

SELF-CAUSATION AND CREATIVITY IN HEGEL AND WHITEHEAD

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Abstract: In my article, I examine some of the fundamental concepts of Hegel and Whitehead concerning the problem of self-causation and creativity of the universe. The focus lies on Hegel's *Science of Logic* and on Whitehead's major work *Process and Reality*. Hegel's and Whitehead's systems both contain a metaphysics of subjectivity. As I argue, numerous parallels can be found in their conception of the self-causation of the subject. Despite these parallels, however, the differences outweigh the similarities. While Hegel stresses the permanence and conceptual character of the subject, Whitehead emphasizes creativity and change.

Keywords: Self-causation, Subjectivity, Otherness, Creativity, Essence, Concept.

Hegel and Whitehead are the most important representatives of modern metaphysical philosophy. In their major works, *Science of Logic* ("Wissenschaft der Logik") and *Process and Reality*, both philosophers develop a theory of subjectivity, the self-causation and creativity of the universe.

In fact, Whitehead, according to his own statements, had never really dealt with Hegel. In, one of his last works, he emphasizes: "I have never been able to read Hegel: I initiated, my attempt by studying some remarks of his on mathematics which struck me as complete nonsense. It was foolish of me, but I am not writing to explain my good sense." (*Essays* 10) Therefore, it is not surprising that Whitehead makes almost no reference to Hegel in his philosophical writings: indeed, even where such a reference would have been opportune.

However, with his pluralistic ontology on a subjective basis (with reference to Leibniz's monadology), the recognition of the ontological reality of relations and the recognition of the principle of causality, Whitehead stands much closer than he was probably aware of to Hegel's absolute idealism. Of course, Hegel does not ultimately present ontological pluralism, but a theory of absolute Spirit, according to which the one and only Reason (*Vernunft*) is realized as the "World Spirit" (*Weltgeist*) in nature and history.

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Hegel's and Whitehead's philosophies are both forms of metaphysical thinking in which subjectivity is the basic structure of reality. In other words, Hegel and Whitehead are both of the opinion that not only human subjects, or animals and plants, but also even the forms that, according to our current understanding, represent inorganic nature, are pre-forms of what constitutes human subjectivity and, in this sense, carry within themselves the capacity for subjectivity. From a historical perspective, Kant's *Critique of Judgement*, in particular his critique of teleological judgment and the concept of "organized beings," is of particular importance here. Kant regarded organized beings in the Critique of the Teleological Judgment as the "analogue of art," when they had to be understood as the embodiment of an idea, "which constitutes its "inner expediency." In Whitehead, as in Hegel, the organism with its immanent teleology becomes the paradigm for all that exists par excellence. (cf. Horstmann) In this way, a fundamental characteristic of Whitehead's philosophy as idealism is already expressed; for Whitehead, reality is a process of "self-realization" of actual entities: "Self-realization is the ultimate fact of facts. An actuality is self-realizing, and whatever is self-realizing is an actuality" (PR 222). Whitehead is an idealist in assuming that each actual entity pursues a "subjective aim" in its self-realization. He expressly points out that this subjective aim is of an ideal nature: Reality can only be understood as a process of self-realization of subjectivity, and this process has a teleological character. He takes a position very close to Hegel: "This development [of the subjective aim of an actual entity, ed. S. R.] is nothing else than the Hegelian development of an idea" (PR 167). But, to distinguish Whitehead's idealism from Hegel's absolute idealism, one must sharply distinguish the development of an actual entity from the ontological status of an actual entity that, in Whitehead's view, represents a "res vera." Whitehead states that with his metaphysical system he is at the same time trying to establish a novel form of idealism: namely, an idealism on "a realistic basis": "Indeed, if this cosmology be deemed successful, it becomes natural at this point to ask whether the type of thought involved be not a transformation of some main doctrines of Absolute Idealism onto a realistic basis" (PR VIII). Hegel considers subjectivity as substance in the process of their development, whereas Whitehead's actual entities realize ideas that Whitehead calls "eternal objects." However, they are not ideas or concepts, but "stubborn facts", which are as singular events invariably, irreducibly particular. Hegel, in contrast, expressly spoke of the conceptual character of the being of subjectivity and, starting from this view, regarded subjects as "existing concepts" (*existierende Begriffe*). According to him, the general is to be understood as concrete in itself.

