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Subjectivity, Madness and Habit: Forms of Resistance in Hegel's Anthropology

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Hegel's anthropology is not just a doctrine of the human soul, feeling and the subconscious, and not just the foundational section of Hegel's philosophy of spirit as it took its final shape in the philosopher's Berlin years. It is also, among many other things, a tale of resistance – of how the natural and the bodily resist their 'idealization' by Geist but ultimately become an 'assimilated' part of Geist (both 'idealization' and 'assimilation', as well as occasionally 'resistance', being Hegel's own terms), although not without generating multiple moments of smaller, and more subtle, resistances and counter-resistances along the way. The goal of this chapter is not to address or question this assimilatory narrative of Hegel's anthropological idealism as such, but to elucidate the more important of those moments and to introduce the anthropological logic of resistance as it permeates and runs through Hegel's anthropology.[1]

Resistance of and to nature

The tale of resistance begins at the inaugurative moment of Hegel's philosophy of spirit: the moment a human soul is born from nature but not as part of it.[2] Hegel calls this 'a play of the absolute spirit with itself' (VPG 31) and talks of the soul-as-spirit's 'absolute negativity' (EPS §§ 381–2) vis-à-vis everything that precedes it. Geist, says Hegel in his lectures on the philosophy of history, begins 'from Geist'[3] and can only emerge as a 'saltus' (VPG 52), a leap from nature to spirit. This foundational anthropological event and its constantly ongoing repetition (every birth of a human child is for Hegel such a 'saltus')

creates a gap or hiatus between Natur and Geist, between the animal and the human, with which the tale of human spirit as a whole – as told in the third volume of the *Encyclopedia* – commences. Intruding into nature from within like this, into its own 'other', Geist creates an inevitable tension between human nature (the soul) and nonhuman nature. This tension is also the first moment of resistance. Initially it is not, however, the soul which resists nature. Although de facto 'captivated' (EPS § 387 A; cf. § 385 A) by the generic power of the world that Hegel calls the 'world soul' (§ 391), it does not yet feel the need to resist it – on the contrary, the soul's first waking moment is defined by its *neglect* of the natural flesh of the world from within which it has been born. Even the first cry of the newborn human child, contrasted by Hegel with the 'dumb' or 'mute' sounds that animals make, is a nonnatural or supra-natural thing, an 'ideal activity', cutting through nature like a knife through butter, so that 'the independence of the external world is null and void (*nichtig*) compared to the human' (§ 396 A).[4] The child's soul itself has unconscious yet 'absolute certainty' (VPG 52) of this fact.

It seems that Geist would like to simply ignore nature altogether and assert its instant and immediate dominance over the latter – at which point, however, it is nature itself that starts *resisting* Geist. This process of resistance coincides for Hegel with that of feeling (*Fühlen*): 'I feel it as that which resists me' (*mir Widerstand leistend*; VPG 76). The world resists the human touch, refusing to simply crumble beneath it or concede spirit's arrogantly proclaimed dominance; in part, this happens because, being born from within nature, the human soul is itself *embodied*. As such, it also carries nature within it even as it seeks to disregard it. Nature's resistance signals to spirit that both nature itself *and* spirit (bodily) exist. However, Geist's confidence in everything else being *nichtig* before it does not go away, even if, due to nature's resistance, spirit's dominance can no longer be merely claimed as immediate. Therefore, since neither nature's nor Geist's own body can be simply disregarded by spirit, they must somehow be made 'spiritual' or 'ideal' (Geist is, after all, defined by Hegel as, among other things, *Idealität* or *Idealisierung*; EPS § 381 A, VPG 30), that is, made part of the world that belongs to human spirit and is not externally resistant to it. If nature does not yield to spirit immediately, it must be 'idealized' or mediated; the superiority of the human needs to be asserted not just 'an sich', but in actuality, too. Such is, inter alia, the 'spiritual' significance of even the most basic interaction between the human and whatever it touches, for example, a child breaking its toys (and generally anything it comes across; VPG 53), which is at the same time connected to the development of self-feeling (or self-awareness,

Selbstgefühl). Thereby begins nature's mediation (idealization, transformation) through spirit: Geist's *counter*-resistance to nature.

