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UPJA

Founded in 2019, the *Undergraduate Philosophy Journal of Australasia* (UPJA) is the first undergraduate philosophy journal run by students from Australasia. We publish one volume and host two conferences annually and interview philosophers with a substantial connection to Australasia. We aim to be an inclusive and diverse journal and welcome submissions from undergraduates (and recent graduates) worldwide, on any philosophical topic, so long as the author attempts to make a substantive contribution to contemporary philosophy. Submissions from women and other members of underrepresented groups in philosophy, including those for whom English is not their first language, are particularly encouraged.

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Special mention:

Nathanael V. Navarro, Global Compassion Coalition, who was a referee for volume 6.1 and was accidentally omitted from the previous issue.

EDITORS' NOTES

Kia ora koutou,

Over the past year, it has been an absolute privilege to serve as an editor for UPJA. There is no shortage of talent in our region, and it has been very inspiring to read each submission for the recent volume. This year I was pleased to see submissions from many people belonging to underrepresented groups in philosophy. This highlights an exciting new direction for contemporary philosophy - one where we cross cultural boundaries and learn from a wide range of philosophical traditions.

I am immensely grateful to William, Paul, Billie, and Leon for their dedication and commitment to creating Volume 6.1 and 6.2 this past year. I am especially grateful to my co-editor-in-chief, Beau, for his talent and unwavering hard work in creating Volume 6.2.

We are proud to showcase a diverse range of papers in this volume. The winner of this year's best paper prizes, Charlotte Carnes, has done a brilliant job in crafting a paper that is rich in deep philosophical analysis, is easy and engaging to read, and is centred on a novel and exciting topic.

It has been a joy to be part of this journey, and I am excited to see where the journal heads next with our new editors-in-chief, William and Paul, who will undoubtedly do an excellent job in continuing UPJA's tradition of amplifying underrepresented voices and pushing the boundaries of undergraduate research. My hope for the future is that we see more submissions from students in Aotearoa New Zealand and Singapore!

I hope you enjoy reading Volume 6.2 of UPJA!

Ngā mihi nui,

Grier Rollinson
Te Herenga Waka: Victoria University of Wellington
May 2025

To all of our readers, authors, and referees without whom volume 6 of UPJA would not be possible.

I would also like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which this volume was partially created, the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people of the Kulin nation and pay my respects to their elders, past and present.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Leon Yin and Billie Angus, our two previous editors-in-chief who oversaw the publication of our Asian philosophy double feature special issue—the first of its kind. Thank you both for your handwork, dedication, and leadership during our time as associate editors. I also wish to thank my co-Editor-in-Chief Grier Rollinson for all of her excellent work and insightful contributions, making sure that the journal continues to run smoothly behind the scenes. It's been a pleasure to work alongside you. Congratulations as well to both Paul Kim and William Smith as they step into their new Editor-in-Chief roles and a huge amount of gratitude from us for your assistance with the current issue and for stepping up when needed. I look forward to seeing how UPJA will develop under your leadership.

During my time at UPJA I have been lucky enough to be a part of an incredible interview with Dr. Bryan Mukandi from the University of Wollongong and be a part of a wonderful virtual conference that showcased the work of the authors who are published here in this volume, and assist in the publication of our first ever special issue. It has been an honour and a privilege to have had a part to play in what UPJA has achieved in the last 12 months.

We are excited to announce the winners of this volume's prizes: congratulations to Charlotte Carnes for winning our Best Paper Award and Best Paper by an Underrepresented Group in philosophy for her paper titled 'Consent: the Brief Light Between Red and Green'. Thank you again to all the authors who took the time to submit and to our referees for taking time to review them.

We hope that you enjoy these insightful contributions from your undergraduate peers as much as we did.

Beau Kent
Deakin University
May 2025

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* Winner of Best Paper

† Winner of Best Paper (Member of an Underrepresented Group in Philosophy)

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Consent: The Brief Light Between Red and Green

Charlotte Carnes[1]

Australian National University

Abstract

This essay critically examines the limitations of consent as a framework for regulating sexual relationships. Drawing on liberal theory, I posit that consent, as a concept, is historically tethered to property rights, patriarchy, and the criminalization of rape, making it insufficient for addressing the complexities of ethical sexual interactions. I analyse the linguistic and legal uses of consent, particularly in relation to the emerging "enthusiastic consent" model, and highlight how these frameworks fail to fully capture the dynamics of good and ethical sex. While recent efforts have sought to expand consent's role beyond merely distinguishing sexual violence from sex, its continued dominance in legal discourse not only restricts consent's potential to define ethical sexual relationships, but also reinforces problematic concepts like "non-consensual sex," which obscure the distinct harm of rape.

§ 0. Introduction

Consent has for decades been at the helm of sexual ethics. It is the delineator between sexual intercourse and sexual violation, between the permissible and impermissible, the determiner of yes and no. However, consent can also be expressed, represented, and received in an array of forms, finding itself in the grey area of ambiguous interpersonal communication where it can be verbal or nonverbal, implicit or explicit, given then retracted. Consent is not black and white, but it is on paper and in law. This discussion centres around consent as the broker of different between sex and sexual violence, investigating why consent is inadequate at regulating sexual relationships beyond instances of sexual harm and that's okay. The liberal notion that consent does and should regulate sexual relationships

[1] *Charlotte Carnes is undertaking honours in philosophy at the Australian National University after completing a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Languages. Her research interests include feminist theory, normative and metaethics, and political philosophy. Her honours thesis examines the normative distortion of personhood and sovereignty in the pregnant mother and her foetus in the context of settler-colonial imaginaries.*

imposes a binary contractarian framework onto sex, which is by nature fluid and embodied.

This essay comprises three parts. First, in 'Consent and all that it implies', I begin by establishing the common linguistic conception and use of the term 'consent' arguing that consent is initially normatively positive as a regulatory act but quickly falls apart under scrutiny. I discuss its linguistic implications of active and passive participation, arguing that the word's binary and patriarchal character is fundamental to the concept of consent. Second, in 'Consent marks the difference', I posit consent as the practical and legal boundary between sex and sexual violence. Notably, while consent's locus in rape rather than sex is valuable and sensible, the rape-centred nature of the law's schematisation of consent is an irreconcilable aspect of why 'consent' is a flawed means of regulating ethical sexual relationships rather than unethical ones. Third, in 'Enthusiastic consent, a new paradigm', I discuss the merits and limits of the recently proposed 'enthusiastic consent' model which seeks to broaden the scope of consent and shift away from negative conceptions of consent to positive articulations of consent in sex. I also reflect on why we should not try and remake the contours of consent to correct these flaws but instead employ other models and frameworks to understand what makes good and ethical sex so.

Throughout these arguments, liberal theory underpins my analysis of the shortcomings of consent as the ethical rule of good sex. Ultimately, the answer to why consent fails to effectively regulate good and ethical sex is twofold: it operates best in a legal framework and thus serves to regulate sexual violence better; and it relies on the liberal conception of the self which mischaracterises the reality of most sexual relationships. At the root, much like the brief orange traffic light between red and green, consent was created for the purpose of cautiously telling us to stop not to go.

§ 1. Consent and All That It Implies

Consent, in its most common construction, returns to one of the first things we learn as children: to respect people's boundaries and to ask before hugging or touching someone. Here is where we first learn liberal bodily autonomy and the idea of what is and is not 'yours to touch'. Instilling this approach to interpersonal touch in children from an early age provides a logical direction for adolescents and young adults entering the world of sexual relationships which hosts its own assemblage of rules, norms, and, of course, play. Naturally it follows that the most common conception of consent instantiates two individuals, wherein one asks permission from the other who, ideally, has the option to refuse or accept. One individual yields to another's behest or acquiesces to another's agency. The liberal framework in which consent operates stems from dated – and often gendered – ideas of property and autonomy. Before considering how consent fails we must first understand how it operates.

Consent both linguistically and practically evokes ownership over one's own body. Joan McGregor articulates the normative significance of consent and its use as a method by which we 'grant others a right to cross our intimate borders'.[2] McGregor's use of the word 'right' here implicitly asserts that without consent or permission we have no 'right' to cross or transgress the 'borders' of another body. Her claim is an uncontroversial one though it illustrates how our most basic conception of consent is grounded in the liberal notion of bodily autonomy associated with property and ownership. Her definition aligns with the conception of consent as a performative speech act.

Consent theory assumes we are all naturally equal in sexual relationships, all of us possessing equal right to give or withhold consent. However, Jonathan Ichikawa and Catherine MacKinnon agree that consent language presupposes an active-passive dichotomy or an 'actor and acted-upon' which has historically been sexed.[3] The role of the acted-upon does not necessitate passivity though it does require that one defers or yields to the other's will or behest – consent is always given to something or someone. 'Talking about whether *S* consents to Φ will convey the idea that Φ is something done to *S*, rather than something *S* does themself'.[4] Ichikawa locates the problem with consent's implication of deference in an asymmetry of autonomy along the same lines as other feminist scholars such as MacKinnon and Pateman who have identified this asymmetry in gender dynamics.[5] In the performative view, when we consent we reproduce the conditions that create the need for consent and we strengthen the structures that uphold its necessitation. In MacKinnon's view, this would mean that in consenting to sex as the 'acted-upon', one maintains and reinforces the asymmetry of power in their sexual dynamic that led them to consenting. Every time consent is given it illuminates a field of power that is silently distorted.

Carole Pateman puts it succinctly that consent is both the establishing fact and central problem of liberalism as it endeavours to maintain individual equality, yet equality is also a precondition for the practice and validity of consent.[6] These foundational concepts of freedom and equality in consent theory ignore the realities of power and domination in our sexual lives, she argues. While Pateman is specifically talking about the political and sexual status of women in the social

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[2] Joan McGregor, "Why When She Says No She Doesn't Mean Maybe and Doesn't Mean Yes: A Critical Reconstruction of Consent, Sex, and The Law," *Legal Theory* 2, no. 3 (1996), 196.

[3] Jonathan Jenkins Ichikawa, "Presupposition and Consent," *Feminist Philosophy Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (2020), 11; Catharine A. MacKinnon, "Rape Redefined," *Harvard Law & Policy Review* 10, no. 2 (2016), 440.

[4] Ichikawa, "Presupposition and Consent," 12.

[5] I'll note here that feminist critiques of consent theory such as Carole Pateman and Catherine MacKinnon's discuss at length the gendered nature of consent and how women who consent to sexual activity with men are not equal in their consenting. Though I do see this asymmetry of power as one that is traditionally gendered through our perceptions of consent being something that women do more often than men especially in heterosexual relationships, the asymmetry is applicable – in my view – to all sexual dynamics, including queer, BDSM, polyamorous, and other non-traditional sexual relationships.

[6] Carole Pateman, "Women and Consent," *Political Theory* 8, no. 2 (1980), 162.

contract, her position informs MacKinnon and Ichikawa's asymmetry arguments which can be generalised to any sexual relationship. This assumed asymmetry makes consent unfit for regulating ethical, embodied, and mutually reciprocal sexual relationships as it starts with a baseline inequality that should not be seen in good ethical sex – more on this point in §4. Consent theory has struggled to reconcile this flaw of inequality with sex that is mutual, embodied and reciprocal.[7] MacKinnon argues that in equal sexual interactions 'consent is not needed and does not occur because there is no transgression to be redeemed'.[8] Quill Kukla observes a similar point that contrary to the consent model, requesting sex ergo asking for consent, while it is something we do it is not the way most sexual interactions begin 'at least not when things are going well' – noting that requests throughout sex are more common than requests for sex.[9] This is the difficulty of the consent model, it has a tendency to account more for situations where one is unsure if the other participant actually wants to have sex rather than instances where both parties are mutually interested in sex. Kukla goes on to say that good sexual communication requires more be done with language than 'request, agree to, and refuse sex'.[10] Ichikawa radically argues that consent is not a necessary condition for ethical sex. His point is not that non-consensual sex is okay but rather that there can be good sexual experiences that could not honestly be described as 'consensual' if consent was never sought.[11] Ichikawa's argument echoes at the crux of mine that our common linguistic conception of consent as a request we respond or yield to is wrapped up in ideas about our bodies as something we have ownership over and is incompatible with how we talk about good sex.

Ichikawa, MacKinnon, and Kukla's positions on consent and their assertions that consent requires we respond to a request reveal how our conception of consent works against mutually reciprocal and ethical sexual dynamics. They all emphasise the recent push for consent language to become more inclusive and expansive in an attempt to reconcile the problem of asymmetry – this is where enthusiastic consent fails. For MacKinnon, consent's 'credibility cover' is the assumption that it stands in for desire.[12] While consent is not incompatible with desire and thus can be included and is hopefully present in consenting to sex, the term is seldom used in that context and is not limited to or even seen to include desire in law. The Youth Law Australia website defines consent as a 'free and voluntary agreement' – this wording is also used in most state legislation on the matter – they continue that it is useful to 'think

[7] Thank you to two of my anonymous reviewers for encouraging me to draw out the following point.
[8] MacKinnon, "Rape Redefined," 476.
[9] Rebecca Kukla, "That's What She Said: The Language of Sexual Negotiation," *Ethics* 129, no. 1 (2018), 80.
[10] Kukla, "That's What She Said," 75.
[11] Ichikawa, "Presupposition and Consent," 11. Ichikawa stresses that good or ethical sex which does not involve consent should not be considered 'non consensual sex' or 'sex without consent' as it linguistically communicates sexual wrongdoing. He maintains that his claim is consistent with a core belief of consent theory that 'non consensual sex is always wrong'. See pp. 13–15 for further discussion.
[12] MacKinnon, "Rape Redefined," 450.

of consent as an enthusiastic yes!'.[13] Here we see the assumption that the equality of all parties is implicit in consent written in law. While the consent.gov.au page states that consent is not 'a transaction or a contract – an exchange where someone "gives" or "receives" consent', the former website citing law suggests the principles of a contract carry over to sexual consent in law in some form – as consent in its original form occurs in the social contract. Beyond that, the language of an 'enthusiastic yes' does not account for desire but instead, answering a request; after all, yes is the answer to a question. The definition embedded in the law reflects our common conceptions of consent as an agreement, something one party says yes to. Thus, a tension arises between those who seek to redefine the terms of consent and how we typically conceive of it and the role consent plays in defining rape.

§ 2. Consent Marks the Difference

Attempts to locate the presence of consent in a sexual interaction – asking 'was there consent?' — lie at the heart of determining whether a sexual encounter was morally *permissible* sex or morally *impermissible* sex. To evaluate if the concept of 'consent' effectively regulates respectful sexual relationships, we must investigate consent's place as the veil between this permissible-impermissible dichotomy that subtends sexual ethics.

Consent was not always the defining feature of sexual misconduct. Susan Brownmiller posits that 'rape entered the law through the back door… as a property crime of man against man'.[14] Just as setting alight to another person's house damages the property; early conceptions of rape saw a crime which diminished a woman's value. Historically, the push to carve consent into law and sexual regulation began once women were legally deemed to have sexual autonomy. The notion of rape as an offence against the owner of sexual property continues to influence legal and common understandings of rape, however, in line with the previous example, the owner is now cast as the woman. From a liberal standpoint, the source of harm in sexual assault is in the violation of autonomy and bodily integrity, commonly conceived as the absence of consent.[15] Recalling that consent assumes equality between actors and is defined in Australian law as a 'free and voluntary agreement', with autonomy comes agency, the free ability to provide or withhold consent to action. Where violation of autonomy is conceived as the absence of consent there is a question to answer: is true consent possible where beings do not have equal autonomy and agency? I will shortly return to this question.

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[13] "What Is Consent?," Youth Law Australia, accessed March 6, 2025, https://yla.org.au/act/topics/health-love-and-sex/consent/.

[14] Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), 85.

[15] Ellie Anderson, "A Phenomenological Approach to Sexual Consent," *Feminist Philosophy Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (2022), 2.

Richard Posner controversially argues that 'all that distinguishes [rape] from ordinary sexual intercourse is lack of consent'.[16] Similarly, Heidi M. Hurd describes consent as a 'moral magic' which transforms otherwise unacceptable actions acceptable.[17] In other words, consent transforms rape into sex. This assertion has two main implications which I will discuss in detail: first, that rape becomes the point from which sex becomes intelligible; and second, this account renders the body property of the mind which has roots in a problematic history.

Susan Brison argues that conflating rape with non-consensual sex distils a large socio-political problem of gendered harm into a problem of choice, thus constituting an epistemic injustice for victims of non-consensual sexual encounters.[18] For Brison, to question 'was there consent?' when assessing whether a sexual encounter was morally permissible or impermissible – typically where a victim has alleged sexual violence – deliberately hides the harm of having one's will be subjugated by another. Further, however, asking 'was there consent?' implies that will was even a force at play and that the victim may have been able to change the situation rather than reckoning with the ubiquitous norm of gendered harm. This misrepresentative ethical framework hermeneutically marginalises rape victims in preventing them from making sense of a unique experience and recognising it for the violent act it is. This framework creates a stifling portrait of rape that obscures the experience of rape so much so that a victim's self-interpretation of a sexually violent encounter is distorted to the point of non-recognition – followed often by shame for dissenting to this narrative. This conflation of responsibility for the harm of rape produces an epistemic injustice by deflating the testimonial credibility of rape victims who have to work against a perceived obligation to vocalise consent as an interlocutor equal to their rapist.[19] This false discursive equality sits squarely within the liberal paradigm and places violated autonomy and free will at the fore rather than acknowledging a uniquely social and historical harm. Along similar lines, Amia Srinivasan states 'when we see consent as the sole constraint on ethically OK sex, we are pushed towards a naturalisation of sexual preference in which the rape fantasy becomes a primordial rather than a political fact'.[20]

Consent is deeply grounded in the liberal conception of the self as *homo economicus*, defined by Diana T. Meyers as the 'free and rational chooser and actor whose desires are ranked in a coherent order and whose aim is to maximise desire satisfaction'.[21] This image of the self presumes a free agent who holds self-interest at the core of his decision-making process and is unconstrained by factors lying outside his own interests. However, *homo economicus* depends on masculinist myths of independence that deny our mutual dependence on and co-embodiment with one another. In assuming perfect rationalism, *homo economicus* also overlooks the gendered power

[16] Richard Posner, *Sex and Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 388.
[17] Heidi M. Hurd, "The Moral Magic of Consent," *Legal Theory* 2, no. 2 (1996), 123.
[18] Susan J. Brison, "What's Consent Got to Do with It?," *Social Philosophy Today*, 2021.
[19] Thank you to Jaden Ogwayo for fruitful discussion on this section.
[20] Amia Srinivasan, *The Right to Sex* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), 84.
[21] Diana T. Meyers, *Feminists Rethink the Self* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1997), 2.

dynamics which have historically robbed women of their agency thus critically rupturing the equalist narrative consent-forward theorists posit. According to Judith Butler, the boundaries of the self and the body are porous.[22] Life is not sustained nor driven by self-preservation, but by a condition of interdependence, Butler argues, the body's boundary is 'a negotiation in which I am bound to you in my separateness'.[23] Negotiation and interrelationality are at the heart of good and ethical sex, encouraging equilibrium. Their account of the body as a site of relation to others – though it regards our political relationships rather than our sexual ones – counteracts the masculinist notion of independence set forth in liberalism. Succinctly, 'the boundary of who I am is the boundary of the body, but the boundary of the body never fully belongs to me'.[24]

The notion of the 'individual' works in tandem with the private/public distinction that operates at the heart of liberalism. Sex positive feminists have used the public private distinction to put forward the argument that sex has no normative quality – it is not ethical or unethical, it is merely wanted or unwanted.[25] In fashioning consent as the sole moral boundary of sex and moving away from moralising about sexual desires, sexual ethics must then rest on the individual right to privacy. As Srinivasan puts it, 'feminism finds itself not only questioning the liberal distinction between the public and private, but also insisting on it'.[26] Though this distinction was crucial in the fight for gay liberation and pro-sex feminism, the assertion that we just have to trust that if the two parties consented in the privacy of their own (symbolic) bedroom then the sex did not transgress any ethical boundaries is a compromise.[27] That sex is consensual makes it all above board harks back to using rape as the reference point for sexual ethics and an inevitability rather than a political fact.

The characterisation of the rational actor always prioritising self-interest inherent in liberalism and to an extent, consent theory, subdues patterns of patriarchy and sexual domination. To the same extent that 'if a wife's subjection to her husband has a "natural" foundation, she cannot also be seen as a "naturally" free and equal individual,' if a woman's consent to a man is rooted in the natural presumption that it is she who gives consent and a man who requests consent, she cannot also be seen as naturally equal in sex.[28] Though Pateman's analysis is highly gendered and somewhat dated, it speaks to the actor-acted upon framework that consent theorists have been unable to reconcile. That no consenter can be truly equal to the consentee transcends gender dynamics because it is built into consent's very function as the delineator between sex and rape. Thus, we cannot 'salvage consent theory by altering the contours of… "consent"' as the difficulty with expanding our definition

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[22] Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso, 2009), 54.
[23] Butler, *Frames of War*, 44.
[24] Butler, *Frames of War*, 54.
[25] Srinivasan, *The Right to Sex*, 82.
[26] Srinivasan, *The Right to Sex*, 83.
[27] Though outside the scope of this discussion, on the right to privacy and how consent operates as a defining and mandatory feature of BDSM, see R. Bauer, *Queer BDSM Intimacies: Critical Consent and Pushing Boundaries* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014).
[28] Pateman, "Women and Consent," 152.

lies in its legal use as a distinguishing fact between sex and rape.[29] Further, the legalistic and liberal overtones of consent do not accommodate the intercorporeal character of sex.

These perspectives reveal further problems with the legalistic and liberal undertones of consent; it more successfully protects perpetrators than victims because this token of consent that was received or claimed to be so by the perpetrator is then the tool with which they may deny any wrongdoing.[30] Thus, the dominant conception of consent and its ideological vestiges of equality under liberal patriarchy favour instances where consent was evident over morally murkier situations where consent was ambiguous or even situations where consent was absent because the experience did not involve such a request.

§ 3. Enthusiastic Consent, a New Paradigm?

Given the consent model's inefficacy as an ethical measure of sex, by what other means might we conceive of safeguarding ethical standards in sexual relationships? Michelle Anderson proposes a 'negotiation model' of legal consent. She advocates for eliminating the legal requirement of non-consent in criminal legislation prohibiting rape in favour of recognising the centrality of negotiation and open discussion in the duration of sexual interactions' communicative exchange(s). Anderson's ideal definition of rape is 'engaging in an act of sexual penetration with another person when the actor fails to negotiate the penetration with the partner before it occurs'.[31] While Anderson's model is a positive step away from the contractual and patriarchal basis of consent, as with most legal discussion surrounding consent, it focuses on the difference between rape and sex which is coloured by the presence or non-presence of consent. Further, Anderson's definition of rape might be enhanced by replacing 'before' with 'before and while' to recognise the ongoing nature of negotiated consent that she espouses.

Anderson's negotiation model is just one instance of many attempts to reconfigure the contours of consent or reimagine consent's utility and role in regulating sexual relationships. Another pertinent conception of consent is the 'enthusiastic consent' model, colloquially known as 'yes means yes'. Jonathan Ichikawa describes the mission of the enthusiastic consent model as treating consent as a 'label for whatever it is we think makes sex morally permissible'.[32] This obviates the circularity of the 'no means no' model which, while respecting active refusal of another's consent as a violation of autonomy, fails to provide positive conditions of consent in itself beyond any absence of non-consent. This circularity obliges enthusiastic consent – the active expression of agreement to or interest in an activity – as an ethical precondition of sex. Per a 'no means no' focus on non-consent, silence could be erroneously

[29] Ichikawa, "Presupposition and Consent," 17.
[30] Linda Martín Alcoff, *Rape and Resistance* (Newark, UK: Polity Press, 2018), 138.
[31] Michelle J. Anderson, "Negotiating Sex," *Southern California Law Review* 78, no. 6 (2005): 1407.
[32] Ichikawa, "Presupposition and Consent," 17.

conceived of as consent – given a lack of active expression against a sexual act – but shifting to a positive 'yes means yes' conception of consent seeks to ensure that both parties' articulated agreement is present before and during consensual sexual relations. However, neither model escapes nor reconciles the core fault of 'consensual' sexual ethics and each inadvertently perpetuates the problematic framing that sex is ethically legitimised by the acquiescence of one person to someone else's requests. Put best by Anderson, 'when things heat up, the Yes Model melts into the No Model, in which silence constitutes consent'.[33] Srinivasan's critique of sex positivism can apply to enthusiastic consent. Just as sex positivism refuses to engage with why we desire what we do so too does the enthusiastic consent model refuse to engage with why we consent and how it enforces problematic ideals of property and patriarchy.

Consent discourse tends to position speech as separate from nonverbal behaviours, privileging the former over the latter.[34] This demarcation undermines the idea that one can express affirmation or a 'yes' through nonverbal behaviour. The requirement of enthusiasm and by extension, explicit consent, 'distorts our understanding of how a great deal of sex is initiated'.[35] For instance, enthusiasm might be absent for a few reasons, including desiring closeness, trying something new or trying for a baby. We can cautiously or ambivalently consent to something that ends up being phenomenal sex just as you can enthusiastically consent to what ends up being mediocre or just bad sex – ultimately, outside of sexual violence consent has little bearing on the outcome. Take the example of two teenagers trying oral sex for the first time, they might be cautious to try something new and express consent in such a way that reflects this issue but, nonetheless, are still consenting to the act. In the case of having sex because one desires closeness with their partner through sexual intimacy, though this may seem problematic, it is not the lack of enthusiasm in my view that makes this encounter dubious. Few would argue that these are examples of intuitively unethical sex simply due to absence of enthusiasm, however, proponents of the enthusiastic consent model posit that 'changing the thinking from sex when someone says no is wrong, to sex when someone doesn't openly and enthusiastically want it is wrong' ergo would classify these encounters as unethical or morally dubious.[36]

I have so far argued that consent is a flawed means of regulating ethical sexual relationships and should not be subject to changing conceptions, leaving now the question of how we should regulate these relationships if not with consent? Recalling consent's reliance on the conception of sexual actors as *homo economicus*, the self-possessed rational decision-maker, Ellie Anderson calls for a phenomenological approach to consent as 'feeling-with'. A brief examination of her definition entails both partners experiencing a 'doubled sensation of being both a

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[33] Anderson, "Negotiating Sex," 1405.
[34] Anderson, "A Phenomenological Approach to Sexual Consent," 18.
[35] Kukla, "That's What She Said," 83–4.
[36] Jaclyn Friedman and Jessica Valenti, eds., *Yes Means Yes! Visions of Female Sexual Power & a World without Rape* (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008), 11.

desiring subject and an object of the other's desire'.[37] Though she defies Ichikawa's argument – which I have above reiterated – against redefining consent, her focus on embodied communication and negotiation which blurs the line between self and other makes better sense of how we conceive of and measure sex compared to the attitudinal approach which sees consent as the mind as granting access to the body. This is what sexual politics and to an extent, sexual ethics, ought to do. She accounts for the factors that characterise the enjoyment of sex regardless of the presence or non-presence of consent such as communication, desire, pace, pleasure, among others. This seems incoherent with my argument that we ought not redefine consent, however, I would argue her redefinition exceeds consent. In considering objections to her argument Anderson states that on Ichikawa's view, her 'attempt to redefine consent phenomenologically as a thick, embodied dynamic of feeling-with would not be helpful, because it is not what ordinary people mean by consent most of the time'.[38] While I take her point and agree that people do not commonly describe consent as she has due to a legal-forward conception, as Ichikawa argues 'consent is supposed to explain moral features of sex, not merely redescribe them'.[39] Her account describes the moral features of sex, it does not explain them, hence its transcendence of consent.

§ 4. Conclusion

Consent sustains legal means of 'regulating' sexual relationships; however, its utility mostly ends there. When discussions of ethical sex are framed by consent and refusal, rape arises as the only sexual harm we have the tools to discuss. By extension, rape then comes to be understood merely as sex without consent rather than a unique violation in its own right. Following, if rape is the only presumed way that sex can go wrong, this dilutes the serious harm of rape while setting a dangerously high threshold for what is considered unethical sex. Currently, consent acts as the veil between sex and rape, but is a concept better placed in the latter's discourse than in discourse surrounding what makes sex ethical or good. As a concept, consent is too bound up in patriarchy and property to effectively describe the conditions that create respectful sexual relationships in contemporary sex done for the sake of pleasure. Consent is just one tool in our linguistic toolbox that allows us to understand ethical sex; for many, it is not the one they reach for first.

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[37] Anderson, "A Phenomenological Approach to Sexual Consent," 17.
[38] Anderson, "A Phenomenological Approach to Sexual Consent," 20.
[39] Ichikawa, "Presupposition and Consent," 24. Emphasis original.

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Beyond Production and Manifestation: Re-evaluating Uddyotakara's Logical Moves Against Sāṃkhya in Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika 458.5–459.2

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Abstract

In this paper, I revisit a segment of the Indian philosophical debate between asatkāryavādins (those who hold that effects are not existent within their causes, pre-causation, and must be produced anew) and satkāryavādins (those who hold that effects are existent within their causes, pre-causation, and cannot be produced anew) featuring Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya in Nyāyasūtra 4.1.49, Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya 242.16, and Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika 458.5–459.2. I analyze the sub-debate—as formulated by the attributed author of Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika, Uddyotakara—wherein Sāṃkhya argues that during causation, pre-existent effects are merely manifested and are not new creations, while Uddyotakara, on Nyāya's behalf, shows Sāṃkhya's position to be contradictory, thus establishing Nyāya's position that the effect is not pre-existent and hence, must be a new creation. I show that the contradiction identified by Uddyotakara is a consequence of an equivocation found in his reconstruction of Sāṃkhya's satkāryavādin position and does not follow from his arguments in [NV 458.5–459.2]. I further argue that if the equivocation is identified, then this segment of the asatkāryavādin versus satkāryavādin debate that seems to be a sub-debate between Nyāya and Sāṃkhya on the nature of the effect collapses into a fundamental disagreement about ontological commitments, the incompatibility of which serves as possible grounds for a meta-ontological debate.

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§ 1. The Debate

If a mango seed turns into a mango plant, does that seed contain that plant before turning into that plant? Does the given mango seed and the mango plant (that the given seed turns into) co-exist before this seed turns into this plant? Analysing the philosophical disagreement on how to answer the first type of question is at the heart of this paper. Put simply, my project is to show that how one answers the first type of question is linked to how one answers the second type of question. An affirmative answer to the first type of question, as for Sāṃkhya, presupposes the commitment that such co-existence is the case. Alternatively, as for Nyāya, the commitment that such co-existence is not the case entails a negative answer to the first type of question. I demonstrate that by making said commitments explicit, the charge of contradictoriness against Sāṃkhya's affirmative answer—by the Nyāya philosopher Uddyotakara in Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika 458.5–459.2—cannot be sustained. The form of the first question can be made explicit as follows: Given two distinguishable entities/events X and Y, wherein we know that X can and does turns into Y (but not vice versa), is it the case that Y is contained within X, prior to X turning into Y—on any understanding of the concepts: 'distinguishable' and 'containment'? For those who hold that there are entities/events such that X turns into Y, this question can be restated thus:

> Q1: If the cause brings about the effect, then is the effect contained within the cause, in some form, prior to that effect being brought about by that cause?[2]

Satkāryavādins say, "Yes."; Asatkāryavādins say, "No." Thenceforth, a debate ensues. satkāryavādins—specifically, philosophers from the Indian philosophical school Sāṃkhya, the Sāṃkhyas[3]—must clarify in what form the effect is contained within the cause. For example, they must account for how the mango plant is contained within the mango seed from which it arises. On the other hand, asatkāryavādins—specifically, philosophers from the Indian philosophical school Nyāya, the Naiyāyikas—must give a robust account of causal regularity in the absence of such containment.[4] For example, they must account for why a specific mango seed turns, exclusively, into a specific mango plant and not into an apple tree,

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[2] What I mean by temporal priority and other related notions shall be designated in §3.

[3] This is a historical and grammatical peculiarity wherein the word 'Sāṃkhya' can refer to both a school of Indian philosophy and a (singular) follower of that school. There is an old term 'Sāṃkhist' as found in Mukerji, J. N. (1932) Sāṃkhya or The Theory of Reality: A Critical and Constructive Study of Īśvarakṛṣṇa's Sāṃkhya-kārika, Sreekrishna Printing Works, 2; and Bhattacharyya, Kalidas (1981) 'Studies in Comparative Indian Philosophy.' Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Institute of Culture 32(1), 15., which is not in popular use anymore. Throughout this paper, the sentence in which this word occurs should serve as the grammatical context for determining what "Sāṃkhya" refers to—the follower or the philosophical school—within that sentence. Thereby I follow Matthew Dasti and Stephen Phillips in the usage of 'Sāṃkhya', as can be seen here: Dasti, Matthew, and Stephen Phillips (2017) The Nyāya-sūtra: Selections with Early Commentaries. Hackett Publishing, 112–13.

[4] By Causal Regularity, I have in mind the following articulation of the Regularity View of Causation (RVC): "iii. all events of type C (i.e. events that are like c) are regularly followed by (or are constantly conjoined with) events of type E (i.e. events like e)." as it occurs here: Psillos, Stathis, and Helen Beebee, Christopher Hitchcock, and Peter Menzies eds. (2012) 'Regularity Theories', *The Oxford Handbook of Causation*, Oxford Academic, 131.

grapevine, raspberry bush, etc.[5] These clarifications occur throughout various philosophical texts, one of which is the Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika by Naiyāyika Uddyotakara. This paper focuses on examining the logical structure of one such sub-debate between a Naiyāyika-siddhāntin and a Sāṃkhya-pūrvapakṣin that is found in [NS 4.1.49], [NB 242.16], and [NV 458.5–459.2][6] The following question spearheads this sub-debate:

Q2: Is the effect something *new* that comes about?

For the *satkāryavādins*, the cause contains the effect already. Therefore, Sāṃkhya's answer is "No." For the *asatkāryavādins*, the cause does not contain the effect. Therefore, Nyāya's answer is "Yes."[7] Uddyotakara speaks on behalf of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, while the Sāṃkhya opponent remains unidentified. However, given that Uddyotakara's is a Nyāya commentative philosophical text, he reconstructs the position of a Sāṃkhya opponent, and the debate ends with Uddyotakara claiming that a contradiction arises from the Sāṃkhya position. Thus, the debate resolves in favour of Nyāya. This allows Uddyotakara to establish the correctness and the philosophical merit of the *asatkāryavādin* answers to Q_1 and Q_2 over the *satkāryavādin* answers.[8]

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[5] The adjective 'specific' may seem redundant, but it designates token-to-token or type-to-type causation, as opposed to type-to-token or token-to-type causation. Which is to say that the *asatkāryavādin* must also explain *how* a mango seed on one side of my garden bed in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India is as incapable of turning into the *type* of mango sapling that is found in Los Michos, Sinaloa, Mexico—as it is incapable of turning into the *token* of mango sapling that could grow out from a mango seed planted on *another* side of the same garden bed.

[6] Two important points of contextual clarification:
(i) Within a Nyāya-typical philosophical debate (*vāda*), the *siddhāntin* is one who purports the thesis (*siddhānta*) and the *pūrvapakṣin* is one who purports the counter-thesis (*pūrvapakṣa*). For contemporary debating-sensibilities, given a debate topic of the form: "Is X the case?" or "Should Y be the case?"—the *siddhāntin* would say "Yes; X is the case." or "Yes; Y should be the case.", while the *pūrvapakṣin* would say "No; X is not the case." or "No; Y should not be the case." and the debate would ensue accordingly. For more on Nyāya notion of debate see Dasti and Phillips, 175–200. For more on *vāda* see footnote 84.
(ii) My teachers of Indian Philosophy and the Sanskrit Language—namely Professors Alex Watson, Dimitry Shevchenko, Nirajan Kafle, Arindam Chakrabarti, and Raja Rosenhagen at Ashoka University (India)—employ a nomenclatural schema, which will be employed by me in this paper. I will be translating the Sanskrit words "-vāda" and "-vādin" as the English suffixes "-ism" and "-ist" respectively. For example, "sat-kārya-vāda" is translated, literally, as Existent-Effect-*ism*. Similarly, "sat-kārya-vādin" which is the Sanskrit word used to identify a (singular) propagator and/or defender of any of the philosophical positions within *satkāryavāda*—is translated as Existent-Effect-*ist*. I restrict these translations to the footnotes as they won't be relevant to understanding the philosophical positions and the discussion about them that will occur within this paper. That being said, I provide these translations nonetheless for they may assist the reader in keeping a track of what position connects with which discussion where—if the reader is so inclined to keep a track of debates in Indian Philosophy.

[7] The reader may note how their answers to Q_2 relate to those to Q_1.

[8] Uddyotakara concludes, as we shall see towards the end of that §3.2, since the Sāṃkhya attempt to contain the effect within the cause leads to a contradiction, it must be the case that, as the Nyāya purports, the cause does not contain the effect. Moreover, since the cause does not contain the effect, when the cause does bring about the effect, the effect must be something *new* that comes about.

In this paper, I show that the precious contradiction of Uddyotakara is a consequence of an equivocation found in his reconstruction of Sāṃkhya's *satkāryavādin* position and does not follow from his arguments in [NV 458.5–459.2]. I further argue that if the equivocation is identified, then this segment of the *asatkāryavādin* versus *satkāryavādin* debate that seems to be a sub-debate between Nyāya and Sāṃkhya on the nature of the effect collapses into a fundamental disagreement about ontological commitments.[9] §2 focuses on the Nyāya-Sāṃkhya disagreement on causation leading up to Uddyotakara. §2.1 features some considerations, and §2.2 elaborates upon the causal disagreement utilising said considerations. §3 focuses on extracting Uddyotakara's arguments, demonstrating their failure to establish a contradiction within the Sāṃkhya causal position and identifying reasons thereof. §3.1 models Nyāya's and Sāṃkhya's causal views in light of §1–2, §3.2 features Uddyotakara's three major arguments employing said models, §3.3 postulates Sāṃkhya's ontological commitments and captures why said arguments fail, and §3.4 identifies the reason for Uddyotakara's equivocational reconstruction of the Sāṃkhya position that leads to said failure by postualting Nyāya's ontological commitments. In §4, I conclude by demonstrating the incompatibility of Nyāya's and Sāṃkhya's ontological commitments as possible grounds for a meta-ontological debate, notwithstanding the faults in [NV 458.5–459.2].

§ 2. A New Introduction to Old Things[10]

In this section, I propose four cases, and at the end of each case, I pose the following question:

> Q_3: Have we now considered one thing or two things?[11]

Reviewing the four cases and our answer to each instance of Q3, we shall articulate nuances of the Nyāya (qua *asatkāryavādin*) versus Sāṃkhya (qua *satkāryavādin*) debate—culminating into Uddyotakara's qualms with Sāṃkhya's position.

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[9] It should be noted that this is not merely a paper on causation but a paper that analyses the logical robustness of a debate that has been dubbed as a debate on causation and the conclusion that this debate tries to establish. Therefore, I will not be defending the Nyāya position on causation against that of Sāṃkhya or vice versa. My modest project is to show that Uddyotakara's argumentative manouevers in [NV 458.5 – 459.2] fail and are unable to establish the refutation of the Sāṃkhya causal view in the way he takes them to.

[10] The style of suppositional reasoning (i.e. consideration-based reasoning) employed in this section is inspired by the what the Naiyāyikas called *tarka*. It was the primary tool employed in philosophical reasoning by all schools of Indian Philosophy, even by the Cārvākas (the Hedonist School) and skeptics like Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta and Śrīharṣa. For more on *tarka* the reader may consult Phillips, Stephen (2014) *Epistemology in Classical India: The Knowledge Sources of the Nyāya School*, Routledge/Taylor & Francis, 30–33.

[11] Within §1, I do not specify what I mean by 'thing'. However, I use this word in specific ways in the hopes of disambiguating my usage to designate a general usage of the term. This is intentional on my part to fit the colloquio-pragmatic ends of suppositional reasoning (*tarka*, see footnote 10). Within §2, as will be noted, I discharge the usage of 'thing' and instead use the ontologically restricted 'entity/event'—as we model the causal views of Nyāya and Sāṃkhya in greater detail.

§ *2.1 Four Cases, Four Considerations*

Case A: Consider a thing. It is raining while I am writing this, and there is cereal kept across the mess hall, where I am seated, so I suggest we consider a bowl of milk. Then, let us again consider something. Say, we consider a numerically identical bowl of milk, containing numerically identical milk occupying the same space at the same time as the previously considered bowl of milk.

Have we now considered one thing or two things? While we have made two considerations, I'd say they have been about the one and the same (qua numerically identical) thing.

Case B: Consider something. Say, a bowl of milk. Then, consider something *else*. Say, a bowl of yoghurt.

Have we now considered one thing or two things? For our purposes, no bowl of milk is also, simultaneously, a bowl of yoghurt, and no bowl of yoghurt is also, simultaneously, a bowl of milk.[12] In other words, a bowl of yoghurt is sufficiently *distinct* from a bowl of milk for them not to be one and the same thing, whatever may be the points of difference (or similarity).[13] If this much is uncontroversially true, then we have now considered *two* things: a bowl of milk and a bowl of yoghurt. With two things considered, we may now consider how they may be related to each other.[14]

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[12] Of course, this assumes that the bowl of milk contains no traces of yoghurt and vice versa. This assumption—about the distinction between a bowl of milk and a bowl of yoghurt—shall sustain throughout this paper, shall sustain throughout the paper unless specified otherwise. Additionally, guided by this notion of simultaneity and numerical distinction, Nyāya's causal model [3.1.N] and Sāṃkhya's causal model [3.1.S] include [3.1.N.3] and [3.1.S.3], respectively.

[13]This is à la Leibniz's Indiscernability of Identicals. See Section 1 of Forrest, Peter, and Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, eds. (2010) 'The Identity of Indiscernibles', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. This is the notion of discernability I have in mind when I mention two entities/events being distinguishable towards the beginning of §1.

[14] In my understanding, such considerations were possible even when we had just one thing at hand. In fact, earlier, we did engage in evaluating whether the relation of identity holds between the object of our first consideration and that of our second consideration. Upon granting that said relation holds, we were able to arrive at the conclusion that the considerations thus far have been about not two but one thing. The reader may know that *numerical identity*, stipulated thus, is an example of a binary relation which is *reflexive* i.e. a relation which a thing (here, a bowl of curd) stands in with itself (i.e. a bowl of curd is identical to itself). The relation which will be relevant to us in this paper will be the causal relation (between the cause and effect) which, for our purposes, will remain asymmetric and hence, irreflexive. Therefore, I chose to invoke the talk of relations after the consideration of (at least) two things. For more on relations, the reader may want to peruse Section1 of MacBride, Fraser, and Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, eds. (2016) 'Relations', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2025 Edition). An example of how I shall be invoking relations in this paper: One may ask questions of the form: "Is the bowl of milk placed to the left of the bowl of yoghurt?" or "Was the bowl of milk filled before the bowl of yoghurt was filled?" The former seems to be a question about a spatial relation. This relation can be stated as: *X* is placed to the left of *Y*. The latter seems to be a question about a temporal relation that can be stated as: *X* was filled before *Y* was filled. Say, the answer to both of these questions is: "Yes." If such is granted, then it will be the case that the bowl of milk is *indeed* placed to the left of the bowl of yoghurt and the bowl of milk was *indeed* filled before the bowl of yoghurt was filled. Moreover, two inferences will follow in each case. In the former case, it

Case C: Consider that a bowl of milk was *completely emptied* and then that *same* bowl was *filled* with yoghurt.

Have we now considered one thing or two things? In my understanding, we are still considering *two* things, but not in the way that we did earlier. Case B featured two physically distinct bowls, while Case C features just one bowl. Then, in what way may we still be considering two things? This is where we must determine how a bowl of milk is related to a bowl of yoghurt in Case C and how this is different from how they are related in Case B.[15] This difference can be explicitly stated as follows:

In Case B, we considered *two* spatially and physically distinct bowls, each simultaneously containing a spatially and physically distinct type of colloidal mixture.[16] In Case C, we considered *one* spatially and physically self-identical bowl, which contained one type of colloidal mixture for some time, and then contained another type of colloidal mixture after that time—first milk, then yoghurt. Unlike Case B, in Case C, the colloidal mixtures (that is, the contents of the bowl) are

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would follow that the bowl of yoghurt is placed to the *right of* the bowl of milk (i.e. *not* to the left of it) and that the bowl of milk is not placed to the *left of itself*. In the latter case, it would follow that the bowl of yoghurt was filled *after* the bowl of milk was filled (i.e. *not* filled before it) and that the bowl of milk was not filled *before itself*. This is so because the two relations described above are examples of asymmetric relations wherein if *X* stands in a given relation to *Y* then it *must* be the case that *Y* does not stand in the same relation to *X* and that *X* does not stand in the same relation with itself. See: MacBride, 1. Having acquired a way to think about relations, we are set to make our penultimate consideration and then our final consideration.

[15] We have stated earlier that no bowl of yoghurt is also, simultaneously, a bowl of milk (and vice versa). My insistence that we are still considering two things is due to the understanding of 'simultaneously' as it occurs in the previous dictum. This understanding can be motivated when we reflect on the fact that a bowl of milk is not a bowl of yoghurt *when* it is a bowl of milk (and vice versa), which can be shown in Case C. When a given bowl contains milk, then that bowl is sufficiently a bowl of milk, and that bowl is necessarily not a bowl of yoghurt. After being completely emptied, when that bowl is filled with yoghurt, then the same bowl is sufficiently a bowl of yoghurt, and that bowl is necessarily not a bowl of yoghurt. Therefore, Case C leads to a consideration of two things, albeit the pair of things considered in Case C differs from the pair of things considered in Case B.

[16] The colloidal mixtures under consideration are whole milk, which is an emulsion-type mixture, and curd/yoghurt, which is a gel-type mixture. See Rows 02 and 04, from the table 'Types of Colloidal System in Food' in Rajak, Himanshu (2023) 'Application of colloid systems in food preparation', *2nd Sem Food Science Notes.*

spatially identical but physically distinct.[17] Our final case can be stated by modifying Case C as follows:

Case D: Consider that a bowl of milk was left, *undisturbed*, for some time. We left behind a bowl of milk only to return to the *same* bowl now containing yoghurt.

Have we now considered one thing or two things? I argue that we are still considering *two* things: a bowl of milk and a bowl of yoghurt. The pair considered in Case D is similar, but not identical, to the pair considered in Case C. They are similar because akin to Case C, Case D features *one* spatially and physically self-identical bowl, which contained one type of colloidal mixture for some time, and then contained another type of colloidal mixture after that time, such that the two colloidal mixtures occupy the same space—inside one and the same bowl—at different times. The primary dissimilarity between them is that in Case C, there was a characteristic *emptying of* and *refilling of* the bowl, neither of which occurs in Case D, given that the bowl is *left undisturbed*.[18]

In Case D, one could ask that given the bowl is neither emptied nor refilled, how does one leave behind a bowl of milk for some time, only to return to a bowl of

[17] To illustrate the difference between Case B and Case C, note the following example and compare it with the example that occurs in footnote 14**:** For the pair of things considered in Case B, all four of the following relations can hold together: (i) *X* is placed to the left of *Y*, (ii) *Y* is placed to the left of *X*, (iii) *X* was filled before *Y* and (iv) *Y* was filled after *X* . For the pair of things considered in Case C, the two spatial relations (namely (i) and (ii)) cannot hold, while the two temporal relations (namely (iii) and (iv)) can hold. The spatial relations cannot hold in Case C because for a given thing to be placed left of or right of another thing – both of these things (i.e. relata) need to be spatially available simultaneously. Which is to say, that both of them need to be spatially available *when* it is being evaluated whether a spatial relation (i.e. being left of, being right of) can hold between them. Given, Case B featured two spatially and physically distinct bowls, when the bowl of milk was spatially available, the bowl of yoghurt was spatially available as well, and when the bowl of yoghurt was spatially available, the bowl of milk was spatially available. However, the pair from Case C, consisting again of a bowl of milk and a bowl of yoghurt, feature the same (singular) bowl corresponding to both things. In this case, when the bowl of milk is spatially available, the bowl of yoghurt is spatially unavailable and when the bowl of yoghurt is spatially available the bowl of milk is spatially unavailable. Such simultaneous spatial availability is not required for (our) evaluation of temporal relations in Case C. Prior to *it* being a bowl of yoghurt, the *same* bowl was an empty bowl. Prior to being *that* empty bowl, the *same* bowl was a bowl of milk. If so, then based on said two inferences – we can safely infer that prior to *it* being a bowl of milk, *that* bowl was an empty bowl. Therefore, it must have been the case that the bowl of milk was filled before the bowl of yoghurt was filled. As for Case C, regarding asymmetric relations, it can be further inferred that the bowl of yoghurt was filled after the bowl of milk was filled. These distinctions are what lend to the explicit statement of the difference between Case B and Case C.

[18] Reviewing our examples of relations and what does it mean for them to hold (or not) from footnotes 14 and 17, following can be illustrated about Case D, highlighting its dissimilarity with Case C: Our two spatial relations (i.e. being left of, being right of) continue to not hold between the two things considered in Case D. However, this is where the similarity between the two things considered in Case C and those considered in Case D ends. This is so because, unlike the pair in Case C, *even* our two temporal relations (i.e. being filled before, being filled after) do not hold between the pair in Case D.

yoghurt? In answering this question, both the Naiyāyika-*asatkāryavādin* and the Sāṃkhya-*satkāryavādin* would endorse causation as an explanation of Case D.

§ 2.2 *Enter the Asatkāryavādin and the Satkāryavādin*

Both the Naiyāyika and the Sāṃkhya would identify the causal relation to be asymmetric[19] because they hold that yoghurt comes from milk and not vice versa. Therefore, upon returning to the bowl containing yoghurt, one may ascertain, veridically, that the milk in the bowl went sour and turned into yoghurt that remains in the bowl and is perceived upon returning. Our *asatkāryavādin*, Naiyāyika Uddyotakara, and his *satkāryavādin*, the unidentified Sāṃkhya, will concede that this is the case.[20] In doing so, they share our position (in Case D) that we are considering

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[19] The kind of asymmetry I have in mind here is Herbert E. Simon's strengthening of Arthur W. Burks' notion of asymmetry. The latter originally occurs implicitly in Burks, Arthur Walter (1951) 'The Logic of Causal Propositions', *Mind* **60**, 375, P$_{25}$. Simon stipulates it thus [sic]: "We shall require that the causal relation be an asymmetrical one — that "*A* causes *B*" be incompatible with "*B* causes *A*." Our requirement will be even somewhat stronger. We shall define the relation that "*A* causes *B*" is incompatible with "not-*B* causes not-*A*." The reason for the requirement is, again, that we wish to keep as close as possible to ordinary usage. Ordinary usage does not sanction: "If the rain causes Jones to wear his raincoat, then Jones' not wearing his raincoat causes it not to rain." " Simon, Herbert Alexander (1952) 'On the Definition of the Causal Relation', *The Journal of Philosophy* **49**(16), 517–18. On the aforementioned strengthening, Simon says: "This is one fundamental departure of the present proposal from that of Professor Burks, whose causal relation is asymmetrical, but only in the sense that the implication relation is asymmetrical. Thus, in his system, from "*A* causes *B*" it follows that "not-*B* causes not-*A*"."Simon, 517, footnote 3.

[20] I emphasise 'our' and 'his' and I employ the usage of the definite article 'the' in the title of §2.2 to indicate that among the plurality of figures holding these two philosophical positions exclusively Uddyotakara and his reconstruction of the Sāṃkhya position will be relevant to us. As for said plurality, among various philosophical positions that purport or assume the veridicality of the Case 4 featuring, *sat-kārya-vāda* [Existent-Effect-ism] and *a-sāt-karya-vāda* [Non-Existent-Effect-ism] are relevant to us. Among the sub-discourses within *satkāryavāda* and *asātkaryavāda*, only the discourses on *pariṇāma-vāda* [(Effect as a…) Transformation-ism] and *ārambha-vāda* [(Effect as a…) New-Beginning-ism], respectively, will be relevant to us. Among the various schools of Indian Philosophy that defend *pariṇāmavāda* and *ārambhavāda*, only Sāṃkhya and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, respectively, will be relevant to us. Among the various written treatises that show the progression of the debate between Sāṃkhya and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika on causation, we will be focusing on the debate occuring in passages *458.5–459.2* of *Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika* which is one of the works attributed to Uddyotakara. *Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika* is one of the surviving philosophical commentaries on Pakṣilasvāmin Vātsyāyana's *Nyāyabhāṣya*, which in turn is a philosophical commentary on Akṣapāda Gautama's *Nyāyasūtra*–the central text of Nyāya School. Later, in §3.3., we shall be looking at philosophical commitments featured in the central text of Sāṃkhya, namely Īśvarakṛṣṇa. *Sāṃkhyakārikā*. For a focused introduction to *satkāryavāda* and *asātkaryavāda*, see Matilal, Bimal Krishna (1975) 'Causality in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika School', *Philosophy East and West*, **25**(1), 41–48.; Shaw, Jaysankar Lal (2002) 'CAUSALITY: SĀṂKHYA, BAUDDHA AND NYĀYA', *Journal of Indian Philosophy* **30**(3), 214–23; and Sutradhar, Apu (2018) 'Causation In Indian Philosophy', *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* **23**(9.3), 35–39. For a brief introduction to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya, see the relevant sections of Perrett, Roy W. (1998) 'Hindu Ethics: A Philosophical Study' *Monographs of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy* **17**, University of Hawaii Press. and for a non-brief introduction to Old Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya see Potter, Karl Harrington eds. (2011) *The Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies (Vol. II): Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology: The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika upto Gaṅgeśa*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers; and Potter, Karl Harrington eds. (2012) *The Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies (Vol. IV): Sāṃkhya: A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, respectively.

two things here: a bowl of milk and a bowl of yoghurt. Keeping in mind the asymmetry of the causal relation, both parties also contend that the bowl can not cause itself; that is, the bowl is neither a cause for itself nor an effect brought about by itself. Therefore, for the bowl of milk and the bowl of yoghurt to stand in a causal relation with each other, it must be the case that the contents of the bowl stand in a causal relation with each other.

According to Sāṃkhya, that which is in the bowl initially *has the form* of milk, then transforms (*pariṇāma*) and *takes the form* of yoghurt within that bowl. