

Striving for the Impossible

The Hegelian Background of Judith Butler

Sari Roman-Lagerspetz

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be presented, with the permission of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Helsinki, for public examination in the Small Hall, University Main Building, Fabianinkatu 33, on 28 March 2009, at 10 am.

Acta Politica 36
Department of Political Science
University of Helsinki 2009

ISBN 978-952-10-5319-1(paperback)

ISSN 0515-3093

ISBN 978-952-10-5387-0 (electronic version, <http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/>)

Helsinki University Print

Helsinki 2009

Vanhemmilleni Anjalle ja Maurille

ABSTRACT

This study analyses the Hegelian roots of the subject-theory and the political theory of Judith Butler. Butler can be seen as the author of the concept of *gender performativity*. Butler claims that identities are linguistic. Subject's identities are "terms". Linguistic identities are performative and normative: they produce, according to cultural rules, the identities which they just claim to describe. Butler's theory of the performativity of identities is based on her theory of identities as *ek-static* constructions. This means that there is a relation between the self and the Other at the heart of identities. It is claimed in this study that Butler's theory of the relation between the self and the Other, or, between the subject and the constitutive outside, is based on G.W.F.Hegel's theory of the *dialectics of recognition* in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Especially the sections dealing with the relation between "Lord" and "Bondsmen" set the theoretical base for Butler's theory of the ek-statism of identities as well as for Butler's political theory. Further, it is claimed that Hegel's own solution for the enslaving and instrumentalizing relation between the self and the Other, *reciprocal recognition*, remains an important alternative to the postmodernist conception supported by political theorists like Butler.

Chapter 2, on Hegel, goes through the dialectics of recognition between the self and the Other in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* up until the ideal of reciprocal recognition and absolute knowledge. Chapter 3 introduces two French interpretations of Hegel, by Alexandre Kojève and Louis Althusser. Both of these interpretations, especially the Kojévian one, have deeply influenced the contemporary understanding of Hegel as well as the contemporary thought – presented e.g. in the postmodern political thought - on the relations between the self and the Other. The Kojévian Marxist utopia with its notion of "the End of History" as well as the Althusserian theory of the interpellative formation of subjects have also influenced how Hegel's theory of the self and the Other have travelled into Butler's thought. In chapter 5 these influences are analysed in detail. According to the analysis, Butler, like numerous other poststructuralist theorists, accepts Kojève's interpretation as basically correct, but rejects his vision of "the End of History" as static and totalitarian. Kojève's utopian philosophy of history is replaced by the paradoxical idea of an endless striving towards emancipation which, however, could not and should not be reached.

In Chapter 6 Butler's theory is linked to another postmodern political theory, that of Chantal Mouffe. It is argued that Mouffe's theory is based on a similar view of the relation of the self and the Other as Butler's theory. The former, however, deals explicitly with politics. Therefore, it makes the central paradox of striving for the impossible more visible; such a theory is unable to guide political action. Hegel actually anticipated this kind of theorizing in his critique of "Unhappy Consciousness" in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Keywords: Judith Butler, G.W.F.Hegel, Chantal Mouffe, Alexandre Kojève, Postmodernism, Politics, Identities, Performativity, Self-Consciousness, Other

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was made possible by the support of many people. I want to especially thank my supervisor in Helsinki, Professor Kyösti Pekonen, and Professor Johanna Kantola, as well as my first supervisors in Jyväskylä, Kia Lindroos and Tuija Parvikko. My friends and colleagues in the project “Social Ontology and Recognitive Attitudes”, Heikki Ikäheimo and Arto Laitinen were most helpful in guiding me through the jungle of the Hegelian philosophy. During my work I have shared an office with three exceptionally kind and helpful room-mates: Jouni Vauhkonen, Anne Luomala and Jemima Repo, in chronological order. I want to thank them for their patience and the many laughs we have had together. Numerous other people both in Helsinki Department of Political Science and in Jyväskylä Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy have helped me in different ways. I want to thank you all most warmly! I especially want to mention Teija Tiilikainen, who, as the person in charge of the little colony of political scientists at the “Economicum”, has created a most friendly and supportive atmosphere. I also want to express my warm gratitude to my first professor Kari Palonen. I have learned a lot from him even though this work is not in line with his teaching.

I want to thank the reviewers of this thesis, Susanna Lindberg and Sakari Hänninen for their excellent comments.

My research has been supported economically by the Gender System Graduate School, by the VAKAVA research school, and by the project Social Ontology and Recognitive Attitudes, all financed by the Academy of Finland. I also received a three-month research grants from the Universities of Jyväskylä and of Helsinki. I am grateful for the support.

I am deeply grateful to my parents Anja and Mauri and to my sisters Enja and Tiina for their unconditional support and love. I thank my dear children David and Daniel, as well as Eerik’s children Leevi and Simo, who have patiently tolerated my absent-mindedness and my endless mumbling of mysterious things like “Absolute Spirit”.

My deepest gratitude goes to my husband Eerik. This study would not have been possible without you. Thank you! Because there are no words by which I could ever express my love and gratitude for you, I cite an old song by Nat King Cole: the greatest thing you’ll ever learn is to love and be loved in return.

Sari Roman-Lagerspetz
In Vantaa, March 1st, 2009

Chapter 6 of this work is partly based on the article written with Eerik Lagerspetz:
“‘Poliittinen’ ja perusteiden ongelma Chantal Mouffén demokraatioteoriassa.” (Politiikka 49(3), 218-239, 2005.)

1. Introduction	11
2. Hegel.....	18
2.1. Introduction to Hegel.....	18
2.1.1 <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> : a theory of the self-relation of thinking and knowing ...	18
2.1.2. Dialectics of freedom and the negation.....	27
2.1.3 Self as a construction vs. self as a self-conscious concept.....	38
2.1.4. Conflicts inside unities	43
2.1.5. Self as a Third.....	45
2.1.6. Phenomenology. Idealism. Things presented in thought as constructions.....	51
2.1.7. Subjective thinker and its philosophy	53
2.2. The Stages of Consciousness in the <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i>	56
2.2.1. Understanding and Conceptual thinking	56
2.2.2. The singularity, doubleness and triplicity of knowing.....	60
2.2.3. Other thinking and knowing	64
2.2.4. <i>Other thinking</i> from the point of view of <i>Desire</i> : Unspeakable humanity.....	68
2.2.5. Acknowledging the Other as something valid and constitutive	73
2.2.6. Stoicism, Scepticism, Absolute dialectical unrest	79
2.2.7. From sceptical thought towards Unhappy Consciousness	82
2.2.8. Between universal and particular.....	86
2.2.9. Bad infinite. Absolute freedom.....	88
2.2.10. Consciousness as the Enlightenment Reason	96
2.2.11. From pure self-consciousness into actual self-consciousness	98
2.3. Recognition	103
2.3.1. Actual self-consciousness of Spirit.	103
2.3.2. Shared knowing.....	109
2.3.3. Absolute knowing	112
2.3.4. A note on Hegel and Kant	116
2.4. The limits of Hegel’s theory.....	117
2.4.1. Family and the “womankind”. The realm of <i>immediate</i> self-consciousness.....	117
2.4.2. The story of <i>Antigone</i> in PhS.....	129
3. Two French interpretations of Hegel.....	133
3.1. Alexandre Kojève	133
3.1.1. The Kojèvian interpretation of Hegel.....	133
3.1.2. Kojève’s “dual ontology” and the rejection of Hegel’s philosophy of Nature.....	142
3.2. Louis Althusser.....	146
3.2.1. Althusser’s theory of interpellation.....	146

3.2.2. Ideology and Science	157
4. Butler	166
4.1. Introduction to Butler.....	166
4.1.1 “Ek-static terms” and “ek-static politics”.....	166
4.1.2 The discursive and historical formation of subjects and things.....	172
4.1.3. Agonistic terms	179
4.1.4. Terms as constructions	182
4.1.5. Colonialist masters and subordinated others	185
4.1.6. Performativity.	188
4.1.7. Criticism of Austinian sovereign performatives	191
4.1.8. Identities as necessary errors	195
4.1.9. Becoming conscious of the internal otherness.....	198
4.1.10. Performative politics	202
4.1.11. The ambivalent results of performative politics	206
4.2. Critiques of Butler	208
4.2.1. Martha Nussbaum	208
4.2.2. A void at the heart of Butler’s politics	211
4.2.3. Seyla Benhabib	213
4.2.4. The situated politics	215
4.2.5. Allison Weir.....	219
4.2.6. Kimberly Hutchings	221
5. Butler’s Hegelianism	224
5.1. Butler and Hegel: interpretation and critique	224
5.1.1. The reception of Butler.....	224
5.1.2. “Arresting” Hegelian dialectics	227
5.1.3. Mediation and the third	231
5.1.4. The incompleteness of the subject: Hegel and/or Althusser	237
5.1.5. The processual incompleteness	240
5.1.6. Butler’s criticism of Hegel: the self and the Other	243
5.1.7. Butler’s criticism of Hegel: the idea of time	245
5.1.8. Butler’s criticism of Hegel: reading Antigone.....	249
5.2. Butler and the Kojèveian interpretation.....	252
5.2.1. Butler on Kojève	252
5.2.2. Historical movement and politics through slavery and Desire.....	255
5.2.3. Final knowledge.....	258
5.2.4. “Pure being”	261
5.2.5. Hegelian “full self-identity” as a threat to politics.....	264
5.2.7. Althusser and Butler.....	268
5.2.8. Butler’s critique of Althusser and Foucault.....	278
5.2.9. The critique of pure politics.....	285
5.2.10. The timeless Law	291
5.2.11. The dialectical critique	294

5.3. A critique of Butler's Althusserianism	298
5.3.1. A critique of Butler's Althusserian subjectivity	298
5.3.2. Abstract recognition	305
6. Butler and the Radical Democracy of Chantal Mouffe	309
6.1. Althusser, Laclau and Mouffe	309
6.2. The influence of Carl Schmitt	314
6.3. The self-defeating argument.....	317
6.4. Principles, decisions, and "the political".....	324
6.5. Democracy and its limits.....	327
6.6. The problem of foundations	329
6.7. Conclusion: the ways of paradoxical and ek-static objects.....	333
7. Conclusions	335
BIBLIOGRAPHY	343

1. Introduction

The subject of this study is Judith Butler, an influential American theorist of politics and of sexuality. In areas like women's studies, queer-studies, sociology, cultural studies and political studies, Butler's influence is visible and still growing. In this work, I shall concentrate on the most theoretical aspects of her work, ignoring most of those issues which have been discussed in the special disciplines. Apart from the more specific discussions on her views on sexuality and sexual identities, several general books on her views have been published. Generally these works are meant to serve as introductions to Butler's thought. They neither criticize Butler's ideas, nor try to put them into a wider context, except in a rather superficial way (on some works, see. ch. 5.1.1) Besides these somewhat relatively uncritical expositions, there have been several relatively hostile critiques of Butler's complex and controversial ideas. These critiques tend to be written in an impatient manner, without any deeper interest to Butler's thinking (on the critiques, see ch. 4.2).

The nature of this reception can partly be explained by Butler's unusually difficult style and strange vocabulary. My starting hypothesis in this study was that these aspects of her work are at least partly motivated by her theoretical aims. They are, more or less, dictated by the traditions in which she works and with which she – at least partly – identifies herself. The difficult nature of her work is not a purely stylistic choice: it reflects her continuing interest in the tradition of German Idealism – the tradition defined by Kant, Fichte, and especially by Hegel. This study is basically an attempt to relate Butler to the discussions that arise from this tradition. I think that Butler's views deserve to be discussed in their proper context, and that such an inquiry may help us to assess them better, in a more informed way.

In more specific contexts, when Butler's ideas are “applied”, her connections to Hegel and to the Hegelian tradition are usually left unmentioned. Indeed, when I have mentioned my topic in discussion, the first reaction of those who know something about Butler has often been: “Butler and Hegel – what they have to do with each other?” Many of Butler's expositors recognize the connection between her and Hegel, and even admit its importance, but are reluctant to go into the details. The reason behind these reactions is, probably, that most people who are interested in Butler's work or see it as potentially relevant (even when they criticize it) are not interested in Hegel at all. To take just one example, in a recent book on Butler's political theory the authors tell us that,

... while many post-foundational thinkers reject what they see as the theological closure in Hegel's thought, Butler, working in a similar vein, remains a fierce defender of Hegel. (...) Butler remains a champion of Hegel and insists on the continued significance of Hegelian thought. (Chambers and Carver 2008b, 84.)

However, after these lines, the authors have nothing more to say about the Butler-Hegel - connection; Hegel simply vanishes from the picture! Thus, I have not found the secondary literature on Butler very useful for my purposes. This explains why, in chapters 4 and 5 which deal with Butler, I have mainly concentrated on Butler's own texts.

Together with French authors like Foucault and Derrida, Butler is often classified as a “post-structuralist”, and generally seen as an anti-Hegelian. Here, it is argued that this particular

form of anti-Hegelianism is itself closely related to certain forms of Hegelianism. For example, Derrida has said about himself:

We will never be finished with reading or rereading Hegel, and in a certain way, I do nothing other than attempt to explain myself on this point. (Derrida, 'Positions')

However, I shall also argue that the relation between Butler and Hegel is much closer than the relation between Hegel and the French thinkers who are Butler's main sources. Butler herself has emphasized the importance of Hegel in most of her works. Her dissertation - her first book-long study - *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in the Twentieth-Century France* (hereafter: SD) was about Hegel. She has published several shorter pieces on Hegel and Hegelianism, and, for example in the discussion-book *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality*. (hereafter, CHU) written jointly with Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek, she constantly refers to Hegel when criticizing the positions of her discussion partners. Her relation to Hegel is a complex one; she appeals to Hegel, discusses with him, defends him against others, and opposes him but always sees him as constantly relevant thinker, as a living thinker rather than as a curious monument in the museum of the history of philosophy.

In the new edition of SD, she comments her own work:

In a sense, all of my work remains within the orbit of a certain set of Hegelian questions: What is the relation between desire and recognition, and how is it that the constitution of the subject entails a radical and constitutive relation to alterity? (SD xiv)

In this study, I accept this self-description of Butler as the correct one. Thus, instead of starting with Butler's own views, I begin this work with a detailed presentation of some of Hegel's central ideas. The problem is, of course, that Hegel is a notoriously difficult thinker. In chapter 2 I go through those ideas of Hegel, which have been important for Butler and for her sources. They are mainly to be found in Hegel's famous early work *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (hereafter PhS). This fact does not make things easier. Hegel's *Phenomenology* is a very complex work, and it cannot be summarized into few pages. Interpretation of PhS is even more contested than that of his other works (say, of *The Philosophy of Right*), and in the more popular expositions of Hegel's ideas, PhS is often left aside. One cannot expect that the possible readers of this study were necessarily acquainted with the contents of PhS. Moreover, one single chapter of Hegel's book, the famous part which describes the dialectics between two figures, the Lord and the Bondsman, has begun to live its own life in Hegel-interpretations. I believe, however, that the meaning of that important chapter can be understood only in the wider context of Hegel's theory. For these reasons, I have seen necessary to begin this study on Butler with a long chapter on Hegel, succeeded by another chapter (ch. 3.) mainly on two influential interpretations of Hegel.

In my own exposition of Hegel's ideas I rely mainly on the interpretations provided by Charles Taylor and by my friend and colleague Heikki Ikäheimo. As I said, PhS has been read in numerous ways. In chapter 2 I shall read Hegel as a theorist who has set the coordinates for the late 20th century philosophical discussion on the nature of the human subject, of self-consciousness, otherness, and identity. This is also the Hegel Butler is interested in, although I

read him in a very different way. One may claim that my attitude towards Hegel is too uncritical – that I take as self-evident that most of the things he discusses make sense. It should be noted that I am not trying to evaluate either his logical works or his theory of State, although both are partly relevant for my work (and I have used their insights when needed). I am, indeed, a Hegelian at least in a limited sense: I believe that many of his insights are continuously relevant and worth of discussing, also for a political theorist. I also think that even those who reject Hegel’s ideas and criticize him should at least be aware of what he was really saying. (There have been too many uniformed attempts to refute Hegel by simply declaring that what he says does not make sense at all!) While I try to explicate the central aspects of the subject-theory of PhS, the last part of chapter 2 is largely critical. I discuss one of the more notorious aspects of Hegel’s work, his attitude towards women. I try to show that his position in this issue clearly violates the spirit of his own theory – thus showing that he was, in his own way, constrained by the same limits he detects in the theories of his philosophical predecessors.

After introducing some of Hegel’s central concepts, I go through the descriptions of the different stages of consciousness presented in PhS. The reason for presenting such a detailed description of the various stages of consciousness, and how they are dialectically changed into ever larger self-reflective constructions, is that I intend to show *how* Hegel constructs his ideas of recognition, absolute knowing and rationality. It is argued in this study that Butler’s subject-theory and political theory is a complex Hegelian-inflected construction. Hegel’s theory of desire and recognition, as well as the dialectical aspect in PhS, sets the theoretical background for Butler’s subject-theory and political theory. Butler appears to present, especially in her theory of performative politics, an alternative “recognitive” model, i.e. a theory of how to take the contradicting Other into account. The basically Hegelian notions of desire and recognition are the central aspects of Butler’s performative politics, even when modified through thinkers like Kojève and Althusser. She develops her political theory to a large extent by a critical reading of Hegel’s theory of the dialectics of desire and recognition in PhS. It is, hence, necessary to show what kind of a construction Hegel’s theory of desire and recognition is, and how it is modified in Butler’s thinking through other thinkers, in order to understand Butler’s politics.

Like Butler, I see Hegel as a living discussion partner, and I try to show how his analyses of the different one-sided forms of consciousness in PhS still possess critical potential, and also have their political relevance. I try to show how Hegel uses these ideal-typical formulations when criticizing his contemporaries like Kant, but also how Hegel actually anticipated some later forms of thinking, including that represented by Butler. Finally I try to show how Hegel uses his crucial notion of recognition as a solution to both epistemological and political problems. Recognition is, of course a central theme in modern philosophy and political theory (thematized by authors like Taylor, Williams, Honneth, and Ikäheimo). I try to show why recognition is absolutely central for Hegel: it simultaneously solves the epistemological problems which troubled Hegel’s predecessors like Kant, it forms a basis for ethical, personal and political relationships, and last but not least, it *makes Hegel’s own project in PhS possible*. In Chapter 3 I emphasize this self-referential character of Hegel’s theory, but also try to show that these aspects of recognition are interconnected.

Butler, like her sources, rejects this aspect of Hegel’s thought. In chapter 3. I discuss two French thinkers who, in a different ways, are behind this rejection. Most historians of the

recent French thought (Descombes, Williams, Weir, as well as Butler herself in SD) are in agreement that the role of Alexandre Kojève's provocative interpretation of Hegel: *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* (hereafter IRH) has been crucial, and not only in France. Before Kojève, Hegel was generally read as a metaphysician, as a theorist of the State, and as a predecessor of Marx. Kojève read Hegel as a theorist of the subject and connected this aspect with Hegel's theory of history and theory of knowledge. He emphasized the role of PhS, (downplaying Hegel's later works). In spite of his influence, Kojève has largely remained in the background in the recent discussions on the theory of subject. In chapter 3.1. I present and criticize Kojève's influential but idiosyncratic reading of Hegel. There and in the next chapter I try to show that while Kojève took up one of Hegel's most important and most neglected ideas, that of recognition, he misunderstood it in a fatal way. In Kojève's interpretation, recognition started to mean an epistemological and political utopia, "the end of history". The French thinkers, first Sartre and de Beauvoir, after them, many others, accepted Kojève's interpretation of Hegel as correct. They accepted many of his ideas, but – quite understandably – rejected "the end of history" as utopian, closed and totalitarian. Kojève's "end of history" turned them against other aspects of Hegel's theory, including his theory of recognition. Nevertheless, they accepted some crucial aspects of Kojève's theory, especially his idea that subjects define themselves always in a conflictual relation with others. Before the (rejected) "end of history" the relation between self and the Other is basically a hostile one. These historical details have been noticed by others (including Weir, Williams and Descombes). In chapter 5. I try to argue that this is also true of Butler, although her attitude towards Hegel is more complex and nuanced.

Before discussing the Kojévian aspects of Butler's theory, I take up another French theorist whose role has been neglected in discussions on Butler: Louis Althusser was an anti-Hegelian Marxist who, nevertheless, was interested in similar themes as Kojève and those (like Sartre, de Beauvoir and Lacan) who derived their inspiration directly from Kojève. Thus Althusser tries to redefine the Hegelian idea that subject's self-consciousness is created in a process of recognition in Marxian "scientific" terms. In Ch. 3.2. I try to show why such an attempt is problematic, and how Hegel himself anticipated this kind of move in his analysis of various one-sided forms of consciousness in PhS. From my point of view, Althusser is important, for he is one of most important sources of Butler. To put it simply, Butler tries to correct Hegel with Althusser and Althusser with Hegel.

In Chapter 5 I try to show why Butler's attempt necessarily fails, and why her theory falls into what Hegel called Unhappy Consciousness. Before that, however, I try to present the most important aspects of Butler's theory. This task is undertaken in chapter 4. I discuss briefly her views on performativity and on performative politics, on the crucial role of language and the violent birth of particular identities. At the centre of this study, however, is her theory of the "ek-static self". This is perhaps Butler's most important and least understood concept. As a tentative starting point, I may quote Hazel Barnes's explanation in her English translation of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (p. 549):

Ekstasis. Used in the original Greek sense of "standing out from". The For-itself is separated from its Self in three successive ekstases:

- (1) Temporality. The For-itself nihilates the In-itself (to which in one sense it still belongs) in the three dimensions of past, present and future (the three temporal ekstases).

- (2) Reflection. The For-itself tries to adopt an external point on itself.
- (3) Being-for-others. The For-itself discovers that it has a Self for-the-other, a Self which it is without ever being able to know or get hold of it.

Although meant to explicate Sartre's use of the term, Barnes's explication catches some essential aspects of Butler's notion of ek-static self. *Generally, "ek-static" refers to something which is essentially dependent on something outside itself.* An ek-static thing would not be what it is without its relations to something outside it. At the same time, Barnes's explication connects the notion with the Hegelian basic concepts. Both Hegel and Butler (as well as Sartre who relied on Kojève) agree that the self is in a fundamental and complex way dependent on its outside. They also agree that the self cannot automatically see and understand this dependence. This is their common point of departure, after which Butler and Hegel take different routes, routes which occasionally cross.

In Chapter 4 I also briefly discuss some critics of Butler, starting with Martha Nussbaum's provocative article. Although I agree with her critics on many points, I also think that they are far too impatient in their attempts to criticize Butler. They are not willing to examine the Hegelian roots of her ideas, and therefore tend to dismiss some of her ideas too quickly. The more specific discussions on, for example, Butler's controversial theory of sexual differences are ignored in this study. I think that these ideas of Butler cannot be fully understood without taking into account her general philosophical framework.

In chapter 5 I finally try to put things together and to show how Hegel, Kojève and Althusser are relevant if we try to understand Butler's thought in its entire complexity. First I - again briefly - review the works written on Butler. All the reviewed commentaries follow the same pattern. They acknowledge the importance of Hegel and his continuous influence on Butler's thought, but, after that admission, they quickly give up and move to other issues. Thus, the Butler-Hegel-relationship is largely left unanalysed, and her own views on Hegel are taken at their face value. The mediating role of Kojève is not recognized; instead, he is either ignored or used as an interpretive authority on Hegel.

I go through Butler's comments and criticisms on Hegel. I try to show how they are influenced by a particular way to interpret Hegel's key concepts, most notably, the concept of recognition. Although Butler does not - after SD and after some brief reviews published in the early 90's - discuss Kojève, her way to read Hegel follows the pattern in which Hegel's final synthesis is seen as totalitarian, while some other aspects of his subject-theory are preserved but interpreted in a more or less Kojévian way. As I said above, Butler attempts to criticize and correct Hegel by using Althusser's theory. She does not, however, accept some crucial aspects of Althusser's view, but wants, in turn, to correct them with Hegel's notions. Thus, chapter 5 reveals an interesting triangle. Althusser is hostile towards Hegel (and Kojève), while Butler partly accepts and partly rejects both, trying to play them against each other. My thesis in chapter 5 is that this interesting attempt for synthesis fails, for two reasons. First, Butler is unable to explain and justify her own position. She cannot really explain how her own view of the subject as necessarily limited and unable to see itself can be learned and communicated by someone who herself is a human subject among other subjects. As I explain in chapter 2, Hegel took great pains to show how his view was possible, and his notion of recognition provided a solution to the problem of epistemological asymmetries. Althusser, following an orthodox Marxist pattern in this issue, draws the distinction between "science" and (subjective) "ideology". In chapter 3 I try to show that this solution has problematic

political consequences, and, in Hegelian terms, leads to the acceptance of a Lord-Bondsman – relationship. But Althusser at least tries to provide *some kind* of solution to the problem of the epistemic status of his own theory. In contrast, Butler omits the issue; she cannot base her views on Althusser’s subjectless Science, but she cannot accept Hegel’s solution either. For Hegel, this is just another form of Unhappy Consciousness.

The second problem, taken up in ch. 5 is that this return to Unhappy Consciousness has its political consequences. Butler’s view is like the one-sided forms of consciousness described by Hegel in the sense that it cannot become shared by people in general. It is based on a tacit supposition of an epistemological asymmetry. The theorist, like Butler, sees that all identities necessarily fail, all attempts to strive for universal aims like justice are other-refuting and excluding, all political terms are, and should be permanently contested and questioned, all forms of recognition and solidarity leave some Others out. All this is a part of the heritage of Kojève. Because recognition in the Hegelian or in the utopian Kojévian form is seen as impossible, all that remains is the continuous process of discussion, contestation, questioning and struggle. According to Butler and some theorists who think in the same way, this process is also the (contentless) content of *democracy*. But if my argument is correct, this view cannot be shared by people in general. It cannot and should not become the basis of our general self-understanding. If it were generally accepted, it would destroy itself. As in Kojève’s End of History, all the movement and all the politics would cease. Hence, the consequence of Butler’s view is that people have to live in a “necessary error” which is recognized as an error only by the political theorist. People are doomed to strive for the impossible – an idea that already appears (in the context of the love relationship) in the first important study deriving from Kojève, Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness*. I shall argue that in PhS, Hegel already discussed this kind of thinking, and understood its self-defeating nature.

In chapter 5. Butler’s other important sources, e.g. Freud, Lacan and Foucault, are largely left out. This is certainly an omission. However, Butler’s ideas are so complex that taking all the aspects into account would require a much longer study; besides, these connections are already examined in the other works on Butler. My aim here is to chart some less known routes rather than to follow the well-trodden paths. (To take random example, a search in the database of the Helsinki University Library discloses ca. 150 books and monographs on Foucault, but only five on Kojève.)

In the final chapter 6, I compare Butler’s views with those of Chantal Mouffe. Unlike Butler, Mouffe is exclusively a political theorist. With Ernesto Laclau, Mouffe has influenced Butler’s ideas, although Butler has also had an influence on Mouffe. Mouffe derives partly from the same sources as Butler, and draws similar conclusions. However, Mouffe’s theory of “agonistic” or “radical” democracy is explicitly a *political* theory. Thus, Butler’s and Mouffe’s theories illuminate each other: Butler provides theoretical premises which are only mentioned in Mouffe’s works, Mouffe derives the conclusions which are more clearly articulated - and, as I try to show in chapter 6, paradoxical in exactly the same way as those of Butler’s theory. In Chapter 6 I briefly discuss Mouffe’s interpretation of the German theorist of the “political”, Carl Schmitt. Schmitt is still another important author whose influence on Continental political thinking has largely remained unacknowledged until the recent re-appropriation of his ideas. Unlike other theorists discussed here, Schmitt does neither belong to the Kojévian tradition nor reacts to it. He is an independent thinker whose ideas were to some extent parallel to those of Kojève and his critics. Kojève’s unpublished work, *Outline of*

a Phenomenology of Right (written in 1943, but published only in 1981) reveals, however, that Kojève was influenced by Schmitt's concept of the "political" Mouffe has, together with some other left-oriented postmodernists, tried to reinterpret Schmitt's ideas in post-structuralist terms. In chapter 6, I criticize this attempt. It seems to me that while Schmitt focused the relation between the self and the Other (in the form of "friend" and "foe" or "us" versus "they") his view is actually quite unlike that accepted by Mouffe and Butler.

Mouffe argues that modern theories of democracy are self-defeating. They presuppose a normative ideal (a sort of end of history) which, if realized, would, according to Mouffe, destroy democracy. However, I shall argue that Mouffe's (and, arguably, Butler's) own view of democracy is self-defeating in a rather similar way. It is "striving for the impossible". Both Butler and Mouffe are quite willing to characterize their own works as "paradoxical" in some sense. I am quite ready to admit that our shared life has its paradoxical aspects – and Hegel was deeply aware of this – but still I do not think that a theorist could avoid criticism by simply affirming the paradoxical nature of her own theory. Hegel argued that while certain types of contradictions are unavoidable and important, others, however, make our views self-defeating. Hegel's fundamental insight was that the self-defeating forms of consciousness described in PhS were defective, not only because of their intellectual errors, but because they were unable to work as the basis of such a shared self-understanding on which lasting personal, ethical and political relationships could be built. This is ultimately also the problem with theorists like Butler and Mouffe. I believe that they contain important insights, and that they may well be able to illuminate important aspects of our shared existence. But when we are thinking our relations to the others, the final word should not be given to those who think that ethics, politics, or life, is striving for the impossible.

2. Hegel

2.1. Introduction to Hegel

2.1.1 *Phenomenology of Spirit*: a theory of the self-relation of thinking and knowing

Philosophy has produced different theories of the “self”. For example, self as a non-material spirit; self as a series of impressions and thoughts; self as a material being; self as a contextual historical being etc. The Hegelian basic question is always: if the self is such-and such, is it able to see that it is such-and such? Is a particular theory of the self able to explain its own possibility? In other words, is a theory of the self able to explain a self who thinks like it (itself) thinks of the self? Is it possible for individual subjects to share the theory and take it as a basis for their self-understanding? According to Hegel, several subject-theories, for example the Kantian one, end up in what we could call the “Ishmaelian” paradox. In Herman Melville’s classical story of Moby Dick, the story-teller, Ishmael, alone survives the tragedy, which none of the other (subjects) survived. “I only am escaped alone to tell thee.” Thus, the story-teller itself remains external to the story which tells what happened to all the others. Such subject-theories have to presuppose that there are epistemologically privileged viewpoints, but they (unlike Melville’s narrator) are unable to tell how such viewpoints are possible, and why cannot we all have an access to such a viewpoint.

Hegel addresses some fundamental questions in PhS. First, Hegel’s insight into human subjectivity is that human beings are finite, particular beings, conditioned by their history, contexts etc. On the other hand, subjects are also seen as capable of freedom and rational thinking. For Hegel, a cultural context both constrains individual freedom, and, at the same time, makes it possible. Secondly, Modern (post-Cartesian) thought has put the thinking subject to the centre. It is the centre of its own universe. How can it relate itself to other beings who themselves are centres of their own universes? Thirdly, Hegel discusses how it is possible for a consciousness to take itself as an object of reflection? How can a human being understand itself – including the fact that it understands itself?

The Phenomenology of Spirit, in which Hegel presents his theory of the self, is one of the most difficult of philosophical classics. It is almost impossible to provide a short account of its contents, and it is no wonder that many interpreters tend to concentrate on some limited aspects or parts of it, leaving the rest of the work to the background. Three observations may be useful for the reader. First, according to Hegel, all objects (including the self) are always perceived, thought, and understood from some viewpoint. They are objects *for someone*. Nevertheless, Hegel believes that this does not lead to subjectivism or relativism. Second, the human self is self-determining. This means that it is not only free to act, but that it is also *self-interpreting* (to use Charles Taylor’s expression). What it is depends partly on what it thinks of itself. Hence, in the analysis of the self, the viewpoint of the self is always relevant. Third, for Hegel, all the important philosophical problems (indeed, all important intellectual problems of the humankind) are somehow interconnected. A theory of the self has to deal with problems which are usually discussed in the theory of knowledge, metaphysics, ethics, history, psychology, or politics. These Hegelian basic principles are largely responsible for

the enormous complexity of his theory.

Here, I try to present Hegel's theory of the self in its entire complexity. The presentation follows the structure of PhS. Other works of Hegel are used only when they seem to be relevant; I do not discuss Hegel's own intellectual development. The most important secondary sources in this chapter are the writings of Charles Taylor and of Heikki Ikäheimo. Many of the interpretative comments (and most examples) are my own, and may be controversial. Nevertheless, this is not meant to be a study on Hegel, but on the Hegelian themes in Judith Butler's works.

The reader may wonder whether such a long and detailed exposition of Hegel's views is really necessary in a work which is supposed to be a study on Judith Butler. And if it really is necessary, why concentrate just on *The Phenomenology of Spirit*? Moreover, why use such a limited selection of secondary sources? After all, there are innumerable books written on Hegel, and many of them are more recent than those of Taylor (which were written in the 70's) or better known than those of Ikäheimo (who is a relatively young scholar).

My answer is the following. One of the main theses of this study is that Judith Butler is a Hegelian and can be fully understood only as a Hegelian. In order to show how her ideas are related to those of Hegel, I have to explain what Hegel said and *how* he said what he said. It is argued here that Butler's way to discuss things as "ek-static processes" is based on Hegel's way to discuss things as "dialectical processes". Thus, a choice is made of showing *how* Hegel constructed, for example, the theory of free self-consciousness, reciprocal recognition and absolute knowing. These Hegelian constructions and their processual nature are highly relevant for the understanding of the main focus of this work: Butler's theory of terms as ek-static processes and her model of radical politics.

During the past two centuries, Hegel has been interpreted in many ways: as a metaphysical system-builder, as a theorist of the State, as a philosopher of history, as a theological thinker, and as a predecessor of Marx. None of these interpretations are entirely misguided; they all emphasize different aspects of Hegel's works. Judith Butler is interested mainly on Hegel's views on "desire, recognition and alterity" (SD, xiv). Her Hegelianism is related to the interpretive tradition which draws its inspiration mainly from *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. The issues mentioned by Butler do appear in Hegel's other works, but only in PhS they are the central themes. As Robert Williams (1997, 3) says, these themes have largely been neglected in English-speaking literature on Hegel until the recent times. In the French tradition, heavily influenced by Alexandre Kojève, desire, recognition and alterity have been central. Because I am critical of the French tradition, I have relied on those (few) commentators who discuss the mentioned themes in detail, but who nevertheless disagree with Kojève and his followers. Among those, I have found Taylor, Ikäheimo plus some others (for example, Robert S. Williams, Kimberley Hutchings and Robert B. Pippin) especially useful.

Doubleness, or "thinking and knowing in parts", connects closely to the Hegelian themes stated above. Doubleness introduces the relation which a subject has to itself. This relation takes place as reflective thinking. As double, subject is able to take itself as its own object, i.e. to have a relation to itself and to its own thinking. Importantly, this doubleness assumes many forms. Thinking is for Hegel always double. It always knows itself from a point of view

outside, yet at the same time inside, itself. Importantly, the notions of the self (being reflected) and the outside (from where the self is reflected) vary along the development of consciousness in PhS. We may take an example. Suppose that I think of myself as a woman. Both Kant and Hegel agree that, when formulating a conscious thought “I am a woman” I am also something else. I must be a conscious being who can think of herself as something, and who can also reflect and criticize her own thoughts. In other words, I am also a free subject. But then, there are two apparently correct but radically different descriptions of me: I am an empirically observable, contingent being who thinks herself as a woman, and I am a free being. In this sense, I am “double”. One fundamental Hegelian question concerns the moment of self-consciousness which reflects its doubleness (self as a “third”), a theme introduced in modern western philosophy especially by Kant. How these two parts or aspects or viewpoints (for Kant: “empirical” and “noumenal” selves) are to be connected?

In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant explains why “I “ can never know itself:

The unity of consciousness, which lies at the basis of the categories, is considered to be an intuition of the subject as object; and the category of substance is applied to the intuition. But this unity is nothing more than the unity of *thought*, by which no object is given; to which therefore the category of substance – which always presupposes a given intuition – cannot be applied. Consequently, the subject cannot be known. The subject of the categories cannot, therefore, for the very reason that it thought these, frame any conception of itself as an object of the categories; for to think these, it must lay at the foundation of its own pure self-consciousness – the very thing that it wishes to explain and describe. (Kant 1993, B422)

When Kant’s consciousness tries to take itself as an object of cognition, it is doomed to move in a circle (Kant 1993, 346/B404). The only thing it can reach is the empirical self. But Kant never really explains how these two “things” are to be connected.

In his so-called “Minor Logic” (the first part of his *Encyclopaedia*) Hegel gives an interesting linguistic analysis of one of the aspects of the doubleness of the self:

Similarly when I say ‘I’, I *mean* my single self to the exclusion of all others; but what I *say*, viz. ‘I’, is just every ‘I’, which in like manner excludes all others from itself. In an awkward expression which Kant used, he said that I *accompany* all my conceptions – sensations, too, desires, actions, etc. ‘I’ is the essence and act the universal: and such partnership is a form, through an external form, of universality. All other men have it in common with me to be ‘I’; just as it is common to all my sensations and conceptions to be mine. But ‘I’, in the abstract, as such, is the mere act of self-concentration or self-relation, in which we make abstraction from all conception and feeling, from every state of mind and every peculiarity of nature, talent, and experience. To this extent, ‘I’ is the existence of a wholly *abstract* universality, a principle of abstract freedom. (Enc.I § 20; emphasis in the original)

Thus, when saying “I”, I try, according to Hegel, to refer to something singular and private, to myself as the locus of my own sensations, thoughts, and desires. But the expression “I”

actually refers to the universal “I” which is common for all thinking beings but which, as such, is void of any particular content. “I” seems either to refer to something which is purely private and inaccessible to others, or, then, to an empty abstraction. How are we actually able to communicate our thoughts and feelings? How are these two “I”s to be connected? According to Hegel, Kant and his followers could never solve the problem successfully. (It should be added that I am not necessarily committed to all the claims Hegel makes about Kant, or about any other philosopher. Many of his interpretations are controversial, and may not do justice for the thinkers he interprets. Nevertheless, by “Kant” I generally refer to “Kant, as read by Hegel”.)

In order to compare Butler’s and Hegel’s theories on “doubleness” with each other, it is important to explicate carefully what Hegel thinks about doubleness. The duplication of the self introduced above is one aspect of it. Another aspect of doubleness in Hegel is the relation between subjective thinking and its constitutive outside, or still in other words, the relation between the Self and the Other, the relation between several “I”s. It is the basic theme of all PhS, as well as Hegel’s subject-theory in general. It is the theoretical base for many of his basic themes like dialectics, reciprocally recognitive relationships and Absolute knowing. Thus, there is a lot to be explained, if one wants to tell what Hegel thinks about “doubleness”. In this chapter I will first explain in somewhat general terms (2.1.1-2.1.7) what Hegel thinks of *relating* in general, as doubleness is, basically, a relation for Hegel. For Hegel, relations in general take various forms because the way they are thought by a subjective thinker varies. Subject’s degree of self-consciousness, i.e. how subject reflects on its own thinking, affects how relations are thought. As a thinker becomes more self-conscious, the constitutive relations of its own thinking become more *internal* (conceptual, particularized, understood) instead of being *external* (abstract, dualist). *Contradictions* form an important type of relation, which introduces the idea of *dialectics*. By a contradictory relation, self is usually taken into the “next”, or actually “enlarged” level of self-reflection. Every new level of self-reflection constitutes its own relational system, which is more internally varied or rich than the earlier one. Afterwards (chapters 2.2.1-2.2.11.) I will explicate how relating changes by the development of self-consciousness. In chapters 2.3.1-2.3.3 I explicate what takes place as Recognition and Absolute knowing. In chapters 2.3.4. and 2.3.5 I shall take up the problematic position of women in Hegel’s theory.

In PhS Hegel appears to be focusing mainly on the problems which follow when thinking becomes conscious that it is *limited* by its own subjectivity. Hegel takes the form of thought which he names as “Enlightenment thinking”, or Kantian thinking, as his main focus. According to Hegel, when thinking realizes its subjective nature and contextuality, and further, when it realizes that it changes in time, thinking realizes something very important about itself, namely its *active conceptuality*. By its conceptual capacity, thinking is able to *think* that (its own) thinking takes place as a particular conceptual system (in a way, as a particular language). Thinking is also able to think that its own particular language is not stable, but that it changes in time because it is affected by powers coming outside of it. Hegel focuses in PhS on the problems which thinking confronts when it starts to *think* of itself as “a particular system, which is historical, subjective and on the move”.

As is more thoroughly explained in chapter 4, also Butler theorizes particular systems of thinking and knowing which are on the move, and which are affected by their outsides. Yet, while Butler’s main focus is on particular “sites of knowing” (within which particular

subject-positions, and things/terms as particulars become determined), constituted by their outsides, and constantly on the move, Hegel's main focus is on this thinking which *thinks* that particular subjectivity is on the move and affected by its outside. Hegel concentrates on thinking which has *internalized* (that is, understood) the idea of subjectivity as contextual and historical.

According to Hegel, when particular subjects are *thought* to be affected by powers coming from outside of them, and *thought* to be moved by these forces, the nature of the effects and the movement changes. These aspects become internal to thinking. The "outside" becomes internal – i.e. a thought outside - and as such, it becomes an object of thinking, in one way or the other. As in the several versions of the Enlightenment philosophy, and after Hegel, in Marx as well as in Freud, human beings become free partly by becoming conscious of the depth of and understanding how they are influenced by external powers. Hegel focuses on what he calls "Kantian abstractivity" which followed from Kantian reflection of subjective thinking. For Hegel, the Enlightenment, or Kantian "error" in its way to *think* about particular subjectivity ("thing for us" to use the Kantian vocabulary) and its relatedness to its constitutive "outside" ("thing in itself") was to think this relation only as an *abstraction*. This relation became internalized (postulated as) an *external relation* in Kantian thinking. In other words, Kant placed, *inside* his own thinking this relation *outside* of his thinking. By this externalization, Kant turned this relation into an abstraction, a relation which is beyond the capacities of particular, historical subjects.

Hegel takes the Kantian doubleness between "thing in itself" and "thing for us" as a structure on which he develops his own version of the doubleness, namely the one between "self" and "other". Hegel intends to turn the Kantian external relation (abstract doubleness) into an internal relation (conceptual and particular doubleness). Ultimately, for Hegel, the Kantian external relation is turned into an internal relation in *reciprocally recognitive relations between free self-consciousnesses*. This requires that the Kantian *pure (abstract) self-consciousness* changes into an *actual* self-consciousness.

PhS can be seen to present a theory of the self-relation of a thinking subject. Subject is primarily a *thinking being* for Hegel. Thus, the self-relation is the self-relation of thinking. This relation is a *reflective* relation. In self-reflection thinking is basically doubled into the reflecting thinking and the reflected thinking. For Hegel, in order for there to be any relation between anything, and hence also between thinking and itself, the relating parts must be somehow differentiated from each other. So, thinking must become divided into "two parts", the part which reflects and the part which is reflected. Thinking must become its own object of reflection. The scene of self-reflecting is however very multi-layered or "multi-circled" in Hegel as the self is not only seen as a reflecting being in PhS. Instead, the self is ultimately seen as a being who reflects itself and the world as a particular, differentiated something (a particular subject and a particular substance) and also as an absolute, universal and freely self-interpreting, processual self. (PhS §90-93, §113-121, §804)

For Hegel, thinking must become *a something for itself*. Otherwise it cannot reflect itself. It is a fundamental Hegelian principle that every object of thought has to have definite properties which make it possible to distinguish it from other possible objects. This must also be true of thinking itself. Ultimately, *concept*, or actually *self as a concept*, is this kind of "reflectable" something. Self-reflecting thinking can be an object for itself as a concept. As a concept, the

self has related to itself internally, not externally. As a concept, it does not relate to itself as an *internal externality*, which is the case, according to Hegel, in Kantian thought. As a concept, the self relates to itself as an internally differentiated whole. In PhS thinking is to gradually find itself as a concept. This concept is to be realized as a synthesis, consisting of parts which are differentiated and related with each other. The parts are unified together, into a synthesis, by the self, which Hegel also calls as a “third”, and as a syllogistic middle term. However, for Hegel, the self cannot know itself as an *actual*, internally differentiated concept without differentiating itself from another self. In order to know itself fully the self must learn, first, how it is similar to the others, a member of a larger genus; and second, how it is unlike the others, an individual being with its own distinctive properties.

For Hegel each self is a self-relational whole so that everything it thinks, relates to it (PhS §85-86). Thus, in order for a self to know itself as a *something*, it must particularize its own self-relational universe. If it can particularize itself as a self-relational whole, it can also particularize its internal structure, i.e. it can become an internally differentiated whole. According to Hegel, this can happen only if a self can relate to *another* self-relational universe. Only another self-relational whole, another universe in its own right, can particularize a self-relational whole.

In PhS, thinking is to find itself (to become *self-conscious*) by becoming related to another conceptual unity, the Other. Without acknowledging the Other as another, equal self as a concept, a self cannot become self-reflective in the way Hegel sees as necessary for a true, free self-consciousness. A self needs to find itself in another self *fully*, instead of projecting just some moments of itself into the other self, as is the case in the various cases of dualistic thinking, depicted in PhS, where the moment of “being dependent of one’s Other” is projected away from the self onto other selves, resulting into an “enslaving” (instrumentalizing, “silencing”) attitude towards other selves. (PhS §178-184). As explained in the chapter 2.3.2, a self can ideally differentiate itself from the other self, without instrumentalizing and “silencing” itself or the other self, through a “shared knowing”.

Actual, or true self-consciousness serves as the necessary base for, firstly, *reciprocally recognitive* relationships between the self and others, secondly, for reciprocally constructed objectivity and, thirdly, for Absolute knowing (explained later). (PhS §176-177,186-187,226-227). Reciprocal recognition is a theme which reappears in several works of Hegel (for example, Enc. III, §430-436; PR, § 57, 206, 330-338, 349) and, according to my interpretation, brings together his views on epistemology, ethics, personal relations, and politics. (On recognition, see Ikäheimo 2000; 2003 ; Williams 1992; 1997.) As Ikäheimo says:

Recognition is not only a social philosophical concept, but has also an epistemological meaning. Yet, it would be inaccurate to say that this epistemological meaning of recognition is separate from the social philosophical one. (Ikäheimo 2000, 70)

While the explicit role of recognition is less prominent in Hegel’s later works, I agree with Ikäheimo and Williams that it is the basis of his later philosophy of Spirit.

Hegel consciously utilizes the ambiguity of the word “recognition” (*Anerkennung*). The

expression – both in English and in German – has an epistemic meaning. We recognize objects by identifying them, for example when we recognize that a person sitting before us is our old classmate. But the expression also has an evaluative, active meaning: we may recognize someone as an equal. The latter meaning has often a *constitutive* aspect; for example, a state gains its independence through the recognition of the other states. According to International Law, it is an independent state if and only if it is recognized as one (Hegel discusses this example in PR, § 331; on the different meanings of recognition, see Ikäheimo 2003, 125-137).

Hegel's theory of recognition can be seen as a plausible solution to several classical problems. First, it is meant to solve the sceptical problem of "other minds" or solipsism: how can we have knowledge about the minds of the others? (Sartre 2001, 212-220) Second, it provides an answer to the traditional problem of morality: why should we take the others as morally relevant? Third, it answers to the basic question of social ontology: how do those things which, in Hegel's terminology, belong to the realm of objective spirit – laws, institutions, traditions etc. – exist? Fourth, it answers to the fundamental epistemological question: how is valid knowledge possible?

The constitution of the Self, as a concept (*for itself*) through being (*self-consciously*) limited and particularized, as well as freed, by the Other, is a ground theme in PhS. The relation between the Self and the Other is a necessarily complex one, for, according to Hegel, it must ultimately be a relation in which the parties are united and, nevertheless, both maintain their independence and freedom. This means that they cannot be known to each other in an "ordinary" way of knowing, in which we identify particular objects and which Hegel calls *consciousness as Understanding*. Ultimately the relation (in which both the particularity and the freedom of the Self and the Other are preserved) takes place in Hegel's theory as *reciprocally (mutually) recognitive relationship between self-consciousnesses* (this is explained more thoroughly later). (see PhS §130-139, §174-179, §789-795; Taylor 1975 130-133, 152-153, 297-308; Inwood 1995, 131-136)

The problem, which thinking faces in PhS, as it tries to relate to its own thinking, is that it has a difficulty to relate to *other thinking*. Nevertheless, thinking is to become conscious of other thinking as a *particular* other thinking, differentiated from its own thinking. Thinking needs to set a particular difference between its own thinking and other thinking in order to become conscious of itself as something particular. "Other thinking", the "Other" and "otherness" in general denotes in PhS such an object of thinking which could be perhaps called "radically different". It could be also called a "free" object. The Other is "radically different" and "free" because it is so fundamentally *similar* to the thinking which takes it as its object. In being similar to the self, the Other is depicted in PhS e.g. as an "internally negating power", self-determining, processual and free. As free, the Other is nevertheless also depicted as a being which is constituted by its own Other and as a being which can acknowledge its own Other in a recognitive (non-instrumentalizing, non-parochial) way. (see e.g. PhS §177-181)

As depicted by Hegel in PhS, thinking has to face tremendous difficulties when trying to actually relate itself to others who are capable of *their own thinking*. This is due to the fact that selves have a tendency to relate to themselves and to others by way of *Desire*. Hegel's notion of Desire shares a similarity with Spinoza's notion of Desire. According to Spinoza, "desire is the actual essence of man, in so far as it is conceived as determined to a particular

activity by some given modification of itself" (*Ethics* III, 173). Desire is, for Hegel, the first, most primitive source of self-consciousness.

According to my interpretation, Desire cannot, however, be seen merely as a primitive practical attitude (as it is, for example, in Hobbes). It should be noted that, in Hegel, theoretical and practical ways of "grasping" objects are related. Hegel has an "appropriation" or "possession" model of understanding: by understanding an object we make it "our own". In PR, he writes:

In thinking an object, I make it into thought and deprive it of its sensuous aspect; I make it into something which is directly and essentially mine. Since it is in thought that I am first by myself, I do not penetrate an object until I understand it; it then ceases to stand over and against me and I have taken from it the character of its own which it had in opposition to me. (PR § 4, addition)

In the same paragraph of PR, Hegel argues that the theoretical attitude (understanding an object) and the practical attitude (physically controlling and moulding – "labouring" – an object) are closely related:

Thus these distinct attitudes cannot be divorced; they are one and the same; and in any activity, whether of thinking or willing, both moments are present. (idem)

This partly explains why the self's relationship with the Other is problematic: the Other also wants to make objects its own, theoretically and practically. The Other also wants to "labour objectivity", self-relationally, i.e. to make the world its "mirror". Competing explanations of the world (ideologies, religions etc.) can be seen as expressions of this intellectualized form of Desire. This kind of "appropriation" model of understanding is shared by Butler as well as by many others.

For Hegel, a self which is driven by an attitude of Desire "reads" the Others on the basis of its own view of the world, i.e. on the basis of its own particular thinking. According to this interpretation, Desire is not necessarily selfish, but it is always *self-centred*. It needs not just be a primitive appetite, but it always treats the external world, including the Others, as means to its own ends. However, the Others are similar beings, and thus they entertain the same desire. Consequently, as concerns the mutual relations of these selves, each driven by a structurally similar desire, there is a conflict of interests as to whose way to read the world is the right one. A question arises as to whose way to read the world is to be recognized as the truly universal and timeless one. PhS appears to present various forms of Desire. Some are more intellectual and abstract than others. Some forms of Desire appear more "animal" (mere appetites) than others (PhS §175). The desire for recognition is a more complex form, possessed only by humans. In fact, the desire for recognition is depicted in PhS to belong only to free selves, who strive, all along PhS, to become free. They possess the conceptual capacities (for abstraction etc.) needed to become conscious of themselves and the world as internally contradicting, changeable, dialectical i.e. free. What these selves ultimately desire (i.e. what satisfies their desire) is, according to PhS, to "go over" or to "turn" parochial, self-centred ways of reading and "labouring" the world into socially shared (i.e. free) ones and to enter into mutually recognitive (equal) relationships with other free selves. (PhS §174-181; Pippin 1989, 143-148; Hutchings 2003, 73-75)

Hegel's basic scene of the *struggle for recognition* depicts a violent scene, which may lead even to death (PhS §186-188). However, some sort of struggle for recognition continues also at the highly intellectual levels of the Enlightenment reason. The type of self-centred self-consciousnesses, denoted by Desire, entails a repressive superseding of the independent Other. Hegel writes of Desire:

Self-consciousness is thus certain of itself only by superseding this other that presents itself to self-consciousness as an independent life; self-consciousness is Desire. Certain of the nothingness of this other, it explicitly affirms that this nothingness is *for it* the truth of the other; it destroys the independent object and thereby gives itself the certainty of itself as a *true* certainty, a certainty which has become explicit for self-consciousness itself *in an objective manner*. (PhS §174)

Desire thus denotes a self-consciousness which does not acknowledge the independence of the Other. This way to read the Other continues also at the intellectual levels of the Enlightenment thought, where the Other is turned into a formalist abstraction and its own particular subjectivity is repressed. The Other is forced into a state of abstract freedom, and its own way to determine and particularize itself is considered not valid (PhS §570-578, §590-593)

According to this interpretation, Desire is not only related to a primitive appetite. Rather, it arises from the self's will to make the external world its "own" intellectually as well as materially. Hegel argues that the self-consciousness takes place as Desire, whenever the Other is not conceived as another self-consciousness. Only when a self-consciousness acknowledges the Other as an internally negating being (i.e. a self-determining, free object, that is, one equal as another self-consciousness) it is able to realize its own independence and the independence of the Other, and become free from the enslaving (un-free) relations of Desire. (PhS §174-177). It appears that the scene of the struggle for recognition, depicted in PhS in the section B.IV.A. "Independence and dependence of self-consciousness: Lordship and Bondage" displays a formal description, or a metaphor, of a relation dominated by an attitude of Desire. This scene appears not to be a separate moment or stage in a narrative. Instead, it appears to present a description of a relation which continues, in one way or the other, until there are proper reciprocally recognitive relationships between free selves. (see on this theme e.g. Pippin 1989, 143-154, 160, 169; Hutchings 2003, 61-63, 75-76, 106)

A struggle for recognition is a famous Hegelian theme. Basically, all selves are capable of universalization. Each one can basically universalize its own particular way to understand everything thinkable. Thinkers are similar in this important sense. Each constitutes a universe. Nevertheless, these universes are particulars, because there are more than one of them. When there is a struggle for recognition, based on similar Desire on all sides, each one claims to be the only truly universal "universalization". Each one claims to know what the "real" is. For a self, driven by an attitude of Desire, there is room for only one universalizing self who has the right to determine what the world is like. Self, driven by Desire, demands the others to give up their own (wrong, non-real, misrecognitive) universalization in favour of the right one. Recognition should be directed towards just one universalization, i.e. towards one self. This one self should be recognized as the universal "knower" of the world. Desire depicts hence a

scene of *one-sided recognition* (PhS §191). Yet, Hegel's intention is to theorize the possibility of *reciprocal recognition*, the mutual acknowledgement between a self and an other self/selves as equals. Importantly, for Hegel, reciprocal recognition, which pertains also to the knowing of "things", is a base for Absolute knowing. When a self acknowledges that others are equally valid contributors to how "things" are known, it can potentially endlessly enrich its knowing, and go over its (present) limits. (PhS §175-177, §670; Pippin 1989, 155-156, 163-171; Hutchings 2003, 40-43, 106)

2.1.2. Dialectics of freedom and the negation

Hegel's idea of freedom is ambiguous. On the one hand, he claims that thinking beings are always already free. As he says in his *Introduction to the Philosophy of World History* (p. 47), "just as gravity is the substance of matter, so also can it be said that freedom is the substance of spirit". On the other hand, this freedom becomes actualized only when the subjects recognize their own freedom. In one sense, they are not free unless they know that they are free. In Hegel's words

Thus everything depends on the spirits self-awareness; if the spirit knows that it is free, then it is altogether different from what it would be without this knowledge. For if it does not know that it is free, it is in the position of a slave who is content with his slavery and does not know that his condition is an improper one. It is the sensation of freedom alone which makes the spirit free, although it is in fact always free for and in itself. (Introduction, 48)

The thinking subjects cannot recognize their own freedom if they do not share an adequate concept of freedom. If they share an adequate concept, they also understand that freedom is something which they all possess by virtue of being thinking subjects. Hence, freedom is necessarily the freedom of all.

Hegel wrote his PhS at a time when the Enlightenment thinking (Immanuel Kant etc.) had questioned particular forms of subjective knowing. Hegel was concerned for the abstractivity and the denial of particularity which, he thought, ensued from the Enlightenment thought. Consequently, Hegel considered it important that the thought, which questions particular knowledge, be taken back into contact with its own particularity and historical subjectivity. Hegel argued that while being able to criticize other, earlier forms of thinking as historically limited and conditioned, the Enlightenment thinking is unable to see that it is itself similarly limited and conditioned. According to Hegel, a thinking which questions its own particular subjectivity, and any particular subjectivity, should become conscious of itself. Hegel agreed with the Enlightenment thought that no (one) particular form of knowledge can tell the unlimited, universal, timeless truth of things. Yet, Hegel saw that if this realization *itself* is not reflected self-consciously, an external (abstract) relation between a self-reflective thinking and its own particular subjectivity ensues. For Hegel, abstract, external relations between constitutive moments of thinking (like e.g. between particular subjectivity and self-reflective thinking) always imply some kind of dualist (enslaving, instrumentalizing) relations with others. (PhS §176-178, §206-208, §231-235, §538-548; Taylor 1975, 178-188)

For Hegel, thinking beings are in important ways always already free. What exactly this means is, literally, a complex question. In Hegel, one of the basic meanings of freedom is that a thinking self is a “complex object”, not reducible to or determined by any one, or just some of its internal moments. What it is as an “object”, or, what it is as a “subject” is not determined by a foreign “beyond” or an external “Lord”. As such, it is an autonomous object, a self-determining, self-grounding, self-changing subject. Nevertheless, in Hegel, freedom includes an aspect of dependency on one’s outside, the Other. An important theme in PhS is how the idea of dependency is combined with the idea of the self as a self-determining, independent subject. Freedom as the unity of the moments of independence and dependence is constructed through the idea of reciprocal recognition between equal self-consciousnesses. In fact, a self cannot find itself as a free being except through other free beings. Actual freedom (in contrast to freedom as an empty abstraction) takes place in PhS only when it is shared by all. However, PhS shows that this is not always the case. At times only some people (like e.g. members of higher classes, “Lords”, priests, or, at other times, philosophers practicing “transcendental philosophy”) are recognized to qualify as beings who are independent and free i.e. who can “minister” or “mediate” between the subject and its constitutive outside. This constitutes un-freedom (a system of “lordship and bondage”) in which some people are dependent on (and instrumentalized to) other people. The “Lord”-people constitute a privileged “beyond”, a class, who knows *more* of particular subjects – and of things in general – than others. In PhS, the theme of “lordship and bondage” (PhS, B.IV.) introduces the theme of independence and dependence as an aspect of freedom.

In PhS, a self finds actual freedom by finding, little by little, itself and all other subjects as beings who are *equally capable* of reciprocally recognitive relationships with others, i.e. equally capable for freedom and absolute knowledge. *Through recognizing another being who is capable of freedom, i.e. capable of recognizing its Other as its equal, a self becomes itself a being who is capable of recognizing its Other as its equal.* This means that subjects in general are mutually recognized as complex objects, self-determining beings, who can mediate between mutually contradicting aspects (between “particular subjectivity” and its “othernesses” or “beyonds”). (PhS §177-184). It is important to emphasize that freedom is not only an ethical question for Hegel, instead, it is the ground principle of various aspects of life, in epistemology, social life, religion, art etc. (see chapter 2.3).

In PhS, freedom of the subject lies fundamentally in its internal complexity and contradictoriness, i.e. in its capacity to look at things from mutually contradicting aspects and in its capacity to change its world-view by mediating conceptually between contradicting aspects of the world. In Hegelian terms, freedom lies in the “spiritual-rational” capacities for conceptual, dialectical and “speculating” thinking. These faculties, enabling one for freedom, are needed in reciprocally recognitive relationships with other free selves. It is important to emphasize that even that a self is in many ways depicted in PhS as always already free, its freedom can be actual only in reciprocally recognitive relationships. (PhS §670; see chapters 2.2.9-2.2.11).

In PhS, the same faculties which enable one for freedom (i.e. for reciprocal recognition) are the source of un-freedom (one-sided recognition; freedom understood only as an abstraction etc.). Only free beings possess the faculties for un-freedom; only they can be either the “slave-masters” or the “enslaved”; only they are described as instrumentalized and silenced when not

acknowledged as free. This is shown importantly in the way Hegel speaks of women and the family (see chapter 2.4). Women are not described as “enslaved” when they are placed outside of the free community, into the realm of family.

In Hegel, subjects are free insofar as they are recognized (mutually, by all) as beings whose constitutive aspects (i.e. constitutive “beyonds”) can be known to them, i.e. insofar as they are recognized as equally complex beings with the others. (PhS §669-671, see chapter 2.3). This means that a free subject is a one who is recognized as one, by itself and by others. In order for subjects to recognize themselves and each others as free, they must *share an adequate concept* of a subject as free. A free subject exists insofar as it is recognized as such by beings (including itself) *for whom subjects in general are free*. In Hegel’s theory of freedom as a *self-reflective* and *self-conscious* phenomenon, it is essential that the “object” and the “subject” of freedom are structurally similar, i.e. self-reflective complex objects, for whom there is no such “constitutive beyond” which the subject/object could not itself grasp by its faculties of mind. In this sense, subjects can be free only for those for whom all subjects are free. In other words, *subjects are free only for those for whom subjects, in general, are capable of treating (other) subjects as free beings*. In PhS, those who see subjects as incapable of treating other subjects as free beings, do not (themselves) recognize subjects as free beings. This results into interpreting (other) subjects through a dualist concept of a subject (i.e. a concept in which subjects are not seen as internally qualified for freedom), in other words, on the basis of some version of an attitude of Desire (one-sided recognition). (PhS §177-184, §670)

PhS tells a developmental story of how a subject becomes free by developing an adequate concept of freedom and by starting to see itself and others – and the world – through this concept. Along PhS, subjects become *for themselves* and *for each others* beings, who are capable for freedom. They become for themselves and for each others beings who are capable of recognizing themselves and each others as free beings (PhS §177-178, §184, §670). A *shared concept* of subjects as free beings is processually developed. Through this concept, a “genus” of free, independent self-consciousness, subjects are mutually recognized as beings who are capable for freedom. In Hegel’s terms, a free subject must become explicit for itself “in its otherness”. A free subject must be “I” as well as an “object”, and further, it must be “I” as well as it is “we”. (PhS §176-177). Importantly, as said before, actual freedom thus requires that subjects are *mutually* recognized as beings who are capable of recognizing their others as free beings. All along PhS, placing people into “bondage” (a state of un-freedom) takes place through not recognizing them as capable of freedom, in other words, seeing them as incapable of acknowledging their constitutive “otherness” in a free (non-instrumentalizing, “non-colonializing” way). (PhS §177-180; on Hegel’ own dilemma here, concerning women, chapter 2.4. This theme is central in the analysis of Butler’s subject-theory, see e.g. 5.3.1-5.3.2).

Hegel’s thought of freedom takes place, to a large extent, as a criticism towards Enlightenment (“Kantian”) thought, in which Hegel found an abstract, formalist notion of freedom. For Hegel, the Kantian freedom included a refutation of particular, historical subjectivity, resulting from Kant’s abstract notion of constitutive “otherness” (i.e. from the idea that the “Thing in itself” is beyond the conceptual capacities of particular subjects). For Hegel, Kant placed particular, historical subjects into a state of un-freedom (“bondage”) by the idea that the constitutive “otherness” (“Thing in itself”) is not known for particular

subjects. (see chapter 2.2.7-2.2.9). In order to solve the Enlightenment problem of abstract freedom, Hegel developed a concept of freedom in which the constitutive outside of the subject – the “other” or “otherness” - was not to be taken as an abstract, inaccessible “beyond”. Hegel argued that like any other object of thought, even an “abstract beyond” (e.g. the Kantian “Thing in itself”) exists for itself, i.e. for its thinker. It is not external but internal to subjective, historical thought, because insofar as it is thought of at all, it is not thought of by gods, instead, it is thought of and spoken of by a human being who is always a particular subject. If it can be thought by somebody, it should not be treated as an (un-free, non-contradictory) possession of a privileged party. Instead, it should be seen as a “free object”, accessible for all subjects. For Hegel, in order to avoid the Kantian “abstract freedom” it is important to see subjects in general as “absolute beings”, for whom there are no inaccessible, constitutive beyonds. (see PhS §197-200, §670; Hutchings 2003 41-43; Pippin 1989, 143-147)

The coming together of the historical, finite subject with its own freedom and “infinite” (absoluteness) - which is necessarily also the freedom and infinitude of others - is the basic theme of the book. Particular “limited” subjectivity - which is thought at most levels of PhS to denote the realm of context-dependency and thus non-freedom – becomes gradually unified with the abstracting and otherness-recognitive (“unlimited”) consciousness. The narrative of how this “coming together” takes dialectically place, as the coming together of *consciousness* and *self-consciousness* (or, as the coming together of dependency and independence) is explained later in sub-chapters (2.2.1-2.2.7). In the present sub-chapter I discuss the elements of freedom in general terms. The themes of “reciprocal recognition”, the “absolute” (e.g. as “absolute knowing” and “the subject as an absolute”) and “the subject as spiritual” are relevant here.

In PhS, thinking strives to know itself and to find its identity, which ultimately is freedom. In this, Hegel fully agrees with Kant and the other thinkers of the Enlightenment. Hegel also accepts Kant’s view that freedom is not arbitrariness. However, as was said above, Hegel argues that thinking must find freedom as *a particular something*, otherwise it cannot relate to it or identify with it. Kant’s abstract moral law, which is binding for any rational being, is not sufficient. Human freedom cannot mean the total absence of all particular forms, limits and dependencies. Hegel calls such (impossible) freedom as “abstract” or “negative”. Abstract freedom does not actually *exist* at all. (PhS §200-201; §584-595) (explained in chapter 2.2.9.).

The strive for freedom in PhS leads human thinking into seemingly opposite directions. On the one hand, it leads it to find its particular identity, and, on the other hand, it leads it to question all particular identities. Thinking seems to be fundamentally drawn towards two goals: towards limits and towards un-limitedness. The urge to find its particular identity means that it needs to identify its particular “position” within a system larger than itself. It needs to find its universal *genus*, and particularize itself as an instance of it, for example, in a nation, in a political or intellectual movement etc. Nevertheless, thinking also strives to make its particular identity “its own”. It, in a way, strives to determine the universal genus, the particular instance of which it is. In other words, it strives to know not only itself as something particular, but also the larger whole, the context, where its self as something particular is situated. It strives to know the *constitutive “beyond-me”* as something particular. (PhS §80-86,90-110, 231-239)

Along the course of its struggle to know itself, thinking is led to question identities which are given to it by some foreign “beyond itself”. Thinking realizes over and over again that the foreign identities, given to it, do not explain what and who it is in a satisfactory way. It questions the identities given to it by other people, by religion, traditions, science, philosophy etc. Along the way in PhS, thinking also comes to realize that one of its fundamental aspects is a capacity to abstract from *any* particular content or description, given of it, and that its own self is conceptually “movable”. Thinking realizes that it is able to move “beyond itself” within itself. This movement is made possible by its basic faculties of reflection, abstraction and conceptuality. It may change its views of all things, including itself. Gradually, in PhS, thinking realizes that its own conceptual and *speculative* capacities, e.g. “moving beyond itself while remaining itself”, “becoming internally alien to itself” and “relating dialectically and rationally to its Other” cannot be fully described by *any stable* identity-description. Thus, its self-identity must ultimately be such in which “being limited (particularity)” is in unity with “being un-limited” and also with “being internally other, contradictory to oneself”. (PhS §80, §184-187; §203-211, §790-794; Taylor 1975, 240-244, 340-342)

Finally, freedom is found as a conceptual, dialectical unity between the self and the free other self. This triplicity (including also the moment of independent Being or “substance”) is a conceptual, dialectical and speculative unity and importantly, something particular. It is particular because particularity is one of its conceptual moments. Yet, particularity has become a part of a larger unity, in which there can be a movement beyond the limits of any particular case of particularity. (PhS §203-211; §669-671; §790-794).

In PhS, Hegel describes the thinking self’s numerous unsuccessful attempts to come into terms with itself as a free being, i.e. to make its mutually contradicting aspects fit together. A satisfactory (a non-self-refuting) concept of freedom must mediate such seemingly incompatible aspects like “dependency”, “independence”, “particularity” and “universality” together. Little by little the self is able to go forward, as it is able to gather more and more *conceptually mediated* information of itself, by the steps of successes and mistakes that it goes through. The basic theme of the book is to see *how* thinking gains better knowledge of itself, by gaining better knowledge of its contradicting, constitutive outside, the Other. What is constitutive of the self yet external to it becomes gradually *internal*, in other words, conceptually mediated. External otherness becomes gradually internal, conceptually mediated. By this process the self becomes, gradually, a more complex object for itself. It becomes not only a conceptually mediated construction for itself, yet, it becomes also a dialectically changeable being for itself. (PhS §178-186)

Another self-consciousness conducts its own thinking by way of “negating its own self and the world within its own self”. The other self-consciousness is another “complex object” i.e. a free subject. In order for these selves to know themselves and the world in a non-dualist (non-enslaving) way, they must find themselves in each others *fully*. If they find only some of their own aspects in the other self (e.g. the aspect of “dependency on one’s outside/beyond”, or, the aspect of “abstractivity”), but not all, they continue to see themselves, each others and the world in a dualist (enslaving) way. (PhS §670). To see another self as an “absolute” means ultimately (in equal, free relations) that no part or moment, seen as constitutive of the other self - or constitutive of the world in general - is placed beyond the other self, or beyond selves in general. No aspect, constitutive of the world is regarded as inaccessible to the

epistemological or ethical (recognitive) capacities of selves in general. When the other self is seen in this way, the other self is not enslaved (i.e. not kept in “bondage” or patronized. (PhS §176-178, §189-191, §670). This theme is important concerning the main theme of this study, i.e. Butler’s theory of the subject as an “ek-static” being. Put in brief here: for Butler, subjects are ek-static constructions which means that there is a “constitutive outside”, “other” to them. Subjects are, in this sense, “complex objects” for Butler. For Butler, however, particular subjects *themselves* cannot know their constitutive outside, i.e. their constitutive “other”, at least fully. Particular subjects themselves cannot see the complexity or internal contradictoriness of themselves or other subjects without reducing these complex objects into non-complex objects. The complex objects themselves have, hence, a limited (not “fully” complex, or, to use Butler’s terminology, not fully “ek-static”) capacity to recognize the complexity (or, the “ek-statism”) of objects. Particular subjects, who are complex *for Butler* are not, hence, seen (by Butler) to be complex *for themselves* or for each others, at least not fully. (discussed more e.g. in chapter 4.1.8)

Hegel’s famous dialectics of the Lord and the Bondsman (of which more in chapter 2.2.4.) is relevant to the theme of freedom. As a universal “negating power”, as its own Lord, the self can resist other selves who try to rule it as its Lord. PhS shows a developmental journey of how relations involving the figures of “Lord” (independence) and “Bondsman” (dependence) change into reciprocally recognitive relations between free selves. In PhS, if there is no limit to a self, in the form of *a recognized*, equal other (through which the aspects of independence and dependence are mediated conceptually) a self exists as the only universal, a limitless centre of the world. It is necessary for a self to acknowledge another absolute - to particularize itself as an absolute through finding another equally absolute absolute (i.e. a being who has an equal, epistemological and ethical access to all possible constitutive “beyonds” of the world). Otherwise the knowledge of the world of the self is absolute, yet, in an abstract, empty manner, which makes this knowledge self-denying and unsatisfactory. Hegel claims that the inherent structure of thinking is to universalize, and to “absolutize”, but also to particularize itself theoretically and practically. The self needs to know everything in a *free* way, without dualist epistemological dependencies on external “Lords” beyond itself. However, the self also needs to render this free object a determinate, limited object. Otherwise it knows everything as an empty abstraction only. (PhS §791-794).

In PhS, a satisfactory knowledge of the world and a satisfactory relation to the world has an ethical base. Through acknowledging another universal being - another absolute besides itself - the self finds particularity and actuality *within* universality and the absolute. Through sharing the world epistemologically, ethically and socially with the other self, the self can (dialectically) go over its internal, constitutive “unknown”. In short, a self can find itself - as a free being, which it ultimately is - processually in the other self, insofar as it recognizes the other as its equal. Importantly, in this relation, they can be also differentiated from each other as *particular subjects*. This differentiation is, however, a dialectical process, due to their free relation. Even that the parties are particular subjects they are nevertheless also “complex objects” which cannot be rendered into non-complex, stable objects through some specific description of what kind of particular subjects they are and how they (timelessly, in all contexts) differ from each others. (PhS §582-593, §803-804)

Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness.
(PhS §175)

Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged. (PhS §178)

Thinking finds the limits (particularity) of its freedom as a self-reflective, active thinker in another self-reflective, active thinker. It discovers the particularity and positionality of its own free thinking in another free thinking (at least ideally, i.e. there is a rational possibility for such discovery). In PhS Hegel often uses the Kantian-inflected aspects of “(Thing) for us” and “(Thing) in itself” to refer, on the one hand, to particular, historical (“dependent”, subjective) knowledge of things and, on the other hand, to what things are *in real*, “in themselves”, free from the limits of subjective knowledge. According to Hegel in PhS, through reciprocal recognition with other selves, the abstract distinction between what the world is “for thinking selves” (i.e. “for itself” or “for us”) and what the world is “in itself” can be processually, dialectically overcome (see e.g. Pippin 1989, 163-167). Hegel finds the Kantian distinction a dualist one and tries to overcome it dialectically by rendering it a conceptually mediated relation. (discussed more in chapter 2.3):

The “I” has neither to cling to itself in the *form of self-consciousness* as against the form of substantiality and objectivity, as if it were afraid of the externalization of itself: the power of Spirit lies rather in remaining the selfsame Spirit in its externalization and, as that which is both *in itself* and *for itself*, in making its *being-for-self* no less merely a moment than its in-itself; nor is Spirit a *tertium quid* that casts the differences back into the abyss of the Absolute and declares that therein they are all the same; (PhS §804)

In Hegel, freedom includes the moment of the “absolute”, limitlessness, that for which there is no beyond. Hegel speaks of the Absolute as a “Subject” in which the aspects of the “self”, the “other”, “abstraction”, “Being” and external objectivity construct a whole which is actual and determinate, yet also “moving”. The Absolute is a determinate something (an object) for itself, yet, it also involves a movement, a “becoming other” (see e.g. PhS §19-20). Hegel describes it also as “a living spirit”:

The spiritual alone is the actual; it is essence, or that which has *being in itself*; it is that which *relates itself to itself* and is *determinate*, it is *other-being* and *being-for-self*, and in this determinateness, or in its self-externality, abides within itself; in other words, it is *in and for itself* – it is spiritual *Substance*. It must also be this *for itself* (...) it must be an object to itself.. (PhS §25)

Contradictions – or, movement involving contradictions and “otherness” - do not hence disappear when the self finds itself in the other self in a satisfactory way or when absolute knowing is reached. Absolute knowledge is not practiced by a non-historical, abstract Spirit, a subject without limits, instead, it is practiced by historical subjects which are particular in many ways. Absolute knowledge is thus always limited, historical knowledge which can become “other”. The reason why it is absolute, limitless, inheres in its capacity to go over its limits self-consciously, to reconcile contradictions, through the recognition of the “other” (see e.g. Hutchings 2003, 40-44).

The word of reconciliation is the *objectively* existent Spirit, which beholds the pure knowledge of itself *qua universal* essence, in its opposite, in the pure knowledge of itself *qua* absolutely self-contained and exclusive *individuality* – a reciprocal recognition which is *absolute* Spirit. (PhS §670)

Robert B. Pippin describes the Hegelian knowledge of objects as “spiritual” and as implying reciprocal recognition:

Knowledge of objects is conditioned by forms of self-consciousness, and forms of such self-consciousness are to be understood as the product of opposed self-consciousnesses attempting to resolve such opposition, ultimately in “thought”. “Recognition” is Hegel’s name for the achievement of such collective subjectivity. Assuming that individuals pursue their desires and are capable of understanding the threat to their desires posed by an other, we can reconstruct the development of a resolution of such conflict, of final satisfaction, in a form of self-understanding that Hegel calls “Spirit”. (Pippin 1989, 160)

The end of the dualist bondage of the “other” does not mean that a final knowledge of things or a way to organize a society is reached (resembling a Kojevian “End of history” and the realm of the “wise men”). Any knowledge of things is particular knowledge as it exists for a historical thought, for limited subjects. Thus it can become “other” through its “other” (explained further e.g. in 2.3.1-2.3.3). Hegel argues that thinking is able to potentially limitlessly enrich or deepen its knowledge of the world, internally, by connecting with *particular* “other” knowledge. The result of the “enrichment”, i.e. the dialectical synthesizing, is always something particular, hence, it can be contradicted through its Other. (see e.g. Hutchings 2003, 41; Ikäheimo 2000, 85). For Hegel, this *absolute* enrichment is based on the processual solving of contradictions (dialectics) instead of getting rid of them. The idea of non-self-refuting contradictions means, in short, that the “self” of knowledge does not get cancelled, refuted, when it is faced with new or “other” self of knowledge. This kind of “self-preserving” process requires that the old knowledge is not criticised through abstract, boundless knowledge (as is the case in the scepticism of “pure self-consciousness”, resulting into empty knowledge, explained further). The new or other knowledge builds rationally (dialectically, conceptually) upon the old, preserving it instead of cancelling it. (see e.g. Taylor 1975, 132-138, 340-342).

The process of acquiring new knowledge is called by Hegel as *dialectics*. Dialectics assumes the basic form of “sublation” (in German as “*Aufhebung*”), which is perhaps the most famous of all Hegelian concepts. Sublation means, in short, that when new knowledge of a “thing” is related to, old one is preserved at the same time. The new synthesis of a “thing” is built upon the old knowledge, so that the “old” knowledge or theory and the new theory can be seen to speak of the same thing. This can be explained also so that there is a sort of “reciprocal recognition” between one knowledge and another knowledge which results into a new form of knowledge. Despite the change, the old knowledge of a thing and the new knowledge are of a same thing. The change takes place *internally*, in other words, the change is conceptual. The old thing and the new thing are, hence, not fragmented into two unrelated thoughts – constructions or contexts - of thinking and knowing. In the case of two externally related contexts of knowledge, or, two externally related *thoughts of a thing*, each thought constitutes its own “thing”. In sublation, however, the two thoughts become synthesized into a new,

enriched conceptual construction of the thing. (PhS §14-25) A schematic account may be given. There are two thoughts; “The thing is F” and “The thing is G”. Both hypotheses have some rational support. However, they are mutually incompatible: if the thing is G, it cannot be F. Instead of rejecting one of the thoughts or both, we develop a new hypothesis: “The thing is H”. The new hypothesis does not just refute the old hypotheses; it must be such that does justice to both of them and helps us to understand why they both were rational, although incomplete. The new concept “H” is able to unify the observations, intuitions, or arguments which made the earlier hypotheses appealing. Seen in this way, there is nothing odd or mystical in Hegel’s notion of dialectics; it is a rather plausible description of the development of human knowledge.

What happens to the *thing*, the object of thought, in this dialectical process? In which sense are all these thoughts about the *same* thing, if different and mutually incompatible properties are ascribed to it? If, for example, we have different views about what “politics” is, what makes them different views about the same thing? For Hegel, only if the “thing” (which is to go through a sublation) is thought of as *a concept*, can it endure itself through the sublation *for its thinker*. In short, only a thinker who acknowledges things as “complex objects” (dialectical, conceptual and “free”) can identify the thing (going through a change through “otherness”) as a same thing. Sublation takes place internally, inside a thing *which is acknowledged for itself* (i.e. for its thinker) as a conceptual construction, made of various aspects, parts and moments. The result of sublation is the same thing as before, yet, this same thing exists now as an enlarged synthesis, a more complex concept. It has related to another knowledge of *itself*, in fact, it has made a conceptual synthesis with its otherness. It must be emphasized that, in Hegel, all this can happen only for a thinker who acknowledges itself as a “complex object” as a thinker, i.e. as a self capable of relating to otherness within its thought. Thus, a differentiation or a change by sublation is necessarily conceptual. The identity of the “thing”, which the change is about, is preserved basically by the conceptual capacities of the thinking self, in the thinking of whom the thing exists. Sublation does not happen externally “out there”, as a non-subjective natural fact, instead, it happens *for a self*. Thing as a sublating process relates to the sublating thinking of it. For Hegel, there is no change or movement of things which would take place beyond the thinking of it.

In fact, the thing is “carried over” from its old conceptual construction into the new, more enriched conceptual construction within the same conceptually thinking self. The self who carries the thing from the way it was thought of and known before, into how it is thought of and known as “new” must be a one who is capable of doing this “carrying over”. For Hegel, a self who is *self-consciously* self-reflective and conceptual, and who acknowledges the value of the Other and its own capacity to recognize the Other is capable of this. (PhS §26-30, §86-90; Taylor 1975 119,134,143-147, 340-342)

Thus, in order for any thing to change, it must retain its identity with itself *for itself* - i.e. for its thinker - during the change. It must retain its self while “becoming other” (discussed later in chapter 2.2.6). Actual change requires that the change is thought of by somebody whom Immanuel Kant would doubtless call a *transcendental self*, and whom Hegel calls *self as a concept*, or a self who can move beyond its limits (i.e. become “other”) while still preserving itself conceptually. Sublation is basically a dialectical change, a change within unity. As said before, this kind of change can be ultimately conducted in reciprocally cognitive relations with other selves. (PhS §670-671; Pippin 1989, 160)

In sublation the thing becomes “other”, however so, that its identity with what it was “before” is preserved. This is what the Hegelian *negation of negation* is basically about. The first determination (first negation) of the thing actually denotes the thing as basically existent and something particular *to its thinker*. Without the first negation, the thinker could not think of the thing to start with. The first negation does not, however, only see a thing to exist, instead, it also includes a theory of the thing. It looks at the thing from a point of view, rendering it a determinate something. It includes it as a part of a “interpretative universe” in which such aspects as what is inside of the thing and outside of it become determined. Thus, Hegel’s “negation” has very little in common with the “negation” used either in traditional or in modern logic. First, like in traditional and unlike in modern logic, Hegel’s negation is attached to objects rather than to sentences or judgments. Second, for Hegel, negation is always connected to determination: if somebody is a woman, she is not a man. Third, in Hegel’s works, negation often denotes an *act*: “negation” means that an acting subject is “negating” something through its deeds or thoughts. The first determination must be preserved, because the very existence of the thing as something particular (for its thinker) depends on it. The first negation must be preserved, while any change (second negation) takes place, if the change is to be *of the same thing*. Thus, if we form a new view about what it is to be a “woman”, it has to contain parts of the old conception of “woman” in order to be, basically, a conception of “woman” and not a conception of something else. In this way Hegel’s notion of dialectical negation of negation shares fundamental similarity of how Aristotle conceived of *change*.

The interpretative universe *as which* the thing is conceptualized, has become larger and more internally varied in sublation, as something other has become a related (constitutive) part of it. The conceptual construction, concept, as which the thing exists (for its thinker) has become more complex, yet, its particularity as a unified whole has not vanished. The *two thoughts of thing*, from which it results as *a third* (after sublation) exist as a particular, determinate synthesis, so that neither one of the thoughts refutes the other. As such the result can be identified as a particular thing. (Taylor 1975, 146)

However, for Hegel, dialectics, or sublation is not *a method* or a programme. It cannot be said to be “conducted”, or done by anyone. One of the major reasons for this is that the very “thing” (or Being) which dialectical change is necessarily always of, has its own independence in relation to any thinker (self), who would think of using dialectical movement as e.g. a political or a philosophical method. Charles Taylor says about Hegelian sublation:

It is important to stress here that Hegel is not proposing the use of a dialectical “method” or “approach”. If we want to characterize his method we might just as well speak of it as “descriptive”, following Kenley Dove. For his aim is simply to follow the movement in his object of study. The task of the philosopher is “to submerge his freedom in (the content), and let it be moved by its own nature”. If the argument follows a dialectical movement, then this must be in the things themselves, not just in the way we reason about them. (Taylor 1975, 129)

There has been a lot of discussion of what PhS is actually about: whether it tells a

developmental narrative of an individual self-reflection, or, whether it tells a developmental history of the self-reflection of something like the “world-Spirit”. *Spirit* denotes the level of collective thinking and knowing, which actualizes itself as cultures, religions and historical phases. There are elements in PhS of both of these aspects. With Hegel, the individual thinker gains ultimately knowledge of itself only by gaining knowledge of others. And, both the self and the others are situated in something called “world”. With Hegel, there are actually three aspects of thinking and none of them is intended to cancel the others. There are no communities, nor the world-spirit without particular thinkers. Nor are there any particular thinkers without other thinkers and larger contexts of thinking: cultures and historical phases of thinking.

Further, Hegel talks about something called “matter”. Matter denotes the material “thingness” referred to in thinking. There is always a reference, or a pointing to something like objective reality in thinking. With Hegel, “Being” is ultimately conceptual. However, Hegel is not a subjective idealist: he does not think that objective reality is *produced* in our minds so that it would not have its own independence. Being can be potentially known, because it is conceptual, yet, it also preserves its own independent freedom. Importantly, at the level of Absolute knowing, also Being becomes a part of the reciprocally cognitive relationship, which exists between self and Other. As Being becomes a part of the cognitive triplicity of knowing, it is known in a way which can potentially limitlessly enrich itself. (§399-418, 789, 804-808) (this is explained more thoroughly e.g. in chapters 2.3.1-2.3.3)

Pertaining to the very thinking conducted in PhS itself, an interesting and important dialectical process takes place. When the final level of knowing, Absolute knowing, is reached, an important thing happens: the gap between what the book (the storytelling “we” of PhS) knows about “thinking”, and what the particular, subjective thinker (observed in the book) knows about itself, vanishes. The subjective thinker has finally learned the elements of thinking described in the book. In the end, also the point of view of the theoretical and philosophical story-teller of PhS has become a part of the subjective conceptual unity. In the beginning of the story, only the book observes the relationship between “subjective thinking” and the “outside of subjective thinking”, yet, the thinking itself does not see what it is like.

Along the narrative, new conceptual dimensions get added to subjective thinking, as thinking becomes aware of its own inherent structure. This means that these dimensions become particularized and conceptually mediated within subjective thinking. In the end of PhS, there remains nothing which is discussed as *an externality* of subjective thinking. Everything discussed in the book becomes conceptually mediated within the thinking of a particular subject. (Hegel’s theory of the Family and women makes up a troubling exception here, see chapter 2.4)

Basically, two levels of thinking are drawn closer and closer to each other along the dialectics of PhS. Subjective thinking becomes more and more self-reflective, and, abstracting, reflective thinking becomes more historical, more particularly subjective. In the end the philosopher meets its subject of inquiry, a particular subject, which is its own self. Also, a particular subject meets the one who reflects it, the “beyonds” through which it “knows” itself, which is its own self. (PhS §84-86, 797-798)

Besides being a theory of particular subjective thinking, PhS can be seen to present a theory

of something like collective self-reflection and the history of collective self-reflection, collective *Spirit*. Collective self-reflection is initiated by, and it actualizes itself also as an inner conflict. Collectives are structured by internal parts which are dialectically driven into conflict with each other. The internal otherness – i.e. other thinking, knowing and constitution of the objectivity of the mutual whole - is the origin of conflicts. In order to make the parts fit together better, to make up a non-self-contradictory whole, their mutual relations must be mediated differently. And, in order for the mutual relations between the internal parts of a collective to change, the whole “particular universe”, namely the culture as a unity, must be changed. What this actually means is that a collective must change the way it thinks about things. For example, in order for a new mediation between groups to be possible in a situation of inner contradiction, a new collectively shared idea of things like “human”, or “citizen” appears necessary (see Inwood 1983, 274-277).

2.1.3 Self as a construction vs. self as a self-conscious concept

PhS is not only about thinking, but also about knowing. Thinking and knowing are fundamentally inter-related because the things, which knowledge is of, are constructed in thinking into objects of knowledge. Basically, actual “things” exist in thinking as *differentiated*, as *particulars*. Actual things stand in contrast to non-actual, external, abstract things. Often Hegel refers to actual things (i.e. particulars) just by calling them *different*. As differentiated, they exist as *posited*, within a system of differentiations. For Hegel, *every particular is a universal*, which means that the condition for the existence of a particular is a universe, a system larger than the one particular. Particulars never exist alone, externally, yet, they exist as particular instances of something which is universal, i.e. instances of their *genus*. This becomes clear in those parts of PhS where Hegel describes Sense-certainty. Hegel argues that we cannot identify particular objects by using a language which does not contain universal terms. (PhS §90-110) In the overall universe, there exist various genera concerning the categorization and differentiation of plants, animals, humans etc. The overall system functions as a synthesis. The condition of a *thought universe* is a mediating thinker, a self. The self functions as a *third*, a *sylogism*, which relates and differentiates between all the parts, making up the whole. (PhS§119-131; see also chapter 2.1.5.)

Hegel writes in *The Science of Logic*:

...so something at the same time *is* through its limit. It is true that something, in limiting the other, is subjected to being limited itself; but at the same time its limits is, as the ceasing of the other in it, itself only the being of the something; *through the limit something is what it is, and in the limit it has its quality.* ..
(SL, 126)

...the limit which something has relatively to the other is also the limit of the other as a something, its limit whereby it keeps the first something as *its* other apart from it, or is a non-being of that something. (ibid.)

Because thought things are limited, differentiated and related particulars, we always *know* the

things, that we think of, in one way or the other. Thinking about something means that we *limit, determine* the thing. In this way it becomes a particular. Particulars are constructed by their limits, and if any things are particulars *for us*, we know what is in their inside, and what is in their outside. If we can say what a thing is, we can also say what it is not, and what distinguishes it from other things. We cannot think of any things, if these things have not been already constructed as “things” in and as our thought. Thus, whenever we try to acquire knowledge of some thing, we already have knowledge of it, as we already *think* of it. An object of thinking is always a “determinate something”, in one way or the other, hence, there is always already some knowledge of it. If we, for example, set ourselves to acquire knowledge of “woman”, we must already know a great deal about the subject of study. Otherwise we would never come to the thought of attaining knowledge of it. First of all, in order for us to start to gain knowledge of some thing, like woman, we must assert its basic existence. We must assume that “woman” exists. “Woman” must exist (as a particular) for us, or for somebody, in order for us to be able to gain any knowledge of it. If the object in question does not exist for us, it must exist at least for somebody (others), whose knowledge we can relate to, in order for us to be able to think about it. We must be able to somehow relate to it as a particular, even through other thinkers, otherwise we cannot think of it, to start with, as a potential object of knowledge.

For Hegel, thinking is always *of* something. It always points at something, which it particularizes somehow, in order to be able to point at it. Things are always thought as particulars, in some way or the other, because any existent thing (existent as a *thought* thing, for a thinking self) is necessarily a particular. Even abstract entities, say, geometrical forms, are always grasped in terms of particular circles and triangles. Hence, any thinking of something includes always a great deal of particular knowledge and information of the *thought* thing, in one way or the other. For example, some structure of gender-differentiation, and an idea of “human” (in relation to which the gender-differentiation takes place) is included in any basic assumption that “woman” exists. Further, one cannot think of particulars without thinking of universals, i.e. of *genera*. And the other way round: one cannot think of universals without thinking particulars. This seems to exclude the most extreme versions of both nominalism and Platonism. According to those views either universals or particulars are somehow unreal.

Yet, according to Hegel, “a thing” may be constructed as a one-sided, parochial unity. This means that the way a thinker thinks of things, or sees them, does not correspond with *how* things are actually constructed in its thinking, taken its constitutive (related, constructive) parts into consideration. In these cases the thinker ends up in a self-contradictory strife with itself. Some of its thoughts refute others. Hegel presents the “split minds” of Lord and Bondsman, Stoicism, Scepticism, Unhappy Consciousness, Reason etc. as examples of ways to think which are in strife with their own selves. With Unhappy Consciousness, the thinking self denies its own possibility. This kind of thinking self has a notion or theory of subjectivity which becomes refuted through its own thinking. The Unhappy Consciousness thinks of subjects as un-capable of knowing their own subjectivity *in full*, i.e. unable to know their own formation. Yet, this very thought itself claims to know how all subjective knowledge is formed (as a knowledge which cannot know itself fully). This very thought is presented as a universal truth about all subjects, including the subject who thinks in this way. It universalizes (fully) its notion of subjects as un-capable of knowing their own formations fully. Hence, its own thought constitutes a denial of its own theory. In reference to this truth, Unhappy

Consciousness can oppose any *other* attempt to know how subjects are formed. *Its theory of subjectivity does not explain how its own subjectivity is possible.*

In these cases thinking is made up of parts which do not speak of a same thing, i.e. parts which do not construct a conceptually mediated synthesis. Thinking is dualist: it is constructed of unrelated thoughts which constitute their own self-relational universes (e.g. the worlds of the “Lord” and the “Bondsman”) and thus do not constitute a common universe. (This is explained e.g. later in chapter 2.2.6). In PhS the dialectics goes basically so that subjective thinking proceeds to form such a theory, or, philosophy of itself, which explains its own possibility. This is reached by actual self-consciousness, reciprocal cognitive relationships between free self-consciousnesses.

To avoid self-contradictory conflicts, thinking needs to become *self-conscious*. This means, for example, that thinking becomes conscious of *how* the world which it sees relates to its own thinking of it. For example, when “pure self-consciousness” (as e.g. Unhappy Consciousness) becomes self-conscious, it realizes that its own possibility depends on there being external “Bondsmen” (metaphorically) into whom it has projected its (own, internal) moment of “dependency”. It realizes that its own thinking is split into two unrelated thoughts, each one refuting the other. On the other hand, there is the context-dependent thought of subjectivity (Bondsman as merely particular; as “immediate”), and on the other hand there is the universal truth of subjectivity (Lord, as merely universal, set dualistically “beyond” the Bondsman). (It should be noted here that I interpret Hegel’s section on Lord and Bondsman in the same way as e.g. Charles Taylor, who sees that this dualist doubleness may exist in one mind). (see PhS e.g. §178-218,231-239; Taylor 1975 152-161)

In PhS, the strive for freedom means, among other things, that a thinker strives to become conscious of *how* the things, which it thinks and knows (including itself as an object) are formed *for itself*. In order for the thinker to become aware of the system, *as which* things exist for it, it must render this system known. In other words, it needs still a “larger” system of knowing, an internally interpreting system, to know its system of knowing. Within this larger whole, it knows itself as a part of it. Yet, in order for it to know itself as a part, it must also know the other parts of this system. If it does not differentiate its own system of knowing from the other systems of knowing, it cannot know the construction of its (own) thinking as *differentiated*. Hence, it needs to know what its *genus* is, to be able to differentiate itself and particularize itself from other instances of the genus. The genus, which it is to find in PhS, is *a free self-consciousness*. The thinking self cannot become conscious of its inside, its self, as a differentiated inside, without rendering it a particular inside. Rendering its inside as something particular (limited) takes necessarily place by rendering its outside (other free self-consciousnesses as other complex systems of thinking) as something particular. Thus, to know itself, it must know its outside. Knowing the outside takes place, as all knowing does for Hegel, by *relating*.

PhS is largely a theory of how this *relating* develops. Basically, a thing comes into existence - in this theory of how things appear for a self-consciousness who is always a limited subject - by becoming a differentiated, limited, particular something. Things exist as differentiated particulars for a self. They exist in so far as they are limited, in short, they exist through their limits. This takes place by a thing being related to other, different particulars *internally*, within a uniting whole. The whole, where things exist as particulars is an internally

differentiating, interpreting whole. Further, these constructions (internally differentiating wholes) come into existence *as particulars* by becoming related to other, different constructions. In order for the constructions to be “different”, i.e. differentiable from each other, they must be similar in the sense of being instances of the same genus. In other words, internally differentiating wholes become existent through each others. In PhS, *free thinking* (i.e. self-conscious, dialectical, “speculating” thinking) is a construction which is to find itself as something existent through its finding other (different yet similar) constructions. A free self can appear to itself (i.e. become phenomenological) through a free other which it manages to see as different from itself. If a free self can limit (particularize, differentiate) itself through a free other, it can appear to itself as something actual. In other words, a free self finds itself in another free self; a free self exists for a free self. (PhS §177-180) This specific type of existing as a “different” being - i.e. being different from internally differentiating “complex objects”, from other free self-consciousnesses - pertains to the themes of “self-conscious thirdness”, “Spirit”, “dialectics” and “speculation” which are discussed later.

It appears as crucially important for Hegel to theorize what kind of a “larger whole” makes *free* self-knowing possible. For Hegel, a self is a dynamic thinker, a thinker who can “move” dialectically and speculatively within its own thinking. In other words, self can go beyond, outside of itself (through relating with its contradicting other) internally. A thinking self is free. As such, the self can go over its limits by itself, hence, it is an absolute and an un-limited being. Self is not (internally) stable. Yet, how can this self know itself, as all thinking and knowing is of “somethings”, of limited objects. The “larger whole”, which renders self-knowing ultimately possible, cannot be an ordinary, particular universe, by which the ordinary thinking (for Hegel, “Consciousness as Understanding” denotes the ordinary way of thinking) identifies *stable* (external, “non-complex”) particulars (see chapter 2.2.1.). For the self is not just one particular element among the others, like a table or a plant. Self as a *free* concept which can mediate between contradictory and alien elements must be thought to exist within a whole, within which not only its particularity (internal limits) but also its freedom (its capability of “self-negation” and self-differentiation) becomes recognized. Self is able to go beyond the limits of a particular universe (context of knowing) by its own conceptual capacities. No particular universe can ultimately explain it, because it can move beyond its limits. What it is depends partly on how it describes itself. Thus, it cannot be described or pointed out like ordinary objects. (PhS §187,197)

Self can see itself as a unified whole (as a whole with limits) only if it can see itself from another viewpoint. Metaphorically speaking, it needs a mirror in order to see itself. This can happen only if the view-point itself (namely, the Other) is formed alike the self. Thus, if the basic identity of a self is freedom and internal conceptual speculation this “identity” becomes seen, as it is, when it is looked at from the view-point of a similar being. A free being is seen (for itself) as a free being when it looks at itself from the view-point of another, similar free being. In other words, a free being requires the structure of “reciprocal recognition” in order to be seen, as it is, by itself. In the dialectical process described in PhS, the self realizes how it is formed when it acknowledges another free self-consciousness. Importantly, neither can the self or the Other be free if they are not identified as particular members of a larger whole (the theme of the “larger whole” is discussed also in 2.3.1-2.3.3). The Other, as a view-point onto self, must be free, yet, conceptually identifiable as a particular something. It must be another particular instance of the same *genus*. If it cannot be identifiable as similar yet also differentiated from the self, it constitutes an undifferentiated sameness with self, and cannot

function as such a point of view onto self, by which the self can see itself as free yet also as something particular. If a self is to see itself, i.e. to *identify* itself as a particular something, it needs to determine its genus and differentiate itself from the Other in terms of this universal genus. There is no “God’s viewpoint” available, only a viewpoint of another, similar but distinct self. Ultimately, self as a self-conscious concept serves as such a genus, which allows for freedom as well as for identification and particularization. It constitutes an entity which is both a self-determining (free, independent) whole, yet, a particular, because there is more than one of its kind.

If self is understood as a construction, including parts like “self as a context-dependent thinker” and “self as not completely limited by any particular context ” and “self as a historical construction”, yet, as not a unity of these moments, its moments are rendered externally related thoughts. If self is thought of as “multiply constituted”, yet, if these multiple parts are not unified into a synthesis of self (i.e. self as a conceptual unity), this multiplicity becomes a fragmented set of thoughts external to each others. (see e.g. PhS §207-208). The parts are not kept together as internal parts *of a something*. The parts are detached from each other, and consequently the self, which the parts were suppose to be of, becomes itself a void. For Hegel, this is actually what takes place as *pure self-consciousness*, in Enlightenment, Kantian thinking, discussed further. The pure self-consciousness constitutes a “pure I”, or “pure, abstract genus”, which cannot relate its parts into itself.

Along PhS, an important difference is made between *mere constructions* and *constructions as unities (concepts)*. This difference shows itself as the difference between *selves as conceptual*, and, *selves as self-conscious concepts*. A non-self-conscious construction consists of externally related thoughts. This kind of construction is actually also a concept, but because it lacks self-consciousness of its aspects belonging to it as its “own” aspects, it is not aware of this. This means that it sees all or some of its conceptual parts (i.e. its own thoughts of the world, itself, other selves etc.) as external, non-subjective reality. For example, a thinking subject may see that there is some kind of unknown otherness (a God, super-natural forces etc.), and an intentionality which is other than its own and which affects it from outside of itself.

The differentiation between, on the other hand, internally, self-consciously *mediated* things (thoughts) and, on the other hand, *immediate* things (thoughts) pertains to what was said above about mere constructions and concepts. When something is mediated as a part of a self as a concept, it is *posited* (limited, particularized) and thus rendered such a part, which gives room for other parts, or, thoughts of some “thing”, to exist. If, on the other hand, something is thought, yet not mediated as a part of a larger conceptual whole, it is seen as immediate. Immediate things (thoughts) appear as non-conceptual, non-subjective objectivity for their thinker.

It is important to note that for Hegel self is *always* a concept (unity). This means, for example, that it always includes a universal truth (a reflective self-knowledge) of itself and of things in general. Its unity can take the form of a denial of the unity (as is more thoroughly discussed later, e.g. in chapter 2.2.7). Nevertheless, self always unifies its parts into a unity and into a universal truth, whether it is itself conscious of how it conducts this, or not. (discussed more in chapters dealing with questions of “otherness”, see e.g. 2.2.3)

In PhS, subjective thinking is depicted as an actively conceptualizing (synthesizing, unifying, mediating) system, which relates its own moments together in its thinking. One of its conceptual moments is “a particular universe”, which Hegel also calls a consciousness as Understanding. Thus, self includes, as one of its conceptual moments, a systemic consciousness of particular things (including itself as an object for itself). Yet, there is also other moments to self as a concept. Self includes various types of *mutually* contradicting beyonds. The conceptual moments (like e.g. the moments of dependence and independence) may constitute external, non-mediated beyonds for each others (as is the case in one-sidedly recognitive thinking, see ch. 2.2.4). In PhS, self always looks upon its own historical particularity, in one way or the other, from beyond it and situates it in a larger interpretative whole. This larger whole can be e.g. a religion. In much of religious thought (at least as religious thought is depicted in PhS) self tackles a unity between itself as a particular, temporal being and God as the constitutive beyond. Self gives an explanation, i.e. a contextualization, to the particular reality which appears to it by looking at it from the point of view of a moment beyond it, i.e. God. Self also unites its own practical intentionality and the intentionality of the other (God) into a synthesis. If this self is not conscious that the “other intentionality” (of God) is an internal part of its own thinking, it may give the role of the uniting “third”, namely, the mediation (the ministering between its own conceptual parts) to an external “priest”. An external mediator is given the role of uniting the intentions of the constitutive beyond/Other (God) with the self’s intentions as a human. (PhS §227-228)

2.1.4. Conflicts inside unities

What takes place dialectically in PhS is that thinkers keep constantly realizing that things are not what they seem to be. Thinkers realize over again that the way reality appears, or the way things *are*, is in contradiction with things “as a whole”, i.e. with how things are constructed, or constituted as a relational unity, a concept. Things proving not to be what they seem to be appears as the motivating force behind the dialectical movement in PhS.

Contradictions are an essential part of the Hegelian dialectics, as was explained in the previous chapter. In fact there is no dialectics without contradictions. Ideally, Hegelian contradictions, and dialectics, are about movement *in unity*. Hegel does not in any way try to get rid of contradictions, nor does he think that it would be possible. Contradictions take necessarily place because of the existence of *free other thinking*, i.e. *free otherness*. The Other is always free to challenge the views of the thinking self.

Most people tend to reject the idea that “the world itself” would contain contradictions. *Descriptions* of an object may be contradictory, not the object itself. However, it should be remembered that, for Hegel, the object *is* the totality or synthesis of all its possible descriptions. We, particular and limited beings, are bound to produce mutually contradictory descriptions when trying to describe an object. If we argue that, from God’s point of view, the object would not appear as contradictory, Hegel’s reply is that we do not really understand how things would look from God’s viewpoint, and so the argument is unintelligible. Any subjective thinking has to posit a particular, limited view on the thing, and hence, it is apt to be in contradiction with other ways of seeing the thing.

Also, the “matter itself ” constitutes its own independence in contrast to how matter, or nature, is constituted in any particular subjective thinking. Matter, substance, is a kind of a free, self-resisting otherness, if only for the fact that it appears as impossible to give a satisfiable account of things like death - a particular description which would satisfy us, permanently. Death (as well as e.g. fatal sicknesses, or, ecological catastrophes) hold on to their own truths *of us*, and function as limits to us, not only as bodies but also as subjective thinkers. We encounter the fact that thinking is not free from its corporeality. Because of the un-deniability of our fate as natural beings, there constantly remains a puzzling, free otherness of Being, which keeps over again contradicting with our (at some given time) particular knowledge of it. (PhS e.g. §175-176,186-191)

Charles Taylor explains the basic motivating power behind the dialectics in PhS in his book *Hegel* (1975). According to Taylor, the starting point in PhS is the knowing subject. Hegelian consciousness is bi-polar: it is consciousness *of* something. Thoughts are *of* something. The thoughts of a thinking subject are also, in one way or the other, *knowledge claims*. A particular thinking subject claims that some particular “things” exist out there. It claims their existence by the sheer seeing of their existence. Yet, when compared with the ideal purpose that these particulars are supposed to meet, they appear as in-sufficient, self-contradictory. Their actual particular existence does not correspond with the standard, or purpose, “their universal ontological truth” which they are supposed to correspond with. The clash between their self-idea and their effective reality is the motor of the dialectic. (Taylor 1975, 128- 136)

As Taylor notes, Hegelian ontological dialectics involves *three* terms. The “third term” is the system of internal differentiation and relation, *as which* we try to realize our conceptions of what things should be like. We try to construct a living reality according to our notions of what things should truly be like. We have, in our minds, also two other terms, firstly, “things”, and, secondly, the standard which things are suppose to correspond with, and which could be seen as our theory of things. Hence, we try to construct an actual reality (a third term) as which things (first term) are what they should be like (second term). The contradiction actualizes itself at the level of the third term, or, as the third term itself. We see that the given standard is not met (at the level of the third term) in our present attempt to realize it (ibid.)

These three terms play active roles in Hegelian dialectics, both historical and ontological. The dialectics involves three terms: the present particular state of things, the ideal or standard against which the present state becomes measured, and, the larger, higher context, as which things correspond better with what they ought to be. In dialectics, the present state of things becomes confronted with a “pressing argument” (i.e. such kind of otherness, which is acknowledged by us as a pressing argument as concerns how things ought to be) and synthesized (germ. “aufgehoben”, i.e. sublated) with it into a new third term. The third term can then, dialectically, become again the first term, measured against some pressing argument (a standard, seen through otherness) and dialectics may proceed like this.

Yet, how is this otherness actually experienced as such a pressing argument, which contradicts subjects “theory of the world”? Why is it not just read from the view-point of the subjects own theory of the world? Why is the thinker *unsatisfied*? Taylor argues that the “argument”, which contradicts a knowledge-claim, inheres in the knowledge-claim itself, or,

actually in the concept, a part of which the knowledge-claim is. The concept is the self, a thinker, which finds a satisfactory “theory” of itself only when it is able to relate, as a concept, to a *free* other.

For Hegel, contradictions make the thinking self move, i.e. change and become different (other through sublation) in relation to what it was before. As the self comes across of a pressing argument, which comes from a contradicting other (i.e other which is Other) it moves, i.e. it changes (sublates, dialectically) its world-view, including its idea of itself. There has been a lot of discussion on how to think of the relation and the movement between self and Other especially in Hegel’s realm of free self-consciousness (which denotes the state of a conceptual unity between Self, Other, and Being). As is explained in the chapter 3, on Kojève, there are various influential interpretations of what the movement between the thinking self and its otherness is in Hegel’s realm of free self-consciousness and the actual State, which is its objectivization. One influential line of interpretation is the one identified with Alexandre Kojève. Kojève saw free self-consciousness as a realm of individuality, disappearance of differences and as an end of history. A few famous 20th century French thinkers (such as Sartre and Foucault) have been influenced by Kojève’s interpretation of Hegel, which has led them to reject Hegel, at least as concerns the state of self-conscious Spirit.

Another line of interpretation, that of e.g. Charles Taylor and some contemporary theorists doing Hegel-linked research on the theme of social ontology and reciprocal recognition (e.g. Heikki Ikäheimo), emphasize that in Hegel’s realm of free self-consciousness (which is a realm of reciprocal recognition between self and Other) dialectics and critical mutual influencing (or history, for that matter) does not end. In contrast, movement between self and Other is enhanced, because the selves (through recognition) take each others view-points seriously and allow themselves to be influenced and changed by each others. This is the line of interpretation which is supported also in this study. Nevertheless, by reciprocal recognition, a certain type of movement can be seen to end as it turns into another kind of movement (in the narrative of PhS). In the realm of free and actual self-consciousness, movement is different than in the phases preceding it, when the movement takes the form of a self-contradictory movement. In the realm of self-conscious Spirit as reciprocal recognition, movement is not self-contradictory (i.e. simple negation), instead, it takes the form of dialectics (as *Aufhebung*, or in other words “negation of negation”). As has been explained in this and previous chapters (and also in 2.2.7; 2.3.1-2.3.2), movement as a self-contradictory movement is turned into a contradictory movement (dialectics as *Aufhebung*) gradually along the PhS. Self as its own internal mediator (as a third) acts as the agent, by which the self-contradictory movement is turned into an internally mediated movement between the self and Other. Self as a third is discussed in the next chapter and also in 2.2.8. and 2.2.11

2.1.5. Self as a Third

For Hegel, the third (or middle term, or synthesis) is what “self” is actually about; it denotes the thinking system as a contradictory process yet also as a conceptually mediating synthesis (see e.g. PhS §223-235, §789-794). Thinking includes contradicting elements (elements which are, in a way, “other” to each other) and as such it denotes the thinking self as

ultimately a *speculative Spirit* (see chapter 2.3). Hegelian “speculative” thinking denotes thinking as capable of mediating contradictory thoughts and things into syntheses with each other (as was explained in the previous chapter).

Michael Inwood explains in *Hegel Dictionary* (1995) that “speculative” thinking unifies apparently opposed and distinct thoughts and things together by a Hegelian “sublative” dialectics. In Hegel’s subject-theory “speculation” and “dialectics” thus imply each other. Inwood writes about this:

In a wide sense, Hegel’s dialectic involves three steps: 1) One or more concepts or categories are taken as fixed, sharply defined and distinct from each other. This is the stage of UNDERSTANDING . 2) When we reflect on such categories, one or more contradictions emerge in them. This the stage of dialectic proper, or of dialectical or negative REASON. 3) The result of this dialectic is a new, higher category, which embraces the earlier categories and resolves the contradiction involved in them. This is the stage of SPECULATION or positive reason (). Hegel suggests that this new category is a “unity of opposites”. (Inwood 1995, 82)

Inwood writes further about Hegel’s idea of “speculation”:

In contrast to the analytical UNDERSTANDING, it is akin to the poetic IMAGINATION and to mysticism, but it differs from them in that it is conceptual and presupposes the work of understanding. It is at odds with the Dogmatismus of pre-Kantian metaphysics, which insists on applying only one of a pair of contrasting predicates to objects, insisting, e.g., that the world is *either* FINITE or INFINITE, and cannot be both. Speculative thought, by contrast, unifies the two concepts, and thus regards the world as both finite and infinite”; ...”*Spekulation*, Hegel insists, is not merely subjective: it SUBLATES the opposition between subjectivity and objectivity, along with other oppositions. (Inwood 1995, 272)

Hegel calls Self a *syillogism* by which any two (or more) parts are “judged” to be related with each other. Why a “syillogism”? Hegel discusses at length on syillogisms in SL as well as in *Enc I (Minor Logic)*. For him, a “syillogism” is not just a form of inference; rather syillogisms (of a certain form) reflect the basic structure of thinking and (therefore) of the world. Thus, he says in *Enc I* that every living being is a system of “syillogisms” (§217), and that the state is “a system of three syillogisms” (§ 198; this theme is developed further in PR). Without going to details, Hegel’s idea may, perhaps be illustrated by a classical form of syillogism:

All Greeks are mortal.
Socrates is a Greek.
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

In this type of syillogism, a singular individual (“Socrates”) is related to a universal (“mortal”) through a particular middle term (“Greek”). What is common for all things called by Hegel as

“syllogisms” is that *individuality and universality are united in them through particularity*. In his lecture-notes for the introduction courses in philosophy (*Philosophical Propedeutics*) Hegel presents the bare bones of his doctrine of syllogisms:

[48] In the Judgement two moments of the Concept are directly connected with each other; the Syllogism contains their mediation or ground. *In it two determinations are linked together by a third which is their unity*.

[49] The two linked determinations are the Extremes (*termini extremi*), the determination linking them is their Middle Term (*terminus medius*).

[50] The Middle Term subsumes under Individuality and is subsumed under Universality.

[51] Since the Universal subsumes under it the Particular, but the Particular subsumes under it the Individual, so too does the Universal subsume under it the Individual and the former is the Predicate of the latter. Or, conversely, since the Individual contains within itself the determination of the Particular but the Particular contains within itself the determination of the Universal, the individual thus also contains within itself the Universal. (*Phil. Prop.*, 72; the first emphasis added)

Arguably, this is also the role of the self. It is the “third” which links together the universal and individual aspects of thinking.

Hegel never forgets to emphasize in his texts that any thought thing - as a structure, made of parts, of which some are in contradiction with some others - exists *for self*. Hegel calls the *internal movement*, by which the thinking self constructs thoughts into “things”, also as *speculative Spirit*. As a speculative and a dialectical Spirit, thinking constructs things out of contradictory parts (thoughts) which are “other” or possibly “alien” to each other (as will be later explained when Hegel’s idea of “otherness” is discussed).

Basically, for Hegel, any relational “dyads” (e.g. epistemological subject-object-relations) exist for a third, for a mediating self. This mediating self deals with contradicting thoughts, yet, it is always a historical, particular subject who constructs a historical, particular “thingness” (a “world”) in its thinking. The “subject” is thus somewhat the same as a “particular theory” or actually an on-going theorizing activity. It is an internally differentiating system of meaning-giving, or “an interpretative field” on the basis of which it “produces” a world for itself, self-relationally. (PhS §130-139; Inwood 1995,136-139)

Hegel’s basic criticism against Kant pertains to the idea of “thirdness”. As was previously said, in Hegel the “third” denotes the level of thinking which Hegel calls as “Spirit”, capable of “speculative” thinking in which thoughts which are “other” (and as such contradictory and possibly also alien to each other) can be conceptually mediated with each other. According to Hegel, Kant had two thoughts of “a thing”, and because these two thoughts were “other” to each other, the Kantian thing turned into a self-contradiction and an impossibility. The thought of “thing for us” (“thing as known to particular subjects”) and “thing in itself” (the independent aspect of a thing, or, the “beyond” of any particular description of a thing) both

pertain to a thing. This applies to the Kantian subject itself. It is divided into the “noumenal” or “transcendental” and the “empirical” self. According to Hegel, the ground mistake of Kant was not to realize that both of the thoughts were included into the conceptual construction of what a thing was *for Kant* (as a third). As Hegel explains in PhS (§85-86) the “thing in itself” exists also for a consciousness. By definition, Kant cannot observe the “thing itself”, but he can think of it and infer its existence. According to Hegel, Kant did not understand that he himself acted as a third, a uniting self, who made up an alien relation between the two parts by which he thought of “a thing”. For Hegel, an alien relation is a unity, a synthesis, even that it is a self-refuting unity. Also self-contradictory unities exist for selves, as thirds. According to Hegel, Kant did not realize that his distinction between “thing for us” and “thing in itself” was a conceptually constructed alien relation, a duality, that existed for itself (i.e. for Kant). Hegel argued that the parts, through which Kant thought of the thing, were related to each other in an alien way in Kant’s thinking, making up a Lord-Bondsman-relation (discussed further as the pure self-consciousness, see e.g. 2.2.6)

One aspect of a Kantian “thing” is that it is *thought* as independent from any particular subjective description given of it. As such, a thing is thought not only as “thing for us” yet, it is also thought as an independent “thing in itself”. Both of these thoughts are of the (some specific) thing, which is thought of. For Hegel, the Kantian *thought* of the thing as independent refutes the other thought of the thing, namely the thought of the thing as dependent on its particular thinker (“thing for us”). For Hegel, the result of this alien relation (by which a thingness in general, and consequently also any specific thing is thought) is that the Kantian thing turned into a self-refuting contradiction. It consisted of thoughts which refuted each other. Hegel’s view can, perhaps, be illustrated in the following way. In introductory texts, Kant’s distinction between “thing for us” and “thing in itself” is often presented with the help of a figure like this:

transcendental self ⇔ empirical self ⇔ thing for us ⇔ thing in itself

“The transcendental subject” is the active observer which synthesizes observations into knowledge, “the empirical self” is the medium of observation (the one which may, for example, have a bad eyesight, or be deceived by an illusion), “the thing for us” is the object as perceived by the self while “the thing in itself” remains outside all observation but nevertheless produces the observable properties. Hegel’s critical point is this: we cannot grasp Kant’s distinctions without the thinking of this kind of figure which shows the thing itself lying behind the appearances. But the figure is drawn from a perspective which, according to Kant, is impossible (from the viewpoint of God, so to speak). The relationships depicted in the figure are, according to Kant, necessarily beyond our knowledge.

