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Hegelian Spirits in Sellarsian bottles

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Abstract Though Wilfrid Sellars portrayed himself as a latter-day Kantian, I argue here that he was at least as much a Hegelian. Several themes Sellars shares with Hegel are investigated: the sociality and normativity of the intentional, categorial change, the rejection of the given, and especially their denial of an unknowable thing-in-itself. They are also united by an emphasis on the unity of things—the belief that things do "hang together." Hegel's unity is idealist; Sellars' is physicalist; the differences are substantial, but so are the resonances.

Keywords Wilfrid Sellars · G. W. F. Hegel · Idealism · Realism · Categorial change · Normativity

1 Introduction

1. The received view is that analytic philosophy originated in Russell and Moore's reaction against the neoHegelian idealism that was dominant in late-nineteenth century British universities. Ever since, Hegelianism has served as the Other over against which analytic philosophy at least in part defines itself, not so much argued with as disparaged and vilified. But the "shape(s) of consciousness" analytic philosophy embodies has generated a dialectic that brings it back to Hegelian insights. Wilfrid Sellars played a major role in this dialectic, which has been pushed further by later members of what is sometimes called "Pittsburgh Hegelianism." Here I will address the landmark Hegelian positions to be found in Sellars's thought—but also their limits, the Hegelian territory that Sellars did not reclaim.

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2. Wilfrid Sellars portrays himself most often as an analytic Kantian, but clearly Sellars is not a *pure* Kantian. Sellars "corrects" Kant. In many cases these corrections push him in Hegel's direction, but Sellars only occasionally points this out, I think for political reasons. Given the general disrepute of Hegelianism throughout Sellars's publishing career, identifying his own positions as Hegelian would have done them no good, inducing many of the people he wanted to talk with to stop listening. When I wrote my dissertation on Hegel under Sellars's supervision, he was never surprised when I mentioned various points of confluence between Hegel's thought and his own. Sellars was perfectly well aware of his own Hegelian leanings; he just did not trumpet them publicly.

3. However, the textual basis for the claim that Sellars was really a closeted Hegelian is not so easy to make out. Let me start with some prosaic textual points, because the references to Hegel that Sellars does make are often misread. Consider the characterization of Sellars's argument in EPM as "incipient *Meditations Hegelièn*nes" (Sellars 1963c: §20, 148). This has been read as an acknowledgment of a debt to Hegel. But, in fact, these words are put into the mouth of a hypothetical logical atomist and verge on an insult. There is, of course, truth to it, but it is hardly a ringing endorsement of Sellars's Hegelian tendencies.

4. There are several passages in SM that refer to Hegel (Sellars 1967; I ¶40, ¶75; II ¶54; V ¶37; VII ¶144). They are a mixed bag. The last one classifies Hegel as a great dialectician; the penultimate reference to Hegel claims that the Hegelian tradition exploits the flexibility in the use of abstract terms, but complains that it doesn't explain it. The first three references to Hegel seem outright critical, but a careful look shows that the first and the third are directly critical, not of Hegel himself, but of the Hegelian tradition, by which Sellars mostly means British Neo-Hegelianism. Only the second reference to Hegel in SM, at (Sellars 1967, I ¶75), is directly critical of Hegel for having, like Mill, ignored an important distinction that Kant did not actually draw, namely, the distinction between the forms of receptivity proper and the forms of what is represented intuitively.

5. I will begin by analyzing the clearest text in which Sellars "goes Hegelian" (Section I). Given the paucity of further direct textual evidence, we must then move to a higher level of analysis in identifying the Hegelian Spirit in Sellars's thought (Sections II and III). I will point out several dimensions along which Sellars was clearly closer to Hegel than Kant. Furthermore, Sellars departs from Kant in these ways, I think, for the *right* reasons.

6. Sellars moves from the Kantian to the Hegelian in at least these ways:

- He recognizes that the normativity essential to intentionality is an essentially *social* phenomenon and cannot be done justice to individualistically.
- He recognizes the possibility (and reality) not just of conceptual change, but of *categorial* change.
- He denies a given that Kant assumes.
- This is not a quietist position, but metaphysically ambitious and rigorously realistic, that is, opposed to any form of subjective idealism.