In fact, it is Hegel's concept of otherness that allows him to think of subjects as concepts and the universal as concrete in itself. Hegel develops this concept in his magnum opus, *The Science of Logic*. It is extremely complex, so only a few central aspects can be discussed here. The starting point of *The Science of Logic* is Kant's philosophy, in particular his transcendental logic. At the center of Hegel's reception and transformation of Kant is his conception of the unity of

self-consciousness, which he reduces to the concept of the synthetic, original unity of apperception. Kant had introduced the concept of the “synthetic unity of apperception” to express that the “I think” accompanies all my ideas, since otherwise I would have as many selves as I have ideas. Through spontaneous concept formation, the self connects a multiplicity of ideas and sensory impressions into a unity that is nothing other than the unity of self-consciousness. In the original synthetic unity of apperception, spontaneity and receptivity of the faculty of understanding are thus inseparably linked. This original unity moves to the center of Hegel’s consideration. But while Kant asks about the unity of concepts, Hegel is concerned with proving the absolute identity of thinking and being. For Hegel, it is crucial that Kant understands the synthetic being of self-consciousness as enabling all objectivity. However, Hegel goes far beyond Kant in that what Kant postulates as the structure of cognition also has ontological validity in his view. Kant’s transcendental logic does come very close to ontology. The statement that certain conceptual structures must be applicable to the world means that we are also saying something about the nature of things. But Kant famously avoids this conclusion by distinguishing between things-in-themselves and phenomena. The starting point of Hegel’s critique of Kant is thus that

... the Kantian objectivity of thinking itself is in turn only subjective insofar as thoughts, despite being universal and necessary determinations, are, according to Kant, merely our thoughts and distinguished from what the thing is in itself by an insurmountable gulf. By contrast, the true objectivity of thinking consists in this: that thoughts are not merely our thoughts but at the same time the in-itself of things and of the object world [*des Gegenständlichen*] in general. (*Encyclopaedia* 85).

In the *Science of Logic*, Hegel seeks to prove this identity of thinking and being by subjecting the fundamental categories of Western thought to criticism. By demonstrating the necessary logical connection between these categories, he aims to make the basic structure of the universe transparent. The *Science of Logic* therefore represents – like Whitehead’s *Process and Reality* – an intellectual view of the universe.

However, Hegel clearly has a completely different view of the categories of our thinking than Whitehead. While the categories that Whitehead bases his “speculative scheme” on derive their justification from the fact that they are applicable to empirical reality, Hegel’s categories are justified by the fact that they can be derived dialectically from one another. Thus, Whitehead’s goal is to use his categorical scheme to provide an “explanatory description” of reality: “Speculative philosophy is the endeavor to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted” (*PR* 3). The scheme should be “applicable” and “adequate.” (*PR* 3) Here, the “empirical” side of speculative philosophy comes to the fore. (*PR* 3)

Hegel, on the other hand, advocates a pure coherence theory of truth in his *Science of Logic*. From a methodological point of view, the difference between Hegel's "absolute idealism" and Whitehead's "idealism on a realistic basis" becomes particularly clear here (cf. Hartmann, Poser). Hegel and Whitehead are both equally strongly influenced by Plato, his dialectic, and his theory of ideas (cf. Kann). But at the same time, Whitehead shows a strong influence from English empiricism, especially from Hume and Locke. However, this does not alter the fact that parallels can be drawn between the two views of the universe. This is particularly true of Hegel's fundamental categories of "something" and "other," which are introduced at the very beginning of his so-called objective logic and already point to Whitehead's fundamental categories of "subject" and "superject."

I.

Hegel divided the *Science of Logic* into two parts: objective and subjective logic. The aim of this division is to show that the true form of reality is the subject. Hegel divides objective logic into the logic of being and the logic of essence. Right at the beginning of the logic of being, which deals with immediate being, Hegel dialectically derives the concepts of "something" and "other" from the concepts of being and existence.