According to Hegel, the Kantian thing became fragmented into externally related, atomistic thoughts. Consequently a thing, which would include both of these thoughts in it, turned into an impossibility. This is a good example of what Hegel calls as a self-contradiction. The Kantian self could not include both of the thoughts, through which it thought of itself, within itself, and thus, the result is two *external* things, instead of a one thing which would mediate both of these thoughts as its “own” *internal* aspects. Importantly, each of the thoughts relates also, in a way, to separate selves. The Kantian (Enlightenment) mind is fragmented into two minds, which are alien to each other. These two minds are metaphorized, basically, by Hegel as the figures of Lord and Bondsman. Because this mind cannot relate its internal thoughts

with each other and make them acknowledge the existence of each other, the result is an external, dualist relation, an alien relation (discussed further in chapter 2.2.4)

Ultimately, to be able to make the two thoughts of itself relate to one self, instead of relating them to two separate atomistic selves, external to each other, self must unite together two descriptions of itself. These descriptions seem, at least initially, to describe somewhat very different selves. “Self as dependent” (i.e. self as a Bondsman - as having a particular identity, which is dependent on there existing a universal genus, “larger” than self itself) and “self as independent” (self as independent from any specific particular generalizing description given of it) must be able to be united as descriptions of a same self. Ultimately, these descriptions are to be rendered as internal aspects of a same thing, as well. For Hegel, a thing, as a thought thing, relates to its thinker.

For Hegel, these two thoughts can be united into a self when self finds *free self-consciousness* as its universal *genus*. In PhS self gradually finds out that any thinker is a free self-consciousness. Being a free self-consciousness is thus something universal. As a free self-consciousness, it is not the only one of its kind, yet, a particular instance of its genus. The two thoughts of “independence” and “dependence” (metaphorized often as Lord and Bondsman) by Hegel, are included into the thinking of each free self-consciousness. Ideally, the relationship between independence and dependence is not the one between Lord and Bondsman. The relationship between Lord and Bondsman is an external, not an internal relation. The level of actual self-consciousness (chapter 2.2.11) discusses how independence and dependence are mediated as parts of a self as a self-conscious concept.

Each particular free self-consciousness includes these two thoughts of itself in itself, in one way or the other. The way free self-consciousnesses relate to each others takes place, ideally, by way of considering each others as thinkers, who determine themselves within their own selves. As such they recognize each others as *internally negating* (self-grounding) subjects, instead of considering them as ordinary objects. (PhS §175-177).

External relation exists between thoughts which are of some thing (like sexuality etc.) and which are thought by the same thinker, but which have not been identified by their thinker as its “own”. This is due to thinking’s being always conceptual and contradictory, whether the thinker itself is conscious of this or not. If the thinker does not identify its thoughts as its own thoughts, and mediate them as particular parts of its own particular conceptual system, the thoughts may refute the existence of each other. This is what happened, according to Hegel, with the Kantian thoughts of “thing for us” and “thing in itself”.

Internal relation, or a self-conscious relation exists between thoughts which have been mediated conceptually with each other. The thoughts are particularized by “returning them back” to their particular thinker. They are identified by their thinker as internal to its own thinking. As such they are conceptually related to each other and seen as particular thoughts of a particular thinker. The thoughts make up a particular, historical conceptual whole. Thoughts which would otherwise constitute, taken individually just by themselves, their own individual universes, can be particularized (and turned into a particular concept) by identifying them as the thoughts of a particular thinker.

Externally related thoughts exist as fragmented and atomistic in the thinking of their thinker.

They exclude each others – and, in a way, deny the existence of each others - because they constitute their own all-encompassing individual universes. Each one of them claims to “possess” the thing in question fully. They do not allow room for other thoughts of the same thing, i.e. they cannot allow the thing, or any aspect of the thing, be possessed by any other thought. Nor can they share the possession of the thing with each others. Their mutual relation could be described also so that there is an *absolute difference* between them. In contrast, internally mediated thoughts recognize the relevance of other thoughts, concerning the thing which they are of. There exists a conceptual, or a conceptually mediated relation between them, in the thinking system of their thinker. This recognition takes place so that the thoughts are limited, particularized, through each others, hence allowing for the existence of each others as relevant aspects of the thing in question. Or actually, the conceptually thinking self, in the thinking of whom these thoughts exist, is conscious of the fact that it thinks of some thing on the basis of these various thoughts. It acknowledges that the thing in question is a conceptual construction, made of these different thoughts, or aspects.

For example, a thinker may become conscious that it thinks of “sexuality” from *other* points of views, not only its “own” point of view. The other point of view may be ascribed to God, to some other authority like a teacher, or to a friend etc. A thinker may also become conscious that it is possible to think of sexuality as an abstract category, “independently” from any particular contents. Also, a thinker may observe sexuality historically and see that it has had various particular contents, depending on the situation and time. A thinker may realize that its view on sexuality is related to all these viewpoints. As it becomes conscious of its various thoughts of sexuality, it can become more conscious of how they affect each other and constitute each other. Further, a thinker may realize that its own notion of sexuality is a construction, gathered together from these various aspects and thoughts. This notion may be dynamic and even troublesome, as it may include aspects which do not fit together easily. Nevertheless, this notion, even with its mutually contradicting aspects can be seen to be of a specific, particular thing, sexuality, which can be differentiated (for its thinker) from other things, like e.g. from friendship, love, or compassion. It can be seen as a historical and a particular construction, as it is nevertheless thought by some particular self in some particular time and place.

A thinker may comprehend that things (like sexuality) exist *in the form of mutually “other” thoughts* (in parts, or moments, of which some contradict others) not only for itself, but for other selves as well. Further, it may move towards reciprocally recognitive relationships by acknowledging the other selves as capable of acknowledging, that the mutually contradicting aspects (concerning a thing like sexuality) all provide valid knowledge of sexuality. As such, a thinker may be able to allow *free* other thinking concerning sexuality.

The “thirdness”, or the nature of the thinker as a mediator between contradicting thoughts or moments can either remain unknown (external, abstract) for the thinker itself (as is the case e.g. when thinking is dominated by “consciousness as Understanding”, as well as in the case of the abstract, “split minds”, such as Unhappy Consciousness). Or, it can become known to the thinker itself, as is the case in *actual self-consciousness* (see e.g. chapter 2.2.11.) (PhS §799)

Especially in the beginning of PhS the self-mediation assumes undeveloped forms. It takes the form of externally related thoughts. The early forms of mediation are seen as undeveloped

because the thinking subject lacks reflectivity and cannot see its thoughts as its own. It is not aware of its conceptual capacities. Consequently, its conceptual parts may exist as an external reality to it. Further, the thinker may think that there is an “other knower” or an “other knowing” beyond its own knowing (like e.g. a god, “fate”, “spirits of the dead” etc.). It may project some of its own thoughts (of the world, itself and other people) into this “beyond”. At the undeveloped stages the thinker does not find these “beyonds” and “other knowings” as its own conceptual moments, i.e. as its own capacity to contradict some thoughts through others or to move “beyond” some thoughts into the realm of other thoughts. (see e.g. PhS §143-148, §204-205, §227-230) Further, a thinker may think that the other thinking exerts power on it, i.e. that the other is somehow related to it. Yet, it does not identify the other thinking or the other intentionality as its own conceptual moment, a moment of itself.

The early forms of self-mediation (between selves own thinking and the “beyond” or, other thinking) are undeveloped; hence, the beyond is an arbitrary power. A thinking subject may believe that somewhere “out there”, in the minds of “noble classes” or “in the kingdom of gods” etc. there is a creature/creatures who know *more* about things, or who know the universal truth about everything. Thinking posits the thought (“the universal truth”) internal to itself into this beyond. The beyond is un-reachable because the thinker does not see it as its own beyond, i.e. related to itself as a self-relational thinker. The universal truth about the subject is seen to lie outside of the particular subjects own resources of thinking and knowing. The subject thinks that the beyond (which Hegel calls at times also by the somewhat Kantian term (thing) “in itself”, see e.g. PhS §544-545) contains timeless secrets of it, which the subject cannot grasp by its own limited thinking. Yet, the thought of the subjects incapability to reach the beyond, or, the “in itself” takes place as its own thought. (ibid.)

2.1.6. Phenomenology. Idealism. Things presented in thought as constructions

For Hegel concepts - and selves as concepts - are *ideas* and *ideal*. This means that the world, which appears “out there” is constituted conceptually for its thinker, or seer. For Hegel, thinking is fundamentally *phenomenological*. The something, which thinking is of, *appears* to its thinker as objective reality. This world is differentiated internally (for its “looker”, who is always not only a looker but also a thinker) according to its thinkers system of thinking. A thinking self thinks of particular things, and it sees “out there” the things it thinks. Because there exists particularities in thinking, a thinker can see particularities “out there”.

The basic idea of *idealism* is that a thinking mind presents things to itself on the basis of itself, self-relationally. It reads the reality on the basis of its own thinking system as an interpretative key. “That thing out there” takes place as a construction in thinking. Things appear always as particulars to the thinker. The way things appear as particular objects is however just one dimension of them as concepts. For Hegel, the way things appear is constituted by a “larger” conceptual whole, reaching outside of any specific temporal and contextual particular appearance. Any particular appearance of things is a moment of a larger conceptual whole, which is, importantly, contradictory. In this sense, concepts are actualized, on the other hand, as a particular objectivity (i.e. as a particular, internally differentiated world “out there”) and, on the other hand, as a conceptually changeable objectivity.

In a way, the Hegelian self is a *language*, according to which, as always a particular language, it reads the world. The real, appearing world is always something particular, read on the basis of a particular interpretative scheme, “language”. Yet, the aspect of reading and seeing things “out there” on the basis of a particular language is just one moment of the thinking self *as an internally contradictory concept*. It denotes the part of *Consciousness as Understanding* and the part of “labouring particular objects”. However, it is important to emphasize that for Hegel Consciousness as Understanding does not disappear at any level of conceptual thinking. It becomes in a way “aufgehoben”, i.e. sublated, cancelled yet preserved at all levels of thinking, also at the stage of “absolute” knowing and the ideal state. (see e.g. Hutchings 2003, 41; Ikäheimo 2000, 85)

Importantly, according to Hegel, self needs to become conscious of itself as a concept, including also other parts than itself as a particular (not contradictory) language. Hegel saw that Kant and the Enlightenment thinking realized, quite rightly, that the self is a particular language, and that there is something else about the self and things than what a language can say, as any language is a particular language. However, Hegel saw that because Enlightenment thinking did not actually go further this thought, i.e. that there is something like “thing in itself” which no particular “thing for us” can describe or relate to in an ordinary way, this thinking ended into abstract formalism. If “thing in itself” is thought to be an epistemologically relevant part of things yet thought as “beyond” the knowledge of particular thinking subjects, this thinking turns things into empty abstractions. If something is thought as a *constitutive* part of things, yet seen as something which cannot be known as a particular “something”, the thinking which thinks like this ends up into one version of the system of Lordship and Bondage. Things fail to appear as particulars to this thinker, except through an “enslaved” bondsman. This thinker splits internally, dualistically, along the lines of Lordship and Bondage to be able to see particular reality, i.e. to “labour actual material particularity” for itself. The questions of the failing appearance of things (i.e. failing performativity, to use Butler’s terminology) are important questions as concerns this study. They are discussed further in connection with Butler’s theory of performativity in chapters 4.1.6.- 4.1.8

Hegel analyzes in PhS a type of thinking, in which e.g. thoughts like “movement of things” and “otherness of things” are formulated. For Hegel, if things are thought as “constituted by their beyonds” or as “changing in time” so that these thoughts are not thought self-consciously (namely, as particular parts of a conceptual whole), thinking is self-contradictory. Hegel discusses this kind of thinking throughout PhS, for example in the Introduction. Hegel sees that *for this kind of thinking* the world as something real and particular, vanishes. Particular world vanishes (for this thinking) because particularity is seen as constituted by aspects which are not particular. Because the non-particular aspects of the world are not seen as internally, self-consciously related with the particular world, the non-particular aspects constitute an external, non-subjective “truth” of the world. According to Hegel, it is important that we relate all the aspects, namely all the thoughts, through which we think of the world, to our conceptual thinking of them. All aspects through which we think of the world and ourselves, yet, which we do not particularize and relate to our own thinking of them, are seen as external reality by us. Non-particular thoughts of the world appear in various ways for their thinker, depending on the level of the development of self-consciousness. They may appear as “magical, super-natural, aspects of reality. Or, they may appear as the Enlightenment abstractivity, which sees things as *instrumental* (see chapter 2.2.7)

2.1.7. Subjective thinker and its philosophy

Hegel conducts, along PhS, a differentiation as to what the thinking self knows about itself and the world and what “we” or “us” know about the thinking and about the world. Hegel makes a differentiation between how the subject (observed in the book) thinks of things and how the world appears to it, and how the ones observing the subject (“we”) see things. For example, in §394 (at the developmental stage of the Enlightenment reason) Hegel points out that now the self-consciousness has itself realized that it is a self-consciousness, whereas before this state of things was known only by *us*. He writes:

Self-consciousness has now grasped the Notion of itself which, to begin with, was only our Notion of it, viz. that in its certainty of itself it is all reality; (PhS §394)

Comments like this, relating and comparing the thinking self (observed by the “we” of the text) and the “we” take frequently place along PhS. Interestingly, the subject (observed by “us”) develops dialectically so that in the end the gap between the subject and “us” disappears. The subject knows as much about itself as the readers of PhS.

In the beginning of PhS, only “we” (the philosophical text of PhS itself) see that all thinking relates to self, and that there is also an outside, otherness to all thinking. Only “we” see, for most part of the text, that the “otherness” is internal to all selves. Yet, the subjective thinking *itself*, observed by “us”, is not aware of this. First, the outside of subjective thinking exists only for “us”, not for the subjective thinking itself, observed by “us”. “We” see that the outside affects subjective thinking. The subjective thinking *itself*, especially at the levels of “Sense-certainty” and “Understanding” (explained more thoroughly later) does not see this. As such, the subject thinks of itself and the world in general very differently than “we”. (PhS §794-798)

When the subjective thinking itself (not only “we”) starts to become aware of its *own* (internal) outside, this outside turns from being outside of subjective thinking (and thus existing only in the thinking of “us”) into being inside of subjective thinking. When things become subjective (thought by the subjective thinking, i.e. constructed as objects in subjective thinking) they become, interestingly, known as conceptual “somethings” (limited objects) also *for* “us” (i.e., for the storytelling “we” of PhS). In other words, the internal abstract externality becomes self-consciously, conceptually internal, and as such, particularized, when it is turned from being known only by “us”, into being known also by the subjective thinker. It is very important to see how Hegel displays along PhS that the *outside itself*, or *otherness itself* cannot know itself (its own particularity) until its own Other, namely the particular subject (observed by “us” in PhS) has rendered it as a particular Other for itself.

Particular subjective thinking denotes the object of reflection for “us” (the storytelling “we” of PhS). The philosophical “we” constitutes a specific, transcendental moment of *other thinking* in the structure of PhS, which knows more of the subject than the subject itself, until

the end of PhS. All along PhS the subject (observed by the “we”) is described in relation to its Other. The two sides (subjective, particular thinking and the Other thinking, outside of it) are constantly interpreted and constituted from the point of view of each other. Otherness takes, dialectically, various forms in PhS. It changes as the subject becomes more and more aware of it as a thinking and knowing, which has its own self, similar with the selves own self. Ultimately, they are to acknowledge each others as similar, complex beings, as independent and free self-consciousnesses. As such, they have found their universal *genus* (a free self-consciousness) and identified themselves as particular instances of this genus. When this happens, self-relational thinking has become particularized *for itself*, as it acknowledges the other self-relational thinking as its equal. As such, the two fundamental needs of a thinking self, namely, to be free and to be a particular part of a larger whole, become satisfied. (PhS §223-230)

It appears that the ultimate, or the “last” otherness of PhS takes place as the storytelling “we”. “We” denotes the ultimate “larger thinking”, in which both the subjective thinking and the various “other” thinkings and beyonds are thought along the text. The “we” becomes united with itself (the contradictory self-consciousness) in the end of the book even that, in a way, it is present since the beginning. When this ultimate “sublation” takes place (in this specific historical text, i.e. in PhS) the dualist distinction between the “we” of the book and the “particular subject” disappears. As such, self-reflective thinking becomes an object for itself, because it does not place any epistemological part (in terms of an external “us”) beyond the thinking subjects any more.

Very importantly, the philosophy of the free, self-conscious thinking (which, in a way, is the story of the “we” of the book) which is all along telling the narrative of PhS, cannot know *itself* until the particular subject, which the “we” reflects from its place “beyond”, knows it in a conceptually mediated way. The “sublation” between the “we” (the philosophy of free self-consciousness) and its “own” particular subjectivity takes place by the end of the book. Until the end, the text is divided into a reflecting otherness (the “we”) and the reflected particular, historical subject. Philosophy reflects subjectivity from a view point, which is *itself* for most parts of the book somewhere beyond the observed subject. This is the case e.g. when the otherness takes the form of “unknown natural forces” (at the level of Sense-certainty) or the form of stable, external knowledge (at the level of Consciousness as Understanding), or as abstract philosophy (the Kantian, or, Enlightenment thinking). At these levels the subjective thinking is lead by its beyond, which it considers an external fact. Yet, the ultimate “otherness” in PhS, constantly present as the philosophy of PhS (the storytelling “we”) knows that these various versions of beyond are internal into the subjective thinking of them, even that the subjective thinking itself takes them as external facts or powers. The philosophy of PhS (the “we”) sees that the various beyonds (which denote the enormous conceptual capacity of the thinking subject to move beyond itself inside itself) are all along the subjective thinking self’s own internal beyonds. In a way, PhS tells a story of how the philosophy of the subject renders everything it has so far become conscious of (*of the subject* i.e. of itself) subjective and historical (*for itself*). In the end, the various philosophical beyonds become seen (by the philosophy itself, i.e. by the “us”) to be subjective and historical. (PhS§ 227-231, 794-798).

The point when the “outside” (beyond) starts to transform from being somewhat completely outside of subjective thinking (and thus known only by the storytelling voice of PhS, “we”), into being recognized as constitutive (of itself) also by the subjective thinking itself marks the

stage when the major modern problems concerning self-reflection, namely abstraction, begin. Thinking goes through several stages where it always constitutes only an abstract, external knowledge of itself (i.e. knowledge which is beyond the capacity of the particular subjective thinker). Thinking appears to reduce itself somewhat totally into the moment of the “abstract beyond”. Because it thinks of otherness as an abstract other, and looks at itself from the view-point of this abstract other, it knows itself as an abstraction. As abstract, the otherness is *indifferent*. Importantly, when the otherness is recognized as constitutive of the particular subject *for (by) the particular subject itself*, and thought as beyond the limited capacities of the particular subject *for the particular subject itself* it becomes an “indifferentiating” and an “abstracting” power inside the subjective thinking. Hegel’s solution to this is that he united the “internally differentiated” moment (“thing for us”), and the “indifferent” moment, the indifferent otherness (“thing in itself”) into a self as a concept. For Hegel, the moment of “indifference”, namely the moment of abstraction, is historical, subjective, and particular. It is one of the moments of subjective thinking, to which there is other aspects too (like e.g. particular subjectivity). In PhS, Hegel displays that at times, the conceptual moment of indifference assumes the form of unknown spirits of nature, or unknown gods, and, at more theoretical times, it assumes the form of e.g. the Kantian “thing in itself”.

In a way, Hegel presents in PhS a narrative theory of such a subjective, particular thinking self who is able to think the way Hegel himself does, and write books like PhS. Thus, Hegel solves the “Ishmaelian” problem by explaining his own possibility. He explains where his own thinking has come from: *how* it is what it is. For example, such a theory of a subject which explains everything in terms of powers which are necessarily incomprehensible for the subject itself, cannot explain its own possibility. It cannot explain what kind of a subject can form such a theory of a subject. That kind of thinking is a typical example of what Hegel means by a thinking which is in contradiction with itself. Contemporary philosophers (for example, Habermas), use the term “performative contradiction”. A “performative contradiction” is a speech act whose content is incompatible with the fact that it is performed. Typical Hegelian self-contradictions are performative contradictions rather than just plain inconsistencies. (see on this theme e.g. Hutchings 2003, 40-43; Rosen 1974, 196).

According to my interpretation, not only the concept of recognition or the famous section on the dialectics of Lord and Bondsman, but also the descriptions of various forms of one-sided consciousness found in PhS have a *political relevance*. They depict different forms of scepticism, relativism, and dogmatism. They can be connected with different cultural and political attitudes and with corresponding social forms. The internally contradictory nature of these one-sided forms of consciousness makes their corresponding social forms unstable (and, for Hegel “unreal”). Because of the internal contradictions, these forms of consciousness cannot be generally shared. They represent asymmetric, non-reciprocal, forms of recognition. Hegel argues that only the form of consciousness which is based on universal reciprocal recognition can be stable (i.e. non-self-denying) in this sense.

PhS tells a story of how a self develops to relate to itself and to another self in a more satisfying way i.e. in a more free, reciprocally recognitive, “sharing” way. The levels of the developing self-consciousness have their social base and correspond with how social institutions, laws etc. are constructed. (see Ikäheimo 2003, 69-73). Pippin writes of the Hegelian “institutions’ self-consciousness”:

His idealist argument connects the very possibility of any number of basic institutions with their forms of self-understanding with, peculiar as it is to say, the institutions' self-consciousness. And it is clear that he thinks that such a conditioning self-consciousness introduces a kind of dissatisfaction, or self-negating impetus, into these institutions in ways that cannot be resolved until there is a full "scientific" account by thought of the basic categorical distinctions involved in such self-understanding and an account of the ground of such distinctions, their rationality, at least as defended in Hegel's "self-moving" account. (Pippin 1989, 169)

2.2. The Stages of Consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

2.2.1. Understanding and Conceptual thinking

This chapter with its sub-chapters 2.2.1-2.2.7 discusses the development of thinking and knowing in PhS in detail. It discusses at length especially the way conceptual thinking and knowing can be constructed from externally related thoughts (pure self-consciousness) as well as from conceptually related thoughts (actual self-consciousness). Hegel theorizes how the parts of the basic doubleness are thought in relation to each other at different levels of thinking and knowing. Sometimes the sides are thought as external thoughts, which refute the existence of each other. Yet, as the thinking self becomes gradually more aware of itself as the synthesizer of its internal thoughts, the thoughts become more conceptually and self-consciously mediated with each other. This chapter explicates how the thinking proceeds in becoming conscious of its internal thoughts, and in relating them with each other.

As considers thinking, Hegel speaks of different levels, or forms of thinking, for example of Sense-certainty, Understanding and Conceptual thinking. The most important differences between "thinkings" are between a sensuous level of thinking called Sense-Certainty, the "ordinary", stable thinking called *Understanding*, and the internally mediated, dynamic thinking called *conceptual* thinking. The difference between Understanding and conceptual thinking could be maybe exemplified as the difference between a particular language, and, a construction where a particular language is one moment, together with other moments like abstracting from the particular language, and moving beyond the particular language into otherness, a larger context where the particular language is situated and explained.

Ultimately, in PhS, all these levels of thinking are to be included into self-conscious conceptual thinking. Self-conscious conceptual thinking consists of internally mediated, differentiated and particularized moments. The internal moments, or thoughts, are particularized by being identified as the thoughts of a particular thinker. As parts of a self-conscious concept, they appear as fundamentally different than when they dominate thinking by themselves, alone. PhS depicts a developmental narrative in which different forms of thinking first dominate thinking alone, and then become included in a "larger" thinking.

In the beginning of PhS, Hegel describes a form of thinking which in a way lacks *particular* subjectivity. It is conducted on the basis of what Hegel describes as *pure "I"*. It cannot comprehend particularity, because it does not see itself as a particular. Because its self is (for it) non-particular, the world appears for it as non-particular. The point of view, from which it sees the world, relates to the world it sees, hence, because it does not at this moment see the world from a particular, limited point of view (i.e. from a subject-position), it sees the world as not limited, not differentiated into particular entities. It is an undifferentiating thinking, and cannot grasp things as particulars. As such, thinking is described as *sensuous*. Thinking is not about particular *things*, as it cannot understand things as determinate somethings, posited into their places within any kind of an internally differentiating and relating systemic whole. Instead, it is about sensuous immediacy. Nevertheless, the thinker sees, hears and feels. Hegel talks here about thinking and knowing as *Sense-certainty*. The "thing", that this seeing and hearing is of, is not figured as a particular "something" *for this thinking*. Even that it points at "this" and another "this", it cannot differentiate between "this" and "that", so that they would be particulars *for this thinking*. As such, sensuous thinking is somewhat abstract. Hegel calls the "something", that this thinking is of, as *pure Being, or, Being in general*. The locus of thinking and seeing (pure I) corresponds with what is seen (pure Being). "Pure Being" is not actually any "something" because it is not an internally differentiated whole. (§90-92; §97-99, SL 82-83)

According to M.J.Inwood, sense-certainty in PhS is about immediate awareness of items in our sensory field. Mind picks out particular items in its experience. It picks out "that" or "this", and it is aware of something like "now", denoting experience of temporality. What is seen by the mind does not, however, have determinacy in such a way that the particular items, picked out by the mind, would make up an internally differentiated, circumscribed system of "determinate being". As such, there is no circumscribed "subject", nor no circumscribed "object". At this stage, thoughts do not take place as a whole, or as a system. Thoughts are intimately connected to sensory experiences, even that "token-reflexive" words (or indexicals) like "this" and "that" are used. (Inwood 1983 I, 14, 73,123) Hegel seems to present a linguistic argument: we cannot refer to definite particular things if our language does not contain expressions for universals.

M.J. Inwood writes about the Hegelian stage of sense-certainty:

If I am sense-certain, I survey the sensible world in all its concrete richness without classifying, conceptualizing or selecting, and I attempt to express what I am conscious of by the use of such words as "this", "here", and "now"(ibid.73)

Hegel's sense-certainty may either be conceived as a description of a primitive stage of human thinking, or, then, just as a thought-experiment intended to demonstrate the necessity of universal concepts.

Thinking becomes a thinking of *something* at the level of *Understanding*. This is called by Hegel the "ordinary", or every-day-life-way of thinking. As said earlier, this thinking can be seen as a particular language. It reads the world on the basis of its internally differentiated and particularized system which resembles the structure of some particular language. It thinks about particular things. It looks at the world as an internally differentiated whole. Yet, it does not relate the particulars which it sees to its own thinking of them. As such, thinking has a

subject, yet, it lacks a subject who is aware of its subjectivity as being related to its own self-relational particular language. Things are particular, but their particularity is not seen by this thinker itself to be related to *particular universality*. Particulars are posited through a reference to universality, yet, the universality is understood as the only universality there is. Consequently, this thinker sees its own “language” as the external reality. As such the a priori given universal is understood as timeless, unchangeable, non-subjective. (PhS §120-131)

Understanding “reads” the world on the basis of a *stable* construction. Every “thing” is its own position amongst a *closed* system of positions. Things become basically identifiable by being differentiated from each other by their relational positions within the system. Also the thinkers own self is a stable position, with its stable identity. The system of Understanding is its own universe, a meaningful unity. It is a *particular universe*, yet, Understanding *itself* does not see its own particularity. (PhS §133)

For Understanding things are always, timelessly and universally as they (now) appear to it. Understanding sees a stable, universal world, and anything which contradicts with its picture of the world is considered as a perversion from the right, natural way, or maybe a sin. If somebody sees the world differently, it is not “different” but “false”, or “sinful”. Understanding lacks a reflective attitude towards itself, namely, self-consciousness, which means that it does not see that its own way of thinking is a particular, self-relational way of thinking.

For Hegel, *conceptual thinking* is a higher or more encompassing level of thinking than Sense-certainty and Understanding, because it includes both of them into itself and thus goes beyond them. It reaches beyond the “particular language” of Understanding, as one of its internal thoughts is abstraction from particularities. It includes a moment of abstraction within itself. It also includes some idea of “other thinking” in itself.

Abstraction from particular contents is necessary in order for any conceptual thought or self-reflective thought to take place. However, for Hegel in PhS, abstraction is also a key to various self-contradictions which can be made whenever reflective thinking takes place. These “errors”, inhering in many ways in the very faculty of abstraction, can take place at various levels of the dialectics in PhS. Every step “forward” in dialectics is conducted by abstracting from the old one, the old or actually present level of thinking. Every step is a possibility towards a larger context of thinking and knowing. By coming into contact with “something new”, the old context can be enlarged. In order to reach this larger context, an act of stepping aside from the totality of the old one must take place. However, at the moment of abstraction, there is a possibility to stop there, at the level of abstraction. Thinking can stop at the level of “pure self-reflection”, namely external self-reflection, called by Hegel as *pure self-consciousness*. When this kind of stopping takes place, the earlier level of thinking and knowing becomes contextualized in an *abstract context*. The earlier form of thinking is looked at, reflected upon, from an abstract (*indifferent, non-particular, external*) point of view, instead of being reflected from a particular, different other point of view. As such, an external, abstract beyond becomes a locus (or a genus) for self-reflection.

As concerns Consciousness as Understanding, it may end up being contextualized in an abstract context, by pure self-consciousness. It can become a “Bondsman”, a “labourer” *for pure self-consciousness*, because it can “produce” the particularities which the pure self-

consciousness is unable to produce itself. The only way for the pure self-consciousness to be in contact with particularity is through an *external other thinking* (an external Bondsman, who labours for it), depicted by Hegel in PhS as the dialectics between Lord and Bondsman, the thinking of Unhappy Consciousness and Reason etc.

In the above cases (Unhappy Consciousness etc.), according to Hegel, a leap into the early forms of thinking takes place, denoted by “Sense-certainty”, originating in pure “I”. Or, actually, the thinking splits into two parts, the other one resembling Sense-certainty, and the other one resembling the particular thinking, denoted by Consciousness as Understanding. When a thinker thinks *of* things by these two externally related parts, it splits into two thoughts, between which *an absolute dialectical unrest occurs*. This dialectics is a kind of movement, yet, nothing actually moves along this movement. (PhS §203-208) (this is explained further in chapter 2.2.6). A seemingly “higher” level of thinking, one with a long history of development behind it, does not surprisingly automatically protect the thinker from the possibility of regressing into self-contradictory ways of thinking, at least for some time. Hence, the succession of various forms of self-consciousness presented in PhS cannot be interpreted as a linear historical development. Our contemporaries can be “stoics”, “sceptics” and so on.

In order to avoid the moment of abstractivity from becoming a limitless, total context of thinking, abstractivity should be particularized. It should be identified as a *particular moment* of abstraction, related to the particularity from which it is abstracted. For Hegel, any abstraction relates to its particular thinker and to the other conceptual parts of its thinker. In this sense, any moment of abstraction relates to the particular thing, from which it is abstracted, as well as to the history and “otherness” of this particular thing. (PhS §79-80)

Abstraction is one important moment in the Hegelian idea of self-reflection, inherent in conceptual thinking. However, ideally, it becomes *a self-consciously mediated moment* within self. As particularized, and thus limited, it becomes a limited abstraction, instead of being unlimited and borderless. As such, it does not render the other thoughts of self similar with it. It keeps within its limits. It denotes, in a way, the first step in the act of self-reflection, the initiative stepping outside of the self’s particular (present, or old) view-point. It denotes the moment when we realize that “things could be maybe thought differently”. Yet, when things are *actually* thought *differently*, the other point of view cannot be an external abstraction. External abstractions cannot be actual other points of views. For Hegel, an actual other point of view is found in another self-consciousness. (ibid., §190)

For Hegel, if self or things are looked at from an indifferent “other point of view”, things and self become indifferent. The look of an indifferent other is *indifferentiating*. It indifferentiates its object. It turns its object into a non-particular object, i.e. an abstraction. Actual other view-point to things (i.e. a viewpoint which is more than a mere abstraction) is taken by a particular Other. Abstraction remains an important moment, yet, in *self-conscious* conceptual thinking it becomes a mediated, particularized moment in thinking. Here, a difference between conceptual thinking and self-conscious conceptual thinking is a crucial one. Thinking is always conceptual, yet, only self-conscious thinking identifies its conceptual parts as belonging to its own thinking of them. Self-conscious thinking can return its conceptual parts (thoughts) to itself and thus recognize them as subjective, instead of seeing them as non-subjective external reality.

In Hegel's view, things are never necessarily or "naturally" beyond our cognitive powers. Hegel actually criticises Kant and Enlightenment thinking for thinking in this way about things. For them, certain things (Kant's "thing in itself") are hidden from the consciousness. They must, then, be determined by unknown powers, resembling the unknown natural forces which govern the primitive and un-conceptualized world of "Sense-certainty". The thinker, who thinks this contingent movement, does not *itself* bring the two sides of itself together, namely the sides of "particular thinking" and "Sense-certainty" (pure "I"), yet, moves continuously between these two poles.

A self-conscious conceptual thinker is able to realize that the "beyond", which affects the stable world, seen by Consciousness as Understanding, is another moment within its own (conceptual) thinking. In *self-conscious* conceptual thinking the role of the self as an active mediator (a third, a minister) between its internal thoughts is fundamental. Self practices internally mediated thinking within itself, as a unity, concept. Here, "Concept" is in a way a synonym to "self", "third" and "mediator". The important idea is that the self can recognize its role as a mediator.

2.2.2. The singularity, doubleness and triplicity of knowing.

In the last chapter the faculty of thinking was explicated. To repeat the basic idea, thinking cannot be separated from knowing. Nevertheless, in this sub-chapter knowing is given a special focus. Hegel speaks of *Consciousness*, *Self-consciousness*, *Reason*, *Spirit* and absolute *knowing*. In PhS thinking and knowing always entail each other. M.J. Inwood writes:

It is true that on Hegel's account conceptual and, more generally, cognitive systems are, at least to a high degree, self-developing and self-determining. The determinate nature of those systems which are known to us or of their parts is guaranteed by their internal relationships or by the relationships of the parts to each other. The concept of causality, for example, is what it is in virtue of its position in a system of concepts, its logical relationship to other concepts. Again, perception in the *Phenomenology* – the view of the world as consisting of things with properties – owes its determinate character, in part at least, to its historical and/or rational relationships to other forms of consciousness. (Inwood 1983, 123-124)

In PhS, as considers not only thinking but also knowing, Hegel addresses first the stage of *Sense-certainty*. Sense-certainty denotes faculties like "seeing" and "hearing", as was already explicated before when thinking was discussed. Sense-certainty sees that something exists, yet, it is frustrated by its own incapacity of actually explicating what exists. Sense-certainty denotes a *singular, abstract* knowing.

The phase of sense-certainty gives way to *Consciousness*, which is in a more adequate way a consciousness of *something determinate*. Consciousness, as a type of knowing, relates to

Understanding, as a type of thinking. Further, by the emergence of *self-consciousness*, a self-reflective turn is made. Self-consciousness is always a consciousness of *other consciousness*, or other knowing, besides being a consciousness of the selves own consciousness. When a consciousness takes itself (its own consciousness) as its object, it must relate it, objectify it in relation to something similar with it. Consciousness of *other knowing* (i.e. another consciousness, outside of consciousnesses own consciousness, yet similar with it) is thus a necessary part of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is a consciousness of things as *double*. It includes a thought of its own knowing of things and a thought of other knowing of things. (PhS §147-150)

Hegel's view may be explicated in terms of the traditional trilemma of justified knowledge. First, consciousness takes itself as an object. Thus, it is doubled: there is the object of knowledge, the self, and the knowing subject, the self-consciousness. However, the self-consciousness can *itself* become a further object of knowledge (as it is, for example, in Hegel's philosophy); then, a higher form of self-consciousness has to be postulated. Because consciousness is free, it can also take this higher form of self-consciousness as its object, and so on. There is an infinite regress, in Hegel's terms, a "bad infinite". Logically, there are only three possibilities. The regress may go on infinitely, it may be halted in a dogmatic and arbitrary way (for example, when a religious or scientific authority just pronounces "the ultimate truth"), or it may form some kind of *circle*. Hegel chooses the last possibility. There is no endless regress but a mutual, symmetrical relationship between two consciousnesses which can reflect each other.

By the notion of *the play of Forces* Hegel explains why and how Consciousness as Understanding is pushed to (conceptually) step beyond its stable world. (§135-139) There emerges something which contradicts the stable reality seen by Consciousness as Understanding. There emerges an inner pull beyond the closed language on the basis of which Consciousness reads the world. This "something else" cannot be explained from the point of view, or contained by the system of differentiations, of the stable Consciousness as Understanding. Consciousness realizes that things do not universally and timelessly correspond with its categorizations. Consciousness e.g. sees that things can be "wrong", that they can be "out" of their natural categories. For example, the sexuality of some people may be "wrong". Consciousness sees that things do not always correspond with what it thought to be their universal nature. For example, people act against their stable, universal, God-ordained nature. They worship false gods. Consciousness may refute the otherness as wrong or sinful, however, it is nevertheless troubled by the thought that maybe the otherness may include *valid* knowledge of the world. It is also troubled by the thought that there is an Other who is in contradiction to it, an Other, who does not recognize the universal validity of its own (correct, rational) idea of the world. The freedom of the Other troubles the consciousness (however, what in fact troubles this consciousness is its own freedom *in the Other*). What is needed now is a way to relate with the "something else", with the "beyond" of the universal, stable system of Consciousness as Understanding.

Thinking needs an explanation of the beyond, namely, the world or people which are beyond its own stable world. Yet, importantly, it also strives to maintain itself, i.e. its stability and unity. Because "things" are basically identified (as particulars) on the basis of Consciousness as Understanding, the stable, unified consciousness must be somehow preserved. If things are not thought as determined particulars, they cannot be thought at all, because thinking is

always *of some thing*. Consciousness has to use some system of categorization or “conceptual scheme”, however imperfect or unsatisfactory it might be. However, there nevertheless is this beyond, which the thinking is enthralled with and which threatens its stability. It needs to explain the beyond while at the same time maintaining its capacity to identify stable objects. If the thinking does not explain the beyond conceptually (internally), thinking remains externally/dualistically split between these two levels or forms: itself and its beyond/Other. It remains split between consciousness of particularity (Consciousness as Understanding) and the consciousness of the consciousness of particularity (Self-consciousness). Only in Absolute knowing these two levels finally meet. (explained further in chapter 2.2.11) (PhS §135-150,161-165; Taylor 1975, 128-135)

By starting to acknowledge the Other as some sort of an “inner pull”, or, as a “pressing argument” (i.e. by starting to acknowledge the Other as a valid Other) consciousness starts to be *for itself* what it is *in itself*, namely, a self-relational system of thinking. Further, self starts to become aware of its own *free* self-relationality by becoming conscious of free, other self-relationality. It starts to see self-relationality also outside of itself. Self-relationality *as such* (as a genus) begins to be objectified when thinking reflects one self-relationality from the view-point of something similar with it. A reflective turn towards self-relationality takes place. Before this self-reflective turn, the self’s own self-relational world appeared as external reality for consciousness. Now, the external world starts to be seen as internal to the consciousness of it. Consequently, there is a drastic change in what appears as external for consciousness. “The world of another thinker”, namely, a world which exists for other self-relational thinking, takes over the place of what appears as external, or, what is thought as outside of self. Importantly, externality, or outside of self, starts to reflect the consciousness back to itself. Another self-relational world reflects another self-relational world. (PhS §175-177)

Thirdly, a thinking self starts to develop an idea of what is later to be known as “shared knowing”, “Being for Self and for Other”, or “reciprocally constituted objectivity”. Self realizes that there is “other worlds”, which, importantly, not just exist there, completely outside of its own world, but which affect its own self-relational world. A thinking self starts to see that its own consciousness and the other, contradicting consciousness are *of a same thing*. By *thinking* that these worlds are basically thoughts of a same thing, the thinking self sets a conceptually constitutive relation between them. If they were not of a same thing, they could not affect each other, but instead, they would exist as atomistic contexts of thinking and knowing. If these two (or more) pieces of knowledge were not of a same thing, there could be no idea of the *internal* doubleness of “thing”, or internal doubleness of a subjective thinking. Internal doubleness of things and subjects is constituted as the relation between selves own consciousness of a thing and the other/s consciousness of a thing.

External doubleness takes place between two atomistic thoughts. In contrast to external doubleness, an idea of internal doubleness starts to develop (at least in Hegel’s narrative in PhS) when thinking becomes frustrated by the self-contradiction of external doubleness. By starting to become aware of the *internal* doubleness a self-consciousness starts to think of things *in parts*. The particularity and actuality of “thing” is preserved, even if the knowing of a thing is constituted as a shared knowledge between the self and the Other. The other part of the doubleness of shared knowing is the thinking self’s own consciousness of things and the other part is the other consciousness of things. The third, necessary part in this relation of

“partly knowing” is the thing itself, which unites the knowledge of the self and the Other. The thing must have its own independence, otherwise it can not serve as the point where the two viewpoints meet. If it were completely “produced” by an individual consciousness of it, the self and the Other would constitute atomistic consciousnesses, each producing its own “thing”, not related to each other. (PhS §163-165)

The independence of things is constituted along the way when self-consciousness develops into actual self-consciousness and finds itself in the other free self-consciousness. When self finds its own independent thirdness, and the equal thirdness of the other, the “thing” as its own third is constituted at the same time.

In this chapter I have explicated the basic idea of the Hegelian triplicity of knowing. This idea is more thoroughly discussed in the following sub-chapters (in this chapter on Hegel) which discuss the development towards *self-conscious self-relationality*, namely, towards the triplicity of knowing. It is important to note that for Hegel thinking is always fully self-relational, yet, when thinking is *self-consciously* self-relational, it can go over the limits of its own self-relationality. Self-conscious self-relationality is reached when a self recognizes another thinking as its equal. By recognizing others as its equals, self can become free from the limits of its knowledge.

Basically, self-relationality of knowing means that consciousness of things is always self-relational and thus singular: it is its own universe. When we understand that more than one thinker practices self-relational knowing, self-relationality becomes thought as plural. It takes place within the thinking of more than one self. This marks the entrance into self-consciousness, and into the doubleness of knowing. Doubleness, namely, self-consciousness of knowing may first assume the form of pure self-consciousness. Yet, pure self-consciousness is made unhappy by its own internal self-contradictoriness, and hence pushed to develop into actual self-consciousness. When thinking reaches *actual* self-consciousness, and the level of shared knowing (in reciprocally cognitive relationships) thinking becomes *for itself* what it is *in itself*. Hegel uses here, basically, the Kantian terminology and distinction between “thing for us” and “thing in itself”. Hegel’s intention was to theorize a form of knowing which would unite the two aspects separated by Kant (which Hegel discusses as pure self-consciousness). The two forms of knowledge separated by Kant are called by Hegel as Consciousness as Understanding (which sees things as particulars) and Self-Consciousness. In order to unite or mediate the two parts, Hegel developed an idea of *self as a concept*. (Kant, in his *Prolegomena* (§46) says explicitly that “I” or “self” is *not* a concept, but only a name for the unknown object of the internal sense.)

For Hegel, the uniting of the two ways to know a “thing” takes place within conceptual thought, a self as a concept. In order to do this, each self had to be developed into its own “thirdness”, into a thinker who “ministers” between the internal moments of its conceptual whole. Self as a *conceptually, self-consciously self-relational whole* is its own universe, as all thinking is. Yet, it can move beyond its particular limits (beyond its moment of “thing for us”), as well as beyond its abstract limits within itself.

2.2.3. Other thinking and knowing

Otherness, i.e. other thinking, other knowing, other practical intentionality and other constitution of objective reality constitutes the “other side” of the famous Hegelian doubleness. PhS depicts a narrative of how this other realm, (which is called by a somewhat general name as *otherness* or *Other* in this study), relates to, and is constitutive of subjective thinking.

For Hegel, thinking and knowing of the world, as well as the constitution of objectivity, is always self-relational. Yet, the self, to whom it relates to, is a particular self. Universal thinking, knowing and constitution of objectivity relates not only to one self but also to other selves. Self-relational universality is an internal part of the thinking of everybody who practices *double thinking*, i.e. thinking which constitutes particularity in reference to universality. The double-thinking selves must - in order to know the world not only as related to themselves but also related to other double-thinking selves - know their own universal thinking as particular universal thinking. Each self practices universal thinking and knowing, i.e. internally double knowing. Thus, the effort to particularize universality is the effort to particularize the internal doubleness. The effort to know the other as a particular self-relational universe is, for Hegel, the effort to know ones self as a particular self-relational universe.

The Hegelian effort - to particularize universal self-relationality and to go over ones own self-relationality – corresponds closely to Judith Butler’s effort to become conscious of the self-relationality of thinking and to go over it. As is explained in the chapter on Butler, she bases her theory on a basically similar doubleness, internal to subjective thinking and knowing as Hegel does, i.e. the internal, constitutive relation between a subject-position and its constitutive outside. Butler introduces the politics of “going beyond ones self” (the “ek-static” politics) as a way of going beyond the limits of ones own self-relational universe and reaching for the “un-limitedness of thinking and knowing”. The Hegelian solution to the same problem is *reciprocal recognition between free self-consciousnesses*.

With Hegel, a subject can go over the limits of its own self-relational knowing, when it acknowledges the existence of other self-relational universes and starts to communicate with them on a reciprocal basis. Yet, before this can happen, the subject must explore the depths of its own universe, and become frustrated by the extent of its own self-relationality. Subject goes as far as to claim *all knowing* of the world as suspect, because it feels, unhappily, that there is no way for it to go beyond knowledge, which would not always turn out to be its own, parochial knowledge, or the parochial knowledge of somebody else. Thus, it explores the whole universe, only to find itself - or other parochial subjects – in every place it goes. It does not find any *independent* object anywhere, only subjectively conceived objects. Every object it finds, relates to itself or to other selves. (PhS §173-175)

Thinking finds itself, finally, also *in and as* an unknown universe - as an unknown object. Even if it tries to free the object from parochial subjectivity, by claiming it to remain subjectively unknown, it finds even this thought as a self-relational thought. Subject realizes that if it claims the universe as an unknown universe, even this un-knowability relates to its own thinking of it. Thus, first, subject finds that all particular knowledge of the world is self-

relational, and then secondly, it finds that also all its doubts and critical views about particular forms of knowledge are self-relational. The subject recognizes that even the all-encompassing forms of scepticism or relativism are just particular, historically conditioned viewpoints. Thus, all knowledge concerning both of the sides of its internal doubleness (particularity and universality) turn out to be completely and fully self-relational.

Everything which is thought or perceived by the self seems to be *dependent on*, not independent of the self (including its own self as an object for itself). This frustrates the self, because it feels that if it cannot look at itself as a part of a larger universe, free from parochial self-relationality, it cannot know who it is. Knowledge which refers back to itself does not satisfy it. It desires independent knowledge of itself and the world. Self needs to differentiate between its particular inside, its content and its outside. Yet, in order for it to have any inside, it must have an outside. In fact, there has to be a particular outside in order for there to be a particular inside. An abstract, limitless outside renders its inside similar, abstract and limitless. Only a determinate particular outside renders its own self a particular something.

If everything is internal to self, everything is external to self. Here Hegel's elaboration on *Being* and *non-Being* may be useful. If everything there is depends on its being thought by me, or perceived by me, felt by me, experienced by me, I may feel that I am the most powerful creature in the world - I am actually a God, an ultimate performative power who has created the world. Yet, according to Hegel, if everything is dependent on the self, the self remains equally dependent. (PhS §191-192) Self needs to meet something which exists independently, outside of its own will and its own self-relational thoughts, in order to understand its own thoughts. Thus, in order for a self to be independent it needs to meet an independent object. For Hegel, *another self-consciousness* is this kind of an independent object. Objects which are not their own double-thinking universes cannot be such independent objects which would constitute the independence of self. The object must be able to resist the self, to be able to constitute its own independence, to be an object which is a subject. A self can determine - and simultaneously negate - all self-less objects. A self can turn them into mere objects for itself. Self can find its limits only when it confronts a self-determining object. Only by mirroring itself in this kind of object, the self can see itself as an independent subject. Thus, self finds its limit in another universally negating power. Objects which exist for Other - which exist as thought, seen, experienced and determined by Other - constitute a realm which exists independently of the self. (PhS §169-172) To use a historical analogy, in Descartes' philosophy only the existence of a benevolent God guarantees that the self's beliefs about the external world are not based on an illusion and imagination. God saves the knowing subject from the universal scepticism. In Hegel, the presence of other selves performs, in a sense, the same task. An essentially similar view was, before Hegel, presented by J.G. Fichte in his *Grundlage der Naturrechts (Foundations of Natural Right, 1796-1797)*. In the first chapter of his work, Fichte argues that a rational being cannot be self-conscious without positing an independent world, inhabited by other rational beings who limit its activity (on Fichte and his influence on Hegel, see Williams 1992).

For Hegel, an independent, internally differentiated universe, which exists for the Other, can resist the universalizing power of the self. Because the Other is a similar universalizing, performative power, it constitutes also a means for the particularization and objectivation of itself. By this kind of similar Other, self can find its genus as an independent, free self-consciousness and become conscious of itself as a particular instance of this genus. As

universalizing performative powers, i.e. as thinkers which negate a Being within themselves, they are similar yet also differentiable from each other. In the Phenomenology –section of *Encyclopaedia*, Hegel gives a vivid description of the confrontation between the self and the Other:

In this determination lies the tremendous contradiction that, on the one hand, the 'I' is wholly universal, absolutely pervasive, and interrupted by no limit, is the universal essence common to all men, the two mutually related selves therefore constituting one identity, constituting, so to speak, one light; and yet, on the other hand, they are also two selves rigidly and unyieldingly confronting each other, existing as a reflection-into-self, as absolutely distinct from and impenetrable by the other. (Enc III, §430, Zusatz)

Hegel points out the fundamental source of the contradiction: the Other appears as another, different and “impenetrable” *for the very reason* that it is, unlike all the other, “ordinary” objects, *similar* to the self. It is similar, because it also sees itself as the centre of its own universe, its “owner”, because it also is a self-determining being with its own viewpoint.

Importantly, when selves, reciprocally, find their limits in each others' freedom and independence, the third element, the substance or nature, is able to gain its own independence too. In the Hegelian triplicity of knowing, i.e. *Being for Self and for Other*, nature or substance is not dependent on one thinker for its existence. It is not an object, dependent on a (one) subject. It is not determined and known by one self. Instead, it is thought to exist for self and for another self. An independence of Being becomes conceptually constituted, because the two selves are independent from each other, yet so that their knowledge is *of the same Being*. The independence of any part of the triplicity becomes conceptually constituted in the same fashion. In order for the self, other self and Being not to be fragmented into externally related thoughts, each part of the triplicity must be independent. None of the parts is determined only as a relation between two, but instead as a relation between three. A relation between two, i.e. the basic subject-object-relation is typical for Consciousness as Understanding. As such, the other side (subject) sees the other side (object) as the stable external reality. A doubleness, which is not self-consciously *thought* to be mediated by a third constitutes the stagnated structure of Consciousness as Understanding.

Hegel thinks that only if we think that Being can be potentially known as an internally differentiated whole - i.e. that there can be a subjective, particular knowledge of it - can the systems of thinking of self and Other be related to each other. Self and Other can be *thought* to affect each other, or to use power on each other, only if they are thought as conceptually related to each other. They can be *thought* to agree, to disagree, be opposed, or criticise each other *on something*, if there is the ground assumption that the unifying substance exists. In short, they must be thought to be made of same substance. Thus, an independent substance (nature, materiality) must be assumed, otherwise the self-relational universes cannot be *thought* to relate to each other in any way. (see PhS §15-23)

In the dialectics of PhS, after the subject has found itself as *absolutely* any object it thinks - including the non-Being and nothingness it thinks, literally, *as absolute thinking and knowing*, it can finally allow for the existence of an independent, free Other. It sees that it cannot find its own self, independently, within its own universalizing thoughts. It realizes that

it can find an actual outside to its own self-relational world only in what an Other thinks of the world. An independent constitution of objectivity exists (independent from the objectivity of self) for another self-consciousness. A self can particularize and limit its own absolute only by another absolute, *by the acknowledgement* of another free self-consciousness. By relating *reciprocally* with the thinking and knowledge of Others, as Other absolutes, its own thinking can reach beyond its own absolute depths. Something like a *shared absolute* (absolute knowing which takes place through reciprocal recognition) can be reached. The shared absolute can potentially endlessly enrich itself, as there are always other particular absolute thinkers who can enrich it (see chapter 2.3)

The Hegelian narrative in PhS is largely inspired by the Enlightenment thinking and the Kantian subject-theory. The division between “thing for us” and “thing in itself” is developed famously in the thought of Kant. For Kant, *thing for us* denotes a “thingness” (a world) as a particular thingness, known to subjects. *Thing for us* is a world, a Being in general, as it is known to us as an identifiable object to our particular subjective knowledge. *Thing for us* thus corresponds with what Hegel calls as Consciousness as Understanding. *Thing in itself* denotes a thingness as not known to us. *Thing in itself* cannot be an identifiable, particular object for particular subjects. Thus, the way to cope with *thing in itself* is that it must just be thought to exist, even that it cannot be known to exist as a particular object of knowledge. However, Kant’s basic distinction generates several problems. According to it a knowing subject is always confronted by phenomena. The “thing in itself” remains unknown, but it is nevertheless the cause and origin of the observed phenomena. Suppose that two knowing subjects disagree about the properties of a thing (for example, one sees it as green and the other sees it as red). Thus, there are two different “things for them” (a green one and a red one). What guarantees that behind the appearances there exists *one* thing on which they disagree? Hegel’s view can, among other things, be seen as an attempt to solve this problem.

According to Kant, it is important that we think that there is such aspect of thingness as *the thing in itself*. In order for us not to be limited by parochial, limited subjective descriptions, we should keep in mind that we can never know everything about the things we perceive. Further, Kant’s idea of universal *reason* is based on an idea of “bracketing off” the realm of phenomena or of things for us. Subjective, particular reasoning about what is good for humans, and what the laws should be, should be bracketed. In order for us to take everybody into account - when we make laws for everybody, not only for us – we should bracket all the contingent aspects of the world. This bracketing is conducted, basically, by the same faculty of thinking, *transcendental faculty*, by which we are able to keep in mind the realm of *thing in itself*. Universal reason is supposed not to be limited by parochial subjective understanding. By transcendental Kant refers to the inherent capacity of thinking to take a distance to itself. Thinking can take a reflective distance towards its own and other parochial subjectivity, to rise above it. Transcendental capacity is thus the prerequisite for the Kantian universal law. Universal law is a law which is constituted *for all* and which binds all. Universal law binds all by virtue of their rationality only. If there are other rational beings besides humans, they are also bound by the universal law.

Several basic “moments” of subjective thinking, found in Hegel’s subject-theory, are based on the Kantian categories or moments. Also, the Kantian transcendental rising above particular subjectivity is found in Hegel’s subject-theory, as the moment of abstraction.

2.2.4. *Other thinking from the point of view of Desire: Unspeakable humanity*

Hegel discusses at length in PhS the question of unspeakable humanity and the unspeakable outside of rational subjectivity. For Hegel, *other thinking, knowing and ideality of the world* can be rendered unspeakable, and it very often is. In PhS Hegel sees various ways in which this does happen. Actually, some sort of an unspeakable humanity (or abstract, external humanity) is always a part of thinking until the thinking is able to acknowledge free and independent thinking (free self-consciousness) as the identity or the nature of its own thinking and as the identity of the thinking of others. As said before, for Hegel, other thinking always mirrors the self of thinking: the way other thinking is thought of corresponds with how the thinking itself is structured. Thinking always sees itself in and as the other thinking, even if the thinking itself is not always aware of this. For Hegel, every thought thing corresponds with the structure of thinking of the one who thinks it. The *thought* object and the thinking subject are thus, in this way, identical. Also, when we think of other thinking, we think it on the basis of how our own thinking is constructed. Other thinking does not only exist “out there”, it exists *for us*.

“Other thinking” is a grand theme for Hegel. With Hegel, other thinking can be internally related to because it is fundamentally similar with the selves own thinking. In fact, any thinking is other thinking as every thinking constitutes the other, or the outside, *for its other*. Every self is an Other, as not only is one’s Other contradictory for oneself but also oneself is contradictory for one’s Other. In PhS, the dialectics concerning otherness starts well before other thinking is thought of either in the Kantian way (the Enlightenment thought) or as the Hegelian ideal of free, yet rationally known Other. In the beginning of PhS, the subject sees other thinking as an external “other world”, as the realm of gods and supernatural powers. In the beginning of PhS the Other denotes a somewhat blurred realm of arbitrary powers (for the consciousness, as e.g. “sense-certainty”) which the subject thinks of as supernatural forces, affecting it from “beyond” it. It relates to other thinking so that it thinks that the “ways of god”, or “the unknown activities of metaphysical forces” affect itself, other subjects and the whole world *externally*. (PhS §138-144).

Importantly, the subject thinks that in the realm of other thinking, there are various other thinking beings, not only one. There exist not only right and good “other thinking” but also malign and evil forms of other thinking. There are good and evil gods, spirits and other powers. People and their thoughts are seen to be driven by good or evil powers, and to contradictory directions, often at the same time. Gods, or other powers are seen as intentional actors who often work through individuals. Individuals can become even totally possessed or led, by other thinking; even individuals themselves may see their thoughts and actions not as their own. Thus, the powers, gods etc. are thought of as related parts of the same world as the ordinary, conscious thinking, and also as part of the whole objective world. The thinking subject itself is unable see that other thinking is constructed in its own thinking. It cannot see that its own thinking is a self-related whole, which includes, as one of its parts, the other thinking.

As soon as the thinking starts to figure itself as *a self-related whole* - as a thinking which *includes its own (idea of) other thinking* - the way it consciously relates between its own thinking and other thinking becomes changed. Now this beyond is seen to exist internally, in subjective thinking itself. Other thinking is not seen as an external (magical etc.) non-subjective reality any more. Thinking starts to also realize that all thinking, including its own, includes its own specific (idea of) other thinking. Even that the subjects may agree that e.g. the will of God should be taken into consideration, they may disagree as regards the specific substance of the will of God.

A more contemporary example of how other thinking is thought of, would no doubt be the psychoanalytical idea of the unconscious. As Judith Butler convincingly shows, there are many ways in which the unconscious becomes conceptualized in psychoanalytical theories. Butler's analysis shows that a difference could be drawn between the more Kantian and the more Hegelian versions. Butler gives examples of at least two kinds of psychoanalytical notions of unconscious, the Freudian one (whom she apparently sees as a somewhat "Hegelian unconscious", for the fact that it can potentially become known for the self itself) and the Lacanian one, within which there is an aspect called "Real". "Real" is thought of as a constitutive part of the structure of the psyche, which however remains necessarily unknown for the self itself. The Freudian unconscious constitutes a form of other thinking (psyche's internal other intentionality) which can potentially become both conceptualized and "worked on" by the person itself (at least through therapeutic analysis). For Lacan, there is a necessary failure (a lack) in the self-understanding of the self. (Butler: BM 187-222; SD 126-127, 193-199; PLP 57-62,86-87)

For Hegel, a phase when the self sees the other thinking as internal to its own thinking, and especially when the self sees other thinkers as having their own internal "other thoughts", marks an important step for the subject towards becoming conscious of itself and others as *conceptual* subjects. Here the subject starts to see that everything not only relates to other thinking but that there are different ways to think of this relation. Each thinking self relates to other thinking *internally*. This marks a crucial and also a painful change in the way a thinker thinks and relates to itself and to otherness. (PhS §165)

At this point the thinking self is not necessarily immediately capable of - at least according to Hegel's narrative in PhS - starting to think that the way it *itself* thinks of otherness is particular, or context-dependent, and that there are other ways to relate to otherness, deserving of equal acknowledgement. Yet, what it becomes conscious of (formulated here in a highly theoretical way) is that others think of something like "the universal meaning of particular human life", or "the universal significance of particular things" in not a different way, but in an *irrational* way. The thinking self cannot admit that the other may be equally rational in its own terms, and that the world, posited by other thinking, may be a rational world. Instead, interpreted on the basis of the self's own rationality, the other appears as irrational. (PhS §173-174)

If thinking cannot constitute, "appropriate" or "produce" a particular world according to its own universal truth, it finds it very difficult to relate to a world at all. A thinker does not know how to speak about or understand other thinking, or the particular world, seen by other thinking. Because the others are self-sufficient, self-relational wholes, they seem utterly irrational from the point of view of a thinker who is used to read things on the basis of its own

self-rationally rational system of thinking (on the basis of Consciousness as Understanding). In order not to lose itself and the world as something objective, thinking must denounce the other thinking as a nothingness.(ibid.). Hegel writes:

...self-consciousness is thus certain of itself only by superseding this other that presents itself to self-consciousness as an independent life; self-consciousness is Desire. Certain of the nothingness of this other, it explicitly affirms that this nothingness is *for it* the truth of the other; it destroys the independent object and thereby gives itself the certainty of itself as a *true* certainty, a certainty which has become explicit for self-consciousness itself *in an objective manner*. (PhS § 174)

Historically, the way to relate to other self-relational wholes have typically taken the form of thinking of them as “worshippers of false gods”, “insane” etc. Self-relational thinkers and groups of thinkers often try to force the others to become worshippers of the true gods or to accept the truly rational explanation of the universe. What Hegel calls as *the struggle for recognition* is relevant here. Often the contact with otherness has also ended up in physically killing the others. This killing has been conducted in the name of the one true universal and the true certainty of what the world is like. The killing of others is easily seen also as a righteous act, the very thing to do, because after all, others are not only wrong, they are also evil. The false universal should be eliminated, in order for it not to contaminate our right world, or seduce us. Because the others have a “satanic”, or “perverted” idea of what is universal, they must be disposed of. According to Hegel, the denouncing of other thinking, or preventing its seductive powers, is however a continuous process, until there is a proper recognition of the Other. The Other cannot be disposed of, as “otherness” constitutes ultimately the truth of the self itself. As said before, every thinking constitutes an other thinking (from the point of view of its Other), and, every self is an Other. (PhS §187-188)

The eliminating of a wrong universal can also take the form of “death in life”. The (other) independence of thinking is thought of as *non-existent*. Self-consciousness - which is ultimately always the consciousness of itself and the other thinking as similar with each other – assumes an abstract point of view. Yet, by this announcement, this thinking renders also its own independent self-relational thinking as an abstract void. By rendering what is external to it, namely its outside (the other) an abstraction, there is no actual border to separate it from such abstract other. It itself becomes also an abstraction. Abstractions do not have borders, only particulars do. As such, it becomes as abstract as its other. Hegel sees that, historically, the way for example ancient Greece thought of “barbarians” displays this kind of attitude towards otherness. Barbarians saw objective, actual world, according to their own ideas of what is universal. For the Greek, the barbarians were irrational beings, whose constitution of objectivity did not correspond with the true objectivity of things. (PhS §187)

“A death in life” can also take the form of *slavery*. This denotes a mode of relating to other self-relational thinking and knowing, where particular objectivity is seen as necessary for the basic maintenance of life, yet, where reciprocal recognition is still lacking. This thinking recognizes only one universal (its own) as the true reference-point, according to which particular objectivity should be “produced”. The other self-relational thinking is *enslaved*. The internally mediated unity of particularity and universality (*of the other*) is broken up, and the particularity (the labour-force, the particularizing force) of the other is forced to work for

another universal, a truth which is not its own. The other is forced to recognize the other, yet, there is no *reciprocal* recognition. The other is instrumentalized: it is turned into something *useful* for another universal truth. It is deprived of the right to actualize, i.e. constitute objectivity, in reference to its own universal truth, but instead it must work to actualize the universal truth of another. The most cultivated and intellectual form of this takes place, for Hegel, as the Enlightenment thinking and the thought of *Utility*. The less intellectually cultivated forms of this take place, for Hegel, as any forced labour and slavery of e.g. the ancient world.

Because slaves cannot particularize, i.e. actualize, their own universal truth – because they must labour for an external, not internally mediated Lord – their own universal truth is non-particular, non-existent, not actual. Slaves are not allowed to be their own masters, as their own internal doubleness is not recognized as a valid one. Their identity as their own self-relational wholes is denied. They are not considered as valid knowers of themselves or the world. (PhS §189-190)

Because slaves cannot identify the particular world on their own, they constitute a death *in life*. In Hegel's words, *they cannot find themselves in the world* because that what exists mirrors the universality of the other, the masters' universe. Yet, slavery does not only affect the slaves; it affects also the masters. Even that the masters, Lords, gain recognition to their own doubleness – in the form of their own self-relational system of thinking, knowing and constituting the objectivity being considered as the only universal truth – a moment of “slavery” or “death in life” becomes a part of their thinking also.

In fact, slavery becomes an internally *threatening* part of the thinking of the masters. Slaves are indifferent for Lords, yet, they *exist*. Slaves constitute an existing, irrational humanity. Their humanity cannot however be completely denied, because they apparently are not animals either. They constitute a troubling ambivalence within humanity and subjectivity. They become an existing and living indifference, which is something threatening because it is something unknown, limitless, uncontrollable and thus potentially dangerous. The other thinking of slaves is unpredictable, and as such, a threat. The intentions of the slaves cannot be known because slaves are, literally, not allowed to have any *rational* self-knowledge, nor consequently rational intentions, either. In fact, slaves are deprived of the right to have such own selves which could be rationally described by the masters, or known even by the slaves themselves. If the slaves were treated as responsible for their deeds, their humanity would thereby be admitted. If the masters at least sometimes have to treat the slaves as responsible beings, their attitude towards them becomes self-contradictory: the slaves are treated as rational beings, while their capacity to rational thinking is denied. Slavery as a social relation presupposes a form of thinking (“ideology” in modern terms) which is internally inconsistent, and, for Hegel, “unreal”. Slaves, which are supposed to be dependent on their masters, for their very lives, turn into a threat to the rational lives of the masters. Lords which are supposed to be independent, not dependent beings, are rendered threatened, and thus dependent, on the arbitrary intentions of the slaves. When other thinking is enslaved, rendered irrational, anything can be expected of it. (PhS §192-193)

Importantly, in a system of lordship and slavery, particular individual slaves are not given particular human identity to, on the basis of universal – and thus also valuable - humanity. They exist as fragmentary particulars, as their particularity is not conceptually related to

universality. As such, they are actually not particular humans, yet abstract, arbitrary humans, of which a rational description cannot be given. For Hegel, actual particulars are always instances of something which is thought as universal. Actual particulars have a universal genus. As not particulars, slaves lack also subjective identities. Slaves exist as vehicles for others, as instruments. They produce particularity *for others*. They are not parts of the universal humanity of the Lords, nor are they part of *any* system of universal humanity (in the system of lordship and slavery). Laws, principles, ethical standards etc. which apply for *particular* humans, do not apply for slaves, because slaves constitute a non-particularizable human mass.

Other thinking, which is rendered an abstraction, is rendered unspeakable. It cannot be listened to, because it is not allowed to say anything particular. It cannot be allowed to say anything particular which would be its own, because it is not allowed to refer to its own universal truth. As such, its own internal rationality (its internal doubleness, namely the relation between particularity and universality) is not considered as valid. For Hegel, a moment of abstraction is an important part of conceptual thinking. Yet, the moment of abstraction may exist as a non-mediated part of thinking. It may exist as unknown gods, or unknown natural spirits. Also, it may exist as indifferent, abstract humanity, slavery, which, typically, may have very concrete consequences to various groups of people. Hegel's theory implies that whenever others (i.e. other self-relational wholes, i.e. other internal doublenesses) exist as not equals *for thinking*, a sort of internal indifference is constituted.

Moment of abstraction is an inherent part in all thinking because all thinking is conceptual whether or not it is self-consciously conceptual. Thus, abstraction plays always some part in thinking. It can however also become *abstract otherness*, or *internal slavery* of thinking. Hegel explains that before otherness becomes a self-consciously mediated part of thinking, it exists as some sort of "unknown god" and/or internal slavery. As such, it functions as a moment of indifference, irrationality, chaos, unspeakability within thinking.

An unmediated abstractivity threatens anything which is not abstract for thinking. As a constitutive (a thought) part, yet as a non-particular (abstract) part, it is limitless. There is no knowing where it starts and where it ends. As such, it does not stay outside the borders of the particular, determinate things, which are thought by this thinking.

Thinking can solve the relating to self-relational, independent thinking (namely, its own thinking and "other thinking") in a way of Lordship and slavery, explained above. Yet, this solution does not satisfy it. Thinking is burdened by its internal slavery, the presence of unspeakable humanity, the troubling idea that there may be some actual truth (actual differentiations of particulars) affecting its own humanity, in the realm of the *forced indifference*. The motif, behind its drive to seek the possibility of relating conceptually, not only indifferently (as abstract otherness, or, slavery) to other thinking is that it cannot relate to itself in a satisfactory way, until it can take itself and other thinking as objects of particular, subjective knowing. When indifferent, irrational humanity is a part of its thinking, its own thinking is not known to it as a rational whole. The indifferent humanity, i.e. abstract or enslaved other thinking, renders its whole system of thinking as indifferent. Because there exists humanity which is not related as a rational part of its thinking as a whole, all the rest of the parts of its system are threatened by this one "irrational" part. As an irrational, non-particular part of its thinking, it is limitless. It has no identity, nor no borders to it. Randomly,

any part of humanity can seem irrational because all the parts are constituted by the irrational part. Irrationality is, potentially, found anywhere. Thus, thinking strives to relate this externally related (abstract, indifferent) part into a conceptual unity with other parts.

2.2.5. Acknowledging the Other as something valid and constitutive

When thinking, or consciousness, starts to *think* that *valid* other thinking may be possible, it strives to relate to and know this “beyond”. Hegel sees thinking/consciousness as a faculty, which needs to find out who and what it is. It wants not to be determined by something which it does not know. It wants to know the ultimate context, where it is situated, and which gives a universally valid meaning to it. As such, it strives after generalizations, of universal knowledge: knowledge which does not leave anything “beyond it” but explains it all. It does not want to be limited by anything which it itself does not know. Thinking/consciousness wants to know itself (differentiate, posit, situate itself) within a universal context, which is truly universal, not parochial. Thus, whenever a thinker realizes that its (present) universalization (meaning-giving context) about itself may actually be not universal at all, it strives to relate to that part of its ultimate context (the context within which it knows itself) which is beyond its present (incomplete) context. Thus emerges the Hegelian self-consciousness. (PhS §174-177; Taylor 1975, 150-155)

Hegelian self-consciousness must not be mistaken for what for Hegel is “free and actual self-consciousness”, which is connected with the theme of “reciprocal recognition”. Not until self-consciousness can mediate “speculatively” with the consciousness of particularity (Consciousness as Understanding) – as well as with its abstracting and self-alienating capacities - is it able to go over its internal dualisms and relations of “Lordship and Bondage”. However, for Hegel, self-consciousness includes always some idea of speculative thinking i.e. thinking which is capable of mediating contradictory thoughts with each other. Hegel sees that self-consciousness always has some idea of a realm where relations of Lordship and Bondage are overcome. Yet often the capacity of “speculation” is seen by Hegel to be projected into a realm beyond humans (i.e. into a realm of God) who is alone thought to be able to mediate between such dualisms like “limited subjectivity” (finitude) and “unlimited, absolute (God-like) subjectivity” (infinity). If the capacity of “speculation” is seen as not belonging to humans yet only to some mystical realm beyond humans, relations which Hegel call “reciprocally recognitive” are impossible. In relations of reciprocal recognition, a thinking self regards itself and other selves as beings capable of “speculation” (ibid.)

At the early developmental level the two basic parts of the internal doubleness of thinking (Consciousness as Understanding and self-consciousness) assume various ways in which they exist as parts of the same thinking, *yet, not being conceptually and speculatively mediated with each other*. They are *externally mediated*, because they exist within the same thinking. A relationship of mutual indifference, metaphorically presented as the relationship between Lord and Bondsman can be detected as the basic structure. The figures of Lord and Bondsman function as the basic metaphors of the split thinking at its early levels of self-consciousness. Both figures, the Lord and the Bondsman denote a self-relational thinking, yet, their relationship is not conceptually mediated before the stage of actual self-consciousness

and reciprocal recognition is reached. Thinking is internally doubled, yet, so that the sides exist as externally related fragments. Self-consciousness assumes the form of *pure self-consciousness*. Hegel relates pure self-consciousness e.g. with the Enlightenment (Kantian) thought. Pure self-consciousness adopts a universally abstract attitude towards all self-relational thinking, by placing all self-relational thinking into a larger, abstract context. Consequently, because it, nevertheless, needs self-relational thinking in order to produce particularity for it, it splits internally, into the figures of Lord and Bondsman.

This fragmentation actualizes itself both in relations between people, as slavery, class-systems etc. and, necessarily, also inside the thinking of particular thinkers. By it Hegel shows that in order for the actual, real-life cognitive relationships to be possible (between people who acknowledge each other as equals), recognition must exist *as a conceptual system of thinking* of each one of the individual thinkers, which take part in cognitive relationships. For Hegel, recognition exists in thinking when a thinker has included “an independent, equal other” as a part of its thinking. Only when recognition exists in thinking, can it exist in “reality”, between people.

As was said before, this interpretation of PhS is based on the view, shared by Charles Taylor, that the famous chapter on Lordship and Bondage (PhS § 178-196) describes one stage in the development of self-consciousness. Thus, “Lord” and “Bondsman” (Hegel’s “Knecht” has also been translated as “slave” or “servant”) do not only denote social classes or positions, as in some interpretations written under the influence of Marx. According to the interpretation adopted here, the stage of the drama is not (only) the society, but the thinking subject. Moreover, the figures of the Lord and the Bondsman do reappear after the Lordship and Bondage -section in PhS (e. g. § 198, 202, 233), and provide a key for the interpretation of the later parts of Hegel’s text. The Taylorian interpretation is, of course, a controversial one. However, it can be supported by a simple textual argument. The chapter which *precedes* the section on Lord and Bondsman speaks about the development of consciousness. So does the chapter which *succeeds* it (“Stoicism, Scepticism and Unhappy Consciousness”). If the chapter on Lordship and Bondage were mainly about something else (for example, about the class struggle), it would completely disrupt the narrative in PhS. Hence, all attempts to “use” Hegel’s dialectics of Lordship and Bondage while ignoring the later parts of the story are one-sided (although they may, of course, be interesting in their own right).

In the thinking of pure self-consciousness, the split (explained above) becomes the point of view from which it sees others, its own self, and everything that is thought, said and known about the world. This means that it interprets everything that the others say, and what it says itself on the basis of this split. Thinking enters into the *internalized* split of Lord and Bondsman at the brink of realizing that its own thinking constitutes a *free*, self-relational whole. *It mistakes abstraction for freedom*. Pure self-consciousness feels empowered by its capacity of abstraction. It reckons that actually abstraction, freedom from all particularity, is the universal truth of itself. Thinking, overwhelmed, yet also empowered by its (conceptual) capacity to abstract from - or, rise above - all particular view-points onto the world, thinks that there is no limits to it. It can for example produce any kind of world it wants. It feels that it has somewhat completely “come out of its (particular) self”, as no particular explanation of who it is, seems to hold universally and timelessly. Nevertheless, this new “non-particular” non-position is not without its fearful sides. Placed and contextualized in its new non-position, it fears that as a particular subject, it is non-existent. None of the particular

explanations of who it is, is a universal or timeless explanation. The thinking self, as well as *all* others, as particulars, are vanishing creatures.

Reflecting itself from this “point of view”, of which no *universally valid* particular description can be given, the thinking self takes *pure “I”* as its universal genus. This genus functions in the thinking of pure self-consciousness in a similar way as it functioned for the non-particular thinking of Sense-certainty. Pure self-consciousness cannot differentiate between particulars from the point of view of pure I. It has understood what self-relational thinking is universally like, yet, it has understood it only as an abstraction. It needs to be able to differentiate between particular self-relational systems of thinking, yet, it cannot do this on the basis of “pure I”. When a thinker reflects itself from an “un-speakable” (pure, abstract) point of view, it situates itself into an abstract context, into a non-particular universe, and sees itself as non-situated, non-limited, non-historical. It has posited itself into a similar abstract universe where slaves were posited in the system of lordship and slavery. (PhS §179-182,186-197; Taylor 1975, 153-158)

Yet, according to Hegel, what has actually happened in the mind of a thinker who thinks like this, is that it has come to the brink of realizing that it is a conceptual thinker. By conceptual thought, it can abstract from all particular contents. It can step beyond itself while still being inside its own thinking. The place beyond, where it steps into, is not, however, external but internal to it. In fact, the place beyond is a thought which can be identified as its own thought. It has not finally found a “God’s point of view” or “Archimedean point” outside all history and subjectivity. This thought, or place beyond, can be returned to its conceptual thinker, because it exists in its own thinking. Yet, before it can relate this newly found capacity to “rise above all particularity” back to its own particular, historical subjectivity, its conceptuality remains an abstraction. In short, the moments of its conceptual thinking take place as unrelated thoughts. (PhS §184-186; Taylor 1975, 157-159)

The primary stage of a mind, who has (conceptually) come out of itself, is that it splits internally, into a *totally independent* mind, free from all particularity and into a *totally dependent* mind. Actually, these two sides exist as abstractions of self-relational thinking, because they are not mediated with other parts of thinking and as parts of a particular whole. (PhS 178-196; Taylor 1975, 153-158)

In the thinking of pure self-consciousness, an abstract Lord serves as the Lord for whom all particularity is laboured, i.e related to. The pure Lord constitutes thus the universal truth of particularity. All particularity is handed over to the abstract Lord, who stamps it with his own, non-particular name. Thus, all particulars are turned into non-particulars when they are handed over (mediated) to the abstract Lord *inside the thinking of pure self-consciousness*. Everything which is known as a particular becomes stamped as unknown. Pure I (as a universal genus of all self-relational thinking) functions as the middle term between this doubleness. The syllogist result of this mediation is an abstract self-relational thinking, as well as abstract thingness. The result of this mediation takes the form of *indifferentiation*. Things, which are differentiated and particularized by the Bondsman, become indifferentiated, while passed on to the Lord.

Here, the Lord is a mind, independent from any particular content which “thingness” (Being, or Life) may have. The Lord can discard any particular particularity, as he himself does not

identify with any *specific* case of particularity. Yet, he appreciates particularity *in general*. This means that no particular “slave” is important to him, yet, he needs slaves in general to take care of his material needs, the basic needs of Life. (PhS § 186-187).

The Lord and the Bondsman constitute, each one separately, somewhat *independent*, self-sufficient viewpoints or ways to relate to things. Thus, if e.g. “democracy” would be the object of thought, the Lord thinks in his way about it, and the Bondsman thinks in his way about it. The Lord may, e.g. think that any way to institutionalize democracy is incomplete and unsatisfactory, because it cannot be fully accepted and endorsed by all. A Bondsman may consider it best to stick to the democracy at hand, because, after all, it is based on the ideas of the superior minds (compared to the mind of his own) of academic philosophers, experts on democracy and politicians. (PhS §184-186) These two independent view-points exist inside one mind, the mind of abstract (pure) self-consciousness. They are independent at least in the sense that they resist each other. The Lord claims not to be a Bondsman – as it strives to be free from the enslavement of parochial subjectivity, and the Bondsman claims not to be a Lord.

The existence of these two independent thoughts in one mind introduces a primary scene of the existence of an *independent other* inside thinking. The pure self-consciousness thinks of things from two (contradicting) points of views and, thus, shows a primary (however, abstract) level of the consideration of independent other thinking. The two points of view are nevertheless external to each other, as well as alien to each other. What things are for the other thought become cancelled in what things are for the other (contradicting) thought. Inside the mind of pure self-consciousness there exists, in a sense, two *individuals* who do not actually acknowledge each other. In contrast to pure self-consciousness, *actual* self-consciousness (explained later) includes an equal, independent other in its thinking. The free other constitutes its own locus of thinking. Free other is recognized, by actual self-consciousness, as a similar locus of thinking than the actual self-consciousness itself. *Free other is a locus of thinking which is acknowledged to include its own self-determining doubleness, instead of functioning as the other side of the thinking’s own doubleness. As such, a free other is acknowledged as another “third”*. (PhS §190-194)

The dilemma of pure self-consciousness is that it has a view of freedom and independence with which it is not capable of identifying with. It cannot identify itself either with the Lord or with Bondsman. It is *itself* a thinking which includes a doubleness: it constitutes a locus of two thoughts. Yet, neither the Lord, nor the Bondsman are *thought*, by the pure self-consciousness, to be structured as an internal doubleness. Neither the structure of the Lord nor the structure of the Bondsman correspond with its own, internally double structure. For Hegel, only when a self acknowledges other thinking as another, internally double thinking, can it reach actual self-consciousness, i.e. to become conscious of how its own thinking is structured. It must make an internally double thinking into a universal genus, and see its own thinking as a particular instance of it.

Unhappy Consciousness is a consciousness of the internal doubleness, yet, it has not particularized the internal doubleness, which it is aware of. Consequently, it looks at the internal doubleness as some kind of an external fact (of things) and not as subjective and as related to the thinking of it. In other words, it sees other thinking – as well as its own thinking – as structured by internal doubleness, yet, because this internal doubleness is not

particularized, it takes the form of fragmentary thoughts and as fragmentary external reality.

Within the thinking of pure self-consciousness, the Lord is independent (or, this is what the Lord thinks) from the Bondsman. And, the Bondsman is dependent on something (the Lord) which it cannot relate to, because the Lord cannot “speak its name”. The Lord cannot describe himself, or give information of himself, because any piece of information would be particular information. Because the Lord is above particularity, he can say of himself only something like “I am who I am”. This relation shows itself both at the level of real-life attitudes towards other people, and towards what they say about the world. The relation displays itself also inside individual thinking. Here it is easy to see that this relation may assume somewhat different structures within different individual minds. Either “Lordship” or “Bondage” can be imagined to dominate an individual mind, even if both must be present: when there exists the other, there must exist the other one, too. There are no Lords without Bondsmen, nor Bondsmen without Lords. “Lords” could be seen for example as intellectuals, who look at particularity in general, or context-dependent thinking, from “above”, not identifying with it, yet, needing it in order to go on with their intellectual enterprise as cultural critics. “Bondsmen” can be seen as people who e.g. think that “I do not know what sense there is to the world, but maybe God knows, or my superiors know, or the intellectuals know. I had better just to do my part, to do as the others do, and not strive after universal wisdom because that is anyways beyond my limited capacity”.

As pertains to the concrete relationships between people, Hegel’s theory implies that both the Lord-minded people and the Bondsman-minded people are incapable of treating each others as equals. Thus, they both are, to each other, creatures which do not “speak their name”, because both of them read the other one only on the basis of their own limited system of thinking. They actually do not communicate with each other when they meet, yet, keep contained within the limits of each ones own self-relational context. As they do not relate conceptually with each other, they are *external others in relation to each other*, or, external contexts to each other. Their relationship concerns just the basic necessities of life-maintenance. The particularity, which the Bondsman produces for the Lord, is a necessity as such for the Lord. Yet, because the Lord does not self-consciously comprehend his dependency on any specific product of the Bondsman, nor of any specific Bondsman, Hegel notes that the Lord enjoys the products of the Bondsman. Enjoyment denotes a somewhat sensuous relation to something, which was earlier described to take place at the level of Sense-certainty. At the level of Sense-certainty, thinking does not identify particulars, yet, its way of being conscious of something takes the immanent and abstract way of sensuousness. Also, Hegel writes that the Lord thinks on the basis of “pure I”, which is the basis for thinking of Sense-certainty. (PhS §189)

The Lord is able to “enjoy” the ready-made thing without itself going through the trouble of forming it according to any idea of particular “shape”, i.e. identity. There is the Bondsman who *works* on the thing and gives a particular shape to it. The Bondsman identifies with the reality, in short, *negates* it through work. Displayed at the level of thinking, he does the work which Consciousness as Understanding does. He negates the immanent, abstract indeterminacy of Being and forms, produces, particular things. He produces particulars on the basis of his context-dependent universe. Thus, he makes the thing his “own”. Yet, even that the particular thing (or, the first negation of Being) is the Bondsman’s own, he is aware that there exists another, second negation, a larger context where the thing which he has

negated, receives its ultimate description. He knows that the larger, second context of thing where his limited, first context of thing is situated, is beyond his capacity of understanding. That very Being, or substance, which he negates, lies in hands, which he cannot understand. He thinks that even that he makes the basic negation (produces particular things), the ultimate description, i.e. a second negation which negates his first negation, is out of his reach to understand. Thus, inside the Bondsman-minded thinking, his own product, in fact, his identity, becomes refuted because it is related to something (Lord) which he cannot conceptually relate to. (PhS §190).

Within the system of Lordship and Bondage, the two ways of thinking refute each other. Bondsman (particularity) turns into an abstraction, as his particular identity is emptied of meaning when contextualized by, and passed onto, the Lord. And, the Lord is an abstraction as he cannot identify with particularity and describe who he is. (PhS §188)

Hegel intended to theorize a construction, where the double negation, *negation of the negation*, would not be self-cancelling. Hegel's idea was that within self as a concept, particularity (Consciousness as Understanding) and self-consciousness (the reflection of an independent self, from the view point of an independent other thinking) would be united.

The Lord is unaware of how his independence is actually dependent on the Bondsman and the particular "thing" which the Bondsman produces for him. He is unaware that bondage (Bondsman) is a constitutive part of his independence, Lordship. Yet, as the Lord does not acknowledge this, he does not relate to bondage *internally* (or he does but in dualist, "internally external" manner). He does not see that independence (limitlessness) is dependent on bondage (particularity, limitedness). The Lord is in contact with the particular world through the Bondsman, i.e. through other self-relational thinking, yet, this connection as something constitutive has not yet occurred to the Lord himself. What the Lord does not also see is that he is not only dependent on Bondsmen in general, but, instead, he is dependant on a *particular* Bondsman. As the actual particular products which the Bondsman produces for the Lord are not particular in general, but particular in particular, the Lord is still to face the fact that what he is actually dependent on is an actual world, with real differences, not only indifferent differences.

In fact, the Lord would have nothing to think of, to start with, without the "limited" particularities, produced by the Bondsman. In fact, the Lord would have nothing (no limits) to be independent of and free from, without the bondage of the Bondsman. Independence (freedom) and dependence (particularity, being limited and dependent on others) are split into two unrelated parts. Yet, they exist as necessary moments within this split mind of pure self-consciousness. In order for a Lord to be able to be a Lord over something, there must be this realm of limited, particular things and the labouring of them. There must be a particular, limited reality which he can reflect from a place "beyond" and thus realize his independence as actual independence. As such, the Lord and the Bondsman are connected through the limited, particular thing, which is passed between them. Yet, this connection does not exist as a self-conscious concept at this dialectical stage. (PhS §178-196)

Further, by actual self-consciousness, these two sides, the Lord and the Bondsman, become internalized as necessary parts of one mind. By mediating lordship and bondage with each other, a self-conscious thinker mediates Consciousness as Understanding and Self-

consciousness into a unified concept. It sees itself not only as internally double, yet, also as a self-reflective thinking which can reflect its internal doubleness. However, in order for it to see itself in this way, it must see also other thinking in this way.

In this chapter the structure of pure self-consciousness, as a structure between two individual thoughts, has been explained. In the next chapter the thinking of pure self-consciousness, *as a continuous activity* is explained.

2.2.6. Stoicism, Scepticism, Absolute dialectical unrest

Thinking is self-relational. It posits its own particular world in reference to its own universe. Thinkers are, for Hegel, primarily thinking, self-relational beings. Yet, for Hegel, the thinking which *itself* arrives on *this* insight does not yet need to be aware of “self-relationality” as anything else than an abstraction. In PhS “Stoicism” and “scepticism” denote modes of thinking in which a thinker has itself realized that its thinking is universal and self-relational. These modes of thinking are versions of *pure self-consciousness* (together with the system of Lordship and Bondage, Unhappy Consciousness and Reason, explained later). Pure self-consciousness takes self as an abstraction (content-less, pure I) as the main point of view from which it looks at itself, other subjects, and the whole world.

For Hegel, a *Stoic* is focused on its own single, pure universe. A Stoic has realized that it is a universal thinking being. For a Stoic, everything that exists, exists in thought. Hegel writes about stoic thinking:

Its principle is that consciousness is a being that *thinks*, and that consciousness holds something to be essentially important, or true and good only in so far as it *thinks* it to be such. (PhS §198)

A Stoic is quite completely estranged from the particular, internally differentiated sphere of life, namely, from the concrete and seemingly stable sphere of everyday life which appears for Consciousness as Understanding. According to Hegel, Stoic thinking has a negative attitude towards the Lord and Bondsman-relationship (explained in ch. 2.2.5.). It thinks that it does not need the particular world; hence it does not need Bondsmen to produce particularity for it. It has withdrawn from the realm of Desire. Hegel writes:

...its aim is to be free, and to maintain that lifeless indifference which steadfastly withdraws from bustle of existence, alike from being active as passive, into the simple essentiality of thought. (PhS §199)

For Hegel, Stoic freedom denotes freedom in thought. Yet, this thought is only an abstract thought, *a truth lacking the fullness of life*. It is a notion of freedom, not the living reality of freedom itself. It cannot give any content or any particular actualization to its freedom. Nor can it give any content to what is good or bad etc. It clings to the freedom of a *contentless* thought. (PhS §201)

Hegelian idea of *scepticism* is that it is the realization of that of which Stoicism was only the thought. It is the actual experience of what the freedom of thought is. Hegel writes:

In scepticism, now, the wholly unessential and non-independent character of this “other” becomes explicit *for consciousness*; the (abstract) thought becomes the concrete thinking which annihilates the being of the world in all its manifold determinateness (...) it is clear that just as Stoicism corresponds to the *Notion* of the independent consciousness which appeared as the lord and bondsman relationship, so Scepticism corresponds to its *realization* as the negative attitude towards otherness, to desire and work. (PhS §202)

An internal doubleness returns with scepticism, as scepticism turns its (Stoic) notion of freedom against the sphere of particular life. With scepticism, a *negative* dialectical movement, between the two poles of thought (metaphorized as Lord and Bondsman, i.e. independence and dependence) takes continuously place. This movement is called by Hegel as *absolute dialectical unrest*.

The sceptical self-consciousness thus experiences in the flux of all that would stand secure before it its own freedom as given and preserved by itself. It is aware of this stoical indifference of a thinking which thinks itself, the unchanging and genuine certainty of itself. This self-certainty does not issue from something alien, whose complex development was deposited within it, a result which would leave behind it the process of its coming to be. On the contrary, consciousness itself is the absolute dialectical unrest, this medley of sensuous and intellectual representations whose differences coincide, and whose identity is equally again dissolved, for it is itself determinateness as contrasted with the non-identical. (PhS §205)

Hegel sees that in order for a thinking to be able to relate to itself as a *particular* (instead of abstract) system of self-relational thinking, and to others, similar with it, it must be able to bring, to use Hegel’s choice of words, the *two thoughts of itself* together. These two thoughts imply independence and dependence.

Sceptical thought can see what belongs to self from the view-point of *some context of self*. It can identify itself as a particular something from the point of view of some particular self-relational system. In other words, it can identify itself through the *thought* of some specific “Bondsman”. Similarly, it can identify others on the basis of some particular self-relational context, a Bondsman. Further, it can differentiate between itself and others on the basis of the thought of some Bondsman. Yet, a sceptical thinker can neither identify *itself* or others as particulars, nor draw any differentiations anywhere. It refutes, in reference to its “pure I”-thought, any particular identity which it thinks (momentarily) of identifying with.

Particular identities, produced (namely, *thought into existence*) by a Bondsman are unsatisfactory for a sceptic, because they are not its “own”. A particular self-identity is thought *in bondage*. It is thought by a *self* who is in bondage. It is produced according to the orders of an alien Lord. This Lord does not let the Bondsman be freely what it is. A particular self-identity is not thought freely, independently, unlimitedly. Consequently, it cannot be seen to relate to a free self, who determines by itself, as its own master, who and what it is.

Consequently, a sceptic cannot recognize any particular identity as its “own”. It cannot find itself fully in it, as its freedom and independence (its other thought, the pure I) is not an internal part of any particular identity. (PhS §394-398)

According to Hegel, a sceptical, changeable consciousness cannot bring *the two thoughts* of itself together. Basically, these two alien thoughts refer to what have been exemplified before as the Lord and the Bondsman. This mind is sceptical of the things it sees and thinks. Yet, it is structured so that it is dependent on the things, the existence of which it is sceptical of. In order to be sceptical of *things*, it needs Bondsmen (namely, other thinking) to produce things for it. It does not posit things self-consciously, by itself, yet instead it takes a step into an external place beyond (into the abstract thought) when particular things are thought into existence (by Bondsmen, particular thinking) as this mind itself cannot be sure whether things exist or not.

To think of these two thoughts as two minds, or selves, gazing at each other, whenever this mind thinks of things, emphasizes the idea of their alienation as two externally related sites of thinking and knowing. Even as they exist within one mind, as two thoughts within one thinking, they do not return (relate) to the same (particular) self, nor do they speak of a same thing. Hegel describes the movement within this self-contradictory consciousness

Its deeds and its words always belie one another and equally it has itself the doubly contradictory consciousness of unchangeableness and sameness, and of utter contingency and non-identity with itself. But it keeps the poles of this its self-contradiction apart, and adopts the same attitude to it as it does in its purely negative activity in general. Point out likeness or identity to it, and it will point out unlikeness or non-identity; and when it is now confronted with what it has just asserted, it turns round and points out likeness or identity. Its talk is in fact like the squabbling of self-willed children, one of whom says A if the other says B, and in turn says B if the other says A, and who by contradicting *themselves* buy for themselves the pleasure of continually contradicting *one another*. (PhS §205)

This dual thinking is without any such own self, which could be particularized and differentiated from another self. In sceptical thinking, there is no self which would identify with both of the thoughts which it has of itself, so that neither thought would need to be cancelled, externalized, be alienated, when an identification with the other takes place. Both the thinker and the “thing” being thought are collections of mutually alien thoughts. The thing, thought by way of dialectical unrest, corresponds with the structure of the thinking which thinks it. Neither the system of thinking or the thing (thought in this system) can be seen as particulars. They cannot be differentiated from anything outside of them. Structured as the absolute dialectical unrest, both of them are unlimited abstractions. Absolute dialectical unrest describes the general logic of how pure self-consciousness thinks of things. It appears as the inner logic of a thinking which is structured as the alien relation between the Lord and the Bondsman.

2.2.7. From sceptical thought towards Unhappy Consciousness

For Hegel, Unhappy Consciousness denotes another version of pure self-consciousness (together with e.g. Stoicism and Scepticism, explained above). Unhappy Consciousness is somewhat different from the sceptical consciousness. It is more conscious of its internal doubleness. Thus, it is a more mature, self-conscious version of pure self-consciousness. When a sceptic just rambled between its two thoughts, and felt quite free from the world of desire and bondage, an Unhappy Consciousness is aware that it is double, and that both of its thoughts are necessary for it. However, it does not bring its two thoughts into a particular unity. Instead, they remain as an abstract unity. Consequently, the thinking of Unhappy Consciousness lacks its own particular (actual) self-consciousness, and hence it is divided into two consciousnesses externally related to each other. Unhappy Consciousness makes these thoughts reciprocally deny the existence of each other.

In Unhappy Consciousness, there are Bondsmen-thoughts, on the basis of which it may think of itself having a particular identity. And, then there is the *pure thought* of itself, by which this thinking frees, or “purifies” itself from the bondage of the Bondsman-thoughts. The phases of “being in bondage” and “getting free from bondage” follow each other. When this thinking sees itself “in bondage”, it is not satisfied, because being in bondage does not correspond, at least fully, with what it thinks of itself. And, when it sees itself “free from bondage”, it is also not quite satisfied. Then it actually sees itself as absolutely free from any particularity, and hence as a non-being.

When an Unhappy Consciousness thinks of itself as having a particular identity, it must externalize its capacity to abstract from, and see beyond the limits of this particular identity. Thus, when it thinks of itself as having a particular identity it must reduce itself to bondage, into the limited consciousness of Bondsman. And, on the other hand, if it thinks of itself as un-limited by any particular identity, it must externalize its particularity. Consequently, its thinking of itself, and of the whole world, moves between the extremes of these two thoughts. (ibid.)

An Unhappy Consciousness may, for example, think of sexuality by moving between the moment of “bondage” (as one of its thoughts) and the moment of “freedom from bondage” (the other one of the thoughts). A thinker may, first, identify with some specific sexual identity. Then, another thought arrives, and the thinker *thinks* that its sexual identity is actually limited; it is sexuality in bondage, not its own freely chosen identity. Thus, the thinker moves off from its previous sexual identity to another identity, which also is to be found as alien. Whatever the sexuality is like, it is seen to be in bondage, if it is a particular identity. A thinking self will always find *any* sexual identity as “in bondage” because it cannot relate the thought of “free from bondage” to any one of the particular sexual identities. Thus, the thinking self will think that any *specific* sexual identity reduces sexuality “to bondage”. No particular sexual identity is its own, because the self receives it from an arbitrary “Lord”. Hegel writes about the dual nature of the Unhappy Consciousness:

This unhappy, inwardly disrupted consciousness, since its essentially contradictory nature is for it a single consciousness, must for ever have present in the one consciousness the other also; and thus it is driven out of each in turn

in the very moment when it imagines it has successfully attained to a peaceful unity with the other. Its true return to itself, or its reconciliation with itself, will, however, display the Notion of Spirit that has become a living spirit, and has achieved an actual existence, because it already possesses as a single undivided consciousness a dual nature. The Unhappy Consciousness itself is the gazing of one self-consciousness into another, and itself is both, and the unity of both is also its essential nature. But it is not as yet explicitly aware that this is its essential nature, or that it is the unity of both. (PhS 207))

If the two thoughts of sexuality (or of any “something”) are not mediated by a *particular* middle term, the two thoughts do not construct an actual (identifiable, particular) form of sexuality. Sexuality remains as fragmented into sexuality “in bondage” and sexuality “as freedom from all (particular) forms of sexuality”. Thus, for this kind of thinking there cannot exist any sexuality. Any recognition of actual (particular) existence of sexuality is soon *thought* to have its origin in the thoughts of a Bondsman. Yet, in order for a Unhappy Consciousness to think of sexuality at all, it must anyhow have it produced by Bondsmen. Without sexuality “in bondage” it cannot think of sexuality at all, because only particular sexuality (i.e. Bondsman-sexuality) can be identified as existent. Abstract sexuality cannot be identified as an existent sexuality, it is everywhere and nowhere. Actually, this kind of a thinker moves between the two extremes of “sexuality in bondage” and “no sexuality at all”. (PhS §238)

A pure self-consciousness (e.g. Unhappy Consciousness) does not have an own notion of sexuality, freedom, democracy, subjectivity, or of anything else. Objects of thought, which could be identified as “sexuality” or “democracy”, do not exist for it at all for it cannot accept any particular description of them. It is aware that these “things” exist for Bondsmen (i.e. for context-dependent thinking), yet, because it does not find itself in bondage, like Bondsmen, they do not exist *for it*. *Its own thought of things do not appear for it as existent, phenomenological*, because, the thoughts which produce actual “things” (Bondsman-thinking) and its other thoughts concerning things (Lord-thinking) make up reciprocally denied fragments in its thinking. (PhS §205-208)

Importantly, the two externally related thoughts of this thinking do not construct a (particular) thing, nor do they relate to any (particular) self. In pure self-consciousness, the “things” which are thought of, and the “self”, doing the thinking, actually do relate to each other, as the things and the self show the same structure of “absolute dialectical unrest”. The basic fragmentary nature of thinking (i.e. the lack of identifiable self, to which the thoughts could be seen to relate to) shows hence itself as the fragmentary nature of its objects of thought. Thus, in this sense, *pure self-consciousness is non-existent for itself*. (PhS §590)

Unhappy Consciousness feels that something important is denied, left out, whenever it thinks of itself from the view-point of either one of its selves. Neither one of the thoughts satisfies it, because the other thought becomes cancelled, violated by the other thought. These thoughts are their own universes, allowing for no “other” existence. Both of them constitute, thus, the non-being of the other. Because this thinking *itself* is the thinking (and consciousness) of both of these thoughts, it is the *consciousness of contradiction*. Because it cannot identify actually with neither one of its internal self-consciousnesses, it identifies itself, according to Hegel, with a *changeable consciousness*, and takes itself to be an *unessential Being*. (PhS §208)

Since it is, to begin with, only the *immediate unity* of the two and so takes them to be, not the same, but opposites, one of them, viz. the simple Unchangeable, it takes to be the *essential* Being; but the other, the protean Changeable, it takes to be the unessential. The two are, for the Unhappy Consciousness, alien to one another; and because it is itself the consciousness of this contradiction, it identifies itself with the changeable consciousness, and takes itself to be the unessential Being. But as consciousness of unchangeableness, or of simple essential Being, it must at the same time set about freeing itself from the unessential, i.e. from itself. For though it indeed takes itself to be merely the Changeable, and the Unchangeable is, for it, an alien Being, yet it is *itself* a simple, hence unchangeable, consciousness, and hence aware that this consciousness is its own essence, although in such a way that again it does not itself take the essence to be its own. The attitude it assigns to both cannot therefore be one of mutual indifference, i.e. it cannot itself be indifferent towards the Unchangeable; rather, it is itself directly both of them, and the relation of the two is for it a relation of essential being to the unessential, so that this latter has to be set aside; but since for it both are equally essential and contradictory, it is merely the contradictory movement in which one opposite does not come to rest in its opposite, but in it only produces itself afresh as an opposite. (PhS 208)

Unhappy Consciousness, as a changeable consciousness, actually identifies with a Bondsman's self-consciousness. The Bondsman is a consciousness which, for it is in bondage, is vulnerable to arbitrary changes. It is, by Hegel, also described as a changeable consciousness. What it knows and what it thinks is vulnerable to changes, uncontrolled by itself. It changes at the will of its master, the Lord. The master's will is not known for the Bondsman, instead it comes from an unknown "beyond". Consequently, the changeable consciousness changes (for itself) somewhat contingently, arbitrarily, as the master, effecting its changes, is external for it. The Lord, in contrast, is an *unchangeable consciousness*, universally and timelessly same. It is unchangeable by anything which it does not, itself, master. As such, it is autonomous. However, as the Lord's "pure" knowledge and will is not known to the Lord itself, nor is it known to the Bondsman, the unity of these two figures (i.e. the changeable consciousness, which includes these two thoughts) is at the mercy of somewhat contingent changes. (PhS §207-209) The internal movement of pure self-consciousness contrasts with how *actual* self-consciousness moves as it thinks. By actual self-consciousness, the dialectical unrest of pure self-consciousness is replaced by the dialectics, *Aufhebung* (negation of negation).

Changeable consciousness cannot unite together the two thoughts which it has of itself, namely, itself as a particular something (as limited) and also as a non-limited thinker. Or, actually, it does think of itself as both, yet only so that these two thoughts constitute a reciprocal denial of each other. Hence, pure self-consciousness is *externally beyond itself inside itself*. With Hegel, there is an important difference between being "externally beyond itself inside itself", and being "internally beyond itself inside itself". Pure self-consciousness has not internally, conceptually, mediated the two thoughts of itself together; hence it is externally beyond itself inside itself. A pure self-consciousness constitutes an active self-denial, which it thinks of as "freedom". (PhS §205, §208, §216, §227, §231-237)

This means that whenever it thinks of itself as having e.g. a particular sexual identity, it also has the urge to “free” itself from the bondage of this “limited” identity. And reciprocally, the freedom, into which it frees itself, does not satisfy it either. When it clings to the “identity” of a master, it feels that it is a master over a nothingness, because the object, which it masters, has no independence outside of its own thoughts. It is a master over a particularity (Bondsman, and the objects, laboured by it) which is actually a nothingness. The satisfaction of being a master is a vanishing thought, because the particular world, which it masters, is non-existent. In the name of freedom, Unhappy Consciousness rejects all particular forms. It cannot actually accept anything particular, because any choice it makes necessarily restricts its freedom. Paradoxically, its uncompromising view of freedom makes it less free. (Consider a person who does not want to have any permanent sexual relationship because it would “limit her freedom”. She is less free than most of us in the sense that she is *not* free to live in a permanent relationship.) Hence, Unhappy Consciousness needs to go on, towards new particular identities, in search for a satisfaction in an independent object, which would not be “moved”, or “changed” at its own will. It needs to find an object, with a will of its own, capable of resisting it. It desires to relate to an object, which is a subject, namely, a being with its own self. In this kind of object, it can find its own self.

Pure self-consciousness thinks of things on the basis of *immediate duality*, which denotes an important contrast to a *mediated conceptual construction* (explained in chapter 2.1.3). The parties of a duality cannot be, together, parts of a same particular whole. The dual sides do not “speak” of a same particular thing, because they are not related to each other conceptually, by a mediating “third”. These kinds of dualist parts constitute what Hegel calls as the “absolute dialectical unrest”. In the absolute dialectical unrest a “particularizing” thought of a thing (i.e. a Bondsman -thought) is opposed by, or criticised by, an abstract thought (a pure, empty, sceptical thought). The result of this confrontation is “purifying”. The thing is purified of its particular contents. Nothing actually changes in dialectical unrest, instead, the thing in question becomes over again rendered into an abstraction. In dialectical unrest, the other thought of a thing denies the existence of the other thought, instead of “criticising” it, adding some new information to it, or making it change into something new. Absolute dialectical unrest changes things into abstractions, into voids: not into something (particular) “new”. Hegel implies that this kind of “unrest” is an on-going process in the mind of pure self-consciousness. This “unrest” constitutes the fundamental way in which this self thinks of things. Whenever it is presented with a particular description of some thing, it purifies the thing by this “pure criticism”.

For Hegel, ideally free selves see themselves both as universals and particulars. They take free self-consciousness as their universal genus, and see themselves as particular instances of this genus. Between free selves there can be communication, e.g. disagreements and conflicts. Disagreements become possible only when thinkers think that they speak of same particular things. There can be no disagreements over abstractions. Abstractions are void of such features which could be the object of a disagreement. Because free self-consciousnesses themselves think that they speak of same things, and consider each others as valid knowers, or theorists of things, they can e.g. enter into a dispute over the thing. This kind of disputes denote the kind of dialectical movement (in contrast to absolute dialectical unrest) by which thinkers can potentially limitlessly enrich their knowledge of thingness. (PhS §208)

2.2.8. Between universal and particular

A conceptual thinker may move *externally* between the various thoughts by which it thinks of some specific thing, e.g. of sexuality. It does not identify its thoughts (of sexuality) as *internal* to itself as a particular thinker. Nor does it realize that its way to think of things – even as a collection of mutually contradicting aspects – constitutes a self-relational, historical, particular construction of some thing, e.g. sexuality. In order for it to identify its thoughts concerning the thing in question, as its own thoughts, it should acknowledge itself as the one who gathers together these various aspects and makes a particular construction (a concept) out of these aspects. It should see itself as the one who builds up, or produces a specific thing (like sexuality) out of various thoughts. It is the one who relates various thoughts as aspects of some thing. Only if it sees itself as the one who makes some thing, like sexuality, or its own self (as a subject for itself), into a unified concept, it is able to differentiate its own thinking from other thinking. The idea of conceptual *unities* refers especially to the self who makes unities (*identifiable* things, objects) out from components (thoughts). This self, who actually always is a concept (i.e. a system-building connector of its thoughts, so that it makes its thoughts into “somethings”, e.g. concepts of sexuality) should see itself as a concept and thus become a *self-conscious concept* (a reflective concept). As a self-conscious concept, it can differentiate itself from another (as another concept). Because particularity (the aspect of the Bondsman) is a feature of all selves, the self is able to differentiate itself from the other. If the self does not identify itself as a *particular* concept, it cannot differentiate itself from the other.

A *third*, or, a *middle term* (the self as a mediator of its own thoughts) is identifiable as a *particular* middle term. Thoughts relate not only to a self, but to a particular self. According to Hegel, a thinker can acknowledge itself as a particular middle term, by acknowledging the existence of other middle terms. A third, a mediator, exists for a mediator, i.e. for a thinker who acknowledges itself (and others) as mediators. A *self-conscious* mediator looks at itself and others from the point of view of a mediator. In order for it to look at itself from the point of view of a mediator, it must have formed a genus out of the mediating property.

In order to find itself as its own middle term (i.e. the mediator of its own thoughts) pure self-consciousness should become aware that there are other thinkers besides itself, who think of themselves and the world, on the basis of two thoughts. Actually, all thinking *ministers* between its own two thoughts, its doubleness. All thinking ministers between its particularity and the ultimate context of its particularity. The middle term (minister) unifies its various thoughts. Even if thinking seems to have given up its faculty of ministering, and handed it over to another minister, e.g. to an external *priest* (as, for Hegel, is the case in much of religious thought) it anyhow ultimately does the ministering by itself. The very act of handing over its own middle term (and, as such the unity of itself) to another is anyhow something *thought* by the thinking self itself. (PhS §227-230)

It could be mentioned here that as considers the contrast between *external priesthood* and

internal priesthood, Hegel appears as somewhat a true Protestant. For Hegel, in the spirit of Protestant “universal priesthood”, the minister between what is unlimited (God) and what is limited (a particular human subject) lies ultimately in each thinking self. Nevertheless (as concerns Hegel’s own religiousness) he places the rational state above religion in matters affecting e.g. ethical principles, rightness, laws and institutions. As Taylor says, for Hegel the convictions of the church are too undetermined, and too subjective in their application, without there being a concrete expression of ethical life in the rational state. (PhS §227-230; Taylor 1975, 485)

In order for a pure self-consciousness to be able to become conscious of itself as the minister of its own affairs, it should see that any thinking is ultimately in bondage (limited) *for itself*. Thus, any Bondsman-thought relates to a potentially free self. In short, anybody who takes itself as its own object of thought is an internally doubled thinker (i.e. a self-consciousness) and thus capable for free self-consciousness and freedom. Every internally doubled self carries in it the basic elements (the two thoughts) enabling it to freedom. Only free selves can allow others to contribute to their thinking and knowing of the world. Bondsman-thought (or, Bondsman-minded thinker), who is not ministered to its own Lord-thought, cannot go beyond its limits, because it does not recognize its Lord (the one who determines its limits) as its own self. And, reciprocally, a Lord-thought cannot go beyond its limits, because it does not recognize any limits to itself.

By seeing that there is also other “ministers” who can reflect on particular subjectivity from the universal view-point, pure self-consciousness becomes conscious that it is not the only, universal reflecting consciousness, or the Lord, over all Bondsmen any more. It is a particular Lord over a particular Bondsman, i.e. it is its own Lord over its own Bondsman. When Bondsmen become acknowledged as actually containing their own Lords, they can become acknowledged as the “knowers” of their own limits. They are acknowledged as valid “knowers” of the world, as there is no higher knowing of them “beyond” themselves. There is no point of view (above them), by which their own point of view onto themselves would be seen to be limited, without their own knowing of this ultimate point of view. Pure self-consciousness realizes that it does not look at Bondsmen from beyond or above Bondsmen themselves, yet, Bondsmen are at the same level of “looking at everything there is” than itself. By this dialectical step forward, along the ladder of self-knowledge, pure self-consciousness realizes that as a system of thinking, containing such conceptual moments as bondage (which refers, basically, to Consciousness as Understanding) and lordship (referring to self-consciousness) it is similar with Others.

Basically, for Hegel, by the act of acknowledging the existence of “other ministers”, besides itself, pure self-consciousness turns into *actual* self-consciousness. The crucial point is that both of its two thoughts gain particularity through the particularization of their minister, their mediating third. As a minister acknowledges its similarity with other ministers, it is able to see itself as also different from others. It does not constitute the abstract beyond (the pure I) of particular differentiation any more. Instead, it can be differentiated from others (ministers, thirds) because others are basically similar to it. It is not an undifferentiated (pure) reflecting consciousness of all others any more. Yet, as a reflecting consciousness, it can be both differentiated and particularized by Other reflecting consciousnesses. It can see itself as a self-consciousness, because it sees other self-consciousnesses. Because there exists other structurally similar systems of *doubly thinking* besides its own, its existence can be

particularized.

However, before it particularizes itself through others, its system of thinking exists for it as immediate externality. Its internal system of thinking exists as objective reality, as the world “out there”. Pure self-consciousness reads the world as immediate *absolute dialectical unrest* (discussed earlier in 2.2.2). If a particular doubleness is not particularized (i.e. related back, or returned back to its thinking self) it is read as a non-subjective fact. This means that a self reads the whole world on the basis of its own doubleness only. (PhS § 547-548, 574-577)

When the Other is *acknowledged*, its *own* ministership (its own self-contextualization) is considered to be basically as valid as mine, or any others. Hegel does not imply that this means that we would have to consider the other to be automatically (universally) right, in what it thinks, yet, that we take its views seriously, as basically equal to our own, or anybody else's views. This means that I do not contextualize the Other *from beyond Others own contextualization of itself*. I do not situate Others contextualization of itself as situated still in a larger universe of knowledge, unknown to the other itself. The Other is not, by me, seen to be contextualized in relation to something which it necessarily cannot *itself* know. An example of recognizing the Other as a valid contributor, as concerns the general “knowing” of things, is that when the Other presents its ideas about things, I do not, in *my* mind, see these ideas as *symptoms* of e.g. the difficult childhood of the Other, or *caused* by some other context, unknown to the Other itself. Thus, even if I may see the ideas presented by the Other as mistaken, I can still consider them as serious contributions, not as symptoms or effects of some “higher” or more remote cause which affects the Other but which is beyond Other's own capacity of understanding.

The next sub-chapter continues with the theme of pure self-consciousness as Unhappy Consciousness. The various aspects of Unhappy Consciousness are important to take up as the theme of “two thoughts” or “internal doubleness” is the basic theme of this work. With Unhappy Consciousness the doubleness takes a form which is only externally ministered. This means that the minister has not become conscious of his *own* ministering, nor has he henceforth been able to become conscious of the existence of other ministers. The contrast between external (immediate) ministering and internal (self-consciously mediated) ministering is crucially important with Hegel. The Hegelian relation between free self-consciousnesses (between free self and free other) is ultimately the relation between ministers, made possible by the particularization of ministering. Further, cognitive relationships and absolute knowing are based on the particularization of ministering, i.e. mediated internal doubleness. Unhappy consciousness presents for Hegel, besides Reason, one of the most developed forms of external, immediate doubleness. It is interesting that even that it includes most of the same components than the internally mediated doubleness, it is in a sharp contrast with it.

2.2.9. Bad infinite. Absolute freedom.

In this chapter I explicate Unhappy Consciousness as an internally “worn out” stage of abstract (pure) self-consciousness. It is to become gradually so unhappy and frustrated with itself, as to finally allow for the existence of other knowledge of the world, besides its own.

This is the stage where the object is *known* to be unknown for any particular subject. In this chapter I refer to Charles Taylor's account of two important aspects of Unhappy Consciousness, *bad infinite* and *absolute freedom*.

For Hegel, the "Enlightenment thinker" thinks that all thinking (including its own, to the extent that its thinking has any particular content to it) is unknown to, or beyond itself. Thus, it has become a conscious of the internal doubleness of thinking, described above. It not only is internally double, it also is aware that its own thinking as well as the thinking of Other, is internally double. An internal doubleness assumes a specific form for a thinker who is itself conscious of it. Because it knows that it is an internal doubleness, it clings to the idea that it thinks, whatever it thinks, on the basis of two thoughts, (discussed already in the previous chapter).

Unhappy Consciousness thinks of any thing on the basis of two thoughts, or two moments, inherent in conceptual thinking. The two thoughts are, as explained already earlier, the moment of particularity, i.e. the moment of stable subject-object-relation, which displays Consciousness as Understanding. The other thought denotes the moment of abstracting from particularity. The moment of abstraction", namely, the moment of absolute singularity or individuality, displays also a *genus* or *origin*, which is "pure I". Pure I is an inherent moment of conceptual thinking, by which it conducts abstracting from particularities. Unhappy Consciousness thinks of any thing on the basis of two "selves", namely the Consciousness as Understanding, and the pure I.