At the anthropological level, this counter-resistance or idealization entails at least two important moments. First, there is resistance to all manner of external natural influences through which nature seeks to conform the soul to its own rhythms and patterns[5] – the influence of planetary life (the movement of the Earth and celestial bodies), climate, seasonal changes and so on (EPS § 392). Since, however, the first act of *Geist* – its birth – is already supranatural, and even the human child is for Hegel captive to nature yet does not belong to it, Hegel insists that this captivity does not have an essential effect on the ('healthy') human psyche. At most, he claims, it leads to some superfluous changes in the mood (§§ 392, 392 R). *Geist* does come under a number of rudimentary natural influences, but in effect it has already left nature behind (§§ 391, 391 A, 392 R), and every further mediation in Geist's path of *Bildung* only makes these influences weaker. Such is, incidentally, Hegel's criticism of astrology and racial theory. While the stars and racial background do exercise a certain influence on the human soul, it is the 'educated' person's task to resist these influences and leave them behind (VPG 36). In particular, EPS § 393 A begins with the criticism of the kind of racial theory that ascribes too much importance to the influence of the race on spiritual activity; racial difference is for Hegel too chthonic a distinction – it is 'bound to the geographical distinction of the territory (*Boden*) that people amass on' (§ 393 A) – and as such, again, must be resisted. All these influences, together with everything else that is merely 'given' to the soul as 'immediate' as if from the outside (and that includes not only the aforementioned natural influence but also things like talents and natural processes like aging), are grouped by Hegel under the header of the 'natural soul' – essentially the lowest stratum of the human psyche. The 'natural soul' is, however, only seemingly 'natural', involving as it does resistance to natural immediacy and the incorporation of natural changes and qualities into a radically new whole where they acquire, as Hegel puts it, a 'spiritual meaning' (VPG 42, 45).

Secondly, this idealization involves not only resisting external influences or mediating that which is given as immediate but also an active *transformation* of nature. This, in its turn, involves 'idealizing' both the soul's environs and its body – both must be incorporated into a world that Geist could call its own, a world *of* spirit, and both are categorized by Hegel under the rubric of 'sensation' (*Empfindung*) or 'feeling' (*Gefühl*).[6] Body is for Hegel effectively the apparatus of sensation; even internal organs are for him inseparably and 'spiritually' tied to specific inner or outer senses (EPS § 411 R and A, and the corresponding

passages in VPG). An individual's body can, however, be an unruly thing, and thus needs to be disciplined. This discipline takes for Hegel the form of habit and leads to the body becoming a 'sign' of spirit (EPS §§ 411, 411 R, VPG 132) – which also entails a great deal of mutual resistance between soul and body, and which I will discuss in more detail next. What is important for us here is that both these moments of counter-resistance proceed simultaneously. It is this co-constitution of the individual (including the individual's body) and his or her 'individual world' that Hegel calls 'idealization, or assimilation' (EPS § 381 A). This is not, however, a mere 'metaphorical' assimilation – it is, on the contrary, the agent's body and its material power that allows it to appropriate and construct its surroundings, so that the individual defines its 'individuality' by the 'totality' (*Totalität*) of the things it touches or digests, the things it 'fills' itself with (*Erfüllung* made actual, 'posited' as a process of 'subjectivity'; § 403). The soul-body does not simply consume what it is being offered; it is always in the process of 'positing nature as its [i.e. *Geist*'s] own world' (§ 384). Resisting natural immediacy, the soul builds for itself an 'individual world' (*individuelle Welt*) (§§ 402 A, 407 R, VPG 66), by means of the double movement of idealization, in which it appropriates and assembles itself from, just as it imposes itself on the surroundings.

'Without such an individual world', says Hegel, 'the soul would not have any actuality at all' (EPS § 402 A). The counter-resistance to nature leads in Hegel's anthropology to *individuation* – it is an exchange between the soul-body and its environs, in which an 'inner' space of the 'individual world' is constructed and the 'exteriority' of the world is 'sublated' (§ 381 A). On the one hand, the soul can reach out to and 'idealize' (negate or retain) a particular 'immediate' (i.e. given) sensation, relate it to itself and 'make it internal' ('the natural immediate as made ideal within it and appropriated', § 401), place it inside itself (*Er-Innerung*) as yet another building block of the soul's inner world. On the other hand, the soul can reach inside itself for a particular feeling – a memory of or a reaction to a sensation (including such reactions as 'anger, shame, laughter or tears', VPG 84) – which it can produce and enact in its body or surroundings (*Verleiblichung*). Whatever comes from within the soul, Hegel insists, must be *verleiblicht* so that the soul can sense or 'discover' it (VPG 84) – it must become a part of the soul-body and its environs which are thereby influenced and transformed. In the double movement of *Verleiblichung* and *Erinnerung*, the 'natural' is 'idealized' towards the 'posited totality of its [i.e. the soul's] *particular* world' (§ 403 R) that includes both the 'inner' world of the soul's being-for-itself (*Fürsichsein*) and the 'outer' world of its surroundings, so that the soul, as Hegel indicates, does not

distinguish what rises from within itself and what comes to it from without ('so that', says Hegel, 'we have the unity of the inner and the outer, i.e., sensation', VPG 131; cf. VPG 71, 88).

Anthropological subjectivity

Throughout the anthropology, the soul resists the world by becoming more *independent* of it with each passing logical moment. Resistance to natural immediacy is one such moment. Sensation as the process of *Verleiblichung* and *Erinnerung* described above is another, in which the soul's embodied *Einzelheit* transforms ('idealizes' or 'sublates') its environs into a particular 'individual world', regarded by Hegel as something akin to the individual soul's felt horizon, the entirety of the content that it has, does, or can sense or feel: 'As the actual individuality, we are *in ourselves* a certain *world* of concrete content with an infinite circumference, having, within ourselves, a countless number of connections and relations that always remain inside us.' All these relations, Hegel continues, 'belong to the concrete content of the human soul, so that the latter . . . can be designated as the *individually* determined *world soul*. Since the human soul is a *singular* soul, determined from all sides and therefore *limited*, its relationship to the universe is also determined in accordance with its *individual* point of view' (EPS § 402 A). This 'totality of relationship belonging to the individual human soul constitutes', for Hegel, 'its actual vitality and *subjectivity*' (§ 402 A; emphasis mine). The soul is both substance and subject, the 'what' and the 'who' – the 'concrete content' of the 'individual world', or everything that the individual soul feels, and the *agent* of the double movement of sensation as the incessant cycle of *Verleiblichung* and *Erinnerung,* the 'subject and central point (*Mittelpunkt*) of all [of the soul's] determinations of content' (§ 402 A). The individual soul is, as Hegel puts it, not only a 'world' but also a 'self' (*Selbst*), defined by Hegel as a 'simple relation of ideality to itself' (§ 409).

To elaborate, this entails that, in order to retain itself as Geist and not be swallowed up by the natural element, the soul must define itself not only as an individuality but also as a different kind of *subjectivity* compared to the natural one. As we have seen, in the process of *Fühlen*, the individual soul 'idealizes' or 'assimilates' its 'natural' surroundings into a felt individual world ('I am what I sense, and I sense what I am', § 400 A). At the same time, through this activity of (counter-)resistance, spirit forms its first subjectivity – the 'Subjektivität des Empfindens' that Hegel speaks of in § 403 or, as he further defines it starting

from § 407, the subjectivity of 'self-feeling' (*Selbstgefühl*).[7] The more a soul counter-resists nature (which on its part impedes Geist's immediate mastery) by mediating and appropriating its environs and bodily operations, the more it gathers itself, focusing itself into a simple point from which it can reach the entire circumference of its individual world and which contains, in a 'wrapped up' (*eingehüllte*, VPG 68) or 'virtual' (EPS § 403 R) manner, the totality of the world that it has sensed and thereby idealized (see also VPG 74, 88, 131). In this way, Hegel's anthropology brings together individuation (formation of an individual world) and subjectivation (formation of the anthropological subject of sensation). '*Selbstgefühl* is [a] feeling individuality as feeling its *Fürsichsein*' (VPG 107–8), that is, individuality as the subjectivity of self-feeling that feels its own, independent existence and actuality within the entirety of its individual world.

The soul is therefore, for Hegel, not just the activity of sensation or the totality of the individual content produced by this activity, but also its centre (*Mittelpunkt*), to which the soul ties its every single sensation or feeling. By doing this, the soul resists any possible independence of any sensation, instead tying this sensation to itself as the *Mittelpunkt*. This is how, for Hegel, the distinction between 'content' and 'form' within the soul emerges. 'Sensation must define itself. Its *Fürsichsein* is [a] form, and the development of this form is the self-determination of sensation' (VPG 74). The soul 'differentiates itself within itself, separates its substantial totality, its individual world from itself, and opposes it to itself as subjectivity' (EPS § 402 A, see also VPG 88). This 'form' of subjectivity is itself an ideal-material part of the totality of the individual world, and every other point within this individual horizon is defined through and within its activity. 'The second aspect', remarks Hegel, '[is] that this totality makes itself into self-feeling (*sich zum Selbstgefühl macht*), … makes itself into the self (*sich zum Selbst macht*)' (VPG 131), that is, into a subjectivity which exists 'as the subject and central point of all determinations of content' (EPS § 402 A), 'the activity of sensation of corporeality as [the] corporeality that exists for itself in distinction from other [things that surround it]', a 'return [of sensation] to itself' (VPG 76). The soul, so to speak, displaces itself by going 'outside' its own centre to a particular sensation and then brings this and all other sensations 'back' to itself (the aforementioned 'return to itself'). Hence also Hegel's description of the individual world as a 'sphere' (EPS § 391 A; VPG 55; cf. EPS § 401).

The subjectivity of *Selbstgefühl* is thus a *self*-feeling in two interrelated aspects: it feels the entirety of its own individual world, but at the same time it feels *itself* whenever it reaches out to a particular sensation within this world – both

aspects being, of course, two sides of the same process of sensation, since the soul does not yet distinguish the subjective from the objective. It 'has particular feelings', but acts 'as *subject* in relation to these determinations' (§ 407). The anthropological subjectivity of sensation functions as a repetition or, to use Hegel's own term, a 'reproduction' (*Reproduktion*) – 'an activity of negating immediacy and reproducing (*Reproduzieren*) the very unity of the inner and the outer. It must tie these connections [between the inner and the outer] themselves to itself, that is, to the self, so that in its activity of sensation and embodying (*Verleiblichen*) it now relates itself to itself' (VPG 131). This kind of mediation, in which the soul goes out to a particular sensation and then ties it to itself as subject, also increases the subject's power over the physical world and its own body alike, and as such it is a continuation of the original resistance. Anything that the individual touches or senses has its centre and master in the individual himself and not anywhere else in the world. 'The individual', explains Hegel in the lectures, 'takes his sensation back to himself", gathers it into himself as the 'point' of 'self-feeling' which exists 'in itself' as well as in every singular sensation (VPG 107–8). I tie every sensation to myself, that is, I assimilate or appropriate it. 'Engulfed in the particularity of feelings … , self-feeling is undifferentiated from them' (EPS § 409); in every particular feeling, the anthropological subject retains and feels itself. What this anthropological subjectivity does is *resist*, at any given moment, the soul getting 'stuck' in any particular sensation or feeling. This will prove instrumental for understanding madness and habit in Hegel's anthropology.

Self-feeling is actually present in any particular sensation – but the reverse is true as well: *Selbstgefühl* is the common virtual origin and centre of anything that the soul senses. In this regard, this anthropological self is something like an inversion of Kant's unity of apperception. This 'intensive form of individuality', as Hegel calls it in § 405 R, is that virtuality of 'power' (VPG 92) or 'strength' (VPG 68) which is the soul. *Selbstgefühl* is a point as much as a world – a point of individuality that contains its individual world within itself, and an individual world that coincides with and contracts into its intensive focus – a 'nucleus of feeling' (*Kern des Gefühlsseins*) that 'contains … all further connections and essential relations, fates, and foundations' of the individual (EPS § 405 R). Furthermore, it is not just an ideal locus – its definition, says Hegel, is 'embodiment' no less than 'spirituality', *Leiblichkeit* no less than *Geistigkeit* (§ 408), and being 'submerged' into the individual's feeling body, into the 'particularity of sensations' (§ 407). 'As *Selbstgefühl* we are identical with our corporeality' (VPG 109). This point of *Selbstgefühl*, in other words, *is* my body

(as the locus and apparatus of sensation), and the line that Hegel draws between individuality as 'content' and individuality as 'form' is a line within the body.[8] Consequently, resistance as subjectivation is also the idealization of one's own *body*.

Madness and habit, or, a tale of two subjectivities

It is with this subjectivity of self-feeling that the tale of resistance both resumes and becomes more complex. *Selbstgefühl* acts in Hegel as an ideal-material centre to which every sensation is related at the very moment that is felt. The soul reaches out to a particular sensation but also retains its self-feeling within the latter and then relates it to itself as the anthropological subject. When it *cannot* return to itself, however, when the mechanism of the anthropological subjectivity breaks down and the process of idealization comes to a halt – that is when, according to Hegel, the soul becomes 'mad'. To be more precise, madness as mental illness is a 'displacement' (*Verrücktheit*, the German word for 'madness' that Hegel uses) of the *Selbstgefühl* from the soul-centre to a particular sensation or feeling where the soul gets stuck, caught up within this sensation and, as a result, coming to a stop – a sort of paralysis of the activity of idealization. What is it in the constitution of the mind or psyche that, for Hegel, allows for such a displacement? And how, then, does one resist madness?

The reason for the possibility of madness has to do with the fact that, in Hegel, Geist has not one but two centres of subjectivity, and this duality is not exactly unproblematic. Aside from feeling, the human subject is capable of consciousness and reason. In EPS § 405 A, Hegel calls feeling and consciousness 'two forms of spirit's existence' which can, moreover, relate to each other in different ways. In a 'healthy' state of mind, the two centres are harmoniously coordinated, so that our sensation does not take us away from the objective world of consciousness (I can process whatever I feel objectively and assign it a place within the totality of the objective world), and all our thoughts and concepts have their empirical foundation in sensation.[9] In a state of madness, however, the mentally ill individual 'persists within a *particularity* of his self-feeling, which he cannot process into ideality and overcome' (§ 408), so that he can no longer find a place for his 'particularity' in the objective world of consciousness. The centre of his subjectivity displaced, his soul now cannot 'point out, within the individual world-system (*Weltsysteme*) that is the subject, the proper place and subordination for the content' of the particular sensation