Hegel insists that "something" and "something else" are both something. But they are also both other. Contrary to conventional logic, which stops at the fixed determinacy and difference of the two, Hegel asserts the difference between something and its other in a way that at the same time establishes their concrete relatedness and thus a first form of mediation. Hegel's decisive argument is that, for example, A and B as others are equally others for each other: "Something and other are, first, both existents or something. Second, each is equally an other. It is indifferent which is named first, and just for this reason it is named something (in Latin, when they occur in a proposition, both are *aliud*, or "the one, the other", *alius alium*; in the case of an alternating relation, the analogous expression is *alter alterum*). If of two beings we call the one A and the other B, the B is the one which is first determined as other. But the A is just as much the other of the B. Both are other in the same way" (*Logic* 90). Hegel concludes from this that otherness is constitutive for the identity of something and that A and B, the "something" and something "other," are only what they are as the other of the other. If the "other" is the negation of the something, then the other of the other is the negation of this negation – and thus, as a double negation, contrary to affirmative being. From Hegel's point of view, the something therefore has a being-for-other, and it only becomes what it is "in itself" when it has returned from its being-for-other.¹ What

¹ From this point, Hegel argues against Kant that the thing-in-itself (*Ding-an-sich*) is an "empty abstraction void of truth" (*Logic* 94), when it is abstracted from all being-for-other.

the something is in itself represents the determination of the something, while its being-for-other characterizes its nature as external reality.

Hegel's conception of the relationship between "something" and "being-for-others" clearly has much in common with Whitehead's conception of the relationship between "subject" and "superject." Like Hegel's "something," Whitehead's "actual entity" as "subject" strives for self-determination. And just as Hegel's "something" has a being-for-others, Whitehead's "actual entity" at the end of its self-realization as "superject" is available for the self-creation process of other "actual entities." As in the case of "being-for-others," the "superject" represents the nature of the actual entity that characterizes it as material reality. Here, however, the decisive difference between Hegel's something and Whitehead's actual entity becomes apparent: while Hegel's something returns from its being-for-others and realizes its "being-in-itself," the actual entity passes away and, as superject, is available as potential for the realization of other, subsequent actual entities. "[...] it belongs to the nature of a being that it is a potential for every becoming. This is the principle of relativity." (*PR* 22) The process of self-determination of an actual entity ends when it merges with itself as a superject: "Its birth is its end." (*PR* 80) When an actual entity passes away, its immediacy of being turns into the non-being of immediacy. According to Hegel, however, "being-for-others" is only a phase in the realization of "something," since the self-determination of "something" culminates in the infinite return of something to itself. There is no such return movement in Whitehead's process philosophy.

Whitehead's thinking represents a radical philosophy of finitude and process, if one takes into account that the actual entities as individual events form a sequence (nexus) and are only indirectly immanent to each other. Hegel, on the other hand, derives from the fact that the something is the other of the other that the something, as something finite, passes away, but in its passing away is sublated into the infinite: "It is the very nature of the finite that it transcends itself, that it negates its negation and becomes infinite" (*Logic* 108). According to Hegel, the negation of finitude is a decisive characteristic of philosophy: "The claim that the finite is an idealization defines idealism. The idealism of philosophy consists in nothing else than in the recognition that the finite is not truly an existent" (*Logic* 124). The term Hegel uses for such an infinite, ideal being is "being-for-itself." As an example of such a being-for-itself, he cites the human "I." For Hegel, the "I" is the paradigm of a concrete universal in itself. As Kline points, "Whitehead is committed to ontological atomism whereas Hegel is committed to ontological continuity" (Kline 134).

II.

Hegel's intellectual efforts in the further course of his logic are directed not least toward explaining how things preserve their identity while undergoing change. On this point, Whitehead's process thinking and Hegel's absolute idealism are diametrically opposed, which in turn does not exclude fundamental similarities. This is particularly true when comparing Hegel's logic of essence and Whitehead's concept of creativity. Hegel and Whitehead both define the essence of things as a process. But Hegel defines the essential process as a development in which identity is preserved as the essence of things.