As Taylor suggests, Unhappy Consciousness is a stage of a highly internalized form of a system of lordship and bondage. Unhappy Consciousness realizes that there is no way of getting rid of particular subjectivity. It sees that it cannot rise anywhere above particular subjectivity by the power of its thought, yet stays limited by it even if it tries to rise above it. However, it cannot see any particular identity as its own, because it sees that all of them are thought while in bondage. Thus, unhappy consciousness has become disappointed in its ability to actually rise above "slavery". It is globally cynical towards all efforts to reach the "immutable", i.e. that which is universally and timelessly identical with itself. (Taylor 1975,159)

Taylor writes about the Hegelian Unhappy Consciousness:

In PhG Hegel presents the unhappy consciousness as one who is deeply divided because it is both the immutable self-identical subject of thought and the individual who is subject to the changeable world. But this situation as it is lived by the subject is one in which he identifies himself as particular with the inessential and the mutable. The immutable is projected into a beyond. His unity with it is felt only in the sense of loss, the sense that he must somehow go beyond his present estate and achieve oneness with this immutable. But since at the present stage, particular and immutable are so defined as to be incompatible, this attempt is perpetually doomed to failure. Since I cannot stop being a particular individual, I can never attain to unity with the unchanging. (Taylor 1975, 160)

According to Hegelian analysis, this somewhat resigned, self-enslaved mode of thought

practices nevertheless “immutable” knowing, even that it itself thinks that it has given up hope of ever reaching the “immutable”. As its self-consciousness is still underdeveloped and not particularized through acknowledging actual Others, it is unaware of how it still universalizes its own sceptical doubts. It does not relate its way to suspect *universally all* attempts to reach the immutable into its own thinking of it. Thus, it practices its own immutability in the form of cynicism towards all attempts to reach immutability.

Paradoxically, this special mode of self-reflection thinks that it treats itself and others *equally*, as it claims to be as unreachable (as considers its own immutable nature) to itself as the others are to their selves. It claims that all are universally and equally incapable of finding the immutable truth. Yet, it does not recognize that it commits to a performative contradiction by making this claim.

Unhappy Consciousness has realized that all thinking is self-relational thinking, and thus particular. What Hegel means by self-relational thinking is what we would nowadays call not only as self-relational thinking but also as contextual, situational and historicist thinking *context-dependent, situation-dependent, historically time-dependent* thinking. Context-dependent thinking sees the world on the basis of its context. Its own context denotes the universe, according to which it sees particulars. Unhappy consciousness is itself a consciousness of this. It has realized that selves are actually normative “contexts of thinking” and that these contexts are numerous.

According to Hegel, Unhappy consciousness sees thinking in general, however, as *only* context-dependent. It sees also its own thinking as only context-dependent. The reason for this is that Unhappy Consciousness continues to pass, mediate, all particularity to the hands of an abstract Lord, within its own thinking. It places all thinking into brackets, considers it as suspect, because all of it relates to parochial subjectivity. It sees that all self-relational, particular things (also abstractions, as they are self-relational abstractions) belong to the realm of unessential things. As it cannot mediate any further than just the immediate mediation between the two (i.e. the absolute dialectical unrest between particularity and universality) it cannot hold on to any particularity.

Unhappy Consciousness does not see the context-dependent thinking as including its own self-reflective faculty. It does not acknowledge the context-dependent thinking as constituting its own *mediated doubleness*. In other words, it does not see the context-dependent thinking as a thinking which is capable of reflecting its context-dependency. It sees all forms thinking as imprisoned into their particular traditions, ideologies or social conditions. As such, unhappy consciousness does not see the context-dependent thinking as similar with its own thinking. Unhappy consciousness thinks of context-dependent (self-relational) thinking as *externally* double, not as *internally* double. As such, consciousness of doubleness is not particularized *for Unhappy Consciousness*, as it later will be for actual self-consciousness. Unhappy Consciousness just is a consciousness of doubleness, yet, it does not yet *think* that it is a consciousness of doubleness, and that there are others, too. It thinks of things on the basis of two thoughts, yet, it does not think that it itself is the mediator, the ministering activity, of these two thoughts. It does not recognize that its own way to think is a living proof that human thought can arise above particular contexts: what is possible for it must be possible for others, too.

For Hegel, the stage of abstract self-consciousness denotes the stage of *abstracting from other thinking*, and as such it is a necessary stage. Yet, if thinking does not go any further than this, it realizes the nature of its own thinking and other thinking only as abstractions. Pure self-consciousness cannot actually see anything particular, when it looks at particularity, because it cannot particularize the position from which it itself looks at particularity.

In consequence abstract self-consciousness appears as *patronizing*. It contextualizes context-dependent thinking from beyond the contexts themselves. Its own self and others are abstract (unknown) contexts of thinking for it, regardless of the fact that the others themselves may not be abstract contexts of thinking *to themselves*, as not all thinkers think in the same way as pure self-consciousness. Yet, pure self-consciousness does not acknowledge the other thinkers as equal knowers of themselves, and equal knowers of the world, and thus it considers the particular self-knowledge, practiced by others, as not equal with its own abstract knowledge.

In a way, Hegel's Unhappy consciousness appears like a peculiar kind of a psycho-therapist who thinks that the patients will *never* find out what causes them to think, or feel, the way they do. Whatever context the patients reconstruct, to give an explanation as to why they think the way they do, feel the way they do, or why they think of other people, or the world, the way they do, the therapist knows always *more*, as s/he knows that the patients will never find out, in full, the ultimate context of their thoughts and feelings. The therapist *knows* (and applies this knowing to all of her/his patients, as well as to her/himself, to the extent that s/he her/himself has ideas of why s/he her/himself thinks the way s/he does) that the ultimate meaning-giving context is lost. The therapist knows that her/his own universal context is lost, and so is the universal context of all others. Yet, the very fact that the therapist is able to see all this, shows that people are not doomed to live in ignorance.

By becoming conscious of itself, Unhappy consciousness may realize that it (itself) *sees* others as unknown to themselves. The unknowingness of others is something *thought* by it. As it may relate its own thoughts of others to itself, it may be able to acknowledge that others practice their own thinking also, outside of what it thinks of others. Consequently, by becoming conscious of how it thinks of others, it may differentiate between its thoughts of others and actual others themselves. However, it sees the Others as necessarily imprisoned inside their particular contexts.

Unhappy consciousness does not *identify* with context-dependent (other) thinking. It observes the realm of otherness from a position beyond it, itself abstracted pure from all particular otherness of its own. It sees its own particular subjectivity also as situated in this external realm. For Hegel, the "point of view" (otherness) from which a self reflects itself, is always similar with the self. Thus, if self does not particularize the abstract point of view, from which it looks at itself, it sees itself as an abstraction. For Hegel, a moment of abstraction (a moment of "pure I") is an inherent moment of all conceptual thinking. However, if it is taken as a non-particular, limitless point of view, from which self is looked at, the self, who looks at itself like this, is seen as an abstraction to itself.

For Hegel, self is in fact meant to (by becoming self-conscious) to find itself as beyond itself, external to itself, and other to itself. Yet, unhappy consciousness has understood the meaning of "being beyond itself" so that it looks at itself from a non-particularized moment of "pure I". It does not identify the moment of pure I as its own moment of abstraction, as belonging to

the system of a particular conceptual thinker. As such it cannot recognize *actual* “externality” nor “beyond” itself at all, as the beyond is an indifferent abstraction for it. (PhS §192-193, 199-200)

According to Hegel, the realm of self-relational thinking is externalized by the unhappy consciousness. As external, self-relational thinking is seen to exist, yet, it is an indifferent abstraction for unhappy consciousness. *As such, all self-relational thinking is (for it) external other thinking, not actually its own.* Because other thinking is *universally and timelessly* questionable, it would be a mistake to identify with any particular case of it. The stage of unhappy consciousness denotes, for Hegel, the “Kantian” dilemma, in which thinking can see other thinking (i.e. particular subjective ideas about “thing”) only as abstractions, not as its “own”. It observes that things are thought differently (in the realm of otherness, external to it) between one (questionable) thinking, and other (questionable) thinking. Unhappy Consciousness has no way of determining which one of the “other thinkers” are right about things and which are wrong. It cannot make any own judgements concerning things because it is fundamentally sceptical towards all particular determinations of things. Thus, it observes that things exist indefinitely *for other*. In contrast to a thinking in which things exist endlessly for other, Hegel intended to theorize how things could exist both for self and for other. (ibid.)

According to Hegel, the ability to “go over” the limits of context-dependent particular subjectivity (the level of Consciousness or Understanding”) is connected to subject’s conceptual capacities to reflect itself and to be self-conscious. Subject is able to be conscious of its own consciousness. Subject can become conscious that its own thinking is particular, historical and limited. Subject is able to think that the world it sees, and the things included in this world, is a world which *it* sees, it is a world “for it”, and that the world “for it” is probably not what the true world is “in itself”.

Yet, for Hegel, the above realization alone does not constitute actual self-consciousness which can take place only when the existence of equal other self-consciousness is acknowledged. Subjectivity, which considers the outside of its own particular subjectivity as something valid cannot be built just on the realization that “particular subjectivity is limited”. The Hegelian difference between pure self-consciousness and actual, free self-consciousness becomes discussed here. Pure self-consciousness realizes that particular subjective thinking is limited. Yet, particular subjective thinking is not limited (particular) for pure self-consciousness itself because it does not have such a particular self, from which it could see limits. For pure self-consciousness, particulars *as particulars* exist for context-dependent thinking (metaphorically, for Bondsman).

For Hegel, a consciousness of one’s *own* limits is the base for actual freedom. This means that a self should not be only conscious of the limited nature and and particularity of others (i.e. the limits of Bondsmen). Actual freedom contrasts with the abstract freedom (which is the freedom for pure self-consciousness, called by Hegel also as Absolute freedom). Actual freedom means that thinking is limited (particular) for itself. Acknowledging ones own limits (i.e. ones own particularity) thus goes hand in hand with actual freedom. Importantly, for Hegel, one becomes free (i.e. thinking becomes free) by acknowledging its own particularity. This however includes also the important idea of going beyond one’s own limits. In abstract freedom one observes the limits of others (bondsmen) without being able to acknowledge

one's own limits. Not being able to see one's own limits is due to the structure of lordship and bondage, inherent in pure self-consciousness. A thinking which does not acknowledge its own limits, cannot go beyond its own limits, either. Limits must become internal and one's own (particular) in order for a one to be able to go beyond them. This can take place only if the existence of other, equal self-consciousnesses is acknowledged. Equality or similarity is a crucial point here, as it means for Hegel that other (as another thinking and knowing of the world) does not automatically cancel or question the truth of its other. There is reciprocal resistance as to which truth is right. As is explained more thoroughly later, when the basic rationality of the other is acknowledged, thinking can go beyond its limits because, in short, it can learn from the other. Thinking can learn from the other if it recognizes the basic rationality of the other. This means, among other things, that one must give up the patronizing attitude, characteristic for all sceptical thinking and all thinking based on pure self-consciousness (including unhappy consciousness). Importantly, for Hegel, one becomes free from its own limits (its limited knowing of the world) when it acknowledges the basically equal rationality of the others. The going beyond/over one's own limits takes place as relating to the rationality of the others. The actual, objective freedom inherent in this takes ultimately place as the constitution of objectivity which is laboured for "us".

In order to become limited for itself, subject must know its limits as particulars and as included in its own conceptual thinking. This is possible only if it knows what is outside of its own limits. According to Hegel, the outside of one's own limits is another (basically similar with one's own) conceptual system, which posits its own particular limits. Another name for a conceptual system is a self or a self-consciousness. Each self is (or, constitutes) the outside of another self. The outside (other self) must become recognized as something conceptual and rational *for one*, if one wishes to become limited for oneself. It must be emphasized that becoming limited (particular) for one's self means for Hegel that one becomes also conceptual and rational for one's self. This is not possible if one does not acknowledge the existence of other beings as rational and conceptual.

One must find its own limits (its particularity, conceptuality and rationality) in another self, basically similar and equal with itself. Only another self-consciousness can provide rational, particular limit for oneself. For Hegel, just the realization that a subject is limited by its historical position is not enough, if the goal is to actually take the outside, or the beyond of oneself into account. To be able to actually see "something" outside the limits of one's own subjective world-view, the subject must become not only particular for itself, but instead a particular third for itself. This is possible only if it can relate to another self-consciousness, which it sees not only as a particular subject, but instead as another internally mediating thinker, capable of reflecting its own limits, contextuality and historicity.

Unhappy Consciousness can be also seen as an ideology – as an insight towards objective reality as institutions, social structures and traditions. And it can be seen as an insight towards material substance, or, what Hegel calls as Being. For Unhappy consciousness, the material, objective world is something alien as its actual truth is somewhere beyond itself. Unhappy Consciousness thinks that the substance of particular lives is beyond them. Taylor writes:

It has the sense of a reconciliation which is felt as absent, in another world or long ago and far away, a reconciliation achieved elsewhere on which we essentially depend This is part of the consciousness of alienation (...) The basic

attitude of alienation is one in which men feel that their substance lies in something outside them, and hence that they can only realize themselves by overcoming their particularity and conforming to this reality. (Taylor 1975, 179)

Hegel relates the Enlightenment thinking and Kantian thought with Unhappy Consciousness. According to Taylor, especially two aspects of the Enlightenment ideology are important for Hegel. First, there is the idea that the absolute or God is reduced to the empty notion of a supreme being to which no further description can be applied. Taylor writes:

Of course, many *Aufklärer* did not believe in God at all, but for Hegel not much separated these materialists from those who believed in a super-sensible reality. For they thought of some abstraction like Nature or Matter as underlying the changing reality of the sensible world. But an abstraction like Matter, which bears none of the particular descriptions of things in the world, is indistinguishable from spiritual substrate; and a spiritual substrate without particular description is indistinguishable from pure Being. We have here an echo of Hegel's famous opening dialectic of the Logic, that of Being and Nothing; and the message is the same: in the end all abstractions are alike (Taylor 1975, 180-181)

The second aspect of the Enlightenment ideology which Taylor sees as especially important for Hegel, is the idea of the usefulness, or utility, which denotes the concept underlying the Enlightenment. Taylor writes about this:

To think of something as useful is to think of it as without intrinsic significance, rather its significance is to serve the ends of something else. This notion of the useful flows naturally out of the Enlightenment outlook; for this sees the world as made up of material things without any further significance. This neutral world has no meaning for man, either as expressive of something higher, or as embodying a form with which he must conform in order to realize himself. (...) Utilitarianism is therefore the ethic of the Enlightenment. Utilitarianism is an ethic in which acts are judged according to their consequences, that is, their relevance to some extraneous end, hence their usefulness. This is opposed to an ethic which judges an act by some intrinsic quality, such as embodying a given virtue, or conforming to some moral law. Such intrinsic properties are swept aside by the Enlightenment as nonsense.. (Taylor 1975, 181)

Important Hegelian notion of *bad infinite* is linked with the Enlightenment thought and Unhappy Consciousness. Actually, in bad infinite the two aspects described above, characteristic of the Enlightenment thought, meet. Things are useful, not because of themselves but because of something else. Yet, because this "something else" which would have intrinsic value, is something that cannot be described, the category of the useful has no stopping point for it. Taylor explains this:

But the hidden contradiction in this for Hegel is that the category of the useful has no stopping point, it is universal in application. Some things may be judged useful for my purposes; but I too am a particular reality in the world, there is no reason why my purposes should be considered final ends. I and my purposes in

turn can be seen as serving or dis-serving the ends of others, perhaps that of society in general; and these others, or society in general can be seen as serving or not the purposes of others, say the members of this society, and so on. We have a bad infinite. Hegel expresses this by saying that each thing can be seen as in itself, but also as for an other, that is, as having just instrumental significance. There is no structure of significant reality which forces us to stop somewhere, which expresses the final purpose; or as Hegel puts it this chain of extrinsic justifications does not return to a self, that is to a subjectivity which would encompass the whole development. (Taylor 1975, 181)

Hegel sees that the Enlightenment thinking is trapped in a peculiar kind of universal: universal as infinite movement. This movement is motivated by a recurring dissatisfaction. This thinking cannot be satisfied with any actual solutions (e.g. as actual state institutions) because any solution is necessarily a particular solution. Unhappy Consciousness resembles the *dialectical unrest*, explained earlier. Bad infinite and dialectical unrest are both based on a lack of a particular “middle term”. This means that the mind of the self, who moves from one moment of bad infinite, or dialectical unrest, to another, is not conscious of this movement as a particular process, taking place in a particular mind. As the self is not conscious of itself as a particular conceptual thinker, it does not relate its conceptual moments (the moment of affirming particular reality, and the moment of abstracting from it) to its own thinking of them. If it identifies with (or, “posits”) the other thought, it must refute the other thought. When it identifies with the other moment (the moment of affirming particular reality), it cannot identify with the other one (the moment of moving beyond, or, abstracting from particularity).

Another concept which Hegel relates to Enlightenment thought and Unhappy Consciousness, that of *Absolute freedom* is important. It resembles bad infinite: the consciousness strives for a goal, which is forever doomed to fail, as the goal is known to be forever somewhere beyond. Taylor explains Hegel’s notion of Absolute freedom:

this consciousness sees the world as neutral, as capable of being formed to fit human purposes. There is nothing in it which has intrinsic significance, which demands to be treated with respect and preserved; all can be altered and reformed according to man’s needs and goals. Moreover this consciousness is not that of particular individuals, it is a universal rational consciousness which has won through to this insight; therefore its purpose in reforming the world will be a single, rational and a universal one. (...) The universal knowing subject who sees the world spread out as neutral objects whose workings it thoroughly understands, cannot but be seized by the ambition to transform this world according to universal reason. This is the idea of absolute freedom, freedom untrammelled by any obstacle, not even that of other wills, for the will in question is a universal will, hence that of all men in so far as they are free. The world is (for this consciousness) simply its will, and this will is universal (Taylor 1975, 184-185)

Hegel explains the consciousness of absolute freedom as incapable of accepting any differentiation (into identities, estates etc.) because all such differentiations are an assault against its freedom. As a non-particular, non-differentiated will, it does not accept the limits

of particular differentiations. Thus, *in action*, it does not take some particular thing, or structure, as its goal. Instead, as its intentionality is based on itself, on its non-differentiated, non-positional, non-particular self, it takes the destruction of particularities and differentiations as its goal. It wants to universalize itself. When it assumes an intentional, practical attitude, based on itself, it becomes a destruction of all differentiation. Hegel sees Terror, of e.g. the French Revolution as exemplifying this consciousness. Terror can be seen as the ultimate form of alienation. As in the Terror, absolute freedom ultimately leads to absolute un-freedom. (PhS §582-594; Taylor 1975, 184-187)

2.2.10. Consciousness as the Enlightenment Reason

Knowing as *Reason* takes place after the earlier phases of self-consciousness as pure self-consciousness have been passed. (PhS §231). At the earlier levels of self-consciousness (as pure self-consciousness) the world as something particular and stable - as it once was known by Consciousness as Understanding - became a restless abstraction. Whereas Consciousness as Understanding saw a particular world, this “stable world” became fragmented into fragmented thoughts by the emergence of self-consciousness, first as pure self-consciousness. When the level of Reason is reached, the world as something real returns. Yet, Reason still denotes a consciousness which continues to be based on pure self-consciousness.

Here the idea of *idealism* emerges. Basically it means that, for Reason, *rationality*, or rational thought determines the course of things. Reason *thinks* that Being is structured rationally, and it develops according to its inherent rational laws. Thus, what appears as a world, is ideal, it corresponds with reason. Reason knows the things it sees in terms of *idealism*. At this phase the thinker makes an effort to bring together the two levels of consciousness. It tries to bring together the identifying of particulars (Consciousness as Understanding) and self-consciousness so that the empirical world would be preserved. It does not want to be lost into the ambivalence of pure self-consciousness. Here, the thinker knows that the world it sees relates to its own - rational - knowing and thinking of it. Thus, the world and the thinking of the world are *thought* to have a shared fundament, rationality.

Nevertheless, still at the level of Reason, the thinker *itself* remains in distance from its rational world. The thinker as subjective, historical and particular is not brought into a conceptual unity with its own rationality. As such, reason appears as timeless, context-less and universal, without a consciousness of its situation, history and particular subjectivity. Reason has, in a way, found a real world, yet keeps itself, as a subject, distanced from it. It feels that if it connects reason with particular subjectivity, reason as universal vanishes. As such, Reason cannot yet bring together (within its own thinking) consciousness of particulars with self-consciousness. The result is that a particular world exists for others (metaphorically, for Bondsmen), namely, for particular contexts, but not for the rational thinker itself. (PhS §232-233; Taylor 1975, 161)

The thinker, as ultimately a conceptual thinker, must still leave some important parts of itself out if it understands itself only as rational, as is the case at the level of reason. Reason is the phase of *scientific thought*, especially of empirical science. As such, , it is very important for

Hegel. Hegel is not arguing that scientific thought should be replaced by something else, for example, by Hegelian philosophical speculation. Yet, scientific thought cannot grasp such aspects like actual, particular otherness, spirit and history. According to Taylor, reason (as observing reason) cannot cope with the meshing of the given and the self-made in man. It cannot understand man as an agent. As concerns the idea of finding a satisfactory explanation of who he is, rational thinker of Reason thinks that it will find himself in the reality which surrounds him. Taylor writes about how the rational thinker thinks about self-fulfilment:

Man and the world are designed for happiness, man has only to reach out, as it were, and pluck the fruit of happiness. Instead of consuming external reality as in the earlier dialectic of desire, the subject, certain of his unity and sich with it, just removes from it “the form of other-being”; “The Enlightenment doctrine of man as naturally good and hence as finding the criterion of right in his own natural desires (whose fulfilment is pleasure) builds on the view of nature as rational harmonious whole which underlay the scientific enterprise (observing reason). (Taylor 1975,163)

However, thinking still remains unsatisfied at the level of the Enlightenment Reason. It anyhow seeks to find itself as an individual, not as a creature which displays externally the laws of universal rationality so as to constitute, in itself, an ordinary object of empirical science.

By Reason, “thing” as empirical is brought back, yet it still remains something alien. Thing as a particular must be still received externally - from the metaphorical Bondsman who labours on particularity. This means that thing is still an external abstraction to its thinker, because here the thinker identifies especially with rationality. However, as particulars are still needed to be thought by someone, it remains thought, and turned into existence, by Bondsmen. Reason thus still needs Bondsmen, through whom it deals with its dependency on specific particularity, as particularity cannot be thought in reference to rational categories. World, and the rational thinker itself, as particulars, remain externalized. They continue to be indifferent abstractions, not particulars, to this thinker itself. Reason observes how a particular thing is posited by the context-dependent others, yet it itself cannot posit a particular thing. At the level of Reason, thinking makes the mistake that it adheres only to *pure reason* and *pure idealism*, which remains still based on pure self-consciousness. According to Hegel, Reason lacks self-reflection. It reflects only on others, not on itself. (PhS §234)

Nevertheless, it is important that idealism is introduced at the stage of Reason. This means that Reason relates the world it sees to the thinking and knowing selves. Reason knows that different thinkers may posit different worlds in their thinking, yet, these different worlds are united by a common rationality. Because Being (thingness in general) is rational, views of it can be potentially measured against this rationality. As rational, selves can find themselves in each other, i.e. they can communicate and relate to each others’ ideas. Various ways to know the world are not atomistically separated from each other.

Reason knows that the world is nowhere beyond the thinking selves. World is not external to thinking. Reason knows that thinkers cannot escape from their dependency on nature and

others into any “freedom from particularity”. It sees that the idea of absolute or abstract freedom was an error. However, Reason comprehends these very thoughts themselves still as abstractions. Reason has gathered together several moments of its conceptual thinking, but it still has not united them into a particular concept. The conceptual parts of thinking are known to exist, yet, they are still external thoughts in their relation to each other. The reason for this is that this thinking has not yet acknowledged an actual Other. As it is, it understands itself very profoundly already, yet, all that it understands remains abstractive, because there is not yet a recognitive relationship with another free self-consciousness.

The problem with Reason, as with all thinking based on pure self-consciousness, is that it has not found the “middle term” which binds together the moments of its thinking. As such, it remains dualistic, that is, parochial and one-sidedly recognitive. It is divided between observing thinking (self-consciousness, “Lord”) and observed thinking (Consciousness as understanding, “Bondsmen”), yet it cannot bind these two sides of itself together in any satisfactory way. It is a conceptual thinker, who moves between conceptual moments as it thinks, yet, it cannot construct a unified unity of its thoughts, a concept, before it finds the unifying element, the middle term. For Hegel, the middle term, or itself as a mediator, a third, can be found only when reflected back by the Other as another middle term. (PhS §241-242, §802-805)

As not conscious of itself as a mediator - and as a particular mediator - the relations (differences, similarities etc.) this thinking makes, continue to have their origin in *pure* (abstract) *I*. (PhS §233-239). It cannot bring the various thoughts of itself actually together, because it cannot make them to refer to a shared origin, a genus, which would also appear as a particular instance of its genus. As Reason does not yet posit itself as a particular origin of its thoughts, and as a particular, differentiable origin in relation to Other, it cannot posit particular differences in “things” or “world” either. Because it does not differentiate *itself*, no differences exist *for it*. It remains an abstract context, or origin, of its thoughts. Thus, it depends on Others (Bondsmen) who do not think of things the same way it does. It depends on those who actually *think* that they have particular identities and who think that also others, and the whole world, have particular identities. Reason is dependent on Bondsmen-minded thinkers, because it cannot affirm particularities on the basis of its own fragmented thoughts. In its own self, it moves between its conceptual poles, and annuls any particularity, which enters its thinking.. Thus, to actually see “things”, it needs to see through others. For Reason itself, things can be only “contextually” (i.e. for others) different. This kind of thinking and knowing is called by Hegel also as *empty idealism*. For Reason itself “thing” is *indifferent*.

2.2.11. From pure self-consciousness into actual self-consciousness

Hegel’s idea of *dialectical unrest* (explained earlier) describes a mediator, who mediates without knowing it itself. An abstract mediator (a middle term who is not known to itself) is not conscious of itself as the one who keeps the construction together - on the basis of which it thinks, knows and looks at things. (PhS §184)

Pure self-consciousness is particularized when it realizes that the “thing”, which it sees and knows *in (conceptual) parts*, relates to its own partial thinking of it. It realizes that the thing is

not made of parts externally, yet instead, its own thinking of the thing consists of parts, i.e. of different thoughts. It also realizes that it is not the only conceptual thinker of the world, yet, one among many. It realizes that each thinker is its own conceptual system. Each thinker constitutes a self as a concept. It sees that because the point of view, from which a self looks at a thing, is a conceptual point of view (made of conceptual parts), selves see things in parts. Further, it realizes that the movement which it (as pure self-consciousness) observed as the *external* movement of “thing” (namely, as the external, dialectical unrest of a thing) is seen now, by itself, to correspond with the movement of its own thinking. .

In conceptual thought the object of thinking is constantly thought of in terms of parts, or moments. As the self thinks of a thing, it constructs it out of various thoughts. The conceptually thought thing is actually *a result* of the various thoughts, by which it is thought. However, if the parts are not “returned” back to, and identified as belonging to their particular thinker, the parts are seen as external (non-subjective, non-particular) reality of the thing, or as external otherness of thing. *External otherness is “other knowing” (of some specific thing), which is not identified as a viewpoint of some particular thinker. Consequently, this conceptual part constitutes self-less, non-particular otherness.* This is the case for example with “unknown gods or powers” (as *thought* unknown gods) or the Kantian noumenal self.

Pure self-consciousness does not see other thinking as having an own *self-consciously* conceptual self. It does not see a conceptual self-consciousness as a universal genus. Nor does it see itself and other thinking as particular instances of a conceptual self-consciousness. Other thinking mirrors always, for Hegel, the selves’ own thinking. Hence, if the other is seen as lacking a conceptual, self-conscious self, the self, who thinks like this, is non-conceptual *for itself*, as well.

The mistake of pure self-consciousness is not to allow the other thinking, or its own thinking, to have its own *particular* conceptual self. Pure self-consciousness wants to free all thinking from particularity, because it believes that particularity is actually limitedness, bondage, slavery. It does not consider particularity a necessary part of things as conceptual. As such, pure self-consciousness may e.g. want to free everybody’s thinking of sexuality from “limited” particularities. It believes that any thought of sexuality as something particular is a thought in bondage, i.e it is an enslaved thought. Pure self-consciousness may, for example, think that all particular sexual identities are enslaved identities. All particular ideas about sexual identities are produced by powers which remain unknown for the subjects themselves.

The dilemma of pure self-consciousness is that it *thinks* of sexuality through the ideas of “known sexuality” and “unknown sexuality”. It moves between these two viewpoints. Whatever the other thought knows of the thing is rendered unknown by what the other thought knows *of the same thing*. Pure self-consciousness is itself aware of this. These two viewpoints exclude each other, but pure self-consciousness contains both of them. According to Hegel, a Kantian dilemma is constituted in the thinking of pure self-consciousness. It looks, reciprocally, at each of its internal thoughts from the viewpoint of the other one, and observes that these forms of thinking do not know each other. Because these forms of thinking do not know each others, they cannot know themselves either, because (as the pure self-consciousness observes) they nevertheless are constituted through each other. Because they are constituted through each others, their self-knowledge would necessary mean that they would have to know each others, i.e. be mediated with each other. Pure self-consciousness

sees that “thing” cannot be thought so as to leave any one of the constitutive thoughts outside of it. Yet, because the viewpoints which constitute the thing do not know themselves, nor each other (i.e. they cannot be mediated into an internally related concept), the thing remains a self-contradictory assembly of thoughts which reciprocally deny each others

This thinking constitutes a sort of *abstract reciprocal recognition*, by which (in contrast to the ideal, self-consciously mediated reciprocal recognition) the both thoughts of the thing are nullified. Whereas in the system of external slavery (not the internalized form of the Unhappy Consciousness) where all parties are forced to recognize the universal validity of one truth and one Lord, in pure self-consciousness all truths and all Lords are being equally un-recognized. The result of this is that when any “thing” is thought, it is known by way of mutually un-recognitive, reciprocally nullifying thoughts. This self-contradiction constitutes for Hegel, nevertheless, a universal knowing of a thing, as *infinite* dialectical unrest, or, as bad infinite.

When pure self-consciousness turns to reflect its own thinking (i.e. when it *itself* becomes aware of what was said above, namely, that its own thinking denotes a universal bad infinite, and that it holds two reciprocally un-recognitive thoughts within itself) it develops into a consciousness of itself as a third, namely, a mediator between its two thoughts. By this turn, it develops into an *actual* self-consciousness. It takes its own “doubleness” as an object of reflection. It finds itself as a third - the “minister”, a mediator between its own doubleness, the synthesizer of its own thoughts. In short, it becomes aware of itself as a self-consciousness. It becomes a self-consciousness and a third *for itself*. Before it just was a self-consciousness, yet, without a knowledge of it. Earlier, it just saw things as “double” (i.e. made of parts) without the awareness of its own, internally ministered, particular way of seeing things as double. When it starts to see itself as a particular thinker, who sees things as double (i.e. as a particular self-consciousness) it finds self-consciousness as a universal genus. This cannot happen if it does not, at the same time, acknowledge the existence of other similar beings, i.e. other thirds. (PhS §208 ,227)

According to Hegel’s dialectics in PhS, Unhappy Consciousness is to become conscious that thinking not just is self-relational, but that thinking also *thinks* that it is self-relational. Thus, the seemingly all-pervading self-relationality is its own object of reflection. At the level of Unhappy Consciousness thinking has found the fundamental depths of its own self-relationality and realized that everything it thinks of relates to itself. Also the self-relationality of all thinking is a self-relational *thought* in its thinking. This is an important step on the road for acknowledging actual otherness. Only when thinking returns to itself from all conceptual parts of its thinking system, and sees that anything it thinks is thought by it and relates to itself, can it become so frustrated of trying to find a non-self-relational “truth” of itself from inside its own universe, as to actually allow for actual otherness to exist. Unhappy Consciousness, on its road to acknowledge the existence of free others, realizes that even the “un-reachability of the Other” is a thought in its own thinking. It realizes that its thought of the un-knowability of otherness is its own self-relational thought, and tells nothing much about the *actual* other.

According to Hegel, when thinking has become totally frustrated with itself, it may find the existence of its own thirdness. Through realizing that it is itself the mediator of its own self-relational system, there emerges the possibility of particularizing itself through its “identity”

as a mediator. Self can particularize its system of thinking, by realizing that it is different than the other “third”, who keeps its own system of thinking a self-relational whole. Because all the relations within a system of thinking are mediated by a third (a self) , a third can differentiate itself from other thirds. Self can find itself as an active thinker and knower, who constantly conducts its “reading of the world” (relating, differentiating, and making a synthesis in and as its thinking). It can differentiate itself from another mediator. As mediators, they can find particularity and difference of themselves *in each other*. As systems of internal mediation, it is not possible that they would be entirely same. Even if two people come from the same family, they have not constructed the “Being” (what world is for them) from same bits and pieces. At least to some extent they have gathered their own conceptual parts from different sources: different teachers or other authorities, experiences friends, books, films, lovers etc. (PhS §394-396)

According to Hegel, through finding its own thirdness (itself as a mediator) a thinker can realize that it not only *is* a self-relational whole, so that everything it thinks, knows, and sees, relates to itself. Instead, it is a self-relational whole *for itself*. Through being particularized by another self-relational whole, it can become identified as “me”, my self-relational whole. It identifies its seeing of things as double as its own (a particular) seeing of things as double. The way it sees things as double relates to its own particular self-consciousness, so that this relation does not just take place in itself, externally, but it is able to reflect this relation self-consciously.

For Hegel, it is utterly important that these self-relational viewpoints are not thought as external abstractions in their relation to each others. Thus, it is important not to stop at the notion of Self and Other as self-relational wholes. In order for them to actually be different from each other, limited and particularized by each other, they must be thought as parts of a larger, shared whole. Self and other must be thought as parts of a larger whole which necessarily, itself, cannot be an abstraction. Within Hegel’s triplicity of knowing *Being for Self and for Other* each moment is a particular one, or, none is a particular one. Very importantly, Self and Other can, each one, potentially go beyond their own limits, as considers how they know the Being. Because they can relate to how Being is thought and known by the other one, they can learn from each other and enrich their mutual knowledge of the Being.

As a limited self-relational whole, thinking is a self-identical whole. It can find its particular identity in the other one, similar yet different from it. To know the other, must hear from the other self what it is like. Each self-identical whole needs to communicate with the other self-relational whole, to be able to know *how* the other is what it is, and how the other knows what it knows. It is important to hear, from the Other itself, *how* something *is* (conceptualized from parts) *for it*. How something appears as valuable, or as not valuable for the other. How the other knows that something is pleasurable or not pleasurable, or worthy or unworthy, can become known only if the Other itself, for whom the something as e.g. valuable exists to, is listened to. *Because the Other knows itself, the Other can be known by other selves*. Through hearing how the other “ministers” between its own internal moments, the other can be known. Even if the other knows itself as “unknowable”, this unknowability can be known as particular, conceptual unknowability. It is the unknown self of some particular thinker. If self as unknowable is thought by somebody, it is necessarily related to some sort of subjective particularity. At least some internal Bondsmen can be always found, by which any

abstract self can be linked to a particular subjectivity. However, only by communicating with the other, we can come to know the various relations, by which the other exists for itself. We can e.g. understand why something is valuable to another person, by “mirroring” it in relation to what, why and how something is important to ourselves. We can try to understand the meaning and construction of “other values” by realizing how our own values are constructed. Because other thinking and other values always relates to some self, it is reachable. There are no freely floating thoughts - particulars or abstractions - existing outside of being thought by some self.

Without seeing the other as another *particular* third, a thinker cannot see itself as a particular third. In other words, without seeing the other as a *particular universal*, the self cannot see itself as a particular universal. If a thinker does not see itself as a particular third, it remains an abstract third, namely a pure self-consciousness. When a thinker becomes a particular third – a particular universal - *for itself*, it has become an actual self-consciousness. Thus, thirdness denotes a universal genus, the other description of which is an actual self-consciousness. The Other is *similar* with Self, because they are both thirds. However, the other is not similar only in a general, abstract sense. The other is similar also by being another internally particularizing – internally subjecting – being. The other labours particularity within itself. A third can relate to other knowing and another labouring of particularity through acknowledging the one, to whom the other knowing relates to, as similar with itself. They both know “universally” as well as “particularly” inside their own self-relational wholes. Because they acknowledge this, i.e. themselves and each others as particularity-producing universals, universality can become particularized *for them*. Universal thinking and knowing can be seen as practiced by many thinkers. Through the other self-relational whole, the self can find itself as not only an abstraction (as a self-relational whole) but as having an identity (as a particular self-relational, universal whole).

For Hegel, thinking cannot find *actual* other knowing from within its own self-relational system, but from inside the other self. Thinking can find only an abstraction of other, independent knowing (an abstract other) from inside its own self, because it can gather together the formal parts of which the other independent thinking consists of. Consequently, other thinking can be known as an abstraction, while still staying within the selves own thinking system. When the self makes an abstraction of its own self-relational thinking, it can reach the other as a formality. However, it does not need to be in contact with actual others at all while doing this. Instead, in order for a thinking to find *a particular, internally active* other thinking – and allow it to have its own self - it must acknowledge an other self-consciousness as its equal. If it does not consider the other as its equal, it does not allow for free other knowing. If the other is not taken as its own equal universe, the self universalizes its own self over the other. As such, self subsumes the other under its own system of knowing and practices an attitude towards otherness called, by Hegel, as Desire. Consequently, thinking needs to ask, who the other is to its (own, other) self, and take seriously what the other says about itself. What Being (“thing”) potentially is beyond my self-relational system of knowing, can be found in another self-relational system of knowing. (PhS §181-182, 400, 802-803)

According to Hegel, the thirds, i.e. particular universals, must become united still at a larger level, at a level of higher thirdness, which sublates their own particular thirdness, in order to be conceptually mediated with each others. If the particular universals do not become

mediated at still a higher level, they still remain external contexts of knowing for each others. Their equality, independence and freedom exist only as formal abstractions for themselves and each others. The higher level of knowing actually denotes what reciprocally cognitive knowing, or shared knowing, is *in particular actuality* about. This level is called Absolute Knowing, and discussed further in the next chapters (2.3.1-2.3.3). Absolute Knowing means that the other particular universal does exist somewhere “beyond”, out of reach *for another particular universal*. Absolute knowing denotes a realm where the particular universals speak of a same *particular* thing. They labour particular objectivity for themselves as reciprocally cognitive selves. As such, the particular universals (selves as internally mediating thirds) are not external thoughts of “thing” in relation to each others, as in pure self-consciousness.

2.3. Recognition

2.3.1. Actual self-consciousness of Spirit.

A self-consciousness exists for a self-consciousness. Only so is it in fact self-consciousness: for only in this way does the unity of itself in its otherness become explicit for it. The “I” which is the object of its Notion is in fact not “object”; the object of Desire, however, is only independent, for it is the universal indestructible substance, the fluid self-identical essence. A self-consciousness, in being an object, is just as much “I” as “object”. With this, we already have before us the Notion of *Spirit*. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is – this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: “I” that is “we” and “we” that is “I”. It is in self-consciousness, in the Notion of Spirit, that consciousness first finds its turning point, where it leaves behind it the colourful show of the sensuous here-and-now and the nightlike void of the supersensible beyond, and steps out into the spiritual daylight of the present. (PhS §177)

For Hegel, subjective thinkers are always conceptual thinkers. This means that thinking – which is subjective and limited – is also contradictory. Contradictoriness means in Hegel that a thinker thinks of subjects and things by thoughts which are “beyond” each others. Thoughts which are beyond each others are also behind the possible “dualisms” of thinking, which take place as relations of Lordship and Bondage. These “beyonds” can, however, become conceptually mediated in *free* relations, in other words, objects can be known in a non-dualist, “non-enslaving” way. Contradictory thoughts are such which do not share a common “differentiating” measure, i.e. they cannot be differentiated from each other in the ordinary way, in which we relate, differentiate and “positionalize” thoughts and things in general. As said above, being an internally contradictory thinker means in Hegel the same as a conceptual thinker and the same as an inherently free thinker (see chapter 2.1.2) This means that a thinker is a unifying “third” of contradictory thoughts, thoughts which are beyond each others. The unification of contradictory elements (the activity of “thirdness”, i.e. speculation) takes place when thinker thinks of subjects and things through contradictory elements. The contradictory thoughts become unified *as* the “subjects” and “things”, which are thought by

these thoughts.

Hegel makes an important distinction between thinking as contradictory and thinking as contradictory *for itself*. This implies another distinction, between beings who are free and beings which are free *for themselves*. It makes sense to say that thinkers are, in Hegel's subject-theory, always seen as free: conceptual, dialectical, rational and speculative beings, i.e. beings who unify, as thirds, contradictory thoughts together so that identifiable, particular and rational "things" and "subjects" result from these thoughts. However, Hegel argues throughout PhS that thinkers end up in "enslaving" themselves and each others (in relations of Lordship and Bondage) if they do not become conceptual, speculative beings *for themselves*. Becoming a contradictory being for oneself – in a way which does not include some form of Lordship and Bondage, i.e. a "desiring attitude" – appears to be possible in Hegel only in relations of reciprocal recognition.

For Hegel, particular subjects are capable of relations of reciprocal recognition and capable of an *actual* self-consciousness of Spirit. As *actual*, self-consciousness of Spirit is seen to take place in particular subjective minds, "on earth", instead of being projected into a realm beyond the world of humans. *Spirit* as such denotes in Hegel the mediation between contradictions. Conceptuality, dialectics and speculation (i.e. "thirdness") denote in Hegel capacities of Spirit as in them contradictory thoughts are mediated. Hegel shows in PhS that often the capacity of Spirit is projected into the realm of mystical powers, creating dualities which can be somehow mediated only by "priests", trafficking between the dual realms of "infinity" (God) and "finitude" (humans).

Actual, self-conscious Spirit denotes in Hegel the level where thinking is not only contradictory, or "internally beyond itself" (which it always is). Nor is thinking just an abstract consciousness of its contradictory nature, its being beyond itself (as is the case in Unhappy Consciousness). Instead, *actual* self-consciousness of Spirit is the level of thinking where it is contradictory *for itself*, beyond itself *for itself* and a mediating third *for itself*. In short, this is the level where thinking is "other for itself". Thinking does not only include "otherness" (contradictory elements, elements beyond each others) which it always includes. Instead, it is a consciousness of itself as a *particular* (subjective, historical) being, who is internally beyond itself. A consciousness of one's self as a particular thinker who is internally contradictory is possible in Hegel only in relations of reciprocal recognition. Hegel argues (through the whole processual subject-theory of PhS) that without reciprocally cognitive relations, contradictory thinking (also a consciousness of the contradictoriness of thinking) ends up assuming some "dualist" form, i.e. a some system of "Lordship and Bondage". One version of Lordship and Bondage is Unhappy Consciousness, which is a consciousness of the contradictoriness of thinking yet without a reciprocally cognitive attitude toward itself and other selves.

Unhappy Consciousness constitutes a consciousness of contradiction i.e. it is aware of itself as a being which is "beyond" itself. It is aware that all subjective thinking is beyond itself. Because of this awareness, it is sceptical towards all particular thoughts and ideas. Unhappy Consciousness constitutes thus a high awareness of there being a "beyond", a "contradictory outside" (outside which does not share a common measure with the differential system from which it is excluded) to all possible "differentiating" descriptions or theories of subjects and things. Importantly, for Hegel, Unhappy Consciousness constitutes one version of a "Lordship

and Bondage”, by its way of placing “subjective, limited thinking” in bondage, (as was explained in the earlier sub-chapters). For Hegel Unhappy Consciousness (or the Enlightenment “Kantian” thinking) enslaves and refutes subjective thinking (in general) as it considers only such thought from which subjectivity is “bracketed out” (i.e. formal reason) universally valid.

For Hegel, an *actual self-consciousness*, which is a prerequisite for reciprocally cognitive relationships, takes place as “we”, which is “I” (PhS§ 177) According to my interpretation, “we”, in this context, is not an abstract “we” - i.e. a community of non-particular “Wise Men”, as in the Kojévian interpretation – but instead, a particular we (see a more thorough discussion of the Kojévian reading of Hegel, in chapter 3.1.). The self-conscious subjects, making up the “we”, are *particular* self-consciousnesses. However, each one of them “enjoy perfect freedom and independence”. Each one is for itself and for each others “an indestructible universal substance”. They are acknowledged, mutually, as their own masters, and, because each one is acknowledged in this way by others, to be its own master, there is no master “above” these masters. Nobody is to be considered as the possessor of knowing “above”, “beyond” the knowing of others. These selves are unlimited by no-one external (beyond, abstract) to them. This means that each one is not limited by anything, which is not knowable (at least potentially) *as something particular* for itself. As such, these free selves are limited (i.e. known as particulars) *for themselves*. This means that each self is known, subjected, in such a manner which can become criticised and contradicted by itself, if the self sees it necessary. Contradicting oneself (moving beyond oneself and changing oneself) is considered an internal capacity, i.e. a “speculative capacity”, shared equally by all. In Hegel’s vision – unlike in that of Kojève – individuality is sublated (that, is, preserved as a part of a wider synthesis) rather than destroyed.

Hegelian freedom as well as the possibility of “absolute, unlimited knowing”, is interpersonally constituted in reciprocally cognitive relationships. As it assumes objectivity in and as the state it constitutes *actual* freedom (in contrast to the *abstract* freedom of the dialectical unrest of the pure self-consciousness). An important idea here is that it (i.e. actual self-consciousness) can go over its own limits internally by “speculation”- potentially endlessly. The way the actual self-consciousness can go over its own limits is by way of contradicting itself (dialectically, speculatively) if it sees it necessary. This means that the *particular, limited* knowledge of “thing” , shared by free selves, can endlessly (at least potentially) correct, change and enrich itself. As new selves and thinkers enter the community, there emerges potentially endlessly new viewpoints, from where knowledge of things may be enriched. The movement, taking place as the changing knowledge of “thing” and “subject”, takes also place as the internal changing of the state. The state can potentially endlessly move internally, by way of becoming contradicted. As the state – as always a particular (limited) state- is constituted in relationships of reciprocal recognition, it can change the way it is limited.

Absolute knowing is “absolute” in the sense of not being limited by or dependent on anything outside the conscious process of knowing. Actually, Hegel’s “absolute knowledge” is just what philosophers traditionally mean by “knowledge”. If knowledge is defined as a true belief, warranted by the best and most comprehensive evidence, there seems to be two alternatives. Either the best evidence is reached through some revelation, intuition or special method available only for few or, then it is reached by taking all partial and potentially

distorted views into account and letting them to correct each other. Hegel chooses the latter alternative. Absolute knowledge is essentially a process which may be compared to Jürgen Habermas's and Seyla Benhabib's "open dialogical process" – although this does not, of course, mean that Hegel would, for example, accept Habermas's (Kantian) "communicative ethics".

Among the reciprocally recognitive "knowers", nobody (or, actually, nobody's own singular "doubleness") has the status of describing the *ultimate* whole or the *largest* context, which would determine the places and positions of the particular self-consciousnesses of this community. Thus, the selves are not parochially particularized, subjected and positioned. How the concrete community (e.g. the particular positions and hierarchical structures) are determined between subjects, who have this kind of attitudes towards each other, takes place as "reciprocally recognitive relationships", ultimately as the state, the community of free persons. The concrete reality of freedom takes place as laws and ethical institutions, which are constituted for reciprocally recognitive selves. This means that the communication between the mutually recognitive self-consciousnesses takes place as *rational* communication. Each self is taken as a free and rational self-consciousness which means that the way each self mediates, internally, between universality and particularity is given equal acknowledgement with the others. As such, each one is taken as an object who negates (determines, subjects) itself within itself.

Yet, what is this *rationality*? For Hegel, rationality stems, basically, from the internal structure of thinking itself. Thus, it is inherent in each thinker. A structure of thinking needs to make all its parts relate to each other. It needs to differentiate and particularize in relation to something which is claimed, by itself, as universal. This doubleness (of universality, ministered into particularity) is, for Hegel, what thinking is about. Its basic manner of relating, mediating and becoming synthesized into a particular whole, is in itself rational. It also needs to look at itself as a rational object in the world. When a system of internally mediating thinking considers another system as its equal, it acknowledges and recognizes the others rationality. In other words, one mediator considers another mediator as its equal. It considers the other as a valid mediator between what is particular of things and what is universal of things. Together – equipped with the attitude of regarding each other as sources of valid knowledge of things - they can enrich each others knowledge. For Hegel, this kind of recognition is fundamental if selves are to create together a shared rationality, i.e. Absolute knowing. Shared mediation between universal and particular takes place as a community between equals ("I" which is "we"), secondly, as a shared constitution of objectivity and, thirdly, as Absolute knowing (philosophy). Hegelian state denotes a shared objectivity (i.e. ministered, internally, into particular institutions etc.). (PhS §178-185)

Mutual rationality, between free, actual self-conscious subjects, seems to take place, for Hegel, so that each one reflects its own rationality and relates to the rationality of others. This relating means that each one allows itself to be known by the others. Each can enrich its self-knowledge by allowing to be "mirrored, translated" by the rationality of the other.

For Hegel, self and other can in fact both be known, to themselves and to each other, because they always exist as rational systems (conceptual unities) *to themselves*. This includes the fundamentally important aspect in Hegelian reciprocal recognition i.e. that selves consider themselves and each others equally capable of "speculation". In reciprocally recognitive

relations contradictory thoughts of subjects and things (mutually alien, dualist, mutually cancelling) are seen as internally mediated within each one of the selves. Each self appears as a rational whole as it is recognized as capable of mediating between contradictory thoughts concerning itself and things in general. As such, the self and the other are seen as beings who are not internally alien. Internally alien beings are beings who are seen as incapable of mediating (internally) contradictory thoughts of themselves and things. In reciprocal recognition the other self is seen as conceptually understandable to itself. In short, the other is seen as a “concept” (similar to one’s own self). As a “concept”, the other is understandable for other selves too. The other is seen as a being who is not beyond, external, or other to itself in a way which cannot be “speculated” by itself. Seeing the other in this way – as a being who is beyond itself in a way which is conceptual for itself – is a necessary feature in Hegelian reciprocal recognition. This feature differentiates reciprocally recognitive relations in Hegel from Master-Slave-relations. In Master-Slave-relations the other is seen as a being who is “beyond itself” in a way which it cannot itself conceptualize. The other is seen as “beyond itself”, “other to itself”, instead of “other to itself” *for itself*. Unhappy Consciousness was a consciousness of the otherness in thinking, yet, it did not consider others capable of internal speculation of their otherness. In Master-Slave-relations (e.g. in Unhappy Consciousness) the “bondage” or the “slavery” of the other is constituted by placing some constitutive part of the other “beyond” the conceptual capacities of the other itself. The other is slaved (silenced) when its knowledge of itself (and of things) is seen as constituted by something which it itself cannot reach. As such, the other is seen as a being whose knowledge of itself and things fails to be complete. Kantian distinction into “thing for us”/thing in itself” or “empirical” /”transcendental self” constituted for Hegel one version of a Master-Slave-relation. In relations of reciprocal recognition each self is seen as basically free, complete and absolute i.e. the self is recognized as constituted by nothing which is “beyond” its own “speculative” capacity.

Basically “speculation” is (in Hegel) what renders selves free, actual self-consciousnesses. Finding oneself in another free self-consciousness means that we consider ourselves and others beings who are capable of speculation, i.e. relating conceptually to that which is beyond us. When we see other as a being in which contradictions are internally speculated (unified into conceptual thoughts of things) the other itself does not need to remain “beyond” us, “unspeakable” to us. If we consider the other only as contradictory (as Unhappy Consciousness does), yet not contradictory for itself (i.e. a being capable of speculation) the other constitutes a silenced, refuted other in our thinking.

When both the self and the other consider themselves and each others beings equally capable of relating conceptually to that which is beyond oneself, the relation is reciprocally recognitive. As such, freedom is constituted in this relation. In speculation, basically, dualist Master-Slave-relations - i.e. relations of self-alienation - are dialectically “sublated” into a rational unity. In reciprocal recognition selves see themselves and each others as internally dialectical (sublating, synthesizing) i.e. speculative unities. Selves see themselves and each others as beings who can overcome “desiring attitudes” toward others and things in general (i.e. relations of Lordship and Bondage) *internally*. Consequently, the other self does not need to be alien or a threat to one’s self, nor does one’s self need to constitute a threat to the other self. They can consider each others capable of mediating and overcoming “being a threat to otherness” internally. In short, reciprocally recognitive selves consider each others as beings capable of synthesizing (“sublating”) dialectics, i.e. speculation. The other is not alien to us,

nor are we alien to the other as we both can render our internal contradictions into “I”s as rational wholes, understandable for ourselves and for others.

As explained earlier, speculation is for Hegel a dialectical, synthesizing capacity – or a “poetic” capacity - to unite contradictory thoughts of things together. In Hegel this poetic capacity results into conceptual and rational wholes. In reciprocally cognitive relations, selves see themselves, each others and things in general as structured by contradictory elements (resembling perhaps elements united in “modern” poetry), initially regarded as mutually exclusive. Dual pairs like “finitude” / “infinity”, or, “context-dependent” / “universally valid”, or, the Kantian duality of “thing for us”/ “thing in itself” constitute such contradictions. In reciprocally cognitive relations the selves see themselves and each others as capable of internal speculation of contradictions.

For Hegel, a capacity to speculate contradictions into unities is a capacity which a self can find. However, as said already above, it is a capacity which selves always have already. Hegel sees that a thinking self always has some idea of a thinking which has a capacity of speculation. However this capacity is often thought to belong to Gods or priests (chosen by gods through some mystic procedure) hence situated in a realm beyond general subjective reason. Or, as Hegel sees to be the case in Kant, this capacity is seen as a transcendental capacity, reached only if one’s particular subjectivity is “bracketed out” by abstraction. When the capacity of speculation is projected into a realm beyond particular subjects, relations of *reciprocal* recognition are impossible. In reciprocal recognition the recognizing parties consider themselves and others as *equally* capable of speculation.

For Hegel, we can find a sense to *how* we and others think of things, because “things”, to start with, are internal instead of external to particular subjective thinking. For Hegel, there can be no parts (thoughts, aspects, concepts) of things which would not exist inside some particular system of thinking. If something is thought at all, it must be hence conceptual *to somebody*. If some thing would be non-particular and non-conceptual *for everybody*, this thing would not exist at all. Hence we could not speculate its non-particularity or non-conceptuality. Thus, the precondition for there to be a “thing” for a thinker is that it exists as a particular thing for this thinker (even that there can be also other thoughts of this thing, for its thinker, besides its particular somethingness). The identifiable (particular) form of a thing must become “laboured” within some particular system of knowing, which does not only affirm the form of the thing, but also the particular content of it.

The rationality of a thing is in many ways attached to its history, which is an invaluable source of self-knowledge for Hegel. Mutual rationality can be communicated on, because each one carries rationality *as its own conceptual system of thinking*. Because we are rational, (and, for Hegel every one is, if we take a self-conscious look at ourselves) we can make ourselves known to our selves and to each others. Because any case of “other knowing” (everyone’s knowing is other knowing from the other’s point of view) is “speculatively” rational to itself it can be made known as rational to others. As rational thinkers, we are similar, and can thus relate to each other’s systems of knowing. Even if rationality is denied by some thinker, this argumentation itself, of why and how there is no rationality, takes place as rational and speculative thinking. Even a thinking which claims that thinking as such is non-rational conducts speculation between contradictory thoughts (i.e. between thoughts of “rationality” and “non-rationality”). By relating internally to rationality – which can be

always found to be some specific rationality, i.e. a specific view of the world - it can be made rational to itself and others. As such it can become also differentiated, as a system of its own rationality, from other rational systems of thinking.

2.3.2. Shared knowing.

The knowing that takes place within the Hegelian self, as it *finds itself in the other self-consciousness*, is a special kind of knowing. It knows the Other, through how the Other knows itself, and considers the Other as basically a valid knower of itself and of the whole world. In the other it also finds its own “identity” as its own self-knower. In the Other the self finds itself as a speculative being, a being “beyond itself internally”. In other words, it finds itself as a free being and a universal, absolute being. Hegelian recognition denotes an attitude towards a free object, an object which is not primarily “different”, instead Other, in the sense that it is its own, internally differentiating power. Thus, recognition is not about the identification of the Other, at least not primarily. The other is seen as “a complex object”, a free subject, whose objectivity is in the hands of its own “lordship”. The other *labours*, metaphorically said, *for itself*. It is its own *performative* power, to use a somewhat Butlerian notion. (PhS §175-177).

The Other as an object *and* a free subject is considered as a valid authority of how, and on which basis, its own “objectivity”, or particular identity is determined. To use Charles Taylor’s expression, the Other is self-defining. Yet, the Other can anyhow be an object, because the one who looks at the Other, recognizes in the Other a similar being than it is itself. By this act, the one who looks at the Other, can recognize itself, in fact, by this act, the self can know what its own self is like. The similarity, however, does not end here, because the one who looks should also acknowledge that it is “looked back” by the Other. It is itself the Others object, hoping that the Other sees itself, as it sees the Other, i.e. as an object which is its own “speculative” subject. Basically, this potential reciprocity, between thinkers and knowers, is the base for the Hegelian “shared knowing”. Knowledge can be shared, and so can be the socially constructed reality, in so far as the selves recognize themselves and each others as beings who can relate to their Others as their equals. The selves need to acknowledge limited subjects in general as beings who can “sublate” their limits through the recognition of their Others in order for them to share knowledge with them. In other words, one must recognize its Others as beings who are capable of free (i.e. reciprocally cognitive) attitudes towards their others and towards objects in general (see chapter 2.1.2.). Shared knowing, conducted in reciprocally cognitive relationships is unlimited knowing, i.e. Absolute knowing (PhS §670; see also Hutchings 2003, 41-43, 106; Pippin 1989, 170). There is, again, an infinite regress or a reflexive circle – the subjects reflect each others endlessly – but, for Hegel, this is not a bad infinity or a vicious circle. Rather, it solves the fundamental problem of self-consciousness. There is no need to postulate an endless series of “meta-levels” or viewpoints.

Shared knowing, unlimited knowing, or knowing which goes over its own limits could not be possible if Self and Other did not acknowledge that they speak of a same *particular* thing. Because their knowing can become united, synthesized as a “better” theory of a same particular thing, they can, each one, go over their own limits. If the others knowledge (of

some thing) were not considered conceptually relatable to my knowledge (of the same specific thing) my knowledge could not become influenced or differentiated from what it was before. My notion of e.g. “subjectivity” can be changed through the Other, if I relate the others particular thoughts of subjectivity to my own *particular* notion of “subjectivity”. I must create a new theory of subjectivity by connecting my *particular* knowledge and the particular knowledge of the other into a new particular theory of a subject. Only if the new theory is a *particular* theory *for us* (of the specific thing in question), not an abstract theory of an abstract thing, it can be said that I and the other spoke of a same thing. For Hegel, any change (concerning the way we know and think of things) takes always place as a particular result (i.e. a new particular theory of the particular thing). Any *actual* change takes place as a differentiation concerning our way to see things as particular things. For Hegel, only particulars can be changed, as only they can be thought differently of. Only particulars can be thought from other points of views, and thus only they (i.e. some particular notion of them) can be criticised.

What was said above repeats the idea of dialectical contradictions, change and sublation (*Aufhebung*). If there is no particularization of dialectical change, there can be no such change which could be identified to have happened. Hence, we must think that some particular thing changes, as only particulars can be *seen* to become different. According to Hegel, this means also that selves and others should relate to themselves and to each others as particulars (speculative, particular and rational thirds) if they want to actually speak of things at all with each others, or produce better theories of things together. Because Self and Other can indeed, according to Hegel, conceptually relate to each others particular knowledge of particular things, reciprocal knowing of things and also reciprocal dialectical change (sublation) is possible. However, as said above, this requires that selves recognize each others as beings who can “speculate”. In reciprocally recognitive relations, the conceptual relating to each others *particular* knowledge of things takes place through acknowledging the other as another free, complete (internally speculative) self-consciousness. Basically, this takes place as recognizing the other as a being who is not determined (subjected) by anything, which is beyond the other itself. For Hegel, we can relate to each others contradictory yet also particular knowledge conceptually, if we do not take each others as Bondsmen, i.e. if we do not enslave each others epistemologically.

For Hegel any actual change of things is dialectical, in the “speculative” way, i.e. it takes place as a conceptual differentiation of a conceptual thing, within the thinking of a conceptual self. When some thing is seen as internally related to otherness – which is Hegel’s idea of things as conceptual (corresponding to Butler’s idea of things as *ek-static*, as is explained in the chapter 3) - the thing can maintain itself, while changing. The conceptual relating to others knowledge (inside some specific thing) takes place by acknowledging the existence of the particular thing, within which the self and the other relate to each other. The self and the other can relate to each others thinking and knowledge if they acknowledge the particular identity of the subject, or thing, that they are talking and thinking of. If, in contrast, they consider each others as unrelated thinkers of things, they do not actually relate to each other internally at all, within some particular thing. As such, they cannot become influenced or differentiated through each other, except externally, by a Lord-Bondsman-based thinking. However, according to Hegel, we can speak of particular things with others, and see each others as particulars also in reciprocally recognitive relations. We can see each others both as particulars and as free. Basically, the Other, as a being who has some actual power (and not

only an abstract, formal power) to influence us, make us actually different, exists *for our selves*. This means that we should acknowledge the other as a valid knower of the same particular things, of which our own knowledge is of. The other becomes a valid knower of things *for us*, when we relate to its knowledge conceptually, i.e. when we do not enslave the other epistemologically.

Importantly, shared knowing also pertains to “shared objectivity”, which could be also described as shared or reciprocal “performativity” (to use a somewhat Butlerian, or Austinian choice of words). Basically, according to Hegel, world appears to us always on the basis of how we think of it. Also, the way we “labour” on the world, i.e. form it into something particular corresponds to how we think of the world. Our power of negation - taking an objective form - relates to our thinking and knowing of the world. When we do what “Bondsmen” do and create the world as an internally differentiated, internally particularized whole, we do it on the basis of whatever idea of “Lordship” we have in mind (however, at the level of recognition or shared knowing, there does not exist any system of serfdom or slavery any more). (see e.g. PhS §772-787)

The “performative power”, through which the world as a particular, identifiable world is produced can be also thought on the basis of reciprocal recognition. The productive power can be seen as a shared power. It can be made to relate to, ultimately, a community of free self-consciousnesses. If we think and know the world in a shared way, world appears to us in a shared way. What does this mean? This means that the way we think of particular identities, social hierarchies, law, institutions etc. may be based on reciprocally recognitive thinking and knowing. According to Hegel, the way we think and know, determine and construct anything which has interpersonal relevance, or affects others, can be based on recognitive relations. Actually, any other way to “produce objectivity” is unfree, based on some form of parochial subjectivity. Objectivity can be e.g. produced on the basis of some particular case of Consciousness as Understanding. Then some particular world-view alone is taken as universal and stable, and e.g. social classification and institutions, law etc. is conducted on the basis of it. This kind of objectivity is apt to go under, because it cannot cope with its internal otherness, as was explained earlier. Or, objectivity can be produced e.g. on the basis of the Enlightenment thought. According to Hegel, in this case, the particular cultural or state institutions are produced on the basis of the thought of Utility of Enlightenment. In utility, Enlightenment thought of Unhappy consciousness finds its objectivity. Also this objectivity is apt to go under, e.g. because it alienates itself from all that is particular. This was discussed already earlier. (see e.g. Enlightenment culture from §538 -596).

As Heikki Ikäheimo argues in his article “Rehabilitating Hegel’s Spirit -Recognitive Attitude as a Social-ontological Concept”, reciprocal or shared objectivity could be described as an objectivity which is *constituted for by mutually recognizing subjects*. Then objectivity is interpersonally constituted. As such, objectivity has *interpersonal ontology*. (Ikäheimo 2003, 6)

This ontology is self-relational, yet, it relates to selves who think and know themselves and the world on the basis of acknowledging each others as valid sources of knowledge. Probably something like this has been already intended, since Hegel’s times, in democratic thinking. In Hegel’s times there were no democracies as we know them now. Reciprocal objectivity should be, however, based on reciprocal recognition, which, itself, is based on actual self-

consciousness and the idea of “middle term”. The idea of actual self-consciousness, and internally ministered doubleness (self as a concept) are highly important here. The contrast between actual self-consciousness and pure self-consciousness is a very important element in realizing what “free otherness” actually means. A pure self-consciousness, for whom an Other is an unrelated thought, cannot recognize the other in a way, necessary for interpersonal ontology, or reciprocally constituted objectivity. PhS implies that the history of actual self-consciousness, i.e. the phases of Lord and Bondsman and pure self-consciousness are invaluable to keep in mind in order for us to actually realize what actual self-consciousness is. The “free other” may well be thought of only as an “unrelated thought” (as in the Enlightenment thought, based on pure self-consciousness).

Interpersonally constituted objectivity may exist as an abstraction only, as is the case of the empty idealism of Reason, still exemplifying the pure consciousness of Enlightenment thought. Shared objectivity, or, plural objectivity, or, ideality of the many, must be based on acknowledging the other, particular self-consciousnesses as valid sources of particular knowledge. Shared knowing should provide the *particular* content to the objectivity, not only its general principle. If it denotes only its general principle, the shared knowing may well take the form of “two (or more) unrelated thoughts”, explained earlier. Kimberley Hutchings’s interpretation of the Hegelian “absolute” knowledge as “shared” knowledge is relevant here:

...three factors emerge as relevant to the evaluation of knowledge claims. First, the partiality of all claims to knowledge is inherent in Hegel’s account of the partial identification of particular knowing subjects with spirit. For Hegel “absolute” knowledge rests on the explicit articulation of this partiality so that, paradoxically, truth is linked to partiality’s acknowledgement. This implies that claims which disguise their partiality are immediately open to criticism. Second, Hegel emphasizes the significance of the articulation of the partial grounds of any judgement to the possibility of recognition of the validity of this claim by others. This recognition is best understood as “sharing” which rests on the degree to which the audience of any claim can identify with its grounding. This therefore implies that for Hegel knowledge claims can be evaluated by the extent to which they are recognized to be shareable – something which cannot be judged a priori, and is not in any sense in the gift of the subject making this claim. (Hutchings 2003, 106)

As said earlier, Hegel does not accept subjective idealism, even if this idealism is shared between many subjects. “Subjective idealism of the many” would constitute the empty idealism of unrelated, un-shareable thoughts, because then the independence of the particular thinkers, making up the “many”, as well as the independence of the “substance” would be refuted.

2.3.3. Absolute knowing

What the freedom or independence of otherness means has been explained earlier, yet, the independence of the “substance” needs to be still taken up. For Hegel, being, nature, or

substance, retains its own independence even that it is conceptually related to us. Thought both as something independent as well as something conceptual it is its own internally negating power, too. It constitutes an externality to us, which in some ways appears as an absolute externality - in terms of death. Death cannot be conceptually differentiated for us, and in this sense it is an immediate, absolute abstraction for us. However, for Hegel, it is very important to think that nature – the particular substance of things - is a conceptually mediated part of our systems of thinking. In other words, it is important to think that we can know *something* about the nature. In fact, for Hegel, a core “error” with pure self-consciousness is that it treats nature as some sort of a “lost referent”. In other words, nature is a non-conceptual “thing in itself” for pure self-consciousness. For Hegel, if the nature is something thought, yet thought by the distinction of “thing for us” and “thing in itself”, an internalized form of the Master-Slave-distinction (i.e. a pure self-consciousness) ensues.

As is explained also in the chapter on the Kojèbian interpretation of Hegel (chapter 3.1), the idea that “substance” is something conceptual is very important for Hegel. One of the most important differences between the pure self-consciousness and the free self-consciousness is the way “nature” is thought at these stages of consciousness. For the pure self-consciousness “material nature” is something which it cannot identify with. In contrast, the free self-consciousness has conceptually mediated the nature as a part of it. If nature is seen to denote an absolute difference to us, it becomes a “lost referent”, a Kantian “thing in itself”, which renders our thinking “pure”, as in pure self-consciousness.

According to Hegel, we cannot “labour” any kind of objectivity we want, because the substance, or nature, which the objectivity relates to, has its own independence. If we could labour any kind of objectivity we want, the objectivity would denote a realm of Subjective Idealism. It would be fragmented into atomistic contexts, not related to each other. There would be “my world” and “your world” with no conceptual connection between these worlds. We could not speak of the same world, or same things at all. Nor could we differentiate between “I” and other “I”:s, as there would be no shared standards, no *shared rationality*, we could refer to.

However, even when the knowing subjects share a common rationality – and, hence, a common world – they preserve their particularity. In Alexandre Kojève’s interpretation (influenced by Marx’s vision of communism) the ultimate negation of the atomistic community is the “universal homogenous State”. There, all important differences between the knowing subjects would disappear. The “Wise Men”, the inhabitants of Kojève’s ideal state would all necessarily share a common viewpoint on everything. There would be just the Kojevian type of “Wise Men”, not They would not be differentiated from each other or from the rest of the universe. Rationality, as conceived by Hegel, would be equally impossible in this homogenous world. Rationality presupposes particularity as well as communality.

For Hegel, a thinking which does not identify with the particular substance of things is necessarily divided into the Lord-Bondsman-distinction. Even the “pure I” must think of something. Hence it needs Bondsmen to provide those somethings for it, because it refuses to labour particularity for itself. Lord removes its own dependency on otherness, and its own dependency on particular substance, onto Bondsmen. As such, it feels that it is free from any dependencies. However, in the Hegelian triplicity of knowing (the parts of which are Being, Self and Other) each one of the parts are independent powers of negation, even that they are

related to each other. Their unity is conceptual, and potentially un-limitlessly enriching its internal differentiation. Yet, the necessary precondition for the actuality and particularity of this triplicity is that all its three parts retain their independence. The particular Being, or “thing with a particular substance”, which any knowing is always of, must be also thought as an independent thing, otherwise its knowing becomes split into unrelated thoughts. The Kojèbian “dualist ontology” (ch. 3.1.2.) is an example of this kind of splitting into unrelated thoughts. The nature becomes split into externally related thoughts *for the one* who does not think of nature as an independent thing,

As independent, the “thing” constitutes its own doubleness. It is rational in somewhat the same way as the self and the other. What it is, and how it appears as a particular, corresponds with its own internally differentiated rationality. Only when we think that it is structured in this way, we can present theoretical argumentation of it. We can e.g. argue that we know *more* of it now, or we know it better than before. To start with, only if we suppose that there is some *it*, which can be potentially known in terms of “more”, “less”, “right”, “insufficiently”, or “wrong”, we can present arguments of it. The claim that it cannot be known is based on a universal claim which can (presumably) be known. Thus, universal unknowingness is *its* universal truth, in reference to which we can argue against any particular description of it. This kind of thinking actually constitutes pure self-consciousness, which does not get involved in disagreements of how it is differentiated in particular, as it refutes altogether the idea of knowing its particular substance of it. Nevertheless, pure self-consciousness has a universal knowledge of the thing, even that this knowledge has universal emptiness as its content.

According to Hegel, we actually think of the “thing” always as double, e.g. so that we relate its particularity to its universality. Thus, the ultimate question, for Hegel, is not whether we universalize about Being, or not, but instead how we universalize about it. For Hegel, becoming self-conscious as to how we universalize the Being, is thus necessary. According to Hegel, all the parts of the triplicity of knowing are free and independent, even that they are conceptually related to each other. Thus, even that the Being is related to the self and the Other, and known as a particular by them, it is anyhow independent and unlimited. It is fundamentally important, concerning the freedom of Being, that it is related to both the self and the Other. For Hegel, the substance is dialectically known by the self and the Other. When the self and the Other negotiate and argue of how the Being is known, the knowledge of the being can potentially limitlessly enrich itself. The shared, reciprocal knowing of Being is the necessary prerequisite of Absolute Knowing.

If Being is thought to be known either by self alone, or, by the Other alone, or by unrelated atomistic thoughts, its own independence is refuted.. The idea that self and other acknowledge each other as valid contributors of how the Being is known enables for the independence of the Being. The full knowledge of thing is not claimed alone, by any thinker. Neither is the full un-knowledge of thing claimed by any thinker alone. By reciprocal recognition, it is understood that to claim that thing is un-known is one version of claiming full knowledge of it, and thus assuming the place of a Lord, a superior knowledge over other knowledge. Yet, by acknowledging others as valid contributors of how the thing is known, a thinker may think that it does not know the thing fully, or that no singular description describes the thing fully, but that they can learn from each others and enrich their knowledge of thing.

For Hegel, things are concepts, made of parts. Hegel argues that only if we assume that there is a concept which can be potentially known fully (as a particular whole) can we say that it is known “partly”. If parts are actual parts, they relate to a something, which can be (at least potentially) seen as a whole, unity, built of parts. Only particular objects are made up of mutually related parts. According to Hegel, it is self-contradictory to say that one part of something, or some parts of something, can be known, while other parts of it are bound to remain hidden forever. This was his argument against the Kantian “thing for us/thing in itself”-distinction. By Kant, thing was split into parts, of which some were known and some were necessarily beyond our knowledge. According to Hegel, if something is a particular object, it is at least possible to know all parts and aspects of it. If it cannot be known, even in principle, it is turned into an abstraction. If we take something to be a potential object of knowledge, we are committed to the claim that it can be known fully. For Hegel, “the thing itself” is a totality or synthesis of all possible descriptions of the thing, observed and thought from different particular viewpoints. This means that although the thing has, at any given moment, aspects which are not thought or observed by anyone, it has no permanently unknowable or un-observable aspects. It also entails that knowing inevitably takes place in a community of particular subjects who, due to their different interests, life-histories and background, look the object of knowledge from different viewpoints. This does not show that our knowledge is “imperfect”; our knowledge simply is like that. We cannot conceive any other way to know things. According to theological speculations, omniscient God can know and see all aspects of the world simultaneously and atemporally. For Hegel, this is not the ideal or most perfect form of knowledge, for our notion of “knowledge” is the knowledge of particular beings.

Hegel criticises a form of thinking which he calls as “intellectualism” and which he identifies with the Enlightenment version of pure self-consciousness. In this “empty” intellectualism, the intellectual thinking itself has not united with its own subjective content, and thus the actual content of its intellectual enterprise is, metaphorically, laboured by external Bondsmen. For Hegel, the coming together of the realm of particularity and universality, i.e. that what exists for Consciousness as Understanding and that what exists for self-consciousness, denotes also the coming together of content and form. By actual self-consciousness the form becomes united with its own content. This unification is about becoming conscious of the unity of form and content which actually always exists *for a thinker* whenever thinking is conducted.

For Hegel, the larger whole, where a self satisfactorily finds its identity, is a community of equals, a community of us. As a community of *equals*, it is a “we”, which is at the same time “I”. The equality between various “I’s” becomes actual, or shows itself in several ways. One level is the reciprocal relationships between the individual selves; they consider each other as deserving equal value and rights. They also consider each others as equal sources of knowledge. Because they relate conceptually and rationally to each others viewpoints, their different pieces of knowledge make up a unified, rational whole. In reciprocal relationships the selves consider each others as absolutes, in other words, free from external subjection and free from interpretations that would be forced upon them by someone. They do not subject (negate, determine, limit) each others except in a reciprocal way. They consider each others their own Lords. The members of the community share the view that they are free subjects constituted in reciprocal recognition – they are, so speak, finally learned Hegel’s basic ideas. This “theory” or philosophy of the subject is seen, by Hegel, to have an endless potential to

enrich (change internally, by sublation) itself. For Hegel, this is not just an abstract ideal we might accept or reject at will. The basic argument in PhS is that we are ultimately bound to accept this view because all other views – basically, different versions of scepticism, relativism, subjectivism, or dogmatism – lead to epistemological asymmetries and self-contradictions. Therefore, they are unsatisfactory, and the social and political forms based on them are “unreal”. They cannot work as a basis for general, shared self-understanding.

Reciprocally cognitive knowing is called by Hegel as free and also as absolute knowing. Hegelian absolute knowing appears indeed as a *process*, not as a final epistemological stage, “final knowledge” implying something like a Kojevian “end of history” (see chapter 3.1) at which all possible knowledge is reached and there is nothing more to know. PhS suggests that absolute knowledge is practiced by particular, limited subjects and it is of particular objects. However, these subjects are capable of *free* knowledge of objects. Free knowing includes a moment of un-limitedness, the absolute, through reciprocal recognition. Free and absolute knowledge is a process in which limited knowers go over their limits through each others. It is important to emphasize that “limited knowledge” is a necessary moment in free and absolute knowing. Only limited knowledge can go, processually, over its limits. (PhS §670, §794-795; Hutchings 2003, 41-44, 106-107; Ikäheimo 2003, 72-72; Ikäheimo 2000, 85; Taylor 1975, 127-134;).

2.3.4. A note on Hegel and Kant

Hegel’s criticisms of Kant, as explicated in the previous chapters, are mainly directed at Kant’s theoretical philosophy. Hegel was also critical of Kant’s practical philosophy. In his criticism, Hegel focuses into Kant’s famous Universal Law: “*Act only on the maxim thorough which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law*” (Kant 1986, 84). According to Hegel, this law and the “generalization argument” (“We cannot all act in that way without subverting the purpose of our actions”) are purely formal and devoid of any content. In his works, Hegel argues in several places that Kant’s Universal Law is unable to distinguish between ethically acceptable and unacceptable maxims (grounds of action), and presents several examples in order to show its emptiness.

According to many commentators, Hegel’s arguments are not fully convincing because they do not really do justice to the complexity of Kant’s ideas (Wood 1990, ch. 9.; Knowles 2002, 198-210). At the same time, these commentators tend to agree with Hegel in that Kant is not able to derive substantive moral principles from his rather thin theory of a free and rational subject (Wood 1990, 165-7). Moreover, Kant is wrong when trying to apply these principles directly to politics – as he clearly does in his political essays (for example, Kant 1983). Hegel emphasized that human subjects are always and unavoidably particular beings living in particular contexts. While any particular form of this particularity is contingent, the very fact of particularity is a necessary aspect of their rationality and cannot be abstracted away. A political or ethical theory has to take this into account.

Interestingly, neither Hegel, nor his commentators, discuss Kant’s *second* formulation of the Universal Law: “*Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own*

person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end” (Kant 1986, 91). According to the interpretation of Hegel defended in this study, this version of the Universal Law would be more acceptable from a Hegelian point of view. Kant’s argument for this version is the following. A subject is an acting being. It necessarily has ends which it sees valuable and worth of pursuing. They are, however, valuable only conditionally, only because the subject accepts them as valuable. Hence, the subject itself is the necessary source and precondition of values. A rational subject has to acknowledge this; therefore, it has to see itself as valuable. Unlike its contingent aims and projects, it is unconditionally (Hegel would say: “absolutely”) valuable. But it also has to acknowledge that all other subjects are similar in this respect. Therefore, it has to treat them as intrinsically valuable, not only because they may be contingently useful for it, but because they are also unconditional sources of values. Therefore, it can not treat the others merely as means for its own ends. When we do so, we contradict our own rational nature. (Kant 1986, 90-1)

Unlike the better-known version of the Universal Law, the second version makes an explicit reference to the *others*. It forbids using them merely as means. Slavery or bondage, Hegel’s basic metaphor for an asymmetrical relationship, is a prime example of using others merely as means. Hegel, like Kant, thinks that such an attitude is self-contradictory. Kant might add that this shows that the first version of the Universal Law is not powerless, for we cannot all treat each others only as means. But for Hegel, the contradiction involved in Lord-Bondsman (Master-Slave) relationships is not only an intellectual error. Because the attitude cannot be generally shared, it cannot be a basis for lasting social arrangements and for politics. Moreover, it is also unsatisfactory from an individual (including the Lord’s) point of view. It leads to a sort of schizophrenic attitude towards the others: in some contexts they are to be treated merely as slaves, but in other contexts they should be treated as morally responsible (rational, free) beings. There is, then, a sort of “generalization argument” in the heart of Hegel’s philosophy. It may be argued that, in spite of the differences, Hegel’s ideas of recognition and of Absolute knowing are rather close to *certain* aspects of Kant’s practical philosophy.

2.4. The limits of Hegel’s theory

2.4.1. Family and the “womankind”. The realm of *immediate* self-consciousness.

Hegel’s views on women are an important topic of its own. But they are also relevant for his theory of the subject. Ironically, they show that Hegel himself was not free from the limitations he analysed in PhS. On this, all contemporary commentators seem to be in agreement.

Hegel’s views on women and the Family has been widely criticised by feminist thinkers, for example, by Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray and Carole Pateman. It is indeed easy to join in with these criticisms. Judith Butler has also criticised Hegel. Calling Butler a *feminist* critic of Hegel would, however, be misleading. Even that Butler criticises Hegel also for his

views of women, her main target is Hegel's theory of "self-conscious Spirit". Butler criticises Hegel's "self-conscious Spirit" because it, according to Butler, refutes violently its "Other". However, unlike most of the feminist critics of Hegel, Butler does not identify this "refuted other" necessarily as "woman", at least in any simple way. For her, any "radical otherness" becomes refuted in Hegelian "self-conscious Spirit". Instead of taking "women" as the point of reference in her critique of Hegel (or, for that matter, of any thinker) Butler takes the general theory formulated in some sections of PhS (i.e. the thought of the "ek-static process") itself as the basis in her criticism. (This will be further explained in the ch. 4 on Butler)

Nevertheless it appears that in Hegel's subject-theory (especially as concerns PhS, which is, of Hegel's texts, the focus in this study) it is especially the women and the realm of Family which constitutes the "other in bondage". Butler's way to criticise not only Hegel but also other thinkers for refuting "radical otherness as such" connects with the ground theme in this study. It is important to go through what Hegel says about women and family – i.e. to take up the "dualism" in Hegel's own thinking - in order to discuss Butler's problems in taking "radical otherness as such" as the reference point not only in her criticism of Hegel (and others) but also in her subject-theory and political theory in general. This discussion is carried further especially in ch. 5).

Everything what has been so far said in this chapter on "thinking", "knowing", "consciousness" and "self-consciousness" – as well as of "Desire", "Lordship and Bondage", reciprocal recognition, rationality and self-conscious Spirit - concerns *men*. All what has been said here is said of *conceptual* thinkers. For Hegel, only *men* are conceptual thinkers. It is not clear whether Hegel regards all males, totally regardless of race etc., as conceptual thinkers - at least in PhS there are no signs that he would not. Nevertheless, it becomes clear in PhS that he does not consider any women as conceptual thinkers. However, even that women are closed out from those realms of society which are based on the capacity for conceptual thinking (e.g. the realms of civil society and state) women do, however, constitute a part of "Spirit". The Spirit includes everything in it, not only the *internally* conceptual beings (i.e. the subjects, human males). Human males constitute that "subjective" part of the Spirit through which it raises to a consciousness of itself. However, there are also other parts to the Spirit. Importantly, community as a whole (corresponding to the whole of Spirit) includes not only its subjective parts, but also its non-subjective part. The non-subjective part of Spirit takes place as femininity and at communal level it has its existence in the Family. Hegel speaks of the family as the realm of "Divine Law":

Confronting this clearly manifest ethical power there is, however, another power, the Divine Law. For the ethical power of the state, being the movement of self-conscious action, finds its antithesis in the simple and immediate essence of the ethical sphere;"..." This moment which expresses the ethical sphere in this element of immediacy or (simple) being, or which is an *immediate* consciousness of itself, both as essence and as this particular self, in an "other", i.e. as a *natural* ethical community – this is the Family. (PhS §449-450)

In Family the separate individuals are *immediately*, naturally, connected with each others. (PhS §451). This contrasts with the *conceptually mediated* manner in which male subjects in the other spheres of society relate to each others. As such, the family relations – family as a whole – are not dialectical: the family does not change. Whereas the subjective realms of the

community can develop, change (for themselves) the family stays always the same. Because Hegel was certainly aware that the legal forms of family relations *have* changed, he obviously conceived these changes as inessential. This stability of family relations is due to the feminine immediacy. Women are, for Hegel and for the philosophical “we” (denoting the “storytellers” in PhS) not capable of conceptuality, for rationality or speculation. In short, the difference between men and women in PhS is that whereas men are seen as *internally mediating* (conceptual, active) beings, women are seen as *immediate* beings (passive, always the same). Whereas men constitute the self-conscious, active part of Spirit, women constitute its *unconscious*, passive part. This constitutes the special “difference”, or actually the *lack of difference* between men and women in Hegel, criticised by feminist thinkers like e.g. Irigaray. For Irigaray, women do not exist in philosophies like the Hegel’s, as there is no such “differentiated” entity like “femininity”. As such, there is no gender-difference. For Irigaray, as well as for thinkers like Lacan, there is just one sex (the male) in Hegelian thinking. Hegelian thought - in its way to think of men and women – constitutes the paradigm of traditional western philosophy, going back to Aristotle and Plato (see Butler on this theme; BM 27-55). In Aristotle the society as a whole was divided into the parts of non-freedom and dependence (the “household”, the “*oikos*”) and freedom and independence (the “public” spheres). The households were inhabited by people seen as internally not capable for freedom, independence and equality. These people were women, slaves, children and servants. Each household was somewhat sovereignly mastered by a person internally capable for independence, freedom and equality. The masters of the households were “white” males (i.e. Greek, “non-barbarian”). The public spheres were inhabited by basically equal males, i.e. by the citizens of the state. The development at the level of the State was essential for Hegel, for this development was, ultimately, development towards greater freedom and independence – the very essence of the Spirit.

For feminist thinkers like Irigaray, Hegel, alike traditional western philosophy in general, retains the ancient division between the feminine private sphere and the male public sphere. For Irigaray this includes the idea that women do not exist in western philosophical thought. As something non-differentiated and hence non-existent, femininity is not “objective”. It is actually not a “something” at all. Irigaray, alike Lacan, speaks of femininity as “non-linguistic” as all identification of objects takes place in language, whether in thinking or in speech. Femininity is without an objective reality of its own hence both in language and “out there”. Femininity is something “imaginary”. It constitutes the “formless”, “silenced” base of male reality, objectivity and rational language (Irigaray 1985). For Hegelian-inflected thinkers like Lacan, women, or actually the gender-difference constitutes a “lost object”.

In PhS women are not seen as “subjects”, and, correspondingly, femininity is not something “subjective”. “Subject” for Hegel is basically a self-reflective, internally mediative (conceptual) entity. It is a “subject – as an object, constituted through otherness - for itself”. In Hegel, there is no subject as a non-self-reflective category, in other words, there is no subject *in itself* without its at the same time being a subject *for itself*. The realm of subjectivity denotes hence for Hegel the self-reflective (self-conscious) part of Spirit. For Hegel, Spirit, taken simply, is however divided into a self-conscious, internally speculative Spirit (called by Hegel as “self-conscious Spirit” or “Spirit for itself”) and Spirit as immediate, intuitive self-consciousness (or, what Hegel called “unconscious Spirit”). The former constitutes the *male* part of Spirit, having its ultimate existence in the rational state and in all that is rational, actual and real. The male part of Spirit constitutes also the properly

human for Hegel. The latter constitutes the *female* part of Spirit, having its existence in the Family. Femininity constitutes that part of Spirit which has not risen into a consciousness (of itself).. Hegel speaks of Family as the realm of the feminine, unconscious part of Spirit:

...the law of the Family is an implicit, inner essence which is not exposed to the daylight of consciousness, but remains an inner feeling and the divine element that is exempt from an existence in the real world. The woman is associated with these household gods (Penates) and beholds in them both her universal substance and her particular individuality, yet in such a way that this relation of her individuality to them is at the same time not the natural one of desire. (PhS § 457)

Hegel writes of the two sides of Spirit, the side which is *for itself* and the side which is *implicit*, not for itself.

It is Spirit which is *for itself* in that it preserves itself in its reflection in individuals; and it is *implicitly* Spirit, or substance, in that it preserves them within itself. As actual substance, it is a nation, as actual consciousness, it is the citizens of that nation. This consciousness has its essence in simple Spirit, and the certainty of itself in the actuality of this Spirit, in the nation as a whole; it has its truth, therefore, not in something that is not actual, but in a Spirit that exists and prevails. This Spirit can be called the human law, because it is essentially in the form of a reality that is conscious of itself. (PhS §447-448)

Hegel speaks of the female part of Spirit as the “Nether World” (“underworld”). This is the world of weakness and darkness, the realm of “sacred claims” and “pathos”. This contrasts with the human, rational world (“upper world”) of men. (PhS §474-§475).

For Hegel, women are the beholders of the “Penates” - “particular gods” who, in the ancient Roman mythology, were thought to watch over a particular household or community. Women are the guardians of Divine Law, self-contained, singular rule, which does not reach an actual self-consciousness. This means, for example, that whereas women can have *intuitive awareness* of what is ethical, men can form *rationally* state-institutions and laws which are *free*, i.e. which are constituted for reciprocally cognitive selves (PhS §457-463).

For Hegel, and for the speculating “we” in PhS, only men are proper subjects, capable of rationality and conceptuality. This means that men’s limits exist for men themselves as they are subjective (particular, conceptual) limits. Women’s limits are immediate and thus they do not exist as particular limits. Men can hence go over their limits (as their limits exist for them), dialectically by “sublation”, internally, socially and epistemologically. Men are capable of relating to free otherness in reciprocally cognitive relations. As such, men are fit for the public, political realms of community life – in other words, they can enter those realms of society where objectivity is (ideally) supposed to be constituted for reciprocally cognitive selves. Men inhabit the realms of proper subjects – the civil society, the state, the academic life (including philosophy) and so forth. Men are, firstly, conceptual, internally double, self-reflective self-consciousnesses (i.e. subjects). Secondly, men are capable of relating equally to other selves and thus capable to forming free communities. Thirdly, men are capable of *absolute knowing* as they can enrich their limited knowledge – and reach absolute and

universal knowledge - by relating rationally to the knowledge of others. Because men's knowledge is limited *for themselves* (i.e. subjective, particular) they can go over their limits in knowing things. Men are hence internally, socially and epistemologically capable of actual, rational universality.

Whereas men's knowledge of themselves, other selves and things is universal in a subjective (rational and actual) way, women's universality is not rational and real, instead, it is unreal. Because women are non-subjective beings, women's knowledge of things is not subjective in Hegel's sense of the term. Women *for Hegel* are not capable of relating conceptually (speculatively, dialectically and rationally) to contradictory otherness. This means that for Hegel women are not capable of taking part in *free* communities, as freedom for Hegel is primarily connected to rationality and conceptuality. Also, women's *immediate* way to relate to things (in contrast to internally double, conceptual relation to things) means that women's "knowledge" of things is not universal, *actual, real*. Women cannot understand the real substance of things which is conceptually constituted. Whereas the (male) actual, free self-consciousnesses find their limits (internally, as well as socially and epistemologically) in reciprocally recognitive relationships with other males, women lack the basic internal structure (i.e. conceptuality), which enables one for this kind of relationships. Consequently, they cannot go over their limits either as concerns their self-knowledge, their social relations with others or their knowledge of things.

In PhS women are closed out from relations of "desire", "Lordship and Bondage" and "reciprocal recognition" – both internally, socially and epistemologically - as all these relations exist in thinking, and between such thinkers, who have the inherent capacity for conceptual, speculative and rational thinking. Women cannot be treated *unequally* (i.e. placed in bondage, silenced) as they cannot be treated or heard *equally*. They are incapable of taking part in equal relationships, to start with. They also cannot be "Lords" over others, as they do not have the basic capacity to treat, or even to learn to treat others as their equals.

Hence in Hegel, like in Aristotle, only those who are internally capable for freedom, independence and equality can be "masters" (Lords) over others. However, whereas Aristotle considered slaves and servants (both males and females) internally not capable for freedom, Hegel apparently intends to free the male slaves and servants from relations of "Lordship and bondage" into the public realms of independence, freedom and equality (explicated in the previous sub-chapters of this chapter). Hegel's theory of Lordship and Bondage is a theory of a non-justified bondage. For Hegel, it is not justified to place males into a state of bondage, as males are not *internally* in bondage. As for women, Hegel clearly retains the traditional Aristotelian philosophy. Because women are internally un-free (internally in bondage), it is only justified that they remain in the realm of un-freedom, i.e. in the realm of the household. They cannot be let to the public, free spheres of society. Keeping women in the realm of un-freedom does not mean (for Hegel) that women are treated in an unjust way, alike as it did not mean for Aristotle that either male or female "barbarians" (non-Greeks) were treated unjustly when excluded from the public spheres of society. Only those who Hegel (in PhS) already recognizes as (internally, potentially) free subjects, i.e. deserving to be treated as free beings, are seen by Hegel to be treated unjustly when treated as unfree (placed in bondage). Women are not "in bondage" (for Hegel) when they are "mastered externally" by their husbands, in the manner how Hegel explains the state of "bondage" in his theory of Lordship and bondage. As women lack the internal capacity of being their own masters – i.e. they lack the internal

capacity to “subject themselves as their own objects” and “labour” for themselves – women are treated justly while externally mastered. As immediate beings (in contrast to internally mediating males, who can limit themselves) women are in need of external “Lordship” (“mastering”). Women are not *internally negating* (internally “subjecting”) independent, “free objects” – i.e. subjects. As was explicated in the previous chapters, only internally negating, independent subjects are “ free self-consciousnesses” and hence capable to take part in reciprocally recognitive relationships with other selves. As women’s state of un-equality in Family corresponds with what women are, women are treated in a right way when confined into family.

Carole Pateman criticises in her book *The Sexual Contract* (1988) especially the way women are excluded from the public spheres of the community and confined into the private sphere in Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. Hegel sees in his Philosophy of Right that both women and men enter the marriage by a marriage contract. Pateman pays attention to the unequal standing of the two parties entering marriage. She argues that the marriage contract in Hegel alike in the traditional Western political philosophy in general takes place in a society which is founded on the subordination of women. Pateman calls the “original contract” which founds the subordination of women a “sexual contract”. Marriage contracts are made in a society which is already based on “sexual contract”. The “sexual contract” is made by men, to the exclusion of women from the political spheres of the community. Women are excluded from those realms where various relations and conditions are constituted politically (between citizens of the state) into the realm of “natural subordination”. Pateman argues that states of un-freedom and inequality cannot in general be seen to be entered by one’s choice or by a contract, hence the marriage contract also in Hegel is not actually a contract. It is called “a contract” only because women must somehow be included into the community as a whole. Actual contracts are however made within the civil order, between equals, not between parties in which the other party is in an inferior position to the other. As women are excluded from the “free” (political) spheres of the community and denied the status of a free, political subject (the status of a citizen), they are not in the position of making actual contracts in general. Pateman sees that the way in which women are denied the status of an “individual subject” is the base for their subjection in Hegel, as well as with most traditional Western philosophers. Patriarchal marriage (determined through a “sexual contract”) appears as the only alternative for a woman to live a respectable “adult” life in the Hegelian community, instead of being a matter of “contracting in”. (Pateman, 1988 116-131, 173-181)

Hegel speaks of the difference of the ethical lives and “interests” of men and women:

The difference between the ethical life of the woman and that of the man consists just in this, that in her vocation as an individual and in her pleasure, her interest is centred on the universal and remains alien to the particularity of desire; whereas in the husband these two sides are separated; and since he possesses as a citizen the self-conscious power of universality, he thereby acquires the right of desire and , at the same time, preserves his freedom in regard to it. (PhS §457)

It appears that male “desire” (men’s intentions and interests) is acceptable because it strives -

and finds its ultimate satisfaction – in reciprocally recognitive, equal relations with others. It strives for the constitution of “shared objectivity” (i.e. a free state, explicated in Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*). In other words, men are built so that they strive for freedom and equality even that they can “err” along the path towards this goal. Even that male desire can assume parochial forms, as it can take place as relations of Lordship and Bondage, it nevertheless strives for being satisfied in free and equal relations with others. It can learn (dialectically) from its errors as it is pushed by its internal contradictions to take into account the demands for recognition, presented by contradicting others. As women’s possible intentions (“desires”) cannot even potentially recognize the claims of contradicting others – and hence cannot be in the service of constituting objectivity for reciprocally recognitive selves - they must be contained in the family. Feminine incapacity for synthesizing dialectics (i.e. uniting contradictory thoughts of things) makes them incapable for constituting shared objectivity with free others. Family appears as a realm of non-contradiction in PhS. This means that family relations are not contradictory. For that matter they cannot also be free, in the manner of being equal. As the women (constituting the guardians of the family relations) cannot mediate between contradicting thoughts, the family relations are not “dialectical”. This means that they cannot be turned into equal, free relations, as is the case in relations in which both parties are (mutually recognized as) free self-consciousnesses.

In Hegel, the capacity to mediate between contradicting thoughts denotes the conceptual capacity for dialectical thinking, in the manner of synthesizing dialectics, i.e. sublation, *Aufhebung*. In “sublation” the contradicting thoughts are united. Because women cannot unite internally with contradicting otherness family relations are immediate relations which Hegel describes as “natural”. Conceptually mediated relations are also such in which one finds itself as a particular being. This is not the case in family relations. Further, because of the female immediacy, family is not an internally speculative part of the community as a whole. Family does not contain in it (through its internal speculation) the other parts of society (i.e. the parts of civil society and the state) as rational othernesses. Even that the Hegelian community is rational and free, family constitutes an un-free and un-rational realm within it. Hegel writes of young male children as the ones who leave the realm of Family to find their true nature in the other parts of society:

The brother is the member of the Family in whom its Spirit becomes an individuality which turns towards another sphere, and passes over into the consciousness of universality. The brother leaves this immediate, elemental, and therefore, strictly speaking, negative ethical life of the Family, in order to acquire and produce the ethical life that is conscious of itself and actual. He passes from the divine law, within whose sphere he lived, over to the human law. But the sister becomes, or the wife remains, the head of the household and the guardians of the divine law. In this way, the two sexes overcome their (merely) natural being and appear in their ethical significance, as diverse beings who share between them the two distinctions belonging to the ethical substance. (PhS §458-459)

For Hegel, the ethical Spirit, or ethical substance, has two parts to it. There is the natural, unconscious, intuitive part (the feminine) and the self-conscious, human, rational part (the male). Thus natural (the feminine) and human (the male) constitute different ethical realms for Hegel.

The difference of the sexes and their ethical content remains, however, in the unity of the substance, and its movement is just the constant becoming of that substance. The husband is sent out by the Spirit of the Family into the community in which he finds his self-conscious being. Just as the Family in this way possesses in the community its substance and enduring being, so, conversely, the community possesses in the Family the formal element of its actual existence, and in the divine law its power and authentication. Neither of the two is by itself absolutely valid; human law proceeds in its living process from the divine, the law on earth from that of the nether world, the conscious from the unconscious, mediation from immediacy – and equally returns whence it came. The power of the nether world, on the other hand, has its actual existence on earth; through consciousness, it becomes existence and activity. (PhS 460)

In PhS Hegel writes that there are recognitive relations and ethical relations in family, too. Family constitutes especially for women and the female children its own individual, singular universe (as for women there is no outside of family). Also in this universe the parts are constituted as ethical parts of the whole, even if not rationally as internally speculated parts (as is the case when contradicting parts are mediated as parts of a whole). For Hegel, women can strive ethically for the best of the family – even if not of larger wholes, i.e. of the whole society. A woman can be very ethical, in a “natural” way, when it comes to the woman’s *own* family. Hence a woman is capable of keeping an ethical household, which, as ethical, is not simply a matter of feelings. This includes, for Hegel, the idea that a woman cannot see her family as *this particular* family instead as a universe of its own (PhS §451) Hegel writes:

In the ethical household, it is not a question of this particular husband, this particular child, but simply of husband and children generally; the relationships of the woman are based, not on feeling, but on the universal. (PhS §457)

Because her own family constitutes woman’s whole ethical universe she cannot strive for the best of “other” families. Other families, with their own “Penate gods” constitute their own universes, and women cannot mediate between these contradicting universes. Thus, family is a universe which cannot become a *particular* universe. Family and family relations cannot be constituted for such a “sublated” universality which is internally mediated with contradicting thoughts concerning the family. This corresponds with the idea that women cannot mediate between contradicting thoughts. Thus family and family relations in Hegel seem to stay stable forever. Family does not change historically (in spite of the appearances) as it cannot relate internally to contradicting thoughts concerning itself and its constitutive relations. Hence wives and husbands cannot, for Hegel, become each others equals, in the same manner in which Lords and Bondsmen become equals in Hegel’s theory of Lordship and Bondage. Family is a realm of immediacy and nature in contrast to the historically changing realms, inhabited by male citizens. Hegel writes that woman cannot accept other (contradicting) Penate gods, only the ones guarding her own family. As such, she cannot strive for the best of “other” families, wives, husbands, children etc., only for the best of her own family. (PhS §457, §474-475).

Simone de Beauvoir criticised Hegel’s idea of femininity as something stable and natural in her book *The Second Sex* (1949). In Hegel men are seen to *actively* become what they are – to

develop from immature masculinity towards mature manhood, higher rationality and freedom. Men *make themselves* into what they are through active participation in various rational activities (including philosophy) together with other selves. The female passivity contrast with this male dynamism. Women just are “naturally” (always already) what they are. As women are *immediate* beings, they remain also always the same, as they cannot mediate with contradicting otherness. The capacity to mediate with contradicting otherness is seen by Hegel as the necessary prerequisite for self-change (as is explicated in the previous sub-chapters in this chapter). De Beauvoir argues against Hegel that women *become* women instead of *being* women. In other words, femininity is culturally and contextually produced and constructed. Girls are carefully raised up, through various means of guidance and education, to become the “naturally subordinate” beings which they are. (De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, see e.g. pp. 84-91)

The “youth”, or the “men of pathos” constitute an important and an interesting category in Hegel. These men live in a somewhat ambivalent, transitory realm between the family and the rational, public realms of the society. These men constitute a class of “immature manhood”, men of “pathos”, who have a similar inclination of *immediacy* toward their own nation as women have toward their own families. Hegel writes in a somewhat frustrated manner how this type of manhood, especially the Youth, are admired and supported by women.

Womankind – the everlasting irony (in the life) of community – changes by intrigue the universal end of the government into a private end, transforms its universal activity into a work of some particular individual, and perverts the universal property of the state into a possession and ornament for the Family. Woman in this way turns to ridicule the earnest wisdom of mature age which, indifferent to purely private pleasures and enjoyments, as well as to playing an active part, only thinks and cares for the universal. She makes this wisdom an object of derision for raw and irresponsible youth and unworthy of their enthusiasm. In general, she maintains that it is the power of youth that really counts (PhS §475).

Through the Youth a somewhat feminine type of thinking enters the public realm and assumes the form of a sort of *nationalist* pathos. Through the Youth, the Spirit of the Penates is taken to the level of the nation.

The Youth comes away from the unconscious Spirit of the Family, and becomes the individuality of the community.(PhS §473)

The brave youth in whom woman finds her pleasure, the suppressed principle of corruption, now has his day and his worth is openly acknowledged . Now, it is physical strength and what appears as a matter of luck, that decides on the existence of ethical life and spiritual necessity. Because the existence of ethical life rests on strength and luck, the decision is already made that its downfall has come. (PhS §475)

A natural (feminine) set of mind strives for particular ends because its particularity makes up (for it) a universal end. This attitude makes up the set of mind of the “brave Youth”. The *individual consciousness* of the Youth contrasts with the “mediated self-consciousness” of

the mature manhood. Even that Hegel clearly considers mature manhood the most important feature of the community as a whole, the Youth constitutes for him an important “other” power through which the nation has an understanding of itself as an *individual* nation. The individual consciousness of the youth is also important for the historical life – and the dialectical movement - of the community. The Youth strive for the best of the community, or nation, in a somewhat similar manner of “immediate devotion” as the women strive for the best of the Family. As the Youth cannot mediate their thought of the community with “other” thoughts of the community, they have a non-dialectical attitude (of a sort of “either-or”) for the preservation of their own thought of the community. . (PhS §475 -476). As such, the attitude of “Pathos” of the youth resembles the attitude of “Desire”, which was explained earlier in this chapter on Hegel. Alike “Desire”, “Pathos” does not mediate *internally* with contradicting otherness.

..the movement of human and divine law finds its necessity expressed in individuals in whom the universal appears as “pathos (...) As a moment of the visible community its activity is not confined merely to the underworld, or to its outer existence, but it has an equally visible existence and movement in the actual nation. Taken in this form, what was represented as a simple movement of the individualized “pathos” acquires a different look, and the crime and consequent destruction of the community acquire the proper and characteristic form of their existence. Human law in its universal existence is the community, in its activity in general is the manhood of the community, in its real and effective activity is the government. It *is, moves, and maintains* itself by consuming and absorbing into itself the separatism of the Penates, or the separation into independent families presided over by womankind.(PhS §475)

For Hegel, the nation possesses in the youth its nationalist - or, as concerns also possible internal conflicts, its *separatist* - power. The Spirit of pathos, as something individual, will take the nation or the community into destruction (i.e. into wars against other communities) which however are seen by Hegel as important phases in the historical movement of the nation or community towards higher (i.e more internally complex) forms. Also the Youth grow more universal (in terms of mediating internally with contradicting thoughts concerning the nation) in wars as they are confronted with the possible destruction of the community. As such, wars constitute a sort of “struggle for recognition” taken to the level of the nation. By becoming into contact with the moment of “abstraction” (the community as “void”, destructed) the Youth find their internal conceptual and rational capacities and, also, are able to unite dialectically with contradicting otherness. As such, separatist thoughts of the nation can become united dialectically.

The community, however, can only maintain itself by suppressing this Spirit of individualism, and, because it is an essential moment, all the same creates it and, moreover, creates it by its repressive attitude towards it as a hostile principle. However, this principle, being merely evil and futile in its separation from the universal end, would be quite ineffectual if the community itself did not recognize the power of Youth (the manhood which, while immature, still stands within the sphere of individuality), as the *power* of the whole. For the community is a nation, is itself an individuality, and essentially is such *for itself*

by other individualities being *for it*, by excluding them from itself and knowing itself to be independent of them (PhS §475).

Governed by the Youth set of mind alone the community would not develop historically from its primitive forms into more internally complex “sublated” forms. However, because the Youth are *males*, their “Penatean” set of mind does not constitute an unchangeable fact. Whereas a Penatean consciousness is a stable, timeless fact *in women*, in men it can become mediated with contradicting otherness and thus change into mature manhood. An attitude of Pathos towards one’s community (alike the attitude of “Desire”) can go over its limits if it exists in a male mind. In Hegel, the community is to unite (by historical, dialectical sublation) various contradicting thoughts (of the community) into a rich, internally varied idea of the community. The development of the community (the nation) resembles the way a subjective consciousness develops in PhS from parochial forms towards free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition (explained earlier). (PhS §455-457, 461)

The mature men – constituting the rational government of the nation – will in time raise the nation from its peril (after its being taken down by the individuality of the Youth). The mature men will “sublate” the Spirit of pathos and thus maintain and dialectically develop the community. However, Hegel sees that the Spirit of the Youth – through the Spirit of the Family – remains always an inherent and necessary power in the society. It appears that the historical movement of the nation takes place as a dynamic between “mature manhood” and “immature manhood” .

Hegel writes that in Family, and in the Feminine, the Spirit passes over into *abstract negativity* (PhS §452). In Hegel, the feminine as “abstract negativity” sets hence an un-conceptual contradiction (a self-contradictory duality) within the Spirit as a whole. As “abstract negativity” (in contrast to internally negated, subjective entities) femininity constitutes a problematic abstract entity in Hegel’s philosophy. Femininity is not seen, by Hegel, as a *particular* abstract negativity (particular, subjective abstraction) which is constituted in the subjective thinking of it. Femininity is not seen, by Hegel, to be related to its subjective thinker (i.e. to Hegel himself). In other words, Hegel does not see femininity to be constituted for the self as well as to other selves. Hegel does not “return” his thought of femininity to its thinker and see it as a conceptual construction. As such, Hegel treats his own particular *thought* of femininity as the unlimited truth of femininity and the women. As such, he treats femininity (or “womanhood”, as he describes femininity) very differently than he treats other *thought* entities. In general Hegel argues that what things are (thought to be) *in themselves* is always constituted subjectively and historically *for themselves*.

As a non-subjective negativity (i.e. an abstract negativity) femininity stays forever same (for Hegel) even that communities and nations (i.e. those parts of communities which are seen to be subjectively constructed) can become historically changed, more complex, free and rational (for Hegel). Only subjective (conceptual) entities are seen by Hegel as movable, changeable, capable of becoming different. Femininity as such, and Family, does not change historically as it does not have the internal structure of conceptuality which would make it capable of changing. It is important to remind that for Hegel actual change is always dialectical, i.e. internal; it takes place subjectively, for itself.

Whereas the (male) Youth can find their rational maturity (inherent in them always already)

in wars, and in the rational activities with other selves, the womankind remains unmoved even when faced with the “moment of abstraction” in wars, i.e. the destruction of their families, husbands, children and their heroes, the brave Youth. For Hegel, the Spirit as a whole is not a fully self-conscious whole. Neither is Spirit fully movable in Hegel. Instead, it has its historically movable (male) part and its stable (female) part. It appears that just some part of Spirit is properly conceptual i.e. internally speculative, while the other part is not. However, for Hegel, Spirit makes up a whole which is a unity.

Problematically – compared to what Hegel says about other “unities”, made of “parts” - Hegel argues that Spirit is a whole, made of a “not self-conscious” part and a “self-conscious part”. Given Hegel’s general rejection of dualisms, this is a surprising view. Hegel does not seem to remember his criticism against the Kantian dualism and realize that his own division into the “self-conscious” and “unconscious” parts of the Spirit is itself consciously done – i.e. that this division exists *for Hegel himself* and for his fellow philosophical “we”. As was explained earlier in this chapter, Hegel criticised the Kantian “thing” because it was made of a “subjectively known part” (thing for us) and a “not subjectively known part” (thing in itself). Hegel himself seems to have transferred the same problem into his notion of “Spirit”. Hegel’s Spirit is divided into the realm of subjects (constituting thus its subjectively known part) and into the realm of non-subjects (a part not known subjectively). Hegel does not seem to remember here his criticism against Kant. According to this criticism all divisions, made by subjects, are fully subjective (including both parts of the division).

For Hegel Spirit is constituted by its male part (internally speculated and thus conceptually known *for us*) and its female part (immediately known, i.e. not conceptual for us, resembling the Kantian “thing in itself”). This apparent Hegelian duality shows itself further in his notions of Family as an entity and family relations. It also shows itself in the way Hegel sees the relations between family and other realms of the society (the male realms of the civil society and the state). These three realms - corresponding with what Hegel basically says about “singularity”, “particularity” and “universality” – make up the whole of Spirit. Whereas the other parts of the whole (the civil society and the state) are internally speculated parts of the whole - as they are inhabited by free self-consciousnesses - the Family is not. Even that in the Youth, the “singularity” of the family becomes mediated with “particularity” and “universality”, in women it does not. Hence the Hegelian Spirit is a dualist whole, resembling in this sense, the Kantian “thing”.

According to what was explained above as “reciprocal recognition” for Hegel, women are not reciprocally recognized by Hegel or the “philosophical we” in PhS. A basic part of the “non-recognition” of women in PhS is that Hegel does not acknowledge women as “internally negated” “free objects” (i.e. subjects). The relation between men and women (as well as the relation between Family and the other parts of the society) constitutes hence a relation of Lordship and Bondage in Hegel’s philosophy. A core aspect of Hegel’s attitude towards women is that women are not acknowledged as free self-consciousnesses (consciousness capable of relating to contradictory otherness through internal mediation).

In PhS, women’s knowledge is not considered *real* knowledge of things. Real, actual knowledge is for Hegel conceptual, rational knowledge as things are ultimately conceptually constructed. As such, what things *really* are is known “beyond” women. Real knowledge is produced by men, capable of knowing things through contradicting otherness. In his theory

of Lordship and Bondage Hegel sees that the core part in the constitution of the “bondage/slavery” of the otherness – i.e. in the silencing and the refutation of otherness - is that Other knowledge of things is considered not real. Hegel describes women’s “immediate” knowledge of things as not real. His attitude towards women corresponds with what he himself says of an “enslaving” (not free, not reciprocally recognitive) attitude towards otherness. De Beauvoir said sixty years ago:

Certain passages in the argument employed by Hegel in defining the relation of master and slave apply much better to the relation of man to woman. The advantage of the master, he says, comes from his affirmation of Spirit as against Life through the fact that he risks his own life; but in fact the conquered slave has known this same risk.(...) He says: “The other consciousness is the dependent consciousness for whom the essential reality is the animal type of life; that is to say, a mode of living bestowed by another entity”.(...) Men have presumed to create a feminine domain – the kingdom of life, of immanence – only in order to lock up women therein. (de Beauvoir 1980, 96-97)

2.4.2. The story of *Antigone* in PhS

When discussing the two realms of the Human and the Divine Law, Hegel discusses also the classic Sophocles’ play of *Antigone*. The story of the crime, committed by *Antigone* goes, in short, as follows. *Antigone*’s brother, *Polyneices*, has died while waging a war against his own brother’s *Eteocles*’ regime in Thebes. *Polyneices* claims to be the rightful inheritor of the kingdom. Both *Polyneices* and *Eteocles* however die. The maternal uncle of the dead brothers considers *Polyneices* a wrong-doer and, consequently, not worthy of a proper burial. *Creon* wants *Polyneices*’s body to be left unburied and to be ravaged. This is when *Antigone*, the devoted sister of *Polyneices*, acts. She buries her brother, even that she knows that it is strictly against the will of the ruler of the kingdom, *Creon*. Later she becomes punished by *Creon*, closed into a tomb where she dies.

Hegel discusses *Antigone*, as a part of his discussion of the distinction between the ethical realms of the human and the divine laws. For Hegel, the act of *Antigone* (to give a proper burial to his brother) is ethical when interpreted from the point of view of the ethics of the Family. Inside the Family, the kinship ties of blood are privileged above all the rational, ethical and moral reasonings of the state. Hegel describes a sisters devotion to her brother:

The loss of the brother is therefore irreparable to the sister and her duty towards him is the highest. (PhS §457)

Hegel describes how the brother and the sister are, in their different ways, connected to the two realms of immediacy (family) and the mediated rationality (state)

The brother leaves this immediate, elemental, and therefore, strictly speaking, negative ethical life of the Family, in order to acquire and produce the ethical life that is conscious of itself and actual. He passes from the divine law, within

whose sphere he lived, over to human law. But the sister becomes, or the wife remains, the head of the household and the guardian of the divine law. In this way, the two sexes overcome their (merely) natural being and appear in their ethical significance, as diverse beings who share between them the two distinctions belonging to the ethical substance. (PhS §458- 459)

By breaking the rule of Creon, Antigone seems to have committed a crime against the rules of the state. However, Hegel discusses whether Antigone's deed is actually a *crime* or not. Actual crimes are committed against the rational human law, inside the human ethical realm, i.e. inside the state. They are committed by subjects, of whom the state expects rational behaviour, because, after all, they are rational beings and this can be expected from them. However, can Antigone, a woman, be considered to commit crimes within the rational realm? According to Hegel, Antigone can be said to break the law, as an actual deed against the ruling of Creon, the rightful head of the state, is nevertheless done. Yet, which law does she break, or does she break any law? Hegel clearly has some difficulty to explain *how* Antigone can be said to be guilty, so that this explanation can be understood as a coherent part of Hegel's own description of the distinction between the two ethical realms of the state and the family. In Antigone's character and in her deed, the two realms come to intertwine in ways which Hegel has some difficulty to explain, as he nevertheless cannot give a conceptually mediated explanation of the relation between the two realms, nor of Antigone's deed.

By explaining Antigone's deed or crime Hegel resorts to call it an act of *individuality*. Hegel also seems to consider it a feminine perversion or ridicule of the universal, human realm. However, Hegel seems to be forced to understand the both sides in the Antigone story. Hegel understands the universal laws of the Family (Antigone) as well as the universal laws of the state (Creon). By not being able to resolve these two contradicting parties dialectically (which he could do if the conflict would take place within the human realm, between rational self-consciousnesses) Hegel argues that there is a somewhat hostile relation between the realms of the human law and the realm of Family (PhS § 475).

According to Hegel, the state needs (the labour) of the Family, in producing the power of the state. However, the state cannot but repress the law of the Family, and especially the womankind, because the state needs to act rationally. It needs to, ultimately, control the power of individuality by rationality. This creates a hostile relation between men and women. Whereas the male members of the Family, sons and brothers, develop to understand why it is necessary for their individual power to be sometimes repressed, when they are young, immature and "pathetic", the women do not develop such reflective self-consciousness. A rational law – which remains forever external for women - is thus forced upon women. Women are always in a hostile relationship with the rational state, because it is necessary that the divine law of the women is controlled externally by a law, in which they cannot find themselves. Because the women themselves are not capable of acknowledging the validity of the law, forced upon them, the women constitute the internal "enemy" of the rational state. The relationship is reciprocally hostile because neither party can find itself in the law of the other one. The rational state cannot recognize the claims of women (e.g. the claim of Antigone, to give a decent burial to her brother) as rational claims, emerging from within the human realm. Hegel's treatment of the deed of Antigone resembles how Hegel describes the attitude of the "Lords" towards the deeds of the "Bondsmen". The labour of the Bondsmen is necessary, however, the Bondsmen themselves cannot participate into determining the

meaning of their own labour. Their labour is determined beyond the Bondsmen themselves. If the Bondsmen do something by themselves, something which is not determined by the Lords, it is considered unreal or unessential. The deeds of the Bondsmen remain outside of the rational realm (for the Lords) as long as there is no reciprocal recognition between these two parties.