in which it has become entangled (§ 408). Elsewhere, Hegel calls madness a state of 'incongruity' between soul and consciousness (§ 404 R). The healthy *Selbstgefühl* is, on the contrary, able to command its 'singular determinations as [its] moments', 'place them ideally within the whole' and remain 'for itself within them', whereas a *verrückte* soul 'fixes such a singularity in place without idealizing it, without subordinating it to the simple totality of the whole' (VPG 123). In madness the individual becomes 'doubled', divided in two: the individual 'lets himself become captive to a *particular*, merely subjective representation, is thereby *brought outside himself*, *moved outside the central point* of his *actuality* and acquires (since he does at the same time preserve a consciousness of his actuality) *two central points* – one within the remains of his *understanding* consciousness, and the other within his *mad* representation' (EPS § 408 A). This 'schizophrenic' character of the structure of the human mind is important if we are to understand Hegel's theory of madness as well as the further moments of resistance in his anthropology.

We first learn that a separation of these two centres is possible from Hegel's account of hypnosis or 'somnambulism' (§ 406). According to this account, which builds on Franz Anton Mesmer's theory of 'animal magnetism' but reworks it to fit the structure of subjectivity that Hegel proposes, whenever I (the patient) am put in an induced state of somnambulic sleep by another person (the doctor or 'magnetizer'), my subjectivity becomes displaced in such a manner that the other person effectively becomes my consciousness whereas my own, proper consciousness remains turned off, muted. My feeling centre continues to coordinate its sensations with my centre of consciousness, except the latter is now, paradoxically, outside me and inside another individual – I 'have the other, waking individual as my subjective consciousness' and am fully 'in another's power' (§ 406 R). As a result, the magnetized patient becomes 'passive' (§ 406 R) and the magnetizer can impress his own consciousness – essentially whatever he wishes to impress – upon him. This section of Hegel's anthropology belongs to some of the most obscure in the entire text; however, here we need not discuss what Hegel, following Mesmer et al., considers the medical and empirical foundation of all these phenomena. What matters for us is precisely the existence of these two centres of subjectivity and the possibility – not just logical, but actual – of manipulating their relationship and somehow pulling them apart, which manifests for Hegel in any state of mental illness, be it animal magnetism (which is, of course, an unhealthy relationship) or madness in the sense defined above. In the latter case, however, the centre of consciousness is not transferred to another person; instead, madness is a split within my own individuality. As

Hegel puts it, 'the subject thus finds itself in *contradiction* between the totality systematized by his consciousness and the particular determination that refuses to be washed away by this totality, does not belong in and is not subordinated to the latter – [such is the state of] *madness* [*Verrücktheit*]' (§ 408; see also the elaboration in § 408 A).[10]

Madness is thus the resistance of the feeling individuality to consciousness; in it, a particular sensation resists its further idealization into the objective totality of the world. It is therefore not entirely correct to frame this conflict between the two centres of subjectivity as a conflict between 'the concrete' and 'the abstract' taken in their standard sense, as Slavoj Žižek does, and to claim that, for Hegel, 'a "madman" is precisely the subject who wants to live – to reproduce in actuality itself – the conceptual order'.[11] It is true that madness involves sticking with the abstract while neglecting the concrete; hence Hegel's approach to the treatment of madness. However, in this case it is not the 'conceptual order' that the subject 'wants to live', and more important, it is not the conceptual order that is 'abstract', but the particular – and disconnected – sensation or representation that it clings to while disregarding the objective conceptual totality of the world. In this kind of psychological split, furthermore, both subjectivities remain isolated and abstract as the individual remains separated from the concrete reality of both the felt and the conceptual world. This becomes particularly apparent in Hegel's discussion of the third type of madness, 'frenzy' or 'rage' (*Wahnsinn*, § 408 A), where the subject is literally torn between the two abstractions, realizing that they are just that, abstractions, yet unable to reconcile the two and make them cooperate. *Wahnsinn* is for Hegel the most radical form of madness, and of the mutual resistance between the two centres of subjectivity.

The general form of madness is that of resistance, but furthermore, madness is that which every individuality must *resist* in order to preserve itself and stay healthy. Resistance to madness comes in two forms. First, when the mind is *already* ill, it must be treated. In both the *Encyclopedia* and the lectures, Hegel devotes a lot of space to examining the different methods of treating madness that he encountered in the medical literature of the time. All these methods, however, boil down to reestablishing the cooperation between the two centres of subjectivity within the patient's psyche and to 'reminding' the individual stuck in something particular about the objective whole that is the world: 'If someone talks like a madman, the first thing that needs to be done is to remind him about *the entire scope* of his relationships, about his *concrete actuality*' (§ 408 A). Treatment is, in other words, aimed at 'repairing' the mechanism of idealization that has broken down. Second, *Selbstgefühl* can not only resist

consciousness by getting entangled in a particularity and thereby bringing about madness. *Selbstgefühl* can also resist madness itself. This resistance has its own 'mechanism', *habit* (*Gewohnheit*); that's why Hegel calls habit the 'mechanism of Selbstgefühl' (§ 410 R).