The further claim that "all things have an essence" is a way of declaring that they are not truly what they immediately show themselves to be. It is then also not enough merely to traipse from one quality to another and merely proceed from the qualitative to the quantitative and vice versa; instead, there is something enduring in things, and this is primarily the essence. (*Encyclopaedia* 174)

The essence is what it is not, and is identified with itself through the "absolute negativity" in which it transcends every particular state. The essence is not the other of another, but the other of itself, and precisely for this reason it can preserve its identity in change. Whitehead, on the other hand, defined the essence of things as "creativity" and decisively rejected the idea that things are manifestations of a permanent substance: "Creativity is the universal of the universals characterizing ultimate matter of fact" (*PR* 21). Based on this principle, the universe oscillates from multiplicity to the complex unity of real individual beings and from unity back to multiplicity. The result of this oscillation is the creative advancement of nature. Nature, says Whitehead, "is never complete. It is always passing beyond itself. This is the creative advance of nature" (*PR* 289). Although Hegel's definition of essence and Whitehead's conception of a creative universe are contradictory, there are nevertheless four important similarities:

First, both Hegel and Whitehead assume that the self-causation of the universe must be understood as an infinite process of self-movement. Second, both argue that causality and finality always interact in this self-causation. Thus, Hegel says that essence presupposes itself on the one hand, and on the other hand only becomes what it is by realizing this presupposition. In a similar vein, Whitehead says: "[...] process is the rush of feelings whereby second-handedness attains subjective immediacy; in this way, subjective form overwhelms repetition and transforms it into immediately felt satisfaction..." (*PR* 155). "The former process provides the conditions which really govern attainment; whereas the latter process provides the ends actually attained" (*PR* 214). Here, too, the difference lies in the fact that Hegel conceives the reconciliation of causality and finality as a complex process in which essence is constituted, whereas Whitehead's concept of creativity states that new actual entities are constantly emerging which ultimately realize

themselves in their date, which is their prerequisite: “The initial situation includes a factor of activity which is the reason for the origin of that occasion of experience. This factor of activity is what I have called ‘creativity’” (*Adventures* 179). The actual entity characterizes itself as a subject through final causality and as a superject through causal causality. But the superject, which is causally effective as potential, is always a different actual entity than the subject, which ultimately realizes itself in the presupposed datum.

A third important similarity between Hegel and Whitehead is that both assume that the universe is constituted as a unity of opposites. Hegel’s logic of essence therefore culminates in the analysis of the logical categories of opposition and contradiction.

It is, however, one of the basic prejudices of previous logic and of ordinary thought that contradiction is not as essential and immanent a determination as identity. But in fact, if order of precedence were an issue, and the two determinations were to be held separate, it would be the principle of contradiction that should be taken as the more profound and the more essential. For in contrast to it, identity is only the determination of simple immediacy, of inert being, whereas contradiction is the root of all movement and life; it is only in so far as something has a contradiction within it that it moves, is possessed of instinct and activity (*Logic* 75).

Whitehead also argues that “the universe is to be conceived as attaining the active self-expression of its own variety of opposites [...]” (*PR* 350). For Whitehead, the unity of opposites prevails throughout the universe and constitutes the true core of dualism (cf. *Adventures* 190). Actual entities form aesthetic contrasts, which he also calls “ideal oppositions.” The universe realizes itself in the formation of contrasts and contrasts of contrasts. In this process, every real individual being is conceived as a contrast and as an individual form of the unity of the universe (cf. Wolf-Gazo). At least in this sense, he also advocates the dialectical principle of a unity of identity and difference. “A physical pole,” says Whitehead, “is in its own nature exclusive, bounded by a contradiction [...]” (*PR* 348). However, this view does not lead him to conceive of the inner dynamics of reality as a dialectical self-movement of concepts.

Fourth, Hegel and Whitehead both advocate a radical ontology of relations. From Whitehead’s point of view, every actual entity is a concretization of the entire universe: “Each task of creation is a social effort, employing the whole universe” (*PR* 223). According to Hegel, essence manifests itself as the ground of an existence in which everything that exists is related to everything else:

Concrete existence is the immediate unity of reflection-in-itself and reflection-in-another. It is thus the indeterminate set of concretely existing entities [*Existenden*] as reflected-in-themselves that are at the same time just as much a

shining-in-another [*in-Anderes-scheinen*], i.e. are relative, and form a world of reciprocal dependency and an infinite connection of grounds and grounded entities. The grounds are themselves concrete existences and the concretely existing entities are from multiple sides just as much grounds as they are grounded. (*Encyclopaedia*, 190)

The historical model for such a holistic conception of the universe in both cases is likely to have been Leibniz's monadology.

III.

The third and final part of Hegel's logic is the logic of the concept. The concept is the unity of being and essence and contains all previous determinations of logic within itself. As Hegel emphasizes, the concept is the subject. However, from Hegel's point of view, only imperfect embodiments of the concept exist in nature. In nature, the concept exists only in itself, but not for itself. Only in the human spirit does the concept exist in and of itself. In Hegel's view, therefore, only humans, as self-conscious beings, represent an adequate embodiment of the concept. Here, another decisive difference in the two philosophers' conception of reality becomes apparent: Although Hegel and Whitehead agree that subjectivity is the basic structure of nature, Hegel assigns humans a special ontological position in his system as the bearers of a world spirit. Hegel speaks of the "flash of subjectivity" that extinguishes human nature. Whitehead, on the other hand, endeavored in his system to overcome the gap between human and other forms of life. All actual entities have "feelings," and human self-consciousness, as an "intellectual feeling," is only a particularly developed form of feeling: "Clear, conscious discrimination is an accident of human existence. It makes us human. It is the essence of our humanity. But it is an accident of our existence" (*Modes* 116). From Hegel's point of view, however, self-consciousness is the basis of human existence.

The concept has three aspects: generality, particularity, and specificity. The generality of the concept is initially simple identity or equality with itself. Thus, a person (e.g., "Peter") in his individuality and particularity has certain characteristics at a given moment that characterize him. But according to Hegel, these characteristics do not apply to a person as Peter, but as a human being. Only because the individual possesses his specific characteristics as a human being can he remain identical with himself as such, even as his characteristics change and he develops as an individual personality. The universal "is the soul of the concrete which it inhabits, unhindered and equal to itself in its manifoldness and diversity. It is not swept away in the becoming but persists undisturbed through it, endowed with the power of unalterable, undying self-preservation" (*Logic* 531). The individual,

on the other hand, is the concrete, qualitative determination of the concept (or subject) as something. What mediates between particularity and generality is the particularity of the concept. This represents the individualizing element of the concept. Particularity contains the moment of determinacy from the individual and the moment of reflection-in-itself from the universal: “This, their simple identity, is the particularity that, from the singular, holds the moment of determinateness; from the universal, that of immanent reflection – the two in immediate unity” (*Logic* 506). The dynamism of the concept consists in the fact that it is realized in judgment and conclusion and then manifests itself as objective reality. In Hegel’s view, the judgment of the concept is the principle of all development in nature and history. The growth process of a plant in its development from seed to bud and to flower can be understood in this sense as the “judgment of the plant.” Hegel therefore says that “all things are a judgment, – i.e. they are individuals which are a universality or inner nature in themselves, or a universal that is individuated. The universality and individuality distinguish themselves in them [the things] but are at the same time identical” (*Encyclopaedia* 242). Similarly, according to Hegel, everything is a conclusion: “The conclusion is what is rational and everything is rational.” [...] “...the actual is an individual that by means of particularity elevates itself into universality and makes itself identical with itself” (*Encyclopaedia* 254). The conclusion is the synthesis of the individual with the generality inherent in it through the reflexive activity of particularity.

Comparing these categories with Whitehead’s conception of subjectivity, it should first be emphasized that particularity, specificity, and generality, as well as judgment and conclusion, are moments of the same structure, namely the concept. Whitehead’s categories, on the other hand, have a different ontological status. In Whitehead’s speculative scheme, the “eternal object” corresponds to the generality of the concept, the “subject” to particularity, and the “superject” to particularity. Particularly, Hegel’s and Whitehead’s conceptions of generality differ greatly. While, according to Hegel, generality is immanent in finite things and even constitutes the soul of the concrete, Whitehead conceives eternal objects – regardless of their realization in actual entities – as “Pure Potentials for the Specific Determination of Facts” (*PR* 22). For Hegel, the generality of the concept represents a higher reality than the individual, while Whitehead assigns a higher value to the individual. Furthermore, Whitehead’s eternal objects are static in comparison to the generality of Hegel’s concept. If a certain pattern of properties persists in a nexus of actual entities, this is due to the repeated ingress of an eternal object into this nexus. In Hegel’s conception, on the other hand, the general as absolute negativity is at the same time the process of the concrete itself.

Hegel and Whitehead both assume that the subject, in its particularity, possesses a structure of reflection within which the subject realizes itself as itself. But for Hegel, this structure of reflection is conceived as a return to itself, while

Whitehead emphasizes more strongly the creative process of the becoming of new actual entities. He emphasizes that “becoming is a creative advance into novelty” (PR 28). Therefore, the actual entity as a specific individual being, as a superject, has a different ontological status than the particularity conceived by Hegel. As a superject, the actual entity is thrown beyond itself and, as already noted, is available as potential for other actual entities. In Hegel, on the other hand, particularity in its determinacy is only a moment in the development of the concept.

Interestingly, Hegel and Whitehead both argue that everything is a judgment. Whitehead, however, uses the term “decision” instead of “judgment,” as he reserves the term “judgment” for higher, intellectual operations. The Category of Freedom and Determination states, “that in each concrescence whatever is determinable is determined, but there is always a remainder for the decision of subject-superject in that concrescence [...]” (PR 28). As Whitehead emphasizes, the word decision does not imply conscious judgment, though in “some decisions conscious judgment will be a factor” (PR 43). Hegel also uses the term “judgment” as an ontological category and does not attribute any consciousness to nature. For Hegel, as for Whitehead, the concept of judgment or decision describes the transformation of the data of subjectivity into that of objectivity. According to Hegel, this process culminates in logical conclusion, which represents a resolution of the contradiction between particularity and generality. In Whitehead, on the other hand, decision culminates in “satisfaction”:

The final phase of the process of concrescence, constituting an actual entity, is one complex, fully determinate feeling. This final phase is termed “satisfaction”. It is fully determinate (a) to its genesis, (b) as to its objective character for the transcendent creativity, and (c) as to its prehension – positive or negative – of every item in its universe. (PR 25)

Here, the difference between Whitehead’s philosophy of feelings and Hegel’s purely rationalistic approach becomes particularly clear. As Whitehead points out, “in the place of the Hegelian hierarchy of categories of thought, the philosophy of organism finds a hierarchy of categories of feeling” (PR 252). In fact, Hegel disregarded feelings and considered them only an inferior revelation of the Absolute.

Hegel and Whitehead’s different views on the significance of the universal in the process of reality have consequences above all for their conception of personal identity: While Hegel assumes that the person remains identical with itself from birth to death because it possesses a general ego, Whitehead conceives of the person as a society with a personal order. Both in the spatial and temporal sense, the identity of the person is therefore only relative, because the actual entities that constitute the person are only indirectly immanent to each other: Strictly speaking, the person is therefore different at every moment. This conception of personal identity is one of the greatest problems of Whitehead’s organic philosophy.

IV.

Hegel concludes his *Science of Logic* with a chapter on the idea. The “idea” is Hegel’s philosophical expression for God: “The idea is the adequate concept, the objectively true, or the true as such. If anything has truth, it has it by virtue of its idea, or something has truth only in so far as it is idea” (*Logic* 670). As the absolute unity of concept and objectivity, the idea has a teleological structure and manifests itself as life and cognition. Because of this teleological structure, Whitehead can compare the development of an actual entity with the development of Hegel’s idea. While life in Hegel’s conception represents an immediate unity of subject and world, in cognition subject and object are mediated through their difference. Hegel assumes that cognition presupposes life. Just as Whitehead conceives of God as a process, Hegel must therefore conceive of the idea as dynamic: “[...] the idea, because of the freedom which the concept has attained in it, also has the most stubborn opposition within it; its repose consists in the assurance and the certainty with which it eternally generates that opposition and eternally overcomes it, and in it rejoins itself” (*Logic* 674). Unlike Whitehead’s God, who is *correlative* to the becoming and passing away of actual entities as “consequent nature” and “primordial nature”, God is identical with nature and human history for Hegel: God realizes himself as world spirit, as natural history and human history. The realization of God as nature and history is to be thought of as a logically necessary process. In Hegel’s view, God has a logical life. Whitehead’s God, on the other hand, as “great sufferer, who understands” and as “poet of the world,” is to be thought of as a living, personal God who represents a concrete counterpart to the real world. Even though Whitehead understands the world as consequent nature, as an enrichment of God’s self-experience, he assumes that God is never completely identical with the world and that the course of the world is contingent.

In summary, it can be said that there are numerous similarities between Hegel’s and Whitehead’s speculative systems. This applies in particular to dialectical and holistic elements in both conceptions. However, Whitehead is not a Hegelian and his philosophy is not a “version of Hegel’s philosophy” (Hartmann 82); his open system represents more of a metaphysical alternative to Hegel’s philosophy of absolute spirit.

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