Hegel argues in his theory of the Lordship and Bondage that “Lords” externalize into the bondsmen those parts of themselves which they do not acknowledge as belonging to themselves. The Lords “labour” the refuted yet necessary parts of themselves through the bondsmen. This seems to happen in Hegel’s own philosophy through the “labour” done by the women and the Family. What are the features which Hegel considers important yet which he does not want to situate into “subjects”, into the “rational manhood” or into the rational state? Looking at his theory of the importance of the Spirit of the Youth it appears that Hegel labours the Spirit of “individuality” and “immediacy” (i.e. the incapability to mediate between the self and the contradicting other) through women. The Youth are immature as they live in an ambivalent realm between femininity and the proper male humanity. Raised by the Penatean women, the Youth cannot unite contradicting thoughts concerning the nation, instead, they can accept only one individual thought concerning the nation. In Hegel, this kind of “individual” attitude toward a political whole (a nation) is important as concerns the historical dialectics of political wholes..

Hegel hence seems to labour “political pathos” (an “either-or” attitude) through women. Families produce forever new generations of Youths who - at each historical level in the development of the nation - cannot tolerate contradicting thoughts concerning the nation. In the “either-or” attitude the contradicting thoughts are not united through dialectical sublation (negation and preservation) in which the both thoughts are both preserved and changed. Instead, in the immediate (feminine) “either-or” attitude (resembling the one of “Desire” in the dialectics of subjective consciousness), the other thought is preserved unchanged and the other thought is rejected. Because the Youth will always be raised up in the “Penatean” spirit of the family, the development of the nation will always require wars (a sort of “struggle for recognition” at the level of political wholes). Because the women will always equip the Youth with an attitude of Pathos/”Desire” towards contradicting other political thoughts (of the nation), historical movement of the nation will always take place through relations of Pathos/Desire (lack of reciprocal recognition between different political groups) and, consequently, through wars.

It appears that in Hegel’s philosophy women “labour” individual “Penatean” political mentality. For Hegel, the women will always admire the “brave youth” and raise young male children to be “Penatean”, because they do not appreciate mature manhood and rationality. Women and the realm of family stays forever same in this sense. It appears that Hegel’s views of the national state as an *individual* entity which has a restricted capacity to go over its individual limits (for example, *Philosophy of Right*, § 330-340 where Hegel rejects Kant’s peace plan), into a more “global” governmental level, is rooted in his theory of the Family Spirit as an element of the national state. These less appealing aspects of Hegel’s philosophy – the degrading treatment of women and the uncritical acceptance of the system of nation-states – seem to be interconnected.

Also the family bonds of love, where the parties do not relate to each other rationally,

instead where they are “totally devoted to each other” seems something which Hegel labours through women. Hegel says that the husband is not *this particular husband* for his wife, instead, the only husband in the universe.

It is important to see that Hegel and his fellow philosophical “we” in PhS render all those dualisms (relations of Lordship and Bondage) *which they themselves are conscious of* into conceptually mediated parts of the subject and also as parts of the rational society. The bondage of women does not belong to these dualisms. Thus it seems that Hegel was unable to recognize how his view on women violated against the very principles he formulated in PhS. It is however also important to remember that Hegel lived in times when women were (in all European nations as well as globally) confined into the family and set under the custody of their male relatives. Most thinkers in Hegel’s times shared Hegel’s views on women and the Family. In this sense, Hegel is clearly a child of his time.

3. Two French interpretations of Hegel

3.1. Alexandre Kojève

3.1.1. The Kojévian interpretation of Hegel

Russian-French philosopher Alexandre Kojève's lectures on Hegel, delivered in 1933-39 in France, had a major influence on how some of the most prominent contemporary philosophers - including many feminists - interpret Hegel (on this influence, see e.g. Weir 1996, 1-32; Grosz 1989, 1-6, 9; Williams 1997, 380-9; Hutchings 2003, 61-4, 70-2, 102). These lectures have been edited and published as *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*; originally in French, 1947. Especially Kojève's interpretation of Hegel's realm of the self-conscious Spirit as the *End of History* has become famous. In France, Kojève's interpretation has been enormously influential, although often unacknowledged. He has actually been considered the one (besides Jean Hyppolite) who made Hegel known in France, at a time when there was little interest in Hegel in France. It has not only had an influence on the way Hegel is read, but on many other substantive issues as well. Stuart Barnett (1998) writes:

The impact of the Hegelianism fostered by Kojève also manifested itself in a preoccupation with certain issues, with a certain state and method of inquiry. In this sense, this impact was to have a far-reaching consequences. Indeed, we still live in the thrall of this brand of Hegelianism. (p. 19-20)

Butler is clearly influenced by the French tradition which reads Hegel through Kojève. According to this tradition, all particular subject-identities – and in general all particularizations of things – denote a repressive attitude toward others. Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Luce Irigaray and Jacques Derrida among others have been influenced by this tradition. This has been discussed by e.g. by Allison Weir (1996; see Weir's discussion of Butler as a thinker influenced by the same tradition as e.g. Sartre, de Beauvoir, Lacan etc. pp. 112-134). Stuart Barnett remarks that the structuralist and post-structuralist critique of Hegel in France was also conducted under Kojève's continuous influence:

Hence, within Kojève's Hegel were the very seeds to this wave of anti-Hegelianisms. In the final analysis, perhaps one version of Hegel was confronting another in the philosophical sea change of the late 1960's. (p. 21-22)

Thus, the anti-Hegelian arguments put forth by Levinas, Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard etc. have largely been made within the interpretative framework established by Alexandre Kojève (see also SD; Descombes 1998; Williams 1997, ch. 15).

In 1943, Kojève wrote another Hegel-inspired work, *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*, which, however, remained unpublished until 1981. It is a rich and complex work in which

recognition has a central role. However, Kojève's influence is almost entirely based on his lectures and on their published version. Therefore, Kojève's *Outline* is largely ignored in this study, although as a philosophical and political work, it may be even more interesting than his *Introduction*.

Judith Butler analyzes Kojève's interpretation of Hegel in SD. She sees it as one possible interpretation, and says that she does not intend to enter into a debate of whether it is right or wrong (SD,73). However, she notices that Kojève departs from Hegel at some important points; for example she claims that Kojève emphasizes the individual and abstract aspects of the self over the collective aspects more than Hegel's original theory does. She also notes that Kojève's normative idea of "democratic Marxist" collective individuality, based on his interpretation of Hegel, appears as a disembodied project which suffers from abstractivity.(SD 78)

Butler writes that Kojève "halts" Hegel's Phenomenology at the end of Lordship and Bondage. She apparently refers to the end of historical movement, which Kojève sees to take place when the realm of Desire (i.e. Master-Slave-system) comes to its end, preceding the entrance into free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition. In SD Butler does not yet develop her own subject-theory or political theory. Instead, she focuses on analyzing how Hegel has influenced the subject-theories of other thinkers, like e.g. Kojève. In her later works it becomes clear that the Kojévian way to halt the historical and political movement of the subject by the subject's entering reciprocally recognitive relationships with others structures also Butler's own subject-theory and political theory. In her later works, e.g. in PLP (51-53) CHU (12,174), Butler (1995a,38-54), Butler (1995b 130-131) and BM (113-116) she criticises the Hegel's theory of reciprocally recognitive subjects for its way to internalize its outside as a differential part of itself, hence ending historical movement and radical politics. Butler says that – as concerns her own subject-theory - she suspends the narrative in PhS before its resolution into the realm of free self-consciousness (PLP 34, 51-53) and continues, henceforth, through what she calls as the "Althusserian reversal of Hegel". It is argued in this study that the background to Butler's Althusserian reversal of Hegel lies in her Kojévian interpretation of Hegel. (These themes are discussed further in ch. 5.)

Butler's analyses in SD show that the prominent French philosophers, which she analyses, have been influenced by the Kojévian reading of Hegel, even that Butler herself does not identify this tradition as specifically Kojévian. Nevertheless, her descriptions of the theories of the Hegelian-inflected thinkers like Sartre, Lacan and Foucault show that all these thinkers include a few fundamental Kojévian ideas into their subject-theories. For example, they regard Hegel's free society (of the reciprocally recognitive relations) as a non-political, static realm where the subject is in an utopian, self-satisfied identity with I's object and where there is no contradicting outside or Other, which could change the subject. In these theories this supposedly Hegelian utopia is opposed by a heterogeneous, dynamic realm which is not conceptually coherent but complex, political and changeable. In this realm there still exist contradicting Others for the subject. The subject represses and excludes the Others. However, the repressed and excluded others enable the subject to change. The subject remains conceptually incoherent, and does not manage to conceptualize itself, or the Other, in a satisfactory way, even that this is what it ceaselessly "desires" to do. The conceptual alternatives posed by these thinkers are, then, a static Utopia and continuous misrecognition, repression and struggle. Kojève's way to emphasize the Lordship and Bondage-section in

PhS makes the contrast between the struggle and the end-state as central, and when the end-state is abandoned, what remains is the conflictual aspect of Hegel's theory, including the "necessary errors" of the one-sided forms of consciousness. This tradition of reading Hegel has influenced, especially through psychoanalytical thinkers like Lacan, the mode of thought which is called as French post-structuralism or "postmodernism". It has influenced also the *radical democratic* theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (see ch. 6).

According to my knowledge, no-one has so far compared these two Hegelian thinkers, Kojève and Butler, in detail. In chapter 5. I try to show that there is indeed a certain fundamental similarity in their interpretations of Hegel's realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition. Their normative attitudes towards this realm are nevertheless fundamentally different. Butler does not think that this realm is either possible or desirable. For Butler, the Hegelian (or, actually Kojévian) free self-consciousness and its realization as the "universally homogeneous State" are not appealing ideals. In this Butler thinks similar to e.g. Sartre and Foucault who read Hegel through Kojévian lenses. The main reason why Butler rejects the Hegelian "free community" is that, for Butler, there is no external, radical Other to it. It has internalized its Other as a differential part of its own world. Because there is no external (radical, contradicting) Other to it, it is un-political.

Butler writes in SD that Kojève introduces the possibility that historical action (i.e. political action) and metaphysical satisfaction may not imply each other mutually. Subjects will be constituted by "Desire" – implying a repressive attitude toward others - as long as there is politics and historical change. As will be explained in this chapter, both Kojève and Butler share that kind of interpretation of Hegel, according to which historical change and politics belong to the realm of Desire and that these activities end in the realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition. When the subject receives a universal recognition (from all possible other points of views) for its own self-knowledge, which is what it desires, the realm of Desire (and, Master-Slave-relations) comes to its end. The subject becomes satisfied, which means that history and politics ends. Butler shares with Kojève the idea that political action includes "slavery" as its necessary element (argued in detail in ch.5).

For Kojève, the Hegelian subject is ultimately an Individual in the sense of being a fully self-determining being. This Individual is a "free nothingness", in the sense that it can overcome any restrictions (as particular identities) placed upon it by time, history, culture and other selves. In PhS this self gradually becomes and *realizes* what it is, i.e. it becomes a free nothingness, which it always is. It becomes recognized as a free nothingness for itself and for all others, and finds its realization as the *universal homogeneous State*, a sociality between free Individuals.

For Kojève, in Hegel's realm of free self-consciousness (free Individuality) the subject has turned everything that is external to it into internal features of itself. It has realized that it is fundamentally a sort of a "free nothingness", as it is not restricted externally (outside of its own free choice-making) by any otherness. It sees itself as a *negating power*, an individualistic mover, who strives to "negate" or question every limit - as substance or as a particular identity - it comes across.

Kojève writes about the activity of "negation" in his *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*:

But thanks to negativity, an identical Being can negate or overcome its identity with itself and become other than it is, even its own opposite. In other words, the negating being, far from necessarily “representing” or “showing” (as a “phenomenon”) its given identical “idea” or “nature”, can *negate* them itself and become opposite to them (that is, “perverted”). Or again, the negating being can break the rigid ties of the fixed “differences” that distinguish it from the other identical beings (by “freeing” itself from these ties); it can leave the place that was assigned to it in the Cosmos. In short (as Hegel puts it in the first edition of the *Logik*), the being of negative or negating Being, dominated by the category of Negativity, consists in “not being what it is and being what it is not” (IRH, 200)

In this interpretation, the particular, context-dependent, historical and limited subject turns into an un-limited *Individual* in the realm of self-conscious Spirit. The “end of history” is the realm of an individual who is universally free from any limits pressed externally upon it. Being determined as a particular subject would mean for Kojève that the subject continues to be determined externally, i.e. enslaved and limited by external otherness. This is the case during its historical movement, preceding the realm of self-conscious Spirit.

Kojève writes about the historical process as the progress of emancipation:

Generally, speaking, it is the Slave, and only he, who can realize a progress, who can go beyond the given and – in particular - the given that he himself is....; possessing the idea of Freedom and not being free, he is led to transform the given (social) conditions of his existence – that is, to realize a historical progress. (IRH 50)

In the realm of free self-consciousness the selves acknowledge themselves and each others as Individual free nothingnesses; consequently slavery has ended. The realm of free self-consciousness is the realm of *realized* unlimited individuality. For Kojève, unlimited individuality *in its actuality* means the same as *reciprocal recognition*. Reciprocal recognition means that nobody questions the validity of, or sets external criteria to, the universal knowledge of itself or any one of the others. By reciprocal recognition, the Individual, which is a free nothingness, is recognized as such, and thus there is no need for the active labor of negation any more, at least in any conflictual way. Because there remains no piece of “other knowledge” - knowledge which is set beyond the selves own knowledge - which is used as a normative criteria or standard in reference to which the self-knowledge of any one of the selves would be measured, there is no need for conflicts between any oppositions. Oppositions are not needed. When the selves cease to “know” themselves and others on the basis of the Master-Slave-division, there are no more reasons for conflicts. Historical movement, as conflictual, is thus seen to belong to the realm of *one-sided* recognition, i.e. to the realm of Master-Slave- relationships and Master-Slave-based epistemology. (IRH, 224-226)

For Kojève, a total self-knowing and perfectly free self-consciousness, which is not divided

into the Master-Slave-system of knowledge, takes place as the philosophical “Wise Man”. In fact, the Wise Man is Hegel himself. Kojève writes:

To be perfectly and completely self-conscious is to have at one’s disposal – at least virtually - an encyclopaedic knowledge in the full sense of the word. In defining the Wise Man, the Man of absolute Knowledge, as perfectly self-conscious –i.e. *omniscient*, at least potentially – Hegel nevertheless had the unheard-of audacity to assert that he *realized* Wisdom in his own person. (IRH, 76)

For Kojève, in the realm of reciprocal recognition there is no need for conflicts because all the selves have been now granted the universal recognition (as a fully self-Mastering individual) which is what the (earlier) fights between the selves were all about. Fights with others were also always internal conflicts, i.e. self-contradictions, based on the Master-Slave-divided thinking and knowledge. Hence the historical movement was not conflictual only between the individual selves, but also self-conflictual, inside the selves. It was motivated by the strive to become free from slavery, i.e. the desire for reciprocal recognition, which was also a desire to become free from Master-Slave-based epistemology. Because finally the self has (as a free individual) become conscious of *all* the knowledge which is formative of itself - historically, presently and futurally - and because its knowledge of itself has gained universal recognition, the selves are freed from that inner pull or desire, which caused the conflicts. There are no restrictions for the free Individuality of everybody and so there are no restrictions which could be removed by further political action. One may summarize that because there is no slavery, there is no historical movement, and no politics in the Hegelian realm of free self-consciousness (interpreted in the Kojèvian manner).

It is also a part of the Kojèvian-Marxist inheritance to emphasize the *violent* nature of these struggles for recognition thus making Hegel to look both as a successor of Machiavelli and a predecessor of Marx. Politics is a struggle for recognition, and this struggle is conducted in terms of oppression, rebellion and war. Indeed, Williams (1997, 11) claims that “for Kojève, recognition is synonymous with the unequal recognition of master and slave”. This, however, is not quite true. As shown above, Kojève *has* a notion of universal recognition, but he equates it with the End of History and the disappearance of all (significant) differences. It is, however, true that Kojève sees the struggle for life and death as an inevitable stage which precedes recognition. Against this, Williams reminds that for Hegel, love is one possible form of recognition (*idem.*). (Also Hegel, in his *Encyclopaedia*, limited the violent struggle for life and death to the “primitive state of mankind”).

The desire behind the conflicts was always the desire for freedom, which did not *yet* exist. It was a desire on the part of the enslaved, un-speakable, non-existent universals (which were forced to produce, or materialize the existence of others, not the existence of themselves) to be included into the domain of those who “speak for themselves”. Only slaves can desire freedom (i.e. to be able to be the free nothingnesses, which they ultimately are) because they do not have it. Yet, when they are granted what they desire, they cease to be slaves and they do not fight with their oppressors any more (as there are no oppressors either). As such, they are fully satisfied with the way they are known. The historical movement, stirred also by epistemological slavery, meant that there was a constant struggle over what is the universal truth about the subject.

The desire to become free from being “externally known” and being externally mastered is the goal which makes the slaved selves (i.e. the slaved universals) to transform both the way they are “known” and also the way their self-knowledge is realized at the social level, as the state. The enslaved selves transform their self-knowledge until finally they include all otherness into them, and thus become free, satisfied and non-conflictual. As long as there is an external otherness, there is a desire towards the overcoming of this otherness (as a restriction) . As long as there is external otherness (slavery) there is a possibility for the selves to become other, different (in a contradicting, radical way) than what they are now. However, when all otherness becomes overcome and included into the self, the self (i.e. its self-knowledge and its reality as the State) cannot become other, i.e. it cannot change, move. This Kojèbian interpretation of slavery as a necessary element in historical and political movement appears also in Butler’s subject-theory (IRH 90, 98, 191; see also e.g. BM 113-116 and ES 89-92), how Butler interprets the role of “external and repressed otherness” in political movement, similarly with Kojève)

For Kojève, the “total wisdom” of the Wise Man or any totally free self-consciousness corresponds with the idea of the “universal homogeneous State”. The absolute knowing, practiced by the free self-consciousnesses in the free State, has no particular, historical character. It cannot change or be enriched. There are also no differences in the knowledge, possessed by the individual self-consciousnesses. The “free nothingness”, which the Kojèbian free Individual is, cannot be differentiated (as regards its particular substance or self-identity) from the other free Individuals. If there were any such differentiation, there would also be the Master-Slave-distinction. Any differentiation would mean that there would be some “higher” system of internal differentiation (above the Individuals) on the basis of which such differentiation would be possible. Kojève explains this also in the following way:

We have seen that perfect self-consciousness equals omniscience. In other words, the Wise Man’s knowledge is *total*, the Wise man reveals the *totality* of Being through the *entirety* of his thought. Now, since Being obeys the principle of *identity* to itself, there is only one unique totality of Being, and consequently only one unique knowledge that reveals it entirely. Therefore there is only one unique possible type of (conscious) wisdom. (IRH 81)

Unlimited free individuality is thus *realized* through reciprocal recognition for Kojève. It gains its objectivity as a universal state which recognizes the free, equal individuality of all its members. This state cannot be an internally differentiating whole because that would mean that the state does not recognize the *full* freedom of its citizens. If the state would place some system of *particular identification* above the Individuals, it would mean that *all* the Individuals were not recognized as fully free, yet instead slaved and restricted by this “higher knowledge”.

Elsewhere in his Introduction, Kojève says that at the End of History “no divergence of opinion is possible”, among the Wise Men (IRH 98). Indeed, “the Wise Man is no longer “individual” in the sense that he would be different from all others” (p.238). The End of History means also that “Man” disappears. Kojève writes about this:

The disappearance of Man in the end of History, therefore, is not a cosmic catastrophe; the natural World remains what it has been from all eternity. And therefore, it is not a biological catastrophe either: Man remains alive as animal in *harmony* with Nature or given Being. What disappears is Man properly so called – that is, Action negating the given, and Error, or in general, the Subject *opposed* to the Object. In point of fact, the end of human Time or History – that is, the definitive annihilation of Man properly so-called or of the free and historical individual – means quite simply the cessation of Action in the full sense of the term. Practically, this means: the disappearance of wars and bloody revolutions. And also the disappearance of *Philosophy*; for since Man himself no longer changes essentially, there is no longer any reason to change the (true) principles which are at the basis of his understanding of the World and of himself. (IRH 158-159)

The Wise Man ceases to be a subject, opposed to the Object. This means that all possible interpretations of the terms, by which the Wise Man “reads” its object are taken as equally valid. There is no normative standard, no limits, to what words mean. This means that the Wise Man ceases to read objects from some specific point of view, i.e. from historically, culturally limited subject-positions. Limited subject-positions were part of the Master-Slave-distinction. The Wise Man does not see “objects” at all. Objects do not exist for it, as there is no differential system on the basis of which objects would be defined, formed or “produced” for it. The Wise Man is in an immediate harmony with its object, alike the nature is “one” with itself. In this sense, the self-relationality, self-reflectivity and internal doubleness of thinking disappears. There is no *mediation* in the Hegelian sense of the term: the world is not understood through something else than itself. The self-reflective structure of thinking disappears as there is no differentiation between the self and the other *for the thinker itself* any more. This means that the selves see themselves and each others as free nothingnesses, not as particular men. Because there is nothing to be known above or beyond the knowing of the individuals themselves, there is nothing which could question or be used as a criteria to measure the knowledge of or the meaning of the words used by, the individuals. (IRH 190-194).

Kojève writes:

This means that Hegel’s discourse exhausts *all* the *possibilities* of thought. One cannot bring up any discourse in opposition to him which would not already be a part of his own discourse, which would not be reproduced in a paragraph of the System as a constituent element (*Moment*) of the whole. Thus we see that Hegel’s discourse sets forth an *absolute* truth, which cannot be negated by anyone. And therefore we see that this discourse is not dialectical, in the sense that it is not a “thesis” that can be “dialectically overcome” (ibid. 194)

For Kojève, disagreements concerning the “universal truth” belong to the realm of epistemological slavery. When all interpretations of the universal are approved *by everyone*, there cannot be opposing parties, conflicts over the content of the universal. As said earlier, there are no differences of opinion between the Wise Men. The Wise Man is an un-

differentiated (i.e. un-limited, absolute) individual. There are no particular, limited universals (i.e. particular selves) anymore. Particular universals are always parochial universals and thus, for Kojève, they belong to the Master-Slave-system.

Therefore Man, even as a philosopher, is definitively satisfied by the adequate description of the real in its totality which is given by the science of the Wise Man: hence he will never again oppose what has been said by the Wise Man, just as the Wise Man no longer opposed the real which he was describing. Thus the Wise Man's non-dialectical (i.e. non-negating) description will be the absolute truth, which will engender no philosophical "dialectic" and will never be a "thesis" against which an antithesis will come in opposition. (IRH 192)

Kojève nevertheless says that the Wise Man does not become an animal in the End of History. He continues to speak and to think. However, as he does not negate *for himself* any more (i.e. he does not "read" or see particular objects any more, as he has ceased to look at things from any specific point of view) he does not *identify* with particular identities any more. He does not see himself, or the other free selves, as particular men. It appears that to the extent that the Wise Man speaks and thinks by particular words, the particular substance of the words is something fully external for him, in the sense, that he does not identify with particularity any more. Identifying with particularities belongs to the realm of dependency (non-freedom), slavery and history. (ibid. 220, 238)

In Kojève, reciprocally cognitive selves are for themselves and for each others first and foremost free nothingnesses. This means that their sociality as "shared knowledge" makes up a non-particular, non-differentiating, "non-positionalizing" whole. The self-knowledge of these "nothingnesses" can not be synthesized into a particular whole, as they do not see themselves or others as particulars. Nor can there be any expectation for them of finding the "truth" of themselves, at least as a truth with a particular substance to it. Freedom from being externally determined and enslaved means for Kojève that the individuals are not determined by any such collective knowledge, which would mediate their self-knowledge as a part of a *particular* whole. Further, freedom in practice takes place as a making of *free choices*, which are not restricted by any external determination. These choices take place, in a Sartrean vein (influenced by Kojève), not as rationally determined before-hand by some particular subject as their agent, but instead at the moment of "now". They actualize at the moment they are done. Freedom is an activity of making choices which are not determined outside the actual activity itself.

As is explicated in chapter 2.1.7., Hegel's subject gathers together its epistemological parts and meets, in a way, its "universal knower" or "truth" in the end of PhS. Hegel also says that the subject comes to know its otherness as an internal otherness. The otherness, which moved and changed the subject "from outside" is thus turned (in reciprocally cognitive relationships) into an internal otherness, which knows and changes the subject internally, self-consciously, in a conceptually mediated way. For Kojève, this means that the dialectical history and the process in which the self becomes other to itself ends. Because the subject mediates conceptually between itself and the Other, the history of its changing self-knowledge meets its end. Both Butler in SD (77) and Williams (1997, 12) see Kojève's interpretation as an affirmation of "liberal individualism". Given the homogenous, static

nature of his final state described above, this judgment can be accepted only with qualifications. Ultimately, his final state is a version of the communist utopia, although, as in Marx, it can be reached only through the extreme individualism of the modern capitalist state. The outlook of Kojève's unpublished study on law, OPR, is much more individualistic. There, the "universal homogeneous State" is conceived as legally regulated state where all conflicts between individuals and groups can be mediated through a legal "third". Thus, law is supposed to replace politics. Although all differences are not supposed to disappear in this version of the End of History, OPR preserves the two fundamental theses of Kojève's theory: history can be interpreted as a struggle for recognition, and the final stage of history is the emergence a fundamentally apolitical world. It is difficult to say which version of the End of History thesis represents Kojève's more mature thinking. Although OPR was written in 1943, four years after Kojève's famous lecture-sessions, he left OPR unpublished, but authorized the publication of his lecture-notes (IRH), and added some comments to them, including a long footnote in which he describes the End of History. In any case, the version of the thesis presented in IRH is the one which has really been influential.

For Kojève, the historical movement continues because, and as long as, the subjects desire for recognition but remain dissatisfied. However, any time when they are recognized, this recognition takes place in some historical, social situation in which the subject is also seen as an object, i.e. identified as "this particular man here". Such recognition (i.e. being also identified as a particular man) does not satisfy the subject's need, which ultimately is to be recognized as a universal Individual, i.e. a free nothingness. The desire for satisfactory recognition can be satisfied only in the universal homogeneous State, in a community of Wise Men, which is a community of universal Individuals, not of particular men. In IRH Kojève argues that men cannot be satisfied through being recognized through civil law (as always a particular civil law) nor by their political existence. For Kojève, when recognition is facilitated by some particular identification of the subjects involved, the recognition cannot be free and universal and hence not satisfactory. (In OPR, however, legal recognition has a fundamental role.)

Kojève writes:

In fact, Individuality can be fully realized, the desire for Recognition can be completely satisfied, only in and by the universal homogeneous State. For, in the homogeneous State, the *specific-differences*" (*Besonderheiten*) of class, race, and so on are "overcome", and therefore this State is directly related to the particular man as such, who is recognized as citizen in his very particularity. And this recognition is truly universal, for, by definition, the State embraces the whole of the human race (even in its past, through the total historical tradition which this State perpetuates in the present; and in its future, since henceforth the future no longer differs from the present in which Man is already fully satisfied). By fully realizing Individuality, the universal and homogeneous State completes History, since Man, satisfied in and by this State, will not be tempted to negate it and thus to create something new in its place. But this State also presupposes that the totality of the historical process has gone by, and cannot be realized by Man from the outset (for the State, and Man himself, are born from the Fight, which presupposes a difference and cannot take place in universal homogeneity). (IRH 237)

3.1.2. Kojève's "dual ontology" and the rejection of Hegel's philosophy of Nature

As will be explained in this chapter, *Nature* is a necessary part of the Hegelian "triplicity of knowing". Kojève's specific interpretation of Hegel is in important ways based on his rejection of Hegel's philosophy of Nature. Because Kojève rejects nature as something conceptual and dialectical, he ends up rejecting also Hegel's triplicity of knowing. As such, for Kojève, there is no particular theory ("third") which could connect the self and the other, or, the Wise Men, together as particular beings.

Kojève's distinction between a free self-identity (i.e. the Wise Man's self-identity), and an un-free, historical self-identity is theorized by him also as the "dual ontology" between the historical and political realm (a limited, particular self-identity) and nature (immanent self-identity).

An important part of the Kojévian reading of Hegel is his rejection of Hegel's dialectics of "nature" or "substance". Kojève argues that a truly faithful interpretation of Hegel demands the rejection of Hegel's idea that nature is something conceptual and takes part in dialectics. Kojève adheres to what he calls a "dualist ontology". He sees that the nature or the *real* in its totality is something merely "positive", *in immediate identity with itself*. Whereas Nature denotes the realm of immanent self-identity, the thinking selves denote the realm of the conceptually mediated self-identity, the "negative". The conceptual selves are not fully self-identical. However, that is what they desire. In the realm of the negative, selves strive after freedom, denoted ultimately by the full self-identity, i.e. the immanent self-identity. As was explained earlier in this chapter on Kojève, when selves know themselves fully and freely, they have a similar self-identity like the Nature has. They have an immanent identity with themselves. (IRH, 216-217)

For Kojève, a truthful interpretation of Hegel means that an ontological distinction is made between, on the one hand, the phenomenological realm, denoting negativity, dialectics and history, and, on the other hand, the non-dialectical realm of the self-identical Nature. In fact, a part of Nature belongs to the realm of the negative and part of it belongs to the realm of immanence, full self-identity. A distinction is made between the appearing (phenomenological) nature and the non-appearing (non-phenomenological) nature. Nature as an *appearing* Nature belongs to the synthesis of Spirit and it is delineated in conceptual thought. Kojève sees that the appearing Nature (e.g. natural sciences) takes part in history and dialectics.

What is dialectical, according to Hegel, is the concrete Real – that is, Totality or the total Synthesis, or, better, Spirit. In other words, it is not *given* Being (*Sein*) itself that has a dialectical structure, but *revealed* Being (*Begriff*). Now, revealed Being implies, on the ontological level, two constituent elements: Being as *revealed* (Identity, Thesis) and Being as *revealing* (Negativity, Antithesis). Consequently, on the metaphysical level, two Worlds must be distinguished, which are inseparable but essentially different: the natural World and the

historical or human World. Finally, the phenomenological level is constituted by the reflection of *natural* empirical existence (external Consciousness, *Bewusstsein*), which is in turn reflected in itself (Self-consciousness, *Selbstbewusstsein*). Now Hegel expressly says that Negativity is the specifically dialectical constituent element. Identity is not at all dialectical, and if Totality is dialectical, it is only because it implies Negativity. Moving from this ontological level to the metaphysical level, one would then have to say that the Real is dialectical only because the natural world implies a human World, Nature being not at all dialectical in itself. (IRH, 216)

Kojève sees that the total nature is divided into two worlds – to the conceptual one which appears *for us* – and which takes part in the dialectical movement. The other part, or actually the full totality *in itself*, is not dialectical.

In fact, what Kojève says about nature is not all in contrast to what Hegel says. Also Hegel says that some natural aspects like “death” constitute an absolute difference for us as particular beings, something which sets a non-conceptual limit for us. What is however important here in what Kojève says about the self-identity of nature is that this kind of non-conceptual self-identity is something what selves strive after, and, which they reach in the realm of satisfaction, i.e. free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition. However, the interpretation of Hegel, supported in this study, contrasts with the Kojévian interpretation. According to how Hegel is interpreted here, Hegel does not argue that subjects become satisfied when their particular subjectivity disappears. The realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition denotes a *conceptual, internally differentiated* realm. This is also emphasized in Taylor's reading of Hegel (see e.g. Taylor 1975, 76-79, 214-221). It was utterly important for Hegel to preserve the internal conceptuality and differentiations of Being, which, in Kojève's interpretation vanish, in the realm of the End of History.

The idea that there are no “ontological dualities” (e.g. between a conceptual realm and nature) was important for Hegel. The background of why Hegel repeatedly and strongly emphasized this can be understood on the basis of his insistent criticism against what he saw as the Enlightenment dualism (e.g. Kant). The idea was to state that all dualities, themselves, are always *thought* dualities. They are particular, conceptual, self-relational constructions. They are also dialectical because they do not exist only for one (sovereign) self, instead for others too. (see also Taylor 1975 on this theme, pp. 76-80).

Hegel argues that free, reciprocally recognitive selves *identify* with nature and see themselves, in a way, particularized and “known” by the nature. Yet, at the same time, it is utterly important for Hegel to preserve the idea that the selves are free, self-determining (self-particularizing) beings. The selves are not known by any such nature which is beyond them. Thus, the selves are not known (particularized, subjected) by anything which is not, in turn, known by the selves (see about Hegel's idea of the self as its own third, 2.1.5.). *How*, then, is it possible that the selves can see themselves and others both as un-limited (not externally subjected) and as limited (subjected through the other) is theorized by Hegel as *the self-conscious triplicity of knowing*. This is the same as Absolute Knowing. Free, reciprocally recognitive selves know themselves, other selves and things in general by way of Absolute Knowing. The triple construction of knowing takes place as an active *rationality* between its

parts, so that the parts, in a way, engage in reciprocal rationalization of each others. The rational triplicity of knowing— as the connecting third party - enables the selves to see themselves, other selves and things as both limited (particular) and unlimited (not permanently known by any one party alone, as in dualities, e.g. in the “ordinary” subject-object-relations). Things are particularized and identified on the basis of a shared rationality, which is not “beyond” any one of its parts, because the triplicity is reciprocal. Nature, material substance is, necessarily, a part of this triplicity, which Hegel repeatedly emphasizes. Further, this triplicity of knowing – the way things are particularized in the realm of reciprocal recognition - has its objectivity in the State, which, as is seen in the Philosophy of Right, is internally differentiated.

In contrast to Hegel’s triplicity of knowing, Kojève clings to an idea of “ontological duality”. Ontological duality is important also for some other philosophers, like Sartre, whose distinction between “Being” and “Nothingness” has been influenced by Kojève (Sartre 2001; see e. g. Descombes 1998, 48-54) . Also Lacan’s theory of the “Real” is influenced by the Kojévian reading of the Hegelian self as an internally multiple construction. For Lacan, the ultimate, full self-identity of the subject - which he calls the “Real” - cannot be reached conceptually, because that would denote an end to the linguistic subject. For Lacan, a full self-identity takes place as a state of psychosis. Psychosis denotes a realm of non-communicative, absolute singularity and individuality, resembling the Kojévian End of History, i.e. the realm of the Wise Man. (On Kojève’s influence on Lacan, see Roudinesco 2006, especially pp. 26-8, and Shepherdson 2006.)

Kojève argues that some parts of Hegel’s philosophy of Being are “erroneous”. He sees that this error stems from Hegel’s “bourgeois, Schellingian imagination”. In the next quotation, Kojève criticises aspects of Hegel’s philosophy of Being, presented in Hegel’s *Encyclopaedia* and *Logic*:

On the one hand, Hegel sets forth in it a metaphysics of Nature, in which Nature is described as a frankly dialectical reality having the same threefold structure as the human reality, which is described in the metaphysics of Man or of “Spirit”. On the other hand, in the Ontology itself, that is, in the *Logik*, Hegel does not, so to speak, take account of the fact that the total Being or the “Idea” (=Geist) which he is describing presents on the one hand a dialectical aspect, which transmits its dialectical character to the totality of *Being*, but which is itself *Action (Tun)* and not *Being (Sein)*, and on the other a fundamentally nondialectical aspect, which is static *given-Being* or *natural Being*. All this, in my opinion, is an error on Hegel’s part. (IRH, 217)

It is apparent that Kojève treats in a trivial way something which for Hegel is a necessary part of conceptuality and dialectics. In fact, according to Hegel, if the full Being of things is not seen as something rationally and conceptually constituted (at least potentially, or ideally), the thinking remains divided into the system of Master and Slave. For Hegel, if the reality can be understood, it has to share the rational structure of thinking itself. Kojève’s dualist ontology between the realm, which appears *for us*, and the realm which does not appear for us *in itself* resembles the Kantian distinction which Hegel criticised. For Hegel, the Kantian distinction

was the principle of *pure self-consciousness*.

However, whereas Kant did not have any such utopia in his mind, where the distinction between the “thing for us” and “thing in itself” would disappear, Kojève indeed saw such utopia (the End of History) approaching us. It seems that Kojève’s dual ontology has a temporal existence to it, as it seems to disappear in the End of History. This duality appears to belong to the realm of history. In the realm of history and politics, the selves are not fully self-identical, which means that they relate to themselves and others through conceptual, linguistic and dialectical mediation. In the End of History the dual ontology apparently disappears as the selves become immanently self-identical, instead of being mediately (conceptually, linguistically) self-identical any more. In the End of History, the selves become like Nature, fully self-identical, stable and non-political. In other words, *the political realm disappears in the End of History*. The dual ontology takes place as long as there is the realm where the selves are not fully self-identical.

Very importantly, the realm of conceptuality and limited (particular) self-identities is, for Kojève, also the realm of *necessary* Master-Slave-distinctions. The selves strive to free themselves from the violent Master-Slave-relations, and for Kojève this means also that the selves free themselves from conceptuality, politics, particular identities etc. It is, however, clear that for Hegel, history does not end to a “homogeneous universal State” which would erase all the differences between its citizens. Even a quick glance to his *Philosophy of Right*, or *Introduction to the philosophy of History* reveals that the State envisaged by Hegel preserves all internal differences. Moreover, different nations have their own States. Hegel’s State is complex, plural and internally differentiated. Hence it appears as symptomatic that Kojève, in his *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, hardly refers to Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* at all. When analysing identity and difference in general, Hegel says:

It is important to come a proper understanding of the true meaning of Identity; and, for that purpose, we must especially guard against taking it as abstract Identity, to the exclusion of all Difference. That is the touchstone for distinguishing all bad philosophy from what alone deserves the name of philosophy. (Enc. I, § 115, Zusatz)

While Kojève’s interpretation of Hegel has many fascinating aspects, it is deeply problematic, both as an interpretation of PhS and as an independent philosophical view. His interpretation of Hegel is often so distorted that he seems to be using “Hegel” only as a means for expressing his own ideas. However, the self-referential nature of PhS, discussed in ch. 2, makes Kojève’s “End of History” more understandable, at least in one sense. For Hegel, history is the development of the Spirit, i.e. of human thinking. This development is essentially a growth of self-consciousness. Hegel’s own philosophy, as formulated in PhS, is a decisive contribution to this development, for it is, first time in history, able to tell us all this. Hegel is the first thinker who understands what Absolute knowing is, thus making it possible for others, too. According to Kojève, there can be no qualitatively new stages in the development of Spirit after Hegel’s invention. We only have to wait that this philosophy becomes shared by all. The fundamental mistake in this logically impeccable reasoning is Kojève’s supposition that Hegel’s Absolute knowing can be characterized as a static *state*, as a *permanent state of mind* which could be reached by individuals at some particular moment. According to the interpretation defended in this work, Absolute knowing is an ongoing

process, which *requires* the continuous co-existence of limited, partially conflicting viewpoints which interact and *together* produce absolute knowledge. What Ikäheimo says about certain other interpretations of Hegel seems to apply to Kojève's, too:

Does Hegel say that somehow after renouncing or sublating the particular determinations of consciousness the master and servant transform into consciousnesses which have nothing left of particularity? Do they transform into gods? No. Even if certainly one point of universal self-consciousness (...) is to account for the fact that we can become habituated in thinking the world from a universal point of view, this does not mean that nothing of particularity would be left. The point is only that on a cultivated level of consciousness, *also* this attitude is present. (Ikäheimo 2000, 85)

To this, I only want to add that, for finite beings who are not gods, the “universal point of view” is not a separate “viewpoint”, but rather their ability to take the other viewpoints into account.

An analysis of Butler's Kojévian inheritance is discussed further in chapter 5. Before that another theorist, Louis Althusser, is introduced, who has also influenced Butler's thought. The two theorists, Kojève and Althusser, appear to be interconnected as important theoretical figures in Butler's thought. Butler's Kojévian reading of Hegel is seen, in this study, to pave way to how Butler adheres to Althusser's theory of Interpellation. A Kojévian interpretation of Hegel is seen as the background of why Butler suspends Hegel's narrative (in PhS) at the same point where Kojève halts it (i.e. at the point where the Hegelian subject enters the “non-political” realm of reciprocal recognition). A Kojévian reading of Hegel prepares Butler for what will be later explained as Butler's “Althusserian reversal of Hegel” (see chapter 5.). First Althusser's subject-theory is explained in a more general manner, in the next subchapter.

3.2. Louis Althusser

3.2.1. Althusser's theory of interpellation

Louis Althusser's theory of the ideological, linguistic subject-formation is one of the major reference-points in Butler subject-theory. Althusser is primarily a Marxist theorist. However, he also intends to develop Marx's theories. He says, for example, that Marx did not theorize sufficiently how fundamentally the subjects are formed by ideology. Althusser's “structural-psychoanalytic” Marxism is intended to give a more profound account of how ideology assumes a psychic and a linguistic or symbolic structure. Althusser made his diploma-study (in 1948) on Hegel, yet, later he became a severe critic of Hegel and of the Hegelian “subjectivist” influence in Marxism. He rejects Hegel's idea of subjects as epistemological totalities, i.e. capable of knowing themselves. Althusser develops his subject-theory in reference to theorists of psychoanalysis like Freud, but especially to Lacan. It may be argued that when the French thought turned against Hegel after the mid-60's, Althusser's influence was decisive. However, many of his views can be fully understood only in the context of his

activities in the French Communist Party. His criticism of Hegel was related to his campaign against the “humanistic” tendencies which become more prominent among the Communists after the denunciation of Stalin in 1956 (on Althusser’s politics, see Elliott 1987). It was also related to his opposition to Sartre’s theory of the subject, inspired by Kojève and by Heidegger. According to Grosz (1989, 16), Althusser’s work has to a large extent fallen into disrepute; nevertheless she sees in Althusser a powerful, if reluctantly acknowledged source in the development of contemporary political theories of power (for example, of the theories formulated by Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe; see ch. 6).

As is said already in this study, Butler claims to make an “Althusserian reversal of Hegel”. This reversal takes place at that point in PhS, when the Hegelian subject would otherwise conduct a “dialectical reversal” (as Butler puts it) and turn into a self-consciously mediated “third” in reciprocally recognitive relationships with others. Butler’s way to discuss Althusser’s theory of Interpellation is in a way two-fold. Actually, Butler’s way to conduct an Althusserian reversal of Hegel is two-edged, as it becomes in turn reversed against Althusser as well. After criticising Hegel through Althusser, Butler is quite quick to turn to criticise Althusser through Hegel.

While Althusser purports to reject Hegel as well as the Hegelian Marxism of Alexandre Kojève, it is interesting that the Hegelian and Kojévian elements actually enter to his system from a backdoor. As we shall see, Althusser’s subject-theory is largely based on Lacan, and Lacan himself was strongly influenced by Kojève. After studying Kojève’s seminars, he planned to write with Kojève a joint study on Hegel and Freud. It was never published, but Kojève’s survived draft contains some of the fundamental concepts later used by Lacan: the “I” as subject of desire; desire as revelation of the truth of being, and the ego as site of illusion and source of error. Under Kojève’s influence, Lacan abandoned the Freudian conception of desire as a biological phenomenon and replaced it with a Hegelian conception in which the desire is the original source of self-consciousness and takes the Other as its primary object (Roudinesco 2006, 28; Casey and Woody 1983, 80). Like Hegel, Lacan maintained that the subject needs the Other in order to become a subject, and uses the Master-Slave dialectic as the model of human (individual) development. Like Kojève, and unlike Hegel, Lacan sees aggressivity and struggle as an inevitable moment of this development. Like Kojève, Lacan sees human being as constituted by lack. (ver Eecke 1983; Casey and Woody 1983, 84-5). But Lacan rejects Hegel’s Absolute Knowing because, again under the influence of Kojève, he interprets it as a claim for “final insight” or “definitive version of truth” (Casey and Woody 1963, 87). Casey and Woody conclude their analysis of the Hegel-Lacan relationship with an interesting comment:

Freud, the long-since-dead father of psychoanalysis, had already reached the reluctant conclusion that civilization and discontent are inseparable, that the subjection of man to culture foredooms him to what Hegel called “the unhappy consciousness”, the “consciousness of self as a dual-natured, merely contradictory being” [PhS, p. 126]. Lacan reinforces Freud’s grim conclusion that the contradiction is insuperable, that history can promise no final reconciliation, no splendid synthesis, not even an arena of the attainment of authenticity; cuttings and splittings, human lives in tatters, are all that remain in this darkened vision. (Casey and Woody 1983, 111)

According to my analysis, this version of Unhappy Consciousness which emerges as a reaction to Kojève's one-sided reading of Hegel, is transmitted to Althusser, and partly through him, to many other structuralist/poststructuralist thinkers.

In this chapter I first give an account of Althusser's theory of Interpellation. The theory of the interpellative formation of subjects is a part of a larger essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" (first published in 1970). I also explain Althusser's distinction between "ideologically formed subjective knowledge" and "scientific objective knowledge". This distinction is an important part of Althusser's subject-theory. An important element of Althusser's "scientific Marxism" was its idea of science as knowledge above ideology and ideologically formed subjects. Later I discuss Althusser's relation to Butler's theory of the ek-static self and the theory of performativity.

According to Althusser the subject is formed when it is "hailed" or "called" by an authoritative "voice". At that moment the not-yet-subject - called by Althusser a *concrete individual* - is made into a *concrete subject*.

As a first formulation I shall say: all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, by the functioning of the category of the subject; (...) I shall then suggest that ideology "acts" or "functions" in such a way that it "recruits" subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or "transforms" the individuals into "subjects" (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called *interpellation* or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing "Hey, you there!". (Ideol. 162-163)

To be a subject means to be "positioned" by the linguistic system. In fact, by learning a language, the individual is both positioned as well as provided a position, a view-point, from which to look at itself, others, and the world in general. Without this view-point, which is fundamentally what to be a subject means, the individual sees nothing.

it is in the "Logos", meaning in ideology, that we "live, move, and have our being". It follows that, for you and for me, the category of the subject is a primary obviousness (obviousnesses are always primary) (ibid.161)

individuals are always-already interpellated by ideology as subjects, which necessarily leads us to one last proposition: individuals are always already subjects. Hence, individuals are "abstract" with respect to the subjects which they always-already are. (ibid.164)

For Althusser, we cannot "reach" ourselves as plain individuals – i.e. as non-ideological individuals - "behind" ourselves as ideologically formed subjects. Any such "reaching" would necessarily take place linguistically, i.e. in ideological language. In this sense, the individual as a not-yet-subject is an empty abstraction *for us (as subjects)*. Even an unborn child is appointed a subject in and by the specific familial ideological configuration in which it is "expected". Althusser writes that "any familial ideological configuration is, in all its uniqueness, also highly structured". (Ideol. 164-165)

When the subject learns to speak, it enters a realm of ideological system of communication. It receives an ideological world-view, given to it by language, which is always already a social phenomenon. What is thought and spoken is always already ideological. Language - as always a social phenomenon - is also an ordering system of hierarchies, classifications, values etc. The subject sees a world because it sees those things in it which can be described in the ideological language. It never just sees things; it always already sees the “order of things”. It sees what things are valuable and what things are not. It receives an idea of what subjects should be like, never just what they are like. The ideological subject-position as a view upon the world is not only descriptive, but also normative. Subject sees the very language, by which it thinks, *as the external world*. The subjects, their self-understanding, and the external world, which they see, are always formed by an ideological power, not by a language which just neutrally mirrors the extra-linguistic world as it is.

For Althusser, subjects, as well as genders, and actual material things in general are *effects* of power (Ideol. 156,161). This very influential idea – of “things” being the *results* (in Hegelian words) or *effects* (in more contemporary words) of subjective thinking can be traced back to Kant and Hegel. With Kant, thinking actively synthesizes thoughts (various material, including also bodily stimuli) into “things”. For Hegel, influenced clearly by Kant, “things” (including subjects themselves as particular, identifiable objects for themselves) are results of the active synthesizing “labour” of thinking. This idea can be found in much of the contemporary thinking of subjectivity, e.g. in the poststructuralist and postmodern thinking. This idea is central in the subject-theories of e.g. Althusser, Lacan, Foucault and Butler.

Butler comments in PLP (PLP, 2-5, 34; see also SD) that Foucault, whom Butler classifies as a Hegelian-inflected thinker, is clearly influenced by Althusser’s subject-theory. Althusser’s subject-theory precedes Foucault’s subject-theory as Althusser published some of his central works already in the middle of the 1960’s. Both Althusser and Foucault are central points of reference in Butler’s own subject-theory. Butler modifies her basically Hegelian subject-theory to a great extent in reference to both of them. However, the basic ideas, found with Foucault (who was Althusser’s student and a friend), are already found with Althusser (except that Foucault does not adopt Althusser’s distinction between ideology and science, a theme discussed in the next sub-chapter).

One of Foucault’s central Althusserian ideas is that things (including subjects) are “discursive effects of power”. Foucault receives this basically Hegelian idea through an Althusserian interpretation. For Foucault, in line with Althusser, power is seen to take place *as* language. Power as language – i.e. as a discourse - is never neutral but always normative, restrictive and repressive. It produces subjects, yet, it also “subjects” (dominates and controls) the subjects. Butler comments on the relation between Foucault and Althusser (e.g. in PLP) that even that Foucault’s formulation of the “linguistic power” is different than Althusser’s formulation of ideological language, the basic idea of the linguistic constitution of subjects is similar. For both of these thinkers, power *as* discourse produces “things” and “subjects” in reference to itself. Power produces the subjects it needs in order to materialize itself, give actual life to itself, and to reproduce itself. According to both Althusser and Foucault, discursive power, which remains not conceptualizable for the subjects themselves, is both the “origin” of subjects as well as the “repressor” of subjects. With Butler, this idea becomes developed into her theory of the *performativity of things* (taken up in the chapter 4.).

According to Althusser (like later with Foucault and Butler) ideological language produces subjects in order to maintain and reproduce itself (Ideol. 158-160).

the category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology, but at the same time and immediately I add that *the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of "constituting" concrete individuals as subjects*. In the interaction of this double constitution exists the functioning of all ideology, ideology being nothing but its functioning in the material forms of existence of that functioning. (ibid. 160)

Ideological language denotes the immediate "programme" by which the subject thinks and speaks. In this way, ideology turns itself into a *living practice* or an everyday *ritualistic* way of living. Ideology is a highly unconscious element of subject's lives. It denotes the immediate conditions of people's lives. It is something universal and all-pervasive; it exists in all societies. It denotes the guiding *principle* of peoples lives and the very *idea* behind peoples actions. As such, it is clear, according to Althusser, that *for the subjects themselves*, ideology is not ideology, but "nature", "anatomy", "the will of God" or "the eternal truth of things" (Ideol. 158; For Marx 222-223, 233-234; Theor.prac.29)

you and I are always already subjects, and as such constantly practice the rituals of ideological recognition, which guarantee for us that we are indeed concrete, individual, distinguishable and (naturally) irreplaceable subjects. (Ideol. 162-163)

Althusser often describes ideological subjectivity in reference to religion, usually Christianity (he was actually a Catholic as well as a Hegelian before his conversion to Marxism in the late 1940's). He also draws on the psychoanalytical theories of Freud and Lacan. His discussion on the "small 's'" and the capital "S" is important for his theory of how ideology assumes a psychic structure. In this theory he draws both on Christianity and the psychoanalytical theories. Althusser refers to Lacan's theory of the "mirror-phase" (found also with Freud) in which a subject needs to reflect itself from another subject to realize that it is a subject. The subject, found in the mirror, is also always already a gendered subject. The mirror hence initiates the process of the "subjecting" of the individual which is always already also a "gendering" of the individual. Althusser, in reference to the psychoanalytical theory, sees the becoming of a subject as a process of becoming *gendered*. This means that the individual enters the realm of the order of "Phallus" when it enters the realm of being a subject. According to Althusser, individuals never become just subjects but they also become "posited subjects" (Hegel would say: determinate, particular beings) by their gender, the social and economic status of their family, the surrounding culture etc. This is important for the Althusserian idea that being a subject means that one has a view-point (a subject-position) from which it looks at itself, other subjects and the world.

Lacan's "linguistic" psychoanalysis is an important point of reference as Althusser develops his theory of the subject as a "Logos" or a "category". With Freud, when a child becomes a gendered subject, it passes through an Oedipal phase and enters a patriarchal realm. With Lacan, when a child learns to speak, it enters a realm of "symbolic order", which is also the realm of the order of the Phallus. For Althusser, especially in reference to Lacan, the subject

enters an (ideological) symbolic order when it learns a language. The subject mirrors itself from the Other (which provides always already an ideological “image” of the subject) and thus internalizes ideology as a theory of what kind of a “subject” it is. When an individual learns a language as an infant, it enters a realm of “symbolic order”, not just language, but an ideological language. For Althusser, via Lacan, the linguistic subjects bear first and foremost their Father’s Name. (Ideol. 152, 164-165, 168-169).

Especially with Lacan, rather than with Freud, Althusser finds the idea - important in his theory of Interpellation - that the subjects themselves cannot conceptualize the primary relation which constitutes them as conscious beings. In reference to the discussion of “thirdness, the Lacanian theory suggests that when subjects act as internal thirds (interpreters of their own complex psychic structures) something which constitutes them fundamentally remains necessarily “unread” or necessarily “missed”. With Lacan, our *particular* attempts (in actual therapeutic practice or by particular psychoanalytical theories) to read the primary relations of our subjectivity always miss their intended object. Our readings always describe an *imaginary*, instead of a *real* object. This idea has a Kantian flavour; as Kant says in *The Critique of Pure Reason* (B 422; A346/B404), the self is unable to conceptualize itself, because it can understand things only through the categories which are its own products. (Kant would, of course deny that such a conceptualization would be possible for psychoanalysis or “science”.) Both for Lacan and for Althusser, our everyday self-understanding is necessarily erroneous; what is peculiar for Althusser is that this necessary error has a political significance.

Althusser discusses Freud and Lacan in his article “Freud and Lacan” (first published 1964). Especially the Lacanian idea of the primary relation as a “lost referent” or a “not validly interpreted referent” seems to influence Althusser in an important way.

Herein no doubt lies the most original aspect of Lacan’s work, his discovery. Lacan has shown that this transition from (ultimately purely) biological existence to human existence (the human child) is achieved within the Law of Order, the law I shall call the Law of Culture, and that this Law of Order is confounded in its *formal* essence with the order of language. what are we to understand by this formula, at first sight so enigmatic? Firstly, that the whole of this transition can only be grasped in terms of a recurrent language, as designated by the language of the adult or child in a cure situation, designated, assigned and localized within the law of language in which is established and presented all human order, i.e. every human role. (FL 193)

Further, in the same article, Althusser sees that Freud’s view is somewhat similar to Hegel’s idea (i.e. that subjects can become known to themselves), at least in the limited sense in which Freud thinks that the human psyche could be interpreted by the “psyche itself” in a psychoanalytical therapy. Althusser argues that whereas Freud saw an ego (including the unconscious) as something psychoanalytically interpretable, Lacan is more correct when he states that any *particular* interpretation of the psyche remain within the realm of the symbolic order. For Althusser, the importance of psychoanalysis lies in it as a *scientific practice* (more of the difference between ideology and science in the next sub-chapter). Psychoanalysis as a

scientific practice should analyze the *particular* psychoanalytical descriptions given e.g. of the formation of the ego – of which Althusser discusses e.g. Freud’s theory of the Oedipal phase – as historical objects of scientific analysis, not as timeless truths as such. In this sense, Althusser criticises Freud. Althusser sees that Freud mistakenly assumed that the Oedipal Phase constitutes a somewhat universal and timeless psychic law of all humans. (FL, 189-196)

With Althusser, the primary, interpellative relation, not known to the subject itself, is always also – seen at the level of particular individuals - a historical one and has a particular content to it. For Althusser, the interpellative relation may take the form of a (Freudian) Oedipal scene, yet not necessarily. For Althusser, ideology can take different historical forms and hence the call, constitutive of subjects, is not *necessarily* an “Oedipalizing” call. As said already, at least Althusser detects a difference between Lacan and Freud on this issue and sides with Lacan rather than with Freud. For Freud, the subject can become conscious of its primary repressive relations and thus receive somewhat self-consciously conducted therapy for itself (at least in the psychoanalytical process). (FL, 186-193). Althusser’s idea of psychoanalysis as a (scientific) practice, in which the psyche should not be assumed to have any a priori substance (in terms of e.g. the Freudian Oedipal scene) and Althusser’s criticism against Freud is echoed in Butler’s criticism of psychoanalysis.

Lacan’s theory is important for Althusser’s distinction between “ideology” (the realm of subjects and subjective, historical thinking) and “science” (the non-subjective realm of objective or scientific knowledge), which will be taken up further. With Lacan, Althusser finds an idea that the constitutive relation, by which subjects become intelligible subjects remains necessarily an unconceptual “lost referent” for them. For Lacan, this primary relation is the relation between the sexes. Subjectivity *exists as* the rule of Phallus. This rule constitutes a psychic structure which always remains something indeterminate, or absent for the subject itself. This means that *for subjects*, there is no relation between the sexes. A relation between the sexes is absent because the other sex is absent. This means that there is no “other sex”, besides the rule of the Phallus or Father in language. The linguistic notion of a “female” or “woman” is an image, produced by the rule of the Phallus. As the female sex is absent from language, there is actually no gender- differentiation or a gender-relation. All relations take place inside one sex, under the rule of the Father. As such, the rule of the Phallus can be explained only (already) inside of it, not from the view-point of an “outside” to it. In other words, Phallus is co-extensive with language. There is no Other or “outside” to the rule of patriarchy. As any actual attempt to oppose the rule of the Phallus would mean also opposing the language and intelligibility itself– and the subject - any such attempts would take place as “psychosis”. As such, Phallus - and the linguistic realm which it orders - appears as a sovereign rule. The Phallus permeates subjects - as intelligible beings - *totally*.

The Lacanian idea, that the primary relation of the subject-formation is always a “lost referent” (called by Lacan as “Real”), appears as fundamental for Althusser, even that Althusser does not discuss this relation as a gender-relation very deeply. In fact, in Althusser’s Marxist theory, the emphasis which Lacan places upon *sex* (as the primary unknown relation) is placed by Althusser on the *relations of production*. Nevertheless, for both Lacan and Althusser, the symbolic order, which every infant internalizes when it learns a language, is a totality, where gender-relations and other relations are parts of a same whole. Via Lacan, Althusser argues that the primary relation, which forms the subject, remains

unconceptual for the subject itself. Hence the primary “interpellation”, which comes from the ideology, and turns the individual into a subject, remains something absent for the subject itself. Through Lacan, Althusser argues that any attempt at conceptualizing this primary “turn”, or a relation, takes always already place inside the ideological system itself. Any such attempt actually reproduces the ideology. Accordingly, Althusser argues that there is no “outside” of ideology *for the subjects themselves*. This idea sets the foundation not only for Althusser’s theory of Interpellation but also for his distinction or actually dualism between “ideology” and “science”. (Ideol. 152-165; cf. also Assiter 1990, 124-129)

The mirror – or, the Other - from which the not-yet-subject looks at itself and where it finds who it is, is called by Althusser the capital “S”. The capital “S” is an ideological Idea of a Subject. By mirroring itself from the capital “S” the individual internalizes also the symbolic order, ideology, as its own psychic structure. As said already earlier, Althusser makes a distinction between a small “s” and a capital “S”. The not-yet-subject needs to identify with a “subject”, mirror itself as a “subject”, in order to see itself as a subject. To do this, there must be an idea of another subject *for the not-yet- subject*. In order for there to be a multitude of subjects, there must be an idea of a Unique, Absolute, *Other Subject*, i.e. God. Althusser discusses the relation between the small “s” and the capital “S” (ultimately God) also on the basis of Christianity. (Ideol. 165)

The internal relation between a small “s” and a capital “S”, which belongs fully to the realm of ideology, produces the internal self-reflectivity of the subjects. By this reflectivity, the ideological power is internalized as a moral and ethical self-control. The mirroring of itself from “ideology” (the capital “S”) becomes a highly unconscious everyday practice for the subject. Consciousness of responsibility is created by this self-reflective doubleness. For Althusser, a subject (as a small “s”) can understand himself as the responsible location of his thoughts and the responsible agent behind his actions only if he identifies with an Idea of a Subject (denoted ultimately by God) as the origin of His Deeds. Identifying with the Idea of a Subject is an important part of ideology. Ideology assumes actually a psychic structure by this internal distinction between a small “s” and a capital “S”. The Absolute Subject functions as a normative ideal for all subjects, and the origin of the sense of guilt. In Christianity the normative model of what all subjects should be like is provided by Jesus. With Althusser, the subjects are led by an internal, self-reflective control, and a sense of guilt, provided by the figure of Christ. All this serves the purposes of ideology. (Ideol.165-170; For Marx 232-233)

It then emerges that the interpellation of individuals as subjects presupposes the “existence” of a Unique and central Other Subject, in whose Name the religious ideology interpellates all individuals as subjects. (Ideol. 167)

Importantly, Althusser sees that the relation between the subject, or self, and the Other belongs completely into the realm of ideology. The other subject, with which the subject identifies with, is an ideological subject, and not, like with Hegel, a source of freedom from a parochial, “limited knowing”. Althusser criticises Hegel’s subject-theory for its idea that particular subjects can know themselves *totally*. Hegel’s idea of particular subjects as epistemological totalities is the target of Althusser’s criticism. For Althusser, a realm of subjectivity is necessarily a realm of distorted, limited and repressed knowing. For Althusser, Hegel’s idea of Absolute Knowing (as the knowing of *subjects*), or Hegel’s idea of Freedom,

are just ideological myths which ideology uses for its purposes (For Marx 236-237). In a lecture on Marx and Hegel, Althusser, while taking a somewhat more positive stance towards dialectics, specifically attacks Hegel's notion of the negation of negation or *Aufhebung* (MRH, 181). According to Althusser, this notion makes Hegel's dialectics teleological, so that Absolute Knowing becomes the aim of the historical process. (In the same text Althusser even praises Stalin for dropping the "negation of negation" from the canon of Marxism, although he does not tell us why the Soviet dictator did not like this dialectical principle).

According to Althusser, the subject is *subjected* to the language at the same time when it learns the language. The image of the "other subject" (the capital "S") functions as a vehicle in this subjection. Thus, the other subject is first and foremost an imaginary one, an illusion, created by ideology. This means also that for Althusser, there cannot be anything like the Hegelian "reciprocal recognition" (which for Hegel is a basis of freedom from "limited knowing"). With Althusser, subjects are *externally (ideologically) formed* and they see themselves and other subjects *necessarily in bondage* – i.e. inside ideology. The subject itself (for itself) as well as all the others are *imaginary* ones. In this sense, Althusser's subjects are similar to what Hegel's subjects are like, in the narrative of PhS, before they enter the realm of freedom, i.e. reciprocally recognitive relationships with other subjects. What Althusser says about subjects resembles what Hegel says about "bondage" in his theory of the Lordship and Bondage in PhS. The knowledge of the slave's (the Bondsmen) is limited and repressed. It takes place under the rule of the Other (the Master). The slaves do not know their own formation which takes place, primarily, as the Master-Slave-system. The relation between the Master and Slave is not a conceptual relation for the slaves. Alike Hegelian slaves, when Althusser's subjects recognize each others, this recognition takes necessarily place under epistemological slavery. The recognition is a one-sided recognition, i.e. done under the slavery of the Other (the Master, or, the ideology). When the slaves (i.e. subjects, with Althusser) turn to look at themselves and others, the look is conducted from the point of view of the Other (the Master, ideology). Althusser's subjects see an ideological self, and an ideological other because the seeing itself takes place inside ideology (inside a Master-Slave-system). (Ideol. 161, 168)

In this view, there is no Hegelian "reciprocal recognition" between the self and the Other. Nor are the Althusserian subjects capable of taking the relation between the subject and the ideology as an object of conceptualization. All objects (e.g. the constitutive relation between the subject and the ideological, linguistic power) which exist for the subjects themselves, are ideologically formed objects. In short, the Althusserian subjects remain slaves to the extent that they are subjects. This resembles what Kojève argues about particular subjects. With Hegel, in contrast, subjects are able to conceptualize the primary relation which constitutes them, in a *free and rational* way, in reciprocally recognitive relationships. In reciprocally recognitive relationships Hegelian subjects become free from *enslaving* limits (externally placed and, thus, repressive) as their limits become rationally accessible for them. With Hegel, there is indeed also a "turn to look at" the primary relation, by which the subjects are constituted as subjects. Butler calls this Hegelian turn a "dialectical reversal" which for Butler is an imperialistic turn, as through this turn the subject internalizes all differences as parts of itself, suffocating the radical Other

As is argued in this study, in the chapter 5., that Butler (as well as also Lacan, Foucault, Sartre etc.) read the Hegelian "turn" (into reciprocally recognitive, free relations between selves) in a

Kojèbian way, and rejects it. In this study, the Hegelian “turn” by which the primary subject-constitutive relation is rendered a self-conscious concept is interpreted differently as in the Kojèbian tradition. As is explained in chapter 2, in the narrative of PhS a dialectical “turn” takes place, by which the primary, subject-constitutive relation - which has so far been unknown *for the subject itself* - turns from an unknown relation into a conceptual relation. Hegel’s “self-conceptualizing turn” (rejected e.g. by Lacan, Althusser, Foucault and Butler) is conducted by a self - called by Hegel as an Unhappy Consciousness or the Enlightenment Reason - who has *so far* thought of itself as constituted by an unknown primary relation, yet, who realizes now, at this point, that this is what it *thinks* of itself. Importantly, the turn, by which the Hegelian subject in PhS enters reciprocally recognitive relations, is conducted by such a subject who has *already* been conscious of itself as an “ek-static” subject but who has so far thought that the ek-static relation (between the self and the Other) cannot be conceptualized by particular subjects themselves. When this self realizes that it *thinks* that subjects are constituted by an ek-static relation which is unknown for the subjects themselves, the self realizes that the unknowingness of this relation is actually something “known” by it. The unknowingness exists as a something which is known *for itself*.

For Hegel, *acknowledging* the Other as a free self-consciousness is a necessary prerequisite for the reciprocal recognition between the self and the Other. This means, for example, that subjects should not see subjects in general (either themselves or others) as formed by such powers which are not conceptually accessible for them. One version of repressing the Other (i.e. treating the Other as one’s inferior, as a “bondsmen”) takes place as the Unhappy Consciousness. It represses the Other by seeing all subjects (including itself, to the extent that it is a subject) as constituted by internal repression. Because the Unhappy Consciousness thinks that everything what subjects think, know and say of themselves, and of the world, is done under internal repression, it treats the knowledge of subjects as an inferior, in relation to its own “pure” (abstract) knowledge.

With Althusser, via Lacan’s Kojèbian-inflected subject-theory, there is no such thing as the Hegelian free self-consciousness, or reciprocally recognitive relationships. For Althusser, subjects can never conceptualize the primary relation, constitutive of them as subjects. For Althusser, subjects are fooled by the ideology to think that when they recognize themselves or others, they actually see what they are like. The subjects do not understand that they fail to recognize the other *in real*, because all their recognitions are distorted by ideology. Thus, Althusser re-interprets the Hegelian idea of recognition as a repressive mechanism, as necessary misrecognition. Althusser writes how:

ideology gives men a certain ‘knowledge’ of their world, or rather allows them to ‘recognize’ themselves in their world, gives them a certain ‘recognition’; but at the same time ideology only introduces them to its *misrecognition*. *Allusion-illusion* or *recognition-misrecognition* – such is ideology from the perspective of its relation to the real. (Theor. Prac., 29; emphasis in the original. See also FL 201.)

Althusser sees Hegel as a pre-scientific thinker who, in his theory of recognition, anticipates the correct theory of subject-formation:

Hegel is (unknowingly) an admirable ‘theoretician’ of ideology insofar as he is a

‘theoretician’ of Universal Recognition who unfortunately ends up in the ideology of Absolute Knowledge. (Ideol. 168, fn. 22)

What remains in common for both ideas is the other as a source of self-identification. The subjects themselves, according to Althusser, do not realize that their own knowledge is “limited”, distorted, one-sided. With Hegel, an important step, in the narrative of the subject’s becoming free from enslaving limits (the Master-Slave-system), takes place when *subjects themselves* are seen to be capable of realizing that their own knowledge is limited because they are historical beings who repress the Other. In other words, according to Hegel, subjects can become limited beings *for themselves*, and, perhaps even more importantly, ek-static beings *for themselves*. In contrast to Hegel, for Althusser, the subjects are limited only *as such*, i.e. in themselves. In other words, for Althusser, the subjects themselves cannot conceptualize their own primary limitation. As such, the subjects are not seen to be limited for themselves, instead, they are seen to be limited externally. For Hegel, when somebody sees others as externally limited (instead of seeing them limited, i.e. subjected, for themselves) this somebody thinks of itself and others on the basis of a Master-Slave-system. From Hegel’s view-point, Althusser and Lacan remain in the Master-Slave epistemology.

With Althusser, the individual, which is no subject before it is “called” by the authoritative power, is transformed into a subject, when addressed by the power. This power calls the individual to be a “subject” by making it look at its image from the ideological mirror. This “call” gives actually an intelligible life to the individual, as it learns to think and communicate with others. It also becomes a responsible locus of its actions, thoughts and intentions. It also receives a place as “somebody” in the social whole. On the other hand, the subject is, from the very beginning, subjected to the power, or *repressed* by the power, as Althusser says. The subject however cannot oppose the ideology, which is its origin, without opposing its whole existence as a subject. The subject thinks of itself and the whole world in terms of this language. Whatever it thinks, it thinks always already inside this language. Thus, any possible opposing of this ideology takes always already place inside this ideology itself.

..what thus seems to take place outside ideology (to be precise, in the street) in reality takes place in ideology. What really takes place in ideology seems therefore to take place outside it. That is why those who are in ideology believe themselves by definition outside ideology: one of the effects of ideology is the practical denegation of the ideological character of ideology by ideology: ideology never says, “I am ideological”. (...) ideology *has no outside* (for itself). (Ideol. 164-165)

The language cannot be escaped into any such place outside or beyond of it which would not be just another place inside this language.

For Althusser, ideology only exists by constituting concrete subjects. It does not have existence outside the subjects. It exists by forming such subjects which – by their everyday life as a *repeated, ritualistic, institutionalized practice* - reproduce the relations of the ideology. Ideology exists as long as there are ideologically formed subjects who give life to it and who reproduce it. *Ideological State apparatuses* denote the large-scale material existence of ideology. State apparatuses are the physical, material existence of ideology. These apparatuses are first and foremost systems of relations. The hierarchical relations – the class

system - must also be continuously reproduced. The state apparatuses is the medium for this. When plurality of subjects are related hierarchically together, their inter-related practices take the form of state-level apparatuses. Examples of this kind of apparatuses are Church, Philosophy, School (i.e. the educational ideological apparatuses), Marriage, Family, and Army. Althusser lists various state apparatuses of a modern capitalist society. There is a “communications apparatus”, “political apparatus”, “cultural apparatus” and “trade-union apparatus”. For a Marxist theorist like Althusser, the most important aspect of the State Apparatuses is that they *reproduce the relations of production*. The State apparatuses function as State *power*, which is a repressive power. (Ideol. 128,134,141,156).

In a given society, people participate in *economic* production whose mechanism and effects are determined by the *structure of the relations of production*; people participate in *political* activity whose mechanisms and effects are governed by the structure of class relations (the class struggle, law and the State). These same people participate in other activities – religious, moral, philosophical, etc. – either in an active manner, through conscious practice, or in a passive and mechanical manner, through reflexes, judgements, attitudes, etc. These last activities constitute *ideological activity*; they are sustained by voluntary or involuntary, conscious or unconscious, adherence to an ensemble of representations and beliefs – religious, moral, legal, political, aesthetic, philosophical, etc. – which constitute what is called the “level” of ideology. (Theor. prac., 23-24).

3.2.2. Ideology and Science

As said in the previous sub-chapter, for Althusser, ideology is not ideology *for the ideologically formed subject themselves*. Instead, ideology appears for them *as the world out there* (or as “nature” or “the truth of things”). However, in order for it to be possible to talk about ideology at all, ideology must be ideology *for somebody*. Althusser theorized the question of “for whom ideology is ideology?”. Obviously, there must be some level, at which ideology is seen as ideology, otherwise it could not be discussed about at all. (Ideol.162, Theor.prac.24-25). Althusser writes.

...the author, insofar as he writes the lines of a discourse which claims to be scientific, is completely absent as a “subject” from “his” scientific discourse (for all scientific discourse is by definition a subject-less discourse, there is no “Subject of science” except in an ideology of science. (Ideol. 160)

Here, Althusser makes his crucial distinction between “ideology” and “science”. This denotes a distinction between subjective understanding and objective knowledge. This also denotes a distinction between ideological symbolic orders - the languages of subjects - and the non-subjective, scientific language. In fact, Althusser does not talk about scientific language, as science is for him a *critical practice*, which takes the ideological languages (i.e. historical symbolic orders) as its objects of analysis. Subjects, subjective knowledge and ideological symbolic orders constitute imaginary, illusory beliefs of things. Yet, this is something which

the subjects themselves cannot know of themselves. Subjects themselves do not know that the images, which they see, are images. Subjects take them as the factual world. The images can be known to be images, and the ideology can be seen as ideology, only by knowledge which is beyond the subjects. Subjective knowledge denotes the realm of limited, distorted, imaginary consciousness (Ideol. 154-155). The distinction is crucial for Althusser, for *it explains how his own theory is possible*.

In contrast to Hegel's subjective knowledge, Althusser's subjective knowledge is not limited *for itself*, instead, it is limited *for science*. The limitedness of the subjects is not seen by the subjects themselves. In contrast to Hegel, with Althusser, science (or, the ultimate knowledge of subjects and of the limits) is not a conceptual part of subjectivity. Instead, according to Althusser, the scientific, *real* knowledge of subjects, is *external* to subjects and subjective knowing. According to Hegel, if subjects are seen to be known by something which is necessarily beyond the capacity of the subjects themselves, the subjects are enslaved. They are epistemologically patronized. For Hegel, in a patronizing epistemology, there is a non-conceptual (external) relation between subjects and other things. With Althusser, *real knowledge* of subjects is external to the subjects themselves and denotes hence a non-subjective knowledge. Nevertheless, with Althusser, both of these forms of understanding (subjective and non-subjective knowledge) contain indispensable knowledge of subjects and of the whole world. Ideology and science are constitutive parts of subjects, yet, these two parts are not seen, by Althusser, to be conceptually connected to each other.

ideology is as such an organic part of every social totality. It is as if human societies could not survive without these specific formations, these systems of representations (at various levels), their ideologies. Human societies secrete ideology as the very element and atmosphere indispensable to their historical respiration and life. Only an ideological world outlook could have imagined societies *without ideology* and accepted the utopian idea of a world in which ideology (not just one of its historical forms) would disappear without trace, to be replaced by *science*. (For Marx, 232)

For Althusser, there will always be ideology and, consequently, subjects. There will also be science, a knowledge of ideology, above the ideology itself. In contrast to Kojève's Hegelian Marxism, Althusser's Lacanian Marxism does not anticipate the disappearance of the limited, distorted knowledge, produced by limited subjects. According to Althusser, even in a "classless" society, there will always be ideology (i.e. limited knowledge of things, in Hegelian words, "knowledge in bondage") because that is always the way how particular subjects relate to themselves and to the world, in their everyday circumstances and their social life.

In a classless society, as in a class society, ideology has the function of assuring the *bond* among people in the totality of the forms of their existence, the *relation* of individuals to their tasks assigned by the social structure.; (.. .) We also understand that ideology gives men a certain "knowledge" of their world, or rather allows them to "recognize" themselves in their world, gives them a certain "recognition"; but at the same time ideology only introduces them to its *misrecognition*. (Theor.prac. 28-29)

The scientific way to look at things, or actually theorize things is not, according to Althusser, conducted at all by subjects. It is a subject-less *practice*. In the realm of science, the subjectivity of the scientists is, in a way, “bracketed off”. (Ideol. 162)

This knowledge of the *mechanism of economic and political structures* can derive only from *another practice*, distinct from immediate economic or political practice, *scientific practice* – in the same way that knowledge of the laws of nature cannot be the product of simple technical practice and perception, which provide only empirical observations and technical formulae, but is, on the contrary, the product of specific practices – *scientific practices* – distinct from immediate practices. (Theor.prac. 24)

For example, psychoanalysis, as a scientific practice, does not take any historical, cultural theory of the structure of psyche (like e.g. Freud’s theory of the Oedipal scene) as a non-historical, universal psychic Law. In contrast, science sees that “laws of psyche” are ideological laws and it analyses them as such. Ideology can be – and it should be - theorized by science in a way which is not distorted by ideological subjectivity. This is the reason why Althusser criticises Freud’s manner to take the Oedipal psychic structure as a somewhat non-historical, universal fact. And this is why Althusser rejects Hegel. Althusser argues, against Hegel, that *real* knowledge of subjects (including the real history and philosophy of subjects) is not attainable for the subjects themselves. Ideology (i.e. limited knowledge) is ideology *for science*, which takes the stance of a non-subjective critical practice. Limited, one-sided knowledge is seen as such only when it is discussed by knowledge which is not limited and not one-sided. Only non-subjective knowledge can be un-limited. E.g. the Oedipal scene can be seen to produce – when it is analyzed scientifically, without any priori subjective assumptions - one historical type of imaginarily gendered consciousness. Because science is not practiced by subjects, it denotes an ideology-free-realm. Through science, there can also be a study of the history of ideology, of genders, of family structures and of the class struggles which develop in societies. When subjects discuss history, this subjective history is distorted, because it is seen subjectively, i.e. ideologically. It serves the purposes of the ideology. For Althusser, the actual history of ideology is external to the ideology itself. The subjects cannot thus know themselves, because their ideological formation, including their history and the prospects of their future (in terms of the class struggles which they are part of) is external to themselves. (Ideol. 150-151)

Althusser has also criticised Kojève (see SD, xvi, fn. 12). In contrast to the Kojévian, totally non-subjective utopia, for Althusser, there will always be limited consciousness, at least in the sense theorized by the Lacanian psychoanalytical theory. Althusser argues that even a class-less society - which may be free from class-repression - is nevertheless not a transparent society. No society is completely determined by science as it cannot, for example, constitute the actual bonds between the people or between the people and their world. As argued already above, for Althusser, the primary relation, which makes subjects actual (living feeling, experiencing) subjects is, via Lacanian psychoanalytical subject-theory, always an ideological relation. (Theor.prac.24)

Consequently, for Althusser, there will also always be subjective, limited politics, conducted by ideological subjects. Limited subjects will always strive only for limited ends. Yet, in contrast to the limited politics of the subjects, there is also Marxist, non-subjective politics,

called as a *Marxist practice*. Hence, the ideological “limited” politics is something else than the Marxist politics, which is based on science and is therefore a scientific practice. (Theor.prac.24-26)

Althusser criticises Hegel for his subjective totality. He rejects the idea that a subject could know itself the way Hegel’s free self-consciousness does. As explained in the chapter 2, with Hegel, the relation between the subject and the other constitutes a relation by which the selves can overcome their limits. With Hegel, un-limitedness and the freedom from repression can be reached through a relation between the subject and the Other. With Hegel, the “other” - in relation with whom the subject can reach un-limitedness and become free from repression - is another subject. With Althusser, all subjects and all conscious, interpersonal relations between the subjects belong to the realm of ideology. Hence, un-limitedness and freedom from ideology cannot be reached - *by the subjects themselves* - through their mutual relations between each others. It could be said, in Hegel’s words, that all the Althusserian subjects are Bondsmen, distinct from the science which knows what subjects are like. Whatever the Althusserian subjects know about themselves or the world is known while in bondage - i.e. under the repression and false consciousness of the ideology.

Ideology also appears as necessary for the transformation of societies. In fact (*Marxist political practice is based upon it*). Althusser writes about this:

ideology is not an aberration or a contingent excrescence of History: it is a structure essential to the historical life of societies. Further, only the existence and the recognition of its necessity enable us to act on ideology and transform ideology into an instrument of deliberate action on history. (For Marx, 232)

For Althusser, ideology is necessary for Marxist political practice. This is the case even in a class-less society, because in every society there will always be distorted knowledge, which needs to be critically analyzed and acted on. Ideology constitutes an important *instrument* for Marxist politics. It is at the level of ideology that the actual pressure, the demand for the transformation of the society is felt, lived and experienced. Science can never play the role of conceptualizing the experienced bond between the men and the conditions of their existence. Althusser writes:

it is in ideology that this demand is expressed, that this distance is measured, that this contradiction is lived and that its resolution is “activated”. It is in ideology, that the class-less society lives the inadequacy/adequacy of the relation between it and the world, it is in it and by it that it transforms men’s “consciousness”, that is, their attitudes and behaviour so as to raise them to the level of their tasks and the conditions of their existence. (For Marx, 235; by “men”, Althusser refers to human beings in general)

The subjects themselves, who *live* the relation between themselves and the world, and feel a need for the transformation of their lives, cannot analyze their experiences from a non-distorted point of view. The analyses made by the subjects, and the politics, conducted by the subjects on the basis of these analyses, are all made in the realm of the ideology. Thus, the politics, of the subjects, just reproduces the ideology itself. Only a non-subjective analysis can come up with such a political program, which does not reproduce the ideology. This non-

ideological politics is a critical practice, which does not take any subjective “truth” as the goal it strives for, yet, it takes such goals as the objects of its critical praxis.

It appears that by the distinction into “ideology” and “science” two realms of politics are constituted, a limited one and an unlimited one - between which there is an external relation. Intentional politics is conducted in both realms. In the ideological realm, subjects strive for their “distorted” goals. In the other, non-ideological realm, the distorted politics of the subjects is used as an instrument for the transformation of the society. The critical agent of this transformation is the Party, equipped with the correct scientific theory. It mediates between science and the political practice.

Especially in the late 1960’s and the 1970’s Althusser’s version of Marxism was very influential in radical circles, in France as well as in the UK. His “patronizing Marxism” also received severe criticism. For example, Alex Callinicos writes in *Althusser’s Marxism* (in 1976):

...the notion that the masses necessarily live in ideology, and that it will therefore be necessary to continue to exist a group of those adept in the sciences in order to guide them, derives from this position. Thus conceived, the theory of ideology can serve as a justification for the bureaucratic state capitalism in the Eastern bloc (Callinicos 1976, 101)

Ted Benton presents a similar critique in his book *The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism*. According to Callinicos and Benton, the political aspect of Althusser’s Lacanian Marxism is that the subjects are seen as incapable of actual radical politics. This Lacanian Marxism appears for the critics as a sort of patronizing “therapy”, given to the subjects from above, from a “therapeutical science”, which necessarily always knows more about the subjects than the subjects themselves. The subjects themselves are “duped” by their own distorted subjectivity (Benton 1984, 106-107).

Feminist theorists in general have criticised Althusser (see e.g. Assiter 1990, 124-129; Grosz 1989, 2-16, however, sees him as relevant even for feminists). They have argued that a subject-less science, alike the traditional philosophical figure of a transcendental (male) scientist, or a philosopher, always denote masculinist utopias from which women are closed off. Feminists, including Butler, have been always criticizing distinctions made between “objectivity and freedom” and “subjectivity and non-freedom”. For feminists, these distinctions denote a distinction made between the private realm of women and the universal, public realm of men.

It is also argued that Althusser’s Interpellation appears as a total power. Ted Benton argues:

...in the context of Althusser’s identification of “ideology” with “ruling ideology” there is no basis for “interpellations” of oppositional forms of subjectivity. Individual human subjects can be no more than willing “dupes” of the social system. (Benton 1984, 107)

Both Benton (1984, 107) and Assiter (1990, 127) remark that Althusser’s Interpellation-theory is conceptually problematic: in order to be interpellated as particular subjects,

individuals have to possess some general capacities of subjects. (Emperor Caligula could declare his horse a Consul, but even he could not make it a subject!) They have to be able to recognize themselves in the “mirror” of ideology. Thus, the theory of Interpellation does not really explain all aspects of subjectivity, but only of the particularity of subjects.

Althusser’s idea of a subject-less science has been severely questioned, and not only by feminists. Most critics of Althusser argue that science is produced by scientists, and scientists are also always subjects. Science does not just analyze historical objects, instead, it is itself conducted in a specific time and place. Moreover, the whole distinction between science and ideology presupposes some criteria of distinction. Althusser argues, for example, that the early writings of Marx (written under the influence of Hegel) were still ideological, while his later writings are “scientific”. There is a definite border between the two realms. But, as Descombes (1998, 123-6) remarks, Althusser does not tell how they are to be distinguished, and any attempt to provide the criteria seems to be circular – that is, the criteria are provided by the (Althusserian) science which already presupposes the distinction.

Nor does it seem possible that *real* politics (in contrast to the politics of the subjects, who strive for *imaginary*, ideological goals) would be conducted by a subject-less practice. The Althusserian Party is also run by human subjects, not by an impersonal Theory. Althusser says that, for example, the trade-union-movement or the fights for freedom and equality, which the subjects *consciously* engage in, take place always already inside the ideology itself. These efforts just reproduce the ideology instead of opposing it. The politics, *consciously* conducted by the subjects, cannot problematize the actual cause behind their problems. The actual problem, via Althusser’s Lacanian analysis, remains a “lost referent” for the subjects *as conscious beings*. The actual reason behind the class-system, the repressive relations of production, or the patriarchal family-structure remains a lost referent for the subjects. The real cause behind the problems, *experienced by the subjects*, is the repressive symbolic order, which cannot be questioned by the subjects. For Althusser, any conscious effort, on the part of the subjects, to politicize the unequal situation they live in constitutes an *ideological practice*. (see e.g Theor.prac. 22-31).

The political aspect of Althusser’s epistemology is that it denies the possibility of politics as a democratic practice. Because it is a subject-less practice, it cannot be criticised by “others”, i.e. by other subjects. There is no pluralism to it, no “other points of views” from which it could be looked at and opposed. Other points of views belong to the realm of “limitedness” (particularity, subjectivity). Politics that can be opposed by other points of views belong to the realm of the politics of the subjects. The views expressed by the subjects themselves, are interpreted by the science – or by the Party informed by the science – as symptoms of the underlying problems, not as potentially valid contributions to democratic discussion. Because the scientific politics is not subjective, it has no limits or an outside to it - or actually it does not recognize any outside to it. Based on a patronizing epistemology, it does not take the criticisms - coming from the distorted minds of the subjects – seriously. The Althusserian scientists place their own expertise above the knowledge of the subjects. Seen from a Hegelian point of view, the Althusserian scientists appear as “Masters”, who cannot take the subjects as their equals. In Hegelian terms, Althusser’s theory constitutes a system of one-sided recognition, where only the scientists (or the Party leadership, as long as it follows the correct line) are granted *universal* recognition. Universal knowledge is for Hegel knowledge which is recognized to correspond with its object. As such it is similar to what for Althusser

is scientific knowledge. Whereas the knowledge of the subjects is described by Althusser, via Lacan, as imaginary and distorted, the knowledge of the scientists is described as real. Looked from the point of view of Hegel's subject-theory in PhS, Althusser's subject-theory constitutes a pure self-consciousness i.e. an Unhappy Consciousness. Althusser's subject-theory constitutes a sort of "pure epistemology" (purified from particular subjectivity) on the basis of which "pure politics" (purified of subjective goals) is conducted.

Hegel's idea, that subjects are "totalities", or that the knowledge of the subjects corresponds totally with its object, constituting thus the identity of the subject and its objects (in the realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal relationships) means that subjects are not epistemologically enslaved. For Hegel, in order not to keep some group of people, or subjects in general in epistemological bondage is to see them as "totalities", i.e. as *real for themselves*. This means that the subjects are not seen to be "theorized" or "realized" externally (by philosophy, science etc.), but that the subjects are seen as potentially competent "theorists" of themselves. According to Hegel, if we see the knowledge of the Others as *necessarily and always already* "distorted", "unreal", or "necessarily not accessible for the subject itself", as Althusser describes the knowledge of the subjects, we posit these subjects in epistemological slavery.

As said already above, subjects appear as instrumentalized for the Althusserian Marxist scientists. Althusser himself says that the subjects "produce material", e.g. various ideological practices and relations of production, which is then analyzed and worked on by the scientists. Althusser writes about this:

It (science) does not "work" on a purely objective "given", that of pure and absolute "facts". On the contrary, its particular labour consists of elaborating its own scientific facts through a critique of the ideological "facts" elaborated by an earlier ideological practice (For Marx, 184)

The Science itself does not experience any particular pressures for the transformation of the society. Such pressures can be felt - *as particular, identifiable pressures* - only by the subjects. Because the science does not think of things on the basis of any identifiable (historical, subjective, particular) ontologies, principles or ideas, it can be in contact with particular things (including particular feelings and experiences) only through the minds of the subjects. The scientists need the subjects to be able to have "objects" of analysis - as "pure" objects cannot be taken as objects of analysis. No particular things exist for the scientists, as they take particular things as products of ideological symbolic structures. Scientists see that particular things exist for subjects - *as* the ideological thinking of the subjects - not for themselves. Scientists cannot, however, work on pure, non-subjective, unlimited things - i.e. on things as they exist (or actually non-exist) for the scientists. Hence, the scientists work on objects which are provided (laboured) for them by the subjects. In Hegelian terms, the subjects are used as the Bondsmen (labourers) for the scientists and for the scientific politics. The scientists place themselves above the subjects, yet, depend on the subjects to be able to be in contact - also politically - with a particular world.

Althusser sees that the "pressure for transformation" is "felt" in the ideological realm, by the

subjects. Yet, the subjects themselves are not taken as equal participants in the (scientific) analysis of what the “pressure, being felt” implies, and how the transformation of the society should henceforth be conducted. Politics (as a scientific practice) is hence conducted in a realm beyond the very subjects, whose own experiences are being analysed, and whose own world is to be “worked” and transformed as the result of the analysis. Science (or the Party) thus “mediates”, or acts as a “priest” (to use a somewhat Hegelian choice of words) between the subjects (the particular, limited world) and the *real*, the un-limited and the not-distorted world. The Marxist scientists thus appear as “therapeutic” analysts and politicians, who first listen to the subjects and analyse their situation from the point of view of their scientific expertise, then come up to a conclusion of what is wrong with the subjects, and then carry out a therapeutic programme (i.e. Marxists scientific practice) to ease the pressures of the subjects. It seems that, by purifying Marxism from its Hegelian aspects, Althusser also purifies it from its democratic aspects. True, even Hegelian Marxists (like Lukács) have been willing to accept the dominant role of the Party as the “educating dictator”. But their Marxism at least contained a promise of a Hegelian *Aufhebung* of the subject-object distinction when the people in the distant future are finally able to govern themselves (Lukács 1972; Schmitt 1985, 52-62).

Althusser’s psychoanalytical distinction between ideology and science appears to constitute a corresponding distinction *inside politics*. In other words, a psychoanalytical and “therapeutic” distinction becomes constituted inside politics. This appears as a specific contemporary version of patronizing politics, characteristic perhaps for a culture permeated by psychoanalytical thinking. There is the “traumatized” politics (the distorted politics of the subjects) and the scientific politics (i.e. the analytical practice, which is supposed to be a “neutral party” in the cure, given to the traumatized subjects). Epistemological asymmetries justify political asymmetries.

As Marxists, Althusser and Kojève seem to represent the opposite ends of the scale. Kojève appropriates Hegel and praises the active, negating subject; Althusser refutes Hegel and makes the subject merely as an instrument of Ideology. However, both thinkers are wrestling with the same problem. Even if Marx and the Marxists reject Hegel’s view of history as a development of (collective) self-consciousness, they, like Hegel, must be able to explain the epistemic status of their own theory. It is especially important for them. On one hand, they want to explain the development of consciousness – including theories, like that of their own – as products of something which lies beyond the (present) consciousness. On the other hand, they suppose that their own theory not only describes the world correctly, but is able to change it. So, they are bound to explain how their own theory is possible. And there seems to be only two consistent alternatives available. They can postulate the independent viewpoint of Science, as Althusser does, or they can return to Hegel and suppose that the historical process they describe explains the viewpoint from which it can be seen correctly (Kojève, and in a very different way, Lukács). However, I try to argue that even non-Marxists may have to face a similar choice.

I have discussed these critical points in detail, because Butler’s they may be potentially relevant for Butler’s theory, too. Althusser’s influence to Butler has not generally been discussed in the commentaries (see 4.2. and 5.1.1.). Alike the critics of Althusser, Butler is very critical towards any such distinctions (epistemological or political) as Althusser’s distinction between ideology and science. As such, it may seem paradoxical that Butler takes

just Althusser as a key theorist in her subject-theory. However, Butler's way to refer to Althusser assumes a quite limited range. She for example does not discuss Althusser's distinction between ideology and science. Instead she refers mainly just to his theory of Interpellation, which she does not fully agree with. Nevertheless, referring to Althusser's theory of Interpellation, *without discussing it as a part of the distinction between "ideology" and "science"* appears as problematic on Butler's part.

4. Butler

4.1. Introduction to Butler

4.1.1 “Ek-static terms” and “ek-static politics”

The main purpose of this study is to analyse how Butler’s theory of the ek-statism of *thought* things (including subjects themselves as objects of thinking) and her “performative politics” are related to Hegel’s subject-theory and the Hegelian-inflected subject-theories of thinkers like Alexandre Kojève. Butler describes the performative politics as “a process” and a “movement itself” or a “critical movement”. Butler’s political writings are mainly of subjective identities or sexual identities. However, she says that her performative politics does not take any particular notion of a “subject”, sexual identity or a gender-difference as its point of departure. Instead, she claims that all particular notions of subject or sexuality are “closed” and based on what the notions violently silence and exclude. All particular notions of subjects and of things in general are in the need of “radical mobilization”. They are in the need of “putting themselves into a critical process”. Butler claims that she does not herself make any “ontological assumptions” or normative statements concerning the existence of any specific subjective or sexual “natures”. For Butler descriptions of subjects or things as particulars are formed in normative cultural contexts. In this she adheres closely to Foucault and also to Althusser (as is further explained in ch.3).

As readers of this study may understand, it is quite complex a task to analyse a *critical* and a *political* theory which does not take any specific normative idea of a “goal to be reached” as its starting point. This poses a challenge for the analysis because Butler does not only analyse political thinking. Instead she also criticises it and wants to change it. She does not only analyze the thought of those who make “ontological assumptions” of the world outside of language, or who have specific normative ideas of goals. Butler criticises various normative and political thoughts, and, she also has her own political programme to provide, the “critical movement itself” i.e. “performative politics”. Yet, what is a critical and a political programme like which does not strive for *any* particular normative goals? How is *criticism* conducted if it does not commit itself to any normative ideal or criterion? Going through Butler’s writings convinces one that the base of Butler’s criticism is to criticise various normative modes of thinking (or descriptions of the world) on the basis of what these theories or descriptions *themselves* refute and silence. In Butler’s politics the idea is, first, to make various normative thoughts concerning subjects and things aware of their own “internal violence toward otherness” and, second, to change these thoughts through their own internal otherness. A concern for the Other is central in her works.

Butler’s refusal to make any ontological or rational assumptions of subjects and things by herself includes the aspect that she is critical when others make them. As explained e.g. in the chapter 4.1.10, her idea of “performative politics” is intended to “trouble” and “subvert” such assumptions, as this kind of assumptions always, for Butler, attempt to be what they cannot be, i.e. constitute a complete and final self-knowledge. Critical readings of other thinkers make up the bulk of Butler’s theoretical works.

Criticizing and politicizing various theories on the basis of what these theories themselves

refute appears as the basic critical, political and also theoretical goal for Butler. This goal constitutes the ground idea in Butler's performative politics as a "critical movement". She frequently reminds in all her books that "terms" should be opened up for their internal otherness and that this project does not have an end. Instead, it is a continuous process. These ideas seem, at first, highly abstract, not at all easy to comprehend. What are these "terms" and what are these "internal others"? Over again Butler reminds that for her things or properties like "woman", "heterosexuality", "homosexuality" or even "democracy" are, firstly, "internally ek-static terms" and, secondly, that these terms are "processes" or "movements". Things are thus already "processes" even that also her politics takes "a critical process" as its goal. This study focuses on Butler's thought of "things" as "processual" and as "internally ek-static terms" and on her politics as "a critical movement itself". Butler's performative politics (as a critical movement) is based on her idea of things as processual ek-static terms. In short, her idea of various entities or properties (like "woman", "sexuality", "gender-difference", democracy, "human" etc.) as ek-static terms means that these terms are internally multiple constructions which include e.g. such necessary aspects as "the normative subject-position" and "the refuted other" in it (the idea of things as ek-static terms is further explained in chapter 4.1.1). Butler's theoretical roots in Hegel and in thinking influenced by Hegel (thinkers like Kojève, Lacan and Foucault) emerge as most important. The theory of the "internal otherness" and the processes caused by it in subjective thinking was first provided by Hegel. PhS is the central text of this theory, as well as the *Encyclopedia Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* (1830). Butler's first published academic study, her dissertation thesis SD (1987) analyzed how Hegel's theory of the "internal otherness" - especially as it is presented in PhS as the mutual dynamic between "Desire" and "Recognition" - has influenced prominent contemporary subject-theories. Butler's later works are based on the same basically Hegelian subject-theory (i.e. subject as internally multiple and processual) which is already present in SD.

Readers of this study may wonder why so little is said here of Butler's thought of gender-identities, as she is known especially as a theorist of gender. The reason is that this study concentrates on Butler's thought of things, including sexual identities, as internally processual ek-static terms. When Butler's ek-static terms are analyzed, it would be misleading to say that the subject of analysis is Butler's "theory of sexuality", or, for that matter, of any other particular entity. Butler explicitly refutes the idea that there are such "objects" like sexualities which await "out there in the reality" (outside of language) to be discovered and explained. Butler argues that all particular notions concerning subjectivities or sexualities are constituted in normative, subjective thinking and, as such, these notions are formed by what they exclude and "refute".

Butler has been often identified, in a somewhat straightforward manner, as an anti-Hegelian or an anti-Kantian thinker. She is often associated with the French postmodernist or poststructuralist thinkers, who tend to be anti-Hegelians (while still struggling with Hegelian ideas). One reason for this may be that people who are interested in feminist-, or queer-studies, or interested in the postmodernist thinking, and who read Butler as a theorist in these fields dislike Hegel and also know little of him. Disliking Hegel for feminist reasons is easy, as becomes clear also in the chapter 2.3.4. Many readers of Butler are not likely to be readers of Hegel. Consequently, the theoretical links between Butler's "processual gender-politics" and Hegelian dialectics of subjective consciousness are not easily seen. Nor is Butler's "re-appropriative gender performativity" seen as rooted in Hegelian "negation of negation" (i.e.

sublative dialectics). However, coming into contact with one's "radical otherness" is the basic idea in Hegel's dialectics of subjective consciousness in PhS. In this dialectics contradictory thoughts (of a thing) are united together in a way which goes beyond what either of the contradicting views themselves would have been able to predict in advance. Theorists like Sara Salih or Moya Lloyd who have written introductory books on Butler's thinking acknowledge the fundamental importance of Hegel, although they do not analyze the relation between the two thinkers in detail. (see Salih, 2002, 43; Lloyd 2007, 13-22).

Butler indeed started her academic life as a Hegel-scholar. Her first published book was her dissertation work *Subjects of Desire. Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France* (1987). It analyzed Hegel's influence on some of the most prominent twentieth century French philosophers like Sartre, Foucault and Lacan. In SD and later also e.g. in BM, PLP and UG she theorizes the ideas of thinkers mentioned above, and also thinkers like Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva by analyzing them from the point of view of the Hegelian "ek-static" subjectivity. She finds out especially in SD, but also in her later books (e.g. in PLP and UG) that the "Hegelian subject" travels across centuries in the works of these "post-Hegelian" theorists. (e.g. SD vii-xiv, 185-186, 198, 227; UG 131-151, 236-241, PLP 34, 53-54).

Butler herself clearly acknowledges her theoretical background as a "Hegel scholar". As is explained further in this chapter 3, Butler acknowledges her theoretical roots in Hegel. Also Hegelian-inflected thinkers like Foucault, Lacan and Freud are important for Butler. Butler argues especially in SD that thinkers like Foucault and Lacan (and many others influenced by these thinkers like e.g. Irigaray, Žižek) build on the Hegelian theory of subjects as ek-static, internally beyond themselves. In PLP Butler e.g. argues that regardless of Foucault's significant moves beyond dialectical logic, he remains, as Butler says, "unwittingly tethered to the Hegelian formulation" as concerns his idea of "subjection" (see PLP 34). Indeed, many of the central Foucauldian ideas can be seen to have a Hegelian origin. In Foucault, like basically in Hegel, particular subjectivity is constituted in particular, historical, normative discursive contexts. Both thinkers also agree that there is more to subjects than these particular normative contexts.

The Foucauldian idea that subjects are multiple (internally heterogeneous) can be seen to build on Hegel's idea that thinkers and thinking as such are made of aspects which go beyond and contradict with the normatively constituted particular subjectivity. These aspects of selves (i.e. the particular normative subjectivity and the aspects which go beyond it) are mutually contradictory and they can be alien to each others. Also the Foucauldian idea that subjects are influenced by "powers", unknown to them, and that subjects emerge in amidst of these powers can be seen (as Butler sees in SD and in PLP) to build on Hegel's idea that "otherness" influences subjects. However, as is argued in this study, e.g. in the chapter 3, a specific Kojévian reading of Hegel can be seen to be behind Foucault's idea that particular subjectivity is *necessarily* produced in relations of "violent subjection". For Foucault, subjects are necessarily produced in subjection to powers external to the subjects themselves. Because the subject is constituted by something (the other) which it necessarily violates, when it tries to relate to it, or, when it tries to conceptualize it, subject's constitution is unknown (non-conceptual) for the subject itself. It is argued in this study that Kojévian Hegelianism is not only behind Foucault's theory of subjectivity, but also behind Lacan's, Butler's and a few others subject-theories, like e.g. Mouffe's (see chapter 6). In Kojévian Hegelianism particular

subjectivity is seen to be necessarily formed through a repressive relation to the other. Because the subject cannot mediate conceptually its relation with the other, without repressing the other, the constitution of the subject remains both violently constituted, and, un-conceptual (see Butler's analysis of Foucault's Hegelian roots in SD, 217-231; PLP 34)

Butler's claim that thinkers like Foucault, Lacan etc. are ultimately "Hegelians" is agreed with in this study. Butler also argues that many other prominent "post-Hegelian" thinkers like Sartre and Deleuze remain connected to the Hegelian subject-theory, even that these thinkers themselves often reject Hegelian (rational, systematic and idealistic) thinking. (UG 148; SD xiv-xv, 147-151, 175-176; PLP 3-5,34,58)

According to Butler, the Hegelian "ek-static subject" which reappears in the theories of Foucault, Sartre etc. is never able to disconnect itself from Hegel, even that most of the "post-Hegelian" theorists explicitly refute Hegel's rationalism. Butler argues that because "disconnection" (i.e. "negation", in Hegelian terms) and especially the idea of "overcoming oneself" (the idea of dialectical *Aufhebung* as the "negation of the negation") are Hegel's ground ideas, it appears difficult not to stay within Hegel's formulations if a basic theoretical link with Hegel's ek-static subjectivity is accepted. The basic point in Hegel's subject-theory is to go beyond oneself through contradicting (or, as Butler would say, *radical*) otherness. Seeing subjects and things as complex constructions, made of mutually radical and contradicting elements is a core (Hegelian-inflected) idea in much of contemporary thought. Also the idea that things move because there is contradictory, mutually antagonistic elements in them is a Hegelian-rooted thought in much of contemporary philosophy, e.g. in the postmodern thought. Butler sees that this thought is not quite capable of "overcoming" Hegel. Much of contemporary talk of "conceptual change" or "internal change" is based on the sublative dialectics of Hegel, even that often Hegel's ideas are explicitly rejected.

Conceptual change is actually somewhat a synonym to Hegel's sublative dialectics in which the idea is to preserve (continue) the "old" thought of some thing (and thus stay within the same concept) while also changing the concept internally through radical or contradicting otherness. This idea is echoed especially strongly in postmodernist theories of *parodic change* and *parodic politics* which is seen to be also a synonym for the "queer" politics. Even that many queer-theorists would explicitly reject any connection to Hegelian conceptual change, the idea of parodic queer-politics resembles in many ways the basic idea in Hegel's sublative dialectics. Importantly, Butler is seen as a leading queer-theorist. In postmodernist or queer-parodic politics the central idea is to change some thought of things (e.g. a thought of sexual identities) through radically different (called as parodic) otherness. In parodic politics contradicting (radically related) elements are united together in order to produce something radically new. A basically very Hegelian argument is often made i.e. that particular identities are internally contradictory, beyond the particular, culturally normative identity. Various "gender-blending" etc. strategies are presented as examples of parodic politics. Parodic otherness resembles what Hegel says of contradicting otherness and what Butler says of radical otherness. Parodic other cannot be seen to be "different" as it is not differentially related to the thing whose other it is. (see on postmodern parody e.g. Hutcheon 1985; Hutcheon 1988; and on Queer parody e.g. Grosz 1994; Kleinhans 1994; Meyer 1994; Butler's queer-political ideas are explained further e.g. in chapter 4.1.10)

Hegel's ek-static subjectivity thus continues its process of overcoming itself in much of the

contemporary philosophy. This philosophy claims to have overcome Hegel, which is indeed a very Hegelian idea. This is what Butler sees happening in the subject-theories of e.g. Foucault and Lacan. (on Lacan see e.g. SD xv, 198). In her own theory of ek-static subjectivity Butler does *not* claim to disconnect with Hegel. Instead she clearly claims to adopt her idea of subjects and things as “internally ek-static terms” from Hegel. She also says that in many ways she builds her subject-theory and political theory upon Hegel’s processual subject-theory. Actually, Butler discusses with Hegel in all her books. Besides Hegel, Butler discusses (mainly, yet not solely) with those theorists in the theories of whom, according to Butler, the “Hegelian ek-static subject” continues its travels by “negating” and “preserving” itself in various ways. (ibid.)

The basically Kantian-Hegelian idea that the subject as well as things are internally multiple and that they include internal otherness appears as the core theoretical and argumentative unit all throughout Butler’s works, including her political thought. Butler’s basic notion concerning subjects and things in general is that they are internally beyond themselves. For Butler, things are always “outside of themselves”. Butler calls this also as *internal alterity*. This basic ek-statism is theorized throughout Butler’s works on the basis of, first, the basically Kantian-Hegelian way of seeing all thought things as subjective, historical and limited (including the self itself as a *thought* subject for itself). For Butler, like for Kant and Hegel, subjects and things are formed of “parts”. As said already above, an important description of the “partial” formation of subjects and things is made here by Kant. This is the distinction between “thing for us/thing in itself”. For Butler things and subjects are formed of the “subjectively known part” which Butler typically calls as “subject-position”, “the temporal site of identity” or plainly as “subject”. There is also another part to subjects and things, i.e. the “outside” of the subject-position, the otherness or the “constitutive outside”.

Secondly, Hegel’s criticism of Kant is the base for Butler’s critical readings of various thinkers, like Foucault, Lacan, Althusser and Irigaray and a few other. These criticisms are discussed throughout this chapter. Butler criticises through Hegel the Kantian distinction between “subject for us” (i.e. subject as a subjectively and historically thought subject) and “subject in itself” (subject as beyond or outside of what it is for some specific subjects living in specific historical contexts). Hegel opposed the Kantian distinction by arguing that the distinction itself (and not only its other part, i.e. the part of “thing for us”) is subjective, historical and limited. Hegel modified the Kantian distinction into the question of *recognitive relations* between the “self’s knowledge of things” and “the Other’s knowledge of things”. For Hegel, universal, real knowledge of things can be attained if selves recognize the knowledge of Others as *valid*. Here the idea of *freedom* appears as an important, ethical aspect of the theory of knowledge. In reciprocally recognitive relations the epistemologically enslaved knowledge of the Other becomes freed. The silenced and patronized knowledge of the Other is recognized basically as an equally valid knowledge (of subjects and things). The Other is recognized as a valid contributor (equally valid with others) to how things are known. It can be also said that “otherness is given room inside of things” as the Other’s views of things are being considered valid. In reciprocally recognitive relations things are hence known *freely*, which means that the internal, constitutive otherness (of things) is not epistemologically enslaved.

Hegel’s notion of the Other, or otherness, is in many ways the central question in many Hegelian-inflected philosophies, including Butler’s. Hegel describes otherness e.g. by saying

that it is a “free object”, object capable of resisting the “objectifications” of others. Hegel also says that before one finds itself in the other in reciprocally recognitive relationships, one does not know its own self and lead a satisfactory life. Hence, the Other (and one’s own self) is found by recognizing the Other as a free being, capable of objectifying its own self and the whole universe internally. It appears that for Hegel, the Other is “radically different” from me because it is neither me, nor a mute instrument of my desires. In this sense, the Other is like me; we both are the centres of our respective universes and unwilling to let the other to define what we are. Paradoxically, the Other is “radically different” because it is (in this respect) *similar* to me. It could be even said that because the other is *too similar* with me (i.e. it is a being who objectifies the universe instead of being a differentiated object in my universe) it is radically different from me. Inanimate objects, trees, animals or even small babies are not “radically different”. In Butler’s theory the question of radical difference is a central one.

As is explained e.g. in chapters 4.1.7- 4.1.8, even that Butler joins Hegel in his criticism of Kant, Butler thinks, via thinkers like Foucault, Althusser and Lacan, that subjective knowledge of things (i.e of entities like “sexuality” which is the main context in which Butler conducts the Kantian-Hegelian debate) always fails in its *attempt* to describe its object in full. Butler adopts from Hegel the idea that subjective descriptions of subjects and things *attempt* to be universal and final descriptions and that these descriptions are always universal and final *for themselves*, in one way or the other. Hence, subjective (limited) descriptions of subjects and things attempt to describe their object unlimitedly, in full, in complete. They intend to render their own norm (of subjects and things) into a universal norm – a norm for all - of how subjects and things are thought of. Departing here from Hegel Butler says that the subject’s striving for universality and “unlimitedness” *necessarily* fails. The subject fails in its intention to gain universal (full, complete) knowledge of subjects and things as its knowledge is always constituted by “refuted otherness”. Hegel, in contrast, thinks that this attempt (for free, universal and full knowledge) is based on the subject’s already inherently being free, striving to know things fully in a community of free, reciprocally recognitive selves. Hegel also thinks that this freedom can be achieved by the subject. Also, in PhS, when the subject achieves freedom (by rendering its refuted other into an equal other self) it unites with the “philosophical we” who have all the time known that the subject and the other are equally free.

As will be explicated especially in the later chapters of this chapter 4, the Kantian distinction into “thing for us/thing in itself” remains also important for Butler, as Butler criticises Hegel, in turn, through a distinction which resembles the Kantian one. In short, Butler does not accept the basic Hegelian idea that subjective, limited, context-dependent knowledge (i.e. what subject is for us in our various contexts) can constitute universal, unlimited and real knowledge (i.e. what subjects and things are in themselves). Butler’s not accepting this is based on Butler’s rejection of the Hegelian “free self-consciousness”. Butler does not accept the Hegelian idea that because subjects can conceptually and rationally relate to what the radically different others know of things, subjects can attain universal knowledge (which is the basic idea in actual, free self-consciousness, the necessary condition for reciprocally recognitive relationships; see chapter 2.3.). For Hegel, subjective knowledge of things is always limited, because it can relate conceptually to the contradicting knowledge of others, it can go over its limits. In this sense, in Hegel, limited knowledge of things can reach universal and unlimited knowledge.

In Butler, the subjective (otherness-refuting) thinking never reaches the level of its storyteller. It appears that Butler's otherness-refuting thinking never learns to know (of subjects and things) what Butler knows. In Butler, the otherness-refuting thinking never (itself) becomes a thinker who is aware that all thinking is based on radical otherness and who does not want to refute any otherness. This important theme is taken up in the next sub-chapters.

4.1.2 The discursive and historical formation of subjects and things

It can be said that *an internally ek-static term* is the basic theoretical, argumentative, epistemological and political unit for Butler. Butler does not have any specific "theory of a subject" or "of sexuality", even that she has become famous for her views on gender and sex. Her views about sexuality and subject are instances of her general theory of ek-static terms.

But what in fact is "a term" for Butler? It appears that any thing or property which is thought of, spoken of, or seen as an object is a term for Butler. So, for example "woman", "body", "materiality", "heterosexuality", "Queer-politics", "democracy", "universality", "performativity", "power", "psychoanalysis" etc. are all "terms". Butler appears to emphasize the character of a thing or property as an ek-static term also by referring to it as "a thing *itself*". Butler refers to "woman" as an ek-static term of "woman itself" (e.g. in GT, 33), to body as a "body itself" (GT 129), to "democracy itself" (ES 90) and to "universal itself" (ES 89; CHU 268,179).

For Butler, things and properties are terms, which sound rather nominalistic. She does not want to draw clear distinctions between objects, concepts, and the related linguistic entities. However, Butler's terms have a Hegelian structure. They are first and foremost internally ek-static constructions. Butler's Hegelian roots are shown strongly here. Through the idea of the internal ek-statism, Butler's terms are similar constructions as Hegel's "concepts". They are structured by a constitutive, primary relation between the self and the Other. There is a relation between the "subject-position" (i.e. what the self is for itself as a determinate object) and the "other" inside Butler's terms, like in Hegel's concepts. Like in Hegel, this relation is contradictory, or, as Butler says "radical".

Similar to Hegel, for Butler things are subjectively thought constructions ("terms") which however always include a contradictory, ek-static relation between the historical self of the term (denoting the initial thinker, subject, of the term) and the "Other". Like for Hegel, for Butler things exist for historical subjective thinkers, i.e. for situated subjects, or, "subject-positions". Term is in this sense a subjective, historical and hence "limited" construction. However, there is more to terms, besides their historical and cultural limitedness. Like for Hegel, for Butler terms are not fully determined by their time and place, or by their individual thinkers. Terms are "outside", at least partly, of what they are for any specific subject or for any specific culture. They are capable of change and movement, because the aspect of contradictory otherness is *internal* to them. What does the internal otherness mean? Butler takes here after Hegel's idea of concepts as *self-reflective* constructions.

As is explained in chapter 2, for Hegel selves are capable of changing their idea of

themselves. This ability is based on their capacity for self-reflection through the Other. For Hegel, all actual change is dialectical and takes place as *Aufhebung*, through the Other. Selves can alter their views of themselves and of the world because they can relate internally to the Other's thoughts of the world.

What makes the contradictory other important for both Butler and Hegel is that it is *internally* (instead of externally) related to the "subject" of the term. The "subject" of the term (referring with Hegel and Butler both to the thinker, subject, of the term as well as to the content and form of the term) is influenced and changed because of its relation to the Other. Internal change is what Hegel calls as dialectical change, and as said above, *all* actual change is dialectical, internal change for Hegel. It means that the "subject" (referring to the thinker itself as well as to the subjective content of its thoughts, i.e. the terms it thinks) changes through the Other self-consciously, i.e. for itself. Dialectical change is in this a change of which the thinking self is conscious of.

Alike Hegel's concepts, Butler's terms exist for subjective, historical thinkers, however, at the same time, these same terms exist for a contradicting other, or, as Butler says, for a radical outside. Because the contradicting other is *internally related* to the "subject" of the term, neither is the thinking subject, or the terms (which the subject thinks of) fully determined by any specific limit (be it time, place, ideology etc.). The internal contradictoriness of terms render Butler's terms very similar "living" constructions as Hegel's concepts. As Hegel's concepts, Butler's terms are limited by their limited subjects and by their history and culture, however, these terms are also free from these limits. The internal contradictoriness, called by Butler as "radicality", "alterity" or "ek-statisms" is the key for what appears as very Hegelian "freedom" - in terms of the contradictory, dialectical relation between the self and the other. There is a dialectical movement to them, caused by the mutual communication between the self and the other.

Throughout her writings Butler theorizes terms, which she finds politically important, by analyzing them as internally ek-static constructions. Butler concentrates on the modern western societies where such terms like "subject", "human" and "gender" appear as politically central. In *Gender Trouble* she calls contemporary Western societies as "heterosexual matrixes", referring to the normative heterosexuality and the refutation of the radical Other - not only women but also homosexuals, ethnic others etc. Women, homosexuals and also ethnic and religious others appear as "refuted" and "silenced" in the Western societies. Butler finds that the contemporary Western way to refute certain "others" like homosexuals is based on how terms like "subject" and "human" are being constructed and understood. Terms like "subject" construct the basic self-understanding or self-reflection of thinkers. The way people see themselves and others - and their mutual relations with others - is based on the way the *self-reflective* terms like "subject" are structured. Both Hegel and Butler think that in order for people to be able to live in relations in which others are not refuted, the basic self-reflective notions should be seen as internally complex or contradictory. In short, these notions should be seen as "internally ek-static".

Hegel argues all along PhS that in order for people to be able to acknowledge other (contradictory) points of views concerning any things, they should first see "otherness" (contradictoriness) as something internal to themselves as subjects. In short, they should recognize the Other as another, equal consciousness of the world. In a similar vein as Hegel,

Butler finds that the refutation of (contradicting, radical) others is based on how the thinking subjects see themselves. If thinkers see themselves as non-contradictory (non-ek-static) beings, they look at others from a non-ek-static point of view, which does not allow the other to be radically other. They read the other from the point of view of their own non-ek-static “language”.