In Hegel, habit treads the thin line between resistance *of* and *to* individuality. As the mechanism of feeling, habit is that which holds my 'individual world' together by tying every particular sensation of myself as subject back to the 'centre' of my subjectivity, my *self*-feeling. As we saw earlier, whenever I feel something particular, it is as if I go 'outside' myself to this particular sensation. Habit both makes sure that I return 'back' from the particular to myself as subject (so that my activity of feeling doesn't get stuck and I can 'move on') and, furthermore, that I place that sensation within the totality of my objective world ('posit it as ideality', § 410 R, or 'sublate' it, § 410 A). Habit is mediatory not only as an individual but as a supra-individual mechanism, whereby the objective world controls and resists any whims of my individual *Fühlen*. As such, it also *resists madness*. As a mechanism of counter-resistance, it helps idealize the particularity of the individual, tame it, and give it cohesiveness. It is when the mechanism of habit breaks down and the subject cannot 'go back' to itself from a particular sensation that madness kicks in. This kind of dynamics of resistance and counter-resistance does mean that, indeed, madness is a necessary moment in the development of Geist – not, however, as 'a passage through the moment of radical madness',[12] but as constant *resistance* to madness every waking moment of an individual's life. This resistance is 'mechanical' and mostly goes unnoticed, governed as it is by the mechanism of habit, but it is there and plays a decisive role in the transition from the anthropological subjectivity of self-feeling to the phenomenological subjectivity of consciousness.

Habit resists madness by sublating it, but so does madness, too, resist habit by attempting to break it down and tear the two centres of subjectivity apart. Madness and habit thus *resist each other*. Of course, they may also be said to 'repeat' each other, but only by virtue of being two mutually opposed repetitions of the same basic two-centre structure of the mind, one reenacting or reaffirming their difference, and the other their identity. By reaffirming the identity of feeling and consciousness, however, habit also goes over and above individuality as such, becoming at once an individual and a supra-individual mechanism. In habit, 'the soul is in possession of its content and contains it within itself in such a way that within these determinations it behaves not as sensing, does not distinguish itself from them in relation to them nor is engulfed in them, but has them senselessly and unconsciously in itself and moves [freely]

within them'; in habit, the soul is indifferent to its determinations and *ergo* 'free' of them (§ 410) as well as above them, so that it can no longer get too attached to any one of them. Just like the subjectivity of *Selbstgefühl*, habit has the structure of a repetition (hence, again, its mechanistic character). Whereas the repetition characteristic of *Selbstgefühl*, however, consisted in the 're-productive' constitution of individuality and the individual world, habit becomes the next step of this anthropological idealization – an *anti-individual* repetition meant to erase all possibility of self-feeling getting lost within anything particular. The repetition that used to define the soul in its individuality is now, at the next stage of the anthropology, used to resist and suppress the excesses of the same individuality. Hence also the conjunction of 'freedom' and 'captivity' in habit: habit, as Hegel insists, makes us at once 'unfree and free' (§ 410 R). We are, in a certain sense, slaves to habit (even though in § 410 R, Hegel calls this captivity 'formal' and 'relative', and even attempts to mostly limit it to what he calls 'bad habits'). On the other hand, thanks to habit, 'the soul is open for further activity and engagement – open for sensation as well as for consciousness' (§ 410); both this sensation and this consciousness, however, are in their turn regulated and kept in line by habit. Given all that, it is no wonder that habit becomes no less than 'the foundation of consciousness' (§ 409 R), encompassing, further, 'all kinds and stages of the activity of spirit' (§ 410 A).

Such is, for Hegel, the end point of the anthropology – the 'actual soul' (§ 411). Interestingly, at the point of the 'actual soul', the soul finally becomes powerful enough to *resist itself* and thereby transition to consciousness: the phenomenological division between consciousness and the external world proceeds for Hegel from *within* the soul. Metaphorically, Hegel describes this process in terms of the soul 'excluding' its own 'content', that is, the felt world of the anthropology, and 'positing' it 'outside' itself, transforming it into an 'external world' and thereby becoming the 'I' of consciousness (VPG 141). The soul essentially abstracts from itself, which is only made possible by the 'openness' granted to it by habit as the peak and ultimate mechanism of the anthropological path of resistance. This is, so to speak, a *radicalization* of resistance via abstraction. '[The soul] freely releases its immediacy from within itself . . . and this excluded external is in its totality *the world*' (VPG 137; cf. VPG 141). Hegel even calls the transition from the anthropology to the phenomenology an 'act of creation' (VPG 137) – it creates the objective 'external nature' as cognized by spirit and distinct from the felt individual world of the soul. The soul has now excluded itself from itself to become the pure 'I' (EPS § 413). What this transition involves, then, is a change in perspective and the movement to a

different kind of subjectivity – from (self-)feeling to consciousness. It is for consciousness that the world, which the individual anthropological subject of *Selbstgefühl* felt as inseparably its own (since there was as yet no separation of subject from object in feeling), first becomes something *external*, an 'object' the 'I' sees as standing over and against itself (i.e. a *Gegenstand* – the German word whose literal meaning of 'something standing over and against' consciousness Hegel takes up in the phenomenology). This phenomenological 'creation' of the world as external – or, in other words, the creation of the very distinction between internal and external – is thus also bound up with resistance.

Conclusion

We saw that *Selbstgefühl* is inextricably tied to the subject's body, and that the working mechanism of self-feeling – that is, habit – prevents madness and guarantees a healthy mind. Hence, a healthy psyche presupposes being in control of its body, having spiritualized or idealized it and made it into a 'sign' of the soul. Habit is that which gives the soul power over its body and helps us be in charge of our body,[13] and since every sensation is embodied, that means it helps us be in charge of the process of idealization itself. Habit, says Hegel in § 409 R, is 'corporeality reduced to its pure *ideality*'. That is why the (right kind of) habits that an individual acquires and exercises in the course of his life, including those imposed on him by the family or society as the ethical whole, help assure the proper functioning of the activity of idealization as well as the healthy role the individual is supposed to play in the *Gemeinwesen*. This theme of having 'right' or 'wrong' habits, and the 'socializing' role of habit as a whole, brings us to another important moment of resistance, which I will merely mention here and which joins together the theme of habit versus madness with that of embodied resistance and transformation. It is the individual's resistance to society, its high point being what Hegel discusses as 'youth' or 'adolescence' (§ 396 A). Youth rejects the existing society and clings instead to a 'particular' abstract 'ideal' (VPG 55, EPS § 396 A), disconnected from the objective totality of the ethical whole and therefore empty and fruitless. And if this sounds familiar, it is because Hegel frames this adolescent attitude to the world in the same way (and even the same terms) as he does the madman's. In fact, it is the closest to the most extreme form of madness, *Wahnsinn*, because the adolescent, too, aims to make his abstract ideal a reality, even if it means a full remaking of the existing world. Just like someone who is *wahnsinnig*, an adolescent person 'goes against the world'

(VPG 55). In other words, he (consciously or subconsciously) *endorses* the split between the two centres of subjectivity, the world he feels to be 'ideal' and the one that actually exists. Similarly to madness, adolescence has the subject stuck in a 'particular', counter-productive role, one which is supposed to be sublated through habituation (including, importantly, social habits) and the mastery of one's body and feelings.

It goes without saying that the adolescent's resistance to society is for Hegel an 'untrue' form of resistance: the ethical whole must not be resisted; on the contrary, the individual must find his own suitable 'sphere' within the *Gemeinwesen* and thereby contribute to 'the work of the world', *das Werk der Welt*, that is the state (VPG 55, EPS § 391 A; cf. the discussion of the 'mature man' and 'civil society' in § 396 A). In all the (sub)plots of resistance that we have considered, then, the end result is the same: a certain point of reconciliation, a certain higher indifference – between madness and habit, nature and spirit, body and soul, individual and society – that the subject must reach. Of course, the tale of resistance does not end with the anthropology. In the phenomenology, for example, resistance becomes one *within* and *to* consciousness, be it a struggle between two (self-)consciousnesses (I resist, and there is another 'I' which resists me) or the subject-object struggle (where the *Gegenstand* is that which, again, resists its unity with the subject and its idealization by the latter). 'There is', however, 'no resisting the I', asserts Hegel (VPG 167), and so while the logical structure of the subjective spirit itself is permeated with moments of resistance, the end result is supposed to be free of it – what Hegel designates as 'free spirit'.

This does not, however, necessarily mean that resistance stops as soon as we reach the free spirit. Nor does it mean that all moments of resistance can be overlooked or their importance underplayed. It is all too easy to point out that Hegel has a higher point of reconciliation in store for each moment of resistance we can name; and indeed, all resistance of an individual is bound to be dissolved by that last point of reconciliation – death. This is, however, just a cop-out, since we have seen that, *as long as the individual lives, he or she resists.* It can, furthermore, be argued that 'free spirit' is itself not an end state that we must or can somehow reach, but the underlying logical form or process itself – Geist as encompassing and moving freely through all its determinations at once, which coexist and coresist rather than being teleologically sublated towards some end point. The ineliminability of madness, and its reciprocal resistance with habit, or the ineliminability of the unconscious as such, on which Hegel insists in EPS § 405 and § 405 A, all refer to the fact there is no actual point at which resistance would come to an end. From this perspective, too, we may

consider the persistence of the anthropological in the realm of 'objective spirit', which is the political realm. The adolescent's resistance to society, for example, is a necessary and ineradicable form of resistance, constitutive, as pointed out in § 396 A, of the ethical-political whole through the process of the young person's maturation into a grown-up individual – a generational change which maintains, as Hegel puts it, the 'abiding generation of the world and its further development' (§ 396 A).

Furthermore, since the youth's ethical-political resistance to the social whole rests precisely on the anthropological structure of subjectivity, the structures and mechanisms of resistance at work in the anthropology may allow for other, more properly political kinds of resistance. The latter would, however, require a move that would seem un-Hegelian (in the traditional sense) – a 'freeing up' of these anthropological moments of resistance, suspending them and not allowing them to be synthesized into the 'free spirit' teleologically conceived. Or, alternatively, tracing these points of resistance *inside* the idealized 'free spirit' itself – not as an end state but as a continuous process of resistance and counter-resistance. After all, if Geist is something new compared to the natural status quo, why not to the political status quo as well? If Geist entails a transformation of the natural world into a new spiritual whole, why can or should it not – since every birth of a human soul is a 'saltus' and the emergence of something new – entail a transformation of the preexisting political world as well? This kind of 'Left Hegelian' question, however, goes beyond the scope of this particular chapter.[14]

Notes

1 Translations of EPS and VPG are my own.

2 I consider this moment and its implications in more detail in my 'Nature, Spirit, and Revolution: Situating Hegel's Philosophy of Nature', *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 8, no. 3 (2016): 302–14.

3 Cited in Dirk Stederoth, *Hegels Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes. Ein komparatorischer Kommentar* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001), 106: 'Spirit does not develop from the animal, does not begin from the animal; spirit must begin from spirit.'

4 See also ibid., 106–7.

5 In other words, to make it animal, since 'the animal lives essentially in this sympathy [with nature]' (EPS § 392 R).

6 As Hegel himself admits in the lectures on the philosophy of spirit, he mostly uses 'sensation' and 'feeling' interchangeably in the anthropology: 'One should not make any significant distinction between sensation and feeling. Sensation expresses the

same thing as feeling, but more from the subjective side, while feeling expresses it more in its determinacy and according to its content' (VPG 69). As such, the soul's world is a 'felt' world, equalling the totality of the content that the soul senses. Cf. EPS § 402 R, where Hegel associates 'feeling' with subjectivity (hence the term *Selbstgefühl* and not *Selbstempfindung*) and 'sensation' with 'passivity' and 'immediacy'. Hegel hereby reproduces the traditional distinction, but it should be noted that he tends not to strictly follow it himself in his analysis of *Empfindung* – sensation for Hegel is in fact neither passive nor immediate; rather, it is an activity and has a certain structure (i.e. it is already a mediation). It is just that, prior to § 407 where he introduces the term *Selbstgefühl* for the soul-subjectivity, he uses the term *Empfindung* for both the singular content of a sensation (sense data) and the focal activity that ties these scattered sensations together within the soul as a peculiar kind of subject. Hence the possible terminological confusion.

7 On the history of the concept of *Selbstgefühl* before Hegel, see Manfred Frank, *Selbstgefühl* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2002). Unfortunately, Frank's book does not deal with or mention Hegel's anthropology.

8 Following François Laruelle, we might call this anthropological subject a 'non-subject' because it has a number of characteristics that make it an *inversion* of the standard subject of cogito. Namely, this anthropological subject is non-Cartesian, non-incorporeal, non-conscious, non-transcendental, non-abstract, non-rigid and non-intersubjective. It is, on the contrary, bodily, feeling, concrete, living and individual. On the non-Cartesian character of Hegel's anthropology, see Murray Greene, *Hegel on the Soul* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972).

9 Hegel specifically insists that everything within our mind or psyche has its first foundation in feeling as the first form of knowledge – '*Alles ist in der Empfindung* und, wenn man will, alles, was im geistigen Bewußtsein und in der Vernunft hervortritt, hat seine Quelle und *Ursprung* in derselben' (EPS § 400 R) – and that the content of reason and of sensation coincide (§§ 447 A, 471 R).

10 Incidentally, this two-center structure of madness is also the reason why Hegel insists that reason or consciousness is a necessary *presupposition* for the very possibility of madness (see e.g. § 408 R). The animal, as a consequence, cannot for Hegel become *verrückt*.

11 Slavoj Žižek, 'Discipline between Two Freedoms – Madness and Habit in German Idealism', in Markus Gabriel and Slavoj Žižek, *Mythology, Madness, and Laughter: Subjectivity in German Idealism* (London: Continuum, 2009), 111–12.

12 Ibid., 98.

13 To say this is, of course, not to downplay the other, supra-individual side of habit – as control over us, as mentioned above in my discussion of habit as resistance *to* individuality.

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