2 Sociality

7. Although some of Sellars's references to Hegel are either indirect or subtly critical when read closely, there is one in which Sellars flat out declares his allegiance to a Hegelian position. In "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" [PSIM], when Sellars rejects the "Robinson Crusoe conception of the world as generating conceptual thinking directly in the individual" (1963b: 16; 2007: 384), he writes,

> It was not until the time of Hegel that the essential role of the group as a mediating factor in this causation [of the presence in the individual of the framework of conceptual thinking] was recognized, and while it is easy for us to see that the immanence and transcendence of conceptual frameworks with respect to the individual thinker is a social phenomenon, and to find a recognition of this fact implicit in the very form of our image of man in the world, it was not until the nineteenth century that this feature of the manifest image was, however inadequately, taken into account.

8. Notice that Sellars does not attribute this insight directly to Hegel, and rightly so, since it was an accomplishment of postKantian Idealism generally. Sellars also quickly hedges his endorsement of the Hegelian insight with criticism:

> The manifest image must, therefore, be construed as containing a conception of itself as a group phenomenon, the group mediating between the individual and the intelligible order. But any attempt to explain this mediation within the framework of the manifest image was bound to fail, for the manifest image contains the resources for such an attempt only in the sense that it provides the foundation on which scientific theory can build an explanatory framework; and while conceptual structures of this framework are built on the manifest image, they are not definable within it. Thus, the Hegelian, like the Platonist of whom he is the heir, was limited to the attempt to understand the relation between intelligible order and individual minds in analogical terms (1963b: 17; 2007: 385).

9. It is standard Sellarsian doctrine that the manifest image generates questions it cannot answer on its own, and this is an instance. Even augmented with the Hegelian insight that the community is an essential intermediary between the individual and the intelligible order, the manifest framework, Sellars claims, is not in a position to explain *how* the community serves this role. This is a complex thought, so let's pause to fill it out. First, we need to characterize the 'intelligible order.' It is the network of rational connections among the concepts of a conceptual framework.[1] Our confidence that brothers are male siblings or that when cooled

[1] It is also worth noting that Sellars would not think that rational connections among concepts are always *analytic* or a priori. Sellars makes room for *material* connections that are nonetheless rational. In general, Sellars thinks of rational connections, not on the containment model that Kant employed, but as inference tickets, and then recognizes both formally and materially valid inferences.

It is also worth remarking here that Sellars's phrase "the intelligible order" implies a unique referent. But if the intelligible order is the set of rational connections among concepts, then there will be, of course,

sufficiently, water turns to ice, is a function of the fact that such connections get built into our conceptual framework/language.

10. At this point in PSIM, the general problem is, How do we come to grasp the rational connections among the concepts of the manifest framework? This is the context in which Sellars discusses the relation between the 'manifest image' (the framework of more-or-less commonsense concepts that we learn at momma's knee and in terms of which we experience the world) and classical philosophy, especially the Platonic tradition. Until the nineteenth century, the general idea philosophers worked with was that we come to grasp the rational connections constitutive of the manifest image by means of some action of the world upon individual minds. According to Plato, for instance, items in a separable intelligible order, the Forms, act upon us before birth to imprint themselves on our minds; sensory experience, with a dose of dialectic, can re-awaken in us our forgotten insight into the intelligible order. What Western philosophers shared until Hegel's time is the conviction that "somehow the world [independently of social mediation] is the cause of the individual's image of the world" (1963b: 16; 2007: 384).

11. Furthermore, according to Sellars, "[i]n the Platonic tradition this mode of causation is attributed to a being which is analogous, to a greater or lesser degree, to a person" (1963b: 16; 2007: 384). Some examples: The Platonic forms share the same kind of being as a human *psychē,* which is why they can interact. The Cartesian God that builds the innate ideas into us is still conceived of as a personal God. Hegel was a member in good standing of the Platonic tradition, and thus also understood the relation between intelligible order and individual mind in terms of something person-like that accounts for how individuals come to possess a conceptual framework. But for Hegel this is not a matter of direct efficient causal action of some person-like agency on the individual. It is, rather, a matter of Spirit informing the activity and pervading the being of the human individual. Spirit is not like an individual person, localized in space and time, nor is it outside of space and time, but its fundamental structure is still that of a mind. (It makes sense to attribute 'cunning' to Spirit, for instance.) Different interpretations of Hegel cash out the personality of Spirit in different ways, but such details are not relevant here.

12. Sellars's view, however, is that the manifest image *cannot* explain how the community (or Spirit) in fact mediates the individual's acquisition of a conceptual framework. He says the most one could hope for from the manifest image in this regard is to understand the relation between the individual and the intelligible order in "analogical terms." This is a complex claim with both a negative and a positive component. The negative claim denies that the MI can explain how the community mediates the individual's acquisition of a conceptual framework. Sellars gives us no argument in PSIM for this negative claim. The manifest image has shown itself to

Footnote 1 continued
many possible intelligible orders, since there are multiple possible conceptual frameworks. Sellars does seem to assume that we can sensibly posit a Peircean ideal framework that, given world enough and time, we would be fated to accept.

be a flexible tool for coping with reality, capable of growth and development to accommodate an ever richer understanding of the structure of reality and our relation to it. That Hegel and postKantian idealism, having finally reached the insight that the community is a necessary intermediary between individual and the intelligible order, did not immediately develop a satisfactory explanatory theory of how that mediation occurs is hardly surprising. But we would need a positive argument to establish that the manifest image cannot develop such an explanation.

13. Sellars grants that the MI permits understanding the relation between the individual and the intelligible order "in analogical terms." This sounds fairly dismissive, as if such an understanding is something to be transcended. In a sense, that's what Sellars thinks, but even if we manage to *transcend* this analogy-based understanding, it does not follow that we should or even can *discard* it. According to Sellars, our conceptions of psychological states are developed in analogical terms, and Sellars never intimates that future science will give us occasion to discard folk psychology, although some of Sellars's students have drawn that conclusion. Quite to the contrary, Sellars insists that the language of "individual and community intentions"—the very heart of the manifest image—must be joined or added to, reconstructed, or better, preserved within the future scientific image.[2] Refining the language of community intentions—the language of sociology, social psychology, family life, and politics—has been on the agenda since Hegel. But Sellars thinks there is a limit to the progress that can be made in these directions with armchair methodologies, just as there is with refining folk psychology.

14. Science always begins with analogically formulated concepts and then reconstructs, refines, and extends them until they become well-specified concepts within a new and independently grounded empirical discipline. Modern science, in Sellars's view, is beginning to give us access in such non-metaphoric concepts to how individual organisms acquire and use concepts and the rational connections among them. We have already overcome some false steps: "this causal role cannot be equated with a conditioning of the individual by his environment in a way which could in principle occur without the mediation of the family and the community" (1963b: 16; 2007: 384). But we also have a positive program that holds great promise, for we are now in a position "to see this as a matter of evolutionary development as a group phenomenon" and "incapable of explanation in terms of a direct conditioning impact of the environment on the individual as such" (1963b: 17; 2007: 385).

15. Evolution generates categorially new objects. The case has become overwhelming that the concepts initially developed to comprehend objects are themselves products of evolution. Millikan (1984) has shown how such processes can be accommodated within a generally Sellarsian view. Still, as systematic as he was, one of the great lacks in Sellars's philosophy is a treatment of the social

[2] I have argued that *preservation* of the "language of individual and community intentions" in the scientific image (as opposed to mere 'joining') is the proper conception in several places: (deVries 2012, 2016).

sciences. How to accommodate normatively-constituted social phenomena within the causal structures central to science's concerns is a daunting challenge. But the idea that the complex and dynamic conceptual structures we find crucial to understanding the world around us might be grounded in equally complex and dynamic socio-historical causal structures points to a vision that would unify central notions of the German Idealists with a naturalistic world view. This is, to my mind, an instructive example: however much of the Hegelian wine Sellars preserves, he is persistent in re-bottling it in naturalistic flasks.

3 Realism, metaphilosophy, and categorial change

16. That Sellars adopts Hegel's view of the sociality of concepts and the minds that wield them, even though he transposes this insight into a naturalistic key, is relatively low-hanging fruit. Identifying other Hegelian theses in Sellars's philosophy requires a more complex analysis, for one cannot pull directly on Sellars's own pronouncements. One method is to compare Sellars's and Hegel's critiques of Kant. Sellars and Hegel were convinced that, as undeniably profound and insightful as Kant's philosophy is, it also goes profoundly wrong in some ways. Comparing Hegel and Sellars can teach us much here.

17. I am going to attack the remaining three shared themes I mentioned earlier in reverse order, for the master idea Sellars and Hegel share in relation to Kant is the rejection of Kant's notion of the thing-in-itself. This commitment drives the other changes they introduce into Kant's basic structure. The conceptions Hegel and Sellars possess of the true nature of things in themselves are radically different, of course. But for all their differences, they share a common strategy in their response to Kant.

18. The analyses Hegel and Sellars offer of Kant's arguments for transcendental idealism are complex, further complicated by the fact that neither wants to reject altogether the distinction between phenomenal reality and things as they are in themselves. Though Sellars casts his contra-Kantian proposal in terms of one large distinction between the phenomenal and the real, or as he calls them, the manifest and the scientific images,[3] Hegel provides for numerous phenomenal realities related in ways that require a phenomenology to understand. It is not the distinction between phenomenon and reality itself that Hegel and Sellars attack, but the notion that it is *absolute,* establishing an unbridgeable divide.[4]

19. Kant's arguments for transcendental idealism turn crucially on the status of space and time. It is because, in Kant's view, space and time can *only* be subjective conditions of human receptivity that phenomenal spatio-temporal experience cannot

[3] This is overly simple. Sellars also mentions the "original image," a forebear of the manifest image. Nor does Sellars think that the manifest image is itself unchanging.

[4] It is notable that attacking the absoluteness of familiar philosophical distinctions is a standard move for pragmatists.

reveal the nature of things as they are in themselves. This belief, in turn, is connected to Kant's belief that the distinction between the a priori and the a posteriori is itself absolute. Kant is convinced that there can be no inferences from the nature of our spatio-temporal experience to the determinate nature or structure of things in themselves, because we have pure, a priori knowledge of the fundamental structure of space and time, and this is possible only if space and time are entirely independent of things in themselves.

20. Both Sellars and Hegel reject the notion that space and time can be only subjective conditions of human receptivity. They also reject the idea that the distinction between the a priori and the a posteriori is clean and absolute. Instead, we have degrees of empirical sensitivity.[5] This move disarms Kant's principal arguments for transcendental idealism, but it also transforms one's understanding of the philosophical project. It does not force us to abandon the idea that philosophy could be or become a *science*, but it does transform our conception of what that might mean and how philosophy relates to other sciences. It moves us significantly towards pragmatism, a more thorough holism, and, as we'll see, naturalism, because it means that there is no level of abstraction at which thought can leave natural reality behind. In my view, these are all salient improvements on Kant.

21. For Hegel, space and time are "mere forms" (see Hegel 1830: §254; §448), namely, the forms of the self-external, which can pertain both to certain contents of internal experiential states and to external, physical objects.[6] Hegel grants that space and time are forms of intuition, which sounds Kantian, but he does not think that being a form of intuition disqualifies space and time from applying to things as they are in themselves. The forms of self-externality can apply both to internal representational states and simple material objects and events. As far as I can tell, Hegel did not work out in any detail exactly what the relation is between the space–time that informs internal representational states and the space–time that informs external, physical objects. Complications arise, however, from Hegel's conception of sensation, which he acknowledges to be a lower-level precursor of intuition that we share with animals. Animals have no metric and do not do geometry, but space and time have to be present in sensation in some immediate way, lest it be impossible to understand how animals can maneuver in space and to some extent even in time (e.g., in animal planning and memory). But Hegel did not work out in any detail exactly how space and time show up in sensation.

22. Sellars worries about such matters. He proposes that Kant needs to distinguish the forms of sensibility strictly so-called, which would pertain to "the characteristics of the representations of receptivity as such"(Sellars 1967, I ¶77: 30) (i.e., sensations), from the space and time in which our *conceptual* representations (including intuition) locate their objects. That is, Sellars thinks Kant needs to distinguish better between the structure of sensory represent*ings* and the structure of sensory represent*eds*. This move becomes crucial to Sellars's own attempt to

[5] I argue for this interpretation of Hegel in deVries (1988, Chapter 3).

[6] See my discussion of the status of space and time in Hegel in deVries (1988: 111–116).

transcend transcendental idealism and defend the realism he always espoused, for it supports the claim that whatever the particular formal characteristics of the representations (represent*ing*s) of receptivity as such, the (corrected and conceptualized) space and time in which we locate the objects (the represent*ed*s) of our conceptual experience are by no means subjective and dependent on "brute-fact features of our subjectivity."

23. That is, Sellars exploits the fact that the organization of sensory experiencings may exhibit a structure that is abstractly and generically similar to the structure of physical objects and events, but not strictly and determinately identical to it. Of course, Sellars denies that we can just "read off" our *concept* of space and time from the properties and relations of our sensory states—that would be a naïve givenism. As the structure of the responses to worldly events encoded in our sensory states congeals into complex patterns that we eventually come to be able to characterize reflectively and ultimately *endorse, reject, or revise,* we develop *concepts* of space, time, and spatio-temporal properties as they exist objectively in the world. With sufficient sophisticated empirical research we can develop, starting from the conception of space and time we 'naturally' develop in response to the structure of sensory experiencings, a much more refined and grounded conception of the space and time of physical objects. Only at a much later stage in the development of the human sciences can we return to investigating in detail the nature of the properties and relations of our representings themselves and how they fit into the objective organization of the world represented.

24. That the spatio-temporality of experience *need not* cut us off from things as they are in themselves does not yet provide us with a positive reason to assert that we *are not* so cut off. We need a different argument to entitle us to the beliefs (1) that the space and time of our subjective experience actually does not separate us from things as they are in themselves; (2) that there is an objective space and time in which things exist independently of subjective cognition; and (3) that we have the wherewithal to cognize such things and the space and time in which they exist.

25. Despite the many differences between Hegel and Sellars in their approach to these challenges, I think there is a fundamental similarity in their strategy.[7] The strategy, boiled down, is this: Kant assumes a number of basic dualisms, a priori/a posteriori, analytic/synthetic, subjective/objective, receptivity/spontaneity, even empirical science/philosophy. Kant's enterprise of critical philosophy is formulated in terms of these dualisms. But Hegel insists that, trapped in these dualisms, Kant cannot satisfactorily explain human cognition or action. The gaps imposed by the assumed dualisms never get properly bridged or closed. Hegel therefore reconceives the critical project. As Sedgwick describes Hegel's reaction to one of the dualisms that rule Kant's conception of critique,

> [Hegel] calls into question the assumption that we can absolutely separate out our meta-level reflections on the conditions of the possibility of some science

[7] Let me note here that I have found Sally Sedgwick's (2012) analysis very helpful.

> or realm of inquiry from the norms that govern the actual practice of the science or realm of inquiry. He, in other words, doubts that we can undertake critique from an Archimedean point, from a standpoint of absolute 'independence from common reality' (FK 63/GW 296). (Sedgwick 2012: 150)

Rather than beginning with dualisms and seeking to explain how we can be at home in a divided world, Hegel abandons rigid dualisms and recognizes that human life is a dynamic, fallible enterprise that begins from relative ignorance (even of ourselves), is fraught with contradictions to be overcome, and works itself slowly via constant revision towards an ever more adequate grasp of and fittedness to the reality *within* which (as opposed to *over against* which) we live. The distinctions that arise must be explained, not assumed. Beginning from the original identity of subjective and objective and seeking to account for the categorial distinctions that seem to confront us as if eternally fixed in place at very least shifts the burden of proof. If we do not begin with starkly dualistic assumptions, the need for or reasonableness of a belief in unknowable things in themselves never forces itself upon us.

26. Sellars's strategy in his response to Kant is strikingly similar, for Sellars also recognizes that there is no Archimedean point outside of common reality from which the critic can operate. He also rejects absolute, hard and fast dualisms in favor of limited and pragmatically justified distinctions. Following Paul Redding, we can describe one commonality between Hegel and Sellars, as opposed to Kant, as a thoroughgoing rejection of both an exogenous and an endogenous given. That is, neither empirical content nor conceptual scheme are fixed deliverances without need of further justification. (Though this does not mean Sellars abjures all talk of Archimedean points—something to which we shall return.) But if conceptual form is not given independently of the real world it confronts, there is little reason to think that it is related only contingently to that world and affords us a mode of access to it unrelated to what that world is in itself. In Sellars's view, as well as Hegel's, human life is a dynamic, fallible enterprise that begins from relative ignorance (even of ourselves), is fraught with contradictions to be overcome, and works itself slowly via constant revision towards an ever more adequate grasp of and fittedness to the reality *within* which (as opposed to *over against* which) we live.

27. Kant's distinction between transcendental realism and transcendental idealism assumes that there is a clear line between the internal structures of a limited and receptive subjectivity, which are knowable a priori, and the external or objective entities that ultimately affect such a subjectivity. Because they can, apparently in Kant's view, vary independently of each other, the best we can do in empirical cognition is to grasp a merely phenomenal reality. Both Hegel and Sellars believe, in contrast, that subject and object are correlative and cannot be understood fully independently of each other. We may begin by grasping the world as it appears to us, but since neither an exogenous nor an endogenous given dictates a limit on our inquiries, a stopping point behind which we cannot go, it is possible to get behind appearances and come to understand the underlying unity of ourselves and the world in itself.

28. But that does not mean that the distinction between realism and idealism also evaporates. It remains a significant question what the fundamental reality of the world is, one on which Hegel and Sellars take opposed positions. The identity of subjective and objective that Hegel begins from (and ends up with) is a spiritual identity, an identity of Spirit; the identity of subjective and objective that Sellars begins from (and ends up with) is a material identity. Hegel's absolute idealism, as an ontology, ends up (like Sellars) endorsing epistemological realism; there is certainly no tincture of subjective idealism in his final view, for the intelligible order *is* the real order, and the real order *is* the intelligible order.

4 The unity of things

29. So let me finish with a few words about the fundamental identities that Hegel and Sellars, respectively, think underlie the many distinctions that articulate the structure of the world in which we live. For Hegel, the underlying reality of the world is Spirit, though getting a proper grip on the nature of Spirit is itself no easy task. Spirit is a synthetic unity of a manifold of disparate items, each of which finds its true nature in playing its role in the synthetic unity that is Spirit. Hegel has abandoned the prejudice against teleology that characterized most early modern thinkers, reviving the Aristotelian conception. Furthermore, he takes the Kantian notion of the mind as an activity of synthesis productive of objects and applies it across the board—not only to the activity of subjective minds constituting the objects of their experience, but to the constitution of such objects as exist, as they do, independently of any individual subjectivity. To paraphrase Kant, the same function which gives unity to the various representings in our mind also gives unity to the synthesis of various representeds in the world. The (capital-C) Concept and all the subordinate concepts that contribute to it are the rules guiding such synthesis, and must themselves be uncovered in the process of that synthesis. This logical realism is a form of spiritualizing nature, and it is important to Hegel that nature is not, ultimately, set over against Spirit, but enfolded within Spirit as one mode in which spirit necessarily expresses itself.

30. Sellars, as one might guess, turns all this on its head. Rather than spiritualizing nature, he naturalizes spirit or mind, but not by a conceptual *reduction* defining mind in terms of physical objects and properties. Rather, minds or persons are high-order patterns of activity within the physical world that respond to themselves and each other *as* persons, members of a community that recognize and act upon norms that regulate their activities. The forms of organization and activity evident in higher animals and especially humans call for different forms of description and explanation from those necessary for the description of the 'merely' physical or low-grade biological. Perhaps even more important, such creatures can take a first-person stance towards the world, recognizing both their knowledge and its limitations, and formulating and executing intentions, both singular 'I'-intentions and plural 'we'-intentions, thereby imposing a greater order on their world than it would otherwise exhibit.

31. For Sellars, the intelligible order arises *within* the real or physical order. It is a creation of the habits and practices we engage in, especially our linguistic practices and the forms of activity that the development of language enables. Through language we are able to transcend the immediacies of the moment by recognizing larger patterns and responding to them in complex ways, adjusting our behavior, both cognitive and practical, to the world we make as well as the world we find. The dialectical development of our concepts is not, in Sellars's view (unlike Hegel's), the very heartbeat of the world itself. But the intelligible order must nonetheless be tied to the real order. Semantical 'relations' cannot themselves do this job, given Sellars's treatment of them as functional classifiers of items in a language-like system. Sellars posits two points of 'contact' between the intelligible and the real orders. The first is a Peircean conception of absolute truth, a regulative ideal in which language and representation are so adjusted to the world that nothing surprises or destabilizes them. This is a contact between the intelligible and the real that is to-be-achieved; it is a task, not yet an actuality. The second is Sellars's notion of *picturing*, a naturalistic relation between (1) a special class of linguistic items (elementary sentences used in a reporting role), conceived of in terms of their natural rather than their normative or semantic properties, and (2) items in the real order. That language-in-use pictures the world is, in Sellars's view, a transcendental condition of the intentional order's properly engaging the real order. This is the "Archimedeian point outside the series of actual and possible beliefs in terms of which to define the ideal or limit to which members of this series might approximate" (Sellars 1967: V, ¶75: 142). Both of these forms of connection between the intelligible and the real orders need substantial explication. But that is a task for another day (or two or three).

32. So I leave you with the remark that Hegel and Sellars are both, in the end, monistic visionaries who try to explicate how it is possible for finite subjectivities to grasp the reality around them as it is in itself. No distinctions are primitive givens for them; each distinction must be justified, for, in the end, the world is One.

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