Butler sees, similarly as Hegel, that the way a thinker sees itself (as a subject) is carried into – or included into - how the thinker sees itself, others and the world. In other words, the way a thinker conceptualizes whatever entity it thinks of is based on how it conceptualizes itself. For Butler, through Hegel, one should acknowledge the validity of contradicting thoughts concerning whatever it thinks of, including itself.

Butler makes a similar discovery as Hegel, i.e. that the refutation of others is based on the thinkers incapacity to acknowledge themselves and others as contradictory (ek-static) beings. Thinkers who acknowledge themselves and others as contradictory beings, are capable of what Hegel calls as “free” or “reciprocally cognitive” relations with others. According to Butler, thinkers who acknowledge the internal “radicality” or “ek-statism” of themselves, and terms in general, are able to live in more democratic relations with others. With both thinkers, the acknowledgement of the internal ek-statism of things – which Hegel calls a cognitive attitude toward the Other and which he contrasts with an attitude of “Desire” - is hence placed as a goal. It is shown as a positive alternative to otherness-refuting, parochial and “enslaving” relations with others. For the both thinkers, thinkers who see themselves as non-contradictory beings, end up always refuting some others. Both theorists see that when a thinker sees itself as a non-contradictory being, it has an “enslaving” attitude toward others. Hegel calls this attitude “Desire” whereas Butler calls it often as an “imperialist” or “colonialist” attitude. This choice of expressions indicates that Butler shares Hegel’s “appropriation”-model of understanding. In understanding, people make objects in some sense *as their own* (cf. PR, Addition to §4).

Throughout her writings, Butler analyzes politically relevant terms like “subject” and “sexuality” as ek-static constructions. Butler discusses how the “ek-static” relation between the “subject-position” and the “other” is being constructed i.e. whether the ek-static relation is refuted and silenced or acknowledged when some term (like woman) is thought. If the internal ek-statism is denied and forced into non-ekstatism, the radical, contradictory others are being silenced and repressed. In contexts where the ek-statism is denied, the aspect of “subject-position” makes up the culturally legitimate and normative part of the term. Radically other points of views onto the term make up the culturally wrong, un-normal aspects of the term.

In my view, Hegel has given us an ek-static notion of the self, one which is, of necessity, outside itself, not self-identical, differentiated from the start. It is the self over here who considers its reflection over there, but it is equally over there, reflected, and reflecting. Its ontology is precisely to be divided and spanned in irrevocable ways. Indeed, whatever self emerges in the course of the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* is always at a temporal remove from its former appearance; it is transformed through its encounter with alterity, not in order to return to itself, but to become a self it never was. (UG, 148)

The internal ek-statism is also called as *internal alterity* by Butler. It describes a self who is, as Butler says, “since the beginning”, given to terms which are beyond this self. The internal alterity – or, the *radical relation* or the *radical difference* - between what Butler also calls as “subject-position” and “constitutive outside” resembles basically closely of what Hegel says of the internal contradictoriness of selves and things. The internal otherness means that selves and things include aspects which need not have any common measure with each others (as differential systems). In this sense, these aspects are *unknown for each others*. They are unknown, “unreadable”, for each others, because they are not internal parts of any larger interpretative system (a universal), which would include them both, and in reference to which they could identify, particularize (“read”) each others – at least not in any simple or non-contradictory sense. In Hegel’s and Butler’s terminology a thing, or a self, or an aspect which is Other in relation to something is not “different” to the one whose Other it is. “Other” is not one of the ordinary objects (i.e. one “particular” among others) *inside* one’s internally differentiated system of interpreting the world (i.e. one’s “universal”). Nevertheless, for Butler, via Hegel, one is internally related to one’s Other, because one is an ek-static construction. The construction, which one ultimately is, reaches beyond one’s own internally differentiating universe. And when this “beyond”, or “outside”, is seen to be internal to oneself, one can be seen as internally outside oneself, outside of one’s universe. As ek-static, one is, as Butler says, internally “outside oneself”: partly unreadable for oneself, not fully identical with how one reads oneself or the world.

Butler writes of the internal relation between oneself and one’s “beyond”, or, internal outside:

To persist in one’s being means to be given over from the start to social terms that are never fully one’s own. Those terms institute a linguistic life for the “one” who speaks prior to any act of agency, and they remain both irreducible to the one who speaks and the necessary conditions of such “speech” (PLP 197)

For Butler, various objects and properties like one’s subjective identity exist always within historical and cultural “interpretative fields” which she also calls as discourses. Theories are for Butler examples of object-formative discourses:

..theory operates on the very level at which the object of inquiry is defined and delimited, and there is no givenness of the object which is not given within an interpretative field – given to theory, as it were, as the condition of its own appearance and legibility (CHU 274)

For Butler, *all* thinking is necessarily discursive. Discourses are bounded, historical and cultural contexts of thinking. They are similar to the Hegelian “particular universes” (where thinking assumes the mode of “Consciousness as understanding”) or the Kantian “thing for us”. For Butler, all theoretical and philosophical thinking is discursive, conducted by discursively formed subjects. Thinking is always conducted by selves who are discursively formed and discursively posited into subjects. Discursively formed subjects constitute positions of thinking. All thinking is conducted by such *subject-positions*. Discourses thus form subjects and these subjects constitute “positions of thinking”. The subjective positions of thinking are formed and also in many ways controlled by the discourses. When discursive

subjects think of entities or properties like “subject” or “gender-difference” or “human” or “democracy” – or, actually, when they constitute these entities in their thinking – the formation of these entities is always controlled and guided by the discourse.

Importantly, external entities and properties “out there” (e.g. material sexually differentiated bodies) are also formed discursively. Material world out there is for Butler - in a very Hegelian manner - constituted in the thinking of selves. As regards its existence as an internally differentiated whole, it exists in the thinking of socially (discursively) formed subjects.

Butler writes:

To “concede” the undeniability of “sex” or its “materiality” is always to concede some version of “sex”, some formation of “materiality”. Is the discourse in and through which that concession occurs – and , yes, that concession invariably does occur – not itself formative of the very phenomenon that it concedes? To claim that discourse is formative is not to claim that it originates, causes, or exhaustively composes that which it concedes; rather, it is to claim that there is no reference to pure body which is not at the same time a further formation of that body. In this sense, the linguistic capacity to refer to sexed bodies is not denied, but the very meaning of “referentiality” is altered. In philosophical terms, the constative claim is always to some degree performative. (BM 10-11)

Butler argues above that to concede the un-deniability of “sex” is to concede always to *some version* of “sex”. To concede that something exists is to always see this thing as a particular “something”. Butler’s argument here resembles Hegel’s idea of thinking as an internally differentiated construction. For Hegel, we always think things (including ourselves) as relational constructions, in other words, within differential systems. In order to think some thing, we have to differentiate it from and relate it to other things. We have to render the thing we think into an “it” or into a “something” so that we can think *of* it. Hegel argues that our thinking – or our consciousness - is always *of something* (PhS §86). In order for there to exist some thing (*for us*) this thing must be *posited* as some kind of circumscribed object, an entity, which we can think of and which has definite properties. This is possible only on the basis of an internally differentiated and related system. Hegel calls these relational systems of internal differentiation as “particular universes”. Hegel’s particular universes resemble, as was said above, Butler’s discourses. For Butler, like for Hegel, it is impossible to think of anything without *forming* the thing in some way. We cannot think of things which are totally formless and limitless. We always differentiate in one way or the other between those features which belong to the thing and those features which do not. Butler agrees with Hegel on that even if we try to purify things from all of their particular content and their relationality with other things and render them pure abstractions, we nevertheless think of them as some sort of relational constructions. We cannot think of totally pure abstractions without relating them to any particulars. Hence we always constitute an *inside* (i.e. the thing’s content; features that belong to the thing) and differentiate it from the *outside* (otherness; what does not belong inside the thing). Without there being a differentiated, particular inside and a differentiated particular outside, the thing would not exist as a thing (for us). (see e.g. CHU 144-145).

What was said above connects with Butler's theory of *performativity*. Thinking is "formative", or, as Butler says "performative". As formative, thinking never just thinks of things, instead, it always also participates in the formation of them. As performative, thinking can be said to "produce" the very objects it sees and thinks of. In Butler, thinking appears to be both: it participates in the further formation of the objects, things, it thinks of. Thinking also produces the objects which it often claims just to describe (as if they existed completely independently or outside of thinking). However, Butler reminds that things are never formed or performed by one sovereign agent, instead, they are performed in discursive and historical thinking. Butler emphasizes the internal ek-statism of performative and formative thinking.

Secondly, for Butler, besides being discursively thought and discursively controlled entities, thought by discursively formed and controlled subjects, terms are also *internally* something else than what is thought of them within the boundaries of some discourse. Terms like e.g. "subject", "human" and "woman" exist for discursive subjects, however, they exist also for "otherness". Discourses are historical and limited. Because discursive knowledge of things is limited, there is, in a way, "more" to terms, according to Butler, than what is allowed to be known of them by *any* discourse. This "something else" or "otherness" which is internal to terms is called by Butler as the *constitutive outside*. It denotes the other part of the ek-statism of terms. Butler writes that it is a "foundationalist fiction" to think that terms could ever denote stable, coherent identities:

Apart from the foundationalist fictions that support the notion of the subject, however, there is the political problem that feminism encounters in the assumption that the term women denotes a common identity. Rather than a stable signifier that commands the assent of those whom it purports to describe and represent, women, even in plural, has become a troublesome term, a site of contest, a cause for anxiety. As Denise Riley's title suggests, *Am I that Name?* is a question produced by the very possibility of the name's multiple significations. If one "is" a woman, that is surely not all one is; the term fails to be exhaustive, not because a pregenerated "person" transcends the specific paraphernalia of its gender, but because gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, and because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities (GT 3)

"Gender is a complexity whose totality is permanently deferred, never fully what it is at any given juncture in time." (GT 16)

Butler argues that terms like "woman" are multiple and plural constructions. However, this multiplicity does not make up such an internally coherent whole that if we would collect together all the parts of this multiplicity or pluralism we were to know what "woman" is like. In reference to thinkers like Foucault, Butler argues that terms are not made of "mutually agreeing" parts which would make up the term as a coherent concept, a unity. In fact, there is an *internal repression* to terms like "woman" or "human". Because the parts, making up the ek-statism of the term, are not quite appreciative of each others, at least not fully, there is an internal struggle as to what the term is.

Butler writes of the ek-statism of things, here of the terms “woman” and “gender”, in reference to Foucault:

To expose the foundational categories of sex, gender, and desire as effects of a specific formation of power requires a form of critical enquiry that Foucault, reformulating Nietzsche, designates as “genealogy”. A genealogical critique refuses to search for the origins of gender, the inner truth of female desire, a genuine or authentic sexual identity that repression has kept from view; rather, genealogy investigates the political stakes in designating, as an origin and cause those identity categories that are in fact the effects of institutions, practices, discourses with multiple and diffuse points of origin. (GT x-xi)

Butler’s theory of the ek-statism of terms has a clear Kantian-Hegelian ground. Terms comprise of parts of which the other one is known “for us” while the other one is not. There is a somewhat troublesome internal relation or alterity to terms (or, objects) as the part known for us cannot in any simple way be related to its other part. For Butler, like for Hegel, things are made of mutually contradicting elements. However, Butler largely agrees with thinkers like Foucault who explicitly argue that the internal relation is not only made of mutually contradicting elements but is *necessarily a repressive one*. Hence the internal relation cannot be known (for us) as any internally coherent construction as a concept.

Butler writes of the formation of subjects in the introductory chapter of BM:

This text accepts as a point of departure Foucault’s notion that regulatory power produces the subjects it controls, that power is not only imposed externally, but works as the regulatory and normative means by which subjects are formed.(...) To this understanding of power as a constrained and reiterative production it is crucial to add that power also works through the foreclosure of effects, the production of an “outside”, a domain of unlivability and unintelligibility that bounds the domain of intelligible effects. (BM 22-23)

In reference to Foucault, Butler argues that subjects are formed in a violent *subjugation* to discursive power, called often by Butler plainly as *power*. Apparently because the discursive power is multiple in a non-identifiable way and because it consequently cannot be identified to come from some specific source, it is called (in a somewhat abstract way) only as “power”. This power is productive as it renders the not-yet-subjects into loci of thinking and also loci of agency. However, this subjection necessarily entails a repressive aspect. Subjects are thus formed through foundational violence. As the internal otherness of ek-static terms (and the internal otherness of ek-static subjects, or selves, as the thinkers of these terms) is never fully acknowledged as valid, a realm of silence (unintelligibility and un-liveability) is produced internal to terms. This creates a certain “injury” inside terms. (BM 8-9; ES 27). Butler writes of this in PLP:

I would suggest that the subject who would oppose violence, even violence to itself, is itself the effect of a prior violence without which the subject could not have emerged. (PLP 64)

For Butler, the “objects” of thinking, as well as the “subjects” - as the loci or positions of thinking - are ek-static. Subjects are ek-static also as intentionally acting agents. The ek-statism of terms (as “objects” of thinking) hence corresponds with the ek-statism of the subjects of thinking. This idea is very Hegelian. Also for Hegel both the objects and the subjects of thinking are made of internal, mutually contradictory parts. Despite of this basic agreement between Hegel and Butler, these two theorists disagree on how the internal ek-statism should be thought of. Both agree that there is an internal ek-statism yet they disagree how it should be *further* thought of. Hegel argues that the internal ek-statism should be thought on the basis of reciprocal recognition and rationality. Hegel argues that if nothing is said of the thinkers, the subjects, *for whom* this ek-statism exists, the ek-statism is reduced into another form of parochial non-ek-statism (into a thinking dominated by an attitude of Desire i.e. the silencing of contradictory otherness). Hegel argues that something must be said of the “third” (the thinking subject) for whom the ek-statism exists. As a *thought* thing, ek-statism is always thought by a subject, and, hence, something historical and defined by its thinker. In other words, the perspective from which the ek-static nature of objects and subjects is seen, should itself be thematized. Butler argues that any “recognizer” of ek-statism is itself an ek-static thinker, a thinker who is “outside of itself”. For Butler, an ek-static thinker fails to fully know its object. Hence, an ek-static thinker conducts a sort of “misrecognition” when it e.g. tries to thematize itself as an ek-static thinker. This theme is further explicated in chapter 5.

4.1.3. Agonistic terms

For Butler, ek-static terms are *necessarily* beyond or outside of *any* specific description. If e.g. a term like “woman” is described as a particular entity or category and information is provided of what kind of features belong and do not belong to it (denoting thus an idea of gender-difference) the term is always more encompassing: it is always larger than any specific description of it. What remains outside of the description is radically unknown *for this given description*. A radical outside of some specific definition of some term does not have a common measure with the differential system, from which it is excluded, and, thus, it is a radical Other. In other words, the temporally, culturally, discursively limited description of some term cannot relate conceptually to Other descriptions of the term (e.g. provided by futural others). Because no context-dependent or temporal description exhausts all features which may belong to the term, the term is, according to Butler, a permanent site of agonistic struggle, over its meaning. Each description of the term intends to fix the term according to what it considers the true meaning of the term. The constant struggle at the borders of the term - in other words, the struggle concerning where the demarcating line between the inside and the outside of the term lies - makes the term permanently instable.

What Butler says here means, importantly, that she opposes Hegel’s basic idea of conceptuality. For Hegel, ek-static thinkers can make a concept (an internally mediated conceptual construction) of the mutually contradictory parts of themselves (and other ek-static objects). For Hegel, this is possible in reciprocally cognitive relationships. In reciprocally cognitive relationships one’s Other, and the Other of things (the “outside”, constitutive of oneself and of things) can be dialectically conceptualized through other self-consciousnesses

(see chapter 2. 3).

Butler opposes the idea that terms like “woman” - or even “democracy” or “justice” - could be seen as conceptually mediated wholes, or e.g. as *dialogical entities*, so that complete knowledge of a term would be seen to be able to be found as a dialogic futural process. Butler’s idea of the impossibility to reach goals through communicative or dialogic means amidst mutually respectful selves means also that she is critical of such theorists like Habermas, Benhabib and Rawls. Butler is against such “coalitional politics” (over the meaning of some thing) which does not attempt to describe the particular content of some term in advance, yet nevertheless sees that it can be found in a futural, dialogic process. For Butler, terms are always internally “political” in an ek-static way. The definition of terms cannot be based on a foundational agreement concerning *any* aspect of the term. If the task is to find the meaning of some term like “woman” as a unity (i.e. as a particular meaning) as a futural process, there is, according to Butler, a foundational expectation that such “unity” exists. If the existence of the term as a particular unity is assumed in advance, such unity will emerge as the result. This is due to the foundational assumption (of the existence of the unity) serving as the guiding principle of the “futural” process. For Butler this would mean that we make ontological assumptions of the “extra-linguistic” existence of this category - as ultimately a unity - even if we leave the particular content of this unity completely free or empty, to be filled in the future. Butler gives the gender-difference as an example. If gender-difference is assumed to exist, always already “out there”, various proofs of its existence will invariably be found as this difference itself (in the form of a belief in it) serves as the guiding principle in the search of it. For Butler, no aspects of the term – including its very existence as a unity of *any* sort - should *in advance* be assumed to exist and thus, in a way, removed outside of political contestation.

Despite the clearly democratizing impulse that motivates coalition building , the coalitional theorist can inadvertently reinsert herself as sovereign of the process by trying to assert an ideal form for coalitional structures *in advance*, one that will effectively guarantee unity as the outcome. Related efforts to determine what is and is not the true shape of a dialogue, what constitutes a subject-position, and, most importantly, when “unity” has been reached, can impede the self-shaping and self-limiting dynamics of coalition. The insistence in advance on coalitional “unity” as a goal assumes that solidarity, whatever its price, is a prerequisite for political action. But what sort of politics demands that kind of advance purchase on unity? Perhaps a coalition needs to acknowledge its contradictions and take action with those contradictions intact. Perhaps also part of what dialogic understanding entails is the acceptance of divergence, breakage, splinter, and fragmentation as part of the often tortuous process of democratization. The very notion of “dialogue” is culturally specific and historically bound, and while one speaker may feel secure that a conversation is happening, another may be sure it is not (GT14-15)

The internal ek-statism of terms means that there is *no internal solidarity* over the meaning of terms. A term is about a permanent, futural struggle over all its aspects, including its very existence as a “thing”. A term is hence not about a “dialogue” which would imply that some basic mutual solidarity or consensus on its basic features (or on the very existence of it) could

be reached. Continuing the discussion above, Butler argues that a term is - and that it should be allowed to be - a *permanently available site of contested meanings*. It is beyond itself in ways not contained by any description which (itself) could not be further contested by another description.

It would be wrong to assume in advance that there is a category of “women” that simply needs to be filled with various components of race, class, age, ethnicity, and sexuality in order to become complete. The assumption of its essential incompleteness permits that category to serve as a permanently available site of contested meanings. The definitional incompleteness of the category might then serve as a normative ideal relieved of coercive force.”..; “Gender is a complexity whose totality is permanently deferred, never fully what it is at any given juncture in time. “ (GT 15)

For Butler, to assume to know the futural movement of the term as some sort of harmonic dialogue would indeed constitute a specific kind of violence:

To understand “women” as a permanent site of contest, or as a feminist site of agonistic struggle, is to presume that there can be no closure on the category and that, for politically significant reasons, there ought never to be. That the category can never be descriptive is the very condition of its political efficacy. In this sense, what is lamented as disunity and factionalization from the prespective informed by the descriptivist ideal is affirmed by the anti-descriptivist perspective as the open and democratizing potential of the category. Here the numerous refusals on the part of “women” to accept the descriptions offered in the name of “women” not only attest to the specific violences that a partial concept enforces, but to the constitutive impossibility of an impartial or comprehensive concept or category. The claim to have achieved such an impartial concept or description shores itself up by foreclosing the very political field that it claims to have exhausted. This violence is at once performed and erased by a description that claims finality and all-inclusiveness. To ameliorate and rework this violence, it is necessary to learn a double-movement: to invoke the category and, hence, provisionally to institute an identity and at the same time to open the category as a site of permanent political contest. That the term is questionable does not mean that we ought not to use it, but neither does the necessity to use it mean that we ought not perpetually to interrogate the exclusions by which it proceeds” (BM 221-222)

According to Butler, terms are temporal processes which cannot be described as causal or coherent histories or processes.

Crucially, then, construction is neither a single act nor a causal process initiated by a subject and culminating in a set of fixed effects. Construction not only takes place *in time*, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms; sex is both produced and destabilized in the course of reiteration. As a sedimented effect of a reiterative or ritual practice, sex acquires

its naturalized effect, and, yet, it is also by virtue of this reiteration that gaps and fissures are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions, as that which escapes or exceeds the norm, as that which cannot be wholly defined or fixed by the repetitive labor of that norm. This instability is the *deconstituting* possibility in the very process of repetition, the power that undoes the very effects by which “sex” is stabilized, the possibility to put the consolidation of the norms of “sex” into a potentially productive crisis (BM 10).

For Butler, entities like “woman” are constructions which are *themselves* temporal processes. As Butler emphasizes in the quotation above, the construction which the term is does not only take place *in time* yet it is *itself* a temporal process. What does this mean? What Butler’s theory implies (e.g. in the quotation above) is that an external observer cannot observe the process by which such terms like “women” become constructed in time. When the temporal process of the term is observed by an external *unifying* subject, who *already* assumes that the term constitutes a unity, the process *appears* as a coherent process i.e. a history (*for this unifying subject*). Butler seems to argue that any external subject (for whom the term exists as a unity) is itself internal to the process. The discursive subject-position, from which any self-appointed “external subject” may observe the process of the term is itself also processual in the manner of internal, agonistic struggle. All those who say something about a contested term like “woman” are actually participating in the contest. A neutral meta-comment is not possible.

4.1.4. Terms as constructions

Butler emphasizes that terms are *constructions*. Butler writes of the construction of “sex” which can be thought only as some kind of a differentiated entity i.e. in terms of sexual difference:

Sexual difference, however, is never simply a function of material differences which are not in some way both marked and formed by discursive practices. Further, to claim that sexual differences are indissociable from discursive demarcations is not the same as claiming that discourse causes sexual difference. the category of “sex” is, from the start, normative; it is what Foucault has called a “regulatory ideal”. In this sense, then, “sex” not only functions as a norm, but is part of a regulatory practice that produces the bodies it governs, that is, whose regulatory force is made clear as a kind of productive power, the power to produce – demarcate, circulate, differentiate – the bodies it controls. Thus,sex is a regulatory ideal whose materialization is compelled, and this materialization takes place (or fails to take place) through certain highly regulated practices. In other words, “sex” is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time. It is not a simple fact or static condition of a body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize “sex” and achieve this materialization through a forcible reiteration of those norms. That this reiteration is necessary is a sign that materialization is never quite complete, that bodies never quite comply with the norms by which their materialization is impelled.

(BM 1-2).

For Butler, then, terms are internally agonistic processes which are tried to make appear as stable, forever fixed natural facts. This stable appearance is produced forcibly by regulatory means. However, as internally political, ek-static constructions, they are not the stable constructions which they *seem* to be. Their internal coherence and stability is thus a certain kind of fiction which fails to be what it purports to be. In other words, any internally coherent notion of “sex” is nevertheless beyond this coherence as sex is nevertheless an ek-static (internally contradictory) term.

Butler’s idea of sex as a movable, internally radical construction has induced criticism. Butler addresses this criticism in the beginning of her book BM (pp.ix-12). Some critics, as Butler herself tells in BM, have opposed the idea that the “whole” body would be a linguistic or a discursive construction. Critics oppose the idea that the whole materiality of sexed bodies – or the materiality of any thing - would be linguistically constructed. Butler addresses this critique in several ways through reviving Hegel’s critique against the Kantian differentiation into “thing for us/thing in itself”. According to Kant, some part of “thing” exists as subjective and historical, internally differentiated discursive systems (as a “thing for us”, denoting a sort of shared construction). However, for Kant, there was also the “thing in itself”, denoting the thing as a real referent, as it is beyond subjective, limited knowledge of it. Hegel criticised Kant’s differentiation into the parts of “thing for us” and “thing in itself” and argued that not only the other part (of the thing) exists as a constructed entity, instead, the whole differentiation itself is a constructed, historical entity. Butler says, holding a same argumentative line:

The moderate critic might concede that some part of “sex” is constructed, but some other is certainly not, and then, of course, find him or herself not only under some obligation to draw the line between what is and what is not constructed , but to explain how is it that “sex” comes in parts whose differentiation is not a matter of construction. But as that line of demarcation between such ostensible parts gets drawn, the “unconstructed” becomes bounded once again through a signifying practice, and the very boundary which was meant to protect some part of “sex” from the taint of constructivism is now defined by the anti-constructivist’s own construction. Is construction something which happens to a ready-made object, a pregiven thing, and does it happen *in degrees*? Or are we perhaps referring on both sides of the debate to an inevitable practice of signification, of demarcating and delimiting that to which we then “refer”, such that our “references” always presuppose – and often conceal this prior delimitation? Indeed, to “refer” naive or directly to such an extra-discursive object will always require the prior delimitation of the extra-discursive. (BM 11).

For Butler, things cannot be differentiated into those parts which are socially and discursively constructed and into those which are not. Any such differentiation takes *itself* place in discursive language. The extra-discursive referents themselves are also discursive formations. The next quotation is a part of Butler’s criticism against the distinction made between “sex” and “gender”; a distinction used in much of gender-studies and in feminist studies. In this

distinction a differentiation is made between “sex” denoted as something natural and extra-linguistic (as a sort of “sex in itself”) and the socially constructed “gender” (as a sort of “sex for us”).

“...the “sex” which is referred to as prior to gender will itself be a postulation, a construction, offered within language, as that which is prior to language, prior to construction. But this sex as prior to construction will, by virtue of being posited, become the effect of that very positing, the construction of construction. If gender is the social construction of sex, and if there is no access to this “sex” except by means of its construction, then it appears not only that sex is absorbed by gender, but that “sex” becomes something like a fiction, perhaps a fantasy, retroactively installed at a prelinguistic site to which there is no direct address. (BM 5).

All this does not, however, mean for Butler - as it did not mean for Hegel either - the same as to say that “real” things do not exist at all. Nor does it mean to argue that discursively formed things are completely subjective, psychic formations. To say that things are discursive, historical and normative formations does not equate saying that “everything is language”. Butler rejects this kind of linguistic determinism (see e.g. BM 6). Butler writes of this:

If the body signified as prior to signification is an effect of signification, then the mimetic or representational status of language, which claims that signs follow bodies as their necessary mirrors, is not mimetic at all. On the contrary, it is productive, constitutive, one might even argue performative, inasmuch as this signifying act delimits and contours the body that it then claims to find prior to any and all signification. This is not to say that the materiality of bodies is simply and only a linguistic effect which is reducible to a set of signifiers. Such a distinction overlooks the materiality of the signifier itself. Such an account also fails to understand materiality as that which is bound up with signification from the start; to think through the indissolubility of materiality and signification is no easy matter. (BM 30).

What Butler appears to say is that she does not claim that there are no *real* things, however, she says that we - as always already socially formed, discursive beings - have no access to what things are outside of language. Butler speaks here of “the materiality of the signifier itself”. Here Butler appears to speak of a same thing as what Hegel spoke of in his criticism against Kant. Any word, however abstract it may be (e.g. words like “universality”, “universal ethics”, or, “thing in itself”) has a history behind it. What the category or word is *for us* is a result of various historical changes. Also the very “us”, or “I”, for whom the category, or signifier, exists (even as an abstraction) is a historical, particular, limited subjective entity. The subjective we, or I, for whom all signifiers exist, is related to, and influenced by the other. These materialities (aspects of subjectivity, history, context, culture, contradicting others etc.) are bound up with any signification .

4.1.5. Colonialist masters and subordinated others

In CHU Butler calls the basic processuality of terms as an *interpretative, translational* political process. The meaning of a term is processually translated, interpreted within a field of *radical relations*. This implies the double constitution of terms like “woman”. First the terms can be seen to be produced within somewhat internally coherent differential systems. Secondly, these terms can be seen to become translated *radically* through radical otherness. Thus, the terms are not simply repeated in an identical way. The specific universalizing discourses (i.e. the socially shared differential systems where specific identities are given to terms) come into contact with radical others (i.e. with views that have no common measure with the differential system from which they are excluded). When terms become interpreted by radical others, they take on meanings which break radically with the previous meanings and previous identities of the terms. Seen as this kind of radically interpretative processes, the history of terms cannot be presented, according to Butler, as a *coherent history* but instead only as a *radical history*. The term changes radically as it becomes processually translated by radically relational “others”. As such, the way how this translation proceeds cannot be known *in advance* by any external observer. It cannot be seen to take on any specific course. Butler writes of this process in reference to how the Hegelian process of Lords (masters, or as in the next quotation “colonial masters”) and the subordinated one’s (Bondsmen) take place in PhS:

Translation can have its counter-colonialist possibility; for it also exposes the limits of what the dominant language can handle. It is not always the case that the dominant term as it is translated into the language (the idioms, the discursive and institutional norms) of a subordinated culture remains the same upon the occasions of translation. Indeed, the very figure of the dominant term can alter as it is mimed and redeployed in that context of subordination. Thus, Homi Bhabha’s emphasis on the splitting of the signifier in the colonial context seeks to show that the master – to use Hegelian parlance – loses some of his claim to priority and originality precisely by being taken up by a mimetic double. Mimesis can effect a displacement of the first term or, indeed, reveal that the term is nothing other than a series of displacements that diminish any claim to primary authentic meaning (...) Both the form and the content of universality are highly contested, and cannot be articulated outside the scene of their embattlement. Using Foucault’s language of genealogy, we might insist that universality is an “emergence” (*Entstehung*) or a “non-place”, “a pure distance”, which indicates that the adversaries do not belong to a common place. (CHU 37-38)

Butler argues that the process of the term (of politically important terms like “human”) consists of “emergences” which are in “pure distance” to each others. Thus, the various universalist meanings given to the term emerge in contexts which are in pure (non-particularizable, non-differential) distance to each others. The process consists of phases which are radically, ek-staticly related to each others. The meanings do not follow from each other in any coherent, conceptual or rational manner as is the case in ordinary rational processes, instead, the meanings emerge somewhat unexpectedly and contingently.

In the quotation above Butler calls the radical translative process also as *mimesis*. Radical

mimesis is another name for Butler's performative politics. Mimesis is also at times equated with *parodic* change. In the quotation above, Butler implies that mimesis can *reveal* that "the term is nothing other than a series of displacements that diminish any claim to primary authentic meaning". Butler argues that it is not always understood how the terms are nothing but series of radical displacements. Their "new places" are not conceptually related to their previous, "older places". For Butler, this radical nature of terms is concealed by "colonialism", of which the Hegelian dialectical change is one example (see e.g. Butler, 1995a, 35-42) Each universalist discourse appears as a colonialist master who tries to *naturalize* its own view of what things are like, or, its own view of how things develop historically and rationally. Discourses try to render their own view of terms a universal norm. An essential feature of this is the attempt to make certain identities seem as natural and as ontological facts whereas radically other identities are shown as unnatural perversions. Often discourses present their own identities as the laws of God. E.g. in religious discourses the subordination of women and the un-naturalness of homosexuality is often legitimated by appealing to a ruling of God. Butler argues that when subjects repeat the discursive norm of what is natural or what is sanctioned by God, the resulting identities look like stable facts. They seem to be timeless ontological truths. Their nature as radical processes is concealed and violently repressed.

Butler criticises the assumption that "subject" is a stable construction, made of "natural" parts or features.

There is no subject prior to its constructions, and neither is the subject determined by those constructions; it is always the nexus, the non-space of cultural collision, in which the demand to resignify or repeat the very terms which constitute "we" cannot be summarily refused, but neither can they be followed in strict obedience. It is the space of this ambivalence which opens up the possibility of a reworking of the very terms by which subjectivation proceeds and fails to proceed. (BM 124)

According to Butler, these colonialist attempts cannot totally repress the internal radical otherness of terms. As such, the identities and the material bodies, produced by these discourses, never remain self-identical in time. Discourses are ek-static complexities in which things are in constant agonistic, ek-static change. The discourses fail to produce bodies *completely, finally*, according to their own rules. This connects to the theme of performativity.

It appears that because terms are ek-static (i.e. they include radical otherness, and, they are radical processes) certain violence takes place when some internally coherent (i.e. non-radical, non-ekstatic) discourse tries to make its own (non-radical) view of terms seem as a universal, timeless truth. Violence is done against the ek-static structure of terms. As radical otherness becomes foreclosed, violence is done against the "full" construction of the term as it nevertheless includes radical otherness. Butler writes of this:

Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being. A political genealogy of gender ontologies, if it is successful, will deconstruct the substantive appearance of

gender into its constitutive acts and locate and account for those acts within the compulsory frames set by the various forces that police the social appearance of gender. To expose the contingent acts that create the appearance of a naturalistic necessity, a move which has been a part of cultural critique at least since Marx, is a task that now takes on the added burden of showing how the very notion of subject, intelligible only through its appearance as gendered, admits of possibilities that have been forcibly foreclosed by the various reifications of gender that have constituted its contingent ontologies. (FT 33)

Butler's theory of the ek-static structure of subjects and things (for Butler, terms) reveals a multilayered construction which is basically Kantian. yet even more Hegelian. For Butler, things exist as discursive objects. They exist as social and normative constructions, resembling the Kantian "thing for us". Yet, things are larger constructions than what is known of them as the "thing for us". There is also the "otherness" which is a constitutive part of a subject or a thing. As concerns Butler's theory of the "otherness" and its relation to what the things are "for us", Butler draws on Hegel. For Butler, there is a radical relation between what is known of things by "we", who share some discursive, normative, internally coherent view of the thing, and the "others" whose views of things are not differentially related (by some common normative measure) to "our" view of things. Consequently, an acknowledgement of the Other is in a central role with Butler. Butler recognizes the validity of the Other, as well as the validity of the "Other of the Other" view of things, and, in this sense, draws from Hegel's theory of reciprocal recognition. Butler acknowledges the validity of both the self and the Other, which are, mutually, each others Others. In Hegel's reciprocal recognition both the self and the Other are acknowledged as valid knowers of the thing, so that neither party is seen to be below or above the other.

What is distinctive in Butler's theory is, that the "colonial" master-slave relationship is unavoidable. The "colonialists" (whom Butler addresses as "masters", in a recourse to Hegel's theory of Lordship and Bondage) do not see what things are (really) like, i.e. that they are ek-static processes. They imagine that there is some specific particular, natural, stable identity to subjects and things – which is normative just because it is natural. They *imagine* (mistakenly) that this nature constitutes a particular unified identity which stays identical over time. Thus, whereas *for Butler* things are ek-static, Butler sees that things are non-ekstatic *for the colonialists*. In fact – seeing things as non-ekstatic constitutes the colonialist attitude. As said before, what Butler says of the colonialist attitude resembles closely what Hegel says of the attitude of "Desire".

Of course, Butler is not against discursive subject-positions or against particularizing thinking as such. She clearly thinks, like Hegel, that particularizing thinking (thinking which is limited by its particular subjectivity, cultural or temporal particularity etc. factors) cannot be disposed of. However, Butler attacks the colonialist attitude toward otherness, which, importantly, she sees as a necessary feature of discursive thinking. In fact, she sees it as a necessary feature of subjects as such. For Butler, discursive thinking is colonialist as it is not appreciative or recognitive of otherness. It sees only itself and thus its capacity of seeing is parochial. It cannot see "beyond" itself into the realm of the ek-statism of things. It is universal and final for itself. It resembles also what the attitude of the "Lords" is (in PhS) towards the enslaved others in relations of Lordship and Bondage.

In the quotations above it appears that for Butler the process by which the terms move temporally is necessarily a struggle and it necessarily contains “colonialist” attempts, discursive attempts to subordinate the otherness. However, Butler’s *own* ideas of otherness, explicated above, can be clearly seen as *recognitive*, in Hegel’s sense.

What differentiates Butler from Hegel is that Butler does not see *particular subjects* as capable of recognition. Whereas her own thought is based on the recognition of the internal ek-statism of things, she sees *subjects* as not capable of a similar recognitive attitude. *In fact, her theory is based on the thought that historical subjects attempt to repress the internal ek-statism - which she herself acknowledges.* This suggests that Butler’s own position is, in a way, an impossible position, an abstract position. Her own attitude and her own concern for the Other – and, for the Other of the Other - is not (*for her*) reachable for particular subjects. A specific dynamic is created, in Butler’s theory, between Butler’s own recognitive attitude toward the Other, and, the non-recognitive attitude toward the Other of the colonialist subjects.

4.1.6. Performativity.

Performativity is perhaps the most famous of Butler’s concepts. It means, in short, that discursive terms like “woman” or “gender-difference” are performative - *productive, objectifying* - of themselves. Butler theorizes especially how gender-specific or sexually specific terms are performative of themselves. However she suggests that all kinds of terms (like “human”, “subject”, “ethnicity”, “democracy”, “justice”, “freedom”) are performative terms. To say that terms are performative of themselves means that they render themselves into objective, “externally” existent entities. A fundamental idea here is that discursive terms become a social reality. In other words, objective reality is discursively constituted. Terms constitute or produce themselves as objective, concrete and *real* things “out there”. Social reality as a whole (as a differential system) is discursively constituted.

For Butler, terms constitute an internally differentiated “externality” which is social: terms constitute hierarchical and authoritative communities. This means that when babies are born into the differential, social systems and learn the corresponding discursive language, they become discursive subjects. Butler’s theory of the “interpellative” social and discursive performativity is in many ways theorized through Althusser and also through Foucault (see chapter 5.).

Butler’s performativity includes the idea that terms produce *phenomenological* objectivity in relation to themselves. As phenomenological, terms like e.g. “woman” or “gender” *appear* to be “out there” for the discursive thinkers of these terms. Because terms are discursive constructions, it is actually the discourse, rather than the individual terms, which renders itself into objective existence. A discourse (i.e. a sort of “particular universe”) with all its internal relations, positions and differentiations. appears together with the appearance of any one of its internal terms. In order for any one “thing” (i.e. a term) to actually appear (i.e. be seen as a separate entity) a whole discursive totality must appear, in some way. In order for things to appear as “separate” entities they must be differentiated from and related to other

things.

Butler develops her idea of performativity in discussions with many thinkers, e.g. with J.L. Austin, Althusser, Foucault and Hegel. However, it is argued here that Butler's theory is rooted deep in Hegel, as concerns the basic elements of her thought. Butler's theory of performativity is based on her Hegelian-inflected theory of the internal ek-statism of things. Through Hegel Butler develops a theory according to which the objective materiality of things is *not only* discursively performed - i.e. rendered into stable, internally differentiated social systems.

For Butler, through Hegel, the objective reality can be *seen* because it is discursive, i.e. it consists of differential particulars. These differential particulars can be identified as particulars as they are related to each others in a system of signification. However, there is more to objective reality than the "stable" entities which we can see out there. The objective reality also "moves away" from the particular entities as which they are seen, i.e. as which they appear for us "out there". Hegel argues that objectivity "moves" because there is more to it than what is seen (of it) by the "discursive eye" (or, in Hegel's terminology, by the Consciousness as Understanding). The objective reality is "ek-static" or, in Hegel's words, conceptual. It is made of mutually contradictory elements, e.g. of otherness. The background of Butler's "multiple, ek-static performativity" lies to a large extent in Hegel. An important normative aspect of her Hegelian-inflected performativity is that, according to Butler, the internal otherness of terms should be given the possibility to materialize, to become *validly* objective. Otherness, in its material existence, should not be considered illegitimate "filth", something which does not belong to the realm of valid objects. In Hegel's words, objective reality should be constituted not only by one "Lord" - or "colonialist"- self. The enslaved selves (the others in bondage) should be recognized as valid contributors to how the objectivity is constituted. In other words, objectivity should correspond to its concept (i.e. to its ek-static nature) and be constituted by both the self and by the contradictory (in Butler's words, "radical") other.

Butler discusses the Hegelian, internally contradictory constitution or formation of external objectivity already in her first book *SD*. As is seen in her later books *Gender Trouble*, *Bodies that Matter* and especially in *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality* she adopts the basic Hegelian elements into her own theory of performativity. There is then - based on the Hegelian-inflected "ek-statism" - more to things than what they seem to be, or, how they appear as objects for us. The appearing part of a thing (i.e. the thing as an object out there) corresponds to how the thing exists (discursively) "for us". However, the formation of the thing as an object out there - as well as the formation of the thing as a discursive entity - is for Butler, like for Hegel, a contradictory process. The process is not controlled or determined in advance by any one particular discourse or culture, instead, it is led by mutually contradictory powers. (see *BM*, 233-242; *SD* 25-28).

As said already earlier, for Butler, the system of thinking of an individual self is formed discursively and historically. However, as ek-static, it is not *fully* determined by any particular discursive normativity. Selves are influenced, moved and rendered instable by many discursive powers. Correspondingly, also the objective reality is discursively formed, however, it is not fully determined by any specific discourse. The temporality (i.e. the historical formation) of objective reality is not closed or "finalized" by any specific discourse.

What appears for the discursive thinking (or, as Hegel would say, for the Consciousness as Understanding) to be the external objectivity is effected by otherness.

Butler theorizes performativity especially in the context of gender-identity and sexuality. Hence, she concentrates on theorizing how the body is performed and especially how the body becomes sexualized. For Butler, sexual bodies are formed in accordance to discursive norms. The bodies which we can see “out there” are always discursively formed (even if not completely performed) bodies. When we look at ourselves and others we never just see *plain* bodies, pre- or extra-discursive, natural bodies, bodies “in themselves”. The *embodied* actuality of one’s discursively differentiated life and one’s identification of oneself as woman, man, “white”, middle-class etc. takes place as the everyday practice of following discursive norms of bodily existence. We enact into something existent (i.e. embody) the discursive gender-differentiation by acting in a feminine or masculine or in some other differentiated way. According to Butler, there is a normative discursive and cultural pull towards coherently embodied identities. A discourse represses contradictory otherness and accepts only its own internally differentiated idea of various subjective identities. A specific discourse accepts that only its own identities are embodied, i.e. turned into reality. The embodiments of other, contradictory subjectivities are considered wrong, perverted, sick etc. There is a rule that the embodied identities must correspond coherently, identically (without a flaw or a contradiction) to the dominant discursive and cultural norms. What Butler says of the forced non-existence of otherness resembles closely Hegel’s description of how otherness is deprived of the right to its own existence in relations of Lordship and Bondage (see chapter 2.2.5 on this)

An essential aspect of a coherent (sexually differentiated) body is that it obeys the discursive rule of the right heterosexual desire. Butler writes about this:

According to the understanding of identification as an enacted fantasy or incorporation, however, it is clear that coherence is desired, wished for, idealized, and that this idealization is an effect of a corporeal signification. In other words, acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this *on the surface* of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity as a cause. Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are performative in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is performative suggest that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality. This also suggests that if that reality is fabricated as an interior essence, that very interiority is an effect and function of a decidedly public and social discourse, the public regulation of fantasy through the surface politics of the body, the gender border control that differentiates inner from outer, and so institutes the “integrity” of the subject. (GT 136)

For Butler, like for Hegel, the basic element in performativity is the contradictory relation inside ek-static terms. For Hegel, the objective world as something phenomenological (as appearing for its thinkers) is contradictory and changing. That what appears for us as

objective is always internally related to its contradictory otherness, and this ek-static relation results into a historical change of the phenomenological world. Also social institutions are ek-static and historical. This change is dialectical, i.e. contradictory. It does not follow any non-contradictory plan known in advance. Butler theorizes performativity in reference to Hegelian contradictory (dialectical) change of objective thingness in many of her books but especially in *CHU* (see e.g. pp.14-41, 144-148, 174, 270-273; Butler's discussion with Hegel's dialectical constitution of objective world is explained further in chapter 5.1).

For Butler, there are always contradicting ideas concerning e.g. how various social institutions should be organized (e.g. authoritative institutions like the government, legal systems, schooling etc). The way the social institutions are organized is in many ways based on ideas concerning terms like "human", "person" or "citizen". The dispute or the negotiation over what the content of these terms are is in many ways shown as the dispute over how external public institutions are organized. The social institutions – the social world in general – can be ultimately seen as the objectification of such concepts like "human" or "citizen".

Butler's performative politics adheres, basically, to a same goal than Hegel. The idea in Butler's political, ek-static performativity and in Hegel's reciprocally recognitive constitution of objectivity is to make radical otherness something that "matters" i.e. something which is recognized as "existent" and as a "valid being". However, Butler's project can be also seen as a very different project. A central part of it is that whereas Butler herself intends to make the Other a "matter-formative" power, a power which participates in the formation of the objective world, she sees particular subjects as incapable of such recognitive attitude toward the Other. She sees that particular subjects, living in particular places and times, are colonialists, as to their object-formative intentions. Historical subjects always want to form the world according to their own parochial world-view – hence situating the Other into a realm which does not "matter". An important background for Butler's *political* performativity (i.e. intentionally contradictory performativity) is her theory of the basic contradictory, ek-static performativity of things. This theory of performativity includes the idea that no individual performative is a sovereign formative power. It never succeeds to fully form the objects it intends to form. This is explained in the next sub-chapter.

4.1.7. Criticism of Austinian sovereign performatives

By the term "performativity" Butler refers to the famous speech-act theory of J.L. Austin. Austin's book *How to Do Things With Words* (1962) is usually considered the key text when performativity is discussed. However, the core themes of Butlerian performativity are quite absent in Austin's theory. Such missing Butlerian themes are the "unknowingness", involved in all performativity, as well as the contradictory processuality of performativity. For Austin, performatives are conventional and often ritualistic acts in which conventional rules must be strictly followed in order for the performative to succeed to "enact" what is said. Butler, in contrast, emphasizes the way performatives *break* with conventions and contextual rituals (see e.g. ES 147). In fact, for Butler, performatives *always* fail to enact – at least fully – what

is being said. Because all performatives include the aspect of contradicting otherness, they never turn into identically corresponding objective reality “that” what is being said. Basically, Austin distinguishes between two types of utterances pertaining to performativity, those that describe or report on something and those that, in saying, actually perform (enact) what is being said. An example of the first, which Austin calls *constative* utterances, would be: “It is a sunny day” or “I went shopping”. When you say that “I went shopping” you report on something being done; you are not actually doing it by the act of saying. Yet, when a man stands in front of a registrar in a Register Office and says “I do”, answering a question “Do you take this woman to be your wedded wife?”, then the man is actually performing the action by making the utterance. Statements like this are called performative utterances by Austin. (Austin 1962, 4-6)

For Austin, performative speech-acts *necessarily* take place in conventional, institutionalized and in many ways ritualistic procedures. Austin emphasizes that the *circumstances must be appropriate* in order for the performative to succeed in enacting the intended state. For Austin, the performative can fail if good many other things besides the so-called performative words, do not go right. In Austin, performatives are thus exposed to failure if the circumstances are not intact. (Austin 1962, 7-14).

Butler criticises Austin – often in reference to thinkers like Althusser and Foucault – and argues that even descriptive (constative) utterances are performative utterances. Also utterances, which only report on some event having happened, actually enact, perform the event – at least in some ways. They form (even if not fully performing) that extra-linguistic objective event which they themselves only intend to describe. Butler uses the following example to explain this:

Gender norms operate by requiring the embodiment of certain ideals of femininity and masculinity, ones that are almost always related to the idealization of the heterosexual bond. In this sense, the initiatory performative, “Its a girl!” anticipates the eventual arrival of the sanction, “I pronounce you man and wife.”. Hence, also, the peculiar pleasure of the cartoon strip in which the infant is first interpellated into discourse with “Its a lesbian!” (...) To the extent that the naming of the “girl” is transitive, that is, initiates the process by which a certain “girling” is compelled, the term or, rather, its symbolic power, governs the formation of a corporeally enacted femininity that never fully approximates the norm..(BM 232)

Thus, the “fact” of marriage is not only created in the marriage ceremony, as Austin thought, but also by all the individual utterances which refer to “their marriage” or “our marriage”. Without the constant use of such expressions, that particular marriage relationship would not exist. Hence, although there is no conscious performative intent behind such utterances (the speakers are just trying to refer to something they take as an independent fact), the utterances actually have a performative function. For Butler, already when we are born we are performatively enacted e.g. into gendered, sexually differentiated life. In a similar vein, we are born also into many other differentiations which are often also hierarchical differentiations, concerning race, social class etc. We are born into culturally bounded discursive life which is full of various normative daily conventions of e.g. how to be a proper heterosexual person or a proper citizen of a free and democratic state. Names, given to us,

and names by which we describe ourselves and each others are thus, very importantly, *norms*.

The performative is not a singular act used by an already established subject, but one of the powerful and insidious ways in which subjects are called into social being from diffuse social quarters, inaugurated into sociality by a variety of diffuse and powerful interpellations. In this sense the social performative is a crucial part not only of subject formation, but of the ongoing political contestation and reformulation of the subjects as well. The performative is not only a ritual practice: it is one of the influential rituals by which subjects are formed and reformulated (ES 160)

For Butler, we see the world to a great extent through the lenses provided by the discourse we are born into. These lenses in many ways (per)form the world, our selves and other people as something objective for us. Importantly, hence, performative speech-acts and performative language cannot be distinguished from non-performative speech acts as there actually is no non-performative language. There is no such non-ideological (power-free) language which would describe the world as it is formed outside of language. We have no access to “thingness” outside of how it is per(formed) by those discourses into which we are born (see Butler’s Althusserian and Foucauldian modifications of Austin especially in ES 1-5, 14-28, 145-51). For Butler, the everyday life of discursive subjects is itself an on-going ritualistic, performative procedure. For Butler, we e.g. perform “womanliness” or “gender-difference” and various other normative differentiations by way of everyday ritualistic life. Because we are discursively named as e.g. “women” or perhaps as “members of nobility” etc. we reiterate the discursive and cultural normative convention of what it is to be a woman – consequently, we appear to ourselves and to others as women (explained further in the chapter 3.2.1 on Althusser).

Performativity is thus not a singular “act”, for it is always a reiteration of a norm or a set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition.. (...) Within speech act theory, a performative is that discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names. According to the biblical rendition of the performative, i.e. “Let there be light!”, it appears that it is by virtue of the power of a subject or its will that a phenomenon is named into being. (BM 12-13).

For Butler, in contrast to Austin, there is not any identifiable “doer” or a “subject” (as a sovereign, controlling agent) behind performative acts. A performative does not have any identifiable subject as its origin or cause. A performative naming and forming of things is not controlled or determined by any one “name-giver” . The particularization of the world (the formation of things into particular objects) takes place amidst conflicting powers which all have particularizing, object-forming intentions. They all want to name the world and form objects according to what they think of them. This theme is theorized by Butler especially in ES. In ES Butler writes that performativity is actually *a conflictual chain of performativity*, a contradictory, ek-static process. Butler speaks of performativity also as a *catathresis*, a multiplicity which cannot be identified in any determinate, specific way. Performativity is about internal ek-statism because the very words which name and form things are ek-static

words. In the next quotation, Butler speaks in favour of the process of the performativity of homosexuality:

...one of the tasks of a critical production of alternative homosexualities will be to disjoin homosexuality from the figures by which it is conveyed in dominant discourse, especially when they take the form of either assault or disease. Indeed, as much as it is necessary to produce other figures, to continue the future of performativity and, hence, of homosexuality, it will be the distance between something called “homosexuality” and that which cannot be fully interpellated through such a call that will undermine the power of any figure to be the last word on homosexuality. And it is that last word, I think, that is most important to forestall. (ES 125-126)

In order to prevent homosexuality (or any other entity) from being *fully, finally* “made” or “named” by some specific discursive name, any name should be thought as not final. Instead, any formation of homosexuality (or, any other entity or property) should be thought as incomplete, not fully or finally descriptive or “interpellative” of the entity, it tries to enact into being. This is important, because any discursive term, taken as it is interpreted in the discourse (as a non-contradictory description) refutes the ek-statism of the term. The Althusserian concept of “interpellation” is discussed especially in the chapter 3.2.

For Butler, *all* discursive speech is more or less performative and all speech is authoritative. It gains its authority by *citing* the cultural, normative conventions of naming (and forming) things. However, for Butler, no name-giving, object-formative authority is sovereign, universal or time-less. Things are not formed universally and timelessly according to the norms of some specific particular discourse. All speech is, as Butler says *ex-citable*, denoting the internal ek-statism of speech.

Understanding performativity as a renewable action without a clear origin or end suggests that speech is finally constrained neither by its specific speaker nor its originating context. Not only defined by social context, such speech is also marked by its capacity to break with context. Thus, performativity has its own social temporality in which it remains enabled precisely by the contexts from which it breaks. This ambivalent structure at the heart of performativity implies that within political discourse, the very terms of resistance and insurgency are spawned in part by the powers they oppose (which is not to say that the latter are reducible to the former or always already coopted by them in advance) (ES 40).

Butler distances her view from that of Austin (for whom performatives are strictly context-dependent in order to succeed) and argues that performativity is an internally ek-static process which breaks with any individual discursive context. No normative context has a sovereign authority to name the thing. Butler’s internally ek-static, processual formation (or, performance) of things resembles, importantly, Hegelian dialectics (which is more thoroughly explained in the next sub-chapters). Both in Butler’s context-breaking performativity and in Hegelian dialectics the way a thing is formed can break with any specific way (of naming and forming it) and become a new construction by being moved by contradicting otherness. As Butler says in the quotation above, the very terms of resistance (i.e. terms which form and name some thing in a radically other way) are spawned in part by

the powers they radically oppose. Butler often gives the term “queer” or “queering” to describe this kind of radical opposition. (ES, 38)

Butler’s theory of performativity is based on the idea that performatives constitute *intentional* (purposive, decisive, deliberate) acts (ES 140-141, 33-34,39; BM 12-18) and that ek-static selves are the agents of these acts. Performative intentionality is ek-static (internally contradictory) intentionality. Any “forming” (or performing) of things is internally effected by other, conflicting intentions. Because the other intentions cannot be brought into a conceptual unity with the intentions whose otherness they constitute, the actual result (i.e. the formation of things) *fails* to be identical with the agents own intentions. According to Butler, there is no “God” or any specific “nature” or “timeless reason” according to whose will the formation of things would proceed. Butler writes of performativity:

Performative acts are forms of authoritative speech: most performatives, for instance, are statements that, in uttering, also perform a certain action and exercise a biding power. Implicated in a network of authorization and punishment, performatives tend to include legal sentences, baptisms, inaugurations, declarations or ownership, statements which do not only perform an action, but confer a binding power on the action performed. If the power of discourse to produce that which it names is linked with the question of performativity, then the performative is one domain in which power acts *as* discourse. Importantly, however, there is no power, construed as a subject, that acts, but only, to repeat an earlier phrase a reiterated acting that *is* power in its persistence and instability. This is less “act”, singular and deliberate, than a nexus of power and discourse that repeats or mimes the discursive gestures of power. Hence, the judge who authorizes and installs the situation he names invariably *cites* the law that he applies, and it is the power of this citation that gives the performative its biding or conferring power. And though it may appear that the binding power of his words derives from the force of his will or from a prior authority, the opposite is more true: it is through the citation of the law that the figure of the judge’s “will” is produced and that the “priority” of textual authority is established. Indeed, it is through the invocation of convention that the speech act of the judge derives its binding power; that biding power is to be found neither in the subject of the judge nor in his will, but in the citational legacy by which a contemporary “act” emerges in the context of a chain of binding conventions. (BM 225)

4.1.8. Identities as necessary errors

For Butler, discursive attempts to produce an internally coherent objective reality, e.g. coherent and stable sexually differentiated bodies never succeed *fully*. These performative attempts fail to produce, or enact, the bodies they *attempt* to produce. The performative production of such bodies fails *necessarily*. These performatives succeed only *partly*, and only temporarily, because discursive identities, and discursive external bodies, denote only

one aspect of ek-static terms. Butler writes of this:

Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through *a stylized repetition of acts*. The effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self (...) Significantly, if gender is instituted through acts which are internally discontinuous, then the *appearance of substance* is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief. Gender is also a norm that can never be fully internalized; “the internal” is a surface signification, and gender norms are finally phantasmatic, impossible to embody. (GT 140-141)

For Butler, the discursive attempt to produce bodies which would be *permanently* coherent (non- contradictory) and stable fails because objects are only *temporarily* coherent or stable. Terms are coherent, non-contradictory and stable only at the discursive sites of knowing. When terms are looked at from the point of view of some culturally and temporally specific discourse, they look *as if they were* stable and non-contradictory. However, the discursive point of view onto terms is parochial; it fails to “see” or describe *all* of the term, because the term is not only a discursive construction instead an ek-static construction. Even that they may appear temporarily coherent and stable they are not *always* or *universally* stable. As such, there is no gender-identities or any other subjective identities which would be embodied into *permanently* coherent bodies. The instability of external objectivity (including human bodies) is due to its being a process which does not follow any non-contradictory developmental course.

The distinction between expression and performativeness is crucial. If gender attributes and acts, the various ways in which a body shows or produces its cultural signification, are performative, then there is no pre-existing identity by which an act or attribute might be measured; there would be no true or false, real or distorted acts of gender, and the postulation of a true gender identity would be revealed as a regulatory fiction. (GT 141)

In Austin, performative speech-acts may fail to enact what is being said. This can happen if, for example, the marriage ceremony is not followed according to the rule of the ritual. In contrast to Austin, Butler argues in reference to thinkers like Derrida, Althusser and Foucault that actually performative speech-acts *always* fail. They fail to enact what is being said, because there is an internal otherness to all performative “saying”. The performative “saying” is ek-static. It always includes an ineffable/un-sayable otherness which effects what is said. Hence the “results” or “products” of the performative sayings fail to fully conform to what is said discursively. What is said includes the discursive part but also the “unsaid”, repressed otherness.

For Butler, the bodies *exceed* the speech-acts (i.e. *the interpellations*) by which they are discursively formed (or, performed). In the next quotation Butler uses Althusserian

terminology which is explained further in chapter 3.2. Said here in short, for Althusser subjects are formed and rendered into culturally intelligible subjects by being called (interpellated) into social life. This happens basically at the same time when the child learns to speak. Language is seen here as a sort of ideological, internally differentiating system. The linguistic entities (like e.g. “woman”, “man” as well as various other status- and class stratifications) and the hierarchies between them are produced by the language itself. When a child learns to speak it internalizes this ideological, social (discursive) system. Butler argues of the way bodies exceed the interpellative performative, here in reference to Shoshana Felman:

The body, however, is not simply the sedimentation of speech acts by which it has been constituted. If that constitution fails, a resistance meets interpellation at the moment it exerts its demand; then something exceeds the interpellation, and this excess is lived as the outside of intelligibility. This becomes clear in the way the body rhetorically exceeds the speech act it also performs. (...) That the speech act is a bodily act does not mean that the body is fully present in its speech. The relationship between speech and the body is that of chiasmus. Speech is bodily, but the body exceeds the speech it occasions; and speech remains irreducible to the bodily means of its enunciation” (ES 155-156).

As said before, Butler’s theory of performativity is based on her theory of the internal ek-statism of terms. Because there is “otherness” (i.e. radical, contradictory otherness) in every term, terms as performatives never *fully* result into coherently intelligible, discursive bodies. The terms as well as the “externalizations” (the material objectivities) of these terms exceed the discursive subject-position, because the discursive subject-position covers only the other part of the term. The radical other constitutes *resistance* to any attempt to render the external reality of terms according to only the other part of the term. As such, performativity includes resistance, struggle. Bodies exceed and also resist any discursive attempt to perform them into stable, discursive bodies, into a life which is identical with the discourse. Butler writes that the body is never *fully present* in discursive speech. There is always some “surplus”, a “remainder” (of the body) which fails to be included into *any* discursive description or into any performative enactment of the body. Because this exceeding surplus denotes radical otherness (i.e. it is in some ways ineffable), it cannot be achieved by trying to dialogically (by mutually recognitive communication) gather together as much information of bodily life as possible. This surplus resists being included into any possible collection of “sayable”, “describable” information. Butler writes that the relationship between speech (i.e. discursive speech, as any speech is discursive speech) and the body is that of “chiasmus”, denoting a certain kind of ambivalent and also antagonistic relation (see of the theme of “exceeding performatives” also e.g. BM 220-221).

For Butler, there is *violence* in any attempt – even to a dialogic attempt - to perform internally coherent bodies. This means that bodies are *permanently political* entities. The violence causes resistance and demands (struggle) for recognition on the part of the others. This aspect of radical and processual politics should not be foreclosed by claiming that a final and an all-encompassing description of the body has been discovered as this discovery would also become a norm of how actual bodily life should take place. This violence corresponds with the violence inherent in any discursive attempt to present some stable, coherent (non-contradictory) description of some term as all-inclusive and final (BM 220-221)

Butler argues that any speech – and correspondingly any bodies – are *excitable*. She writes of this:

In the law, “excitable” utterances are those made under duress, usually confessions that cannot be used in court because they do not reflect the balanced mental state of the utterer. My presumption is that speech is always in some ways out of control. (ES 15)

It must be emphasized that Butler is not against discursive speech or discursive bodies (indeed, as she herself grants, it is difficult to see what it would mean to be against discursive speech or bodies). She says that all speech is invariably discursive. This means that we cannot dispose of making differentiations between linguistic entities and dispose of making these differentiations in discursive systems i.e. “particular universes”. Without differentiated entities we could not think at all. Butler’s idea is hence not to stop thinking in terms of discursive language, instead, the idea is to open discursive language more open and more appreciative of radical otherness.

Butler argues, interestingly, that particular temporal identities are *necessary errors* (BM 230). Particular identities are, firstly, necessary because we could not think of things, nor see them, without identifying them as particulars. This, of course, is very Hegelian thought. However, in contrast to Hegel, particular identities are for Butler *errors* as well. For Butler, all coherent identities and coherent bodies fail to fully describe the ek-static nature of their own selves. Instead, there is an erroneous (colonialist) attitude according to whom all discursive identities describe their objects fully and finally. The colonialist attitude is erroneous because it does not acknowledge the ek-static nature of things.

It seems that *for Butler* particular identities are both necessary and erroneous because she connects particular (discursively formed) identities *necessarily* with the attitude of “colonialism” - i.e. with the refutation of otherness. There can be no particular, discursive and normative identities without colonialist attitudes towards otherness. Because a particular identity do not acknowledge that it does not constitute the final truth of the term, it fails. Correspondingly, Butler appears to consider discursive bodies (the bodies we identify “out there”) also as necessary, yet also as colonialist errors. The bodies are enacted into external (identifiable) existence) by “colonialist” words and by colonialist attitudes. As such, the bodies are colonialist, and erroneous. Butler’s manner of associating particular identities and particular bodies *necessarily* with the “enslaving”, erroneous attitude toward otherness is seen, in this study, to be rooted in Butler’s Kojèvian reading of Hegel. (more of Butler’s Kojèvian reading of Hegel in the chapter 5.).

4.1.9. Becoming conscious of the internal otherness

For Butler, even that we cannot dispose of a discursive, otherness-refuting language and otherness-refuting and violent sociality (at least not fully), we can become more open to otherness. In the next quotation Butler speaks in favour of becoming more open to sexual

otherness:

...precisely because certain kinds of “gender identities” fail to conform to those norms of cultural intelligibility, they appear only as developmental failures or logical impossibilities from within that domain. Their persistence and proliferation, however, provide critical opportunities to expose the limits and regulatory aims of that domain of intelligibility and, hence, to open up within the very terms of that matrix of intelligibility rival and subversive matrices of gender disorder. (GT 17)

According to Butler, we cannot comprehend such gender identities which would *fully* fail to conform to prevailing norms of cultural intelligibility. Such gender identities would not be even thinkable for us because they would not assume an objective form. We can only think of things which assume some form of differentially constituted objectivity. However, as Butler argues above, the *persistence* and *proliferation* of the “failing” and the “non-logical” gender-identities may expose the limits and the regulatory aims of the dominant culture.

For Butler, discursive notions of things - made under discursive “law” - and discursive performative intentions are *as such* neither right or wrong. Hence, for Butler, when the parochialism and the colonialist aims of dominant discourse are exposed as being not universally and timelessly stable or “true”, they are however not exposed as having been wrong, either. Further, nothing can be said to become “liberated” or “emancipated” when the refuted otherness is acknowledged as valid. There is no true nature of things which can be found by the acknowledgement of some specific otherness. A historically specific otherness does not as such contain any timeless “truth” of the thing, or any piece of such timeless truth, any more than any other discursively normative thought of the thing. Butler argues here against any illusions of the emancipation of the refuted otherness:

The female body that is freed from the shackles of the paternal law may well prove to be yet another incarnation of that law, posing as subversive but operating in the service of that law’s self-amplification and proliferation. In order to avoid the emancipation of the oppressor in the name of the oppressed, it is necessary to take into account the full complexity and subtlety of the law and to cure ourselves of the illusion of a true body beyond the law. If subversion is possible, it will be a subversion from within the terms of the law, through the possibilities that emerge when the law turns against itself and spawns unexpected permutations of itself. The culturally constructed body will then be liberated, neither to its “natural” past, nor to its original pleasures, but to an open future of cultural possibilities. (GT 93)

It seems that through becoming aware, i.e. *conscious*, of the limits and the parochial (colonialist) regulatory aims of *any* discourse (even a liberating discourse) terms can be, in Butler, *internally* opened up for otherness. It is important to remember that no liberating discourse liberates or emancipates the “thing” (i.e. the way the thing is thought and objectified) from *all* otherness-refuting laws. It is very important for Butler to remind that the “alternative” or “new” modes of thinking - which emerge when some dominant discourse is being criticised and opened up for otherness - are never themselves fully free from the “law” (i.e. the otherness-refuting law). Any opening up for otherness takes always place *inside* the

otherness-refutive law, in one way or the other. All “law” and power which produces identifiable (i.e. discursive, particular) terms and bodies is always an otherness-refuting law. All particular (identifiable, discursive) terms and bodies result from the workings of some limiting power – otherwise they could not be differentiated from other entities - and hence an otherness-refuting power. Butler’s manner to associate limiting (object-formative) power necessarily with otherness-refuting power is discussed in the chapter on Butler and Kojeve (Ch. 5).

To summarize what was said above, in a somewhat Hegelian terminology: for Butler, the constitution of things and the constitution of objective reality *always* takes place in relations of Lordship and Bondage, under the attitude of Desire (colonialism) toward contradicting (radical) otherness. The “law” governing relations between mutually contradictory thoughts of things necessarily refutes the contradictions. This means that some part of the internal ek-statism is always refuted. Butler does not see that there could be a law which were constituted for mutually recognitive self and Other. In other words, for Butler, in contrast to Hegel, there is no way to enter a realm where things would be limited and particular, but where there would be recognitive (instead of refuting) relations between selves and others (and where, consequently, objective reality could be constituted by reciprocally recognitive selves).

In Butler, there is no way to move beyond the otherness-refuting and parochial law. Some otherness is always refuted because the *full* internal ek-statism of things can never be, as Butler explicitly says, transitioned conceptually into a coherent concept. Relations between contradicting (ek-static) thoughts of things can never be conceptualized - unified - so that the internal contradictoriness could be preserved. All attempts at the unification result into the refutation of some otherness.

However, Butler detects a democratizing potential in the *radically performative movement itself*. This movement is a process in which things are radically renamed compared to how they were named before. In CHU Butler calls this process as *radical translation*. In CHU Butler theorizes her idea of radical performativity by explicit references to Hegel. Nevertheless she keeps in line with how she describes radical performativity also in her other texts where she does not refer to Hegel explicitly. The idea of Hegelian dialectics can be clearly detected in the next quotation, with the exception that for Butler this movement is necessarily a struggle. The basic idea is to preserve the “old” while mixing it with its radical otherness. The resulting new form breaks with the old contexts of either one of those mutually contradictory parties who come together. Butler writes of radical translation:

There are universal claims intrinsic to these particular movements that need to be articulated in the context of a translative project, but the translation will have to be one in which the terms in question are not simply redescribed by a dominant discourse. For the translation to be in the service of the struggle for hegemony, the dominant discourse will have to alter by virtue of admitting the “foreign” vocabulary into its lexicon. The universalizing effects of the movement for the sexual enfranchisement of sexual minorities will have to involve a rethinking of universality itself, a sundering of the term into its competing semantic operations and the forms of life that they indicate, and a threading together of those competing terms into an unwieldy movement whose “unity” will be measured by its capacity to sustain, without domesticating,

internal differences that keep its own definition in flux. (CHU 168).

In the quotation above, Butler repeats the general attitude found in what Hegel says of reciprocally recognitive relationships. The idea is to recognize and to sustain the internal contradictoriness of things without “domesticating” things under the rule of one “universalizing” discourse or context (or, in Hegel’s terminology: under one “particular universe”).

In short, even that there is no *final* liberation from all of the repressive law, there can be, for Butler, a liberating, critical movement by which any specific instance of the law can be opened for its internal otherness. Even that the imperialist law can never be fully disposed of, specific instances of it can be tried to be “subverted”. Butler suggests that in order for the discursive formations (i.e. things as discursive formations) to become mobilized radically people should become aware that things *are* internally ek-static. (GT 93).

Butler argues often that terms should become more “open” for their “internal otherness”. This raises a question of *how* does a *term* become more open for its internal otherness? Do terms, words, really have an internality – an internality which is in many ways non-linguistic, silenced, repressed? Here it is important to remember that Butler’s theory of terms as ek-static constructions is rooted in Hegel’s theory according to which *concepts* are ek-static constructions. For Hegel, concepts do not float freely in the sky, instead, they exist for thinking selves. Hegel in fact gives “concept” even as a description of a thinking self: self is a concept, an internally contradictory, dynamic “mover”. However, like a “concept”, self is also – in any given historical and cultural context - a *particular* construction. Also in Butler, terms are always *thought* terms, even that Butler clearly rejects Hegel’s conceptuality. Nevertheless, it appears that in Butler, like in Hegel, *thought* terms (which Hegel calls concepts) have internalities and “othernesses”. A thinking self has an ek-static internality, which it can become more conscious of, or, as Butler says, “open up for”. Butler’s terms appear to have a very Hegelian self-reflective structure in which the one who thinks terms can open up for its own internal “thinking” structure. Hegel describes in PhS how the self (as conceptual) becomes gradually more conscious – or more “open up for”, to use a Butlerian formulation - of its internal contradictory nature.

Importantly, for Hegel, a thinking self is *always* self-conscious as thinkers always reflect themselves and the world by contradictory thoughts, in one way or the other. Yet, a thinker does not always see itself as a contradictory being, instead, it may see itself as stable and non-contradictory, as is (in PhS) the case with the Consciousness as Understanding. When a thinker becomes more conscious of itself and others as contradictory beings, it develops towards *free* self-consciousness. A thinking self becomes gradually more free self-conscious, to use a Hegelian formulation when it becomes aware of its own and other’s internal contradictoriness. This process of becoming more conscious of one’s own contradictoriness (i.e. becoming a free self-consciousness) resembles Butler’s description of the terms opening up for their internal otherness. By becoming more self-conscious, or, more open to its internal otherness – a self acknowledges the internal contradictoriness of various terms which it thinks. A subject (i.e. the thinking self for itself, reflected by itself) is one of these terms.

For Butler, like in Hegel, opening up for one’s internal otherness (or, becoming self-

conscious)

4.1.10. Performative politics

Butler describes her performative politics as a sort of critically *parodic process*. What Butler says of this specific *queer* parody resembles what she says of the “radical translation”. It is a radically translative process (according to the idea of radical translation explained in the previous sub-chapter). The basic idea is to make terms more open for their internal ek-statism, instead of interpreting them through some new, different translative apparatus. The idea is not to offer a new, different translation or interpretation of some term (like woman) but instead to open the old term for its own refuted otherness, its own internal ek-statism. When terms are interpreted through some coherent (internally non-contradictory) apparatus, this apparatus is recognized as the dominant “identifier” of the term. The internal dynamism (caused by the contradictoriness) is repressed and the term becomes closed into its one and true identity, it becomes stabilized. Butler opposes the idea that terms are “identified”, “particularized” – or rendered into objective reality - by one dominant interpretative system. Her idea resembles Hegel’s idea that things should be constituted by the self and the other, through a relation which is contradictory.

I would argue that it is precisely the expropriability of the dominant, “authorized” discourse that constitutes one potential site of its subversive resignification. What happens, for instance, when those who have been denied the social power to claim “freedom” or “democracy” appropriate these terms from the dominant discourse and rework or resignify those highly cathected?? terms to rally a political movement? If the performative must compel collective recognition in order to work, must it compel only those kinds of recognition that are already institutionalized, or can it also compel a critical perspective on existing institutions? What is the performative power of claiming an entitlement to those terms – “justice”, “democracy” – that have been articulated to exclude the ones who now claim that entitlement? (...) Or, equally important, what is the performative power of appropriating the very terms by which one has been abused in order to deplete the term of its degradation or to derive an affirmation from that degradation, rallying under the sign of “queer” or revaluing affirmatively the category of “black” or of “women”? (ES 157-158)

This specific politics is also called by her as *subversive citation-* or *reiteration* (BM 223-233), *critical translation* (see CHU) and *queering double-movement* (BM 220-222, 229). As said already, the idea is not to replace the old and wrong discursive idea with a new and a good or better one. The very idea of seeing things as non-contradictory, coherent unities is *itself* being criticised here. The idea is, as Butler says, to *cite* the old notion and thus to continue its existence, preserve it, however so that the term’s radical otherness is taken into account in this radical citation. Radical otherness, which already is a part of the term (yet often in a repressed and silenced form) is recognized as something valid. It is considered a valid aspect of the term. It is considered to include valid knowledge of the term. It is in a way freed – or at least partly freed - from its forced non-existence.

It is important to emphasize that this politics is based on Butler's Hegelian-inflected theory of the ek-statism of things. In Hegel (in PhS) a basic aspect of this theory is the subject's processual development of taking the otherness of things into account. In PhS the subject processually tries to take account of the internal radical contradictoriness of things so that this contradictoriness would not be reduced into parochialism. For Hegel, *freedom* is about the recognition of the internal contradictoriness of things. This is ultimately reached in the reciprocally cognitive relationships between mutually acknowledging free selves. Consequently, the idea that one non-contradictory (parochial) notion of a thing is replaced by another non-contradictory (parochial) notion cannot be the satisfactory answer here. The goal is, instead, to form (or, perform) things *radically* so that the radical nature of terms (ek-statism) is acknowledged as something valid, instead of being forced under the rule of some master which can recognize only its own self. The Hegelian aspects of "Desire" (colonialist attitude toward things) and recognition, especially reciprocal recognition (acknowledgement of the ek-statism of things)

For Butler, the idea in radically formative (or, performative) politics is to use the cultural and discursive power of some discursive notion of a thing, yet, the idea is to use it "wrongly", in ways not intended by it. The idea is to *expropriate* and to *re-appropriate* the cultural and discursive authority which the old notion carries with it, but redirect this power in ways which are radically different (contradictory) in relation to the old intentions. The old intentions are however not fully replaced by new intentions. Instead, the "ek-static" idea is to allow room for the silenced other intentions. (see e.g. ES 157; BM 232). Yet, what does it mean to use the "power" of some term in order to redirect it against its earlier purposes or its earlier political intentions? It seems that the idea is to *re-contextualize, partly*, a term. Terms (things) gain their meaning inside differential systems. Butler calls these internally interpretative systems as cultural, temporal and discursive contexts. Hegel describes similar entities as "particular universes". The idea in Butler's politics of radical citation, radical interpretation (radical performativity) seems to be to include radical elements into the interpretative field in which the thing gains its meaning. In fact, the idea is to bring the thing's *internal* otherness (the thing's own repressed elements) into the field of those elements which are acknowledged as valid and "existent" elements of the thing.

Parodic representations and performances can be examples of this politics. In e.g. the drag -, cross-dressing - or genderblending performances radical elements are united on a one and same body. Elements which are contradictory, typically not considered to belong to a same body, become included into a one "interpretative field" (i.e. a body). Consequently, a "male" body can include such elements which are traditionally considered as masculine as well as elements which are not considered as masculine. Also modern poetry is given as an example of a Butlerian radical politics. In modern poetry language is in a way "broken" and mutually contradictory elements are used to describe some thing or a feeling. In a way, such bodies in which contradictory elements are mixed in unexpected ways can be called "poetic bodies".

Julia Kristeva, whose Hegelian-inflected idea of *radical poetics* Butler discusses in SD (pp. argues that bodies are poetic assemblages of drives and needs in heterogeneous, unstable and to a large part unconscious ways. As Butler explains in SD, Kristeva connects with the Hegelian-inflected tradition of seeing selves and bodies as combinations of mutually contradictory thoughts. Butler situates Kristeva in a somewhat Lacanian tradition of the post-Hegelian speculations of subjectivity. In this study this tradition is traced back to

Kojève's influential interpretation of Hegel.

For Kristeva, *any* particular or conceptual description of one's constitution in relation to one's contradictory other is seen as a parochial description - as is typical in the Kojevian tradition. Any particular description of one's relation with one's radical other constitutes a repression (an enslaving) of otherness. For Kristeva, poetic language provides a medium for the articulation of one's heterogeneous, "multivoiced" nature. However, Kristeva argues that poetic language is always connected to rational language - otherwise it is non-communicable "psychotic" speech. The presence of the communicable speech means that the radical otherness becomes always repressed, abjected, also in poetic language, in one way or the other. One's heterogeneous nature constitutes the unthinkable, the non-assimilatable "non-object" of the thinking "I". It will always be radically excluded (in a non-objectifiable way) from the realm of the rational language and the unitary subject. This *radical exclusion* is described by Kristeva as "abjection" and also as "convulsion" and "defilement". The radically excluded Other (in contrast to the differentially related other) denotes a place where the linguistic meaning collapses. The "objects" in it are actually not objects as they are things which have no valid existence or being. They are non-beings (resembling what Butler says of the "remainder" or of the "surpluses" which exceed linguistic representation) which go beyond language and the realm of actual objects. To the extent that language is seen to represent things which exist the radically excluded things exceed language. Things which are "radically excluded" constitute a realm of the pulverization of the linguistic and conceptual system of the subject and the object. In this realm the subject becomes deconstructed as there is no subject without no objects - if we think that "subject" is one of its own objects. (Kristeva 1982, 1-13;).

Butler's idea of a language - or actually of a "translation" - which would allow room for radical otherness resembles Kristeva's poetic language. Butler's "queer" parody (the ambivalent bodies, performed in queer manner) resembles what Kristeva says of the ambivalence of the poetic bodies (Kristeva, *ibid.* 84-89). They both draw on the Hegelian tradition in which selves and bodies are seen as ek-static (internally multiple and contradictory). They also both draw on the (Kojevian) tradition of reading Hegel in which the relation between the realm of "particular historical rationality" (e.g. particular subject-identities) and its contradictory other is seen as a relation of abjection (i.e. repression, slavery). For Butler, like for Kristeva, this repression takes place in *all* communication. For Kristeva, like for Lacan, *any* language is necessarily governed by the Law of the Phallus. In this Law, the feminine otherness is necessarily something non-existent. Butler criticises Kristeva for her political impotency. (GT 88-93). Kristeva associates the linguistic realm of culture and politics with the *necessary* abjection of the *maternal* body. Butler argues that Kristeva situates any opposition to the Law of the Phallus outside of culture and language. Butler argues against Kristeva in the same vein as she argues against Lacan. For Butler, even that the Other is always repressed, this repressed Other need not always be the "maternal Other". Nor does the repressing "master" need always be a paternal law. Butler argues that Kristeva's own theory reproduces the abjection of maternity which it claims just to describe

The idea in Butler's performative, queer-parodic politics is to cite some authoritative discursive construction parodically, critically, by mixing some radical elements into the construction, which the term is. Thus, the construction is not reproduced according to the prevailing dominant cultural norm, yet, it is repeated "wrong", or actually parodically, i.e.

partly wrong. It is repeated in a parodic manner, in which some of the old, legitimate aspects of the term are united with radically new aspects. The parodic citing denotes a “radical continuation”, a sort of dialectical change (Aufhebung, in Hegelian terms) of the term.

For Butler, queer-parodic performances of this kind can also work to expose and to show that also the normal cultural construction was itself a forced repetition of norms, instead of being something natural.

We no more create from nothing the political terms that come to represent our “freedom” than we are responsible for the terms that carry the pain of social injury. And yet, neither of those terms are as a result any less necessary to work and to rework within political discourse. In this sense, it remains politically necessary to lay claim to “women”, “queer”, “gay” and “lesbian”, precisely because of the way these terms, as it were, lay their claim on us prior to our full knowing. Laying claim to such terms in reverse will be necessary to refute homophobic deployments of the terms in law, public policy, on the street, in “private” life (...) The political deconstruction of “queer” ought not to paralyze the use of such terms, but, ideally, to extend its range, to make us consider at what expense and for what purposes the terms are used, and through what relations of power such categories have been wrought (BM 229).

The term “queer” is a good example of Butler’s parodic politics. “Queer” was used as a derogatory name – in “name-calling” - to abuse sexual minorities like homosexuals. It was expropriated and redeployed against its (earlier, derogatory) intentions and adopted into a name for gay and lesbian activist movement.

The term “queer” emerges as an interpellation that raises the question of the status of force and opposition, of stability and variability, *within* performativity. The term “queer” has operated as one linguistic practice whose purpose has been the shaming of the subject it names or, rather, the producing of a subject *through* that shaming interpellation. Queer derives its force precisely through the repeated invocation by which it has become linked to accusation, pathologization, insult. This is an invocation by which a social bond among homophobic communities is formed through time. (BM 226).

However, Butler also speaks of the possibility of the “queer” itself becoming a parochial name and a parochial performative. Any name, even the “queer”, can become a parochial name.

One might be tempted to say that identity categories are insufficient because every subject position is the site of converging relations of power that are not univocal. But such a formulation underestimates the radical challenge to the subject that such converging relations imply. For there is no self-identical

subject who houses or bears these relations, no site at which such relations converge. This converging and interarticulation *is* the contemporary fate of the subject. In other words, the subject as a self-identical entity is no more. It is in this sense that the temporary totalization performed by identity categories is a necessary error. And if identity is a necessary error, the the assertion of “queer” will be necessary as a term of affiliation, but it will not fully describe those it purports to represent. As a result, it will be necessary to affirm the contingency of the term: to let it be vanquished by those who are excluded by the term but who justifiably expect representation by it, to let it take on meanings that cannot now be anticipated by a younger generation whose political vocabulary may well carry a very different set of investments (BM 229-230)

Any name can become fixed to take on some discursive identity which always is an “error”. Hence, it is necessary, as Butler says, *to affirm the contingency* of the term. Any term should be allowed to be, permanently, a site of political contest.

4.1.11. The ambivalent results of performative politics

Butler writes of “drag” as an example of radically performative politics. Drag is described by Butler as a gender parody or gender impersonation. In drag, natural or “normal” genders are mimed in a way in which features from mutually exclusive genders are mixed together on a one body. Or, actually, features from genders which are culturally and discursively *forced* into mutual exclusiveness become combined in gender parody. (GT 122-123; BM 229-231)

For Butler, gender is actually always a sort of “drag”. Drag is a sort of ek-static gender which genders (and things in general) actually always are. The coherent, non-ek-static gender-identities are actually, as she calls them, *necessary errors*. (BM 230) For Butler, it is necessary that there is the aspect of “coherent identity” to things - i.e. the moment of identifying things as particulars. Otherwise we could not think or see them at all. Yet, this moment of non-ek-static identity is a necessary error as things are actually ek-static; they are sort of “drags” to start with. For Butler, gender-parody may, importantly, *reveal* the ek-static construction, which the gender always is. These radical appropriations of gender are not “colonizing” appropriations or parochial translations of gender. As they reveal the ek-static constructiveness of gender, by combining mutually exclusive elements together, they do not claim sovereign knowledge of gender (GT 122-123)

For Butler, the parodic appropriations of gender may result into the acceptance of the lesbian, gay, trans-, bi-sexual (etc.) identities. For Butler, e.g. feminine features are not “sovereignly owned” by women, hence, they can be displayed also on a male body. Also, desire for women is not the property of men, hence, it can be practiced also by women. (GT 122-123).

Within lesbian contexts, the “identification” with masculinity that appears as butch identity is not a simple assimilation of lesbianism back into the terms of heterosexuality. As one lesbian femme explained, she likes her boysto be girls,

meaning that “being a girl” contextualizes and resignifies “masculinity” in a butch identity. As a result, that masculinity, if that it can be called, is always brought into relief against a culturally intelligible “female body”. It is precisely this dissonant juxtaposition and the sexual tension that its transgression generates that constitutes the object of desire. In other words, the object (and clearly, there is not just one) of lesbian-femme desire is neither some decontextualized female body nor a discrete yet superimposed masculine identity, but the destabilization of both terms as they come into erotic interplay. (...) In both butch and femme identities, the very notion of an original or natural identity is put into question; indeed, it is precisely that question as it is embodied in these identities that becomes one source of their erotic significance. (GT 123)

However, for Butler queer-parodic gender parodies like “drag” are not necessarily or unproblematically subversive. Butler writes of the radical potential of “drag”:

It serves a subversive function to the extent that it reflects the mundane impersonations by which heterosexually ideal genders are performed and naturalized and undermines their power by virtue of effecting that exposure. But there is no guarantee that exposing the naturalized status of heterosexuality will lead to its subversion. Heterosexuality can augment its hegemony through its denaturalization, as when we see denaturalizing parodies that reidealize heterosexual norms *without* calling them into question. On other occasions, though, the transferability of a gender ideal or gender norm calls into question the abjecting power that it sustains. For an occupation or reterritorialization of a term that has been used to abject a population can become the site of resistance, the possibility of an enabling social and political resignification. (BM 231)

It seems that gender parodies do not always manage to reveal the radical constructiveness of gender which is, however, what Butler herself knows to be the (true) construction of gender. Who are these people to whom the (actual) nature of gender is to be revealed, and of whom we can never be sure whether or not they are capable of understanding the genders right (i.e. as ek-static) or not?

Butler writes that “heterosexuality can augment its hegemony even through its denaturalization” (ibid.). What Butler writes here could be understood to mean that heterosexuality is some kind of a colonialist, parochial agent of its own. Yet, we know that for Butler terms like heterosexuality are ek-static; they go beyond any parochial interpretation of them. Even that there is necessarily *temporarily* “colonialist” (discursive, coherent, parochial) translations and intentions of them, all translations are nevertheless also “beyond colonialism”. They are ek-staticly processual, due to their basic ek-static nature. For Butler, the colonialist attitudes (of gender and also of other terms) are, as she says, necessary errors. Erroneous (refuting, silencing, parochial) attitudes are necessary just because discursive, identitarian thinking is necessary.

4.2. Critiques of Butler

In this chapter I take up a few critiques of Butler. (Here, as elsewhere, I ignore the more specific discussion related to, for example, her analysis of sexuality.) Butler is often criticized for her difficult, highly abstract language. She is also criticized for paralyzing feminist politics, and politics in general, Butler's critical analyses of the basic political terms such as "subject", "freedom", "human" and "woman" have been interpreted to imply that there is no political hope – e.g. feminist hope - because our basic political concepts are always repressive of others, regardless of what concepts we choose to use. In this chapter I discuss the critiques of e.g. Martha Nussbaum and Seyla Benhabib. They criticize Butler for paralyzing politics, especially feminist politics, with her abstract, postmodernism.

Butler's Hegelianism has also been discussed, even if very briefly. I take up Allison Weir and Kimberly Hutchings as theorists who discuss Butler's Hegelian inheritance. Allison Weir seems to be the only theorist who has, so far, located Butler to the Kojèvian tradition. In her *Sacrificial Logics* (1996). Weir argues that Butler draws from the same tradition as e.g. Sartre, de Beauvoir, Derrida and Luce Irigaray. However, Butler's relation to the Kojèvian inheritance is discussed very briefly and indirectly, amidst a few other theorists. Hegel's and Kojève's theories are also introduced only briefly by Weir. Nevertheless, Weir claims that in the Kojèvian tradition the relation between the self and the other is seen as a necessarily "sacrificial" relation, a view not supported by Hegel. Kimberly Hutchings comments Butler's reading of Antigone, focusing Butler's discussion on Hegel's interpretation of the Antigone story.

Butler has been a very influential theorist over the past few decades. It must be noted, that most of those who discuss on her theories tend to share her basic ideas. A characteristic feature in the few critical texts is that they are brief. They do not analyse Butler's views in depth. It seems that the readers of Butler either praise her ideas rather uncritically, or, then, reject them completely, with frustrated exclamations made about her difficult style of writing. So far no thorough studies have been presented, either by her protagonists, or by her critics, of the theoretical background of Butler's thought. Butler's roots in Hegel, Kojève and Althusser are commented very briefly, if at all. Most theorists see her especially as a Foucauldian thinker, influenced also by the psychoanalytical theories of Freud and Lacan. The way Butler is embedded in a specific Kojèvian and Althusserian traditions of thought - which have their roots in Hegel - has not been discussed at all.

4.2.1. Martha Nussbaum

The American philosopher Martha Nussbaum published a fierce critique of Butler in her article 'The Professor of Parody' (1999). Nussbaum criticizes Butler for turning feminist politics into abstract and obscure verbalism, with little consequence to the lives of real women. According to Nussbaum, there is still a lot to do to make the lives of real women

better. Hence feminists should make concrete proposals for social change in terms of better laws, education, working conditions and wages for women, as well as sufficient social welfare for mothers, child-care etc. Feminists should not forget to focus on legislative action.

Nussbaum worries of the new postmodernist feminism, which she describes as “quieting” as it does not encourage women to take concrete action to improve their lives. Nussbaum sees that there is a new trend, especially among young feminists, to turn from the material side of life, and from real struggles to improve legislation etc. toward a new type of obscure and highly abstract verbal and symbolic politics. This new type of linguistic, symbolic politics makes, for Nussbaum, only the flimsiest of connections with the real situation of real women. Nussbaum considers Butler a leading figure in this postmodernist politics.

Feminist thinkers of the new symbolic type would appear to believe that the way to do feminist politics is to use words in a subversive way, in academic publications of lofty obscurity and disdainful abstractness. These symbolic gestures, it is believed, are themselves a form of political resistance; and so one need not engage with messy things such as legislatures and movements in order to act daringly. The new feminism, moreover, instructs its members that there is little room for large-scale social change, and maybe no room at all. We are all, more or less, prisoners of the structures of power that have defined our identity as women. (;) All that we can hope to do is to find spaces within the structures of power in which to parody them, to poke fun at them, to transgress them in speech. (Nussbaum 1999, 2-3)

Nussbaum argues that it is actually difficult to come to grips with Butler’s ideas, because it is difficult to figure out what they are. Nussbaum argues that Butler’s text is dense with allusions to other theorists. The problem is that Butler does not explain how she interprets the ideas of the theorists she refers to (p. 3). Nussbaum argues:

..an initial problem in reading Butler is that one is bewildered to find her arguments buttressed by appeal to so many contradictory concepts and doctrines, usually without any account of how the apparent contradictions will be resolved. (Ibid. 3)

Nussbaum complains that Butler makes casual allusions to other theorists in her texts, and this results into a “thin” argumentation where few definite claims are made. When definite claims are not made, things, which are talked of are rendered obscure, un-theoretical and also un-democratic. Other theorists cannot participate in theoretical debates with Butler, because Butler speaks of things in such a mysterious, un- theoretical way. The issues (gender, sexuality, subject etc.) are mystified and placed beyond critical theoretical discussion. For Nussbaum, this results also into a hierarchical situation:

Mystification as well as hierarchy are the tools of her practice, a mystification that eludes criticism because it makes few definite claims. (ibid.4)

Nussbaum argues that Butler does not actually say anything new, anything which has not been said before. When Butler does make definite arguments, they are arguments which have been presented by others before. An example of this is the idea that conventional understanding of gender roles is a way of ensuring continued male domination in sexual relations. Nussbaum says that this idea has been presented by Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin already in 1970s and 1980s. Actually, already John Stuart Mill said the same. Nussbaum lists several of Butler's central arguments and shows that others have said them before. Nussbaum argues that Butler's main idea – that gender is a social artifice, which does not reflect anything external in nature, and that it derives from customs that embed social relations of power - is not a new one. What makes Butler's ideas appear as new is her obscure way of presenting them. (ibid 5-6).

Nussbaum criticises Butler's idea that the distinction of a body into two sexes is a social construction.

..it is much too simple to say that power is all that the body is (...) Culture can shape and reshape some aspects of our bodily existence, but it does not shape all the aspects of it (...) Even where sex difference is concerned, it is surely too simple to write it all off as culture; nor should feminists be eager to make such sweeping gesture. Women who run or play basketball, for example, were right to welcome the demolition of myths about women's athletic performance that were the product of male-dominated assumptions; but they were also right to demand the specialized research on women's bodies that has fostered a better understanding of women's training needs and women's injuries. In short: what feminism needs, and sometimes gets, is a subtle study of the interplay of bodily difference and cultural construction. And Butler's abstract pronouncements, floating high above all matter, give us none of what we need. (ibid.9)

Nussbaum continues:

Suppose we grant Butler her most interesting claims up to this point: that the social structure of gender is ubiquitous, but we can resist it by subversive and parodic acts. Two significant questions remain. What should be resisted and on what basis. What would the acts of resistance be like, and what would we expect them to accomplish? (idem)

Nussbaum observes that Butler opposes the social structures which govern gender and sex on the basis that these structures are repressive and subordinating. Nussbaum notes that Butler does not give any account of the concepts of resistance and oppression that would help us "were we really in doubt about what we ought to be resisting" (idem). Nussbaum continues:

Butler departs in this regard from earlier social-constructionist feminists, all of whom used ideas such as non-hierarchy, equality, dignity, autonomy, and treating as an end rather than a means, to indicate a direction for actual politics. (...) Indeed, it is clear that Butler, like Foucault, is adamantly opposed to normative notions such as human dignity, or treating humanity as an end, on the grounds that they are inherently

dictatorial. In her view, we ought to wait to see what the political struggle itself throws up, rather than prescribe in advance to its participants. Universal normative notions, she says, “colonize under the sign of the same”. (idem)

Nussbaum criticizes Butler for political passivism, for a type of “let’s wait and see what will happen in politics”- attitude. Nussbaum associates a similar attitude to thinkers like Foucault. She argues that when political action does not base itself on any such ideas as human dignity, equality, or universal freedom, almost anything can be done under the name of “subversion”. Feminists, gays and lesbians can be mocked and parodied, because it is “subversive”. Also antidiscrimination laws, made to protect the rights of minorities, can be resisted, because *any* officially and legally defined object (like an anti-discrimination law) is thought to be ultimately repressive (idem).

4.2.2. A void at the heart of Butler’s politics

Nussbaum claims that there is a “void” at the heart of Butler’s notion of politics. This results to arbitrary politics, in which anything can be mocked, including the rights of minorities, gays, blacks etc. She writes:

This void can look liberating, because the reader fills it implicitly with a normative theory of human equality or dignity. But let there be no mistake: for Butler, as for Foucault, subversion is subversion, and it can in principle go in any direction. Indeed, Butler’s naively empty politics is especially dangerous for the very causes she holds dear. For every friend of Butler, eager to engage in subversive performances that proclaim the repressiveness of heterosexual gender norms, there are dozens who would like to engage in subversive performances that flout the norms of tax compliance, of non-discrimination, of decent treatment of one’s fellow students. To such people we should say, you cannot simply resist as you please, for there are norms of fairness, decency, and dignity that entail that this is bad behaviour. But then we have to articulate those norms – and this Butler refuses to do. (ibid.10)

Butler addresses the problem of “empty politics”, raised by Nussbaum, in her text ‘The question of Social Transformation’ (UG). According to Butler, it is clear that resignification alone (pure empty subversion of whatever object, even antidiscrimination laws) is not a sufficient ground for politics. Resignification needs to be thought in its context. When resignification is contextualized, it does not need to be arbitrary, targeted randomly against the minorities themselves. Butler argues that the goal in the resignification should be to make terms more inclusive by resignifying them through excluded otherness. When this “norm” is taken as a principle, resignificatory politics need not be “empty”, and, consequently, arbitrary. Here Butler seems to speak of the “void”, which Nussbaum identifies at the heart of Butler’s politics.

Butler says that: “one can argue that the Nazis appropriated power by taking the language and concerns of democracy against itself” (UG 223). Hence, Butler agrees that, in a sense, Nazis acted according to the idea in Butler’s performative politics in which the idea is to turn power

against itself and to re-appropriate political terms radically. Butler takes up two examples of “subversion” and tries to show how it is possible to say that the other is good while the other is not. The other example comes from South Africa, where, prior to the overthrow of the apartheid, black South Africans came to polling stations to vote, even that there was no prior authorization for them to vote. They tried to include themselves into the political community, from which they had been excluded. They referred to the right to vote and claimed that this right includes also them, blacks, not only the whites. The terms of universality and citizenship were turned against themselves, through being interpreted and resignified by a claim made by the excluded others. For Butler, this kind of resignification can work to make central political terms and rights more inclusive. Terms may be opened for radical otherness. Another example, which Butler offers, concerns Hitler. According to Butler, Hitler was also “subversive” for he invoked rights to a certain kind of life for which there was no constitutional or legal precedent, local or international. Butler says, however, that there is an important distinction between these two invocations. For Butler, we can ask ourselves the next questions when considering what political action is good and what is not.

When we come to deciding right and wrong courses of action in that context, it is crucial to ask: what forms of community have been created? Hitler sought to intensify the violence of exclusion; the anti-apartheid movement sought to counter the violence of racism and exclusion. This is the basis on which I would condemn the one, and condone the other. What resources must we have in order to bring into the human community those humans who have not been considered part of the recognizably human? This is the task of a radical democratic theory and practice that seeks to extend the norms that sustain viable life to previously disenfranchised communities. (UG 225)

By asking the questions (above) from ourselves, we can, according to Butler, draw the conclusion that the South African case represents radical democratic politics, which works to render the refuted, excluded others something viable. As such, it represents what for Butler really is performative, subversive politics. It expands *radically* the range of what is considered viable life and citizenship. In contrast to the South African case, Hitler’s politics furthers the exclusion and the elimination of radical others.

What Butler says here is actually quite close to Hegel’s view. In the quotation above Butler speaks in favour of bringing into the human community those humans who have not been considered part of the recognizably human. This echoes very closely what Hegel speaks of the “free communities”. In Hegel’s ideal recognition, contradictory others become - mutually - acknowledged as having something valid to say about various terms, important in defining the community.

However, according to the analysis presented here, there is a problem in the way the excluded others become included into the range of “recognizably human” in Butler’s subversive politics. For Butler, there is no conceptual transition (at least no full transition) between what is identified by subjects, and what is identified by others, as “human”, or, as “citizenship”. For Butler, we exercise colonialism, if we try to define the radical Other, or when we try to conceptualize what the Other says of something like “human”. When the views of the others (concerning such things as citizenship, human, gender etc.) become included into what is considered viable, these views of the others should not, however, become conceptualized. If

we conceptualize them, we include them into our own conceptual construction of “human”. Hence, the inclusion of the others into the realm of what is considered viable (about “human”, “freedom” etc.) does not mean that we could understand, in terms of identification or conceptualization, what the Other says of the relevant issues. Hence we cannot identify or conceptualize *what* becomes included into the community of the recognizably human when the others, with their views, enter into it.

If we think about the inclusion of the others (into the realm of the recognizably human) in the same way as Butler does, we cannot actually make out what the others say, what they are, and how they may change the “community of the recognizably human”. The speech of the Other remains ambivalent *for us*. We cannot relate to it conceptually. This is due to what the Other is *for us*, i.e. what we think of radical otherness. Thinkers like Butler see the Other as ambivalent. If we think of the Other like Butler, we *know* that what the Other says is constituted by a *further Other* what is excluded and silenced by the Other. We know that the speech of the Other constitutes a necessary error. We know that what is said (of citizenship, viable life, or of human) by the Other is “beyond” the Other, not conceptualizable by the Other itself. At the same time we know that our own way to interpret the speech of the Other (including the way the Other excludes its further Other) is constituted by our own internal ek-statism. Our interpretation of the Other is beyond us. It is constituted by the repression of our own constitutive outside.

We cannot conceptualize “the community of the recognizably human” if we cannot conceptualize ourselves or other selves, i.e. the beings who make up the community and who define (by their speech and their thoughts) the community and its founding categories and principles, e.g. the concept of the “human”. If we cannot conceptualize or particularize what the community of the recognizably human is, this community remains un-conceptual – and thus empty - for us. A form of recognition of the Other (as a member of a community of humans) which does not acknowledge the validity of what the Other says of itself, or of things in general, remains an abstraction. Further, if we think that our own attempts to recognize the Other are bound to fail - because they are based on the refutation of our constitutive outside – then, in effect, we do not acknowledge the Other’s recognition of itself as valid. Here, both one’s own, and the Other’s capacities to recognize things and persons in a valid way become rendered into abstractions. Because neither one’s own self or the Other are acknowledged as able to think and speak of things in a valid way, actually both one’s self and the Other – as well as the human community – become arbitrary abstractions. This may result into the arbitrary politics which Nussbaum speaks of.

Nussbaum’s critique of Butler takes up a few important themes. However, it remains rather limited in itself. It appears that Nussbaum is mainly frustrated with Butler’s often difficult and even mysterious text. It is difficult. However, Nussbaum does not make a thorough analysis of Butler’s arguments in her quite brief article. For example, no references are made to Butler’s Hegelianism.

4.2.3. Seyla Benhabib

Seyla Benhabib is a well known contemporary political philosopher. She works as a professor of political science and philosophy at Yale University. Benhabib is known as a Kantian-influenced theorist of democracy, influenced by a Habermasian communicative ethics and also by the thought of John Rawls. However, like Butler, she started her academic career as a Hegel-scholar. She did her PhD-study on Hegel: *Natural Right and Hegel: an Essay in Modern Political Philosophy* (1997). The basic point in both Benhabib's and Nussbaum's criticism of Butler is that Butler deconstructs the fundamental base in all politics, including feminist politics. For both Nussbaum and Benhabib, any actual, political action has to be based on some concepts which it gains its principles, motivation and direction. In Butler, there are no such concepts and, consequently, Butler's politics works to paralyze politics and silence the concrete claims made by the repressed minorities.

According to Benhabib, the central theme of the emancipation of women, gays, or any minorities cannot be based on Butler's thought. Even that Benhabib agrees with Butler in her criticism of the Western philosophical "masculine Reason", she sees dangerous aspects in Butler's views. When terms like woman or homosexuality become *themselves* seen as products of heterosexist suppression, there is no base for critical feminist or gay politics. There is no "woman", "homosexual" or a "black" to be emancipated or recognized as equal as the very categories themselves are seen to be constituted by a colonialist oppression of others. Benhabib writes in *Feminist Contentions* (1995) in which Benhabib, Butler and some others discuss feminist issues.

Surely we can criticize the supremacy of presuppositions of identity politics and challenge the supremacy of heterosexist and dualist positions in the women's movement. Yet is such a challenge only thinkable via a complete debunking of any concepts of selfhood, agency, and autonomy? What follows from this Nietzschean position is a vision of the self as a masquerading performer, except of course we are now asked to believe that there is no self behind the mask. Given how fragile and tenuous women's sense of selfhood is in many cases, how much of a hit and miss affair their struggles for autonomy are, this reduction of female agency to a "doing without the doer" at best appears to me to be making a virtue out of necessity. (Benhabib 1995, 22)

Benhabib argues that Butler's (as well as other postmodernists, like Derrida's) thought relies on a thesis of "the death of metaphysics". According to this thesis, Western philosophy tries to gain a position of a "master", a privileged position from which it explains the world. For Benhabib, this kind of generalizing claims about what all philosophy attempts to be cannot be made. Benhabib writes:

But is the philosophical tradition so monolithic and so essentialist as postmodernists would like to claim? Would not even Hobbes shudder at the suggestion that the "Real is the ground of Truth"? What would Kant say when confronted with the claim that "philosophy is the privileged representation of the Real"? Would not Hegel consider the view that concepts and language are one sphere and the "Real" yet another merely a version of a naïve correspondence theory of truth which the chapter on "Sense Certainty" in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* eloquently dispensed with? (ibid.24)

For Benhabib, Butler's postmodern thesis of the "death of metaphysics" flattens out the history of modern philosophy. It loses the necessary conceptual base (such concepts like human, subject, citizen, equality etc.) of politics. The conceptual and philosophical problems discussed in human right issues, issues of minorities etc. are swept away when the central concepts are considered to be "colonialist master"-concepts, constituted through what they cannot name (the Real, the constitutive outside) and what they repress (the other). When a human right activist, or the theorist of democracy is seen to *think* by terms she cannot know, and through otherness she represses, the motivation of politics is lost. Benhabib continues:

Social criticism without philosophy is not possible, and without social criticism the project of a feminist theory, which is committed at once to knowledge and to the emancipatory interests of women is inconceivable. (ibid. 26)

4.2.4. The situated politics

Benhabib claims that when postmodernists are faced with criticism, e.g. for their political impotency, they usually offer "local criticism" as a solution. *Local narratives* – serving as a ground for local criticism - do not claim to hold on to universal truths, and they do not intend to offer a solution to *all* places and contexts. Local narratives and local criticism do not intend to be universal. Instead, they are particular, limited. When criticism is local, or, as Butler says "temporal", it is based on local and historical (temporal) narratives, values and meanings, not on universal, timeless principles. Such local narrative could be, for Benhabib, e.g. "the Anglo-American liberal tradition of thought", "the tradition of progressive and interventionist jurisprudence", "the Judeo-Christian tradition", "the legacy of the suffragettes" etc. (ibid. 26-27).

Benhabib, however, criticises the postmodernist's idea of local narratives. She argues that the local narratives are "ideal types":

They are constructed out of the tapestry of meaning and interpretation which constitutes the horizon of our social lifeworld. The social critic does not find criteria of legitimation and self-criticism to be given in the culture as one might find, say, apples on a tree and goldfish in an aquarium; she no less than social actors is in the position of constantly interpreting, appropriating, reconstructing and constituting the norms, principles, and values which are an aspect of the lifeworld. There is never a single set of constitutive criteria to appeal to in characterizing complex social practices. Complex social practices, like constitutional traditions, ethical and political views, religious beliefs, scientific institutions are not like games of chess (...) So the first defect of situated criticism is a kind of "hermeneutic monism of meaning", the assumption namely that the narratives of our culture are so univocal and uncontroversial that in appealing to them one could simply be exempt from the task of evaluative, ideal-typical reconstruction. (ibid 27)

Benhabib seems to argue that the local narratives and situations, through which the

postmodernists intend to do situated criticism of e.g. the gender relations, are interpreted *for the postmodernists*. Whenever the “local” is seen, it is interpreted at the same time. The local narrative, or the local context, is not an external given to be found. Instead, whenever a local situation is seen, it is always seen from a *specific* point of view, even by the postmodernist theorists. Here, Benhabib’s criticism against Butler and other postmodernists resembles Hegel’s criticism against the “pure self-consciousness”. In PhS, the pure self-consciousness thought, in short, that particular objects (e.g. particular subject-identities) exist “for Bondsmen”. Pure self-consciousness alienated itself from those situated and limited “Bondsmen” who interpreted the world from the point of view of their “local narrative”. Hegel, however, argued that even that the pure self-consciousness had found something important in finding its reflective capacities, it is nevertheless itself no less situated than any one of the “us”, which it reflects. These themes are taken up in later chapters.

In the same volume where Benhabib’s criticism is presented, Butler answers:

The point articulated forcefully by some recent critics of normative political philosophy is that the recourse to a position – hypothetical, counterfactual, or imaginary – that places itself beyond the play of power, and which seeks to establish the metapolitical basis for a negotiation of power relations, is perhaps the most insidious ruse of power. That this position beyond power lays claim to its legitimacy through recourse to a prior and implicitly universal agreement does not in any way circumvent the charge, for what rationalist project will designate in advance what counts as agreement? What form of insidious cultural imperialism here legislates itself under the sign of the universal? (ibid.39)

Butler argues that “power pervades the very conceptual apparatus that seeks to negotiate its terms” (ibid. 39). In this, Butler seems to agree with Benhabib, who also claims that any social critic is also a social subject. However, Butler offers a different way to look at ourselves as situated and local social critics than Benhabib. For Benhabib, the social critic should not deconstruct away such philosophical foundations like “rationality”, “freedom”, or “human”, because these thoughts anyhow continue to constitute the lives of the real people, *including the social critic herself*, who cannot escape from the tradition of philosophical thinking. For Butler, the way in which a social critic may situate herself as constituted by the very terms which she criticizes, is to interrogate these terms as internally radical, ek-static terms. In this way, a social critic does not place herself beyond the history and the politics of these terms. In CHU, Butler criticizes “Kantian” thinkers like Benhabib for taking e.g. the idea of a “universal rational capacity” as a non-political and a non-historical starting point in their political and normative analyses. Butler argues in CHU:

The Kantian presumption that when “I” reason I participate in a rationality that is transpersonal culminates in the claim that my reasoning presupposes the universalizability of my claims (CHU 15)

Butler argues against Benhabib’s “Kantian” belief in universal reason by referring to Hegel’s criticism against Kant. Here, in the context of Butler’s discussion with her critics, Butler’s basic line of criticism – Hegelianism, modified by Althusserianism – becomes again visible. Butler criticizes Benhabib’s formalist and abstract reason for its Kantianism, through the Hegelian idea that all thoughts are ek-static constructions which include the contradicting

other. However, the critical turn, made through Hegel, is followed by its Althusserian reversal. Butler uses her basic *critical movement* to further modify the Hegelian idea of internal ek-statism. For Butler the idea need not to lead to a conceptual, rational synthesis. By the Althusserian modification, the Hegelian ek-static relation between the self and the Other remains at the level of the struggle for recognition.

Butler insists that our task is to negotiate the theoretically and politically foundational terms (like rational human, subject, woman, heterosexual) which lay their claim on us, by seeing these terms as *radical* ek-static constructions. We should negotiate – e.g. through a historical analysis – our own cultural identities as humans, heterosexuals or, as members of minorities. Our task is not to try to do away with foundations (like the category of human) because there is no escape from them. According to Butler, we should also *not* champion for a position that goes under the name of anti-foundationalism. Our task is, instead, to interrogate what *each* theoretical move that *temporally* establishes foundations *authorizes*, and what it excludes and forecloses (ibid.39). Here Butler refers to her general theory of things as radical ek-static terms, and to her theory of politics as an “Hegelian-Althusserian”, radically critical movement. The idea is that terms are used and affirmed so that their internal, radical ek-statism is taken into account.

Butler often refers to a “Hegelian synthesis” while criticizing various modes of thought, and also when confronting her critics. Hegel’s conceptually mediated ek-statism, which Butler considers *non-radical* and non-political ek-statism, is presented as something which should be avoided. Butler says, when answering Benhabib, e.g. that:

the Hegelian presumption, that a conceptual synthesis is available from the start is precisely what has come under contest in various ways by some of the positions happily unified under the sign of postmodernism (ibid.38)

Instead of the Kantian universalist reason or the Hegelian rationalist synthesis, we have, what Butler refers to as a “postmodern sign”. The “postmodern” refers to a realm, or to a world, in which there is a permanent, radical political contest – between contradicting claims – over the meaning of various terms and categories. There is no hope of a “Hegelian conceptual synthesis” between the ek-static parties, or any other universal, timeless agreement, over what terms mean, between the holders of the mutually contradictory positions. (ibid. 38-41)

Why does Butler speak about a Hegelian synthesis when criticizing Benhabib? There appears to be, for Butler, an ultimate “Hegelian” problem in *all* theories which do not consider their own constitutive terms as *radical*, ek-static structures. The basic difference between Butler and Hegel is that Butler rejects the possibility of a conceptual mediation between the ek-static parties of the self and the Other. Consequently, for Butler, all theories which do not consider their own foundational terms *radically* ek-static structures can, in this particular sense, be seen as “Hegelian” and criticized through a recourse to a Hegelian, rationalist synthesis. For Butler, these theories place some terms (such as “subject”, “human”, equality etc.) beyond *radical* politics and power. “Being placed beyond radical politics” means, for Butler, that terms are put beyond “the struggle for recognition”. Even that these (“Hegelian”) theories do not claim to possess a final and a universal truth of their central terms, they nevertheless assume, according to Butler, that such a universal truth can be found. They take these terms, in a Hegelian way, as conceptual constructions into which new elements (coming

e.g. from repressed groups) may be included *conceptually*, as parts of a conceptual whole. For Butler, this indicates a “master”- attitude, which necessarily rejects *radical* forms of otherness. The very adherence to conceptuality indicates, for Butler, a “master-attitude”, which is always violent. Even that the “master” allows the concepts to be negotiated and debated of, criticized and changed, the criticism and the changes nevertheless take place in a conceptual space, inside the (master’s) synthesis. In contrast to this “Hegelian” way to take things as conceptual constructions, Butler argues that we ought to see terms as radical, ek-static structures.

Butler’s critique against rationalist or communicative projects, which do leave enough room for radical others is in many ways reasonable. It appears that often critics too easily dismiss Butler’s ideas because they are just too frustrated with Butler’s complex way of writing. However, Butler, quite justifiably, notes that we should not expect the silenced others to be able to speak to us (of themselves and of the world) in a language which does not leave any constitutive “surplus” outside of it. Silenced groups may have been deprived of their own speech for so long, and in so profoundly silencing ways, that their capacity to take their selves – and our capacity to interpret them - as “rational objects” is not possible. Their selves are, in this way, lost objects. To expect that repressed groups are able to give rational syntheses of who they are and what they want may well constitute another instance in the process of their enslavement. Butler quite reasonably calls us to be “post-colonial translators” in our efforts to try to interpret what the others say. Often the enslaved others are “emancipated” or “interpreted” into a new form of enslavement because their new, emancipated selves become constructed from the viewpoint of the Western, middle class, white heterosexual etc. points of view. It is clearly true that when it comes to the recognition of others, we should be careful not to recognize our own ideas of them in the place of the others themselves. The recognition of others is a more complex process than just starting to plainly listen to what the others say. Instead, we should constantly interrogate what viewpoints onto otherness we privilege and authorize and what interpretations we authorize, and what may become excluded. (see also CHU 34-41; 178-179).

Butler is quite right in reminding us that we should pay attention to the “ek-statism” of the terms in which we translate the speech of the radically other. However, the general critique, presented in this analysis against Butler’s “Kojevian-inflected” theory of ek-statism can be repeated here. It is no doubt true that the speech of the Other may well become repressed if we do not remember that the speech of the Other, as well as our own terms of translation, are embedded in relations of politics and power. However, if we see all the terms *always* only as sites of the Hegelian struggle for recognition, we force both ourselves and the other into a new colony of silence. The other is not allowed to be a valid subject if *all* particular identities which the Other could ever identify with, are permanently considered sites of the struggle for recognition. If we consider all self-identifications *necessary failures*, as Butler calls them, we surely force both ourselves and all others into a specific colony of forced incompleteness, forced failure. In this colony all self-knowledge is considered a failure because it is known that it can never describe its object in a *valid* way. Butler’s own views themselves constitute one possible form of self-knowledge. The Other is equally deprived of a right for a valid self-knowledge, if the only valid piece of self knowledge is that all other forms of self-knowledge are but necessary errors.

4.2.5. Allison Weir

Allison Weir criticizes Butler's thought among others, when discussing on the Kojévian-inflected, postmodernist French thinking. In her book *Sacrificial Logics. Feminist theory and the critique of identity* (1996), Weir argues that French postmodernist thought is strongly influenced by the Kojévian reading of Hegel. According to the views discussed by Weir, societies are, in general, productions of the repression of the Other. Weir argues that Butler belongs to this group of thinkers. For Weir, the characteristic feature in the Kojévian-inflected thought is that the relation between the self and the Other is seen as necessarily conflictual and repressive. Self-identities are seen to be based necessarily on the domination of the Other. Weir argues that e.g. Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir have been influenced by the Kojévian reading of Hegel's theory of the relation between the self and the Other. Both Sartre and de Beauvoir see this relation as necessarily conflictual and repressive. Any way of distinguishing between the self and the Other is considered violence. Weir argues that as long as we accept this "sacrificial logic" as *the* logic of identity we will be unable to move beyond a conception of society which is always and only violent. Weir writes of the Kojévian "sacrificial logics of identity" in feminism:

Following Kojève's preoccupation with Hegel's master-slave struggle as the basis of subjectivity, de Beauvoir assumes that the struggle for domination between self and other is essential to the establishment of self-identity. Feminist theorists since de Beauvoir have been very critical of this assumption. However, both poststructuralist feminist theories which draw on Derridean deconstructions of identity and relational feminist theories that attempt to reconstruct the self as a function of connection are ultimately based on the same assumption. (ibid.8)

Weir argues that the Kojévian reading of Hegel was passed into feminism and further into the queer-theory mainly through de Beauvoir. Through de Beauvoir, many feminists have adopted the idea that the self ought to strive for an "impossible identity", one which is defined through a constant negativity, a constant mastery over an otherness which, as is also acknowledged, cannot ever fully mastered. Many feminists have adopted the idea that the only way to be a feminist is to constantly "outdo" oneself. One is to negate and master any self-identity which lays its claim on oneself in the various cultural contexts and human relations where one finds oneself. This constant "labour of negativity" is considered the highest form of freedom and the highest form of self-realization. Whenever one finds itself as an "object", one has to negate this objectivity, as all objectivity is considered inessential and limiting. (ibid. 18-23).

Weir sees that Butler sticks to an idea that particular identities can be always subverted, i.e. negated, as in the Kojévian tradition where freedom is associated with the capacity to negate any determinations and definitions given of oneself. However, the basic (Kojévian) idea, that particular identities are always based on violent domination is itself never questioned. The notion of the relation between the self and the other as a basis of all self-identity is thus taken as an a priori given. Weir argues:

By adopting this single, totalizing theory of the logic of identity, Butler herself represses any possibility of difference among different forms of identity. (;) Butler subverts her own call for a subversion of identity by rendering identity so omnipotent and intransigent that the subversion becomes impossible. Thus, it becomes impossible to see the affirmations of existential and political identities which provide a sense of meaning and solidarity to participants in feminist, gay and lesbian, and black struggles... (ibid. 113-114)

For Weir, this leads into a situation where intelligibility as such becomes seen as violence.

Once we define the identity of meaning in language as a form of restriction and exclusion, we are thereby defining our social construction, and our capacity to speak and interact with each other, as a form of violation. (ibid. 118-119)

Weir pays attention to Butler's Nietzschean idea that there is no identifiable "doer behind the deed". Deeds and speech are, for Butler, ex-citable. Speech and acts are not fully known for any reflexive self, because they are constituted by an outside, which the acting and speaking self itself cannot conceptually relate to. For Weir, this leads into a problem concerning Butler's own performative politics:

Butler jumps to a discussion of subversive repetition, of parodic performances, which can serve to expose and thereby subvert the deceptive workings of the systems of power. But how do we move from variations on repetition, which are understood as accidental failures to repeat, to practices of parody, subversion, and resistance, without resorting to a concept of the reflexive mediation of a knowing, critical subject? For while variation and failure probably do not require critical reflection, parody does. Somebody, at some level – and it may only be at the level of the unconscious – has to get the joke. (ibid.128)

Weir appears to discuss on one of the central problems of this study. *How* critical politics is possible, if, as Butler says, subject lacks (at least generally and to a great extent) the reflexive capacities which would enable it to see things from the point of view of the repressed Other?

Weir criticizes the Butlerian "subject-less" performative politics – that is, Butler's *radically* critical process which does not have any identifiable doer as its agency. Weir refers here to Butler's ek-static politics, in which the idea is to refrain from "identity-politics", e.g. in the name of women, blacks or gays. For Butler, if any category is placed above politics – by taking it as a starting point, in advance, of politics – the internal ek-statism of the political process is rejected.

Solidarity, then, is rejected as a basis of feminist politics, because it excludes the possibility of subversions or disruptions of the group identity, and, presumably of disruptions of group actions aimed at the achievement of agreed-upon goals. In other words, a coalitional activist group should refrain from affirming any solidarity or common purpose, because it might thereby thwart its own subversion. An interesting notion, in the abstract, but its difficult to imagine how such a group could actually get

anything done. Or why it would want to. (ibid. 129-130).

Weir's important contribution is to connect Butler to the wider tradition. However, apart from this discovery, her criticism appears to follow the same line of criticism as Nussbaum's and Benhabib's. No further analysis of Butler's roots in Hegel and Kojève, or in Althusser, is made.

It is important to note how difficult it is to think of politics when a reader tries to adopt Butler's own viewpoint to things, as Nussbaum, Benhabib and Weir all try to show in their critiques. Each of them try to look at politics, as it would look like from such a person's viewpoint who shares Butler's thoughts. Whereas Butler speaks of politics mainly from the viewpoint of the ek-static terms or of discourses, these critics speak of politics from a viewpoint of a one who thinks of terms or of discourses like Butler. Whereas Butler theorizes politics mainly at the discursive level, where the structural elements are, on the first hand, the discursive subject or the discursive term, and, on the other hand, the Other or the constitutive outside, these critics look at politics from Butler's own viewpoint, from which politics appears rather problematic, too abstract to comprehend.

4.2.6. Kimberly Hutchings

Those who comment on Butler's connection with Hegel, and say of it more than a few words, usually comment on Butler's discussion of Hegel's interpretation of the Antigone story in PhS.

Kimberly Hutchings is Professor in International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. In her book *Hegel and Feminist Philosophy* (2003) Hutchings briefly discusses Butler's reading of Hegel's interpretation of the Antigone story. As explained in the chapter 2, Hegel discusses Antigone, and the kinship relations of love, in his discussion of the womankind in PhS. In *Antigone's Claim. Kinship between life and death* (2000) Butler criticizes Hegel's reading of Antigone (as is explained in the chapter 2.4.2.)

For Hutchings, Butler's reading of Antigone, in general, shares ground with that of Lacan. As explained also in this study (chapter 3.2.1) women do not *exist* in language for Lacan. The linguistic realm of differential and conceptual relations denotes the realm of the "Phallus". There is nevertheless a distinction into the masculine realm and the feminine realm. Notwithstanding, this distinction does not denote a linguistic distinction, or a difference, as it cannot be defined, conceptualized. "Woman" – in this case Antigone and her ethics – denotes a "lack".

Hutchings explains what she means by Butler's "Lacanian" reading of Antigone:

Like Lacan, Butler rejects the idea that divine and human law represent equal and opposing forces. For Lacan, ..Antigone's invocation of the laws of the gods is a reaching beyond the limits of possibility and liveability established by the symbolic order. Butler accepts this idea but interprets it dynamically as an intervention in and

perversion of that order, rather than its confirmation through the acknowledgement of a permanent constitutive exclusion. In Butler's view, Lacan's mistake is that of generalizing and idealizing kinship as a fixed symbolic order. This means that, like Hegel, Lacan is unable to grasp the impossibilities inherent in what Antigone says and does. (Hutchings 2003, 92)

Hutchings notes that Butler's Lacanian reading of Antigone takes place through a certain kind of criticism of both Hegel's and Lacan's interpretation of Antigone. Butler criticizes Hegel's theory of the two realms, the human and the divine, which structure Hegel's interpretation of Antigone. As is explained in the chapter 2.4.2., for Hegel there is a realm of the human law (the law of the rational state) and the divine law (the law of the family and the womankind). Butler criticizes both Hegel and Lacan for placing women into the static, un-political, non-ek-static realm of the divine law. In both Hegel and Lacan, there is a distinction between feminine and masculine realms, so that the masculine denotes mediated, communicative (social) relations, and the feminine denotes immediacy. Even that in Lacan, in contrast to Hegel, the distinction between the masculine and the feminine takes place within the subject, the specific type of gender distinction is found in both. (AC 29, 38-42).

Hutchings writes that Butler's reading of Antigone draws critical implications not only of the sexual difference but also how, in general, the domain of "liveability" (the domain of the human and the rational) is both constitutive and exclusive and how, when "the less than human speaks as human", that domain may be radicalized from within. Hutchings notes that Butler criticizes especially Hegel's reading of Antigone, but also the reading of Lacan, for placing the border between what is conceptual and what denotes the "un-conceptualizable" permanently just between the men and women.

In spite of Butler's criticism of Lacan and Hegel, Hutchings notes that the *radical alterity*, which Butler herself draws between the domains of the state (the domain of the social and cultural) and the other, stays within the Lacanian formulation. Resembling Lacan, Butler adheres to the idea that there is a distinction between the coherent, self-conscious subjectivity (denoting cultural, discursive subjectivity) and the constitutive outside, the other, within the thinking subject. This relation is retained even that Butler, according to Hutchings, manages to radicalize the distinction.

Her radicalized Lacanianism identifies sex and gender not with any stable content or capacities and not with women or men, but with constantly reiterated performances, which can challenge as well as conform to the normal conditions of intelligible sexed or gendered speech or action. Antigone exemplifies such performances in her many contaminated voices, working to pervert the course of justice. (ibid.94)

According to Hutchings, Butler offers a "radically performative play" to politicize the border between the "conceptual realm" and the "non-conceptual other". Hutchings also notes that Butler claims that this border does not have to be permanently drawn between women and men, or between any other specific parties, instead, it can vary historically and contextually. However, Hutchings sees that Butler stays within the Lacanian reading of the border between what is real and human, and what is non-real and non-human. Hutchings calls Butler's reading of Antigone as "radicalized Lacanianism". (ibid. 94).

Hutchings argues that even that Butler offers radicalization of the border between the human and the divine laws, she may be, quite justifiably, criticized for undermining the possibility of feminist politics. Hutchings writes:

Butler may be accused of undermining the possibility of any coherent feminist ethics or politics by denying any stable ground for responding to the question of the meaning of women, sex and gender, and reducing freedom to arbitrariness. The way in which critical, sexual difference and postmodernist feminists read and respond to each other challenges their claim to have refused the either/or choice to which Beauvoir's philosophy is seen to have succumbed.(ibid. 104)

Hutchings argues that we have to return to Hegel's general account of the *historical formation of self-conscious being* in order to find possible "Hegelian" feminist solutions. (ibid. 104). According to Hutchings, Butler, among some other feminist critics of Hegel, present *immanent* critiques of Hegel (ibid.95) However, if Hegel himself is considered a historical philosopher, his own general theory of the development of self-consciousness in PhS, may offer a solution to what can be seen as a duality in his own theory. Hutchings argues:

A Hegelian account of knowledge permits the claim that it makes sense to say that Hegel is more wrong about women now than he was when he made his claims, because his partial grasp of the position of women has become less and less sustained by spirit and the forms of its self-understanding in science and philosophy. (ibid. 109)

Hutchings sees that a possible feminist reading of Hegel becomes opened up from within Hegel's theory itself. Hutchings argues that Butler misses this with her radicalized Lacanianism.:

In seeing Antigone as destabilizing and disrupting the given orders of kinship and state, Butler rejects Hegel's account of Antigone's relation to human law as one implicit in the mutual dependence of nature and spirit, private and public sphere. Butler's rejection of the ontological status of categories of determination and self-determination make her argument difficult to grasp other than as a celebration of a power of disruption which breaks through, rather than being always already implicit within the symbolic and social orders. Antigone comes to stand for "anti-law" in Butler's account (anti-kinship and anti-state), even when she acts through law. But to be "anti-law" in this sense is to usurp the place of Creon, of arbitrary and persistent legislation, only this time with irony (ibid.101)

The critiques of Butler, discussed in this chapter, take up similar themes than the ones taken up in this study. They criticize Butler's abstract politics and abstract feminism, as well as the idea that the relation between the self and the Other is necessarily violent and un-mediated. However, the critiques do not do full justice to Butler, as no thorough analysis is made of her theories. In this sense, they do not also fully succeed as critiques.

5. Butler's Hegelianism

5.1. Butler and Hegel: interpretation and critique

5.1.1. The reception of Butler

The depth in which Hegel has influenced Butler's own subject-theory and especially her political theory has been commented on only briefly. Usually Butler's connection with Hegel has been taken up when various critiques of Hegel, e.g. feminist critiques, are discussed. Butler's book *Antigone's Claim* (2000) is discussed as a feminist critique of Hegel. (see Hutchings 2003). Most Butler's commentators agree that she has been profoundly influenced by Hegel (see e.g. Salih 2002, 1, 3-4; Lloyd 2007, 13-25; Chambers & Carver 2008b 92). However, not much more is said about the matter. Usually the commentaries focus on thinkers like Foucault and Freud as the main sources of influence.

In their work *Judith Butler and Political Theory* (2008b) Samuel A. Chambers and Terrell Carver describe Butler as a Hegelian. They write, for example:

... while many post-foundational thinkers reject what they see as the theological closure in Hegel's thought, Butler, working in a similar vein, remains a fierce defender of Hegel (ibid. 84) (...) Butler remains a champion of Hegel and insists on the continued significance of Hegelian thought. (idem) (...) Butler never ceases to write within what one might call 'the shadow of Hegel. (ibid. 92).

In spite of these forceful pronouncements, Chambers and Carver do not analyse the Hegel - Butler-connection at all. Because their book is acclaimed to be "the first to take a thematic approach to Butler as a political thinker", the unstated implication is that Butler's Hegelianism is not relevant to her political theory. I disagree. My view is that Butler is, indeed, a Hegelian, and can be fully understood only as a Hegelian.

Sara Salih writes in her book *Judith Butler* (2002)

How does Butler move from phenomenology to questions of "femininity" and "masculinity"? Does this constitute a break in her thought and a change of direction? And what is the result when a brilliant Hegelian turns her attention to current debates on sex, gender and sexuality? It would be a mistake to regard *Gender Trouble* as a radical departure from *Subjects of Desire*, and, although it would be equally mistaken to try to plot a straightforward progression in Butler's thought, it is important to be aware of the phenomenological and Hegelian threads running through all her work. Desire, recognition and alterity are still very much on Butler's mind in *Gender Trouble*, as is the constitution of the subject, the ways in which identity, and in particular gender identity, is constructed by and in discourse. (ibid. 43-44)

Salih notes that the central Hegelian themes of Lordship and Bondage and the Hegelian

dialectics are important for Butler. When Butler shifts into questions of gender and sexuality she does not move out from the Hegelian themes of Desire, Recognition and alterity. Salih sees that these central Hegelian themes are carried into inside the Butlerian themes of gender, sexuality and subjectivity.

Salih writes that the notion of “alterity” belongs to Butler’s Hegelian inheritance (see also Salih 2002, 133). In Butler, the notion of alterity corresponds to the notion of “ek-statism”. It refers to the non-coherent, radically altered structure of terms. Salih sees that Butler analyzes also the themes of sex, gender and subjectivity in reference to the structure of ek-statism, or alterity.

Salih writes that the Hegelian subject-in-process is a central starting point for Butler’s idea of subjectivity. Also Butler’s subject is processual. According to Salih, for Butler the Hegelian subject makes constantly “errors” during its travels. It “fails” repeatedly. It over again thinks (at least first) that it has found a universal truth of itself and the world, a full truth, a truth without flaws. However, over again the truth turns out to be a half-truth and hence a failure as a full truth. Salih sees that even that Butler remains always somewhat a protagonist of Hegel, she also adheres to the thoughts of those who intend to go “beyond” the Hegelian dialectical system of subjective Spirit. Salih sees that Butler’s way to reach beyond Hegel takes place through parodic proliferation, which is another name for Butler’s performative politics.

It seems that it is only through parodic proliferation that dialectic will be dismantled, an idea that forms the basis of Butler’s next major engagement with the subject in *Gender Trouble*. (Salih 2002, 40).

Salih goes through the central themes and background theoretical links in her book on Butler. However, the book does not say much more, besides this, of Butler’s Hegelianism. In this, it is alike much of the commentary literature on Butler.

Elena Loinzidou (2007) tells in the introduction of her book *Judith Butler. Ethics, Law, Politics* how

throughout this book, this reading of her work is viewed through Butler’s use of performative theory and Hegel’s theory of recognition. (Loinzidou 2007, 7)

Moreover, she admits that Hegel’s phenomenology has been the predominant influence on Butler’s conception of the subject (ibid., 47-8), and gives a presentation of the first parts of PhS (pp. 62-8). Loinzidou’s most important secondary source - apart from SD - is Kojève’s *Introduction* (Loinzidou 2007, 63, 64, 67, 85 nn. 6 and 7). Consequently, the presentation ends to the dialectics of Lordship and Bondage, and then, the text moves to Nietzsche and Heidegger. After the end of the chapter 3 Hegel, although considered as important, disappears from the scene.

Loinzidou does not make any systematic comparisons between Butler’s and Hegel’s views on the subject. However, she pays some attention to Butler’s way to reinterpret Hegel’s notion of recognition:

She finds the concept of recognition useful because it produces the subject as the

outcome of the agonistic relationship between the subject and its social and cultural spheres. (Loizidou 2007, 77).

Also Moya Lloyd (2007) sees that the Hegelian themes of dialectics and of Lordship and Bondage are important to Butler, and that these themes run through all of Butler's work. She sees that Butler's subject-theory has a Hegelian base. However, she argues, like Salih, that the Butlerian ek-static subjectivity does not engage with the whole logic of Hegel's dialectical system. In short, whereas in Hegel the encounter between the subject and the Other leads into a "higher" knowledge of oneself and the world, in Butler any new knowledge constitutes a new form of error. Butler's ek-static subject is a subject who constantly engages in a "self-loss". Lloyd writes, importantly, that this is due to Butler's suspending the narrative in PhS before the journeying consciousness encounters reason or spirit. Lloyd writes that this "suspension of the narrative" is important, however, she says that she will leave this theme to others to debate (p.15-16). In general, Lloyd writes that Butler rejects the idea of full dialectical synthesis and that, in this sense, her work is much closer to that of Foucault and Derrida. Lloyd writes of Butler's relations with the latter:

For she, like them, holds on to the idea of the critical force of negativity but refuses to link that force to the idea of a dialectic that retains the "power of synthesis", in other words, she subscribes...to what what might be called as non-synthetic dialectic. (Lloyd 2007, 19)

Lloyd writes that in non-synthetic dialectic, difference cannot be incorporated into identity, as, she says, Hegel had assumed. Instead, particular differences, whether historical or linguistic, are insuperable. They cannot be overcome, and consequently, the Hegelian *Aufhebung* (as a simultaneous preservation and re-interpretation, i.e. negation) is impossible. According to Lloyd the implication here is that when an identity (a synthesis) is posited, difference is denied instead of being overcome by the Hegelian way of preserving it. Through this idea, according to Lloyd, Butler is critical when any single identity (a synthesis) is tried to be posited for women, men, sexuality or such notions like "human" etc. (ibid. 15-19).

Lloyd speaks of "Butler's Hegelian inheritance", alike the other commentators. However, they all seem, in a way, to take for granted Butler's own version of her theoretical links with Hegel. They quite loyally repeat what Butler herself says of her Hegelianism. Figures like Kojève and Althusser are not looked at more closely. The theoretical links between Butler and Hegel are not discussed in detail and no systematic comparisons are made. Nevertheless, the commentators present some of the central themes of Butler's Hegelianism.

Butler's subject-theory has Hegelian roots as she, in general, adheres to the basic Kantian-Hegelian thoughts concerning the subjectivity of thinking and the subjectivity of "things". For Butler, thinking is always subjective. Thinking makes up a subjective interpretative field, a particular historical self-referential universe, i.e. a contextual discourse. This means that subjective thinking is limited by its time and place. It is dependent on its history and its cultural context. Thinking is always limited and hence it "produces", self-referentially, a limited objectivity. The "thing", or the "subject", which the thinking is of – i.e. the object of thinking – is hence a subjective, limited object. According to Butler, there is no "givenness of objects" outside of subjective, limited fields of interpretation. We cannot do away with the

subjectivity of thinking, as there is no thinking outside of subjective, time-and place-dependent thinkers. According to Butler, thinking is also *citational* (BM 232). It refers to various cultural authorities, such as religion, ideology etc.

For Butler, subjects and objects exist, in a basic Kantian manner, *for us*. However, this “us” for whom various terms (i.e. subjects and objects, including the thinking self itself as its own “reflected” object of thinking) exist is structured for Butler in a Hegelian manner, i.e. by the ek-static relation between the self and the contradicting other. Thus, the various terms which Butler theorizes have a Hegelian structure. First of all, like Hegel in PhS, Butler speaks of *thought* terms (e.g. thought sexuality), not empirical objects. For Butler, like for Hegel, *thought* terms are ek-static structures, because they are thought by an ek-static thinking self. The ek-static thinker is itself structured by the ek-static relation between itself (as a differential system of thinking) and the Other. (BM 123-124, 227-229; GT 15-16, 142-149).

Butler says that all her works discuss the Hegelian themes of “Desire” and “Recognition”.

In a sense, all of my work remains within the orbit of a certain set of Hegelian questions: What is the relation between desire and recognition, and how is it that the constitution of the subject entails a radical and constitutive relation to alterity? (SD xiv)

This indeed seems to be true. The Hegelian Desire and Recognition denote two different attitudes toward ek-static relations and toward ek-static change. An ek-static relation is forced into a non-ek-static relation through an attitude of Desire (i.e. in relations of Lordship and Bondage). Hegel claims that in reciprocally recognitive relations the ek-static relation is preserved as *self-consciously ek-static*. In reciprocally recognitive relations the parties recognize each others as equally capable of thinking the ek-statism of terms. In Hegelian terms, they acknowledge each others as equally capable of *speculation* (see e.g. chapter 2.1.5 on Hegelian “speculation”). It is true that Butler discusses all throughout her works the possibility of preserving the ek-statism of things. The goal in her political program is to render the radical others less repressed and less excluded, i.e. to render them more existable: to render them something which “matters”. An important part of all her theories is to explore ways in which the ek-statism of things could be preserved. In this sense, she has the same goal as Hegel. Her discussion with Hegel, and her rejection of the Hegelian solution to this problem are important parts of her theory.

5.1.2. “Arresting” Hegelian dialectics

Butler carries the Hegelian ek-statism into her theories of subjectivity and sexuality, and into her political theory. Consequently, dialectics (or, as Butler says, “ek-static process”) is central to all her thinking. Dialectics – or, ek-static process - takes place between mutually contradicting parties, i.e. between ek-static parties. However, Butler’s way to suspend the Hegelian dialectical process (depicted in PhS) before the travelling consciousness reaches the *self-conscious dialectics* (self-conscious ek-statism) in the realm of reciprocal recognition, is

essential for understanding her particular version of Hegelianism. In the following these themes are taken up and discussed in detail.

Butler recognizes the Hegelian roots of her subject-theory, yet, she says that her Hegelianism is modified by her way to “arrest” the Hegelian text at a certain point in PhS. In fact, she speaks of an “Althusserian reversal of Hegel” which she considers important (see e.g. ES 5; CHU 12; PLP 2-6, 30, 51-53; BM 35,69, 113, 116). Butler rejects the specific dialectical “turn” in PhS which takes place when the self-consciousness turns from the struggle for recognition (an attitude of Desire) into a free, actual self-consciousness (into reciprocally cognitive relations). Butler adheres to the Hegelian ek-static process, in the form it takes *before* the turn into free, actual self-consciousness. Before this turn the ek-static process takes place as a struggle for recognition, or, as “movement through slavery”. During the phases of the struggle for recognition, the self-consciousness has various different types of Desire-attitudes toward the contradicting other.

As said already above, in PhS, there can be discerned two types of dialectical movement. These two types of dialectics correspond with two different ways, or attitudes, in which a thinking self deals with contradictions. Hegel presents basically two ways in which a self can deal with the fact that there is mutually contradicting thoughts of the world. A self may deal with mutually contradicting thoughts on the basis of Lordship and Bondage (an attitude of Desire, one-sided recognition), or on the basis of reciprocal recognition. In relations of Lordship and Bondage, consciousness acknowledges only one way to think of things and refutes views which contradict with this view.

Both Butler and Hegel agree that the world should be understood as internally contradictory. People have mutually contradicting thoughts of the world. People look at the world from different perspectives, and these perspectives can be incompatible. Both thinkers agree that the world itself is constituted, or known (for thinking selves) in mutually contradicting ways. A Hegelian way to say this is that “the world *is* for the self and for the Other”. Butler’s way to say this is, in short, that “terms are ek-static”. The internal “ek-statism” – the way the world exists for mutually contradicting parties - makes all knowledge concerning the world *processual*. Butler and Hegel agree on that understanding the world is an interactive process. This epistemological process takes place so that the contradicting parties influence each others, mutually, and make each others views of the world change. Both Hegel and Butler talk of the process, by which the world is known, as *dialectical*. For them, knowledge is not a permanent state of mind. However, they disagree on the nature of this process. Whereas in PhS, there is first a one kind of process (struggle for recognition) which turns into another kind of process (reciprocal recognition), Butler rejects the latter type of processuality and the idea of the reciprocal recognition.

Butler rejects the dialectical turn in PhS, by which the thinking self becomes free. She rejects the idea that a thinking subject may acknowledge such views of the world which contradict with its own views in a *free* way, without repressing either its own, or the Other, contradicting views. Butler sees that during the phases of the struggle for recognition in PhS, all kinds of ethical and philosophical positions come, in their turn, criticised and changed, when their refuted others destabilize them by their demands for recognition. In a struggle for recognition, a change takes place through the contradicting other which has been silenced and repressed. (PLP 51-53)

In PhS, the turn from relations of Lordship and Bondage into free relations takes place when the thinking self becomes aware of its own “thirdness”. By realizing its own thirdness, and by realizing that also the contradicting others are their own thirds, it becomes capable of reciprocally recognitive relationships. Becoming a self-conscious third does not only mean that a self becomes conscious that its own view-point onto the world is one among other possible view-points. This is what e.g. the pure self-consciousness (the “Kantian” thinker) realizes and ends up abstracting from all points of views. It cannot decide which way to look at the world is valid, as they appear interchangeable, and it appears that they all can be negated through each others. In a way, it rejects or relativizes all of them. By becoming a self-conscious third a self realizes that the manner, of the pure self-consciousness, to treat all particular views onto the world as contingent constitutes another version of the “enslavement” of the Other views onto the world. The world is turned into an empty abstraction and its internal “ek-statism” (or, in Hegel’s terms: contradictoriness; its way to exists for the self and for the Other) is repressed. Hegel’s *self-conscious third* realizes, first, that it *sees* things as ek-static (i.e. it realizes that it is a consciousness of the ek-statism of things and subjects), and, second, that it is a *particular consciousness* of the ek-statism of things and subjects. It realizes that the Other exists as an *interpreted Other for it*, in its thinking, as it is, *itself*, a particular consciousness of the Other. It realizes that its own way to see things as ek-static, and its own consciousness of the Other, is a particular one, one among others. It sees itself as a third, a seer of the “doubleness” of things, i.e. that they exist for contradicting, ek-static parties, for the self and for the Other. And, it realizes that it is not the only consciousness of the ek-statism of things, it is not the only “third”. Instead, there are other consciousnesses of the ek-statism of things too. The others are, so to speak, struggling with the same problem.

When this basic reciprocally recognitive self-reflective “turn” is made, the subject realizes that the ek-statism of things is preserved in the best way through rational communication between itself and other subjects (i.e. between “thirds”) whom the subject treats as its epistemological equals.

For Butler, Hegel’s self-conscious third (an actual, free self-consciousness) is problematic. Butler writes that when the travelling self becomes closer to the realm of Spirit and freedom, Hegel introduces a problematic figure of a “mediator”, “minister” or “priest”. The mediating “third” starts to counsel between the parties of the ek-static relation, i.e. the subject and its constitutive outside, the Other. This counselling takes place within the self’s own thinking. As a consequence, the Other, who was repressed and excluded before (during phases of the struggle for recognition) is now internalized. This leads to a problematic conceptualization of the Other. Through the conceptual internalization of the “outside”, the radical political potential - associated with Butler especially with excluded, repressed otherness - vanishes from the process. Butler writes:

the minister reformulates the dialectical reversal and establishes the inversion of values as an absolute principle (...) Before the introduction of the “mediator” and the “priest”, the chapter on the unhappy consciousness appears to proceed as if it contained a trenchant critique of ethical imperatives and religious ideals, a critique which prefigures the Nietzschean analysis that emerges some sixty years later. (PLP 52,53)

Butler opposes the “absolute ethical principle” which is constituted by the conceptually mediated unity of the ek-static parties (the self and the contradicting other) in reciprocal recognition. A reciprocally recognitive relation constitutes indeed an absolute ethical and also epistemological principle in PhS. It is *absolute* as it is not thought to be determined by any such ethical or epistemological “outside” which would be beyond its capacities. Butler, in contrast, argues that there is no conceptual mediation (or, transition) between the subject and its constitutive outside. For Butler, there is no conceptual mediation *for the subject itself* between the two powers, constitutive of the subject. The other one is internal (the subject as a particular object for itself) yet the other one (the Other i.e. the constitutive outside) remains external. The other power is conceptually known for the subject itself while the other power remains external, not conceptually known for the subject itself, at least not fully. The external power acts on the subject without the subject itself being able to conceptualize it. Butler writes:

There is, as it were, no conceptual transition to be made between power as external to the subject, “acting on”, and power as constitutive of the subject, “acted by”. What one might expect by way of a transition is, in fact, a splitting and reversal constitutive of the subject itself. Power acts on the subject, an acting that is an enacting: an irresolvable ambiguity arises when one attempts to distinguish between the power that (transitively) enacts the subject, and the power enacted by the subject, that is, between the power that forms the subject and the subjects “own” power. What or who is doing the “enacting” here? Is it a power prior to the subject or that of the subject itself? At some point, a reversal and concealment occurs, and power emerges as what belongs exclusively to the subject (making the subject appear as if it belonged to no prior operation of power). (PLP 15).

According to Butler, there is a conceptually un-mediated relation between the two powers forming the subject. The subject-constitutive ek-static relation cannot become conceptual for the subject itself; if it were, it would lose its nature as an ek-static, radical constitution. Hence, for Butler, there is the subjectively known, conceptual power, which constitutes what the subject is *for itself*. This power, or agency, is called by Butler a “subject-position” or just a “subject”. Then there is the external power which also participates in the formation of the subject. This external power is not fully conceptualizable by the subject itself. It cannot be identified, differentiated or conceptualized by the subject itself, and, in this way, it is not internal to the subject. It remains external, at least partly. Thus, subjects are externally constituted, at least partly, for Butler. The Other remains at least in some ways external, as it is not fully internal to the subjects system of identification and differentiation. It remains something external, in the way the Althusserian interpellative address. In short, the subject cannot make a conceptual construction (for itself) of the internal power (i.e. the subject-position) and the external power (the Other), which are both formative, constitutive of itself.

Butler opposes the Hegelian dialectic which, for her, includes every opposition, every “outside” and otherness, into internal features of itself. She writes:

The risk here is that the dialectic can work to extend the very terms of

dominance to include every aspect of opposition. This is the trope of the monolithic and carnivorous Hegel whose “Spirit” incorporates every difference into identity.(CHU 174)

Butler opposes the Hegelian dialectical turn into the reciprocally recognitive relationships and the shift into a new type of an ek-static process. The new type of ek-statism takes place as a rational, reciprocally recognitive process. However, it is important to note here that according to the analysis of this study, Butler’s way to interpret Hegel’s “internalization” of the contradicting other (in relations of reciprocal recognition) is based on a Kojèveian reading of Hegel. At the point when the Hegelian consciousness proceeds into reciprocally recognitive relationships, Butler finds it necessary to conduct, what she calls, an *Althusserian reversal*.

5.1.3. Mediation and the third

In her article “Longing for Recognition” (in *Undoing Gender*, Butler 2004) Butler argues that the “destruction of the Other” cannot be overcome by any mediating “thirdness”. The reason for this is that the third itself is constituted by the refutation of other thirds.

For if it is the case that destructiveness can turn into recognition, then it follows that recognition can leave destructiveness behind. Is this true? Further, is the relationship assumed by recognition dyadic, given the qualification that the process of recognition now constitutes “the third”, itself based upon a disavowal of others forms of triangulation? (UG 134)

Butler sees that the “third” is itself based upon the disavowal of other thirds and other forms of “triangulation” (i.e. mediating between the internal parts of the self). As such, any third is actually another “ek-static self” which is always, for Butler, constituted on the “refuted” otherness.

If the “third” is redefined as the music or harmony of dialogic encounter, what happens to the other thirds? The child who interrupts the encounter, the former lover at the door or on the phone, the past that cannot be reversed, the future that cannot be contained, the unconscious itself as it rides the emergence of unanticipated circumstance? Surely, these are all negativities, even sources of “destruction” that cannot be fully overcome, sublated, resolved in the harmonious music of dialogue. What discord does that music drown out? What does it disavow in order to be? (UG 145-146)

Butler believes that no such Other can be found who could give a full description of who and what it is. Neither can the self, or the other self, make their selves known as particular subjects (either to their own selves or to each others). Hence, the formation of selves cannot be rendered speakable, conceptually known, at least not fully. We cannot find an authentic self, nor an authentic Other, amongst the various possible descriptions which can be given of them. This resembles closely Hegel’s description of Unhappy Consciousness. Unhappy

Consciousness sees that neither it itself - as it is also a subject - or any others, can give a *valid* description of themselves. Unhappy Consciousness sees that there is parts, constitutive of subjects, which can never be, all of them, brought into such a unity, which would make up a universal and timeless truth, i.e. a complete, “total” concept of the subject. If this kind of a conceptual unity is tried to be constructed, some constitutive Other becomes necessarily refuted.

According to Hegel’s analysis of the Unhappy Consciousness, Unhappy Consciousness sees that the moment of “a universal truth” is relevant as concerns the knowledge of subjects. Unhappy Consciousness realizes that subjects are “universalizing” beings, hence, “universal truth” is a moment of thinking. Yet, Unhappy Consciousness thinks that it is never reached by the limited subjects themselves. Striving for universal truth is, for Unhappy Consciousness, striving for the impossible, as it is always conducted by limited, historical subjects. Because the Unhappy Consciousness thinks of subjects, and their knowledge of themselves, through a construction like this – i.e. through a construction in which “universal truth” (or, a “thing in itself”) is seen as something relevant, yet, impossible to be reached by particular subjects, Unhappy Consciousness practices a Master-Slave (patronizing) epistemology. It acts as an external reader (external third) of the subjects. It knows that subjects (including itself) are unknown (in terms of *validly* known, i.e. fully, universally known) to themselves, because all their constitutive parts (which would make up the universal and timeless truth of themselves, and thus describe what they are as things/subjects in themselves) are not known for themselves. This actually repeats Hegel’s critique against Kantian philosophy (which can be seen as the point of reference behind the metaphoric figure of Unhappy Consciousness). With Kant, the ultimate truth of things (i.e. thing in itself) cannot be reached by the subjects themselves.

In UG Butler writes that the self and the Other cannot (apparently *necessarily*) find, or know, each others because neither one knows the way they know themselves or each others:

Can one find the Other whom one loves apart from all the others who have come to lodge at the site of that Other? Can one free the Other, as it were, from the entire history of psychic condensation and displacement or, indeed, from the precipitate of abandoned object-relations that form the ego itself? Or is part of what it means to “recognize” the Other to recognize that he or she comes, of necessity, with a history which does not have oneself as its center? (UG 146)

In the same text from where the previous quotations are from, Butler refers to two perspectives of how otherness becomes recognized in PhS. This is what she does also in some of her other books, e.g. in CHU, when discussing Hegel’s ek-static self in PhS. Butler sees that the self as internally multiple, ek-static appears in two ways in PhS. On the one hand, it is discussed in a non-teleological way, in which the otherness is not fully known. She refers in CHU, and also in UG, to “another kind of Hegel”, with whom the relation between the self and the Other is not identified as a definitive relation, yet as a movable, futural one. This movable, futural Hegelian self is not “total”, “complete” or “final” as Butler says. Yet, on the other hand, the self is discussed in an all-inclusive, non-futural way, in which all external features of the self (including all otherness, in full) are mediated into identity with the self. In CHU she refers to “monolithic and carnivorous Hegel, whose “Spirit” incorporates every

difference into “identity”, which means, for Butler, that there is no futural movement or becoming radically other any more. (CHU 174, UG 151, see also BM 113-116).

Butler argues that reciprocally recognitive “dyad” relationship is not *fully* possible. This is because the “third” is based on the refutation of other possible thirds. Butler sees that thirds refute other thirds, necessarily. In Butler, self as a third remains, in Hegelian terms, one-sidedly recognitive, instead of reciprocally recognitive: “Desire” is not turned into reciprocal recognition. For Butler, one way to see the ek-static relation (i.e. one way to act as a third) refutes radically other ways to see the ek-static relation. Thus, Butler appears to reject the core Hegelian idea behind reciprocal recognition (the non-Kojèveian reading of it, supported in this study) which is that a self-conscious third acknowledges that the Other is another *valid* third (i.e. another self-consciousness, epistemologically equal with it).

Butler argues that any recognition takes always place between particular people, in a particular place and time, not between abstract selves. Thus, recognition is bound to be facilitated, or mediated through terms – or actually *as* terms - which are not abstractions, yet instead, *some things*. Examples of such terms are “rational human being”, “person”, “citizen”, “woman”, “man”, “adult”, “normal” etc.

Butler questions Hegel’s idea that the *identificatory* term, through which the recognition takes place, could become freed from internal slavery (i.e. freed from its otherness-refuting structure). According to Hegel, the term or the language through which recognition takes place can be (at least ideally) constituted for reciprocally recognitive selves. Thus, for Hegel, identificatory terms (terms through which objects, “some things”, are identified or actually “laboured”) can become “shared”. This idea repeats the idea of “shared rationality” and “shared objectivity” in “absolute knowing”. (see chapter 2.3; Hutchings 2003, 106). Hence, for Hegel, the particular and *partial* “term” (or the particular and partial “theory” of what things are like), which always acts as the medium in recognition, does not need to refute either the self (as a theorist of the term) or the Other (as another theorist of the same thing). Things can be known in a partial, limited way, albeit in an “absolute” way. Knowing is absolute when it is not conditioned by an external, inaccessible (abstract) “beyond”, in other words, when it is not practiced in dualist (Master-Slave) relationships. In contrast to Hegel, Butler argues:

..the account of myself that I give in discourse never fully expresses or carries this living self. My words are taken away as I give them, interrupted by the time of a discourse that is not the same as the time of my life. This “interruption” contests the sense of the account’s being grounded in myself alone, since the indifferent structures that enable my living belong to a sociality that exceeds me. (GA 36)

Butler argues that the terms, by which one makes itself recognizable to the Other (or to itself) never fully express the self. The words become “interrupted” by something that is (at least partly) *indifferent* to the self, in the sense of *necessarily exceeding* the differentiating (particularizing) capacity of the self. Hence, the words become “interrupted” by something which remains, at least partly, an “inaccessible beyond” to the self. Consequently, as Butler repeats in all her text, the terms by which the self and the Other are recognized are permanently ambivalent, ambiguous, contingent. That is, they fail to fully describe their

object. They misrecognize their object. The words which facilitate recognition are partly constituted by something which is not “speakable” for the self itself, who is doing the describing. For Butler, a non-speakable, “exceeding” surplus denotes the *refuted otherness* of the term in question. It is the “non-existent”, yet “haunting” part of the term in question. Butler continues (in the same text from where the previous quotation is taken):

We can surely still tell our stories, and there will be many reasons to do precisely that. But we will not be able to be very authoritative when we try to give a full account with a narrative structure. The “I” can tell neither the story of its own emergence nor the conditions of its own possibility without bearing witness to a state of affairs to which one could not have been present, which are prior to one’s own emergence as a subject who can know, and so constitute a set of origins that one can narrate only at the expense of authoritative knowledge. Narration is surely possible under such circumstances, but it is, as Thomas Keenan has pointed out, surely fabulous. Fictional narration in general requires no referent to work as narrative, and we might say that the irrecoverability and foreclosure of the referent is the very condition of possibility for an account of myself, if that account is to take narrative form. The irrecoverability of an original referent does not destroy narrative; it produces it “in a fictional direction”... (GA 37)

The relation between what is spoken (of some recognition-mediating term, like e.g. “human”) by some specific self, and what is not spoken (in terms of completely silenced) of this term, by this same self, cannot be defined, by this self itself, in terms of a particular relation. This very idea actually summarizes Butler’s rejection of Hegel’s idea of self as a unified concept (a “totality”) for itself. If the unspeakable (silenced, refuted) part of a term could be rendered speakable (conceptual) that would mean that a Hegelian free self-consciousness would be constituted. For Butler, it is important that the relation between what is known of terms (such as “human” or “woman”) and what is not known of them is not rendered conceptually mediated in the Hegelian manner (this theme relates to Butler’s “Lacanianism” which is further discussed in the next chapter on Althusser). As she often repeats, if all the external relations (all otherness) of the terms are rendered internal (known), a return to a Hegelian all-inclusive synthesis is conducted. As has been explained before, in Hegel, the inclusion of “all” (i.e. “absolute knowing”) takes place in reciprocally cognitive relationships.

The term gestures toward a referent it cannot capture. Moreover, that lack of capture constitutes the linguistic possibility of a radical democratic contestation, one that opens the term for future articulations. (ES 108)

With Butler, the refutation of otherness cannot be willed away, nor should it be. Consequently, the identificatory terms by which selves recognize themselves, each others and things cannot be “shared”. Butler rejects the synthesizing element in Hegel’s dialectics. She is concerned of the refutation of the Other. Nevertheless, she believes that the refutation, the enslavement of the Other is unavoidable. The only alternative to the enslavement of the Other would be the End of History, which, for her, is actually no alternative as it denotes the “Hegelian carnivorous Spirit”, in which all otherness is repressed and forced into sameness with the self.

Butler reminds that there is always a refuted otherness (an internal, unspeakable slave) to all terms through which the selves recognize themselves, each others and things in general. However, for Butler, this realm of “unspeakable otherness” holds also a future promise for the terms, by which selves recognize each others, to become democratized. In a sense, hence, terms are “shared” (by the self and the Other, i.e. constituted by the subject and the constitutive outside) for Butler, however, this democracy, sharing, takes place as a “future promise”. The situation *now* is such that this democracy, the sharing of a referent, is strived for but not captured, not conceptualized. According to Butler, terms should be mobilized through the Other, or, be “opened up for otherness”, as she often says. However, she reminds that we cannot radicalize terms self-consciously, through the Other, so that the otherness would not be at the same time destructed in some way. Our self-conscious efforts to radicalize terms are always particular, historical and thus limited. As limited and “partial” they are, for Butler, refutive of the Other. Terms should be opened up for otherness, however we should always remember that we cannot ever “open” the terms for the Other so that the Other would not be excluded from them - enslaved and silenced in them - in some ways. Terms can never be shared, constituted equally for the self and the Other, i.e. become free from slavery. They can never become known in an “absolute” way, in reciprocally cognitive relationships, in the Hegelian sense. Any mediation results into a new otherness-refuting term, into a term which is constituted by what exceeds its self-knowledge, i.e. by its “surplus”/beyond. Nevertheless, Butler has an idea of politics, by which the selves and terms would become “democratized” in the sense of becoming opened up for otherness. She calls this a *performative politics*, or a “double-movement”.

An idea of historical (or, futural, as Butler usually says) and political movement (self-othering movement through slavery) appears as highly important in Butler’s political theory. Hegel calls this movement a “struggle for recognition”. With Hegel, in the realm of Master-Slave-relations, the slaves try to free themselves from epistemological and other forms of unfreedom, through a struggle for recognition. They try to become included into the valid and *authoritative* (i.e. free) humanity. This would mean that their speech (i.e. what they say of things) was regarded as authoritative and valid, which is the same thing as that they would become “speakable”, “existent” and “real”.

According to Butler, it is necessary not to include *all* the excluded, disavowed identifications, which are formative of the subject as a multiple and ek-static construction, into internal, conceptual features of the subject. Opposing this kind of *full* inclusion of the contradicting other into the subject is usually referred to by Butler as a *Hegelian synthesis*. Butler writes of this:

I invest no ultimate political hope in the possibility of avowing identifications that have conventionally been disavowed. It is doubtless true that certain disavowals are fundamentally enabling, and that no subject can proceed, can act, without disavowing certain possibilities and avowing others. Indeed, certain kinds of disavowals function as constitutive constraints, and they cannot be willed away. But here a reformulation is in order, for it is not, strictly speaking, that a subject disavows its identifications, but, rather, that certain exclusions and foreclosures institute the subject and persist as the permanent or constitutive

spectre of its own destabilization. The ideal of transforming all excluded identifications into inclusive features – of appropriating all difference into unity – would mark the return to a Hegelian synthesis which has no exterior and that, in appropriating all difference as exemplary features of itself becomes a figure for imperialism, a figure that installs itself by way of a romantic, insidious, and all-consuming humanism. (BM 115-116)

A Hegelian reciprocal recognition and rational Spirit constitutes for Butler an “imperialism”, a “colonialism”, or, “the carnivorous Hegelian Spirit” (ibid; CHU 174). For Butler, the main problem in the Hegelian synthesis is that in it the Other is fully and *finally* included into the subject. There remains no critical, radical outside by which the subject could be de-stabilized and changed. Whenever the Other is *fully* included into the subject (fully conceptualized) its radical otherness is imperialistically forced into sameness with the subject. This Butler sees as the danger in PhS, especially at the point when the internal mediator (internal, conceptual thirdness) is introduced. (PLP 51-53). Butler writes of the “imperialist violence”, inhering in the Hegelian recognition:

Language sustains the body not by bringing it into being or feeding it in a literal way; rather, it is by being interpellated within the terms of language that a certain social existence of the body first comes possible. To understand this, one must imagine an impossible scene, that of a body that has not yet been given social definition, a body that is, strictly speaking, not accessible to us, that nevertheless becomes accessible on the occasion of an address, a call, an interpellation that does not “discover” this body, but constitutes it fundamentally. We may think that to be addressed one must first be recognized, but here the Althusserian reversal of Hegel seems appropriate: the address constitutes a being within the possible circuit of recognition, and, accordingly, outside of it, in abjection. (ES 5)

For Hegel, when things are determined in reciprocally cognitive relationships, they are not constituted through the abjection (i.e repression) of the contradictory other. For Butler, in contrast, *any* recognition of the Other takes place in a scene which is *always already* constituted through an Althusserian type of an Interpellative address, in which the contradicting other is abjected. Any recognition is here seen as an ideological recognition (see ch. 3.2.1. on Althusser’s interpretation of recognition). In an ideological recognition, contradicting ways to recognize the Other are repudiated and silenced. Also the Hegelian reciprocal recognition needs mediating terms (such as “person”, “human”) through which it takes place. Any recognition takes place through language, which is formed through the ideological “enslavement” of the Other. Butler implies that the problem inhering in the enslaving ek-static process (resembling the struggle for recognition in PhS) is not resolved by reciprocally cognitive ek-static process or by any *Aufhebung*. The “result” of any dialectical synthesis (i.e. any “sharing” of terms between mutually Other parties) takes always place in historical and particular language and, hence, constitutes another enslaving construction.

It is important for Butler to remind that any recognition takes place on a social, linguistic scene which is formed through the abjection of the Other. Things, selves and bodies *become accessible for recognition* by being first formed in language, in discourse, which represses the

contradicting Other. Consequently, she argues that an “Althusserian reversal” of the Hegelian recognitive scene is necessary. Butler continues:

...to be addressed is not merely to be recognized for what one already is, but to have the very term conferred by which the recognition of existence becomes possible. One comes to “exist” by virtue of this fundamental dependency on the address of the Other. One “exists” not only by virtue of being recognized, but, in a prior sense, by being recognizable. The terms that facilitate recognition are themselves conventional, the effects and instruments of a social ritual that decode, often through exclusion and violence, the linguistic conditions of survivable subjects (ES 5)

Before proceeding further, Butler’s and Hegel’s differences and similarities are shortly summarized here. Butler and Hegel both agree that the world and the thinking self are internally contradictory, or, ek-static. Both thinkers agree that this ek-statism may become refuted so that the contradicting other is repressed. Where Butler and Hegel disagree is the question of how the ek-statism of things should be accounted for or preserved. Hegel argues that *when* a thinking self has become conscious of its own consciousness of the ek-statism of things (i.e. when it has become conscious of its own self as a “third”, as one third among other thirds), the way to preserve this - now already acknowledged - ek-statism is through a rational communication with the other selves (thirds) on an equal basis.

For Butler, thinking selves are incapable of acknowledging the ek-statism of the world and of themselves, without rendering it non-ek-static, i.e. without repressing the radical other. For Butler, Hegel makes a mistake to suppose that subjects are capable of acknowledging their own ek-statism (what Hegel calls as free self-consciousness) and the ek-statism of the world in general. Consequently, Butler rejects Hegelian reciprocal recognition, conceptuality and rationality. For Butler, the way to make things change through the radical other is to continue the ek-static process, which is similar to the struggle for recognition. Butler’s thought here is based on her view that particular, historical subjects, and particular cultures and discourses are “colonialist”: they always repress the Other. Butler offers an “Althusserian reversal of Hegel” as a way to preserve the ek-statism of things. By the Althusserian reversal, the Other is not included completely (finally) into the self, instead, any particular world-view and any particular view of the subject is processually radicalized through its repressed other. Through the Althusserian reversal the radical, contradicting potential of terms – the future promise of radical democracy - is preserved. In short, what Hegel calls as “absolute knowing” (i.e. the “sharing” of things in reciprocally recognitive relations between “ek-static” parties) denotes, in Butler’s thought, a future promise of democracy, which is strived for, albeit never reached *now*.

5.1.4. The incompleteness of the subject: Hegel and/or Althusser

Butler adheres to a specific kind of *incomplete* relation between the subject and the constitutive outside (the contradicting other). This incomplete relation is, according to Butler,

conceptually ambivalent, ambiguous. It fails to constitute a “Hegelian” conceptual unity of the ek-static parties of the subject and the Other. Butler writes:

I understood the “incompletion” of the subject-position in the following ways: 1) as the failure of any particular articulation to describe the population it represents; 2) that every subject is constituted differentially, and what is produced as the “constitutive outside” of the subject can never become fully inside or immanent. I take this last point to establish the fundamental difference between the Althusserian-inflected work of Laclau and Mouffe and a more Hegelian theory of the subject in which all external relations are – at least ideally – transformable into internal ones. (CHU 12).

Butler’s departing from the Hegelian “complete, synthesizing ek-statism” into an Althusserian-inflected “incomplete, non-synthesizing ek-statism” appears as the most fundamental theoretical structure in Butler’s subject-theory. Butler indeed explicates, in PLP, that her own subject-theory pursues the path that Hegel introduces in PhS, “only to foreclose” (PLP 32-34). In other words, Butler rejects the dialectical turn in PhS, by which Hegel starts to discuss the ek-statism as an *internal, self-conscious ek-statism*, i.e. as a thought ek-statism, ek-statism which is (now) acknowledged by the subject. Instead of following Hegel, Butler continues on a path in which the self (or, the subject, observed in the theory) does not acknowledge the radical other as something constitutive of itself or the world, or worry for the sake of the preservation of the ek-statism of things. Butler continues on a path in which the subject is not seen as an otherness-recognitive being, i.e. as a being who sees the Other as constitutive of itself. Through the Althusserian reversal the subject continues to be seen (in Butler’s theory) as a Desiring (one-sidedly recognitive) subject.

However, *Butler does not cast Hegel away, at least completely, by her Althusserian reversal. Butler’s subject-theory is actually structured by successive Althusserian reversals of Hegel, followed by Hegelian reversals of Althusser.* As will be explained further, Butler criticises, in turn, Althusser for his “Kantianism”, through a recourse made to the Hegelian idea that all powers, formative of the subject, exist as *thought* powers. As thought, they are thought by particular, discursive subjects. Whenever the formation of the subject is thought, it is also interpreted, in a cultural, discursive context. Consequently, all *thought* powers, including Althusser’s interpellative power, are historical and contextually limited powers which can be altered politically, through the excluded other. All interpellations (i.e. attempts to form an object in identity to some “name”) fail to *fully* constitute the terms they name *in identity to themselves*. Butler writes:

Interpellation is “barred” from success not by a structurally permanent form of prohibition (or foreclosure), but by its inability to determine the constitutive field of the human (PLP 130)

Butler’s Hegelian-Althusserian critical movement resembles the way the Hegelian ek-static (dialectical) process is structured *before* the dialectical turn into the self-conscious dialectics and reciprocal recognition (which Butler rejects). In Butler’s Hegelian-Althusserian ek-static process every Hegelian moment of full conceptual unity (the affirmation of identity, e.g.

sexual or ethnic identity) is followed by an Althusserian moment. Every Hegelian conceptual unity is reversed - by an Althusserian reversal – i.e. by being acknowledged being formed by an Interpellative (ideological) call, coming from an excluded, repressed other. In this process, terms become conceptually constructed (synthesized), however, these moments are followed by reversals, when their constitutive exclusions become interrogated and exposed. Along the process, each Althusserian moment of a conceptual incompleteness is followed by a Hegelian moment of conceptual completion. The idea in the Hegelian reversal of Althusser is to show that the Althusserian interpellative “naming” is itself an internally ek-static, historical and particular power. Butler’s ek-static process contains Hegelian (synthesizing, conceptualizing) and Althusserian (non-synthesizing) reversals, followed by each other. Synthesizing conceptualizations are made (i.e. terms are “shared” by the contradicting self and Other) and, then these conceptualizations are “troubled” and mobilized by pointing to their being constituted by powers which they exclude and refute. Butler writes:

It is one of the ambivalent implications of the decentering of the subject to have one’s writing be the site of a necessary and inevitable expropriation. But this yielding of ownership over what one writes has an important set of political corollaries, for the taking up, reforming, deforming of one’s words does open up a difficult future terrain of community, one in which the hope of ever fully recognizing oneself in the terms by which one signifies is sure to be disappointed. This not owning of one’s words is there from the start, however, since speaking is always in some ways the speaking of a stranger through and as oneself, the melancholic reiteration of a language that one never chose, that one does not find as an instrument to be used, but that one is, as it were used by, expropriated in, as the unstable and continuing condition of the “one” and the “we”, the ambivalent condition of the power that binds. (BM 241-242)

Butler follows with Hegel in PhS (in the phases preceding the dialectical reversal which Butler rejects) for the trenchant critique which is placed against all kinds of ethical imperatives and religious ideals (i.e. parochial universals, based on one-sided recognition and the refutation of otherness). She sees that before the introduction of the self as a conceptual mediator between its ek-static parts (i.e. as a self-conscious third) Hegel shows how the thinking self is (over again) beyond itself, i.e. led by powers which are not fully known to itself, powers excluded and repressed by it. Any effort, by the thinking self, to become a complete universal, results into another incomplete universal. Thus, all complete, universal truths, which the subject presents are proven incomplete, parochial. She criticises Hegel for departing from this pattern of explanation and for stopping this critical narrative at the point of the dialectical reversal, in which the relation between the self and the Other is internalized by the conceptually mediating “third” (PLP 34,51-53)

With Althusser, the “linguistic ideology” which forms the thinking subject, is an epistemological part of the subject’s formation (i.e. it contains such knowledge of the thinking subject) which cannot be conceptualized fully by the thinking subject itself. On the basis of the Althusserian modification of the Hegelian narrative, Butler argues that there always remains some type of a *constitutive outside* to the subject. All universal truths (i.e. all ideas of what the subject is, or, what the world is like) are formed by powers which are not *in full* conceptualizable by the (conceptualizing) subject itself. In this sense, for Butler, thinking

subjects are “known” and constituted, partly, by such epistemological parts, which cannot be known by the thinking subjects themselves. (ibid. see also PLP 15, 34, 51-53; CHU 12; BM 113-116; GT 144).

Through the Althusserian reversal, Butler continues a similar ek-static process, a movement through slavery (struggle for recognition) which takes place before the self, in PhS, becomes a self-conscious third, and, enters into reciprocally recognitive relations with the Others.

5.1.5. The processual incompleteness

Butler explains in CHU what she means by the incompleteness of *any* universality, especially by contrasting her idea with the Lacanian “Real”. She sees that Lacan and Žižek (and other followers of Lacan, like Althusser and Laclau) understand the notion of the incompleteness of any universality in a somewhat Kantian way, i.e. as a formal abstraction:

One other way of explaining this incompleteness of the subject is to establish its necessity through a recourse to a Lacanian psychoanalytic account of it. Žižek has suggested – and Laclau has partially agreed – that the Lacanian “Real” is but another name for this “incompleteness”, and that every subject, regardless of its social and historical conditions, is liable to the same postulate of inconclusiveness. The subject which comes into existence through this “bar” is one whose prehistory is necessarily foreclosed of its experience of itself as a subject. That founding and defining limit thus founds the subject at a necessary and irreversible distance from the conditions of its own traumatic emergence. (CHU 12)

In the text that follows the quotation above, Butler writes that the Lacanian “Real” appears as an incompleteness which is a structural necessity of all times, and all subjects, instead of being a political and temporal incompleteness. This incompleteness concerns the gender-difference. Butler criticises the Lacanian “Real” in reference to the Hegelian ek-statism. Consequently, she poses a critical question to the Lacanians:

...should not the incompleteness of subject-formation be linked to the democratic contestation over signifiers? Can the ahistorical recourse to the Lacanian bar be reconciled with the strategic question that hegemony poses, or does it stand as a quasi-transcendental limitation on all possible subject-formations and strategies and, hence, as fundamentally indifferent to the political field it is said to condition? If the subject always meets its limit in the selfsame place, then the subject is fundamentally exterior to the history in which it finds itself: there is no historicity to the subject, its limits, its articulability. Moreover, if we accept the notion that all historical struggle is nothing other than a vain effort to displace a founding limit that is structural in status, do we then commit ourselves to a distinction between the historical and the structural domains that subsequently excludes the historical domain from the understanding of opposition? (CHU 12-13)

Butler argues that while terms are incomplete, they are not incomplete in some specific way in all times and places. The knowledge of the subject is not limited – i.e. incomplete - in the same way universally and timelessly.

This problem of a structural approach to the founding limits of the subject becomes important when we consider possible forms of opposition. If hegemony denotes the historical possibilities for articulation that emerge within a given political horizon, then it will make a significant difference whether we understand that field as historically revisable and transformable, or whether it is given as a field whose integrity is secured by certain structurally identifiable limits and exclusions. (CHU 13).

In the next quotation, Butler argues in favour of a Hegelian way to think of contradictions (i.e. ek-static relations). When contradicting “universalizations” are made (through the enslaved others) the knowledge (which is contradicted by the enslaved others) should not be cancelled. Instead, both forms of knowledge should be granted some acknowledgement. Through the acknowledgement of the both forms of knowledge, the ek-statism, or the ek-static relation (between the subject and the Other, inside the specific form of knowledge in question) becomes preserved. For Butler, this means that we should think that the question of universality, universal knowledge or truth, has *not yet* been settled. Butler argues that the “not yet” provides a proper way to think of universality:

the assertion of universality by those who have conventionally been excluded by the term often produces a performative contradiction of a certain sort. But this contradiction, in Hegelian fashion, is not self-cancelling, but exposes the spectral doubling of the concept itself. And it prompts a set of antagonistic speculations on what the proper venue for the claim of universality ought to be. Who may speak it? And how ought it to be spoken? The fact that we do not know the answers to these questions confirms that the question of universality has not been settled. As I have argued elsewhere, to claim that the universal has not yet been articulated is to insist that the “not yet” is proper to an understanding of the universal itself: that which remains unrealized by the universal constitutes it essentially. The universal announces, as it were, its “non-place”, its fundamentally temporal modality precisely when challenges to its *existing* formulation emerge from those who are not covered by it, who have no entitlement to occupy the place of the “who“, but nevertheless demand that the universal as such ought to be inclusive of them. (CHU 39)

In Butler, “universals” are *temporally specific* states, when some term (like sexuality or race, or concepts like “human”) becomes fully, universally and finally (finally for itself) determined. A universal is timeless for itself. A universal *misrecognizes* itself for a final truth. It fails to see itself as a temporally specific, parochial, partial truth. All its external relations, also temporally external, are transformed into internal relations, into *present* knowledge. For Butler, Hegel’s self-conscious concepts are this kind of fully self-known universals: they

constitute knowledge in which time has stopped to move, as they have turned all the ek-static parts (all aspects of the Other) into parts of the same conceptual whole. When a thinker thinks of the world as such a concept, it knows itself and things in a full and final way. It knows itself as a particular subject and its Other as a particular other subject inside a timeless, stable universe. Butler rejects the idea that terms could be known in a full and permanent way like this. Instead, as she says in the quotation above, we should think that the “not yet” is a proper way to think of universality. This means that even that we cannot escape making universalist claims about terms, we should be ready to interrogate our claims through investigating the constitutive outside of our claims.

She argues in CHU,

The open-endedness that is essential to democratization implies that the universal cannot be finally identified with any particular content, and that this incommensurability (for which we do not need the Real) is crucial to the futural possibilities of democratic contestation. To ask after the new grounds of realizability is not to ask after the “end” of politics as a static and teleological conclusion: I presume that the point of hegemony on which we might concur is precisely the ideal of a possibility that exceeds every attempt at a final realization, one which gains its vitality from its non-coincidence with any present reality (CHU 162).

It was said above that Butler’s subject-theory takes place as a kind of theoretical movement. This theoretical movement resembles the “moving subject-theory” in Hegel’s PhS, in which movement is structured by partly external relations, as it is before the entrance into the realm of free self-consciousness. The “unknown part” of the subject, which is not related to internally (i.e. knowingly, as a particular or a conceptual part), but externally, as an ambivalent part, or as an unspeakable, non-grounded part, serves as an important point of reference in this “moving” theory. Butler argues:

If the spectrally human is to enter into the hegemonic reformulation of universality, a language between languages will have to be found. This will be no metalanguage, nor will it be the condition from which all languages hail. It will be the labour of transaction and translation which belongs to no single site, but is the movement between languages, and has its final destination in this movement itself. Indeed, the task will be not to assimilate the unspeakable into the domain of speakability in order to house it there, within the existing norms of dominance, but to shatter the confidence of dominance, to show how equivocal its claims to universality are. (CHU 179).

For Butler, the goal of the ek-static process is “the movement itself”. This appears also the goal in Butler’s politics. Butler writes:

To ask after the new grounds of realizability is not to ask after the “end” of politics as a static or teleological conclusion: I presume that the point of hegemony on which we might concur is precisely the ideal of a possibility that exceeds every attempt at a final realization, one which gains its vitality precisely

from its non-coincidence with any present reality. (CHU 162)

5.1.6. Butler's criticism of Hegel: the self and the Other

Butler argues against the Hegelian model of self-recognition and subject-object-dichotomy:

The Hegelian model of self-recognition that has been appropriated by Marx, Lukacs, and a variety of contemporary liberatory discourses presupposes a potential adequation between the "I" that confronts its world, including its language, as an object, and the "I" that finds itself as an object in that world. But the subject/object dichotomy, which here belongs to the tradition of Western epistemology, conditions the very problematic of identity that it seeks to solve. What discursive tradition establishes the "I" and its "Other" in an epistemological confrontation that subsequently decides where and how questions of knowability and agency are to be determined? What kinds of agency are foreclosed through the positing of an epistemological subject precisely because the rules and practices that govern the invocation of that subject and regulate its agency in advance are ruled out as sites of analysis and critical invention? That the epistemological point of departure is in no sense inevitable is naively and pervasively confirmed by the mundane operations of ordinary language – widely documented within anthropology – that regard the subject/object dichotomy as a strange and contingent, if not violent, philosophical imposition. The language of appropriation, instrumentality, and distanciation germane to the epistemological mode also belong to a strategy of domination that pits the "I" against an "Other" and, once that separation is effected, creates an artificial set of questions about the knowability and recoverability of that Other. As part of the epistemological inheritance of contemporary political discourses of identity, this binary opposition is a strategic move within a given set of signifying practices, one that establishes the "I" in and through this opposition and which reifies that opposition as a necessity, concealing the discursive apparatus by which the binary itself is constituted. (GT.144)

Butler criticises "the Hegelian self-recognitive model" for violently internalizing the Other into a conceptual unity with the "I". This internalization takes place especially by the self-conscious Spirit (a self which has conducted the "dialectical reversal", which Butler rejects) as she explains also in her other books, e.g. in BM (113-116) PLP (34, 51-53) and CHU (172). For Butler the Hegelian epistemological subject denotes a closure, for according to Butler it is a subject who fully and permanently knows itself and the Other. It is a subject who tries to conduct a violent, permanent differentiation *in advance* (in advance of the future) between the "I" and the Other. The outside (the Other, or, radically different kind of epistemology and intentionality) is violently tried to be sucked into the inside of the subject's own differential system. Violence takes place because the epistemological point of reference is determined at some specific point in history (thus "in advance", as the process is to go on), hence allowing for no futural dimension.

Butler sees that in the Hegelian ideal recognition a particular subject-object-dichotomy becomes considered a permanent truth of all subjects and objects (i.e. of the whole world). She criticises Hegel for abandoning his dialectical scheme, in which the thinking self is again and again forced to reject its view-points as parochial. Butler criticises Hegel for departing from this model of explanation and argues that any specific idea of what the “I” and the Other are like is only temporal and contingent.

Butler criticises Hegel for not exposing the limitedness and parochiality of also *that* self who goes through the dialectical reversal. (PLP 52; ES 142-144). Instead of exposing the parochialism of the self who *thinks* to be a free and a non-parochial self-consciousness (which, for Butler, Hegel should do), Hegel conducts an absolute *inversion* of the dialectical process. In reciprocally recognitive relations the self becomes its own internal mover, i.e. a mediator between itself and the contradicting other. Whereas before it was moved by such other, which moved it, without its own full knowing of it, now the self labours the world together with the Other, self-knowingly, conceptually and rationally. The dialectical inversion which Butler criticises (and which she replaces by the Althusserian reversal) takes place in PhS quite soon after the phase of Unhappy Consciousness and Reason. Butler writes:

Indeed, at this juncture one might well imagine a set of closing transitions for “The Unhappy Consciousness” different from the ones Hegel supplies, a set that is, nevertheless, perhaps more Hegelian than Hegel himself (PLP 52)

As said before, Butler and Hegel disagree on whether one’s ek-static structure can be known *self-consciously*, as a particular structure. Hegel thinks that we (subjective, temporal thinkers) can know our ek-static selves un-parochially (so that we do not necessarily repress the Other) even that we know ourselves as partial, context-dependent “conceptual closures”. In Hegel, this kind of non-refutive and unlimited— even if still partial and limited – knowing takes place as “absolute knowing” (*a process* of “shared” knowing) in reciprocally recognitive relationships. Hegel thinks that by seeing ourselves and the Others as equally free “absolutes” (for whom there is no constitutive yet inaccessible epistemological or ethical beyonds/“surpluses”) and by constituting the theory of the world for reciprocally recognitive selves, we can practice un-parochial knowing of ourselves and the Others. Hence, Hegel argues (expressed yet in Butlerian terms) that it is possible to practice “self-consciously ek-static” knowing of objects. Butler disagrees on the self-conscious knowability of this basic structure, especially as considers the moment of the constitutive otherness. In Hegelian terms, Butler does not think that “absolute” (reciprocally recognitive, “sharing”) knowing is possible. For Butler, there always remains a constitutive “surplus” which is not known for the one who is constituted by this surplus. The knowing self is not an absolute, instead, it is conditioned by what remains external (an inaccessible beyond) for it. All knowing is constituted by what exceeds it, and, this exceeding part is *a refuted* part. In contrast to the Hegelian idea of absolute knowledge, partial knowledge is for Butler, echoing Kojève, always “enslaving” knowledge. Butler emphasizes the temporal aspect in explaining why we cannot know the Other fully. We cannot know, internalize the Other *in advance*. We cannot end the ek-static process, which, for Butler, ends in Hegel’s reciprocal recognition in which the ek-static process proceeds through an internal, instead of an external Other.

Hegel himself discusses (as one of the stages in his dialectics of subjective spirit in PhS) the kind of consciousness who *sees* that there is an internal ek-statism (subject-Other-relationship) to things, but who, despite of this seeing, does not take this relationship to exist as a *thought* relationship, or as a thought alterity *for itself* (i.e. to be a particular alterity, constructed in its own thinking). This consciousness which Hegel discusses in PhS in the chapter of “Freedom of self-consciousness” (as the Unhappy consciousness) and in the beginning of “Reason” (as e.g. “positive scepticism”) is a parochial consciousness, even that it *sees* that things are structured by an internal self-Other-alterity. This consciousness is parochial (one-sidedly recognitive) even that it grasps the idea of freedom and reciprocal recognition. It constitutes a one-sided, unfree consciousness of reciprocal recognition and freedom because it sees them as formalist abstractions. For Hegel, a (self)consciousness, who sees that there is an internal contradictory relation (a self-Other-relation) to things, but who does not posit this alterity *for itself* (as a particular, subjective construction), needs internal slavery (refuted others, Bondsmen) in order to construct and determine, through the enslaved other, this relation which it *itself* refuses to construct *for itself* as a conceptual relation. In Hegel, always when things are structured through others which are not taken as one’s equals (as free others, as other “absolutes”) they are thought in a dualist manner. A thinker who sees things being structured by an unknowable relation (a relation, which is beyond particularizing subject’s capacity of particularization and conceptualization) needs others through whom it can *know* things as *some things*. It cannot itself identify things, because it sees that they (i.e. things which are identified) are actually constituted by a relation which is beyond the capacities of any “identifying”, “object-defining” self. It refuses to identify things because it sees identifications as partial and thus refutive. However, even this thinker cannot think without thinking of *something* (i.e. without the identification of things) and thus it needs others to “labour particulars” (to identify some things) for it. Yet, its relation to these others, whom it needs, is a dualist (Master-Slave) relation. It looks down upon the others, because they practice “otherness-refutive” as well as misrecognitive thinking and knowing. For Hegel, a thinker who thinks that it is *necessarily* impossible to provide an identifiable, particular form to something through which, or *as which* (as a basic structure) it nevertheless sees *particular* things and the world, is dependent on receiving the particular form and substance (to that thing or world which it sees) externally (through object-formative Bondsmen, or other thinkers who think of things on the basis of differential (differentiating and identifying) systems. Consequently, this thinker ends up into having an alien, external, patronizing attitude towards both the other (particularizing) thinkers and the particularized, identified things, i.e. the particularized world. This self (as Unhappy Consciousness) refutes “subjective” thinking in general, also its own thinking in so far as it practices object-identifying thinking. (chapter 2.2.7; PhS § 119-145)

In contrast to Hegel, Butler thinks that if the internal ek-static alterity is known conceptually, in the Hegelian sense, it is *then a* one-sided alterity. For Butler, an alterity which is left “undefined” or, “permanently ambivalent” is not one-sided, but instead, open to multiple interpretations and otherness. (see e.g UG 131-151; CHU 270-276)

5.1.7. Butler’s criticism of Hegel: the idea of time

Butler’s criticism of Hegel centers on the question of whether the structure of internal alterity

is knowable “in advance” or not. Butler thinks that the internal alterity can not be known in full, timelessly, because then it is known “in advance”. Subjects may only mistake their temporal knowledge for an eternal knowledge. This knowledge necessarily refutes its otherness, echoing the Kojèbian reading of time (chapter 3.1.). Thus, there always remains an abjected outside, as well as a futural outside to any determinate knowledge, given of internally ek-static things. This is due to the fact that any knowledge is always historical and situated. Any knowledge constitutes a temporal “moment” of knowledge. The temporal “remainder” (i.e. the other times, other moments of knowledge), constituting the incompleteness of any knowledge cannot be brought into a conceptual unity with the present, context-dependent knowledge by any context-dependent thinking self. Hence, knowledge as a temporal construction, reaching beyond any specific moment of knowing, cannot be known in full for any temporally specific thinker. The futural possibilities, the “other times” of terms remain inaccessible and thus un-conceptualized by any present thinking self, whose capacity of conceptualization is restricted by its history and place. (see e.g. GT 141)

For Butler, the “I” who takes itself as an object of knowledge and sets some definitional limits to its identity, thus claiming to know itself, is a changeable, processual “I”. She writes about this:

If identity is asserted through a process of signification, if identity is always already signified, and yet continues to signify as it circulates within various interlocking discourses, then the question of agency is not to be answered through a recourse to an “I” that pre-exists signification. In other words, the enabling conditions for an assertion of “I” are provided by the structure of signification, the rules that regulate the legitimate and illegitimate invocation of that pronoun, the practices that establish the terms of intelligibility by which that pronoun can circulate.(GT 143).

According to Butler, the particular substance of the thinking “I” and the terms, which exists in the thinking of this “I” change in unforeseeable ways, not rationally known before-hand. This is meant as a criticism against the Hegelian dialectical (conceptually mediated) movement which is in identity with the thinking “I”, i.e. which is known for the I’ because it proceeds rationally. Butler criticises Hegel for positing a self-conscious self (after the dialectical reversal, at the point of which Butler departs from Hegel) who knows its past, present and future. According to Butler’s criticism, the Hegelian self-conscious self is an “I” from which a time, identical with the I itself, originates from. This “I” mediates its past, present and future, as well as all relevant parts of itself, into an identity with itself. This means that everything which is epistemologically relevant for it, “speaks” for it conceptually. Nothing remains “unspeakable” for it. Its ek-static process (the process by which it goes through changes) is internal to itself – and there is no outside for this “I”. It is an “absolute” as concerns its temporal constitution. It is not conditioned by any temporal “outside”. Its “other times” are known to it *now*. This means that it cannot change in time. The Hegelian “I” stands before of its future. It controls time and, as such, its history has ended (see the chapter on Kojève for a discussion of this theme). Because the Hegelian self thinks of the process of subject-formation as a rational process, it is able to conceptually reflect on the entire process.

Butler criticises the idea that a self could relate conceptually with the timeless, universal rationality of things, and as such be able to grasp the future of things already now, in advance,

at some specific historical situation and cultural and linguistic context.

To a certain extent constitutive identifications are precisely those which are always disavowed, for, contrary to Hegel, the subject cannot reflect on the entire process of its formation. (BM 113)

Continuing to criticise the Hegelian kind of a thinking subject, who knows its internally complex structure as a coherent and rational synthesis, Butler argues:

It seems important, then, to question whether a political insistence on coherent identities can ever be the basis on which a crossing over into political alliance with other subordinated groups can take place, especially when such a conception of alliance fails to understand that the very subject-positions in question are themselves a kind of “crossing”, are themselves the lived scene of coalitions difficulty. The insistence on coherent identity as a point of departure presumes that what a “subject” is is already known, already fixed, and that that ready-made subject might enter the world to renegotiate its place. But is that very subject produces its coherence at the cost of its own complexity, the crossings of identifications of which it is itself composed, then that subject forecloses the kinds of contestatory connections that might democratize the field of its own operation. (BM 115)

However, as Butler continues, she admits that conceptually closed identities cannot be escaped (or, the necessary *moment* of a closed identity cannot be escaped) because thinking always takes place as a particular thinking of things as particular things. In this she refers to the basic Hegelian structure of internal alterity, in which both the “limited subject” (for whom things as particulars appear to) and the “ek-statism through contradicting other” (in relation to which things are not fully determined by their particularity) are both seen as necessary parts:

None of the above is meant to suggest that identity is to be denied, overcome, erased. None of us can fully answer to the demand to “go over yourself!”. The demand to overcome radically the constitutive constraints by which cultural viability is achieved would be its own form of violence. But when that very viability is itself the consequence of a repudiation, a subordination, or an exploitative relation, the negotiation becomes increasingly complex. (BM 117-119)

Importantly, also Hegel speaks of a process, in which both sides of an ek-static relation (self and Other) are to be taken into account. This is the idea behind Hegel’s reciprocal recognition. In reciprocally recognitive relations new things (concepts) emerge when the ek-static parties are influenced by each others. Butler’s queer-performativity draws from this idea. New things are produced performatively when ek-static parties influence each others, so that neither one becomes cancelled by the other. In Butler’s queer-performativity, the idea is to produce new terms, new bodies etc. so that these new terms contain aspects from mutually contradicting elements. This production takes place as an on-going radical process.

Following a basically Hegelian criticism against one-sided parochial universals and one-sided recognition, Butler argues that one limited identity (constituting a universalization of what it

is to be e.g. a “human”) should not be replaced by another limited identity. Instead, the possibility for existence should be provided for the *both*. When both of these mutually contradicting world-views are granted an acknowledgement, a room is given to the internal ek-statism of the world.

That identification shift does not necessarily mean that one identification is repudiated for another; that shifting may well be one sign of hope for the possibility of avowing an expansive set of connections. This will not be a simple matter of “sympathy” with another’s position, since sympathy involves a substitution of oneself for another that may well be a colonization of the other’s position *as* one’s own. And it will not be the abstract inference of an equivalence based on an insight into the partially constituted character of all social identity. It will be a matter of tracing the ways in which identification is implicated in what it excludes, and to follow the lines of that implication for the map of future community that it might yield (BM 118-119)

For Butler, if the both, i.e. the historical subject-position (i.e. a momentary subject-position) and the Other are taken into account (within some term like “woman”), the *resulting* term is beyond itself in a way which cannot be known as a particular concept “in advance”. Butler basically adheres to the Hegelian idea of reciprocal recognition, in which both parties making up a contradictory relation are acknowledged as valid. However, Butler contrasts Hegel in insisting that there is no conceptual mediation between the ek-static parties “in advance”. The aspect of temporality is relevant here. There is also a constitutive *temporally ek-static* relation to terms. Because all conceptual mediations are historical (i.e. they are made by subjects who live in some specific, limited time, “in advance” of future), they cannot conceptualize such ek-static parties which are temporally Other to each other. Consequently, the resulting term is not a concept, an identifiable “thing” (for Butler). Or, as terms nevertheless are temporally identified, the identification of the resulting term is based on some new discursive, temporally limited form, including a refutation of the Other. Identifications, made “in advance”, fail to conceptualize all the ek-static aspects (including the temporal othernesses) constitutive of the term. They fail to become “shared” between the self and the Other, in the Hegelian sense, because for Butler all terms are conditioned by what is inaccessible, unknown (also temporally) for them. When conceptualizations are made “in advance” (of the future), the constitutive aspect of the future becomes refuted.

Butler’s way to recognize the temporal ek-statims of terms by way of regarding *all* temporally particular identifications of terms as repressive colonisations (repressive of the “other times” of terms) resembles, basically, what Hegel says of the pure self-consciousness, especially of Unhappy Consciousness. The Unhappy Consciousness *sees* that things are structured by an ek-static relation, and it acknowledges the validity of the contradicting views concerning the term - yet it refuses to conceptualize the relation between the contradicting parties. The things which emerge (for the Unhappy Consciousness) as a result of the way it constructs them out of ek-static aspects are empty abstractions. As was explained in the previous chapter, the reason for this is that the Unhappy consciousness refuses to see itself as a particular subject, and its own way to gather things up from contradicting aspects as a *particular* way to gather things up from contradicting aspects.

In a way, a distinction between “Thing for us in advance” and “Thing in itself infinitely”,

resembling the Kantian distinction between “Thing for us” and “Thing in itself” becomes made here. For Hegel, the dilemma of this sort of “Kantian” thinker is that when it refuses to conceptualize the ek-statism of things which it sees, it depends on external “Bondsmen” i.e. labourers of particular objects, in order to see particularities *in the present*. At the same time when it depends on the Bondsmen (which are always temporally limited Bondsmen) it looks down upon them, because it considers them limited, “failing” consciousnesses.

5.1.8. Butler’s criticism of Hegel: reading Antigone

Butler’s subject-theory and her political theory are based on Hegel’s subject-theory, i.e. the theory of self-consciousness. Self-consciousnesses are ek-static beings, i.e. beings who are constituted through a constitutive relation with the contradicting other. These beings are proper subjects, which in Hegel’s theories means that they are self-reflective beings; free and rational beings. However, as is explained in chapter 2, Hegel has also a theory of beings whom he does not include into the realm of subjects and self-consciousness. These beings are women.

As is explicated in the chapter 4.2, feminists have criticised Hegel especially for his degrading way to confine women to the private sphere, and for excluding women from the public and political realms. Hegel’s theory of the “womankind” takes place partly through Hegel’s reading of the Antigone-story (in PhS). Butler, among other feminists, have criticised Hegel’s theory of women.

Even that Butler’s subject-theory and her political theory are criticised in this study, it is easy to join her – and other feminists – in her critique against Hegel’s theory of women. Butler discusses in her *Antigone’s Claim* (2000) mostly Hegel’s and Lacan’s reading of Antigone – as well as also the somewhat Lacanian feminist reading of Antigone by Luce Irigaray.

Butler criticises Hegel’s reading of the acts, speech and the deeds of women as not belonging to the public, social and political realm. Basically, Butler criticises Hegel’s theory of women on the basis of her Hegelian-inflected theory of ek-statism. Butler criticises Hegel’s way to render women as the absolute outside of the political realm. Women constitute the realm of the un-conscious. The speech and the deeds of the women are beyond rationality and conceptuality – hence, women are rendered un-speakable, non-existent beings. (AC 38-39)

Butler notes that the realm of the rationally human is constituted by the realm of the non-human in PhS. The realm of the rational self-consciousness depends on there being the realm of the non-rational non-consciousness. In order for there to be proper subjects and proper humans, there must be those who are excluded from proper subjectivity and humanity. Even that the womankind – with its Penatean gods and its non-rational law - constitutes the enemy of the rational law, this enemy appears as internal and necessary.

Antigone passes away as the power of the feminine and becomes redefined as the power of the mother, one whose sole task within the travels of Spirit is to produce a son for the purposes of the state, a son who leaves the family in order

to become a warring citizen. Thus citizenship demands a partial repudiation of the kinship relations that bring the male citizen into being, and yet kinship remains that which alone can produce male citizens (ibid. 12).

Butler writes of the way the Other (the women) is silenced in Hegel's reading of the Antigone. The silencing takes place for a large part by Hegel's idea of the "Penatean law of the family". Women are the guardians of this law and doomed to the same un-conceptual silence than the family law.

This law, we are told, is in opposition to public law; as the unconscious of public law, it is that which public law cannot do without, which it must, in fact, oppose and retain with a certain necessary hostility. Thus Hegel cites Antigone's word, a citation that contains and expels her at once, in which she refers to the unwritten and unfailing status of these laws. The laws of which she speaks are, strictly speaking, before writing, not yet registered or registerable at the level of writing. They are not fully knowable, but the state knows enough about them to oppose them violently. (ibid. 38-39)

Butler is quite right in claiming that the Hegelian rational state (in PhS) is constituted by there existing the excluded, repressed others. The non-ekstatic realm produces necessary aspects of the rational realm, e.g. the individualism of the immature youth, needed in war. By equipping the young men with the right attitude of "pathos" and "individualism" – necessary in war - women contribute for the self-maintenance of the state. Butler writes:

From this discussion of the hostility toward the individual and toward womankind as a representative of individuality, Hegel moves to a discussion of war, that is, a form of hostility necessary for the community's self-definition. (;) The community's necessary aggression against womankind (its internal enemy) appears to be transmuted into the community's aggression against its external enemy; the state intervenes in the family to wage war. The worth of the warring male youth is openly acknowledged, and in this way the community now loves him as she has loved him. (AC 37).

Butler argues that women constitute the necessary internal enemy of Hegel's rational state – without which the state could not be what it is (for Hegel, in PhS). For Butler, Hegel's theory includes a degrading reading of the women and the kinship relations in general. Hegel interprets women by a dominating speech, in which no room is given for the women themselves. Hegel does not realize that his reading of women and family relations is constituted on what it excludes and silences. It is easy to agree with Butler's account here.

In her book on Antigone Butler proceeds from her critical reading of Hegel to a critical reading of Lacan's interpretation of the Antigone story. As is explicated in the chapter 3.2, the relation between the two sexes constitutes an un-definable relation for Lacan. Resembling thus Hegel's account of women, according to Lacan, women do not *exist*. Because the relation between the sexes cannot be defined in systematic language, women denote a sex which escapes a coherent, linguistic definition. Consequently, communicable language constitutes a realm which is governed by the law of the Phallus. Like for Hegel, for Lacan, too, women, or

the feminine, constitutes an internal “trouble” in the communicable, rational realm. The rational realm has its unconscious side, which makes the rational realm unstable. The difference between Hegel and Lacan is that for Hegel, in PhS, the young males may develop out from their “feminine” immediacy and individualism, by becoming members of the rational state. They leave the family and become rational members of the state. Even that the womankind remains a power of the community – and the Spirit - as a whole, as it includes the realms of the un-conscious and the conceptual self-consciousness, the unconscious does not remain an internal psychic aspect of the mature, rational men. For Lacan, in contrast, each linguistic, conceptual individual contains its unconscious side and its conscious side. Thus, for Lacan, there is an internal conflict between these two spheres, within the realm of “the symbolic”, which renders systematic language unstable. (AC 40-44)

For Butler, Lacan’s reading of Antigone is able to radicalize Hegel’s reading, as Lacan situates the unconscious into the realm of the rational self-consciousness (ibid. 47). However, for Butler, Lacan’s reading of the Antigone repeat Lacan’s basic arguments concerning the relation between the sexes and the structure of the communicable language as the realm of the Phallus (ibid. 50-55). Butler criticises Lacan accordingly, for mainly for similar reasons, (explicated more thoroughly in the chapter 3.2.).

In the chapter 4.2.6. I referred to Hutchings’s description of Butler’s own reading of the Antigone story as ”radicalized Lacanianism”. According to Hutchings, Butler joins Lacan by seeing that the realms of the “conscious subject” and the “constitutive outside” are included into all thinking and into all terms. These aspects are related to each other by a primary, ek-static bond, which cannot be defined conceptually. However, unlike Lacan, Butler does not associate the unconscious, excluded side necessarily with women, and the systematic, conscious side with men. Nor does she think that some specific kinship relations (those which break with the norm of patriarchal heterosexuality) must always constitute the unconscious, excluded and repudiated relations of all human societies. It ought to be remembered that Antigone was a member of a somewhat “queer”, incestuous family, as she was her father’s half-sister and her brother’s aunt.

Butler’s reading of the Antigone story follows her overall theory of the ek-statism of terms. Butler retains the idea that there is the part of the “subject-position” (conceptual self-consciousness) and the radical other within all thinking and all terms. She builds upon the Hegelian dualism, which exists between men and women and between the public sphere (the state) and the private sphere (family) in PhS. Through a critical psychoanalytic reading, Butler however radicalizes the Hegelian dualism. Nevertheless, because of her basic Kojèbian-inflected theory of the subject, she finds it necessary that there remains the split between the legitimate, conceptually definable side and the illegitimate, conceptually undefinable side within the subject as well as within the society. For Butler, those who reside in the two realms ought to change, and we should not think that women, gays, blacks etc. stay forever the residents of the unconscious realm. However, Butler takes for granted the basic existence of these realms. For without them, the radical- democratic politics, in which politics is pursued through the excluded and silenced other, would not be possible. For Butler, the radical promise of the Antigone story is that she is able to trouble and redefine the terms of the rational realm. However, Butler closes her book on Antigone by arguing that the terms, which become radicalized by radical others such as Antigone, will never assume any stable definition:

in acting, as one who has no right to act, she upsets the vocabulary of kinship that is a precondition of the human, implicitly raising the question for us of what those preconditions really must be. She speaks within the language of entitlement from which she is excluded, participating in the language of the claim with which no final identification is possible. (AC. 82)

5.2. Butler and the Kojèbian interpretation

5.2.1. Butler on Kojève

It is argued in this study that Butler adheres to a specific “Kojèbian” tradition of reading Hegel without (apparently) acknowledging it. Butler’s Kojèbian interpretation of Hegel makes Butler reject the possibility of Hegel’s reciprocally recognitive relationships and the realm of non-slavery, freedom. She “suspends” the Hegelian narrative at the same point where Kojève sees the history end, at the point where the subject enters into reciprocally recognitive relationships with others. Butler suspends the narrative, yet remains within the basic Hegelian subject-theory (i.e. the theory of the subject as ek-static). As will be explicated in this chapter, Butler’s way to remain within the Hegelian subject-theory - after suspending the narrative through a Kojèbian interpretation of Hegel - is conducted through a recourse made to Althusser’s theory of Interpellation. Butler’s “Althusserian reversal of Hegel” has its background in a Kojèbian reading of Hegel.

Butler’s Kojèbian-inflected reading of Hegel is characterized by a few important features. One of these features is the fear of the Kojèbian “End of History”. The End of History denotes the non-changeable realm of the “Wise Men”. Kojève interprets Hegel’s ideal society and the free state (in which there is reciprocally recognitive relationships) as the end of all politics and all change. For Kojève, historical change ends by the ending of the refutation of otherness. There is no historical change and no politics when there are reciprocally recognitive relationships. In Kojève, the prerequisite for historical change is that subjects are equipped with an attitude of Desire toward others and that there are relations of Lordship and Bondage. (see ch. 3.1.1.)

Another feature, typical in Kojèbian-inflected interpretations of Hegel is that “particularizing thinking” (what Hegel would call as “Consciousness as Understanding”) inevitably excludes some others and, that this exclusion is always *repressive* (on this reading and its roots in Kojève see Weir 1996). When thinking selves see themselves and others as particular subjects – or things as particular things – they necessarily not only exclude but also more or less violently repress *contradicting* others. They refute other interpretations of themselves, of each others and of things in general. They refute such other interpretations which have no common measure with the differential system on which their own view of things is constituted. In Kojève, particular subjects (i.e. thinkers who identify themselves and others as particular subjects) cannot mediate conceptually with others without refuting them. All efforts to take otherness into consideration result just into new ways of refuting otherness. Hence, history is continuous struggle. This resembles closely how the dialectical change - in subjective

consciousness structured by internal otherness - takes place in PhS *before* the emergence of reciprocally recognitive relationships between selves.

It will be argued in this chapter that the Kojèbian tradition of interpreting Hegel is developed further in the views of thinkers like Butler. It appears that Butler gains her basically Hegelian theory of internally ek-static thinking - yet through Kojèbian lenses - especially from such thinkers as Foucault, Lacan and Althusser. Butler develops her theory of internal ek-statism to a large extent in discussions with these Kojèbian-inflected thinkers. Althusser's theory of subject-formation (the theory of Interpellation) is rooted in Lacan's (Kojèbian-inflected) subject-theory. Even that Butler also criticises Althusser, Foucault and Lacan as well as such thinkers as Žižek and Irigaray (who also have Kojèbian-inflected subject-theories, primarily through Lacan), Butler does not question the basic Kojèbian notions concerning the internal ek-statism of thinking (explained briefly above). It is significant that while in SD, Butler describes and discusses in detail the French post-War reception of Hegel's thinking, she fails to analyze in depth the fact that the Hegel admired, criticized and rejected by the leading French thinkers is actually Hegel seen through Kojèbian lenses. A simple explanation of this omission is that Butler herself shares the received French interpretation: her Hegel is more or less the same as Kojève's Hegel.

In a book review, "Poststructuralism and Postmarxism" (1993), Butler formulates the poststructuralist version of Kojève's Hegelianism:

Rather, the "end" toward which history has been thought to be moving has proven illusory; it is either permanently deferred or postponed, use the deconstructive terminology, or it has been exposed as an impossible ideal. In this sense, these positions, which we might loosely call poststructuralist, differ from the Kojèbian hypothesis recently echoed by Fukuyama, that history has come to an end and that we dwell now in a posthistorical time. The poststructuralist position, if it is a position, argues that this "end" is in the future, but – and this is the crucial twist – *in a future which is in principle unrealizable*. The promise of history is one that is destined to be broken. The end of history is an impossibility; it never happened, and it will never happen. It is an ideal, and if it were to take place, it would immediately be vanquished in its ideality and, hence, cannot be understood on the order of the event. (Butler 1993b, 4; emphasis in the original)

In this passage, Butler presents the Kojèbian hypothesis and shows how the poststructuralist position emerges from its (limited) critique. *She does not, however, discuss on how far this the "end of history" interpretation is actually supported by Hegel*. In the next pages (pp. 5-7) she simply calls Kojève's hypothesis as "Hegel's" or "Hegelian".

In another book review - of Michael S. Roth's *Knowing and History. Appropriations of Hegel in Twentieth-Century France* (1990) - Butler writes of Hegel in an explicitly Kojèbian manner. In this text, Butler argues that Hegel made a claim that history came to its end in his model of reciprocal recognition. Butler says: "Hegel's claim that history has reached an end in 1807 is taken seriously by those who survive that closure". Butler hence takes as some sort of a given fact, that Hegel made a claim that history has come to its end in 1807. At the end of the text she comments;

The paradox of the Hegelian production and rejection of the post-Hegelian is precisely the problematic initiated by *Hegel's claim* that history is at an end. (p. 258; emphasis here)

By “those who survive that closure”, Butler refers to Kojève, amongst some other philosophers. Butler hence associates the “end of history” with the Hegelian reciprocal recognition. When the subject enters into reciprocally recognitive relations with other subject, the history ends, because then the telos of the historical process, or actually progress, becomes explicit for the subjects themselves. There remains no excluded, repressed groups who could redirect the historical process in ways which would not be known already. (ibid. 249-252) These two book reviews appear as key texts; in them, unlike in her books, Butler clearly defines her own position in reference to that of Kojève.

Butler emphasizes, all throughout her texts, that politics is a *futural* process, and, that the futural (or, historical) process, through an excluded, repressed other, never meets its end:

The end of history is an impossibility; it never happened, and it will never happen. It is an ideal, and if it were to take place, it would immediately be vanquished in its ideality and, hence, cannot be understood on the order of the event. (;) On the contrary, in a sense that will become important to interrogate, the unrealizability of the end of history is precisely what guarantess futurity, for if history were to have an end, a telos, and if that end were knowable in the present, then the future would be known in advance of its emergence, and history, a postulation that invariably takes place in the present, would assimilate that end to the present and so foreclose the very history that the postulation anticipates. (Butler 1993b,4)

For Kojève the End of History was something truly ideal and welcome. Butler retains the ideality of this “Hegelian complete, final knowledge” in her theory as a sort of “negative goal”. It constitutes a sort of “necessary error”, as an ideal and as a goal. Complete, final knowledge is a goal, which ought not to be reached, but which is necessarily strived for, at least by some, in order for there to be politics. All politics, as a futural process, depends on there being subjects who try to end this process - by striving after final knowledge. Thus, the existence of the futural politics depends on there being subjects who try to end the futural politics, i.e. in Kojèbian terms, who *try* to end the history by finding the ultimate truth and realizing the ultimate ideal. It appears that Hegelian absolute knowledge – as a state of epistemological satisfaction and the end of Desire – is a foundational political entity in Butler, in the curious form of a “necessary error”.

Hegelian absolute, complete self-knowledge (knowledge which is “shared” between the ek-static parties, the self and the Other, in other words, knowledge which is not conditioned by what is refuted by it) and reciprocally recognitive relationships exist in Butler’s theory as something retained yet rejected. The Kojèbian threat of the End of History, the End of Subject and the End of Politics is escaped by processual denial of the validity of subjective knowledge. Self as a being who conceptualizes and presents knowledge of its own ek-statism

(and thus acts as a “mediating third” of its own constitutive contradictions) becomes turned, in Butler, into something which appears as a *constant* threat, something to be escaped. Thinking self as a conceptual synthesizer (mediator) of its ek-static parts is a constant threat because – as the subject-theory is nevertheless a Hegelian one – it is what the subjects are seen to strive for. In Hegel, thinkers strive for freedom, for complete knowledge of their ek-static selves and the world, by trying to connect with those parts of themselves which they do not (yet) have knowledge of. Butler’s model of politics is fundamentally based on the Hegelian subject, who tries to connect with those parts of its ek-static self, which it does not (yet) have a knowledge of. Butler’s model of politics (ek-static movement) requires a Hegelian subject, who tries to connect with its Other. However, it appears that through a Kojèbian interpretation of the Hegelian subject, Butler’s politics is a project of “striving for the impossible”. By the Kojèbian threat of the “End of History” the basically Hegelian subject cannot, and should not, reach the goal which it strives for. The goal cannot be cast away because the ek-static politics is *dependent* on an attempt to reach it. Consequently, the goal becomes retained in Butler’s political thought as a necessary error. The politics depends on this error being made. However, the particular political subjects themselves, striving for this goal, must not consider it an error. *In Butler, paradoxically, subjects necessarily and genuinely have to strive for something which they cannot and should not reach.* This complex idea is echoed in the next line, by Butler:

The constitutive instability of the term, its incapacity ever fully to describe what it names, is produced precisely by what is excluded in order for the determination to take place (BM 218)

5.2.2. Historical movement and politics through slavery and Desire

Kojève did not see the realm of free self-conscious Spirit as a violent, otherness-refuting realm. In contrast, he considered it a kingdom of harmony, without slavery. However, Butler and some other contemporary philosophers who read Hegel’s free self-consciousness in line with Kojève, see it differently. In short, what is seen by Kojève as the final end, is seen by Butler and a few other post-modern thinkers as a threat. Indeed, the whole post-modernist view of Hegel as a “totalizing” and “finalizing” thinker, who ultimately wants to suppress all differences, can be seen to be based on a Kojèbian reading of Hegel. For Butler, Hegel’s free self-consciousness is a self-same subject, who cannot recognize the Other. Because this self thinks that it has no situationality and particularity (i.e. no limits to its knowledge), it extends itself violently and imperialistically everywhere, across places, contexts and times. It cannot acknowledge such other knowledge which would not be already a part of its present knowledge. It does not allow any dependency on otherness to itself for example as a future where it is beyond or different to its present self.

In Hegel, the field in which oppositions turn out to have presupposed each other is one that is led into crisis when the practice of nomination becomes so profoundly equivocal that nothing and everything is meant by the name. It is unclear what is resistance, what is Fascism, and the understanding of this

equivocation precipitates a crisis of sorts, one which calls for a new organization of the political field itself. This can be called a crisis or a passage of unknowingness, or it can be understood as precisely the kind of collapse that gives rise either to a new nomenclature or to a radical reinscription of the old. The risk here is that the dialectic can work to extend the very terms of dominance to include every aspect of opposition. This is the trope of the monolithic and carnivorous Hegel whose “Spirit” incorporates every difference into identity. (CHU 174)

This “trope” resonates with the Kojévian reading of Hegel. With both Kojève and Butler, the realm of Spirit is a place without critical otherness, or futural movement caused by this otherness. The reason for this is that the self has become an all-inclusive system. There is no other, no outside, who could move it, displace its knowledge of itself and make it different. Echoing Kojève, this means for Butler that there is no “refuted otherness” (i.e. slaves, unknown otherness) any more. In criticism against Hegel’s realm of reciprocal recognition, Butler sees it important to remember that there is a refuted otherness to *any* self-knowledge. In other words, there is an unspeakable and non-existent, enslaved other, to any self-consciousness. As will be explicated e.g. in the next sub-chapter Butler’s criticism against Hegel’s (supposedly) totalizing free self-consciousness serves as a core argument in Butler’s criticism against various subject-theories,.

I invest no ultimate political hope in the possibility of avowing identifications that have conventionally been disavowed. It is doubtless true that certain disavowals are fundamentally enabling, and that no subject can proceed, can act, without disavowing certain possibilities and avowing others. Indeed, certain kinds of disavowals function as constitutive constraints, and they cannot be willed away. But here a reformulation is in order, for it is not, strictly speaking, that a subject disavows its identifications, but rather, that certain exclusions and foreclosures institute the subject and persists as the permanent or constitutive spectre of its own destabilization. *The ideal of transforming all excluded identifications into inclusive features – of appropriating all difference into unity – would mark the return to a Hegelian synthesis which has no exterior and that, in appropriating all difference as exemplary features of itself, becomes a figure for imperialism, a figure that installs itself by way of a romantic, insidious, and all-consuming humanism.* But there remains the task of thinking through the potential cruelties that follow from an intensification of identification that cannot afford to acknowledge the exclusions on which it is dependent, exclusions that must be refused, identifications that must remain as refuse, as abjected, in order for that intensified identification to exist. (BM 115-116, emphasis mine).

Butler does not consider temporally and culturally limited thinkers capable of saying anything – anything which does not constitute, as she defines it, a “necessary error” - of the relation between their own (present, particular) knowledge of the world and temporally Other knowledge of the world. In Butler, knowledge is formed of radical relations, of which the radical temporal relations are highly relevant and constitutive ones. Yet, the temporally limited thinkers themselves are seen by Butler as incapable of saying anything which does not fail, of their own ek-static temporal constitution. Their ek-static temporal constitution goes

beyond their limited capacity to understand ek-static relations. Their capacity to understand ek-static relations is limited, however, it is not limited in the Hegelian way of being limited *for themselves* (internally, conceptually), but instead, limited *externally*. Temporally specific knowledge is constituted externally (at least partly externally) by Other times. Butler is critical when subject-formative, ek-static temporal relations are defined, e.g. when “Other times” are conceptually mediated with the limited, particular times of the limited subjects (e.g. in the form of a coherent history). Butler insists frequently e.g. that the future should remain undefined. Because the future is radically other to the present time, it should not become defined by the present. For Butler, various conceptualizations of temporal processes always fail to describe their object *in full*, i.e. they fail to describe the temporally ek-static constitution of subjects and things.

What is important about these ek-static temporal relations is that Butler sees them as *constitutive*, however, as beyond the epistemological capacities of temporally limited subjects themselves. The way radically other times are constitutive of the subjectively known, particular time (the present) is thus *normatively* an external relation, constituting an external temporal constitution, of particular subjects. The constitutive relations between mutually Other (ek-static) times becomes, hence, placed into a realm beyond the capacities of particular subjects, because particular subjects are seen as temporally limited, yet not limited *for themselves*. Because e.g. the future is seen as this kind of an “other time” – as it is for Butler – it constitutes a founding temporal aspect which *never* becomes limited (for thinkers like Butler). Because the future cannot be defined by particular subjects in any non-failing way, the unknown (abstract, or “pure”) future constitutes an *un-political* aspect of subjects (for thinkers who think of it like Butler). All “specific, limited times” (and all temporally specific knowledge) are constituted by temporally Other and normatively “pure” (abstract) aspects which are beyond the capacities of the temporally limited subjects. The “Other times” constitutes hence an abstract temporal constitution of the subjects. The future, after all, has no particular properties.

For Butler, as for Kojève, the future becomes included into the present in the Hegelian realm of reciprocal recognition. The temporally ek-static constitution of historical subjects comes to its end, when there are no Other times any more. The present time and the present knowledge become unlimited, absolute. Butler’s way to escape the End of History is to keep reminding that things should not be defined “in advance”. However, if this idea is generalized, it becomes empty. All defining is defining “in advance”. The result is not that the Others (living in Other times, e.g. in the future) are somehow set free to define things in their own “futurally Other” ways, but that no-one is allowed to define anything. Because the advice (not to define things in advance) is given to subjects *in all times*, there will be no such future in which things are allowed to be defined. All times, also the futural time, take place “in advance” of their *own* future, and thus the advice not to define things “in advance” has to be applied to all times. In this way, the “pure future” becomes turned into a “pure present” which extends itself limitlessly, to all possible temporal directions. In fact, the necessarily non-definable “Other time” (be it the future or any other Other time, seen as *constitutive* of the time of the subject) turns *all times* into non-definable times. The result is not really distinguishable from the End of History.

As a short interval summary, it appears that Butler builds her subject-theory and political theory on the Hegelian “ek-static self” and on the *self-othering-through-slavery* process in

PhS. She does not in any way deny that she builds her subject-theory on Hegel. In contrast, she says this repeatedly in her texts. Additionally, an important aspect of Butler's subject-theory is to avoid the "return to a Hegelian synthesis which has no exterior." Hence, while she takes some aspects of Hegel's subject-theory in PhS as basic elements of her own theory, she rejects other parts of them and uses them as warning examples. Hegel's free self-consciousness – interpreted in a Kojévian way - is used in her subject-theory as a negative ideal to be avoided. At the same time, Butler sees that it is necessary, for political reasons, that this ideal is indeed a positive ideal, a goal which is genuinely strived for at least for some. Subjects who strive after impossible goals (e.g. after "temporally other" goals, which cannot and should not be reached) appear as necessary instruments for the preservation of politics.

5.2.3. Final knowledge

Throughout her works, Butler criticises, not only "Hegel's permanent self-identity" but also various other theoretical and political ideas, for giving a *full* and *permanent* identity to their subject of study. Butler's main interest is with theories which theorize sexuality and gender-relations, e.g. feminist theories, queer theories and theories of democracy. As was explained in the previous sub-chapter, Butler's criticism can be seen to operate mainly on the basis of her criticism against (Hegelian) all-inclusive self-consciousness. Butler sees, like Kojève, that Hegel's free self-consciousness has internalized all its epistemological parts into itself (including such otherness, which could actually make it radically other than what it is already) and that its ("self-othering") movement has stopped. Hence there remains no radical political power outside of it, which could function as a critical limit to its self-knowledge. For Butler, Hegel's free self-consciousness holds its otherness and also its future in self-identity with it, because its otherness and its future are *conceptual, rational aspects of it (for itself) already*. Hegel's free self-consciousness moves only internally, self-knowingly (i.e. non-ek-statically) and thus its future is already "owned" by it. There are no conflicts and no politics to free self-consciousness. As for Kojève, it has no future which could not be told already now. (see e.g. BM 113-116, ES 5)

Butler criticises various theories for presenting "full, final knowledge" of e.g. "woman", "sex" or "human". She criticises various theories for trying to fix the internal ek-statism of the term (i.e. "woman") into a total, permanent self-identity. Also, she criticises them for trying to end the movement of the term, for trying to be the final explanation of the term and for forgetting that there always remains an outside/otherness, which cannot be known by any temporal, particular description of the term. Butler does not approve of the ek-static structure being turned into such syntheses, to which no "unknown, futural otherness" would be seen as constitutive of. Unknown, or partly unknown otherness is the same as "refuted otherness", similar than the "enslaved universal" in the Lord-Bondsman-relations in PhS. In PhS, the enslaved otherness denotes knowledge which does not "speak", which is non-existent and which does not "matter" or "appear", because its own meaning-giving, and object-formative, system is not acknowledged as a valid one.

Butler's criticism - which has its base in her criticism of the Hegelian full self-knowledge, as it is interpreted by her, in a Kojévian way - is presented by her towards very different kinds

of theories. It is also presented by Butler against “post-structural” ideas of “non-identity”. As Butler convincingly shows, it can be presented against any kind of subject-theory which does not analyze the subject in the same (“self-othering”) way as it is done in PhS, during the phases of the struggle for recognition, i.e. during “history”. These theories are criticised by Butler for the fact that these theories do not see themselves as incomplete and do not acknowledge their own limited nature.

Butler also speaks of what she considers to be an Other-acknowledging way to think of a term like “human”. This is similar to what she considers to be the a radically democratizing or radically political way to think of various terms like “sex”, “subject”, “woman”, or “universality”. The role of the unknown (refuted) otherness appears as fundamental for any actual politics.

Have we ever yet known the “human”? What might it take to approach that knowing? Should we be wary of knowing it too soon? Should we be wary of final or definitive knowing? If we take the field of the human for granted, then we fail to think critically – and ethically – about the consequential ways that the human is being produced, reproduced, deproduced. This latter inquiry does not exhaust the field of ethics, but I cannot imagine a “responsible” ethics or theory of social transformation operating without it”....” the necessity of keeping our notion of “human” open to a future articulation is essential to the project of a critical international human rights discourse and politics. We see this time again when the very notion of the “human” is presupposed; it is defined in advance.(UG 222).

To claim that the universal has not yet been articulated is to insist that the “not yet” is proper to an understanding of the universal itself: that which remains “unrealized” by the universal constitutes it essentially. The universal begins to become articulated precisely through challenges to its *existing* formulation, and this challenge emerges from those who are not covered by it, who have no entitlement to occupy the place of the “who”, but who, nevertheless, demand that the universal as such ought to be inclusive of them. The excluded, in this sense, constitutes the contingent limit of universalization. “....” It is this otherness by which the speakable is instituted, that haunts its boundaries, and that threatens to enter the speakable through substitutions that cannot always be detected. (UG 191)

Butler’s normative model in these criticisms is the Hegelian subject’s self-criticism (through the refuted other) in PhS. Hegel’s subject criticises itself processually through its refuted, i.e. enslaved other. The self and the Other do not stay the same along the process and hence the criticism also changes, according to what the excluded Other is. The present “universal” system of self-knowledge is always taken as the target of criticism, from the point of view of that which is refuted and excluded by it. Various forms of self-knowledge become turned radically other, in relation to what they were before. The subject is “haunted” and transformed over again by its own parochial, incomplete self-knowledge, structured by an

internal slavery. Whenever it thinks that it has reached full knowledge of itself, and thus become self-identical, it finds out that this is not the case. It has just ended up in a new kind of parochial self-knowledge as there emerges a new “otherness”, which is not yet part of its self-knowledge. Thus, the self criticises itself, along a temporal process, for that what remains unknown by it. Butler criticises various theories because they do not acknowledge their own limited validity (i.e. practise the sort of self-criticism, through the Other). She criticises e.g. structural feminism (i.e. feminism which takes some description of “woman” as its rallying point) for what remains unknown by it and illegitimate for it. She sees that feminism which posits some idea of what woman is, forgets that it is only a temporal idea, and that there is always “otherness”, and an unknown future, to any particular description of any given term (see e.g. GT 1-5).

The same type of criticism is presented by Butler against “post-structural” or postmodernist theorists also. Butler criticises e.g. Derridean or Foucauldian feminism for trying to fix a *fully unknown* “non-identity” for terms such as “woman”. She sees that there is an unknown outside to these theories themselves, which cling to a full unknowingness of the subject. This criticism is quite like Hegel’s criticism of pure self-consciousness in PhS (see chapter 2.2.11). Butler sees that also when things are permanently, *fully unknown* by some theory, there is an “End of History” if this is taken as the full, final truth. She e.g. sees that Derrida’s “signifiers” “float” too freely (to use a Derridean terminology). Hence, Derrida’s signifiers are alike the words in the Hegelian realm of free self-consciousness: anything and nothing is actually meant by them. (ES 147-151).

Butler criticises the French, post-structural feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray for a similar reason than she criticises Derrida. Irigaray is seen as one of the theorists who build on the Kojévian tradition (see e.g. Weir 1996, 1-5, 90-111). Irigaray argues that “woman” is something which is in constant “flux”. This “flux” escapes determinate self-identity. Woman cannot be known as an object which has a determinate *position* to it. For Irigaray, it is characteristic for a phallic subject-object-epistemology to think that things are objects with stable positions, with determinate borders around them. Irigaray argues that things are not “one” in this way. For Irigaray, woman is not limited by borders, as it ambivalently flows like “jouissance”. Butler argues that Irigaray’s femininity is without any limits, hence, it allows no critical outside to it. It does not allow the existence of any Other knowledge of woman, or the feminine. It sets a *permanent, full, un-limited* un-knowingness to women, and forgets that if something is described as fully unknown, this is a self-relational, temporal gesture, which is made in some historical language. For Butler, this kind of full unknowingness constitutes its own version of full and permanent knowingness. Butler criticises Irigaray also for reproducing old patriarchal myths, according to which women belong to the realm of “immanence” and “nature”. For Butler, Irigaray’s philosophy paradoxically repeats the ancient patriarchal myth of women as beings who are non-logical, non-rational and un-political “fully natural” beings. (see e.g. BM 39-49, and, GT 101-106; PLP 2-3,11; CHU 144, 151,167).

The criticism which Butler presents against Hegel’s free self-consciousness can be also be presented against e.g. Habermasian and Rawlsian theories. In these theories there is an idea to leave the particular identities of subjects un-described, however there is some idea of universal reason or rationality (as e.g. rational communication, which is seen as the inherent capacity of everybody). These ideas are criticised by Butler for forgetting that there remains a

refuted part, that of “limited subjectivity” which is constitutive of the reason which (in a Kantian vein) claims to be empty of particular subjectivity. Butler’s criticism against e.g. Habermas resembles closely Hegel’s criticism against Kantian transcendental, abstract, formal reason. When Butler criticises the Habermasian reason for its formalism and abstractivity, she tends to refer to Hegel’s criticism of Kant. (see e.g. CHU 15). Importantly, Hegel’s criticism against the Kantian “empty reason” is a part of his criticism of pure self-consciousness, taking part before the entrance into free self-consciousness. In free self-consciousness the Kantian reason is internally mediated with its otherness, i.e. the particular historical subjectivity.

In fact, according to Butler whenever a theory holds on to *any* kind of a description, *which this theory itself does not admit as being incomplete and as constituted by something which this theory itself excludes and refutes*, this description can be criticised for “ending the history”.

5.2.4. “Pure being”

Kojève’s and Butler’s way to interpret Hegel’s free self-consciousness and the community of free selves resembles interestingly what Hegel himself says about “pure being”, which, for Hegel, is the same as “empty undifferentiated nothing”. Hegel connects pure being to abstract thinking and with “pure self-consciousness”, which is a phase in PhS preceding the entrance into free, actual self-consciousness and the community of reciprocal recognition. Pure self-consciousness -especially just before its entrance into free self-consciousness - has knowledge of all its parts, however, only as abstract notions, as empty nothingnesses. For Hegel, when things are taken as pure, non-particular abstractions (as they exist for pure self-consciousness, according to Hegel) everything and nothing is meant by them. (SL 82-85,98) In his *Science of Logic*, Hegel writes:

Being, pure being, without any further determination. In its indeterminate immediacy it is equal only to itself. It is also not unequal relatively to an other; it has no diversity within itself nor any with a reference outwards. It would not be held fast in its purity if it contained any determination or content which could be distinguished in it or by which it could be distinguished from an other. It is pure indeterminateness and emptiness. There is nothing to be intuited in it, if one can speak here of intuiting; or, it is only this pure intuiting itself. (SL 82)

Consciousness by making abstraction can, of course, fill itself with such indeterminateness also and the abstractions thus held fast are the *thoughts* of pure space, pure time, pure consciousness, or pure being. It is the thought of pure space, etc. – that is, pure space, etc. *in its own self* – that is to be demonstrated as null: that it is as such already its own opposite, that its opposite has already penetrated into it, (SL 98)

In PhS Hegel sees that there is a moment of “pure I” or “emptiness” internal to any subjective

thinking. He calls this a moment of abstraction. If “pure I” dominates thinking as its main point of reference, it results into an abstract and formal thinking in which nothing and everything is meant by words. “Pure I” is associated in PhS with pure self-consciousness, universal (abstract) individuality and absolute, individual freedom. It is also associated with choices made at “pure will” and things known by non-particular “pure knowing”. “Pure I” corresponds with an unlimited culture, in which “pure language” is being spoken, and in which there cannot be differentiations made between the Individuals. This unlimited and unchangeable sociality appears as very similar to Kojève’s universally homogeneous State. For Hegel, pure self-consciousness takes the form of a negating activity towards any particular determination and identity, given of it, echoing how Kojève describes the free Individual. However, Hegel does not join Kojève in his praise for this kind of free Individuality. Instead, Hegel rather joins Butler in her criticism of it. Actually Kojève’s and Butler’s interpretation of Hegel’s *free* self-consciousness has more in common with Hegel’s description of *pure* (still un-free) self-consciousness (consider e.g. Kojève’s view that the Wise Man cannot be differentiated from each others!).

For Hegel, pure self-consciousness takes the form of a hostility towards subject-object-relations (i.e. the realm of Consciousness as Understanding), particularity, differences and otherness. This resembles closely how Butler critically describes Hegel’s realm of free self-consciousness and its realization as the State. (PhS §197-213, §792).

Hegel is very critical of all ideas based on undifferentiated self-same wholes and unmediated relations and in this sense he thinks like Butler. Hegel does not see this kind of a “homogeneous” situation of “un-differentiated individuality” as the ultimate perfection. Instead, Hegel sees it, like Butler sees it, as a realm of a Master-Slave-division. This is actually what Hegel repeats over again in PhS, as this kind of thinking constitutes for Hegel one version of parochiality, the refutation of otherness. Hegel thinks, like Butler, that the movement of things (their becoming other) has ceased in such a realm. This is linked, for Hegel, with the abstractivity of the pure self-consciousness. As particular things do not exist for it, it cannot comprehend movement. There exists nothing for it which it could see to move. Things are abstractions for it and abstractions cannot be seen to move, as they cannot be seen at all, to start with. They are not particular somethings which could be seen either to stand still, or to become different from what they were before. Hegel argues that movement cannot be seen *in itself*, as a “pure movement”, without there being something (particular, limited, non-abstract), existing for the thinker itself, which moves. Hegel repeats over again in PhS that *abstractions are unchangeable*. Pure self-consciousness – for whom things mean everything and nothing – is able to see things at all, or the movement of them, only if it looks at things from the point of view of somebody who does not think of things the way it does. It can see things move, or stand still, or become changed, if it looks at them from the point of view of particular thinking, metaphorically, through thinking which is in bondage, i.e. context-dependent, historical thinking. In this sense, Hegel thinks like Butler. He sees that self-same thinking, which does not allow for the existence of an outside to itself, refutes otherness. As is explicated in the chapter 2 on Hegel, thinking which sees itself and others as “free nothingnesses” (i.e. not differentiated from others: as pure I’s) depends on externally produced differentiation, particularity (i.e. enslaved otherness) in order to be able to think at all, as its own language means everything and nothing. For Hegel, as for Butler, a pure Individual is necessarily internally divided on the basis of lordship and bondage, and hence it can see things at all, to start with, only through some Other thinking, beyond it. It depends on

the Other, i.e. particular subjects, also to labour temporal changes for it. It can comprehend historical movement only through the eyes of Bondsmen, as Bondsmen denote the realm of seeing historically and contextually limited particulars. In order for a pure Individual to comprehend temporal changes - things becoming other in time – it must think of things and looks at things through the eyes of the Other (i.e. the particular subjects).

Hegel emphasizes all through his philosophy of subjective spirit (in PhS and also in Enc. III) that if the internally contradictory self becomes conscious of its parts, yet does not “return” (relate) those parts to a particular, historical subjectivity, its self-consciousness and its freedom is only an abstract notion, i.e. an empty individual nothingness. This is what takes place in pure self-consciousness and in the self-same, pure State (exemplified for Hegel in the absolute freedom/Terror of the French Revolution). According to the reading, supported in this study, Hegel’s free self-consciousness, in contrast to pure self-consciousness, knows itself as a particular concept, as a particular “something”. The self is differentiated from other selves, even that the selves, in reciprocal recognition, do not place any “external otherness” beyond themselves, or subjects in general. The terms that facilitate recognition - also in reciprocal recognition - are particular and limited terms. The selves recognize themselves and others as free self-consciousnesses, however, as *particular* free self-consciousnesses. Subjects continue to see things (including themselves and others) on the basis of subject-object-relationality.

Hegel argues that the particularity of things is determined *rationally* in relations of reciprocal recognition. The selves identify themselves, each others and the whole world through *shared* rationality, which is always a particular, historical rationality. According to Hegel, the rational “theory” of particularity can potentially limitlessly differentiate itself, become Other to itself, because it is a particular, historical rationality. As is said also elsewhere in this study, and as is explicated in the chapter on Hegel, this study supports a different line of interpreting Hegel’s free self-consciousness, and its objectivization in the rational state, than Kojève and Butler. In this study the realm of free self-consciousness, and Absolute Knowing, is interpreted in a similar way than e.g. by Hutchings (Hutchings 2003, 106), Ikäheimo (Ikäheimo 2000, 85), or by Charles Taylor. According to Taylor, the rational whole (epistemological and material) as which Hegel’s free self-consciousnesses know and realize themselves and each others takes place as particular rationality which is historical and which can endlessly (at least potentially) become other in relation to what it is at some given time. The way things become other in the realm of Absolute Knowing is different than in the realm of parochial consciousness (which is led by refuted otherness). Nevertheless, the becoming changed and the becoming different *through contradiction* does not end in the realm of free and absolute Knowing (Taylor 1975, e.g. 103-109). As Hegel says in PhS:

...nor is Spirit *a tertium quid* that casts differences back into the abyss of the Absolute and declares that therein they are all the same.. (PhS §804)

Butler’s subject-theory appears to be built partly on the approval of Hegel’s subject-theory and partly on its rejection. Butler herself says that she “arrests” Hegel’s text in PhS before its resolution into self-conscious Spirit, and continues from there with what she calls an “Althusserian reversal” (see PLP 32-43; ES 5; BM 113-116). However, Butler also seems to preserve the “Hegelian self-same synthesis” (as she interprets it, in a Kojévian way) as a

figure to be avoided. In fact, as said before, the Hegelian synthesis - the figure of “complete knowledge” - cannot be disposed of as Butler’s Hegelian subject-theory and Hegelian-inflected model of politics fundamentally *depends* on it. What is also important is that in reference to this Hegelian “figure to be avoided” she criticises Althusser, and actually all those theorists, in reference to whom she criticises Hegel’s all-inclusive, total self. Even that she criticizes Hegel’s all-inclusive self in reference to Althusser (and also Foucault, Lacan etc.), she nevertheless finds an all-inclusive self also in these theories. Hegel’s theory of pure self-consciousness and his criticism of the “Kantian” formalist thought serves as the argumentative base in Butler’s criticism against these theorists, through whom she criticises Hegel. Even that Butler uses these theories in her criticism of Hegel’s supposedly otherness-refuting conceptual synthesis, these theories nevertheless constitute for Butler their own “otherness-refuting-synthesis” when taken as such, alone by themselves. Consequently, taken alone as subject-theories, they appear as “full and final syntheses” which also need the sort of “self-othering-through-internal-slavery”, which Butler adopts from PhS as the normative model of theorizing things in a democratizing way.

An important part of Butler’s criticism against Hegel’s all-inclusive self is her criticism against the “mediator”, or “third”, which conducts the “inclusion”, in other words, the Dialectical Reversal. Butler criticism against the “third” is taken up in the next chapter.

5.2.5. Hegelian “full self-identity” as a threat to politics

In her texts Butler worries about something which she calls the “survival of the subject”, or the “linguistic survival” of the subject. In her political theory, the survival of the subject appears as a core goal. In fact, the survival of the subject is connected to the survival of politics, or actually to the existence of the political, conflictual realm. This means that the prevention of what could be called the End of Subject appears as core political goal for her. Butler sees that a full self-knowledge denotes a threat to the existence of the subject and politics. Especially the Hegelian synthesis between the self and the Other (taking place in free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition) is a threat to the subject as something futural, political and changeable. The reason why Butler sees Hegel’s full self-knowledge as a risk can be understood on the basis of Butler’s Kojévian reading of Hegel. In the Kojévian End of History (taking place as a Hegelian free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition) there are no subjects, politics, ek-static selves or future. The self, the Other, the past, the present, the future etc. all possible epistemological aspects, constitutive of the self, are synthesized into an un-limited realm of the Wise Man. In the Kojévian End of History the political field disappears. (see e.g. SD 59, BM 113-116, 218-223, 224, 227)

According to Butler’s basically Hegelian subject-theory, “subject” denotes the moment of the *limited* “subject-position”. Subject-position – an Althusserian concept - is always a particular (i.e limited) one, as only limited entities can be *positional*. Unlimited entities (like the Kojévian Wise Men) are not restricted by limits or positions (time, place, cultural context, discourse etc.). Further, particular objects (limited objects) are seen only when looked at from a limited subject-position. In fact, subject-position is synonymous to a limited, particular “point of view”, through which anything at all can be seen. This means that a “point of view”

- i.e. a subject - is a particular system of differentiation and relation. The subject is, in this sense, a *particular language, or, a particular universe*.

In Kojève's End of History, there are no limited subjects or viewpoints. Instead, there are unlimited Wise Men. Wise Men are all "one" because they have integrated all otherness into them - i.e. all Other points of views from which things could be looked at. In fact, the existence of the Other (contradicting other limited points of views) goes hand in hand with the existence of the limited subject, and the structure of the ek-static self. The existence of Other points of views is the core idea in the structure of the ek-static self. Hence, in the ek-static self (which denotes the structure of the self and the Other), there must be a *separation* between the self and the Other. (see e.g. BM 218-222)

However, as concerns the necessary separation between the self and the Other, there is, for Butler, also a risk that this separation takes place as a full identification of them. In other words, there is the risk that the self and the Other become related in the same way as in the Hegelian, internal, conceptual mediation. The reason why Butler sees this as a risk for the survival of the limited subject (who ought to stay *limited*) and the survival of ek-static politics (which depends on there being limited subjects) can be understood on the basis of Butler's Kojévian reading of Hegel. Kojève interprets Hegel's conceptual mediation between the self and the Other - the one which takes place in free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition - as resulting from the immanent, non-differentiated, non-limited self-identity. This unlimited self-knowledge cannot be criticised (politicised) from the point of view of the Other, as all Other points of views are included in it already. (see e.g. BM 113-116)

For Kojève, when the self and the Other recognize each other as *fully free*, they see each others as *free nothingnesses*. They cease to be particular subjects for themselves, or for each others. They also cease to be parochial (otherness-refuting) subjects. They cease to be subjects who can be criticised from Other points of views. Nor do the Wise Men see any reason to criticise each others. In the realm of this kind of Wise Men, there is no reason for politics as nobody needs to change anything. With Kojève, being a particular subject means the same thing as to be a parochial subject. A particular, parochial subject (i.e. a one whose knowledge of itself and others is based on the Master-Slave-relation) can be criticised, as it can move, become changed through its enslaved otherness.

The Wise Men create together, by their mutual attitude toward each others, an unpolitical realm. They are in this sense, paradoxically, at the same time, fully separated from each other and fully identified with each other. There is no system of differentiation - i.e. no *third* - on the basis of which the separating and relating between them could be thought. There is also no system of differentiation which could be criticised. They are in this sense melted into one - without a mediation through a *political* "third"- because there is no way to draw a differentiating border between them. There is no particular (limited) point of view, i.e. particular subjectivity, from which a differentiation between the self and the other selves could be thought. The selves cease to be particular subjects. As Kojève says, they are free nothingnesses, or, Wise Men. This means also that they do not exist as identifiable entities for each other any more. They cannot "read" (see) the other at all, or interpret in any way what the other one says. As was explicated in the previous sub-chapters, this is how Butler also reads Hegel's realm of free self-consciousness, especially as a self-conscious Spirit and as a free State (see e.g. CHU 174, BM 116).

It is true that for Hegel (in PhS) the otherness becomes internalized into the self in the realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition. Yet, in contrast to Kojève, Hegel always emphasizes that this internalization takes place as a conceptual relation. It takes place through a particular “third”, as is explained in the chapter 2.1.5. There is no disappearance of particular points of views, i.e. particular thirdness. The self and the Other remain particular subjects, particular thirds, having their particular points of views onto the world. The “larger third”, or the “free, unlimited third”, connecting the particular selves together, takes place as a shared rationality, or, the triplicity of Knowing, as is explained further in the next sub-chapter. The larger third conducts a preservation and negation (sublation, *Aufhebung*) of the particular points of views onto the world. The shared (sublated) rationality could be described as a “theory” of what subjects, things and the world are like. This theory is however always a particular theory, and a historical one, thus providing a particular (limited) point of view onto things. However, it is also an un-limited one, and it is a “free theory”, as its substance is determined by reciprocally recognitive selves. The theory is free from internal epistemological Master-Slave-relations. No one self or group alone acts as the “universal truth”, which would one-sidedly fix the substance of the theory, as in relations of Desire (Master-Slave). Because the selves recognize each others as basically equally valid contributors to the theory, the particular substance of the theory can change or enrich itself limitlessly, through contradiction. As such, the self and the Other do not melt into a non-differentiated sameness in Hegel’s theory of reciprocal recognition. In short, Hegel’s theory of recognition is fundamentally different from the Kojévian interpretation of it. A Hegelian full self-identity (ultimately denoted by the sublated free theory, which is not based on Master-Slave-epistemology) is dialectical, historical and *political*. Its particular substance can be criticised and politicized by the particular selves.

Whereas Kojève assimilates particularity with parochiality – i.e. particular (limited) self-knowledge and identities with Master-Slave-relations – Hegel does not do so. In free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition the selves can still criticise each others - and the “shared rationality”- for being limited. One way to understand this could be perhaps through the idea that, in order for there to be criticism and politics, we do not necessarily need the kind of Master-Slave –systems, like in the Aristotelian world. Politics does not *necessarily* always take place between Masters and Slaves, i.e. between the “recognized universals” and the “not recognized, un-speakable universals, who do slave-labour for others”. Also the so called “free and equal citizens” can criticise each others views and the ways of the community, i.e. “polis”. Master-Slave-relation thus does not have to be taken as the necessary and normative paradigm of a political relation.

Butler says that there is a “necessary error” to all self-identities. (see e.g. BM 228-229, SD 59) With Butler, as with Kojève, the duality between the realms of “full self-identity” and “not full self-identity” correspond with the duality between the realms of “no politics” (which in Butler is constituted by the negative ideal of the End of History) and “politics” (the realm of the struggle for recognition). However, as Butler does not accept Kojève’s *normative* ideas, it seems that for Butler there is a dilemma of how to strive for something, which nevertheless should not be reached. Overcoming the violence of exclusion (the Master-Slave-system, the realm of Desire) appears as an important goal for Butler. However, a situation where that goal was reached would be a situation of “non-limited singularity” and the disappearance of all differences (resembling the Kojévian End of History and Wise Man). This dilemma (of

striving for something which should not however be reached) is taken up also e.g. with the political thought of Chantal Mouffe, see chapter 6. Butler writes:

The task is to refigure this necessary “outside” as a future horizon, one in which the violence of exclusion is perpetually in a process of being overcome. But of equal importance is the preservation of the outside, the site where discourse meets its limits, where the opacity of what is not included in a given regime of truth acts as a disruptive site of linguistic impropriety and unrepresentability, illuminating the violent and contingent boundaries of that normative regime precisely through the inability of that regime to represent that which might pose a fundamental threat to its continuity. In this sense, radical and inclusive representability is not precisely the goal: to include, to speak as, to bring in every marginal and excluded position within a given discourse is to claim that a singular discourse meets its limits nowhere, that it can and will domesticate all signs of difference. (BM 53, see also CHU 174)

Butler speaks frequently of the “violence”, inherent to all self-identities, as a restricting yet also *politically enabling violence*. Violence is necessary for the existence of the political realm. According to Butler, we cannot fully dispose of the violence done against the Other, because this violence is formative of the subject, and also formative of there being the ek-static relation between the self and the Other. The end of this violence would mark the end of the subject, the Other, ek-static relations, and, also the end of ek-static politics. However, there is a dilemma of how to think of this violence, which on the one hand is a necessary presupposition of subjects and of political possibilities, yet, which on the other hand means that there is, indeed, violence. Butler writes about this, in connection with the politics of the term “woman”:

... the descriptions offered in the name of “women” not only attest to the specific violences that a partial concept enforces, but to the constitutive impossibility of an impartial or comprehensive concept or category. The claim to have achieved such an impartial concept or description shores itself up by foreclosing the very political field that it claims to have exhausted. This violence is at once performed and erased by a description that claims finality and all-inclusiveness. To ameliorate and rework this violence, it is necessary to learn a double movement: to invoke the category and, hence, provisionally to institute an identity and at the same time to open the category as a site of permanent political contest. That the term is questionable does not mean that we ought not to use it, but neither does the necessity to use it mean that we ought not perpetually to interrogate the exclusions by which it proceeds,... (BM 221-222)

One of the claims made in this study is that Kojève presents a specific interpretation of Hegel’s realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition. Butler approves of this interpretation. Consequently, she refutes Hegel’s free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition. Butler does not seem to realize that her reading of Hegel is here influenced by Kojève. Nor does she seem to realize that also her *political* theory, based on the Hegelian subject-theory, is influenced by Kojève. For Butler, the Master-Slave-system cannot be escaped, because without it, there would be a non-limited singularity and the disappearance

of all differences (in terms of full self-identity). Butler's Kojévian thinking - i.e. that Master-Slave-relations and conceptually unmediated self-knowledge (in a Hegelian way) are necessary elements of politics - sets the theoretical ground for her performative politics. This means that the special type of politics between Master and Slave - the struggle for recognition - becomes a base for Butler's performative politics. This supposedly necessary connection between a self-identity, a striving for recognition, and a violent struggle is typical for Kojève and for those who derive their inspiration from him (see, Weir 1996, ch. 1; Williams 1997, ch. 15). The necessary failure of recognition and the unavoidable hostility between the self and the Other is already present in the first important work inspired by Kojève, Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943). There, Sartre rejects Hegel's "epistemological optimism":

Hegel's optimism ends in failure: between the Other as object and Me as subject there is no common measure. I know myself in the Other if the Other is first an object for me; neither can I apprehend the Other in his true being - that is, his subjectivity. No universal knowledge can be derived from the relation of consciousnesses. This is what we shall call their ontological separation (Sartre 2001, 219)

Nevertheless, Kojève's reading of Hegel is a parochial one. In fact, Hegel discusses the kind of thinking, which resembles Kojévian thinking, and calls it a pure self-consciousness. Hegel criticises *pure* self-consciousness for similar reasons as Butler criticises "Hegel's" *free* self-consciousness.

5.2.7. Althusser and Butler

Althusser is a key theoretical figure for Butler. The "Althusserian reversal of Hegel", discussed already before, is perhaps the most fundamental theoretical structure in Butler. Butler herself says that she adheres to an Althusserian subject-theory, where not all the relations, formative of subjects, are turned into internal ones, rather than a Hegelian theory, where these relations become totally internal, i.e. known by the subjects themselves. According to Butler, the subject is problematically *complete* in Hegel, in a way which ultimately cannot but suffocate politics. In other words, the subject is seen as able, in principle, to understand *all* its radical aspects. For Althusser, the subject is necessarily *incomplete*, as the interpellative relations, formative of it, are external to it. Butler writes in CHU about the incompleteness of the subject:

I understood the "incompletion" of the subject-position in the following ways: 1) as the failure of any particular articulation to describe the population it represents; 2) that every subject is constituted differentially, and that what is produced as the "constitutive outside" of the subject can never become fully inside or immanent. I take this last point to establish the fundamental difference between the Althusserian-inflected work of Laclau and Mouffe and a more Hegelian theory of the subject in which all external relations are - at least ideally - transformable into internal ones (CHU 12).

Butler criticises Hegel in several books in reference to Althusser. Lacanian ideas, which Butler receives not only directly from Lacan, but also through thinkers like Althusser, appears important for Butler. (see e.g. CHU 12, ES 5, PLP 4-6, 30, 34). Butler writes in ES:

If a subject becomes a subject by entering the normativity of language, then in some important ways, these rules precede and orchestrate the very formation of the subject. Although the subject enters the normativity of language, the subject exists only as a grammatical fiction prior to that very entrance. Moreover, as Lacan and Lacanians have argued, that entrance into language comes at a price; the norms that govern the inception of the speaking subject differentiate the subject from the unspeakable, that is, produce an unspeakability as the condition of subject-formation. (ES 135)

In an Althusserian- Lacanian manner, Butler sees throughout her writings that when the “speaking subject” - i.e. an intelligible and self-conscious subject - is formed, a realm of “unspeakability” becomes produced as well. Thus, something unspeakable, and in this sense “external” , is necessarily constitutive of a subject-position. For Butler, via Althusser and Lacanian thought in general, the realm of unspeakability is the condition of the possibility of the subject. Even if Butler does not fully agree with any of these theorists, she nevertheless claims that unspeakability is constitutive of intelligible subjectivity. She claims that the realms of “speakability” (intelligible subjectivity) and “unspeakability” are differentiated or split off from each other in a way which is repressive and constitutes a “founding submission” as the base of subjectivity (see e.g. ES 27, PLP 1-3; BM 3,8). Butler writes:

“Subjection” signifies the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject. Whether by interpellation, in Althusser’s sense, or by discursive productivity, in Foucault’s, the subject is initiated through a primary submission to power. (PLP 2)

Even that Butler disagrees with any *specific* theories, given of this primary (interpellative) relation (given e.g. by Hegel, Althusser, Lacan or Foucault), she nevertheless claims that there is this kind of primary relation, or alterity. Butler’s critical discussions with the theorists who have some *specific* theory of the primary split appear to constitute most of Butler’s own theory of it, i.e. Butler’s theory of the self and things as “ek-static”. Following the Althusserian usage, Butler often calls her theory a *critical practice*. In a manner, resembling Althusser’s distinction between the realms of subjective (ideological, failing) theories of things and critical (scientific, non-subjective) theorizing of things, Butler takes specific theories of the ek-static self as objects of critical analysis. However, the way Butler takes specific theories as objects of critical analysis does not quite correspond with Althusser’s distinction between “subjective theorizing” and “scientific, critical theorizing”. Butler claims that she rejects all distinctions between “subjective” and “non-subjective” realms. She adheres, throughout her writings, to the basic Hegelian claim, i.e. that all *thought* things, including all *thought* distinctions, are subjective, that is, they exist *for* someone. As such, the theoretical relation between Butler, Hegel and Althusser is a complex one. Nevertheless, Althusser is seen in this study as a theorist who has a major influence in Butler’s thought - also in ways not commented on by Butler herself.

As has been already explained above, Butler discusses the primary relation, formative of a subject - *as an ek-static subject* - in reference to a few theorists. For Butler the primary relation - rendering the subject ek-static - constitutes a relation between what is speakable and what is unspeakable of the self. Butler partly agrees with each one of these theorists, like with Hegel and Althusser, and, partly disagrees with all of them. As was explicated in the chapter 5.2.3., it appears that what Butler is primarily critical of is when a particular description is given (of the primary relation, constitutive of the ek-static self) *as a final description*. For Butler a description is presented as the final one if the one who presents it does not say that the description is valid only inside its own context, i.e. in terms of its own subject-position, instead of being universally valid. In other words, Butler's critique is directed against all views in which - according to her - some particular description of the primary relation (constitutive of the self as ek-static) is presented as a non-failing description.

The rejection of such "final explanations" is the reason why Butler, in line with Althusser, criticises Freud's theory of Oedipal phase. As is explained in the next chapter, this is why she is also critical of Althusser, Lacan and Foucault. (see the next chapter on Butler's criticism of Althusser et.al)

Basically, Butler follows Althusser in the sense that, as in Althusser, *the subjects themselves* cannot take the primary relation, or interpellation - which is their origin as intelligible subjects - as an object of analysis. The subjects themselves cannot conceptualize their own ek-static formation. Butler rejects Hegel's idea of free self-consciousness, i.e. the idea that subjects are not (necessarily) externally known, by external Masters. According to Butler, in reference to Althusser and in contrast to Hegel, there always remains something, constitutive of the subjects - something which she often refers to as a "surplus" or a "remainder" - that cannot be described conceptually by the subjects themselves. Butler argues that the self is never identical with itself. The self always fails to know its constitutive primary relation (its ek-static structure, constituted in relation to Otherness) as a particular relation.

It will not do to say that there is first a self and then it engages in splitting, since the self as I am outlining it here is beyond itself from the start, and defined by this ontological ek-stasis, this fundamental relation to the Other in which it finds itself ambiguously installed outside itself. This model is, I would suggest, one way of disputing any claim concerning the self-sufficiency of the subject or, indeed, the incorporative character of all identification(...). it is possible and necessary to say that the subject splits, but it does not follow from that formulation that the subject was a single whole or autonomous. (UG 150-151)

For Butler, the primary relation or split, the "ontological ek-stasis" between the self and the Other cannot be determined as a particular relation *by the subject itself*. Like Althusser, Butler sees that the psyche takes place as a relational psyche. What the primary relations specifically are, and who are the relational parties (i.e. the constitutive parts of the ek-static self) is determined culturally and historically.

For Butler, like with Althusser, subject is known if it is looked from a linguistic subject-position. Butler's description of "subject-position", which she also calls in an Althusserian way a "category", is very similar to Althusser's description of the subjects. For Butler subject is a category, a position, which is formed by a primary interpellation. For Butler, this

interpellation constitutes the subject as a linguistic, self-reflective, social, responsible, gendered being. This constitution is, for Butler, as for Althusser and in general in Marxism, a forced one. In line with Althusser, Butler sees that ideology appears (for the subjects) as a natural fact. Butler herself has become famous especially of her theories of the forcible, ideological constitution of anatomical facts, such as the gender-differentiation and heterosexuality. She writes about the forced constitution of gender:

To expose the contingent acts that create the appearance of a naturalistic necessity, a move which has been a part of cultural critique at least since Marx, is a task that now takes on the added burden of showing how the very notion of the subject, intelligible only through its appearance as gendered, admits of possibilities that have been forcibly foreclosed by the various reifications of gender that have constituted its contingent ontologies. (GT 33)

As for Althusser, for Butler the forcibly gendered subject-position is the mode by which the ideological power makes itself existent and legitimate and by which reproduces itself. The subjects themselves fail to see that their subjectivities are forcibly produced, instead, they take their subjectivities (i.e. their gender-identities, racial identities etc.) as natural facts. Gendered subjects produce - in reference to the hidden "symbolic Law" which they are "programmed" to obey - a gendered objectivity and gendered bodies. The "gendering" takes place as an everyday compulsory, ritualistic and institutionalistic practice, supported by the heteronormative state. Subjects follow ideological, institutional rules of how to be a right kind of woman, a man and a heterosexual. In an Althusserian, Lacanian and Foucauldian manner, the intelligible, coherent genders produce also the realm of "prohibited", un-normal, not intelligible genders.

"Intelligible" genders are those which in some sense institute and maintain relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice, and desire. (...) The notion that there might be "truth" of sex, as Foucault ironically terms it, is produced precisely through the regulatory practices that generate coherent identities through the matrix of coherent gender norms. The heterosexualization of desire requires and institutes the production of discrete and asymmetrical oppositions between "feminine" and "masculine", where these are understood as expressive attributes of "male" and "female". The cultural matrix through which gender identity has become intelligible requires that certain kinds of "identities" cannot "exist" – that is, those in which gender does not follow from sex and those in which the practices of desire do not "follow" from either sex or gender. "Follow" in this context is a political relation of entailment instituted by the cultural alws that establish and regulate the shape and meaning of sexuality. (GT 17)

When the gender-practices, as well as other ideological practices, are repeated loyally, in identity with the ideology, they make ideology to appear as a natural fact. Loyally repeated gender-practices make the genders seem stable gender- identities. When the gender is repeated identically in time, it appears to "express" an independent ontological substance. Consequently, subjects mistake genders as time-less natural facts. Butler calls this productivity by the core notion of her theory, as *performativity*. For Butler, subjects (as

subject-positions) are performative (productive) of themselves. Yet, the subjects do this unconsciously. Butler writes about this:

gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence. Hence, within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be performative – that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed. (GT 24-25)

Like with Althusser, for Butler subject is a normative position. For Butler, like for Althusser, the subject-position provides a normative principle, a rule, according to which the subject must conduct its life. Thus, like with Althusser, subject is not an ontological, factual or biological “thereness” but an ideological category. Butler writes of the constitution of a gendered subject ultimately a ritualistic process, sanctioned by ideological rules. As is seen in the next quotation, Butler shifts the emphasis, placed by Althusser on the compulsory production of the economic class-relations into the compulsory production of the gender-relations:

the “unity” of gender is the effect of a regulatory practice that seeks to render gender identity uniform through a compulsory heterosexuality. The force of this practice is, through an exclusionary apparatus of production, to restrict the relative meanings of “heterosexuality” and “bisexuality” as well as the subversive sites of their convergence and resignification. (GT 31)

Because the ideology assumes a psychic, internalized structure, the subject becomes a responsible and a moral subject and can be held as the originatory cause behind its actions. It can be held responsible for its deeds. Yet, for Butler, like for Althusser, it is erroneous to see the subject as the actual *origin* of its deeds.

the one who speaks is not the originator of such speech, for that subject is produced in language through a prior performative exercise of speech: interpellation. Moreover, the language the subject speaks is conventional and, to that degree, citational. The legal effort to curb injurious speech tends to isolate the “speaker” as the culpable agent, as if the speaker were at the origin of such speech. The responsibility of the speaker is thus misconstrued. (ES 39)

According to Butler, the “speech” and the deeds of the subject are constructed within compulsory discursive contexts. Thus, when a subject speaks or does something, it refers to - i.e. it “cites” - such authorities (cultural principles, values etc.) which are provided by the ideological and compulsory context, where the subject is born into - without any prior “own” choice. The subject is ordered to cite the Law loyally, and it is guilty if it cites it wrong. As the Law which determines what the subjects are like and what they must be like, refutes otherness, the subjects are interpellated into subjectivity in which they themselves must violate otherness. The recognition of others (other Laws) is prohibited. Butler finds support

also from thinkers like Nietzsche and Foucault for the idea that the responsible origin – or “cause” - for e.g. the violent speech of the subject lies not (at least fully) with the individual subject itself (see e.g. ES 28, 43-52) (see the chapter on performative politics on a further discussion on this).

Althusser is not the only theorist in reference to whom Butler “reverses” Hegel’s complete and final subject (as Butler interprets it, through Kojévian lenses). Butler finds very similar views with theorists like Foucault, Lacan, Nietzsche, Derrida - and also with J.L. Austin. In ES she discusses the views of a few of these theorists and conducts what she calls an “Althusserian reversal of Hegel” not only in reference to Althusser but also to these other theorists. The basic point in this reversal, for which she finds support also from these other thinkers, is that the primary relations, constitutive of the subject, are not all conceptually describable for the subject itself. Hence the subject is not complete and final. (see e.g. CHU 12; BM 113-116; ES 5; UG 145-151; GA 26-40)

In the beginning of ES Butler writes that she considers it necessary to conduct an “Althusserian reversal of Hegel”. The discussion of *Body* is important in this reversal. In reference to “body” Butler theorizes what kinds of material, bodily existencies are possible. Basically, she adheres to the Hegelian and also Althusserian idea that such bodies which exist “out there”, as identifiable and readable - i.e. as *thought* bodies - exist *for subjects*. They exist for subject-positions (in Hegelian terms, they exist for “Consciousness as Understanding”). According to Butler, we have no “access” to bodies (or any other things) except through language, i.e. through subjective, symbolic systems. We are unable to see “pure”, extra-linguistic bodies. As such, bodies are always already “interpreted”, when they appear for us phenomenologically. Bodies (*for us*) are always linguistic bodies. This very basic idea is not in contrast to Hegel’s subject-theory. Butler sees (see e.g. UG, 148; SD 217-230) that thinkers like Lacan, Foucault etc. have adopted this idea from Hegel. Nevertheless, Butler considers it important to “reverse” Hegel on this matter. She writes of this “Althusserian” reversal:

Language sustains the body not by bringing it into being or feeding it in a literal way; rather, it is by being interpellated within the terms of language that a certain social existence of the body first becomes possible. To understand this, one must imagine an impossible scene, that of a body that has not yet been given social definition, a body that is, strictly speaking, not accessible to us, that nevertheless becomes accessible on the occasion of an address, a call, an interpellation that does not “discover” this body, but constitutes it fundamentally. We may think that to be addressed one must first be recognized, but here the Althusserian reversal of Hegel seems appropriate: the address constitutes a being within the possible circuit of recognition and accordingly, outside of it, in abjection (...) Thus, to be addressed is not merely to be recognized for what one already is, but to have the very very term conferred by which the recognition of existence becomes possible. One comes to “exist” by virtue of this fundamental dependency on the address of the Other. One “exists” not only by virtue of being recognized, but, in a prior sense, by being recognizable. The terms that facilitate recognition are themselves conventional, the effects and instruments of a social ritual that decide, often through exclusion and violence, the linguistic conditions of survivable subjects. (ES 5)

In connection with the theme of “mediating thirdness”, the way Althusser interprets the primary relation, constitutive of the subject, is that this relation is not mediated conceptually for the subject itself. Althusser agrees on this matter with a few other thinkers. They all, including Butler, think that it is impossible for a subject to reflect on the entire history of its formation, and to reflect on all the possible influences by which it has become the subject it is. Accordingly, Butler argues that the “power” (in Foucauldian words), or “ideology” (in Althusserian words) or the “symbolic Law” (in Lacanian words), which form the subject as a recognizable subject (and as an identifiable “body”) for itself, is not conceptual for the subject itself. With all these thinkers, the “power”, constitutive of the subject, remains something un-conceptualized for the subject itself. In a sense, they return back to the Kantian position.

The Althusserian, Lacanian and Foucauldian ideas of how the subject interprets itself (i.e. in reference to what kind of “universal” it particularizes its subjectivity for itself) are indeed in contrast with Hegel. For Hegel, the self, who already (as in most subject-theories after Kant) *thinks* of itself as “interpellated” through a subjective, historical system (though Hegel did not use the term “interpellation”) mediates this primary relation conceptually for itself, in one way or the other. For Hegel, all *thought* constitutions of the subject are subjective constitutions of the subject – they exist *for us*. Thus, for Hegel, all distinctions between things or relations which exist for us and which exist external to us, are themselves distinctions, thought by subjects. For Hegel, one subjective and historical way to determine the primary “interpellative” relation (i.e. a relation constitutive of subjects) is to claim that it is unknown or partly unknown for the subject itself. This kind of thinking of the primary relation constitutes, for Hegel, a “pure self-consciousness”, a version of which is “unhappy consciousness”. In Unhappy Consciousness subjectivity in general, including the subjectivity of the Other, is seen as not fully valid because the subjects knowledge of themselves is not considered as fully valid. Because the subjects knowledge of things is partly constituted externally, subjective knowledge is not fully valid, and as such it constitutes a “misrecognition” of its object. In Lacanian terms: conceptual descriptions lose their referents. For Hegel, Unhappy consciousness precedes the realm of reciprocally cognitive relations. In the realm of reciprocally cognitive relations subjectivity in general, including the subjectivity of the Other, is acknowledged as “free” from being externally determined (i.e. being determined through an external interpellation, coming from an unknown “power”, “ideology”, or “symbolic Law”).

Often Butler refers not only to Althusser, but also to Austin, when she theorizes how words “do” (i.e. enact into existence, perform) things, instead of just describing things. Yet, the way Butler theorizes performativity - which mostly takes place in reference to thinkers like Hegel, Althusser, Lacan and Foucault - is quite far from the strictly socio-linguistic theory of J.L. Austin. In Austin’s theory of performative speech-acts, there is e.g. no analysis of the “unspeakable” side of the performatives, which is a core theme for Butler. Butler writes in BM of the performative formation of the subject:

..the matrix of gender relations is prior to the emergence of the “human”. Consider the medical interpellation which (the recent emergence of the sonogram notwithstanding) shifts an infant from an “it” to a “she” or a “he”, and in that naming, the girl is “girled”, brought into the domain of language and kinship through the interpellation of gender. But that “girling” of the girl does

not end there; on the contrary, that founding interpellation is reiterated by various authorities and throughout various intervals of time to reinforce or contest this naturalized effect. The naming is at once the setting of a boundary, and also the repeated inculcation of a norm (BM 7-8).

Butler's own critical analyses concentrate mainly on themes of gender and sexuality. Nevertheless, like Althusser, she sees that the gender-positions are part of a larger cultural, normative matrix (hegemony) which determines what it means, in general, to be a human. In the next quotation Butler argues how the gender-differentiation works as a part of a larger discourse on normative humanity:

Such attributions or interpellations contribute to that field of discourse and power that orchestrates, delimits, and sustains that which qualifies as "the human". We see this most clearly in the examples of these abjected beings who do not appear properly gendered; it is their very humanness that comes into question. Indeed, the construction of gender operates through exclusionary means, such that the human is not only produced over against the inhuman, but through a set of foreclosures, radical erasures, that are, strictly speaking, refused the possibility of cultural articulation. Hence, it is not enough to claim that human subjects are constructed, for the construction of the human is a differential operation that produces the more or less "human", the inhuman, the humanly unthinkable. These excluded sites come to bound the "human" as its constitutive outside, and to haunt those boundaries as the persistent possibility of their disruption and rearticulation (BM 8).

In reference not only to Althusser but, in general, to Lacanianism, or, broadly said, psychoanalytical poststructuralism, Butler develops her thought of normative, linguistic subjectivity and its relation to a prohibited, un-linguistic subjectivity. Butler sees, in SD, that the theories of the relation between speakable subjectivity and unspeakable subjectivity – by e.g. Althusser, Lacan, Foucault and Kristeva - are rooted in Hegel's theory of "desire" and "recognition" in PhS (SD, vii-xv).

Butler argues, in a Lacanian vein, that normative subjectivity is produced through the constitution of a realm of un-thinkable, irrational humanity. Un-thinkable humanity is a realm where the structure of the coherent language breaks. In the realm of *irrational* and *incoherent* humanity, the ordinary linguistic system, where meanings are constructed relationally, and differentially, becomes fragmented. E.g. Julia Kristeva describes this "abjected realm" as a realm of "modern poetics", where the ordinary structure of language becomes fragmented. The thinkers, by which Butler develops the idea of the "excluded, abjected humanity" as the realm of "linguistic silence" are, besides Lacan, e.g. Kristeva, Irigaray and Žižek. Butler sees in SD that all these thinkers build on the Hegelian legacy. Indeed, it is easy to see that how the relation between "speakability" and "unspeakability" is described by these thinkers, resembles how Hegel describes what the "silenced, irrational" otherness is from the viewpoint of "desire". A "desiring" self recognizes only its own linguistic structure and rationality as the valid one, thus rendering all other rationalities as invalid ones. Consequently, a struggle for recognition ensues. In Hegel's struggle for recognition, an internal unspeakability, as irrationality, "haunts" the rational humanity and demands to be included into the group of those who are recognized as rational beings.

Butler calls the subject-position also a “historical moment”. Like for Althusser, for Butler, ideological subject-positions vary historically, but this history is necessarily not fully known for the subjects themselves. Subject-positions do not stay the same, as Althusser argues e.g. in his criticism against Freud. For Butler, like for Althusser, there is no reason to assume that subjects are at all times and all places interpellated in the same way, by a same ideology, e.g. by the Oedipalizing interpellation.

For Butler, via e.g. Laclau (1990) the moments (of being a particular subject) are necessarily also moments of “violence” in which otherness is refuted. Other ways of knowing the self and the Other are refuted, rendered illegitimate and unspeakable. Yet, for Butler, in line not only with Althusser but also with Kojève, these moments of violence are also important, as they keep the historical process going on. Because there is the unspeakable, repressed otherness, there is also political demands, coming from the repressed Others. These demands (in Hegelian terms, the struggle for recognition) secure, for Butler as for all thinkers, influenced by Kojévian thinking, the existence of politics, historical change and future.

As such, for Butler, the moment of a *particular* subject, i.e. the moment of an intelligible subject-position, is (like with Kojève, Althusser, Lacan and several other poststructural and postmodern thinkers) a moment of just one universal truth. With Althusser, as well as in Lacanianism in general and also with Foucault, subject-positions necessarily refute (i.e. “enslave”) otherness. Subject-position (as always a position inside some specific, historical, particular symbolic order) denotes the imperialism of its own “Law” on the expense of the contradicting others. Each symbolic order necessarily recognizes only its own subject-position (which are speakable within its systemic whole) and refute others, rendering them un-linguistic, “abject”. Hegel’s idea of subjects, as capable of recognizing also other rationalities, is refuted.

For Butler, the moment of conceptualization, which is the moment of rationalization, making coherent histories, predicting the future, describing other cultures (i.e. the moment of giving a particular substance to one’s subjectivity) is - like with Kojève, Althusser and Lacan - a moment of repressing the Other. This idea is shared by Foucault. Butler notes (PLP 4-5), that Althusser’s subject-theory sets the stage for the (later) ideas of Foucault (who, indeed, was sometime a student of Althusser). Even that Foucault adheres to the idea that the discursive power - the effects of which subjects are- is a heterogenous power, he nevertheless builds on the Kojévian idea, (shared also by Althusser, who otherwise was a stern critic of Hegelian Marxism) that this power is a violent and repressive power. In fact, many Foucauldian ideas, on which Butler builds her subject-theory and also her political theory, are already found in Althusser. (ES 26-31; UG 46, 146-151, 164-166)

Althusser’s criticism against particular psychoanalytical theories, e.g. against Freud’s theory of the Oedipal phase, has clearly influenced Butler. For Butler, as for Althusser, any specific, particular interpretations, given of the formation of the psyche, are always historical, given in some specific interpretative field (in a specific theory or in a historical moment in therapy). Further, Butler sees, again like Althusser, that psychoanalysis can be used for various hidden normative purposes, i.e. for upholding a patriarchal order:

Psychoanalysis has sometimes been used to shore up the notion of a primary

sexual difference that forms the core of an individual's psychic life. (...) But this recruitment of psychoanalytic vocabularies for the purpose of preserving the paternal line, the transmission of national cultures, and heterosexual marriage is only one use of psychoanalysis, and not a particularly productive or necessary one. (UG 14)

Like Althusser, Butler sees that psychoanalysis can be a critical practice, which takes the cultural and normative psychic "laws" as objects of critical scrutiny. As such, psychoanalysis does not take some specific psychic structure as the normative "point of view", on the basis of which it criticises the cultural psychic laws. Instead, it works to expose the laws as cultural and historical ones, produced by the ideological culture itself, *as its effects*.

In PLP, which is her major study of subject-formation, Butler discusses Althusser extensively. Nevertheless, she starts her analysis in PLP with Hegel (PLP, 1-13, 31-62). This appears clearly in her account of the basic formation of the subject. She says, via Hegel, that the subject is internally double, i.e. that there is an internal "alterity" to the subject, a relation between the subject and the Other. She says that the relation between the subject and the Other is constitutive of the subject as a self-reflective, self-conscious, social being. In a sense, then, this relation is prior to the subject: it precedes the subject and makes it possible. By this primary self- (through the Other)- relation, the subject is also invested with the idea of responsibility - to take the otherness (subjects in general, universally) into account. In this, however, she follows actually not only Hegel but also Althusser. With Althusser, the figure of the Capital "S" serves as the "universal other" which demands to be taken into account. With Hegel, the moment of the Other connects the subject with the "universal point of view" from which it looks at itself. The Other serves as the view-point, as a "mirror", from which the self looks itself, controls itself and holds itself responsible. In spite of their mutual disagreements, various post-Hegelian thinkers like Freud, Sartre, Lacan, and Foucault all accept this idea as central. It introduces the very basic structure of self-reflection, the relation between the self and the (not only descriptive but also normative) point of view, from which it looks at itself.

As is explained in chapter 2, with Hegel the Other can take many different forms. It can be a "spirit of nature" or "a multitude of gods". With Hegel, whatever the Other may be for the self, it sets an internal "demand" for the self, from the part of "universal subjectivity". The Other demands to be included into the "universal theory", through which the self interprets and forms (or, "performs", to use a Butlerian term) the world. Through the moment of the Other, a demand *for recognition* is presented for the self. As the Other can take various forms *for the self*, the normative "universal subjectivity" may take, correspondingly, various forms *for the self*. An internal demand may come from the source of "spirits of nature", Christian God, or various other "theories", describing what all subjects are like. According to Althusser, the otherness (capital "S", ideology) brings the idea of normative, universal subjectivity for the subjects. In Althusser's Lacanian theory, subjects cannot know *the real* other, as any knowing is linguistic knowing, and thus necessarily imaginary, *not real* (see ch. 3.2.1.). In reference to Althusser (and also Lacan, Foucault, Althusser etc.) Butler argues that the primary subject-constitutive relation remains unconceptual for the subjects. All conceptualizations of this relation are misrecognitions, i.e. they fail to describe this relation. (PLP 5-6, 30-34, ES 5, CHU 12)

Butler argues in PLP that subjects are formed as subjects by a figure of “turning towards an Other” and identifying themselves through the idea of a subject, provided by the Other. The turn towards the Other is thus, at the same time, a turn towards the self. Through the Other, the self sees itself as a “subject”. Via Althusser Butler argues that the Other, towards whom the subject turns, and from the point of view of which the subject identifies itself as a subject, is necessarily a “traumatizing”, repressive power. Hence, unlike the subjects, who do not see themselves as traumatizing, otherness-refuting beings (when they mirror themselves from others), yet, as e.g. “heterosexual women”, Butler sees differently. It appears that while the subjects see natural facts from the mirror, provided by the Other, Butler sees ideological, distorted, repressive subjects. Butler sees subjects who are necessarily repressive. Mirroring subjects through the Other, Butler sees subjects in general as necessarily repressive powers. Butler sees subjects, who recognize only their own “speakabilities” and render Others “unspeakable”. Subjects as *intelligible* beings recognize only their own universal rationality (like the egoistic “desiring “ subject in Hegel’s PhS). Also, *for Butler*, ek-static relations, relations between selves and Others, can never be conceptually transitioned by the selves themselves. Thus, the Other (or actually subjects in general) are for Butler, necessarily traumatizing, non-speakable beings. The Other cannot be mediated as a part of intelligible, conceptual speakability. Butler writes about this:

There is, as it were, no conceptual transition to be made between power as external to the subject, “acting on”, and power as constitutive of the subject, “acted by”. What one might expect by way of a transition is, in fact, a splitting and reversal constitutive of the subject itself. Power acts on the subject, an acting that is an enacting: an irresolvable ambiguity arises when one attempts to distinguish between the power enacted on the subject, that is, between the power that forms the subject and the subject’s “own” power. (PLP 15)

In the chapter 5.2.1., it was argued that Butler reads Hegel’s idea of reciprocal recognition through Kojèbian lenses. Hence, it can be argued that Butler conducts an “Althusserian reversal” of what appears as a *Kojèbian interpretation of Hegel*. Kojèbian interpretation of Hegel has apparently dominated much of the French thought not only of Hegel but, in general, of the “self as internally multiple”. I have tried to argue that this Kojèbian reading of Hegel is implausible. Like Butler and her sources, I agree that Hegel’s view is the most comprehensive and important of all classical theories of the subject. However, if it does not have the un-intuitive consequences drawn by Kojève, the structuralist/poststructuralist case against it collapses.

5.2.8. Butler’s critique of Althusser and Foucault

Butler argues throughout her texts that subjects are “interpellated” into subjects and that the subjects, while already in language, cannot take the interpellative ideological power as an object of critical analysis. However, her references to Althusser are not without criticism. She argues in ES:

In “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”, Althusser attempts to describe

the subject-constituting power of ideology through a recourse to the figure of a divine voice that names, and in naming brings its subjects into being. The divine name makes what it names, but it also subordinates what it makes. In claiming that social ideology operates in an analogous way to the divine voice, Althusser inadvertently assimilates social interpellation to the divine performative. The example of religion thus assumes the status of a paradigm for thinking ideology as such: the authority of the “voice” of ideology, the “voice” of interpellation, is figured as a voice almost impossible to refuse. (ES 31)

Butler argues that there is no such “sovereign interpellation” which would succeed *fully* to constitute the subject it names. No interpellation is without limits. Any ideological interpellation is necessary a *failure*, or partly a failure. There is no sovereign interpellation (i.e. ideology, rule) which succeeds to (fully) *form* the field of the human according to itself. Butler argues against both Althusser and Lacan in the following quotation, taken from PLP:

Under what conditions does a law monopolize the terms of existence in so a through way? Or is this a theological fantasy of the law? Is there a possibility of being elsewhere or otherwise, without denying our complicity in the law that we oppose? Such possibility would require a different kind of turn, one that, enabled by the law, turns away from the law, resisting its lure of identity, an agency that outruns and counters the conditions of its emergence. Such a turn demands a willingness *not* to be – a critical desubjectivation – in order to expose the law as less powerful than it seems. What forms might linguistic survival take in this desubjectivized domain? (PLP 130)

In the quotation above Butler actually moves somewhere between the Hegelian “turns” (of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition) and the Althusserian (and Lacanian, Foucauldian) turn, which come from an unknown power. In contrast to Althusser’s subjects, Butler’s subject, or the not-yet-subject, is seen to be able to *resist* the interpellative, ideological law – i.e. the particular subject-position and identity - offered by the Other. Butler criticises the Althusserian psychoanalysis-inflected theory of Interpellation and also Foucault’s account of the subject, which Butler sees similar, in this sense. She finds that Foucault’s subject-theory is not only rooted in Hegel, but also in Althusser. With Foucault, there is also the idea that the subject becomes a subject through a necessary, primary *repressive subjection*:

What does it mean, then, that the subject, defended by some as a presupposition of agency, is also understood to be an *effect* of subjection? Such a formulation suggests that in the act of opposing subordination, the subject reiterates its subjection (a notion shared by both psychoanalysis and Foucauldian accounts). How, then, is subjection to be thought and how can it become a site of alteration? A power *exerted on* a subject, subjection is nevertheless a power *assumed by* the subject, an assumption that constitutes the instrument of that subject’s becoming. (PLP 11)

In criticism against both Althusser and Foucault, Butler argues that power is “double” in a way which makes it possible for the subjects to resist to be formed *fully* by the other (i.e. fully

determined by the linguistic, ideological interpellation). However, because the subject cannot conceptually mediate between the power as external to itself (“acting on” the subject) and power “acted by” the subject (internal to the subject, conceptualizable by the subject), the subject is not a unified concept. Butler is moving somewhere between the Hegelian accounts of subject-formation (according to which the subject is a unified concept for itself as it can mediate between various parts of its constitution) and Althusser’s theory of Interpellation.

For Butler, a subject is not formed unilaterally either by the power “owned” by the subject or by the power “not owned” by the subject (i.e. by power as external, not conceptualizable by the subject). The subject’s own power cannot be differentiated from the power of the other, so that a particular conceptual unity (a definable *form*) would emerge as a *result* or as an effect of this relation. For Butler, subject is an “ambivalent” constitution, not fully (conceptually) owned either by itself or by the other. For Butler, the political aspect of this not fully conceptualizable relation - between the formative power as known by the subject and as unknown by the subject - is that the subject cannot distinguish *certainly* between its own intentions and the intentions of the other. Its “own” politics is thus not fully known to itself, as it cannot conceptually transition between the internal otherness, constitutive of its “own” politics. Butler says that there always is a *remainder, an exceeding surplus*, constitutive of the subject - also as a critical and political category. (PLP 13-15; ES 28, 32-35, 87-92) Butler writes:

Where conditions of subordination make possible the assumption of power, the power assumed remains tied to those conditions, but in an ambivalent way; in fact, the power assumed may at once retain and resist that subordination. (PLP 13)

Butler’s theory of the “founding ambivalence” of the subject is theorized mainly by her critical readings of various theorists, of whom the most important ones are (besides Hegel), Althusser, Lacan and other Lacanian’s (e.g. feminist Lacanian-inflected thinkers like Irigaray) and Foucault. The founding ambivalence concerns the way the “ek-static” subject is formed. The parts of the ek-statism – the self and the Other - denote the modalities of “internal power” and “external power”. The primary relation between the self and the Other structures also the political intentions of the subject, i.e. the subject as a critical and political agency. As Butler argues in the quotation above, when the subject becomes interpellated into language, it becomes interpellated also into a political system of power, inherent in the language as always a social phenomenon. For Butler, via Althusser, linguistic identities and positions connect with social hierarchies and positions of authority and power. However, for Butler, via Foucault, these systems of power are not so systematic and coherent as in Althusser. For Butler, the “self” of the subject - the internal power, assumed through interpellation, which renders the subject a critical and political agency - is not fully determined by an ideological, external power.

Even that Butler sees Foucault and Althusser as similar thinkers in the sense that according to both of them subject is formed through a “founding submission” or “founding violence”, she also criticises Althusser in reference to Foucault. In reference to the latter, Butler argues that subject is formed through a founding submission which cannot be “defined, conceptualized” to have come from some specific repressive source. The repressing force thus cannot be identified or conceptualized, at least not fully. The power which forms the subject is not a

unified agent or structure – e.g. like the Althusserian ideology - seen as a sort of “sovereign subject”. Nor is the “interpellated” subject - the effect or result of interpellation – an identical copy (an identical reflection in the mirror) of a specific, identifiable interpellating power. Rather, the power which forms subjects comes from various sources, various formative interpellations, which cannot be differentiated from each other from the point of view of some “scientific” higher system of relation and differentiation. The interpellative powers are, in a sense, Other to each others.

Power does not arrive in the form of a name; its structures and its institutions are not such that the name seems perfectly suited to whatever power is. A name tends to fix, to freeze, to delimit, to render substantial, indeed, it appears to recall a metaphysics of substance of discrete and singular kinds of beings; a name is not the same as an undifferentiated temporal process or the complex convergence or relations that go under the rubric of a “situation”. But power is the name that one attributes to this complexity, a name that substitutes for that complexity, a name that renders manageable what might be otherwise too unwieldy or complex, and what, in its complexity, might defy the limiting and substantializing ontology presupposed by the name (ES 35).

For Butler, via Foucault, any conceptual system which analyzes the multiple powers, formative of subjects, is itself formed in the midst of multiple, ek-static powers. There is no neutral, “power-free” and “exclusion-free” point of view from which the power, formative of subjects (including the analyzer itself) could be seen *as it “truly” is*. For Foucault, subject is formed amidst multiple, *contingent* powers, which cannot be conceptually differentiated from each other. Butler explains what kind of an idea of the *formative* power (the power which “labours” objects, like e.g. bodies) she finds in Foucault:

Power is not a subject who acts on bodies as its distinct object. The grammar which compels us to speak that way enforces a metaphysics of external relations, whereby power acts on bodies but is not understood to form them. This is a view of power as an external relation that Foucault himself calls into question. Power operates for Foucault in the constitution of the very materiality of the subject, in the principle which simultaneously forms and regulates the “subject” of subjectivation (...) “Materiality” designates a certain effect of power or, rather, *is* power in its formative or constituting effects. Insofar as power operates successfully by constituting an object domain, a field of intelligibility, as a taken-for-granted ontology, its material effects are taken as material data or primary givens. These material positivities appear outside discourse and power, as its incontestable referent, its transcendental signifieds. (BM 33-35)

In a way Butler groups Althusser and Foucault together, as in both of them, the subject is formed by a founding submission, repressive by its nature. Both Althusser and Foucault see that the power, formative of the subject is not conceptualizable, as a particular object, for the subjects themselves. Yet, in contrast to Althusser, Foucault thinks that the originary “ideology” (to use an Althusserian choice of words) through which the subject becomes interpellated into subjectivity, cannot be analyzed as some specific ideology, or, ideological apparatus. Foucault thus denies the possibility of an Althusserian, or Marxist, “scientific”

analysis of the subject-formation. Butler agrees here more with Foucault than with Althusser, even that Butler does not take Althusser's distinction between ideology and science directly as a target of criticism.

With Foucault, there is no distinction into "ideology" and "science" as in Althusser. Butler does not discuss Althusser's distinction into "ideology" and "science" actually at all. Yet, it appears that the reason why, for Althusser, it is possible to analyze where the interpellative, subject-formative addresses *specifically* come from, is because there is the "subject-less" realm of science. As science itself is not ideologically interpellated, and thus not "failing" in its knowledge of subjects, the historical origin behind the formation of subjects can be specified by the scientific practice. As such, a Capital "S", as the originatory cause behind some historical, particular subject-position can be ascertained *for science*. In Foucault, *any* discursive practice is formed in a founding subjection. Thus, for Foucault, there is no external position (external from power) from the view-point of which the "founding submission of subjects" could be neutrally identified. Ideological power is *internal* to every such "external", scientific "looker" itself, instead of being distinct from it. As there is a lack of any "higher" (either Hegelian or Althusserian) system of rationality, from which the primary relation constitutive of the subject and its politics could be conceptually mediated, the power appears "heterogeneous".

While the basic Kojévian interpretation of the "violent" relation between the self and the Other *as political and historical agents* remains intact in Althusser's Lacanianism and in Foucault – both of whose subject-theories are rooted in Hegel – Butler modifies Althusser's subject-theory through Foucault. Even that Butler does not discuss Althusser's distinction between "ideology" and "science", Butler criticises Althusser's theory through Foucault. Foucault criticises strongly all theories – found according to him not only with Hegel but also with psychoanalysts – where the idea is that some "universal" point of view can be reached from which subjects and things can be interpreted. While in Althusser, there is still a "higher" (scientific) system of reading the formation of the subject, in Foucault such "higher" (power-free) systems are lacking. Foucault appears as critical not only against Hegel's universal rationality but also towards Althusser's Marxist science and Lacan's and Freud's psychoanalysis and theories of sexuality. For Foucault, all such rational or intellectual practices are themselves formed in power. Through Foucault Butler adopts a theory of a subject-formative power which is referred to mainly as just "power" because it cannot be identified (differentiated from or related to) in any other way.

Butler seemingly agrees more with Foucault than with Althusser on the nature of the "power", formative of the subjects. For Butler, like in Foucault, *formative power* (formative of things and subjects) is heterogeneous and contingent. As the effects of the workings of this kind of "ambivalently" formative power, the subjects are ambivalent as well. The interpellative power is not a particular subject as it is not a unified power, acting with a clear "ideological program" in its mind. It cannot be understood as an Althusserian Capital "Subject". Neither can it be known at some universal meta-level – as Althusser's science appears to be – which is distinct from the subjective realm.

Nevertheless, Butler's agreement with Foucault is not without reservations, either. Butler writes about this in PLP:

Whether by interpellation, in Althusser's sense, or by discursive productivity, in Foucault's, the subject is initiated through a primary submission to power. Although Foucault identifies the ambivalence in this formulation, he does not elaborate on the specific mechanisms of how the subject is formed in submission. Not only does the entire domain of psyche remain largely unremarked in his theory, but power in this double valence of subordinating and producing remains unexplored (PLP 2)

For Butler, in order for power to be resisted or criticised in any way it must be somehow taken as an identifiable "object". It appears that for Butler it is possible to elaborate on the *specific* mechanisms of how the subject is formed in submission – at least in some ways. She criticises Foucault for leaving the power, formative of subjects, totally ambivalent, not "elaborated". Butler argues that if we do not elaborate on the power at all, we cannot alter, question or "re-appropriate" it. As such, we place the power, formative of us, *discursively* above politics. Butler seems to think of abstractions – at least as concerns her criticism of thinkers like Foucault – like Hegel. For Hegel, all *thought* abstractions exist as larger conceptual constructions, all relational parts of which cannot be abstractions. All *thought* abstractions are thus ultimately *internally other* (or "ek-static") as they cannot be thought at all without relation made to those specific particulars from which they are abstracted off. As constituted by particulars, they are limited, contextual and historical entities. As such, abstractions can be rendered into criticisable "somethings" by thinking them as particular constructions. This resembles the way Butler frequently criticises not only Foucauldian but also many other abstractions (e.g. Lacanian "Lost object", Irigarayan "feminine jouissance" – even Derridean and Lévi-Straussian "floating signifiers"). Butler's way to argue for the necessity to "elaborate" on abstractions in order to render them "alterable through otherness" echoes Hegel's discussions on abstractions, especially as a part of his criticism of "pure self-consciousness" in PhS.

In the next quotation Butler criticises Foucault's notion of "sexuality". Butler finds a distinction between "sex" (produced, in an Althusserian vein, by repressive "Law") and "sexuality" (sexuality as it is *outside* of Law) in Foucault. Importantly, Butler's critique of Foucault's distinction between sex/sexuality echoes Hegel's critique of Kant's distinction between "thing for us"/"thing in itself":

On the one hand, Foucault, wants to argue that there is no "sex" in itself which is not produced by complex interactions of discourse and power, and yet there does seem to be a "multiplicity of pleasures" *in itself* which is not the effect of any specific discourse/power exchange. In other words, Foucault invokes a trope of prediscursive libidinal multiplicity that effectively presupposes a sexuality "before the law", indeed a sexuality waiting for emancipation from the shackles of "sex". On the other hand, Foucault officially insists that sexuality and power are coextensive and that we must not think that by saying yes to sex we say no to power. In his antijuridical and anti-emancipatory mode, the "official" Foucault argues that sexuality is always situated within matrices of power, that it is always produced or constructed within specific historical practices, both discursive and institutional, and that recourse to a sexuality before the law is an illusionary and complicitous conceit of emancipatory sexual politics. (GT 97)

Butler's Hegelian-inflected idea of "things, formed in multiple powers" is different from Foucault's notion of "things, formed in multiple powers". According to Butler, the Foucauldian "multiple power" – and sexuality, formed in multiple power - is placed above particular discourses and history. This is due to Foucault's not "elaborating" on the internal otherness of power, or sexuality. Multiple, unnameable power appears as a universal, unlimited agent, forming subjects and sexualities everywhere in all times and places. There appears no "other" for this power, which would limit it and constitute an outside to it. Placed beyond the critical capacities of subjects, it appears as an "unlimited explanation" of all matters. In Foucault, the unnameable and unlimited sexuality becomes a norm.

For Butler, in contrast to both Althusser and Foucault, the power, forming the subject and its sexuality can become "partly" accounted for - and politicized - by the subjects themselves. Power can be questioned and altered through its "ek-static" structure, i.e. through its internal otherness. As noted above, this is basically a Hegelian idea, setting the basis for Hegel's idea of *self-conscious* relations between the subject and the Other, which is, importantly, the basic idea of dialectics. The ground idea of Butler's performative politics (which she theorizes also in reference to Hegel's dialectics) is that the subjects can *repeat* the norms of compulsory subjecthood "radically", in a manner not fully in compliance to external otherness.

The compulsory norms, formative of subjects, can be reiterated in some ways *against* the norms. Hence, the subjects themselves can take part in the "labouring" (interpellative formation) of things. This means that subjects are capable of resisting the "external norm" and capable of including also their own thoughts and norms into the formation of objects (including also their own selves as objects for themselves). Thus, the interpellation, coming from an external power is rendered not sovereign, even if it cannot be totally resisted. There is an element of freedom which resembles the Hegelian idea of freedom. In Hegel's community of free selves, objects are formed by mutually recognitive selves.

Butler's critique against Althusser takes up also the question of the "subject" as a *practice*. Butler says, via Althusser, that in order for the ideology to *exist*, it needs to be constantly reiterated, repeated "loyally" in the everyday lives of the subjects. One of Butler's most famous (Althusserian-inflected) ideas is that a subject, and especially a gendered subject, is a *reiterative practice*, an institutionalized, sanctioned, continuous ritual. The subjects must constantly repeat the rules of right, legitimate subjectivity and gender to actually *be* subjects, women, men, heterosexuals. However, Butler argues – in criticism against Althusser - that the rules can be repeated not loyally; they can be repeated "wrongly".

After all, to be named by another is traumatic: it is an act that precedes my will, an act that brings me into a linguistic world in which I might then begin to exercise agency at all. A founding subordination, and yet the scene of agency, is repeated in the ongoing interpellations of social life. This is what I have been called. Because I have been called something, I have been entered into a linguistic life, refer to myself through the language given by the Other, but perhaps never quite in the same terms that my language mimes. The terms by which we are hailed are rarely the ones we choose (and even when we try to impose protocols on how we are to be named, they usually fail); but these terms we never really choose are the occasion for something we might still call

agency, the repetition of an originary subordination for another purpose, one whose future is partially open. (ES 38)

Even that the subjects cannot totally resist being subjects – being hailed, interpellated by the Other and thus subordinated by an external power - they can nevertheless “trouble” the rules which subordinate them. This “troubling” can take the internal otherness of the power itself (its constitutive radical outside) as the point of reference. The power can be turned against itself, through the Other which is excluded by it, yet nevertheless internal to it as an ek-static construction. This idea is the base of Butler’s performative politics where the rules of legitimate subjectivity are repeated, yet not loyally. The rules can be “appropriated” and repeated in a subversive (radical) manner. The idea of political “gender trouble” as a not loyally reiterative practice is based on this idea.

Like for Hegel, for Butler the subject itself can in some ways take itself (including such aspects like “subject-position”, “other”, “subject as a lost object”/ subject as an empty power” – as an object of thinking. For Butler, the subjects themselves can politicize the various interpellations (identities) by which they themselves are formed by making a recourse to the internal otherness of their own selves.

5.2.9. The critique of pure politics

Butler criticises Hegel in reference to thinkers like Althusser, Lacan and Foucault. By criticising Hegel’s total subject they criticise especially the realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition, which they equate with something like Kojève’s “End of History”. However, after criticising Hegel through Althusser (and through Foucault, Lacan etc.) Butler turns to criticise Althusser and Lacanians in general and also Foucault. Hence, somewhat “reciprocally”, these thinkers are criticised in reference to Hegel, or in reference to ideas found primarily with Hegel.

The way Butler criticises Althusser, Lacan, Foucault - or Derrida - echoes closely Hegel’s criticism of Kant. According to Kant, the epistemology of the subject is constituted by a primary relation (subject as a subject *for itself*/subject as a subject *in itself*) which (this relation itself) remains unknown for any particular, historical practice of thinking. Butler criticises Althusser, Lacan and the Lacanians (such as Žižek and Laclau, see especially CHU on this) as well as Foucault, for the same reason than Hegel criticized Kant. Butler claims that in the theories of these thinkers, subjects are known *externally* and *unpolitically*.

According to Hegel’s criticism of Kant, as well as according to Butler’s criticism of Althusser, Foucault etc. , any primary relation which is thought to be *necessarily* unknown, is rendered as such *in historical thinking*. As such, this primary relation is (including both of its parts, also the unknown part) subjective, historical and particular. For Hegel, as for Butler, any *thought* distinction (including both of its parts) is a particular, subjective distinction, because it is not thought by God, or by nature, but by historical subjects.

These arguments are presented in CHU where Butler criticises Ernesto Laclau’s Lacanian

notion of the incompleteness of the subject. Butler makes in this criticism frequent references to Hegel's criticism of Kant. First Butler gives an account of Laclau's idea of particular subject-positions. For Laclau (according to Butler), particular subject-positions try to universalize their own particular idea (or, truth) of subjectivity, i.e. to render their limited truth into an unlimited, "global" truth, accepted by everyone in all places and times. Laclau argues that the subject-positions are bound to fail as to their universalizing efforts. A particular subject-position cannot globalize itself because it is not universal but contains a limited and historical truth of what subjects are like. What each subject-position shares with other subject-positions is the similar nature of being not universal, instead particular and limited. Any attempt, on the part of a subject-position, to gain universal recognition for its own truth from all other subject-positions (of all times and places) is bound to fail. Butler agrees with Laclau on that subject-positions are bound to fail if they attempt to universalize themselves (Laclau 1990; 2000a,b)

..we are, I believe, in agreement that the field of differential relations from which any and all particular identities emerge must be limitless. Moreover, the "incompleteness" of each and every identity is a direct result of its differential emergence: no particular identity can emerge without presuming and enacting the exclusion of others, and this constitutive exclusion or antagonism is the shared and equal condition of all identity-constitution. (CHU 31)

As is seen in the quotation above, Butler shares with Laclau the (Kojèveian) interpretation concerning particular subject-identities. For Butler, as for Laclau, every particular subject-identity is based on an exclusion of others and this exclusion is "antagonistic" by its nature (see also Laclau 1990). Butler describes, throughout her writings, that the primary relation which constitutes every particular subject-identity is necessarily a violent and repressive exclusion. In this Butler disagrees with Hegel, according to whom the primary exclusion of others (i.e. the relation between the self and the Other) does not have to be based on the attitude of "desire" (i.e. on one-sided recognition and thus the repressive exclusion - i.e. the "enslaving" - of others).

Butler agrees with Laclau – and in general with the Lacanians – on a few things, yet, she also disagrees with them. In general, her disagreement with the Lacanians is similar as her disagreement with all those thinkers - in reference to whose idea of the subject as "incomplete" - she criticises Hegel's "complete" subject. An interesting question is what is wrong with Althusser's, Foucault's and Lacan's notions of the subject as incomplete, as Butler nevertheless agrees with these theories on the "incompleteness" of the subject? A similarly interesting question is what is wrong with Hegel's idea of the subject as "complete" if Butler nevertheless appeals to Hegel's theory of the subject as complete, when criticizing the theories of the incomplete subject?

CHU, which comprises of Butler's discussions with the Lacanian thinkers Laclau and Žižek is devoted to the question of the "incompleteness" of the subject. All these three thinkers agree, basically, that the subject is incomplete, yet, they disagree on the nature of this incompleteness. In CHU, Butler takes Hegel as the main point of reference in her critical thinking of the incompleteness of the subject. Butler explains first Hegel's criticism of the Kantian "formal abstractivism". For Butler Kant's distinction between "subject for us/subject in itself" provides one theory of the subject as incomplete. With Kant there is an idea that particular,

historical subjects can know themselves only in terms of “subject for us” which never fully reaches what the subject is “in itself”. Butler equates, at least in some ways, the Lacanian’s theory of the incompleteness of the subject (including the ideas of Laclau and Žižek) with the Kantian idea, which she criticises through Hegel. Through a Hegelian reading she, firstly, argues that the Kantian and the Lacanian idea of the incompleteness of the subject actually constitutes an idea of the subject as complete. For Hegel, all theories of the subject are self-relational conceptual constructions and thus complete and universal taken as such, alone. In this Butler agrees with Hegel.

Importantly, Hegel does *not* criticize Kant for presenting a universalizing, complete theory of the subject. For Hegel, *all* theories of the subject are “complete and universalizing”, in one way or the other. Hegel is not against universalizing theories as such. Instead, he is critical of Other-refuting theories, i.e. theories which constitute an internal “patronizing” structure (a Lord – Bondsman- relation). For Hegel, in patronizing (epistemologically asymmetrical, enslaving) theories only some subjects are treated as complete, while others are seen as incomplete. Nevertheless, for Hegel, complete and universalizing theories do not *necessarily* refute otherness. In reciprocally cognitive relations all selves - each self seen as a “theorist” of the subject - are seen as complete. Nevertheless, they do not patronize each others. As for the criticism of Kant, Hegel is critical of the distinction between subject for us /subject in itself. For Hegel, it constitutes a Lord-Bondsman-relation. This distinction renders Kant’s subject-theory an Other-refuting theory.

Butler disagrees with Laclau, basically for the same reason why Hegel disagrees with Kant. According to Hegel, particular subject is *externally* known and thus *epistemologically enslaved* in Kant’s subject-theory. For Hegel, subjects are enslaved in Kant’s philosophy because they are thought to be constituted by a primary relation (thing for us/thing in itself, which corresponds with the distinction between “subject for us”/“subject in itself”), which is thought as necessarily beyond the conceptual capacities of the subjects themselves. Hegel’s idea that subject is a *self-conscious concept* repeats the idea that the subject is *internally known* and complete. The idea here is that all relations – *thought by someone* (e.g. by philosophers, scientists, priests or other mediators, like perhaps the contemporary psychoanalytic theorists) to be constitutive or formative of the subject – are “accessible” for the subjects themselves. Whatever can be known about the subject can also be learned by the subject itself. And there are no aspects of the subject (or of any thing, for that matter) which cannot be known by someone, for all things in this world are constituted by the synthesis of all humanly possible descriptions of them. Hegel’s insight was that if the subjects themselves are seen as capable of conducting their own internal mediation, the internal dualism (Lord-Bondsman-relation and epistemological slavery) can be abolished.

In reference to Hegel’s criticism of Kant, Butler criticises Laclau’s idea that the “universal truth of things” is an “empty place”, void of particular content. First Butler explains what universality of things is for Laclau:

Where universality is to be found, according to Laclau, it is as an “empty but ineradicable place”. It is not a presumed or a priori condition that might be discovered and articulated, and it is not the ideal of achieving a complete list of any and all particularisms which would be unified by a shared content. Paradoxically, it is the absence of any such shared content that constitutes the

promise of universality. (CHU 31)

As a part of the same critique against Lacanians, Butler argues the following, echoing closely Hegel's critique of the Kantian Reason as "empty formalism". For Hegel, as for Butler, Kantian idea of the incompleteness of the subject resulted into an abstract intellectualism and "formal Reason" which has a "enslaving" attitude towards particular subjectivity.

The notion that all identity is posited in a field of differential relations is clear enough, but if these relations are pre-social, or if they constitute a structural level of differentiation which conditions and structures the social but is distinct from it, we have located the universal in yet another domain: in the structural features of any and all languages. Is this significantly different from identifying the universal in the structural presuppositions of the speech act, in so far as both projects elaborate a universal account of some characteristic of language? Such an approach separates the formal analysis of language from its cultural and social syntax and semantics, and this further suggests that what is said about language is said about all language –users, and that its particular social and political formations will be but instances of a more generalized and non-contextual truth about language itself. (CHU 34)

For Butler, the Kantian as well as Lacanian idea of "universality" (i.e. the universal truth of things, i.e. the truth of the "object") as "lost" or as an "empty place" results from political thought abstracted from such contradictory (radical) otherness which could question this thought itself. Butler criticises the Lacanian "psychoanalytical linguisticism" for being a politically paralyzing mode of thought. Criticism against Lacanian-inflected theories of feminist thinkers is a repeatedly recurring theme in Butler. E.g. in Irigaray Butler finds a Lacanian-inflected idea of "femininity" as a "lost object". Butler presents basically very similar criticism against Irigaray as she presents against Lacanians in general. (see e.g. BM 57-91).

According to Butler, Lacanian-inflected linguisticism renders language the ultimate abstract, structural truth of things which becomes placed external to politics. Particular political claims become seen as the "changeable" and "contingent" contents which variably fill the universally stable abstract structure of language itself. If the "truth" of things becomes equated with the plain structure of language, abstracted from specific semantic contents, there is no room for politics against this thought itself. Butler writes:

..if we conceive of universality as an "empty place", one that is "filled" by specific contents, and further understand political meanings to be the contents with which the empty place is filled, then we posit an exteriority of politics to language that seems to undo the very concept of political performativity that Laclau espouses. (CHU 34)

The Kantian-inflected notion of "free reason" is also a target of Butler's criticism. Butler criticises the Habermasian and Rawlsian communicative and deliberative proceduralisms for their "Kantian" abstractivism. The next quotation is from a text which targets the Lacanian notion of the incompleteness of the subject as well as also the Habermasian and Rawlsian formal proceduralisms:

...the fear, of course, is that what is named as universal is the parochial property of dominant culture, and that “universalizability” is indissociable from imperial expansion. The proceduralist view seeks to sidestep this problem by insisting that it makes no substantive claims about human nature, but its exclusive reliance on rationality to make its claim belies this very assertion. The viability of the proceduralist solution relies in part on the status of formal claims and, indeed, whether one can establish a purely formal method for adjudicating political claims. Here the Hegelian critique of Kantian formalism is worth reconsidering, mainly because Hegel called into question whether such formalism are ever really as formal as they purport to be. (CHU 15)

Butler criticises the idea that *political aims* could be established by methods thought as *purely formal*, as the very idea of “purity” here (i.e. the idea behind Kantian “transcendental Reason”) and also behind Althusserian subject-less philosophical practice) is to be void of political content. Even that Butler does not discuss Althusser’s subject-less scientific Marxism here, also the idea behind it was to be free from *limited* (ideological, misrecognitive, failing) political aims.

Butler’s insight here appears to be that political claims (as *intentional and thus formative*) are always in some ways “limited” (otherwise they could not be claims in favour of something, instead of being in favour of something else). Intentional claims thus include some notion of the favoured “object”. The favoured object, giving a direction and also “identity” to the intentional action, must be somehow differentiated from disfavoured objects. As such intentional (political) claims are formative of objectivity. Thus, the idea that political claims are established by a “pure” mode of thought (thought as free from limits) indeed appears self-contradictory and also undemocratic.

Why should we conceive of universality as an empty “place” which awaits its content in an anterior and subsequent event? Is it empty only because it has already disavowed or suppressed the content from which it emerges, and where is the trace of the disavowed in the formal structure that emerges? (CHU 34)

It indeed seems that “pure politics” criticised by Butler does not allow for a critical outside to it. Such politics, seen to be purified from “limited” intentions, places itself above criticism. Whereas any criticism is seen to belong to the realm of subjective (limited) knowledge, the pure politics itself is considered to emanate from a “pure method”, free from subjective knowledge. Butler’s criticism here echoes closely Hegel’s criticism of Kantian “pure self-consciousness” and Enlightenment Reason. Also sceptical thinking, an intentional aspect of pure self-consciousness, appears as a target of this criticism. For Butler, via Hegel, political aims, which appear as results of “pure” methods, do not allow for a critical outside, hence they refute otherness and produce un-democratic politics.

Butler’s Hegelian criticism of Kantian- and Lacanian-derivative “pure politics” seems reasonable. This sort of *pure politics* seems indeed “placed” above critical otherness. E.g. in Althusser (whom Butler does not however discuss) there seems to be an otherness-refuting dualism inside politics. There is the subject-less Marxist politics, thought as free from incomplete subjectivity and incomplete political aims, hence appearing as complete. And then

there is the “fallen” and misrecognitive (ideological) politics of the subjects. There appears to be some sort of “therapeutic” relation between these two realms, where the Marxist politics tries to cure the traumas, caused in the realm of the misrecognitive politics, in which subjects strive for wrong (ideological) objects. Because of the dualist (not conceptually mediated) relation between these two realms, the subjects necessarily strive after something else than the subject-less scientists. Yet, importantly, intentionality (and thus politics) is conducted in both of these realms, and seemingly directed towards the same reality. Hence, “thingness” (“world”, as well as “subject”) is constituted by an *internal* Lord-Bondsman-structure (put in Hegelian terms).

It appears that for Butler, whenever some thing becomes an “object” of thinking (an identifiable something) - i.e. a *thought* object, it becomes a complete, universal object for itself, and thus otherness-refuting. However, it appears that there is at least some thinking, which is not dominated by this logic. Butler seriously seems to think that her performative politics is a way to “democratize” terms, to open them up for otherness. Thus, the one (like Butler herself) who thinks of things in terms of “performative politics” – i.e. in terms of an ek-static process in which all particular identities become in turn questioned through their Others – is actually able to think in a “democratizing” way. The way to think of objects in a democratizing way is to think of them as ek-static processes. Whereas “stable identities” are otherness-refuting identities, ek-statically processual identities are democratic because during the process the refuted identities become also “freed from slavery”. Through the process all the particular identities and definitions that terms (like e.g. “woman”, “sexuality”, “human” etc.) take on are opened up for their own otherness. As the definitions of the terms vary in time and place, also the Other varies correspondingly, as the Other is something relational and contextual. Even that the internal moments (i.e. moments in which a particular identity is given to the term) are otherness-refutive, the process itself is “ek-static” and hence radically democratizing. The process takes the Others into account. The process takes all the (mutually refutive and refuted) moments into account, and sees them as valid moments of the term. In this sense, the process goes beyond any of its singular (temporally and contextually limited) moments. Whereas the singular moments define the term only from their own limited point of view, the one (like Butler) who sees the term as a process, sees (or, “speculates”, to use a Hegelian term) the term as consisting of various mutually contradicting parts. Indeed, in this way (in the sense of seeing terms as dynamic processes, consisting of mutually contradicting aspects) Butler, as a seer of terms, resembles what Hegel says of “speculation”.

Butler’s performative politics claims not to have its own “particular” (and thus otherness-refuting) ideas concerning things. Its internal moments have particular political goals, yet, the process itself does not have. This is what makes it ek-static and contrasts it with non-ek-static processes, like coherent histories, which are known “in advance”. Performative politics is an ek-static process, recognitive of otherness, even that its internal moments, taken alone, are refutive of otherness. It includes moments of particularity, however, it goes also beyond them, through the recognition of the Other. This kind of process bears some resemblance to the Althusserian Marxist politics. It may “trouble” the particular politics, yet, it refrains from setting its own, conceptually defined political goals, hence refraining from a Hegelian, conceptually synthesizing dialectics. What is important, Butler herself is apparently capable of thinking of things as this kind of ek-static processes. Even that Butler would no doubt concede that her own thinking is as subjective, historical and particular as anybody else’s, constituting in this sense a limited “moment” in an ek-static process, she nevertheless speaks

of this “limitedness” from a reflective point of view. Her way to look at the otherness-refutive moments from the point of view of the refuted others, shows not only that she worries for the sake of the refuted others, but also that she acknowledges that there is an Other for any moment of particular historical thinking, also to her own. It appears that Butler, who thinks of things as critical processes is able to form an object, which is not otherness-refuting: object as an ek-static process. Butler’s thought of the object corresponds to the constitution of the object (object as a process or a futural doing, which goes beyond its limited otherness-refutive moments). However, Butler does not see a capacity to see things as ek-static processes as a capacity which belongs to “particular subjective identities”. This is connected to Butler’s “Althusserian reversal of Hegel”, i.e. her way to see *particular subjects* as not capable of reflecting their own ideological formation. For Butler, particular subjects are conditioned by what remains inaccessible, external for them.

Butler does not explain the possibility of her own self-(through the Other)-consciousness. Her own capacity to introduce e.g. the “performative politics” – in which the Other is taken into account – appears as an impossible capacity, given her theory of the subject. Her own model of “reciprocal recognition” (performative politics) appears an impossibility – at least for actual subjects – because she, quite like Althusser, does not consider subjects capable of reflecting the ek-static constitution of themselves. Butler does not discuss Althusser’s distinction into the realms of “ideology” and “science”. Nor does Butler compare Althusser’s distinction between ideology (as a realm of subjective, incomplete knowledge) and science (as a subject-less knowledge free from the incomplete subjectivity) with Kant’s distinction between the realm of subjective knowledge and transcendental Reason. For Kant, Reason constituted a “transcendental” mode of thinking, abstracted free from parochial, limited subjectivity. In this sense, as a sort of “subject-less” mode of thinking the Kantian Reason could be compared with Althusser’s “scientific, subject-less” philosophy.

Althusser can be seen to have given an answer – by the view-point of “science” - to the question of how, and for whom, his own subject-theory was possible. With Butler, this question, which relates to the “Ishmaelian paradox” remains unanswered.

5.2.10. The timeless Law

According to Butler, even that the refutation of others cannot be fully overcome, there is no need why it should mean that some *specific* others are *always* refuted. There is no *necessary* reason why the refuted others must always be women, homosexuals etc. For Butler, the refutation of women or homosexuals is also not a necessary *structural* part of all languages at all times (or the necessary feature of all linguistic psychical structures) as the Lacanians or some Lacanian feminists (like Irigaray) claim. There is no need (outside of this very Law itself) why just these groups are always the silenced groups. This is why Butler opposes the Lacanian theory of the silenced and irrational other “sex” as *forever* the “feminine” sex., or the abject, perverted sexuality as forever the homosexuality. Butler argues that because the refuted otherness is produced as such, as an everyday reiterated practice, it can be produced differently.

According to Butler, even that subjects are incomplete, they are not *fully* incomplete (in the Althusserian or Foucauldian sense). They can politically alter, and question, the *specific* ways in which the otherness becomes refuted in some cultural and historical context (as a specific symbolic order). Even that there is always symbolic orders, and Laws which are based on the foreclosure of the otherness, these Laws do not have to stay the same forever. The same Others (like homosexuals or women) do not have to remain refuted forever. Butler's theory of the incompleteness of the subject has been importantly modified by Hegel's critique of Kant.

By performative politics, the defining borders of particular subjects and things are to be made more "open" for "unspeakable otherness". Butler calls this openness a "founding ambivalence". This includes the idea that there is no such *timeless* Law, as timeless language, which can fix the limits of all subjects forever to some specific particular place. The border between what belongs to the rational, speakable, legitimate subjectivity and what belongs outside of it in abjection is temporally movable. The idea is to expose particular things to their internal "unspeakability" and make the border between these realms move. There is an intention is to "make room" inside the things (such as "human", "woman", "sexuality" etc.) for the internal, refuted otherness.

Butler's intention, in her performative politics, is not to make the particular borders of things disappear. This is also seen in her criticism of "Kantianism". For Hegel, as for Butler, the borders of things disappear (and particularity becomes "enslaved") if things are thought to be constituted in primary relation to the Kantian "thing in itself" or to the Lacanian "lost referent". Because these "things in themselves" are fully abstract, fully unlimited, they render the limited, particular part of the thing unlimited as well. Butler argues that the "constitutive, unspeakable outside" can be thought always in relation to the particular subjectivity, whose "other side" and whose "unspeakability" it is. In line with Hegel, Butler argues that there is no such "unspeakable otherness" which would not itself be historical and relational. Any otherness is itself internally altered, because it is also a construction, thinkable because of its relation to its "speakable" and "legitimate" outside. The subject-position is the outside of this "outside". Because this outside is thus a relational, instead of an absolute outside, it is also political: it can be questioned, exposed as historical and subjective. The constitutive outside – as always a relational and thus specific outside - is thus a construction, or a part of a construction.

This zone of uninhabitability will constitute the defining limit of the subject's domain; it will constitute that site of dreaded identification against which – and by virtue of which – the domain of the subject will circumscribe its own claim of autonomy and life. In this sense, then, the subject is constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection, one which produces a constitutive outside to the subject, an abjected outside, which is, after all, inside the subject as its own founding repudiation. (BM 3)

For example "femininity", "homosexuality" or "blacks" etc. are *discursively* produced and constructed as abjected outsides. Correspondingly, as the "world out there" is discursively produced, abject and incomplete humanity may gain its objective materialization as women, homosexuals, blacks etc. These abject outsides, in comparison to which "complete, normal and legitimate humanity" becomes understood, are always historical constructions. In the next

quotation Butler goes back to Plato to criticise the idea that some *specific* groups are necessarily always the incomplete, irrational (i.e. slaves) instead of universal beings (i.e. Lords, Masters):

After all, Plato's scenography of intelligibility depends on the exclusion of women, slaves, children, and animals, where slaves are characterized as those who do not speak his language, and who, in not speaking his language, are considered diminished in their capacity for reason. This xenophobic exclusion operates through the production of racialized Others, and those whose "natures" are considered less rational by virtue of their appointed task in the process of laboring to reproduce the conditions of private life. This domain of the less than rational human bounds the figure of human reason, producing that "man" as one who is without childhood; is not a primate and so is relieved of the necessity of eating, defecating, living and dying; one who is not a slave, but always a property holder; one whose language remains originary and untranslatable. (...) This is a materialization of reason which operates through the dematerialization of other bodies, for the feminine, strictly speaking, has no morphe, no morphology, no contour, for it is that which contributes to the contouring of things, but is itself undifferentiated, without boundary. (BM 48-49)

For Butler, even that it makes sense to say that the "refuted otherness" is something constitutive to linguistic beingness, there is no *specific* otherness which must *necessarily* and always inhabit the zone of the irrationality. Butler argues all through her writings that the "outside", constitutive of all coherent subjectivity, is a *relative* outside. It is a part of the always historical construction of coherent subjectivity. As historical and changeable, the realms of coherent and incoherent subjectivity may be inhabited by different figures. Even that this resembles Althusser's criticism of e.g. Freud's theory of the Oedipal phase, Butler criticises also Althusser's interpellative power for its way to pose as a *non-relative* (non-political) outside. Even that Butler does not discuss, let alone criticise Althusser's distinction into "ideology" and "science" she criticises Althusserian ideology as completely "above" subjective knowledge. Butler criticises the idea that the subjects themselves could not be able to mobilize, to politicize, i.e. to make other, the distinction, by which they are "known. Butler argues that there is no power, which could not be turned against itself, reappropriated, in some ways. All powers are ek-static: they can be "troubled" through their Other. In the next quotation, from a text (in BM) where she reads critically Lacan's theory of the "Real", Butler criticises the "Lacanian" Žižek and Laclau (as well as also Mouffe). Her criticism resembles Hegel's critique of the aprioristic Kantian dualism

To claim that there is an "outside" to the socially intelligible, and that this "outside" will always be that which negatively defines the social is, I think, a point on which we can concur. To delimit that outside through the invocation of a preideological "law", a prediscursive law" that works invariantly throughout all history, and further, to make that law function to secure a sexual differential that ontologizes subordination, is an "ideological" move in a more ancient sense, one that might only be understood through a rethinking of ideology as "reification". That there is always an "outside" and, indeed, a "constitutive antagonism" seems right, but to supply the character and content to a law that secures the borders between the "inside" and the "outside" of symbolic

intelligibility is to preempt the specific social and historical analysis that is required, to conflate into “one” law the effect of a convergence of many, and to preclude the very possibility of a future articulation of that boundary which is central to the democratic project that Žižek, Laclau and Mouffe promote. (BM 206-207)

For Butler, any epistemology of the subject, and any description of what subjects are universally like, is “ek-static” so that there is always an “unknown” side to the subject. However, this “unknown” side is as historical, subjective and “ideological” as the “known” side. These sides are constitutive of each other and thus both relational. As such, this whole distinction into the known and into the unknown belongs fully to the realm of subjective historical thinking. Importantly, Butler repeats, above, the idea behind Hegelian reciprocal recognition, as the main point of reference in her criticism. In order to give possibility to the otherness (called here as the “outside”) to articulate differently the way subject is formed (or interpellated) into intelligible subjectivity, we should not make our theory of this primary relation an “unreachable” one. A theory is rendered unreachable, and politically inaccessible if it is rendered a “lost object”. If it is “lost” from language – by claiming that it cannot be analysed as a linguistic object - it is also lost from politics as politics takes place in language. Hence, for Butler, the “unknown” is necessarily some *specific* unknown, as femininity (and consequently also *actual* heterosexuality as well as actual homosexuality) is for the Lacanians.

For Butler, a democratizing ek-statism of the subject takes place as a “double-movement” in which any (present) form of universality is opened up for its *relative* otherness. Consequently, in the course of the movement there appears a plurality of *formative* (interpellative, radically performative) powers, instead of one, as in Althusser’s ideological practice. There is hence features resembling Hegel’s dialectical movement and absolute, “shared” knowing. In Hegel’s reciprocal recognition – as a dialectical relation - both the self (as one thesis of the world) and the Other (as another, contradictory thesis) are considered *formative* (“negating”, in Hegel’s words, or “performative” in Butler’s words) powers. In such dialectical movement the “result” (the actual thing being formed, another name of which is *synthesis*) is constituted by the formative labour of both the self and the Other, instead of, like in Althusser, in reference to the ideology of the other side, i.e. for the ideological capital “S”. (In fact, with Althusser, there is a kind of reciprocity as well, as “science” appears also as an intentional agent. Butler however does not discuss the synthesizing role of Althusser’s science at all. This theme will be discussed further in the next chapters)

Butler’s “double movement” is actually another name for her “performative politics”. This theme will be discussed further in the next sub-chapters.

5.2.11. The dialectical critique

Butler theorizes her performative politics in reference to Hegel’s dialectics (described in ch. 2 in this work). Butler e.g. criticises Althusser, Lacan and Foucault for their “Kantian” *one-*

sided movements in reference to Hegel's *double-movement*, dialectics.

Basically, in Hegelian dialectics - whether it takes place before or after the entrance into the realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal recognition - the movement is synthesizing. The particular subject - or particular things in general- as the effects or as the results of the dialectical process (a sort of "double interpellation") are not in identity with just one interpellative power. Butler recalls this idea when she argues that no "interpellative power" is a sovereign power which "performs" (i.e. constitutes) the objectivity self-identically, one-sidedly, by itself alone (ES 71-102). Thus, Hegelian double-movement is referred to in Butler's criticism of the Althusserian "ideological practice", the course of which is dominated just by the other side, which acts as the Capital "S". With Althusser, subjects are "practices", dominated by the Capital "S". Subjects cannot reflect radically the interpellative power, the Capital "S", which constitutes them as subjects. Interpellative power is used *on* the subjects, not *by* the subjects (see ch. 3.2).

With Hegel, subjects are dialectical processes, in which there is no singular power which would set the course of the process. Contradictory selves take part in the process, by which "terms" (subjects as well as "things" in general, and objective existence) are determined. Thus, while with Althusser there is the small "s" (subject as particular, subject as formed by an interpellative power) and the capital "S" (subject as an authoritative, interpellative agent), with Hegel there are, so to speak, *two* interpellative "S":es. With Hegel, both sides in the dialectical process are universalizing and formative - i.e. *negating* - powers. The "negation" of subjects and things are not done by a singular power. With Hegel, neither side of the interpellation is, alone, a capital "S", as is the case with Althusser. Hegel's idea of the double movement is the base of Hegel's subject-theory in general (the theory of the "ek-static self"). It is also the base of Butler's theory of the ek-static self and Butler's politics as a double-movement.

In ES Butler discusses the problem of "hate speech" on the basis of Althusser's theory of Interpellation, critically modified by Butler in reference to Hegel's theory of double or mutual (dialectical) subject-formation. Butler argues that "hate-speech" such as the calling of somebody a "nigger" or "queer" does not necessarily produce a "victim-class" because the injurious address (interpellation) is not a sovereign, one-sided power. Butler argues the following:

"The political possibility of reworking the force of speech act against the force of injury consists in misappropriating the force of speech from those prior contexts. The language that counters the injuries of speech, however, must repeat those injuries without precisely re-enacting them. Such a strategy affirms that hate speech does not destroy the agency required for a critical response. Those who argue that hate speech produces a "victim class" deny critical agency.." (ES 41)

With Hegel, there is of course no Althusserian distinction between "ideology" and "science". With Hegel, "science" is an internal, conceptual part of the subjects. Even if intellectual abstract practices contribute to the collective development of the Spirit, they are conducted by particular subjects. From the point of view of Hegel's subject-theory in PhS Althusser's "science" occupies the position of a *synthesizing* "third" in Althusser's Lacanian subject-

theory. By the “third”, the internal doubleness of the subject is “seen”. Althusser’s science, placed as a neutral practice above subjects, sees that the subject is double. Science sees that the subject consists of the “particular subject” (little “s”, i.e. the addressee of interpellation) and the ideological Capital “S” (the interpellative power). From the point of view of Hegel’s theory of the synthesizing “third”, the Althusserian external and “pure”, Marxist “third” acts like a “pure self-consciousness”. Because the Althusserian “science” has not acknowledged its own particular subjectivity, it does not allow any contradictory “otherness” to itself.

Butler criticises Althusser’s Interpellative subject-theory in reference to Hegel’s criticism of the Kantian pure self-consciousness (see e.g. CHU 1-40; ES 28-38). Butler argues that in Althusser, the subject is seen as a one-sided process, dominated fully by ideology as the Capital “S”. Butler does not however engage into criticizing Althusser’s distinction between “ideology” and “science”. By the distinction between “ideology” and “science” Althusser, in a way, explains the possibility of the theory of Interpellation. Through science, it is possible to talk of the “dyad” interpellative subject-formation. Without any such realm like “science”, the very talk of the interpellative subject-formation appears as impossible. Without “science” there would be no theory of any such human “practice” which could be seen as capable of theorizing the interpellative formation of subjects, as the subjects themselves are considered incapable of such discussions. There would be also no theory of how the interpellative, ideological subject-formation can ever be interfered with, or “troubled”, as the conscious politics of subjects take always already place in the realm of ideology. There would be no explanation of the possibility of Marxist politics. The speculation of “fallen” (ideologically formed, misrecognitive of themselves, each others and the world) subjects would have to be transformed to take place in the realm of “gods” etc. In Althusser’s atheist Marxism there is naturally no room for gods, thus the talk of the formation of the “mistaken” and “limited” subjects cannot take place as a religious communication between gods or between priests and gods. Nevertheless, for Althusser, the “real”, “universal” knowledge of the subjects cannot take place by the “fallen” subjects themselves because their knowledge of themselves and of the world is “failing”.

Butler criticises Althusser’s idea of the subject as a “practice” for its one-sidedness. Althusser’s subjects repeat quite loyally the orders of the capital “S”, because the particular subjects themselves are not seen as “interpellative powers”. Hegel’s idea of the dialectical movement (as a double-movement) is the basic point of reference in Butler’s criticism against Althusser’s one-sided practice. Basically, Hegel’s idea of the dialectical movement between the self and the Other – as it takes place in PhS before the realm of free self-consciousness and reciprocal relations – is the model for Butler’s politics and serves as the point of reference in Butler’s criticism of Althusser.

For Butler, the interpellative formation of the subject - as a continuous practice - is seen as a *critical* process. The process is not dominated by any one sovereign power. This process is caused or motivated by the refutation of contradicting otherness. Hence the process proceeds through contradicting otherness, like the Hegelian dialectics. Process through radical (contradictory) otherness is the basic idea also in Butler’s performative politics. The process consists of concurring criticism and demands, on the part of the radical otherness, to be included into the “valid” universal. The Other demands to be included into the group of those who are seen as valid, universal beings (i.e. as complete beings) and who are also seen to have valid “bodies” (i.e. valid objective existence). As was explained already in the chapter

on Kojève, Butler takes Hegel's "struggle for recognition" as the base for her politics.

In CHU and also in other texts Butler criticises various subject-theories, especially the theories of Foucault, Lacan, Althusser etc. on the basis of her idea of the "double-movement" of things" (movement through radical otherness). For Butler, things or actually terms (such as "woman", "man", "human") are primarily processes which proceed through radical otherness. Butler's notion of terms as processes is however based on both Althusser's idea of subject as an ideological linguistic practice (theory of Interpellation) as well as on Hegel's idea of the "struggle for recognition".

Butler calls e.g. "woman" "a term in process" (GT 33). However, for Butler, in criticism of the Althusserian "gendering" practices (and in reference to Hegel's dialectics) the subject-formative practices are not fully determined, alone, by any particular ideology. They are not fully determined by some sovereign Other. Hence there is no sovereign Other (as an ideology or a "symbolic Law") which can fix (or, interpellate) things as a sovereign power. When a thing is fixed in reference to some "power", it is, in turn, soon contradicted by its internal refuted otherness. This idea repeats the idea of Hegel's dialectics, as it takes place *before* the realm of reciprocal recognition. Basically the process takes place, as was explained also in the chapter on Kojève, as the politics of the slaves.

Butler's idea of politics as a critical process becomes also a critique against Althusser, other Lacanians (such as Ernesto Laclau) and Foucault. Butler argues that it is important for the "survival of politics and historical change" not to think of universality as an empty place. For Butler, universality can be only temporally an empty place. If universality was recognized "empty" by all, in all places and times, this universal, timeless recognition would end the critical process of things. Butler argues that if all would agree that the universal truth of things is necessarily "empty", politics would lose its motif. There would be no disagreements as to what the ultimate "truth" is. Everyone would agree that the truth is empty of content, and hence "an end of history" would be constituted. According to Butler "the failure of things" cannot, itself, be the goal of politics, for which universal recognition (as the agreement of all) is demanded. (CHU 31-32)

Partly in criticism of Laclau's Lacanian idea of the "incompletion of the subject" (Laclau 1990; 2000 a,b) and partly in agreement with it, Butler writes (as a part of the same text from where the quotation (above) is from):

Laclau identifies a condition common to all politicization, but it is precisely not a condition with a content: it is, rather, the condition by which any specific content fails fully to constitute an identity, a condition of necessary failure which not only pertains universally, but *is* the "empty and ineradicable place" of universality itself. A certain necessary tension emerges within any political formation inasmuch as it seeks to fill that place and finds that it cannot. This failure to fill the place, however, is precisely the futural promise of universality, its status as a limitless and unconditional feature of all political articulation. Inevitable as it is that a political organization will posit the possible filling of that place as an ideal, it is equally inevitable that it will fail to do so. Much as this failure cannot be directly pursued as the "aim" of politics, it does produce a value – indeed, the value of universality that no politics can do without. (CHU

According to both Hegel and Butler - and in criticism against Kant, Althusser et al. - if a part of some thing is thought as necessarily unknown (like the Kantian thing in itself) the whole thing is rendered unknown, empty of content. The reason for this is that the unknown part cannot be differentiated from the “known” part – as the unknown part is without limits - and hence the whole thing is rendered unknown, fully identical with the unlimited (unknown) part of it. Consequently, for Hegel, as for Butler, the claim, coming from the Other, not yet included into the universality, is to be something particular:

The assertion of universality by those who have conventionally been excluded by the term often produce a performative contradiction of a certain sort. But this contradiction, in Hegelian fashion, is not self-cancelling, but exposes the spectral doubling of the concept itself. And it prompts a set of antagonistic speculations on what the proper venue for the claim of universality ought to be. (CHU 38)

According to Hegel, a thinker who opposes some particular, subjective “truth” of some thing in reference to a claim that “the truth of this thing cannot be known by particular subjects or in terms of particular descriptions” (as the Lacanians, according to Butler, claim) engages in a “self-cancelling contradiction”. Such self-cancelling contradiction results into an abstract, self-same (i.e. not doubled, but “one”) term, purified empty of its particular content. It becomes same with the “unlimited”, “empty” opposition. An opposition, coming from such non-particular other is self-cancelling (of the concept in question) *for the thinker who considers such an “opposition” valid*. Butler engages in a very similar criticism against a few “post-Hegelian” thinkers such as Althusser, Lacan and also Foucault, as Hegel engages against the Kantian “pure self-consciousness”.

5.3. A critique of Butler’s Althusserianism

5.3.1. A critique of Butler’s Althusserian subjectivity

Butler modifies her basically Hegelian subject-theory in reference to Althusser. As said already, with Hegel (found already with Kant) the subject is structured by a *primary relation*, i.e. an internal relation, which Butler calls “internal ek-statism”.

Butler has a theory of the internal ek-statism as a critical process, or as a “double movement”. This theory of a critical process presents, basically, a description of what terms *are*. It also serves as a model for Butler’s performative politics as a radical process. Two moments are discerned as structural in this process. There is the Hegelian moment and the Althusserian moment. These moments or reversals conduct the “turning” of the term in question (like e.g. “woman”, “sexuality” or “human”). A Hegelian moment is criticised by an Althusserian moment, which again is criticised by a Hegelian moment. The ek-static, radical process (of

terms, such as “woman”, “human”, “sexuality”, “democracy” etc.) is structured by these successive Hegelian and Althusserian moments. These moments present a mobilization, a reversal, of each other. Neither moment is thus permanent. The Althusserian moment points to the “other power” in the Hegelian synthesis, and, the Hegelian moment points to the particular, temporal nature of the “ideological power” which is left outside of the subjects in the Althusserian moment. Butler herself calls these theoretical moments a moment at which a conceptual unity (a particular identity) concerning a term is affirmed (the Hegelian moment), and, a moment at which the affirmed identity becomes exposed to its internal, disavowed otherness (the Althusserian moment).

Butler, however, does not discuss the crucial distinction Althusser makes between “ideology” and “science”. In Althusser, even that the subjects cannot take their formation as an object of critical study, science can. In Althusser, the subject cannot take the ideological linguistic power, which forms it, as its object of analysis. This power exceeds the conceptualizing capacity of the subject and hence remains a “surplus” or a “remainder” for the subject. There is no “surplus power” or “remainder” *for the subject itself*. The ideological subject has no outside (for itself). The subject is not formed by an ideological power *for itself*. In Althusser, all the talking of the ideological, linguistic power, exceeding the subject, is conducted by the scientist, not by the subject. This talking takes place outside the realm of the interpellative, ideological power. The reason why the ideological formation of the subject can be talked of at all – and why a “surplus” or “remainder” power can be analyzed – is that what remains outside of subjects, does not remain outside of the science.

In Althusser, the subject is totally identified with the ideology. There is no interfering “other” power *for the subject itself* which could alter what the subject is *for itself*. Any change in what the subjects are for themselves takes place externally, through historical struggles between such large constructions as economical classes. The subjects themselves cannot turn the interpellative linguistic power against itself in any “radical” or “ek-static” manner (to use a Butlerian terminology). Consequently, according to Althusser, the ideological subject itself cannot be behind the theory of Interpellation. The theory of Interpellation can be written only by somebody who acknowledges that there is an outside for the subject. This “third” party (even that Althusser does not use this Hegelian term) which sees the relation between the subject and its outside power is *science*. A scientist sees *more* of the subject than the subject itself. In fact, the ek-static structure of the subject exists as an object for the scientist. The relation between the subject and the other *is* for the scientist. The scientist synthesizes the ek-static parts by seeing that a subject (or any other term) consists of ek-static parts. In this sense, also in Althusser’s theory the ek-static structure of the subject – i.e. the ek-static relation as the foundation of the subject - exists for the “third” party which is the scientist. Butler’s claim, that she reverses the Hegelian synthesizing (“third”) moment through the Althusserian non-synthesizing moment appears consequently problematic in so far as the Althusserian moment is also synthesizing. The Althusserian theory of the subject-formation includes its own synthesizing “third”, the scientist. It must be emphasized that when Butler claims to reverse Hegel through an Althusserian moment, she refers to his theory of Interpellation. Althusser himself says that he has written the theory *as a scientist*, not as a subject. (Ideol., 160)

Butler does not discuss the Althusserian scientific view-point onto things. Althusserian science appears indeed as a synthesizing “third” which is capable of reflecting the relation

between the subject and its constitutive (formative) outside, the Other. To a certain, however very limited extent, science is also capable of interfering into the logic of the ideological formation of subjects. The difference between the Hegelian synthesizing “third” and the Althusserian “third” is that, for Hegel, all “third” points of views onto things are still “subjective” in the sense that subjects can adopt them. For Hegel, the moment of the “third” is a part of the reflective self-consciousness which is always subjective and historical. All synthesizing and relating together of ek-static parts are conducted by subjects. For Althusser, only non-subjective science can see the relation between the subject and the ideological other. It exists only for non-ideological, non-subjective thinking, science. Because this scientific point of view is non-subjective, Althusser’s theory of the primary relation (constitutive of subjects) is presented as a non-subjective, non-particular theory. The ek-static constitution of the subject is seen to be there, to exist, however, it is seen only as an abstraction, because the seeing of it is thought to take place outside of subjects.

Butler claims to conduct a reversal of Hegel’s “all-inclusive” subject-theory by an Althusserian “non-all-inclusive” subject-theory. However, Althusser’s Interpellative theory takes the ideological power, which is external to the subject - but not external to science - as its object of study (see ch. 3.2.2.). The theory of the Interpellative formation of the subject indeed includes into it those aspects of the subject which are outside of the subjects themselves. Even if it includes them in a non-particular, non-subjective, “scientific” form, it nevertheless includes them and discusses them. In this sense, also the Althusserian subject is fully known *for itself*, i.e. for the Althusserian scientific writer, who is behind the Interpellative theory. The “other”, formative of the subject, is known for both Hegel and Althusser in their theories. Neither theory leaves the “other” outside of its scope. Both Hegel’s and Althusser’s theories think of the relation between the subject and its constitutive Other from a “third” point of view, which for Althusser is Marxist science and for Hegel the subject (reflective self-consciousness) itself. The difference between these two theories is that whereas Hegel argues that *all* ways to think of the relation between the subject and its “other” are conducted by beings who are themselves subjects - thus presenting subjective, particular and historical conceptualizations of the subject and its “other” - Althusser claims that the relation between the subject and its “other” is seen (in a non-ideological, non-misrecognitive way) only by a non-subjective science. For Hegel, the “third” party (i.e. the one who sees the constitutive relation between the subject and its “other”) is itself a subject, a particular self, whereas for Althusser it is a non-subjective science. Butler’s position between these two views appears as problematic. Her way to “reverse” Hegel through Althusser seems to link Butler problematically with a theory which is against her own thought concerning the subjectivity and particularity of all thinking (including philosophical and scientific thinking). One of Butler’s basic arguments is that there is no thinking outside of subjects or outside of time and place.

By his scientific point of view Althusser tries to explain how his subject-theory is possible. If the ideological power is actually external to the subject, we could rightfully ask how such theories, in which this external power is theorized, can be formulated. Aren’t we all subjects? Althusser answers this question by pointing to his role as a scientist. He writes of the power, which is external to the subject, as a scientist, not as a subject. Hegel answers the same question by the general claim that subjects, as constructions which include the contradicting other power, can be reflected by themselves and known to themselves. Theorists and scientists (like himself) are all subjects. Both Althusser and Hegel apparently think that to

present a theory of the ek-static structure of a subject and, at the same time, to deny the possibility that this structure could be known at all, constitutes a self-contradictory statement. Althusser tries to avoid this self-contradiction, or theoretical self-denial, by referring to his possibilities as a scientist. Hegel refers to the possibilities of subjects in general. *Butler does not answer this question at all.*

What Butler does is to present her theory of the subject as a critical, ek-static process. Butler agrees with Hegel in that there is no thinking (or theorizing, or science) which is done outside of subjects. In this sense, she disagrees with Althusser who adheres to the idea of non-subjective science. However, in this light, Butler's theory of the subject as an ek-static being, who cannot fully conceptualize its ek-statism appears self-contradictory or self-denying. Butler seems to fall into the Kantian dilemma with her structure of ek-statims. Like for Kant, for Butler, there remains always something - which she typically calls as a "surplus" or a "remainder" - constitutive of subjects which cannot be conceptualized by the subjects themselves. Butler is not unaware of the general problem concerning such "surpluses", as they resemble the Kantian "thing in itself". She criticises Kant in reference to Hegel. She criticises Althusser, Foucault and Lacan for this same reason. However, she seems to fall into it herself. Butler's way to theorize the subject from the point of view of that which cannot be conceptualized by the subject (a "surplus") is not itself acknowledged (in Butler's text) as a particular, subjective way to theorize the subject. Butler's way to see *more* of the subject than what is seen (in Butler's theory) to be possible for the subjects themselves renders Butler's position a privileged one. Butler reflects subjects and subjective, historical moments of terms. She finds subjects misrecognitive (of terms) because, as limited, they cannot conceptualize the constitutive "surplus" of a term. Nonetheless, what is beyond subjects (i.e. the constitutive outside, "surplus") is not beyond Butler. Like in Althusser, Butler refrains from presenting a *particular (subjective) concept* of a term in which the constitutive "surplus" is taken into account because, for Butler, subjects cannot see the constitutive "surplus" of themselves or other terms except in a "misrecognitive" way. Because Butler does not consider *this* way (i.e. her own way) to speak of subjects and terms - as ek-static constructions, including the "surplus" - a particular one Butler's own thought (which nonetheless thinks of the constitution of subjects and terms so that it includes the outside "surplus") becomes posited into a non-subjective realm, somewhat similar to the Althusserian realm of science. Butler's theory becomes divided into two realms, resembling the Althusserian distinction between the "subject" and the "science".

As is explained earlier, Butler criticises Hegel for his "all-inclusiveness" and Althusser for his "Kantianism" (i.e. for placing the ideological power outside of subjectivity and politics). Butler is neither fully Hegelian or Althusserian. Instead, she presents a processual theory which includes both of these subject-theories as "moments" inside terms as critical, ek-static processes. Because these moments not only present necessary aspects of terms, but also criticise each others, neither one becomes placed, alone, as the full, permanent truth of the term. By her "internally radical" theory, Butler includes the two, mutually radical aspects, into terms. The mutual radicality of these moments is supposed to be preserved, because the *process itself* remains not known for any particularizing subject. No historical moment of the term (i.e. no particular "subjective context" at which the term is conceptualized) knows the ek-static process which the term is. The ek-static process itself does not hence become conceptualized or particularized. *Terms as processes remain always, permanently beyond historical "momentary" subjects.* The problem in Butler's thought is that *this* is known and

that this knowledge becomes posited into a privileged position.

The ek-static process is, according to Butler, not an instance of the Hegelian synthesizing, teleological dialectics in which the subject and the Other can synthesize (by *Aufhebung*) what they think and know. Butler's process is structured by an Althusserian "Other", not by a Hegelian, conceptually known and reciprocally recognized Other. Consequently, according to Butler, the process is not a Hegelian rational process, which is supposed to be teleological and its result "known in advance".

Butler apparently tries to avoid both the Hegelian problem and the Althusserian problem, by this model of a critical process. As these moments reverse, in turn, each others, neither one dominates the term alone. However, both moments become preserved as inescapable moments of the term. In a way, this resembles the Hegelian, dialectical idea of "preservation and negation". Nevertheless, the Hegelian synthesizing rationalism and the idea of the conceptualizing "third" is supposed to be avoided by the Althusserian moment.

However, there is a problem due to the fact that the constitutive moments of Butler's futural critical process are known already now (for Butler, i.e. for Butler's theory). The structure of the relation between the moments of the "subject-position" and the constitutive outside, "surplus" (of a term like e.g. woman) is known already now. It is known already now (for Butler) that the structure of the relation is not known *for subjects*, i.e. for these moments themselves except in a misrecognitive way. It is not known for the present subjects or for the futural subjects. However, this fact of the nature of the relation is known (already) *for Butler's theory*. This knowledge (of the internally critical Hegelian-Althusserian processuality of terms) does not seem to change because it is not (itself) a historical, particular moment of knowing, instead, like Althusser's science, it presents knowledge *of* the historical moments of knowing and *how* these moments relate to each others. It presents knowledge of the mutually colonialistic and unconceptualizable relations between the individual moments. As *this* kind of knowing is impossible for particular subjects, Butler's theory, like the Althusserian science, practices its knowing in an abstract realm, above politics.

Butler's problem here can be thought through her own, Hegelian-inflected criticism against Kant and "Kantian" thinkers like Althusser or Foucault. The Kantian relation between the moments of "thing for us" and the "thing in itself" serves as a model here. According to Butler, because the "thing for us" does not know the "thing in itself" (in Kant's theory), the "thing" is rendered a formal abstraction. It is known in Butler's theory that a moment at which a term is known subjectively and conceptually (resembling the "thing for us") cannot know subjectively and conceptually the constitutive Other of the term (resembling the "thing in itself"). But the *both* two aspects, or moments, resembling the Kantian "thing for us" and "thing in itself" can be thought of in Butler's theory. Butler's theory sees a constitutive relation - constitutive of terms - between these two aspects or moments. Butler's theory determines the relation between these two moments, which are thought, by Butler, to be constitutive of the term. Butler *sees* that the other moment cannot conceptualize the other moment, except in a "failing" or a colonialistic way. Butler *sees* the mutual alienness of the moments. Butler acknowledges that this kind of mutual unknowingness and alienness is what terms *are*, as ek-static constructions.

This type of seeing of terms, conducted by Butler, resembles what Hegel says of the "absolute

dialectical unrest” (see ch. 2.2.6). Butler is a consciousness (a seer) of the internal contradictoriness and alienness between the structural moments inside terms. Butler does not see only one temporal moment (i.e. one historical subjectivity) to be constitutive of a term, instead, she sees how the mutually contradicting temporal moments relate to each others and constitute a term. She sees the internal unknowingness of terms, due to the mutual hostility between the constitutive moments. Butler constructs a term (like “woman”, “human” or “democracy”) from mutually un-conceptualizable moments, i.e. from moments which (themselves) do not recognize each others to be constitutive or constructive of each others.

Butler sees that there is a mutually failing recognition between the constitutive, subjective moments of terms. The internal moments are *seen* by Butler to be “alien” (in Hegel’s words) or “colonialistic” (in Butler’s words) toward each others. She sees, observes, that these moments do not synthesize so that a conceptually coherent “thing” would be formed. She *knows* that these moments are radically beyond each others conceptualizing capacity, as well as beyond each others ethical (recognitive) capacity. Butler’s way to think of the internal “beyondness” (contradictoriness and otherness) inside terms resembles Hegel’s pure self-consciousness (especially Unhappy Consciousness).

Butler cannot escape the dilemma of pure self-consciousness by claiming that the relation between a “moment of knowing” (corresponding to “thing for us”) and a “moment of not knowing” (corresponding to “thing in itself”) takes place as a futural process. Insofar as the structure of this process - the way the historical moments relate non-conceptually and misrecognitively to each others - is foreseen already now the process corresponds to the Kantian relation between “thing for us” and “thing in itself”. Butler *knows already* (i.e. in advance of the futural moments which are Other to the present time) that every moment at which a term is known “for us” cannot relate conceptually to futurally Other moments, constitutive of the term, except in a misrecognitive, “failing” way. Thus, the “incapacity for reciprocal recognition” of all subjective moments, also in the future (or, in other Other times) is known already *now* (for Butler). (see on this theme Hutchings 2003, 160)

In Butler, like in Kant, the inter-relationality, between the constitutive moments of terms, remains an abstraction. The moments exceed each others identificatory or recognitive capacity. Because they fail to identify each others in a valid way, it is difficult to see how they could criticise each others in a *valid* way. Butler claims that terms are critical processes. However, as it is known (for Butler) that the moments, constitutive of terms, cannot conceptualize each others or recognize each others in a valid way, the moments do not make up (mutually critical) moments or parts of a same thing. How could some specific thing (like e.g. “woman”) be identified as the object of the critical change? By whom can this identification be made in a valid way? As Butler herself refrains from making particular conceptualizations of terms or subjects, there is nobody - no subject recognized as capable of this “labour” - to unify the various mutually radically other moments to construct an identifiable term. Butler herself recognizes the internal otherness of terms, yet, she situates this recognition beyond the conceptual and recognitive capacities of particular subjects. She does not give an explanation how a subject could adopt her own otherness-recognitive point of view i.e. she does not render her own way to think of things as a *subjective* way to think of things. Hence, her otherness-recognitive way to think of things remains beyond, external to subjects.

Butler writes that any subjective mode of thought (into which she apparently would include also her own thought) constitutes a universal truth *for itself*. Further, Butler disagrees with Kant who claims that because subjective universal truths are parochial, we should strive for non-subjective, truly universal truths and ethics. In Kant, by abstracting from the subjective, parochial contents we can create a universally equal ethics for all. Equality thus resides in our capacity for abstraction, in our ability to distance ourselves from our subjectivity. For Butler, via the Hegelian critique of Kant, even if we abstract from subjective contents, the resulting ethics constitutes always a particular subjective universe, dependent on its history, time and place. Subjectivity cannot be escaped in *any* mode of thinking.

Butler claims that subjects (and subjectively thought terms) constitute temporal, parochial moments and that these moments cannot conceptualize the constitutive “other” moments of the term. The subject’s inability to conceptualize its “other” exists *for Butler*. What Butler sees of this constitutive relation becomes an external (natural, universal) fact insofar as she does not consider any Other description (of the relation between the ek-static moments) as a valid description. Thus her own description becomes placed above politics and criticism. She places what she sees (of subjects and their relations with others) into a realm beyond subjectivity, history and politics, as she does not consider an ability to reflect subjectivity like this an ability which belongs to (other) subjects (subjects in general).

According to this analysis Butler’s theory of subjective thinking as a “necessary error” is based on a Kojévian interpretation of Hegel. Also Althusser’s theory of Interpellation is seen to draw from Kojève, through Lacan. This Kojévian interpretation of the Hegelian processual ek-statism appears as the fundament of Butler’s thought. Butler sees this kind of process – a historical change though slavery – as a structure which cannot be escaped. This process resembles closely what Hegel says of the struggle for recognition. There is a moment of identity which is a colonialist moment. The colonialist moment is questioned by the “others” demand for recognition. However, this “other” moment can itself become another colonialist moment, if its own subjectivity (and inherent slavery) is not questioned. In fact, both moments constitute a potential moment of slavery, as they are both subjective moments. Nevertheless, when turned processually against each others, they work in favour of freeing the slaves, internal to each, from imprisonment. It can be summarized that Butler’s general theory of the ek-statism of terms –as well as her theory of the politics of the performative – is built on the model of the Hegelian struggle for recognition.

For a thinker who *thinks* of terms as “struggles for recognition”, and who *knows* them to be this kind of struggles, this process - i.e. a struggle - is however problematic. It resembles what is said earlier of the Althusserian “pure politics” and also what is said of the Hegelian pure self-consciousness and of absolute dialectical unrest. For example, as said before, no *identifiable* thing can be seen to be in a process of change in it (for a thinker who thinks of terms as this kind of processes). Because a moment of identity is thought to be related to such another moment, which it cannot conceptually relate to, the “thing”, seen to be structured by this kind of relations, ceases to be an identifiable thing. A thinker who sees that a thing consists of moments which are not parts of a same conceptual whole, ceases to be able to identify a “thing”. However, this thinker (like Butler) does not actually even want to identify any particular thing, which would move in this process, as the identification of things is thought to be a violent act.

The term becomes consequently an abstraction (for a thinker like Butler). Because it is *known* that there will be moments which cannot be conceptually related to each others, the term does not continue or remain itself during the process (for a thinker like Butler). The term (as this sort of process) cannot be discerned from any other processes (i.e. from other terms) as it does not make an identifiable conceptual process (for a thinker who thinks of it like Butler). Its temporal moments cannot be identified to belong to a same process, because this would entail a conceptual relation between them. A thinker who *sees* the process necessarily as a process through *slavery*, cannot (itself) make conceptual relations between the mutually enslaved moments “in advance”. And because all moments are indeed moments “in advance” (for a thinker like Butler), no moment appears as a moment at which the term can be identified or conceptualized. Making such conceptual relations would itself constitute another moment of slavery. By necessarily refraining from making conceptual relations between the moments, and, at the same time foreseeing that the term is structured by this kind of (not conceptually related) moments, this kind of thinker renders the term an abstraction (for itself, i.e. for a thinker who observes the term in this way). No *identifiable* process is seen, because the thinker refrains from “slavery”, i.e. from identifying the thing which is in process. In order for there to be an identifiable process, in which a thing could be seen to change, other kind of thinker’s – i.e. synthesizing thinkers - are needed to make a conceptual continuation, mediation, between the various moments of the process. Ordinary synthesizing subjects, who do not think of terms like Butler (i.e. resembling Hegelian “Bondsmen”) are needed to labour particular things out from the fragmentary, non-related moments.

As I have argued, for Hegel even asymmetric, one-sided relations to the Other are forms of recognition. Butler’s theory includes a peculiar form of the recognition of the Other. This assumes the form of refraining from the refutation of otherness, in other words, refraining from the identification of particular subjects and objects. Butler’s recognition of the Other assumes the form of seeing particular subjective entities as ek-static constructions. Butler sees that any particular descriptions, given of any terms (of e.g. the Other) include an internal violence. Interestingly, if the others themselves present particular descriptions of themselves, Butler considers also these descriptions failures, in so far as others say anything particular of themselves, or of things in general. Butler’s Hegelian-inflected way to recognize the Other (modified by Kojève and Althusser) takes the form of insisting that all recognitions of the Other, made by particular, historical subjects are misrecognitions.

5.3.2. Abstract recognition

Butler’s terms are abstractions which are also *violent* abstractions. Terms are seen to be necessarily constituted through a colonialist refutation of the Other. The reason why the moments of terms cannot relate conceptually to “other” moments of the same terms is that the moments of identity are colonialist moments. Consequently, there is no conceptual relation (a genuine “hearing” of what the Other says) because they do not recognize the validity of the Other as an equal “knower” of the thing. They cannot include what the Other says into their knowledge of the term. Via a Kojevian interpretation of Hegel, Butler does not consider it possible for *subjects* – now or in the future - to mediate conceptually with their contradicting others, and thus to recognize their others as valid and existent beings. A colonialist

(Lord/Bondsman-) attitude toward others is thought to be constitutive of all subjectivity in Butler's Kojevian-inflected theory. Subjects are violent toward others without ever being able to change this fundamental feature in themselves.

As Butler does not consider her own way to see or reflect the relation between the subject and the Other a *subjective* ability, her own way to reflect this relation becomes placed beyond (other) subjects. This means, consequently, that all social constructions (like sexual identities, political systems, institutions, the state) are built on the refutation of the other (for Butler). For Butler, we can trouble colonialism to some extent, e.g. by trying to change the object of the colonialist refutation, so that e.g. homosexuals or women do not have to be always constructed as inferior beings. However, the basic structure remains a colonialist one. It resembles closely Hegel's description of the Lordship and Bondage.

Butler's own attitude towards the contradicting others is evidently different than what she thinks of the subject's attitude towards them. She claims that subjects exclude and disavow their contradicting others and render them illegitimate. Butler herself, however, worries of the situation of the excluded others and tries, by performative politics, to render them into legitimate beings. Butler is aware that any subjective thought has its excluded other and that any subjective thought should be democratized and mobilized from the point of view of its other. Notwithstanding, Butler describes subjects as beings who do not entertain this kind of sympathies or worries for the sake of the excluded other; they just (often violently) disavow them. Butler has hence an attitude toward excluded others which she sees as impossible for subjects. Butler's attitude can be described in some ways as recognitive, to use a Hegelian term. She acknowledges the worth of the excluded others as valid sources of knowledge, deserving to be granted a right to exist and be heard.

Butler does not, very importantly, see that the capacity to recognize the Other is a *subjective* capacity. Consequently, Others can be recognized only by refraining from subjective (enslaving) thinking and from the identification of particular (otherness-refutive) objects. As this cannot be actually done (for we cannot stop thinking) we should render things into critical, internally ek-static processes, in which any affirmation of identity is questioned by its refuted other. What follows from this is that the recognition of Others is placed into an abstract realm beyond the subjects themselves. This thought bears a resemblance to the Althusserian thought, in which there is a distinction between the psychoanalytically oriented Marxist scientist and the ideologically "interpellated" subjects. A peculiar aspect of this abstract recognition is that what the Others say of themselves is considered another moment of the enslavement of the Other, in so far as the Other identifies itself as a subject with a particular identity, i.e. speaks of itself as an object (for itself). The Other is granted recognition only as an abstract (unspeakable, un-identifiable) other, not as a particular subject. A norm of an abstract (unspeakable, unparticular) other becomes created in Butler's theory, at the same time when the unspeakability of the Other is seen to be the result of the refutation of the Other. In this sense, particular, historical subjects are the enslaved Others of Butler's thought because she does not recognize them as valid knowers of themselves or the world. Butler's way to see subjects as "misrecognitive" beings works as a similar "enslaving" attitude as the attitude of the Lords towards the Bondsmen in Hegel's theory of self-consciousness in PhS. Hegel's own way to see women as "misrecognitive" beings (i.e. not capable of reciprocally recognitive, free and rational relations) is also echoed here.

Butler's way not to consider her own reflections of subjects, Others and of ek-static terms in general as *subjective reflections*, means that whatever she sees is placed into the position of an unlimited (non-particular, abstract) truth. This means, among other things, that both, the subjects and the others, remain unconceptualized (for Butler). The subjects and the Others cannot be conceptualized (particularized, identified) as the ability to recognize them is not considered a subjective ability. Any conceptualization of them refutes them and even that we, according to Butler, cannot escape from making conceptualizations and identifications of terms, identity is an error. Identity is a *necessary* error, a misrecognition, because we cannot escape from making identifications. We are destined to make these errors, and we are destined to refute others, insofar as we think, act and speak as subjects. Identity never presents a valid statement, a valid knowledge, of a term, because it does not recognize the "other" of the term. As the recognition of the Other is denied from subjects, recognition is rendered an abstraction. What follows from this "abstract, impossible recognition" is that subjects and others are, equally, not considered valid being. Because subjectivity, in general, is seen as an "otherness-refutive" category, albeit necessary, subjectivity as something valid is denied from everybody. Butler falls here, together with Althusser and others, into problems which Hegel describes under the heading of "pure self-consciousness", especially Unhappy Consciousness. In Hegel's theory of Unhappy Consciousness, particular historical subjectivity becomes "enslaved" by what Hegel calls as "pure I". Particular subjects are enslaved, because they are considered incapable of relating to what constitutes their ek-static formation. Subjects are not considered valid epistemological beings, as they are seen to be formed externally. Subjects are enslaved, in short, by considering them enslaving beings. Butler's thought constitutes a highly internalized Lord-Bondsman-relation. A thinking self is distanced, or alienated as in Unhappy Consciousness, from subjectivity in general, including its own.

Indeed, the very idea of a "necessary error", central for Butler as for many poststructuralists, seems to be problematic. When something is called as an "error", some notion of "successful performance" is simultaneously presupposed. In other words, it must be possible at least to conceive what it would be to *not* commit to that error. Here, Hegel's argument on the "limit" seems to apply:

Only he who does not know is limited, for he does not know his limitation; whereas he who knows the limitation knows it, not as limitation of his knowing, but as something known, as something belonging to his knowledge; only the unknown would be a limitation of knowledge, whereas the known limitation, on the contrary, is not; therefore to know one's limitation means to know one's unlimitedness. (Enc.III, § 386, Zusatz)

Hegel is, of course, not speaking of any physical or practical limits of knowledge; rather, he has in his mind such arguments which claim that we are necessarily limited – and therefore, bound to err – by our language, "conceptual framework", historical and cultural backgrounds and so on. Applying Hegel's argument, if we are able to recognize an error as an error, it cannot be strictly "necessary".

As a summary, Butler's subject-theory is based on the Hegelian ek-static subjectivity so that it includes an Althusserian critique of Hegel. Butler's criticism towards the Hegelian subject-theory is based on Althusser. Althusser's subject-theory is, however, based on there being "science". For Althusser, science is free from subjectivity. Science, at least, is able to see

through the “necessary errors” of subjectivity. Without there being “science” it would be difficult to understand how Althusser’s subject-theory would be possible. Butler, in contrast, does not accept an idea of a subject-less science, which constitutes a universal, non-subjective view-point onto terms. Butler does not discuss Althusser’s dualistic distinction between the subjective, “failing”, view-point onto things and the universal, scientific view-point onto things. Nevertheless, Butler’s rejection of the Althusserian view-point becomes shown in Butler’s criticism of Althusser’s way to posit the interpellative, subject-formative Ideology into a realm beyond subjects, history and politics.

Butler ends up into a contradictory situation. Even that she adheres to Althusser’s theory of how the subject is “interpellated” by an external ideology, she cannot accept the premises of this theory or Althusser’s conclusions of the sovereign role of ideology in the formation of the subjects. Butler’s model in which Hegel is criticised through Althusser and Althusser through Hegel, appears as self-contradictory and arbitrary. Butler appears to present a subject-theory and a model for politics which cannot be adopted by subjects. As she appears to reject the idea that there could be subject-less “scientists” it appears that there is no-one left, in her subject-theory, who could pursue her ek-static politics. The ek-static process appears not to work (so that anyone could actually *see* some kind of an ek-static process) because there seems to be no-one (according to Butler’s subject-theory) who could perform the “ek-static turns” between the Althusserian and Hegelian moments. There is no-one who can see the internal ek-statism of the moments and turn these moments against themselves internally through this ek-statism. Shifting from one violent scene into another violent scene does not present a radical, ek-static political change. In Althusser, the Marxist psychoanalytical scientist, who was behind the theory of Interpellation, was able to see through the linguistic, ideological syntheses of the subjects. This scientist was able to perform Marxist, non-ideological politics, too, even if on a somewhat external way (i.e. external for the ideological subjects). In Hegel, there is the self-consciousness who is capable of reflecting its enslaving attitude towards the Other and enter into reciprocally recognitive, free, relations with others. In Butler there is no-one who can adopt her recognitive attitude toward the Other. Whatever radically democratic or ek-static happens for the subjects is beyond (external) for the subjects themselves, as it cannot be thought except as an abstraction.

A central flaw is that Butler does not consider her own reflective and recognitive capacities (i.e. the capacity to see the ek-static structure of subjects and to worry for the sake of the refuted others) as capacities of the human subject. Consequently, whether she admits it or not, what she sees of the subject is posited beyond the capacities of the subject. Hence, what she sees of the subjects and what she suggests as an “ek-static politics” is placed into a realm resembling the Althusserian science and Marxist politics, with the exception that all scientists, along with the subjects, are denied access to this realm, due to their subjectivity. By not explicating her own role, nor seeing what she sees as subjective, she falls into the dilemma for which she criticises Althusser, Foucault and Lacan. Either Butler’s story is told by a human subject to other human subjects, or it is not. If not, who, then, is the storyteller? If, however, the story is told by a human subject, Butler finds herself in Ishmael’s situation: how can it be that “I only am escaped alone to tell thee”?

6. Butler and the Radical Democracy of Chantal Mouffe

6.1. Althusser, Laclau and Mouffe

Chantal Mouffe is a Belgian political theorist who holds a professorship at the University of Westminster in England. She studied in Althusser's seminars in the late 1960's. In her recent works she draws on the socialist tradition, deconstruction philosophy, psychoanalysis and the "decisionist" political theory of Carl Schmitt to develop a *radical democracy*. She is also known as a "postmodernist" theorist. She has published her perhaps most known book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985) together with Ernesto Laclau. Mouffe is also an author of *The Return of The Political* (1993), *The Democratic Paradox* (2000). Her most recent book is *On the Political* (2005). Her views have been discussed by several authors (for example: Brockelman 2003; Deveux 1999; Man Ling Lee 2001; Norris 2002; Tanesini 2001). However, the critique presented in this chapter is essentially independent of those earlier studies.

Chantal Mouffe has a theory of radical, or *agonistic democracy* and *agonistic pluralism* which can be compared to Butler's theory of radical, performative politics. In fact, it appears that Butler has gained much of her "Kojévianism" and "Althusserianism" through thinkers like Mouffe and Laclau. Mouffe's theory of Radical democracy has been influenced directly by his former teacher Althusser, and by Lacan, although Derrida also appears important for her.

For Mouffe, the ultimate truth of what subjects and things are like and what an ideal society, justice, or the common good are, is permanently "lost". It is lost for subjects, because subjects cannot know themselves, nor things in general, in a total and final manner. Mouffe rejects all versions of "foundationalist" or essentialist thought. When she explains her "anti-foundationalism" and her Schmittian-derivative "decisionist" politics (explained further in this chapter more thoroughly), she also refers to Judith Butler:

Judith Butler asks: "What new shape of politics emerges when identity as a common ground no longer constrains the discourse of feminist politics? My answer is that to visualize feminist politics in that way presents a much greater opportunity for a democratic politics that aims at the articulation of the various different struggles against oppression." (...) To be adequately formulated, such a project requires the discarding of the essentialist idea of an identity of women *as* women as well as the attempt to ground a specific and strictly feminist politics. (RP 87)

And further:

As Judith Butler reminds us, "To establish a set of norms that are beyond power or force is itself a powerful and forceful conceptual practice that sublimates, disguises and extends its own power play through recourse to tropes of normative universality" (RP 143)

In defining her own idea of a subject, and her idea of a society, Mouffe criticizes the Hegelian “totalities” in which all differences, pluralities and alienations (otherness) are ultimately always parts of a self-conscious unity. Mouffe criticizes the way all pluralities and otherness can be identified, in Hegel, inside a rational system. Mouffe sees that, in Hegel, the subject and the society are complete, final, all-inclusive, and, hence, closed and un-political. When criticising Hegel, Mouffe criticizes both Hegel’s idea of a subject (as a totally self-conscious being) and Hegel’s idea of society (as a “closed” community, based on the union between self-conscious subjects). All these criticisms are shared by the tradition which reads Hegel through the Kojèveian interpretation. In HSS, Mouffe acknowledges the importance of Althusser in dissolving the Hegelian “complex structured whole”. (HSS 94-97, DP 134-139)

In HSS, Mouffe and Laclau, however, depart from the Althusserian scientific Marxism. They do not accept the way the Marxist science unifies the different planes of the subject and society into an “abstract universal object” of *economy* in Althusser. Althusser is important, according to Mouffe and Laclau, for trying to dissolve Hegel’s universal, *rational* object. However, the Althusserian view ends up creating its own a priori explanatory cause, economy. Mouffe and Laclau do not accept the way the Marxist science, with its notion of economy, functions as a unifying “third” level in Althusser. It unifies the two other levels, i.e. the levels of the subject and ideology. Althusser’s own attempts to get rid of the primacy of the economy by concepts like “overdetermination” and “the last instance” are not convincing. Nevertheless, Mouffe and Laclau see the value of Althusser in the criticism of the Hegelian ideals of the self-conscious subjectivity and self-conscious society (HSS 98-99, 104).

Mouffe and Laclau argue that the ground principle of democracy and of politics are what they call as “the permanent loss of stable, conceptual signifiers”. Basically, in an Althusserian vein, they see that subjects and subjective thinking are based on a primary relation between the “subject-position” and the “constitutive outside”. Because the “constitutive outside” remains un-conceptualized, not differentiated and identified for the subject itself, there is a permanent loss of stable signifiers. For Mouffe and Laclau, various wholes (like the subject or the society) cannot be separated and differentiated into constitutive moments in a logical, rational manner. These parties should not be conceptually separated, as is ultimately also the case in Althusser’s *scientific* approach, as well as in Hegel’s rational approach. Mouffe and Laclau argue in reference to what they understand to be the “original” Althusserian formulation. Apparently they contrast this original formulation (which they seemingly adhere) to Althusser’s later, “scientific” formulation:

In the original Althusserian formulation, however, a very different theoretical undertaking was foreshadowed: that of a break with orthodox essentialism not through the logical disaggregation of its categories – with a resultant *fixing* of the identity of the disaggregated elements – but through the critique of every type of fixity, through an affirmation of the incomplete, open and politically negotiable character of every identity (...) far from their being an essentialist *totalization*, or a no less essentialist *separation* among objects, the presence of some objects in the others prevents any of their identities from being fixed. Objects appear articulated not like pieces in a clockwork mechanism, but because the presence of some in the others hinders the suturing of the identity of any of them. (HSS 104)

Like in Butler, in Mouffe various objects are constituted by “ek-static” parts, which cannot be differentiated from each other on the basis of a shared rational system. However, Mouffe argues that it is *politically* important that various “closed” (mutually incompatible, incommensurable) ideals are strived for. This is due to what appears to be another ground principle for Mouffe. A foundational principle in Mouffe’s Radical democracy is *conflictuality*. Mouffe criticizes various contemporary political theorists for forgetting that politics is fundamentally about conflicts. If conflicts disappear, politics itself disappears. However, In order for there to be conflicts, political actors must strive for “closed” goals; ideals which are final and complete *for the political actors themselves*.

Mouffe recognizes the importance of Lacan in showing the impossibility of intersubjective communication which would be free of constraints and violence. She argues that subjects are discursive beings, and that they are never free from ideological discourses. Ideological discourses are conflictual, and often violent, because they exclude the point of view of the radical Other. Because radical otherness is nevertheless seen as constitutive of the subject, the relation between the subject and the other remains both un-conceptual, and, conflictual. The basic similarity between Butler and Mouffe concerns how the primary relation inside subjects and also politics is defined. For Mouffe, like for Butler, subjects are structured by a radical and agonistic (or, antagonistic) relation between the “subject-position” and “the constitutive” outside, or, the “other”. The relation between the subject and the constitutive outside remains un-conceptualized, and also conflictual, because the subject can conceptualize its outside only within the ideological discourse. Because ideological discourses are always parochial (excluding the Other) all conceptualizations of the subject constitute a further instance of the refutation of the other. Both Butler’s and Mouffe’s political theories are based on the basic notions of the “un-conceptuality” (unknowingness) of the subject as a unity of the subject and its outside, and, the “antagonism” between the subject and the other. (DP 134-139; RP 1-21)

Butler refers to Mouffe’s ideas of *hegemony* and the *incompletion of the subject*, when she explains how her theory of the internal ek-statism of the subject differs from the Hegelian “all-inclusive” theory of the subject. Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau present the idea of the subject as incomplete in their jointly written book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985; see e.g. 181-193). It appears that the incompletion of the subject and the contingent nature of hegemonies as social wholes connect to each others.

...the material character of discourse cannot be unified in the experience or consciousness of a founding subject. (HSS 109)

Whenever we use the category of “subject” in this text, we will do so in the sense of “subject positions” within a discursive structure. Subjects cannot, therefore, be the origin of social relations – not even in the limited sense of being endowed with powers that render an experience possible – as all “experience” depends on precise discursive conditions of possibility. (HSS 115)

In Mouffe, the subject is established as a discursive being who is necessarily unable to take its discursive formation as an object for itself. This also means that social wholes appear as contingently formed, as contingent processes. One important aspect, in the idea of contingency is that for Mouffe *all* modes of knowledge, also scientific ones, are discursive so

that they cannot take the formation of their basic thoughts or concepts as objects for themselves. Here it is important to note that Mouffe rejects both the Hegelian way, as well as the Althusserian way, to take the discursive formation of subjects as an object of knowledge. Mouffe rejects the Hegelian *free* self-consciousness of subjects. For Hegel, subjects can take the “discursive formation” of themselves as objects for themselves, through their capacity to recognize others. Consequently, for Hegel, subjects and social wholes are not contingent processes. Mouffe rejects also the Althusserian idea of a “non-subjective” scientific knowledge (as will be discussed further). For Althusser, social wholes are not contingent processes. In Althusser, societies can be objects for science – even if not for subjects themselves – and, hence, they are not seen as contingently formed but governed by “structural necessities”. Mouffe and Laclau write:

Our analysis rejects the distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices. It affirms: a) that every object is constituted as an object of discourse, insofar as no object is given outside every discursive condition of emergence. (HSS 107)

...every relation of representation is founded on a fiction: that of the presence at a certain level of something which, strictly speaking, is absent from it. But because it is *at the same time* a fiction and a principle organizing actual social relations, representation is the terrain of a game whose result is not predetermined from the beginning. (HSS 119)

For Mouffe and Laclau, any particular, historical political systems, also democratic ones, constitute hegemonic systems. These systems form, discursively, their basic units, such as subject-positions and economical classes. Hegemonies are total systems. Or, in fact, they *attempt* to be total, stable and universal, but are bound to fail in this attempt (HSS 112-113). Hegemonies constitute their own “particular universes”, to use a Hegelian choice of words. In a basic Kantian or Hegelian manner, these systems produce themselves. Within these systems, things or objects exist “for us”. Hegemonies are hence “performative”, to use Butlerian terminology. They produce the objective reality in relation to themselves as *discursive*, articulating systems. Discourses are “object- performative” practices (HSS 105-116). Thus, Althusser’s “interpellating ideologies”, Butler’s “performativity” and Laclau’s and Mouffe’s “hegemonies” are closely related.

Hegemonies are also hierarchical systems. However, they are contingent, historical formations, with no external, necessary foundation. Hegemonic subject-positions and classes have no universal or natural base. There is also no rational logic to how the historical struggle between the hierarchically formed classes proceeds. Mouffe’s and Laclau’s socialism claims to depart from the classical Marxism by its emphasis on the *contingent* nature of the class and the class-struggle. (HSS 1-5, 93-116).

Butler says in CHU that she understands the central idea of *hegemony* in Mouffe’s theory to be as follows:

democratic polities are constituted through exclusions that return to haunt the

polities predicated upon their absence. That haunting becomes politically effective precisely in so far as the return of the excluded forces an expansion and rearticulation of the basic premises of democracy itself (CHU 11)

Explaining her rejection of what she understands to be Hegel's idea of the subject and the state as "complete" Butler refers to Mouffe's Althusserian-inflected theory of the subject as "incomplete". The incompleteness of the subject and the incompleteness of any social or political groups (e.g. the state) go together in both Mouffe's and Butler's theories. This appears to be meant as a critique against the Hegelian formulation, in which the completion or all-inclusiveness (or, conceptuality, to use Hegel's words) of both the subject and the state go hand in hand. The incompleteness of politics includes the idea that any particular *subject-position* in the polity is necessarily incomplete. Butler writes:

I understood the "incompleteness" of the subject-position in the following ways: 1) as the failure of any particular articulation to describe the population it represents; 2) that every subject is constituted differentially, and that what is produced as the "constitutive outside" of the subject can never become fully inside or immanent. I take this last point to establish the fundamental difference between the Althusserian-inflected work of Laclau and Mouffe and a more Hegelian theory of the subject in which all external relations are – at least ideally – transformable into internal ones. (CHU 12)

In a few of her books Butler refers to Mouffe's idea of the radical democracy as a model in which a term is opened for future articulation. (There is, then, a continuous relation of cross-reference between Mouffe and Butler.) Butler writes in ES:

The term gestures toward a referent it cannot capture. Moreover, that lack of capture constitutes the linguistic possibility of a radical democratic contestation, one that opens the term to future rearticulations. (ES 108)

In BM Butler speaks of the "critical reformulation of Althusser", conducted by Laclau and Mouffe. Butler writes of the central idea in this reformulation of Althusser:

Their notion that every ideological formation is constituted through and against a constitutive antagonism and is, therefore, to be understood as an effort to cover over or "suture" a set of contingent relations. Because this ideological suturing is never complete, that is, because it can never establish itself as a necessary or comprehensive set of connections, it is marked by a failure of complete determination, a constitutive contingency, that emerges within the ideological field as its permanent (and promising) instability. Against a causal theory of historical events or social relations, the theory of radical democracy insists that political signifiers are contingently related, and that hegemony consists in the perpetual rearticulation of these contingently related signifiers, the weaving together of a social fabric that has no necessary ground, but that consistently produces the "effect" of its own necessity through the process of re-articulation"; .." What is here understood as constitutive antagonism, the

nonclosure of definition, is assured by a contingency that underwrites every discursive formation” (BM 192-193)

This passage follows closely the argument presented in HSS (see e.g. *ibid.*122-132). The central ideas of this Althusserian-inflected theory of radical democracy have had an important influence on Butler’s thought. The central notions are: antagonism (conflicts, agonism, violence), the constitutive outside, and an idea of politics as a critical process which has no final resolution. An idea of the “failure” of all particular descriptions of the common good, or of the subject, or world, to capture the referent, which they attempt to describe, is also central to this theory.

6.2. The influence of Carl Schmitt

The political theory of Carl Schmitt appears important for Mouffe. Carl Schmitt (1888-1985) was a German political and constitutional theorist. Especially in his books *Political Theology* (1922) and *The Concept of the Political* (1932) Schmitt developed his *decisionist* political theory. It was influenced by Hobbes and by the Catholic counter-revolutionary thinkers, but also by Hegel.

For Schmitt, “the political” is the realm of sovereign, unconstrained decision. Political appears as a sovereign realm, because it is not determined by anything external, such as nature, God or some rational or developmental logic. The fundamental political decision is that which distinguishes “the friend” from the “enemy”, and the basis of that decision is essentially unpredictable and indeterminable. Collective political identities presupposed the existence of potentially hostile others, the relation between self and the other was always conflictual. (Schmitt 1976, 26-27)

Schmitt’s views were partly influenced by the struggle of recognition described in PhS (see e.g. Kennedy 2004, 104-107). However, for Schmitt, the relation between “us” and “they” (resembling basically Hegel’s relation between the self and the other) is always an external one. This means that the friend-enemy-relation it is not mediated by any “third”, which the “us” and “they” could mutually recognize. Consequently, there is no room for a Hegelian reciprocal recognition which would be mediated conceptually and rationally. Schmitt rejects un-political (liberal) societies, built upon individualism and the idea of individual freedom. These societies are abstractions which cannot produce their own positive theory of state, government and politics. An important feature in this is that these societies lack the political friend-enemy-principle. What Schmitt says of these un-political societies resembles Kojève’s descriptions of the Hegelian “Wise Men” in the “universal, homogeneous state” which constitutes the End of History (Schmitt 1976, 69-74) Schmitt argues in a passage where he criticizes Hegel and the un-political societies.

“The triple structure weakens the polemical punch of the double-structured antithesis” (*ibid.* 74).

Schmitt was not primarily interested in developing an interpretation of Hegel, although he refers to Hegel in most of his works. Nevertheless, there is a certain parallelism between his political writings and those of Kojève. Although they were politically in opposite camps (Schmitt was a counter-revolutionary who also worked for the Nazis, while Kojève was a Marxist) these two thinkers were in correspondence after the war, and obviously respected each others. Kojève also visited in Schmitt's seminars. (On the discussions between the two thinkers, see Müller, 2003, pp. 93-8.) Kojève, who studied in Germany in 1920's, was probably aware of Schmitt's ideas when formulating his influential interpretation of the struggle of recognition in Hegel's PhS. At least in his unpublished work, *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right* (written in 1943 but not published until 1981) Kojève explicitly accepts Schmitt's conception of "the political" (OPR, 134 - 135). In OPR Kojève makes clear that the Schmittian "political" will disappear at the End of History. Whole the work can be read as a critical response to Schmitt's ideas (see Frost and Howse 2000). Its fundamental idea is that universal recognition is realized only in a legally regulated world where the law takes the role of the "third" as a mediator between "us" and "them". In such a world, politics, as conceived by Schmitt as well as by Kojève, becomes needless (Müller 2003, 98).

Like the postmodernists, such as Mouffe and Laclau, Schmitt would reject the Kojévian idea of a "universal homogenous state" as the ultimate nightmare (Müller 2003, 95-6). For Schmitt, the liberal tradition, in its cosmopolitanism, legalism, and economism, actually strives for such a state. To quote Müller (ibid., 97), "Schmitt... thought that struggle could and *should* be preserved". In his critique of parliamentary politics, Schmitt (1985) reads Hegel mainly as the predecessor of Marxism. Like Kojève in IRH, he ignores Hegel's constitutional theory formulated in PR, and argues that Hegel's theory may justify an "educational dictatorship", although it cannot be derived directly from the theory. Like Kojève, he invokes the image of Napoleon arriving to Jena just at the moment when Hegel was writing his PhS (Schmitt 1985, 56-9).

In all her political works published after HSS, Mouffe relies on Schmitt and accepts his friend-enemy distinction and his notion of politics (OP 11-16, 77-81, 87; DP 3, 9, 36-59; RP 105-116, 118-133; see also her anthology on Schmitt). In Mouffe, the Schmittian political relation between "we" and "they" is described, however, in a similar manner as how Butler describes the relation between the subject and the Other. It appears that Mouffe's reading of Schmitt is highly modified by the subject-theories of Lacan and Althusser. Mouffe sees, via Lacan, that the political relation between the mutually antagonistic "we" and "they" corresponds to the primary, antagonistic relation, structural of the subject itself and of each political concept. A political relation does not hence exist only between groups of people, instead, it exists inside each individual subject and inside the linguistic terms which form the subject.

For Mouffe, each subject is, like for Lacan and for Althusser, formed through an ideological power. This is why the constitutive outside remains a "lost referent" for the subject itself. Each subject is constituted by a relation, corresponding basically to the Lacanian and Althusserian relation between the subject-position and the constitutive outside. Through Lacan, Mouffe's theory of the political relation can be seen to trace back to the Kantian theory of the "thing for us" and the "thing in itself" and to the Hegelian theory of the subject and the Other. Through Lacan, Mouffe's theory of radical democracy gets a strong post-

Kantian and post- Hegelian flavor. Radical democracy is seen as a permanent, antagonistic process, which is constantly moved by the primary relation between the subject-position and the constitutive outside. Subject tries to explain the truth of who it is. However, all explanations fail as all explanations are parochial and they are based on the exclusion of the “true” outside. This primary relation, structural of each subject corresponds to the relation between “we” and “they” at a social or national level. Mouffe contrasts, in reference to Derrida, her idea of the radical political process to Hegel’s synthesizing dialectics:

It is the notion of the “constitutive outside” which helps me to emphasize the usefulness of a deconstructive approach in grasping the antagonism inherent in all objectivity and the centrality of the us/them distinction in the constitution of collective political identities. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, let me point out that the “constitutive outside” cannot be reduced to a dialectical negation. In order to be a true outside, the outside has to be incommensurable with the inside, and at the same time, the condition of emergence of the latter. This is only possible if what is “outside” is not simply the outside of a concrete content but something which puts into question “concreteness” as such. This is what is involved in the Derridean notion of the “constitutive outside”: not a content which would just be its dialectical opposite – which would be the case if we were simply saying that there is no “us” without a “them” – but a content which, by showing the radical undecidability of the tension of its constitution, makes its very positivity a function of the symbol exceeding it. (DP 12)

Mouffe argues that the relation between the “inside” (the subject-position) and the “constitutive outside” remains un-decidable. It is constituted through a tension which exceeds it. Apparently, this relation is similar to Butler’s ek-static relation, which also exceeds itself. This relation exceeds the conceptual capacities of the subject which it constitutes. In short, subject, or, society which is constituted by this relation is unknown *for itself*. For Mouffe, this means that the constitution is necessarily *political*. (DP 20-22)

Mouffe’s radical democracy as a conflictual process, which corresponds to Butler’s ek-static process (and contrasts to Hegel’s synthesizing dialectics). Both theorists see that a primary relation which is “radical” (by way of remaining unconceptualizable, at least fully) and “conflictual” must be preserved in order for a historical change and politics itself to be possible. For both theorists, it is important that the conflictuality of political movement is not tried to be suffocated by a consensus. Mouffe adheres to plurality, but, unlike the traditional pluralists, sees it as conflictual rather than consensual. Mouffe describes radical democracy also as a “paradox”. It appears as paradoxical because the particular political actors necessarily strive for something (a hegemony, a universal consensus over their own truth) which, however, should and could not be reached. For if there will be a universal consensus over the truth, the political, conflictual relation would cease to exist. Consequently, politics would disappear and, in Kojève’s words, history would end. This kind of mediation between the antithetical “us” and “they”, through a “third” (emphasized in Kojève’s unpublished OPR), is rejected also by Schmitt as un-political. Mouffe’s theory shares with Butler the basic “Kojèvian” problem of historical and political movement as striving for the impossible. This basically “Kojèvian paradox” is carried into Mouffe’s theory through the post-Hegelian thinkers like Lacan, Althusser, and, also through Schmitt.

However, it should be noted that Schmitt, in contrast to the Kojévian, post-Hegelian thinkers like Lacan, Althusser, and Foucault, did not speak of the antagonistic relation as a relation of “violent unknowingness”, structural and internal to each political group, each subject, and each identity. In this, Schmitt’s theory is fundamentally different to the more psychoanalytically oriented thinkers like Lacan, Althusser, Mouffe, and Butler. Actually, Mouffe acknowledges this and names it as the “Schmittian problem”. For Schmitt, nations, or all politically relevant groups of people, are constituted the mutually antagonistic parties of “we” and “they”. For Schmitt, the mutually conflictual groups are, however, not *internally* conflictual, as themselves. The self and the Other are invariably conceived as political groups. In contrast to Mouffe, the political groups are supposed to be homogeneous; indeed, the principle of internal homogeneity is essential for Schmitt. Mouffe’s theory of *all* identities as internally conflictual (i.e. as including a primary conflictual relationship) draws, hence, mainly from post-Hegelian theorists like Althusser and Lacan, rather than from Schmitt. (DP 49-57) (Ultimately, the “Schmittian problem” seems to be that Schmitt does not say what he, according to Mouffe, should have said!) In spite of her frequent references to Schmitt, Mouffe’s theory is actually quite unlike Schmitt’s. The same could be said about the views of other Lacanians (e.g. those of Žižek, 1999, 114-5) who have been interested in Schmitt’s works.

In the following chapters, Mouffe’s theory of radical democracy is examined critically. Special emphasis is paid to two of her books *The Democratic Paradox* (2000) and *The Return of the Political* (1993) and *On the Political* (2005). Mouffe defines her notion of Radical democracy to a large extent through criticizing other theories of democracy. Mouffe’s criticism of the modern, or liberal theories of democracy is explained in the following chapters. In the last chapter, a comparison between Butler and Mouffe is made. I intend to show that Mouffe’s more specific and politically more articulated theory of democracy can be criticized on the same basis as Butler’s general theory.

6.3. The self-defeating argument

What is Mouffe’s basic argument against the modern (liberal) theories of democracy? In criticizing consensus-oriented authors like Rawls or Habermas, she uses the following argument: The criticized authors try to solve the “paradox of democracy” by presenting a comprehensive theory of democracy, and claim that all consistent democrats should agree with them. However, an *actual* consensus on the truth of any particular interpretation of democracy would, in effect, destroy the agonistic tensions which are central for democracy. An agreement on the basic principles of democracy would stop the movement of democratic society, create a stasis. It is this very process, produced by the tensions and differences, that is really important and valuable in democracy. Thus, all attempts to provide a comprehensive theory of democracy are (indirectly) self-defeating. If the correct, true theory of democracy were to be found, and if it were *generally accepted* it would undo the whole democracy. If a theory of what the relations between the various mutual “others” (i.e. political subjects) are were recognized by the political subjects themselves, there would be no attitude of violent exclusion any more. The political subjects (which constitute each others’ “others”) would not exclude each others any more from their vision of the ideal society, and try to gain universal

recognition just for their own particular ideal any more. This kind of “reciprocally recognitive” attitude would undo the democracy itself. Mouffe joins Butler in the criticism of consensus-oriented communicative systems:

To believe that a final resolution of conflicts is eventually possible – even if it is seen as an asymptotic approach to the regulative idea of a rational consensus – far from providing the necessary horizon of a democratic project, is something that puts it at risk. Indeed, such an illusion carries implicitly the desire for a reconciled society where pluralism is superseded. When it is conceived in such a way, pluralist democracy becomes a “self-refuting ideal” because the very moment of its realization would coincide with its disintegration (DP,32)

And, again:

Indeed, one could not indicate how, in both Rawls and Habermas (...) the very condition for the creation of consensus is the elimination of pluralism from the public sphere (DP, 49)

For Mouffe, the fundamental fact is that there cannot be any solutions to the basic questions of democracy, and all attempts to find such solutions or even justify the possibility of having such solutions are positively harmful:

...my aim was to reveal the danger of postulating that there could be a rational definite solution to the question of justice in a democratic society (DP 32)

It is important to notice that Mouffe’s agonistic pluralism is not just a *modus vivendi* , a practical way to cope with the contingent but all-pervasive fact that in the modern world, people tend to disagree. For Mouffe, the pluralism and difference is a positive good in itself. It is something we should “valorize” and “be thankful for” (RP 139). All attempts to “close” the democratic process are dangerous because conflicts and confrontations are the very essence of democracy:

A project of radical and plural democracy...requires the existence of multiplicity, of plurality and of conflict...(RP,18)

In a democratic polity, conflicts and confrontations, far from being a sign of imperfection, indicate that democracy is alive and inhabited by pluralism (DP, 34).

One of the keys to the thesis of agonistic pluralism is that, far from jeopardizing democracy, agonistic confrontation is in fact its very condition of existence (DP 103)

Of course, not any confrontation or conflict would do. Pure power-struggles between self-interested actors, or clashes of forces between fanatical groups are not radical in the required sense. A radical agonist does not praise all conflicts. Democratic conflicts are, in a sense, always conflicts *about* democracy, about its content. They arise between principled and

sincerely held views:

Without a plurality of competing forces which attempt to define the common good, and aim at fixing the identity of the community, the political articulation of the demos could not take place. (DP 56)

Mouffe's thought here, that it is important that competing and conflicting forces try each to define the common good, resembles Butler's idea of politics. For Butler, like for Mouffe, it is important that there is political views which are subjective and particular in the sense that they exclude each others and compete each others in trying to gain universal consensus to their own particular truth. For Butler, terms, such as democracy or justice (and, no doubt also "common good") are internally ek-static "sites of conflict". There is a constant internal conflict over the meaning of various terms.

In the following passage the argument is encapsulated:

They (the mainstream democratic theorists) are unable to acknowledge that, while it is indeed the case that individual rights and democratic self-government are constitutive of liberal democracy...there exists between their respective "grammars" a tension that can never be eliminated...Such tension, though ineradicable, can be negotiated in different way. Indeed, a great part of democratic politics is precisely about the negotiation of that paradox and the articulation of precarious solutions. What is misguided is the search for a final rational resolution. Not only can it not succeed, but moreover it leads to putting undue constraint on the political debate. Such a search should be recognized for what it really is, another attempt at insulating politics from the effects of the pluralism of value, this time by trying to fix once and for all the meaning and hierarchy of the central liberal-democratic values (DP 93; cf. RP 150).

Mouffe's rejection of "final solutions" which would fix "once and for all" the meaning of democratic values echoes Butler's rejection of "full" and "final" conceptualizations of politically central notions like "human". For Mouffe, as for Butler, politics is about a permanent process, ongoing movement. The process is structured by the conflictual relation between the mutually exclusive parties of the "subject-position" and the "constitutive outside".

Mouffe criticises the efforts to solve the basic questions concerning democracy, e.g. the role of individual rights versus popular sovereignty in democratic states. Some contemporary theorists of democracy – e. g. John Rawls or Ronald Dworkin - claim that rights are more fundamental, while some others like Jeremy Waldron claim that the principle of popular sovereignty is more fundamental. Finally, authors like Habermas say that there is no incompatibility. All these theorists try to provide theoretical arguments for their respective positions. But, according to Mouffe, they are *all* mistaken. There is no solution to the question; moreover, all attempts to solve the question are dangerous to democracy, for, if any of the solutions were to gain general acceptance, it would eliminate the plurality and the necessary tension. However, it is argued here that if we all would accept Mouffe's view that there is no solution, *the result would also be the elimination of the tension*. The "tension" is there only as long as people think that there can be a correct interpretation but disagree on the nature of the correct interpretation. It should be noted that Mouffe uses this "self-

defeatingness”-argument when arguing against the other theorist of democracy. It is appropriate to ask whether Mouffe’s own theory passes the test she applies to the others.

According to Mouffe’s agonistic theory, none of the conflicting interpretations of the rights-sovereignty issue can possibly be the right one. Unlike most participants of the dispute, she *knows* that the problem is actually unsolvable. But because the tension between the various positions is essential in democracy (RP, 110), she should actually welcome all theoretical attempts – including those of Dworkin, Habermas, and Rawls – to keep the issue alive by providing their conflicting solutions. A general acceptance of Mouffe’s own view would be as fatal for “the tension” and for democracy as a general acceptance of any of the competing single correct solution –views. Correct solution -theorists like Rawls, Dworkin or Habermas seem to play an important role in the conflict by providing theoretical support to various conflicting proposals.

This malign form of the “democratic paradox” is visible in the question she poses to Rawls:

...why doesn’t [Rawls’s] conception of democracy leave any space for the agonistic confrontation among contested interpretations of the shared liberal-democratic principles? (DP, 30)

Again, when discussing communitarianism, Mouffe says:

Its rejection of pluralism and defence of a substantive idea of the ‘common good’ represents, in my view, another way of evading the ineluctability of antagonism. There will always be competing interpretations of the political principles of liberal democracy, and the meanings of liberty and equality will never cease to be contested. Citizenship is vital for democratic politics, but a modern democratic theory must make room for competing conceptions of our identities as citizens.(RP, 7)

In other words, we (Rawls, the communitarians etc.) should refrain from putting forth our own interpretations, in order to “make room” for the competing interpretations. What is the moral requirement presupposed in these critical comments? One possible reply to Mouffe is that Rawls’s or the communitarians’ interpretations of democracy do not “leave any space” for other interpretations for the simple reason that *they are themselves among those confronting interpretations* of liberal-democratic principles.

Mouffe’s claim that the competing interpretations themselves should “leave room” for other interpretations, by not presenting their interpretation as “complete and final”, resembles Butler’s criticism against any descriptions of society which think that they are complete and final. Like Butler, Mouffe endorses incompleteness, in the sense of acknowledging the Other of any conception of the common good. This “Other” cannot be conceptualized and whenever particular ideas of the common good are presented, the Other is violated. Consequently, this “un-conceptualizable” Other should be acknowledged by endorsing the incomplete (indeterminate, un-conceptualizable) nature of any description of the common good.

Consider the following passage taken from Mouffe:

political philosophy has an important role to play here, not in deciding the *true* meaning of notions like justice, equality or liberty, but proposing different *interpretations* of those notions. (RP 115; italics in the original).

The question is, can we propose an interpretation of something without simultaneously proposing that it is (or at least might be) the *true* interpretation? Presumably, Mouffe herself tries to provide a true theory, although its central message is that notions like justice, equality or liberty do not have “the true meaning”. Suppose that an interpretation of something is proposed in a serious vein. We may reasonably require that it somehow takes other, competing interpretations into account, and discusses with them. But can we require that a single interpretation has to “leave space” *within itself* for other, competing interpretations? Could it be a general demand for all conceptions of democracy that each of them leaves space within itself for other interpretations? And were they to do that, would there be any reasons left for agonistic confrontations between them? If they all leaved space for the others, the space would, presumably, not became occupied by anyone. Or, could Habermas, Rawls *et alii* get off the hook simply by adding a single sentence to the Prefaces of their respective books: “The interpretation suggested in this work is not intended to give *the true* meaning of the basic concepts (justice etc.)”, and then, by going on as usual?

All this constitutes a problem, for according to Mouffe, the existence of different *genuinely competing* conceptions is essential:

Ideally, such a confrontation should be staged around the diverse conceptions of citizenship which correspond to the different interpretations of the ethico-political principles: liberal-conservative, social-democratic, neo-liberal, radical-democratic, and so on. Each of them proposes its own interpretation of the ‘common good’... A well-functioning democracy calls for a vibrant clash of democratic political positions. (DP 103-4)

Obviously, all the proponents of these different conceptions are expected to defend their own conception as *true* (correct, valid) conceptions. Otherwise there would no clash between them. It is essential for democracy that these conceptions are mutually excluding. But what is Mouffe’s *own* position in this “vibrant clash”? The theorist of agonistic democracy appears here as a stage-master, as someone standing outside and above the confrontation. She knows that none of the protagonists playing their part in the democratic drama is actually defending the true view, for there cannot be any correct interpretation of the common good or any right answer to the questions of justice (e.g. RP, 64: “substantive common good has become impossible”). But, because the confrontation between different conceptions of citizenship and/or common good is the very condition of the existence of a working democracy, it is important that there are sufficiently many people around who sincerely hold these various convictions, however misguided they might be. Thus, all these mistaken and one-sided conceptions of democracy (“liberal-conservative, social-democratic, neo-liberal” etc.) - criticized elsewhere in Mouffe’s writings - should be kept alive, if possible. If people did not sincerely believe that the best definition of the common good exists, there would be no basis for the necessary confrontation and agonism. To conclude, Mouffe’s theory can be criticized by using the same form of argument she herself uses against other theories. The theory of

agonistic democracy is self-defeating in the same way as the Rawlsian or Habermasian theories are claimed to be. If all (or sufficiently many) citizens would actually accept the agonistic view that there are no justifiable solutions to the problems of justice and of common good, the essential agonism would disappear. *In order to work, the agonistic democracy has to presuppose that most people do not share the agonist view.* In the terms used in this study, it presupposes a Lord-Bondsman –relationship.

For this reason, the agonistic theory cannot work as a basis for the *self-understanding* of those subjects who themselves participate in political struggles. Inadvertently, it is based on a similar “pure self-consciousness” as Butler’s ek-static politics. In Mouffe, politics is divided dualistically into two realms. There is concrete politics, where hegemonic claims are made. This realm is conflictual and its processes take place through a “struggle for recognition”. And, then there is the realm of the observing theorist, who does not itself take part in the struggle for recognition. Instead, the external theorists just observe how the various “terms” such as “common good” become politically constructed within the various struggles. This agonistic democracy is possible only when most people continue to believe in something which, according to this theory, is actually impossible, a “necessary error”. Consider someone who is fighting for women’s rights in a society where they are not firmly secured. Surely, she is committed to the position that there exists “one” or “the best” solution in this particular issue, namely to give women their rights. She may sometimes welcome opposition, for the confrontation may help her to make her own position more clear, for herself as well as for the others. She may well admit that the particular institutional solutions advocated by her need not be the final word; in the future, they might be superseded by some other arrangements. But surely, her basic aim is that women’s rights were to be secured firmly and irrevocably, that they are elevated above everyday political disputes, that the consensus supporting these rights becomes in her society, as wide as possible. She may, realistically, admit that she cannot expect a complete consensus: there are and will always be some people who are unwilling to accept even the basic rights for women. But, unlike the agonist, she can hardly “valorize” this disagreement, or see it a positive good as such.

Mouffe’s discussion on the continuous relevance of the Left-Right –dimension in politics provides another illustration of the problem. In OP, she argues, through Freud and Lacan, that political discourse must be able to offer people, not only alternative policies, but also political identities which are strong enough to mobilize political passions (OP 30). Therefore, the Left-Right division is still relevant:

A well functioning democracy calls for a clash of legitimate democratic political positions. This is what the confrontation between left and right needs to be about. (idem.)

For this reason, Mouffe calls for a revitalization of the left/right distinction . However,

what is at stake in the left/right opposition is not a particular content (...) but a recognition of social division and the legitimation of the conflict. (OP, 120)

The very content of left and right will vary, but the dividing line should remain because its disappearance would indicate that social division is denied and that an ensemble of voices has been silenced. (OP 121)

The critical question is: Would the activists at the left and at the right be willing to participate in politics in those terms? Would they be interested in defending their respective positions just in order to keep democracy “well functioning”, to offer strong identities for people, and to “legitimate the conflict”? Ironically, Mouffe’s argument for the continuous relevance of the Right-Left -dimension is itself formulated from a viewpoint which is supposed to be above that dimension.

Mouffe’s politics can be compared to that of Butler’s. For example, in CHU she opposes the same-sex marriage laws because that would end the marriage as a “contested zone”. She asks,

how does it become possible to keep an open and political efficacious conflict of interpretations alive? (CHU, 161)

“Keeping conflicts alive” is important in democracy, for

the open-endedness that is essential to democratization implies that the universal cannot be finally identified with any particular content, and that this incommensurability (...) is crucial to the futural possibilities of democratic contestation. (idem.)

The core of Butler’s argument against the legalization of same-sex marriages is, then, that it would remove the problem from the democratic contest. To put it bluntly, only someone who has nothing personal at stake would be appealed by this kind of argument. But, as with Mouffe, with Butler, the point (presumably, the point of political theorists) is not to answer to question like “what is right?” or “what ought universality to be” but to “provoke a political discourse that sustains the questions” (CHU, 41). Nevertheless she asks;

can a critical intellectual use the very terms she subjects to criticism, accepting the pre-theoretical force of their deployment in the contexts where they are urgently needed? (ibid, 159)

Butler’s view is similar to that of Mouffe. “Keeping conflicts alive” and “valorizing unrealizability” (CHU 269) are important for the political theorist only; as generally shared, such arguments would be self-defeating. If all agreed that the questions about the content of universality were to be left unanswered, the questions would lose their meaning. An affirmative answer to Butler’s last question allows that a critical intellectual is allowed to appeal to terms like “justice”, “rights” or “common good” – because there are others who have not understood that the terms are actually without any determinable content.

In this analysis, Butler’s political thought is seen to correspond to Hegel’s description of pure self-consciousness, and especially Unhappy Consciousness. In spite of Butler’s criticism of Althusser, it also seems to presuppose something like the epistemically privileged position of Althusser’s scientific Marxism, which is able to distinguish between the political conceptions of ideological subjects and the pure political theory formulated externally, by the Science which is free from subjective limitations. Butler’s politics is seen to include a duality into two political realms. There is the realm of particular political agents, who must necessarily think differently of things than Butler herself, in order for Butler’s politics to be possible. The

particular political agents cannot “leave room for contradicting otherness” *inside* their own views – at least so that they would do this consciously. They cannot recognize their internal otherness, hence, they cannot think of themselves the same way as Butler thinks of them, and of all subjects. In other words, they cannot acknowledge and valorize the radical ek-statism of things. If they did, conflictual politics, in which contradicting others are excluded (instead of being given room inside one’s own “truths”) would no more take place. Like in Butler, in Mouffe there must be particular political agents who think differently than herself. If they thought like Mouffe and Butler and acknowledged that their own “truth” is actually constituted by the Other which it excludes, their truth would not in fact exclude the Other any more. Instead, it would include the Other, by way of acknowledging it as constitutive of their own truth. Consequently, Mouffe’s conflictual, otherness-refuting politics depends on there being political agents *for whom* the other is not constitutive of themselves. Thus, Mouffe’s political theory presents the paradoxical conclusions of Butler’s theory in a more articulated form.

6.4. Principles, decisions, and “the political”

As I already argued, in her understanding of “the political”, Mouffe owes a lot to Carl Schmitt. However, as concerns the most fundamental structure of the “political”, the theory draws ultimately from the ideas of Kojève, transmitted to Mouffe through Althusser, Lacan and Derrida.

In her works, Mouffe tries to combine ideas taken from different sources: from Wittgenstein’s and Oakeshott’s critiques of rationalism, from Derrida’s radical undecidability of meanings, and from Carl Schmitt’s existentialist-decisionistic critique of liberal legal theories. These ideas are not easily combined. But it is quite true that they all converge at least at one point. They can all be seen as powerful critiques of a certain model of ethical and political decision-making. In order to introduce the issue, a crude picture could be drawn – perhaps a caricature – of the kind of model of political or ethical decision making criticized (directly or indirectly) by all these authors. In this picture, ethical decision-making is based on principles. We have a rationally warranted general principle, roughly, of the form “Whenever the situation is S, do A”. This is the major premise. We, more or less passively, recognize that the situation at hands is S. This is the minor premise. Then, we have to draw the inescapable conclusion: “We have to do A”. In this model, practical decision-making is modelled as a logical inference. If we have to accept the premises, there is no way to avoid the conclusion. What is wrong with this picture? It could be said that this crude picture has very little to do with the real life decision making. Nothing in this simplified model does indicate that it is intended to be a model of practical decision making. It does not distinguish between the first person perspective – *our* choosing – and the third person perspective – the description of a choice made by an outsider. It does not distinguish between a purely hypothetical argument and an actual decision. Indeed, it could as well describe a trivial exercise performed in a logic class. The element of will is absent. (DP 75-7, 105, 129, 135)

An existentialist-decisionistic critic like Schmitt focuses on the major premise of the model, the principle. “You justify your action by appealing to a principle. You say that it necessitates

your choice. But then, your *real choice* was made when you adopted the principle, and decided to stick to it in this particular case.” For Schmitt and Mouffe, the fundamental decision (by which e.g. a hegemonic principle is chosen) is political. The question how far the Other should be taken into account – tolerated, consulted, included into one’s own group – is solved by a political decision. This decision is not determined by anything external to the (political) decision itself. As such, the decision itself is, ultimately, sovereign. A decision maker who has accepted the inference model may try to counter this critique by providing further justifications – e.g. other, more general and more abstract reasons – for her principle. But the critic would simply repeat her critique: “And how do you justify these *further* reasons?” Any chain of justifications has to end somewhere. A rationalist (say, Kant) thinks that at the end we reach the reasons that should be acknowledged by every rational person. For Wittgenstein, the end of the chain is something like “the forms of life”, the basic practices which cannot be questioned without stepping out from our shared life, and which are not open for any further justifications. For a decisionist like Schmitt, the end of the chain could only be a “sovereign decision”, “substantially unbounded by any norms”, as Schmitt says in his *Political Theology*. When an appeal is made to justificatory reasons like principles, the decision-makers have already chosen these reasons. For a reason or a principle cannot force itself upon us. They have to choose it. Thus, the first, original, most fundamental choice precedes all reasons and principles. (On this argument, see Rasch 2000, 4-9.) This does not mean that this fundamental moment of choice is ever reached in actual situations. It works as a conceptual idealization which helps to understand the ultimate nature of all choosing. (Laclau 1990; for a detailed critique see Norris 2002).

This unconstrained choice is, for Schmitt as well as for Mouffe and for Laclau, the proper realm of “the political”. Indeed, “the political” seems simply to *mean* a choice from which there is no further appeal to any rational reasons. Ultimately, it is behind everything:

...the political cannot be restricted to a certain type of institution, or envisaged as constituting a specific sphere or level of society. It must be conceived as dimension that is inherent to every human society and that determines our very ontological condition. (RP, 3)

“The political” must be conceived both as *autonomous* and as *supreme*. It is autonomous, because the ultimate choice cannot be regulated by any moral or rational principles. It is supreme, because it precedes the choice of all such principles. Hence, moral, scientific, aesthetic, religious etc. choices can be evaluated from the political point of view; political choices can be evaluated only politically. These “specific spheres” of human societies are constituted by rules, principles and standards; “the political”, as contrast, is constituted by the *lack* of such rules, principles or standards. To quote Mouffe again: “Politics cannot be reduced to rationality precisely because it indicates the limits of rationality” (RP, 115).

Surely, this is a metaphysical view of the world. It may be a plausible one, but it is metaphysical all the same. Here we detect a difference between Mouffe and those 20th century thinkers who, like Mouffe, have also emphasized the specific role of “the political”. Authors like Max Weber or Hannah Arendt argued that “the political” was autonomous in the sense that it could not be reduced to economy, science, morality, or law. They thought that “the political” had its own logic and own point of view, and wanted to free it from the iron-cages of the bureaucracy (Weber) or of “the social” (Arendt). In these respects, their views were quite like those expressed by Mouffe. But unlike Mouffe (and Schmitt, cf. e.g. Scheurman

1994, 17-24), they never conceived the political as *supreme*, as something which “determines our very ontological condition”.

Here, it is important to make two critical points. First, if the inference model of decision making sketched above does not capture the essential aspects of real life decisions, it is claimed here that the Schmittian model is equally alien to our experience. We do not really have experience of a choice made in a normative vacuum. We may well admit that in the real life, there may well be different moral, rational etc, considerations pulling us to different directions, and there need not be any single, pre-determined way to solve these conflicts. Some of our basic choices may be underdetermined by reasons. Hence, they cannot be described as inferences based on undeniable premises. But a difficult or tragic choice is not a choice made outside and before all reasons. In real life, there are always *some* reasons, however inconclusive, and they structure situations in which our choices are made. This is true both of personal ethical choices and of political choices. Thus, it seems that Mouffe (and Schmitt) present a false dilemma. Their dilemma is this: either our choices are fully determined by rational principles, and there is no real choice, or then, all principles are chosen, so the “first” choice must be totally undetermined. They also argue that all actual choices are political, in the sense that they are constituted by an antagonistic “us” and “they” relation. However, it is argued here that the dilemma is an unnecessary one, for both of the alternatives are inadequate. By a reference made to Hegelian reciprocally cognitive relationships, it is argued here that we do not have to make decisions from the view point of the Hegelian “Unhappy consciousness”. The Unhappy Consciousness (a version of pure self-consciousness) sees two types of “things” (or values, principles etc.). There are either “pure” terms which are abstracted from particular content. Or, there are particular terms, the content of which is based on the conflictual relationship between the self and the other. In a Kojévian fashion, things are either “free individuals”, empty from all particular content, and of all conflict. Or, then they are “sites of the struggle for recognition”. However, it is argued here that we have more alternatives than those presented by the Kojévian or the Schmittian traditions. Hegel’s model of the reciprocally cognitive relationships presents a model which, importantly, acknowledges our inevitable need to take “the other” into account. It acknowledges that the need to recognize others is a need felt by particular subjects, in their historical contexts, not only by “pure” (abstract) theorists or other external observers.

Second, Mouffe says that *responsibility* presupposes unbounded decisions. Because principles do not force themselves upon us, we can never avoid criticism simply by appealing to the pre-existing principles. Hence,

we should never refuse bearing responsibility for our decisions by invoking the commands of general rules or principles... This emphasis on the moment of *decision* and on *responsibility* enables us to envisage democratic politics in a different way because it subverts the ever-present temptation in democratic societies to disguise existing forms of exclusion under the veil of rationality or of morality. (DP 74)

It is true that responsibility is not compatible with the mechanistic model of decisions sketched above. But, contrary to what Mouffe seems to claim, the presence of principles and of other reasons is as essential for responsibility as the *relative* indeterminacy of our

decisions. To say that someone is responsible does not just mean that she can be identified as the first link in some chain of events. That we are responsible for our choices means that we could legitimately be criticized and praised, punished and rewarded for our choices. But these practices presuppose, not only relative freedom and causal efficiency, but also some shared reasons or principles. Someone can be held responsible for her choices only if there are some standards of conduct which can be used in judgments, and which the chooser herself is expected to accept as binding. This becomes clear in the cases of negligence. We may be held responsible, not only for what we have done, but also for what we have not done. But the number of possible deeds we have not done is infinite. How can we ever be responsible for something we have not done? The answer is that we can legitimately be responsible for something we have not done only if there is some *shared reason* why we should have done the required action.

Hegel's theory of pure self-consciousness and Unhappy Consciousness describes forms of thinking which do not recognize *any* particular principles or standards as binding, because these standards are always seen as parochial and constituted by the refutation of the Other. Hegel argued that this kind of thinking results into "absolute freedom", a sort of abstract individualism. When abstract individualism becomes actual (i.e. when inter-subjective situations are judged in referent to it) it results into a culture in which it is impossible to think of such things as responsibility. Abstract individualism refrains, to start with, from taking any particular idea of a subject as its point of departure. A refusal to take *any* particular form of subjectivity as a normative criteria is also the ground idea in Mouffe's and Butler's subject-theories. However, when *particular* subjects cannot be identified, no subjects can be identified. When subjects are lacking, there cannot exist such inter-subjective relations in which responsibilities could be based. Responsibility can be only an abstraction. It cannot be binding because there are no subjects who could be bound by it. Further, it does not relate to any shared, particular standards. It means everything and nothing, as any other term, including the "subject".

Hegel's theory of a free society, which is constituted for reciprocally cognitive particular subjects offers another model for thinking about principles and responsibility. *Particular* standards are recognized as collectively binding in it. They are not only imposed by the coercive will of the state or the government. Consequently, people can be held responsible on the basis of these standards. At the same time, however, the principles are seen as changeable through contradicting others. If an argument is made that the principles exclude some Others, the principles can be changed. Principles are thus not alien, i.e. constituted on the *necessary* refutation (and the silencing, exclusion) of others. Responsibility, based on particular principles, does not constitute (at least not necessarily) a further instance of a struggle to force the other to take responsibility on the basis of alien, strange principles.

6.5. Democracy and its limits

For a theorist of democracy, the fundamental question is, whether *democracy itself* is ultimately just a result of a pure (rationally and normatively unlimited, hegemonic) political decision. If it is, there are no rational or moral arguments for choosing democracy rather than, say, dictatorship. The question how far – if at all – the conflicting opinions of the others are

taken into account or even tolerated, is arbitrary. This, indeed, was Schmitt's view. He was ready to argue that dictatorship could be a legitimate expression of the collective will of a group. Hence, he could also embrace the most violent way to exclude the Other, the National Socialism with its racial practices. Mouffe's position is unclear. If she rejects this arbitrary basis for democracy, does her position really differ from the universalisms defended by Rawls or Habermas? She asks:

should liberal democracy be envisaged as the rational solution to the political question of how to organize human coexistence? Does it therefore embody the just society the one that should be universally accepted by all rational and reasonable individuals? Or does it merely represent one form of political order among other possible ones? A political form of human coexistence, which, under certain conditions, can be deemed 'just', but that must also be seen as the product of a particular history, with specific historical, cultural and geographical conditions of existence.

This is indeed a crucial question because, if this second view is the correct one, we have to acknowledge that there might be other just political forms of society, products of other contexts. Liberal democracy should therefore renounce its claim to universality. It is worth stressing that those who argue along those lines insist that, contrary to what the universalists declare, such a position does not necessarily entail accepting a relativism that would justify *any* political system. What it requires is envisaging a *plurality* of legitimate answers to the question of what is the just political order. However, political judgment would not be made irrelevant, since it would still be possible to discriminate between just and unjust regimes (DP 62-3)

To this, two comments are relevant. First, it is argued here that Mouffe misconstrues the universalistic claim made by the liberal democrats. The liberal-democratic universalists are not defending – or at least, are not committed to defend – the thesis that liberal democracy is the best form of government in all imaginable contexts. (Surely, they are not bound to deny that the liberal democratic political form has a history.) They claim that the liberal-democratic basic values – liberty and equality – are universal, and that in our present world or context, characterized by e.g. a pluralistic culture, a certain level of education, a certain level of technological and economic development, large and interdependent communities etc., the liberal-democratic institutions realize these values better than any other institutions. *This* judgment is supposed to be universally true, warranted by moral and rational and moral considerations. In other words, the liberal democrats like Dworkin, Rawls or Habermas are not defending the claim “It is true in all contexts that liberal democracy is the best system in all contexts” but the more modest claim “It is true in all contexts that liberal democracy is the best system *in our context*”. This allows the possibility that, in radically different contexts, different institutional solutions may be compatible with the basic values of liberty and equality. Does Mouffe really disagree with them or not?

Second, Mouffe says that her position does not entail relativism, but only a “plurality of answers” to the question of what is the just political order. She does not give any hint on how the non-liberal democratic, but equally just orders would look like. But she clearly says that *some* possible alternatives are definitely ruled out. Hence, there must be some criteria,

however general or vague, for the justness of various regimes. And hence, all her questions, initially addressed to the liberal democrats, may also be addressed to herself. Are all reasonable individuals bound to accept these more permissive criteria of a just order? Are these criteria universal? Are they products of particular histories? Are they ultimately based on a normatively unlimited choice? There is no middle way: by accepting the validity of a single universal judgment – however general or vague - we make ourselves vulnerable to all anti-universalistic attacks. More generally: the plurality of acceptable answers does solve the problems arising from the fact that people seem to have different, partly competing criteria of what constitutes an acceptable answer. But it does not solve the problem of the justification. As long as *some* possible answers (for example, National Socialism) are rejected, some ethical criteria are needed, and the problem of justification is there. (cf. Zizek 1999, 174)

6.6. The problem of foundations

Indeed, if one sees the democratic revolution as Lefort portrays it, as the distinctive feature of modernity, then it becomes clear that what one means when one refers to postmodernity in philosophy is a recognition of the impossibility of any ultimate foundation or final legitimation that is constitutive of the very advent of democratic form of society and thus of modernity itself. (RP 11-2)

On one side we find the ‘rationalist-universalists’ who – like Ronald Dworkin, the early Rawls and Habermas – assert that the aim of political theory is to establish universal truths, valid for all independently of the historico-cultural context. (DP, 63)

In spite of the ambiguities noted above, the core of Mouffe’s critique of democratic theories (those put forth by Rawls, Habermas, Dworkin, and by the deliberative theorists) seems to be this: All the theories are based on some ahistorical metaphysical truths, about the human nature, universal rationality, the nature of morality etc. But there are no ahistorical metaphysical truths that could work as premises in an argument purported to justify some concrete political arrangements. (cf. RP 11 on the impossibility of any ultimate foundation) Nor is there any historically developing but normatively fundamental process like Habermas’s critical discussion or Hegel’s reciprocal recognition.

It is necessary to focus to two potential problems in Mouffe’s general view. The first problem is the nature of the denial of all ahistorically true metaphysical claims. Does this denial *itself* constitute an ahistorical metaphysical truth? It is certainly a kind of metaphysical claim, and someone like Mouffe who says that she knows its truth is certainly claiming to possess some metaphysical knowledge. (A negation of a metaphysical statement is a metaphysical statement.) Is it *ahistorically* true? If it is merely contingently true, it allows that there might, after all, be some non-contingent truths. It seems that a denial of all a-historical metaphysical truths contains a problem of self-reference.

Again, Hegel’s theory of “pure self-consciousness” is relevant also here. What is, in fact, denied when all metaphysical truths are denied? In Mouffe, typically, when metaphysical

truths are denied, it is denied that some *particular* truth (of the human nature etc.) could (even possibly) constitute a universal truth. From the point of view of Mouffe's political theory, this constitutes a dilemma. If the particular political agents, who try to gain universal recognition for their own particular truth - which they themselves consider a universal truth - were to agree with Mouffe, politics would end. If all political agreed upon the universal validity of what Mouffe says, there would be no "they" to constitute the political "outside". What Mouffe says would be recognized as an absolute "truth" itself. Hence, Mouffe's statement can be right if there are people who disagree with it and thus prevent it from becoming an un-political, universally accepted truth. There are constitutive outsides to various "truths" as long as there is subjects who constitute (by their particular contradicting ideas) these outsides.

Mouffe seems to think that her denial of all ahistorical metaphysical truths has important political consequences. She claims that if we accept that there are no ahistorical metaphysical truths (except, perhaps, the ahistorical metaphysical truth that there are no other ahistorical metaphysical truths), we have an argument, not only against metaphysically based interpretations of democracy, but also *for* her own agonistic interpretation. And the agonistic interpretation certainly is intended to have concrete political consequences. But then, paradoxically, it follows that there is, after all, a sound argument in political theory that is ahistorical, starting from a metaphysical truth. *The metaphysical truth that "there are no metaphysical foundations" seems to work like the metaphysical foundation in Mouffe's own theory:*

...instead of putting our liberal institutions at risk, the recognition that they do not have an ultimate foundation creates a more favourable terrain for their defence. (RP, 145)

The dilemma is unavoidable. This becomes clearer when we consider Mouffe's more specific arguments, for she operates with premises that have specific metaphysical contents. For example, the new democratic project should be informed by "the recent theoretical contributions" of philosophy and psychoanalysis (RP 10-11). The core of these recent ideas is the non-essentialist conception of the subject (RP 71; DP 11, 17). More precisely:

to be capable of thinking politics today, and understanding the nature of these new struggles and the diversity of social relations that the democratic revolution has yet to encompass, it is indispensable to develop a theory of subject as a decentered, detotalized agent, a subject constructed as the point of intersection of a multiplicity of subject positions between which there exists no a priori or necessary relation...(RP, 12)

Surely, this (basically Lacanian) theory of the decentered subject is as metaphysical as the theory of the Kantian subject it tries to replace. And, according to Mouffe, it is as essential for the new theory of democracy as the old theory was for the old, rejected liberal theories. In both cases, a certain conception of what kind of beings we *really* are appears as a premise in an argument which is put forth as a justification of concrete political practices.

Still another example: the way Mouffe uses the Wittgensteinian argument on rule-following. She quotes Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*:

Following rule is analogous to obeying an order. We are trained to do so; we react to an order in a particular way. But what if one person reacts in one way and another in another to the order and the training? Which one is right? (DP 73)

According to Mouffe's interpretation, Wittgenstein's analysis of rule-following shows that "there cannot be one single best, more 'rational' way to obey... rules and that is precisely such a recognition that is constitutive of a pluralistic democracy". Recognizing this problem would mean "fostering a plurality of forms of being a democratic citizen and creating the institutions that would make it possible to follow democratic rules in a plurality of ways" (DP, 73). As in the discussion on the limits of legitimacy and of relativism, the recognition of the plurality of several alternatives is seen as a solution to the problem of ambiguity or indeterminacy. But does this requirement of plurality really follow from Wittgenstein's analysis of rule-following? If the problem is a *conceptual* one, it does not matter whether there are one or several equally acceptable ways to follow democratic rules, as long as *there are rules* which are somehow supposed to exclude at least *some* possible reactions. It is always possible that someone tries to follow the rules - be they single or plural, permissive or rigid - in a way that is not compatible with any of the acceptable ways. Then, the problem is still there. No amount of plurality and toleration can remove the problem, if *something* is, nevertheless, excluded - in other words, if there still are *rules* that can be obeyed or disobeyed, for the point of a rule is simply to rule out some possible forms of conduct. If there is a general, conceptual problem of the interpretation of rules, it concerns loose and permissive rules as much as rigid and fixed rules. But then we may ask: If the proposed "plurality of ways" cannot be conceived as a solution to Wittgenstein's problem, how does the recognition of the problem nevertheless contribute to the justification of this "plurality of ways"?

But, again, there is a deeper problem in Mouffe's account. For even if her conclusions *do* follow from Wittgenstein's analysis, this analysis is still a perfectly general and conceptual one: it is supposed to apply to *any* rules (mathematical, linguistic, legal, religious etc.) in *any* society. Even if Wittgenstein has provided inspiration to the contextualist moral and political theorists, his account of rule-following is not itself "contextualised" in any relevant sense. It is not tied to any particular context, and does not, as such, have anything to do with the specific problems of modern democracies. If it is used as a premise in an argument that purports to justify the democratic practices, *isn't this a clear example of an "ahistorical", "universal" argument in political theory?*

This "antifoundationalist foundationalism" of Mouffe can be contrasted with the genuinely contextualist political views of such authors like Michael Oakeshott, Michael Walzer, or Richard Rorty. In Mouffe's texts they are all treated as fellow antifoundationalists, together with poststructuralists like Derrida and decisionists like Schmitt. Mouffe says she subscribes the view of Rorty: democracy is not dependent on metaphysics (RP 10). Democratic principles "can only be defended as being constitutive to our form of life, and we should not try to ground our commitment to them on something supposedly safer" (DP 66).

It is argued here, however, that the contextualist political theories have actually very little to do with Mouffe's version of postmodernism. Authors like Rorty agree with Mouffe that all the traditional attempts to defend democracy by such metaphysical notions as universal rationality or human nature are misguided. But first, unlike Mouffe, they do not argue that this lack of rational foundations does *itself* constitute a new defence of democracy. Rather, they

claim that the alleged metaphysical foundations, *and* the lack of any such foundations, are both equally irrelevant for democracy. The defence of democracy and the search of metaphysical basic principles are simply two independent intellectual projects. For example, even if the Kantian theory of subject is found as defective, or if whole notion of rule-following is inherently problematic, democracy is neither endangered nor supported by these observations. For the contextualists, democracy is a local and practical matter. It can be defended by appealing to our traditions and shared practices, or to pragmatic considerations, but not by any context-independent principles – or by the lack of such principles. (On Rorty's reply to Laclau, see Rorty 1996.)

This kind of contextualism is also incompatible with the Schmittian decisionistic view discussed above, and Mouffe's attempt to combine both views is simply incoherent. In contextualist thinking, we are always involved in traditions and in forms of life. Traditions and forms of life are supposed to have an *authority* that has to be recognized. They are not something we can just choose, nor can they be conceived as facts which just limit our "horizons of options" even when we are not aware of them. We may decide to accept or reject some particular elements of a tradition, but such decision can be made only in a context already constituted by other elements of a tradition or traditions. Hence, what determines our "very condition" as human beings is not "the political" as the realm of sovereign decisions but our participation in shared traditions and practices. According to a contextualist, "the political" cannot be supreme, for its role in different societies is also contingent, dependent on their particular traditions. In some societies the shared traditions do not reserve any dominant role for "the political". Mouffe might reply that ultimately the political *must* be supreme because the traditions and the way they draw the distinctions between, say, the political sphere and the private sphere, or between the sacred and the secular, are themselves political by their nature. By saying "this is not a political matter" we are already making a political claim. But this kind of view of the role of the political is itself definitely anti-contextual and ahistorical. It says to the adherents of various traditions: although *you* do not see the authority of your traditions as based on political choices, they *are* based on such choices, and you *should* recognize this fact. Your way to draw the distinction between the political and the non-political, although based on your own traditions, is a mistaken one. In this view, the perspective of "the political" transcends all particular contexts, determining "our ontological condition" in every society, as Mouffe says.

In another context, F.R. Ankersmit, (2002) formulates a similar contrast when comparing the views of Schmitt to those of Machiavelli:

When Machiavelli argues for the brokenness of the political domain and openly accepts all the implications of strife, conflict, and struggle that go with that, he is not saying, like Schmitt, that strife, conflict, and struggle are its ultimate *source* and *foundation*. He is saying, rather, that these constitute a permanently present *aspect* of politics. (...) The indisputable fact that we shall always have to fight in order to realize our political goals and ideals does not itself imply that fight and struggle are *themselves* the central issue in all politics. Or, to formulate it in the terms that have been used in this section: if the incommensurability of our political ideals invites a continuous fight between them, this fact does not elevate political fight to the status of being a new and extrapolitical ideal. (p. 170)

It seems that at least in this issue Mouffe is quite loyal to Schmitt. For her, as for Schmitt, conflict and antagonism, the lack of shared foundations are themselves the positive foundations of political theory.

While making a distinction between the genuinely contextualist theories and Mouffe's agonism, it is not claimed here that the theories of the former type do provide an unproblematic solution to the problems of the political. One problem is that many of our shared traditions are themselves tied to universalist and metaphysical arguments which – according to the very traditions – transcend the limits of the traditions. This seems to be the case in e.g. the Christian, secular-humanistic, and Islamic political traditions: they all make universalistic claims. Thus, a contextualist seems to be forced to accept the position of a Rortyan ironist: someone who attaches him- or herself to a tradition while preserving a critical distance to its universalistic and metaphysical claims. Such an attitude may ultimately produce a problem similar to that of Mouffe's: the ironist's detached form of solidarity is possible only if there are enough true believers whose attitude towards the tradition is non-ironical. With its unavoidable dependence on the other (non-ironical, "serious") forms of thinking, Rorty's ironism appears as yet another version of Unhappy Consciousness.

6.7. Conclusion: the ways of paradoxical and ek-static objects

According to this analysis, Mouffe's democratic agonism suffers from internal incoherence. However, she openly admits that her project is, in a sense, "paradoxical". Does this admission leave her off the hook? Here a comparison between Butler and Mouffe can be made. Butler adheres to the idea of ek-statism, resembling Mouffe's idea of what constitutes a "paradox". Both the Butlerian ek-statism and Mouffe's paradoxicality introduce a relationality which cannot be conceptualized inside any shared differentiating system.

A philosophical view may be paradoxical in the sense that it contains internal incoherencies in the sense of being self-contradictory, self-eliminating. It may also be called "paradoxical" if it produces a pragmatic contradiction of some type. For example, if a theory were true, it couldn't be known to be true, or it couldn't be generally believed to be true without actually making it untrue. These can be seen to be self-contradictory forms of paradoxicality. However, as Mouffe says, a paradox is not necessarily the same thing as an internal contradiction (in the form of self-contradiction). Contradictions are also a central part of Hegel's thought. The existence of contradictions make dialectics and conceptual, historical change possible. But even for Hegel, a contradiction is never the last word.

A philosophical view can be said to be "paradoxical", and *still consistent*, at least in two ways. A philosopher may try to show that some of our received and normally held convictions (say about the nature of politics, language, mind etc.) are actually false. Such a view is "paradoxical" in the rather trivial sense that it may be very difficult for most people to accept it, even when the view is, as such, fully consistent. In another sense, an ethical or political theory may be said to be "paradoxical" when it implies that some of our most cherished principles or values are not simultaneously realisable. For example, it may be that the

demands of liberty and equality cannot be combined under some circumstances. We do not want to drop either of the values. Thus we have to admit that there may be practical or ethical contradictions, and try to live with them.

Mouffe argues that the best-known democratic theories are paradoxical in the first, self-contradictory sense of the term. They try to eliminate conflicts between political adversaries, which are constitutive of democracy, and nevertheless remain as democrats. Mouffe also tries to show, perhaps successfully, that the liberal-democratic values produce a paradox in the third sense of the term. She may well be right in claiming that there can be no general solution to the certain conceptual problems of democracy, for example, those of rights and sovereignty. Reasonably, she argues that this does not constitute a reason to reject liberal democracy; rather we have to try to live with the politically dynamic “paradox” and to be content with contextual and temporary solutions. However, it is claimed here that the way she generalizes from this alleged “paradox” makes her own theory paradoxical in the sense of being self-contradictory. If the subjects themselves were to accept Mouffe’s theory, it would equally lead into the disappearance of the contradictory relations between “us” and “they” and, hence, to the disappearance of politics. Thus, it is vulnerable to the same form of criticism she herself uses against Rawls, Habermas and the others. Her own affirmation that democracy itself is “paradoxical” does not, as such, make her theory immune for criticism. If it had that effect, any theorist could use it to shed off any possible criticism.

Mouffe’s paradoxes end up into the same dilemma as Butler’s ek-statism. *For the one* who sees objects of thought and will as paradoxical (in the sense Mouffe sees them, or Butler sees ek-static objects) these objects turn into abstractions. They cannot be *identified* to exist, as they are not actually objects, circumscribed unities, with borders around them, by which they can be separated from other objects. In Mouffe and Butler, objects exist for such thinkers who think of things like the conflictual subjects which Mouffe and Butler see as political agents. Mouffe and Butler see identifiable objects through the eyes of the particular political subjects. As in the case of Hegel’s pure self-consciousness, ordinary subjects are needed to labour identifiable objects (in various ideological contexts) in order for the pure self-consciousness to identify them. For theorists like Mouffe or Butler, these political bondsmen are necessarily striving for the impossible.

7. Conclusions

Judith Butler has often been seen as a difficult, even as an incomprehensible thinker. Most of those who have not understood her works have probably passed by them in silence. Some of her admirers have a tendency to present her ideas as completely new and revolutionary. Numerous impassionate rejections as well as uncritical apologies of Butler have been published. This study is an attempt to show that Butler's work should be understood in the context of the Western intellectual tradition, and that such an understanding may also help us to see its merits and detect its problems in a more effective way.

I have argued that in Butler's case the definitive context of her ideas is Hegel's philosophy. Butler is usually related to the post-modernist, or more exactly, to the post-structuralist tradition. This tradition is generally seen as hostile towards the rationalist projects of the Western philosophy, and Hegel's project is certainly the most ambitious of all such projects. However, whole the post-structuralist tradition is itself related to Hegel's thinking in a complex and ambiguous way. Descombes, Williams, and Weir, as well as Butler herself (in *SD*) have charted these relations. I argued that Butler's thinking is even more closely related to Hegel than that of the other post-structuralists. I have tried to show that in an important sense, she is, and has always been, a Hegelian thinker. Although other commentators have noticed this, no-one has tried to study this aspect of her thinking in detail.

For Butler, as for her sources, "Hegel" means largely *Hegel's theory of the subject* as formulated in his *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. In this study, I have tried to analyse and expose some of the central aspects of this theory, as a necessary precondition of a more complete understanding of Butler's own theory of the subject. The central Hegelian themes shared by Butler are the formation of the subject and self-consciousness, the role of Desire and the Other, and the notion of recognition. These form the premises of her better-known views on the formation of gendered subjects and on performative politics. Butler's way to discuss these issues cannot be understand without understanding Hegel. However, I am not just interested in Hegel because I see him as a key to Butler's work. Rather, I think that Hegel also provides a critical perspective to Butler as well as to some other contemporary theorists (e. g. to Chantal Mouffe). Finally, I want take Hegel's own views seriously, an intention I share with Butler.

My interpretation of Hegel is, however, based on another tradition than that of Butler; I rely mainly on the works of Taylor and Ikäheimo. Nevertheless, my analysis follows Butler at least in one sense: I concentrate on PhS and take the relationship between self and the Other as the interpretive key. But unlike some influential interpreters of Hegel, I interpret PhS – including the famous sections on Lordship and Bondage - in terms of the consciousness' *internal* self-development rather than just in terms of external struggle. One consequence of this reading is that Hegel's concept of Desire should no be interpreted merely as a primitive appetite. Rather, Desire characterizes all one-sided attempts to "appropriate" or "grasp" the world, theoretically or practically.

The various one-sided forms of self-consciousness, presented in PhS were analysed in detail. According to my interpretation, Hegel's key concepts – especially that of recognition – are meant to solve the *epistemological* problems which Hegel finds from Kant and from his

followers. Like Kant, Hegel sees that all objects of cognition, including ourselves, appear to us from some particular viewpoint. Numerous conceptual problems arise from this. These problems emerge in both the traditional and the modern forms of scepticism and relativism. By acknowledging the necessity of multiple and contradicting perspectives, Hegel accepts the key premise of sceptical and relativistic thought: there is no metaphysically privileged viewpoint. Hegel, however, does not see scepticism as the last word. Rather, it is, for him, an inevitable starting-point. Scepticism itself is one possible viewpoint on the viewpoints of the Others, not a privileged meta-position. This observation opens the road to recognition.

At the same time, concepts like recognition have an *ethical* and *political* meaning in Hegel's work. While Hegel cannot be said to have a theory of political action (in the sense Aristotle, Machiavelli, Arendt, or Schmitt have theories of political action) his "political theory" is not confined to his philosophy of Right. According to my view, his analyses of the one-sided forms of consciousness (Scepticism, Stoicism, Unhappy Consciousness etc.) do have political implications. They are all but versions of the asymmetrical Lord-Bondsman (Master-Slave) relationship introduced in PhS. They are connected with various other-refuting practical attitudes and political practices – for, example, in Hegel's analysis of the Absolute Freedom which ends up to the rejection of all particular forms in the Terror. While PhS is not about "political theory", it has its political relevance.

Thus, recognition, the key term, has simultaneously an epistemological, ethical and political meaning, because various social, cultural and political forms which are incompatible with universal recognition are based on implicitly other-refuting (and therefore self-refuting) views. And, correspondingly, universal reciprocal recognition which takes all the possible viewpoints into account and allows them to interact and correct each other is simultaneously a solution to the epistemological problems of knowledge and self-knowledge, and the basis of a democratic society which consciously resists all forms of exclusion. Hence, I read Hegel's views as potentially fruitful contributions to the contemporary discussions on democracy, exclusion, and marginalization.

Contrary to the common conception, shared by many thinkers of different persuasions (e.g. such as Levinas and Lyotard as well as Popper) the vision of Hegel is not totalitarian in any sense. It does not try get rid of all differences or to melt them into one mystical whole. On the contrary, it sees that differences between various viewpoints are unavoidable for conceptual reasons (i.e. our knowledge is the knowledge of separate, different beings), and just *our separate existence makes recognition necessary*.

While I try to defend Hegel against some of his critics – including Butler – my attitude towards him is by no means uncritical. His notorious exclusion of women is analysed at some length. It cannot be dismissed just as a minor defect in an otherwise excellent theory. I try to show that his treatment of women is a part of his way to see the Family as a moment of particularity, and women as necessarily particular beings who are limited, for the Hegelian reason that they are inherently unable to see their limits. It appears that the nation-state and the patriotic spirit carried by the Youth are similar necessary moments of particularity for Hegel. Thus the two less appealing aspects of his political views – the position of women and the uncritical acceptance of the system of nation-states – *arise from the same considerations*. From Hegel's own point of view, this is paradoxical. For the women – as well as the "patriotic youth" - appear as instruments ("Bondsmen") for the nation-state. Women's ability

to become full members of the recognizing community is permanently denied. Both, women and the Youth are instrumentalized as means of the collective development, not contingently but permanently. Women's labour is needed to equip the Youth with the necessary "individualistic, immature spirit", for the nation-state needs patriotic spirit to wage wars successfully. This is a clear example of the exclusion of Others. The fact that women, in our day, have been able to see and challenge their limits should be, from the Hegelian point of view, a conclusive proof that they actually *can* overcome their limits.

Throughout my discussion on Hegel, I have emphasized the peculiar *structure* of PhS and the implications of that structure. In the narrative, the self gradually learns to understand itself. And, because the book is about the human self, the book itself is a contribution to that understanding. Hence, the story, told in PhS, ends at the point when the self has reached the same level of self-consciousness as the narrator. According to my view, this reflects Hegel's central concerns. As I said, in PhS every object of cognition is an object *for someone*. It is seen from a particular point of view. The object of PhS is the human subject and its consciousness, including Hegel's own. The fundamental (Kantian) question is, then, *how is the viewpoint taken in PhS possible?* Because, according to Hegel, all subjects are able to overcome their limits and take the viewpoint of another, the viewpoint taken in PhS must, in principle, be accessible to all. Unlike some philosophers criticized by Hegel (Kant and the sceptics in PhS, Spinoza in his other works), he explicitly tries to formulate a theory which is self-referential in the sense that it can explain its own possibility. This explains the structure of PhS.

The last-mentioned idea is central for my interpretation of PhS. I argued that some other thinkers who have taken the self and the consciousness as their main objects have been unable to answer to the question: how am I able to tell this story? (I called this "Ishmael's problem".) Especially some Marxists and post-structuralists seem to be vulnerable at this point. The postmodernists/post-structuralists are often criticized for their supposedly "relativist" or "sceptical" views as well as for "political impotence". (Martha Nussbaum's criticism of Butler belongs basically to this genre.) The Hegel-inspired critique of Butler and Mouffe formulated in this work intends to be more nuanced and more constructive. The various one-sided forms of consciousness analysed in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* may be seen as so many different versions of scepticism. The core of Hegel's critique is not, however, just their inability to "justify universal norms" or "knowledge". Rather, Hegel argues that these forms of consciousness (for example, the Unhappy Consciousness) cannot consistently become the basis of general self-understanding. *In order to be meaningful for their proponents, they have to presuppose epistemic asymmetries which cannot be justified within these forms of thinking.*

Although I am interested in the same aspects of Hegel's views as Butler, our ways to read him are rather different. It appears that Butler's reading of Hegel is – like that of most French thinkers – largely based on the influential interpretation given by Alexandre Kojève. This is striking, for Butler herself in SD discusses some one-sided aspects of Kojève's Hegel-interpretation. Most of Butler's commentators (with the partial exception of Allison Weir) have not paid any attention to this. They have taken for granted that Butler's way of reading Hegel is unproblematic.

In Kojève's reading, PhS is also seen as a political work, although in a very different sense. Roughly, Hegel is seen as a successor of Machiavelli and a predecessor of Marx. What is

characteristic for Kojève's way to read Hegel is, that (1) the interpretation is mainly limited to the first parts of PhS, to the Lord-Bondsman -sections; (2) the Hegelian notions of desire and negativity take an all-pervasive role; (3) all particularity and all particular self-identities are seen as constraining and other-refuting; (4) the relation between the Self and the Other becomes that of a perpetual and violent struggle; (5) recognition is not reciprocal but an aspect of Master-Slave relations, but (6) universal recognition is nevertheless the *telos* of history. It means the End of History and the disappearance of all differences - and consequently, of politics. *The French thinkers typically accept all or most points (1)-(6) as correct interpretations of Hegel.* They, however, reject point (6), as "totalizing" and "absolutist" closure. Both existentialists like Sartre and de Beauvoir and structuralists/poststructuralists like Lacan and Foucault agree on this. And because they see (6) as the inevitable outcome of Hegel's theory, they turn against him. *The real target of their anti-Hegelianism is Kojève, who, however, has also largely determined their positive agenda.*

It has been argued here that Butler, who largely relies on the French sources when developing his views, *actually accepts a large part of the Kojèbian reading of Hegel.* Like Kojève, she "halts" the story told in PhS, rejects reciprocal recognition and accuses Hegel for his totalizing tendencies. Here, it has been argued (through Taylor, Ikäheimo, Hutchings, and Williams) that Kojève's interpretation is one-sided, and that *none* of the points (1)-(6) can be accepted without qualifications as a basis for an accurate interpretation of Hegel. Most importantly, Hegel did not see the process of recognition only in terms of struggle; Hegel did not believe that the unmediated (collective) self-knowledge and its practical realization, the "homogeneous universal state" were either possible or desirable. His theory did not have the totalizing aspect often ascribed to it. Hence, the criticism of the Kojèbian reading of Hegel may partly be directed against Butler's reading, too.

Althusser is another important figure, whose influence has been decisive for Butler (as well as for many others interested in similar issues.). Like Kojève, Althusser is largely neglected; his Marxism is considered as outmoded. Butler tries to correct the supposed mistakes of Hegel with the help of Althusser (and those of Althusser with the help of Hegel). Most notably, Hegel's theory of reciprocal recognition is replaced by Althusser's *purely descriptive interpretation of recognition as ideological misrecognition (Interpellation)* which produces particular subjects. This link between Butler and Althusser has not generally been analysed in the secondary literature on Butler.

Although Althusser criticizes both Hegel and the French Kojèbian reception of Hegel, his own powerful anti-Hegelianism is an example how the Kojèbian ideas – in Althusser's case, transmitted through Lacan – have pervaded the French discussion. In his own peculiar way, Althusser shares the Kojèbian view that "recognition is *synonymous* with the unequal recognition of master and slave" (Williams 1997, 11). Unlike the Hegelian recognition, the Althusserian interpellation is a socio-psychological mechanism without any rational or normative aspect. Indeed, it is fundamentally an irrational process. Althusser's theory is, however, troubled by difficult problems. It sees the consciousness of the ideologically produced subjects as a "*necessary error*". In order to explain his own ability to see through the error, *Althusser has to postulate a distinction between the subject's erroneous consciousness and the subject-less Science which is able to see through the ideological delusions.* Althusser, however, cannot explain in a satisfactory way how the subject-less Science is possible and how it can be distinguished from ideology in a non-circular way.

What is more important, Althusser's distinction between perspectives of the misled subjects and the epistemically privileged Science has serious *political consequences*. As Hegel recognized, epistemic asymmetries are related to political asymmetries. Althusser's distinction leads to a Lord-Bondsman relationship which can also be used to justify a non-democratic form of politics. Clearly, Butler subscribes to Althusser's view of our particular identities as "necessary errors". Hence, she is forced to face the fundamental Hegelian question: for whom do they appear as errors, if they are unavoidable? While Butler rejects the totalizing aspects of Althusser's theory, *she does not take any clear stand in the Science – ideology issue*. It is not clear how far she can use Althusser's theory of subject-formation against Hegel without implicitly committing herself to the more problematic aspects of the former. Both Althusser and Hegel have a solution to the fundamental problem which any theory of consciousness has to face: how is the theory itself possible? Althusser's solution is to separate ideology from Science, and to claim that his theory is formulated from the subject-less standpoint of Science. Hegel's solution to the same problem is based on the possibility of universal reciprocal recognition. In this study, Hegel's solution is preferred for both intellectual and ethical reasons. The fundamental point is that Butler is unable to accept either solution. Nevertheless, by rejecting the possibility of reciprocal recognition she implicitly commits herself to the Althusserian alternative: her own subject-theory has to be formulated from an epistemically privileged standpoint. The subjects themselves cannot share it. If Butler, unlike Althusser, still sees her own works as products of a human subject rather than of a subject-less Science, *her own viewpoint remains mysterious and its possible political consequences unclear*.

A serious problem in Butler's thought is caused by this impossibility of her own position. This is related to the aspect of mediating, self-conscious thirdness, by the name of which Hegel calls the self who has become aware of its own internal contradictoriness and who (like Butler) does not want to continue the refutation of the Other. As Butler rejects Hegel's theory of the internally mediating third, a problem seems to arise. To put it simply: if Butler's theory is correct, how can she (or anybody else) become to know it? *Isn't her own theory a living example that a subject can understand its own nature, to become a "third" for itself?*

It was further argued that Hegel actually anticipated the views expressed by the French existentialists, post-structuralists and Althusserians, as well as those of Butler. As M. J. Inwood says, "Hegel has an uncanny knack of anticipating apparent objections to his thought and incorporating them within it" (Inwood 1983, 521). Hegel's descriptions of the one-sided forms of consciousness like Unhappy Consciousness, Pure Consciousness and Reason (all largely ignored by the Kojévian tradition) are relevant here. They are all, according to Hegel, internally contradictory views about the nature of the knowing subject. They presuppose epistemic asymmetries – the other subjects, unlike the thinkers themselves, are necessarily unable to understand their own thinking correctly – and therefore lasting personal, ethical and political relationships cannot be grounded on them. According to Hegel, these forms of thinking are inherently unstable. They must be replaced by a larger, more inclusive perspective. Universal reciprocal recognition emerges in this process as conceptual necessity. In this study this is seen as the central insight of Hegel. *Any thinker who focuses self-consciousness, and sees the Others as potentially relevant, is ultimately forced to accept universal recognition as the logical outcome.*

Butler, like her main sources, cannot accept Hegel's conclusion. Therefore, she is stuck with the implicit epistemic asymmetry (for Hegel: a Lord-Bondsman –relation). All particular identities accepted by the subjects themselves are for her, as for Althusser; “necessary errors”. *They are also necessarily other-refuting*. But they are, nevertheless, necessary. Hence, the subject-theorist remains an outsider who, at least occasionally, is able to see through the collective illusions. The theory, which is able to provide the correct picture of people's self-understanding cannot itself become a part of that self-understanding. Unlike Hegelian subjects, the Butlerian (or Lacanian or Althusserian subjects) are not potentially able to overcome their limits by becoming conscious of them.

In this vision the *struggle* against the exclusion of the Other becomes the aim of politics. All particular identities and the corresponding viewpoints are results of *violence* – this one of the important ideas of Kojève. However, first, this struggle *cannot* be successful, for the exclusion of the Other is a aspect of all particular identities and the resulting necessarily limited viewpoints, and Butler (like Hegel and unlike Kojève) sees that particular identities and viewpoints are unavoidable. Second, it *should not* be successful, for the only (impossible) alternative of the eternal struggle is Kojève's End of History, the disappearance of all differences and all political action. Ultimately, Butler cannot recognize the Others in the full sense, as real beings with own self-understandings, own identities, own needs and viewpoints. For all these are effects of power and of misrecognition. What remains is the unending struggle, fuelled by the subjects' striving for the impossible. This idea is, in some form, already present in the early works of Sartre and de Beauvoir, even if their subject-theories are quite unlike to that of Butler.

Here, it is claimed that this attitude roughly corresponds with Hegel's description of Unhappy Consciousness. And, Hegel correctly characterizes this attitude as self-contradictory. It is not contradictory in the standard logical sense. Rather, it is self-contradictory or self-defeating because it *cannot become the basis of the self-understanding* of the subject who participates in the struggles against exclusion. The subjects themselves have to believe in something like Hegel's genuine recognition: they cannot see their own identities and needs as “necessary errors”. Nor are they willing to participate into the struggles – and in the extreme cases, risk their lives – for the sake of the “movement itself”.

Another instance of the same problem is revealed by Butler's use of expressions like “not in advance” or “not yet”. Butler tries to escape the End of History by emphasizing that things should not be defined “in advance”. However, if this idea is generalized, it becomes empty. Expressions like “in advance” or “not yet” convey the impression that the “proper time” is somewhere in the future. But, all defining is necessarily defining “in advance”. The result is not that the Others are allowed to define things in their own ways, but that no-one is allowed to define anything. The result is not really distinguishable from the End of History.

Because all particular identities and viewpoints are inherently violent and necessarily exclude the Other, they cannot be recognized in the Hegelian sense. Nevertheless, I argued that Butler herself is, as an ethically concerned and responsible human being, *implicitly* committed to accept the Hegelian recognition. She is constantly and genuinely worried about the fate of the Others, of marginalized groups, of women, homosexuals, the prisoners of Guantanamo etc. This care is an expression of the recognizing attitude, and Butler would certainly not want to analyse it only as a symptom of something of which she is not conscious. Thus, she is like

Sartre who, according to Williams (1997, 372) “denies reciprocal recognition in principle while affirming it in practice”. Because she cannot conceptualize this concern of the Others, her view on recognition remains abstract; for she does not see it as an expression of something which (potentially) belongs to other human subjects. For Hegel, this kind of attitude would still be implicitly patronizing.

It was further argued that the form of asymmetry found in Butler is central in some other contemporary theories influenced by Althusser, Lacan and ultimately by the Kojévian vision (minus the End of History). One such theory, formulated by Chantal Mouffe, was analysed in detail. Mouffe’s view was seen as relevant for several reasons. First, it was developed in a close interaction with Butler’s views; second, it spells out Butler’s rather abstract ideas in an explicitly political context. It starts from basically the same premises as Butler’s view, but it is intended to have definite political consequences for democratic practices, for citizens’ movements etc. Mouffe’s view is also more accessible: especially in her later, directly political works she mostly avoids the complex philosophical discussions typical for Butler. She is also interested in more general political issues. Nevertheless, she relies largely on the same sources as Butler. Thus, reading Mouffe may help to understand Butler, and *vice versa*. Because this study is ultimately about politics, the analysis of Mouffe’s view appears as central.

While Mouffe’s criticisms against some recent theories of democracy are well-taken, she ultimately falls into the same trap as Butler. She shares the central ideas of the latter: all politically central terms are sites of struggle and, as such, indeterminate. Any attempt to create a consensus would lead to something like Kojève’s End of History as depicted by his (or Hegel’s) critics. The political differences would disappear and, with them, all movement would cease. But democracy is basically the very movement itself. Hence differences and political disagreements are something we should “valorize” and “be thankful of”. However, as with Butler, *the political subjects cannot share this perspective*. They are not willing to strive in order to make democracy alive: they are interested in those issues (justice etc.) which, according to Mouffe, are and should remain as undecided. Hence, *if Mouffe’s (or Butler’s) own view of democracy were to be universally shared, it would be as disastrous to democracy as the universal consensus criticized by Mouffe*. Thus, there is a political asymmetry between the perspective of political actors striving for universal ends, and the political theorist who sees that this striving is misguided, and that its value lies in its unintended side-effects. From the Hegelian perspective, all this constitutes just another version of the Unhappy Consciousness. There seems, indeed, to be close parallelism between Mouffe and Butler: both thinkers start from similar premises and end in a similar position, although there are important differences in their styles of reasoning. Butler’s argument that the institutionalization of same-sex marriages should be rejected because it would remove the conflict is just one telling example of the paradoxical consequences of this view. I have brought the two thinkers together partly because I think that the analysis may be applied to some other important thinkers, too, although I have not emphasized that aspect.

Mouffe’s discussion on the nature of the “political” derives much from Carl Schmitt. Unlike the other theorists discussed here, Schmitt’s views do not, as such, belong to the general Hegelian-Kojévian inheritance. His powerful vision of the “political” as autonomous and normatively unconstrained is parallel to Kojève’s view rather than a continuation or rejection of it. Nevertheless, there are striking similarities between these two (largely unacknowledged)

political thinkers who have shaped the post-war European political thought. Both see particular identities as necessarily antagonistic and other-refuting, and still mutually dependent. Both see politics as a site of constant (often violent) struggle, and both see this struggle as necessary. Both see the end of struggle as the end of politics and of History – although for Kojève this was the ultimate *telos*, while for Schmitt it was a nightmare. Kojève’s posthumous *Outline* reveals that he was influenced by Schmitt’s conception of the political, and wrote the work partly as a response to Schmitt. Both Kojève and Schmitt can be seen as critics of the everyday liberal politics. It is no wonder that those like Mouffe and Laclau who are implicitly attached to Kojève’s views see Schmitt’s views as appealing.

I have tried to show that the connections between Schmitt’s views and those of Mouffe and of other radical democrats are nevertheless, rather thin. Schmitt’s dialectics of friend and enemy or of “us” and “they” presupposes closed individual identities. The *individual subject* as such is not problematic for Schmitt – as it is both for Hegel and for those influenced by Lacan. Whole the Schmittian problematic is confined to collective groups. Moreover, his praise of the “political”- which, for him, means the realm of sovereign, normatively unbounded decisions – excludes all genuine concern of the Other who is not one of “us”. Even democracy itself remains dependent on the ultimate unbounded decision. I have argued that, contrary to Mouffe and Laclau, our sense of responsibility does not presuppose Schmitt’s idea of an absolute decision, unbounded by any rational or moral norms. Rather, *responsibility requires the very existence of some shared norms*. While Schmitt’s theory is interesting, it is difficult to combine it with a genuinely democratic political theory. (My conclusion, it should be added, is independent of any assessment of Schmitt’s own controversial political career.)

Finally, Mouffe’s claim that her “agonistic” or “radical” theory of democracy follows from the postmodern rejection of all metaphysical foundations is difficult to accept. Schmitt’s endorsement of antidemocratic views already shows that there is no inevitable connection between the primacy of politics over metaphysics. The real problem of Mouffe’s claim is that it is self-contradictory. *I argued that the denial of metaphysical foundations is itself a (negative) metaphysical claim which, paradoxically, is presented as a foundation of democracy*. An attempt to connect it with other anti-metaphysical views (like those of Wittgenstein or Rorty) fails, for Mouffe’s reliance on “local narratives” is ultimately justified by a theory which has its own metaphysical ambitions. Butler has subscribed to the radical democratic theory put forth by Mouffe and Laclau. Therefore these problems are also problems in her political theory.

My conclusions have been mainly critical. I want to emphasize that Judith Butler’s numerous works contain many interesting ideas and insights. She deals with important issues, and her concern of the excluded Others is certainly to be admired. I am convinced that her views are worth of a reasoned discussion, and that it is possible to discuss them in a rational way. In this study, I have tried to do justice to the complexity of her thought. Nevertheless, I do not think that her views are ultimately able to do justice to the role of the Other in our lives. They do not present a viewpoint which we could generally share, and which could work as a basis of our self-understanding if we try to work against exclusion and oppression. In *Subjects of Desire* (p.98) Butler tells how, according to Jean-Paul Sartre, “human beings are forced to desire the impossible”. I have argued that Butler’s own view is ultimately quite similar. Hegel’s answer to Sartre and Butler would be that even if we were able to believe the claim, it could not guide our lives.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources:

The writings of Judith Butler

- SD *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflection in the Twentieth-Century France*. New York: Columbia University Press 1999. [1987].
- GT *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge 1990.
- BM *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London: Routledge 1993.
- PLP *The Psychic Life of Power*. Stanford: Stanford University Press 1997
- ES *Excitable Speech. A Politics of the Performative*. London: Routledge 1997.
- CHU: Butler, Judith, Laclau, Ernesto and Zizek, Slavoj, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality*. London: Verso, 2000.
- AC *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*. New York: Columbia University Press 2000.
- UG *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge 2004.
- GA *Giving an Account of Oneself*. New York: Fordham University Press. 2005.
- Butler, Judith 1989a. Sexual Ideology and Phenomenological Description. A Feminist Critique of Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*. In Jeffner Allen and Iris Marin Young (eds.) *The Thinking Muse. Feminism and Modern French Philosophy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 85-100.
- Butler, Judith 1989b. Commentary on Joseph Flay's "Hegel, Derrida, and Bataille's Laughter". In William Desmond (ed.) *Hegel and His Critics*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 174-8.
- Butler, Judith 1990a. Gender Trouble, Feminist Theory and Psychoanalytic Discourse. In Linda J. Nicholson (ed.) *Feminism/Postmodernism*. New York: Routledge, 324-340.
- Butler, Judith 1990b. A book review: Michael S. Roth, *Knowing and History . Appropriations of Hegel in Twentieth-Century France*. In *History and Theory* 29., 248-258.
- Butler, Judith 1993. Poststructuralism and Postmarxism. *Diacritics* 23., 3-11.

Butler, Judith 1995a. Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of “Postmodernism”. In Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, Drucilla Cornell and Nancy Fraser. *Feminist Contentions. A Philosophical Exchange*. London: Routledge. 35-57. [1991].

Butler, Judith 1995b. For a Careful Reading. In Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, Drucilla Cornell and Nancy Fraser. *Feminist Contentions. A Philosophical Exchange*. London: Routledge. 127-143. [1991].

Butler, Judith. 2000a. Restaging the Universal: Hegemony and the Limits of Formalism. In CHU 11-43.

Butler, Judith 2000b. Competing Universalisms. In CHU, 136-181.

Butler, Judith. 2000c. Dynamic Conclusions. In CHU, 263-280.

The writings of G. W. F. Hegel

PhS *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Tr. A. V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1977. [1807]

Enc I *Hegel's Logic being Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. Tr. William Wallace. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1975 [1830].

Enc III *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind, being Part Three of The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* . Tr. William Wallace and A. V. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1971 [1830].

PhR *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Tr. H. B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992.

SL *Hegel's Science of Logic*. Tr. A. V. Miller. London: Allen & Unwin 1969. [1812-16].

Introduction *Lectures on the Philosophy of History. Introduction*. Tr. H. B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 19780. [1822-30].

Phil. Prop *Philosophical Propaedeutic*. Tr. A. V. Miller. Oxford: Blackwell. 1986 [1809-11].

The writings of Louis Althusser

For Marx *For Marx*. Tr. Ben Brewster. Middlesex: Penguin Books 1966

Theor. Prac. *Theory, Theoretical Practice and Theoretical Formation: Ideology and*

Ideological Struggle. In *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of Scientists*. Tr. London: Verso 1990, 3-67. [1965]

- Ideol. Ideological State Apparatuses. In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Tr. Ben Brewster. London: New Left Books 1971, 121-173.[1969]
- FL Freud and Lacan. In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Tr. Ben Brewster. London: New Left Books 1971,181-202. [1964]
- MRH Marx's Relation to Hegel. In *Politics and History*. Tr. Ben Brewster. London: New Left Books, 161-186. [1968]

The writings of Alexandre Kojève

- IRH *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel. Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit, assembled by Raymond Queneau*. Tr. J. H. Nichols, Jr. Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1969. [written 1933-39; publ. 1947].
- OPR *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*. Tr. B.-P. Frost and R. Howse. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield 2000. [written 1943; publ.1981]

The writings of Chantal Mouffe

- RP *The Return of the Political*, London: Verso 1993.
- DP *The Democratic Paradox*, London:Verso 2000.
- OP *On the Political*. London: Routledge 2005.
- HSS Laclau, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal. 1985. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London:Verso.
- Mouffe, Chantal. 1996. Deconstruction, Pragmatism and the Politics of Democracy. In Mouffe, Chantal (ed.), *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*. New York:Routledge, 1-12.
- Mouffe, Chantal (ed.). 1999. *The Challenge of Carl Schmitt*. London:Verso.

Other works:

- Ankersmit, F. R. 2002. *Political Representation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Assiter, Alison 1990. *Althusser and Feminism*. London: Pluto Press.
- Arendt, Hannah 1998. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. [1958].
- Austin, J. L. 1962. *How to do Things with Words* Oxford: Clarendon Press.[1955].
- Austin, J. L. 1971. Performative-Constatative. In J. R. Searle (ed.) *The Philosophy of Language*. Oxford:Oxford University Press, 13-22. [1963]
- Barnett, Stuart 1998. Introduction: Hegel before Derrida. In S. Barnett (ed.) *Hegel after Derrida* London: Routledge, 1-37.
- de Beauvoir, Simone 1980. *The Second Sex*. Tr. H. Parshley. New York: Vintage. [1949].
- Benhabib, Seyla 1995. Feminism and Postmodernism: An Uneasy Alliance. In Behabib, Seyla, Butler, Judith, Cornell, Drucilla & Fraser, Nancy, *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange*. New York:Routledge, 17-34.
- Benton, Ted 1984. *The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism. Althusser and his influence*. London: MacMillan.
- Brockelman, Thomas 2003. The Failure of the Radical Democratic Imaginary. Zizek versus Laclau and Mouffe on Vestigal Utopia. *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 29:2, 187-212.
- Callinicos, Alex 1976. *Althusser's Marxism*. London: Pluto Press
- Casey, Edward S. and Woody, Melvin J. 1983. Hegel, Heidegger, Lacan: The Dialectic of Desire. In Smith, Joseph. and Kerrigan, William (eds.) *Interpreting Lacan. Psychiatry and Humanities*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 75-112.
- Chambers; Samuel A. and Carver, Terrell 2008. *Judith Butler and Political Theory. Troubling Politics*. London: Routledge.
- Descombes, Vincent 1998. *Modern French Philosophy*. Tr. L. Scott-Fox and J. M. Harding. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [1979].
- Desmond, William (ed.) 1989. *Hegel and His Critics*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Deveux, Monique 1999. Agonism and Pluralism. *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 25:1, 1-22.
- Elliott, Gregory 1987. *Althusser. The Detour of Theory*. London:Verso.
- Ferrarin, Alfredo 2001. *Hegel and Aristotle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Fichte, Johann Gottlieb 1970. *Science of Rights*. Tr. A. E. Kroeger. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. [1797].
- Frost, Bryan-Paul and Howse, Robert 2000. Introductory Essay. The Plausibility of the Universal and Homogenous State. In A. Kojève, *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*. Tr. B.-P. Frost and R. Howse. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1-27.
- Gauthier, Jeffrey A. 1997. *Hegel and the Feminist Social Criticism. Justice, Recognition, and the Feminine*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Grosz, Elizabeth 1989. *Sexual Subversions. Three French Feminists*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Grosz, Elisabeth 1994. Experimental Desire: Rethinking Queer Subjectivity. In J. Copjec (ed.) *Supposing the Subject*. Verso: London and New York.
- Hutcheon, Linda 1985. *A Theory of Parody. The teachings of Twentieth Century Art Forms*. The University Printing House: Cambridge.
- Hutcheon, Linda 1988. *A Poetics of Postmodernism. History, Theory and Fiction*. Routledge: New York and London.
- Hutcheon, Linda 1994. *Irony's edge. The theory and Politics of irony*. Routledge, New York and London
- Hutchings, Kimberley 2003. *Hegel and the Feminist Philosophy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Ikäheimo, Heikki 2000. *Self-Consciousness and Intersubjectivity. A study on Hegel's Encyclopaedia Philosophy of Subjective Spirit (1830)*. Jyväskylä: Publications in Philosophy 67. University of Jyväskylä.
- Ikäheimo, Heikki 2003. *Tunnustus, subjektiviteetti ja inhimillinen elämänmuoto. Tutkimuksia Hegelistä ja persoonien välisistä tunnustussuhteista*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research. University of Jyväskylä.
- Inwood, M. J. 1983. *Hegel*. London: Routledge.
- Inwood, M. J. 1995. *A Hegel Dictionary*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Irigaray, Luce 1985. *Speculum of the Other Woman*. Tr. Gillian C.Gill. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Irigaray, Luce 1985. *This Sex which is not One*. Tr. Catherine Porter. Cornell University Press. Ithaca, New York.
- Irigaray, Luce 1993. *Sexes and Genealogies*. Tr. Gillian C. Gill. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Kant, Immanuel 1959. *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. Tr. P. G. Lucas. Manchester: Manchester University Press. [1783]
- Kant, Immanuel 1983. *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*. Tr. Ted Humphrey. Indianapolis: Hackett Co.
- Kant, Immanuel 1993. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Tr. and ed. Vassilis Politis. London: Dent. [1781/1787].
- Kennedy, Ellen 2004. *The Constitutional Failure. Carl Schmitt in Weimar*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Kleinhans, Chuck 1994. Taking Out the Trash. Camp and the politics of Parody. In M.Meyer (ed.) *The Politics and Poetics of Camp*. Routledge: New York and London .
- Knowles, Dudley 2002. *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*. London: Routledge.
- Kristeva, Julia 1982. *Powers of Horror. An Essay on Abjection*. New York; Columbia Univ. Press.
- Kristeva, Julia 1984. *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Tr. Margaret Waller. New York: Columbia University Press. [1974].
- Lacan, Jacques 2006. *Écrits*. Tr. Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Laclau, Ernesto 1990. *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*. London: Verso.
- Laclau, Ernesto. 1996. Deconstruction, Pragmatism, Hegemony. In Mouffe, Chantal (ed.), *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*. New York:Routledge, 47-67.
- Laclau, Ernesto. 2000a. Identity and Hegemony: The Role of Universality in the Constitution of Political Logics. In Butler, Judith, Laclau, Ernesto and Zizek ,Slavoj, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality*. London: Verso, 44-89.
- Laclau, Ernesto. 2000b. Structure, History and the Political. In Butler, Judith, Laclau, Ernesto and Zizek, Slavoj, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality*. London:Verso, 182-212.
- Lloyd, Moya 2007. *Judith Butler: From Norms to Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Loizidou, Elena. 2007. *Judith Butler. Ethics, Law, Politics*. Abingdon: Routledge-Cavendish.
- Lukács, György 1972. *History and Class Consciousness. Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press. [1923].
- Man Ling Lee, Theresa. 2001. Feminism, Postmodernism, and the Politics of Representation. *Women & Politics* 22:3, 35-57.
- Meyer, Moe 1994. Reclaiming the Discourse of Camp. In M.Meyer (ed.) *The Politics and*

Poetics of Camp. Routledge: New York and London.

Müller, Jan-Werner. 2003. *A Dangerous Mind: Carl Schmitt in Post-War European Thought*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Norris, Andrew. 2002. Against Antagonism: On Ernesto Laclau's Political Thought. *Constellations* 9:4, 554-573.

Nussbaum, Martha 1999. The Professor of Parody. *The New Republic* 02/22/1999, Vol.220 Issue 8, 37-45.

Pateman, Carole 1988. *The Sexual Contract*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Pippin, Robert B. 1989. *Hegel's Idealism. The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rasch, William. 2000. Conflict as a Vocation. Carl Schmitt and the Possibility of Politics. *Theory, Culture & Society* 17:6, 1-32.

Rorty, Richard. 1996. A Response to Laclau. In Mouffe, Chantal (ed.), *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*. New York:Routledge, 69-76.

Rosen, Stanley. 1974, *G.W.F. Hegel An Introduction to the Science of Wisdom*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Roudinesco, Elisabeth. 2006. The Mirror Stage; an Obliterated Archive. In Rabaté, Jean Michel (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Lacan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 25-33

Salih, Sara 2002. *Judith Butler*. New York: Routledge.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. 2001. *Being and Nothingness. A phenomenological essay on ontology*. Tr. Hazel Barnes. New York: Citadel Press. [1943].

Scheuerman, William E. 1994. *Between the Norm and the Exception. The Frankfurt School and the rule of law*. Cambridge (Mass.):MIT Press.

Schmitt, Carl. 1976. *The Concept of the Political*. Tr. George Schwab. New Brunswick, [1932].

Schmitt, Carl 1985. *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*. Tr. Ellen Kennedy. Cambridge (Ma): The MIT Press. [1926]

Schmitt, Carl 1988. *Political Theology. Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press. [1922]

Spinoza, Benedict 1955 *The Ethics*. In *On the Improvement of the Understanding, The Ethics, & Correspondence*. Tr. R. H. M. Elwes. New York: Dover. [1675]

- Tanesini, Alessandra. 2001. In Search of Community. Mouffe, Wittgenstein and Cavell. *Radical Philosophy* 110., 12-19.
- Taylor, Charles 1975. *Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, Charles 1979. *Hegel and Modern Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weber, Max. 1994. The Profession and Vocation of Politics. In Lassman, Peter & Speirs, Ronald (toim.), *Weber: Political Writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 309—369 [1919].
- Weir, Allison 1996. *Sacrificial Logics. Feminist theory and the critique of identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Ver Eecke, Wilfried 1983. Hegel as Lacan's Source for Necessity in Psychoanalytic Theory. In Smith, Joseph. and Kerrigan, William (eds.) *Interpreting Lacan. Psychiatry and Humanities*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 113-138.
- Williams, Robert R. 1992. *Recognition. Fichte and Hegel on the Other*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Williams, Robert R. 1997. *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wood; Allen W. 1990. *Hegel's Ethical Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zizek, Slavoj 1999. *The Ticklish Subject. The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*. London: Verso.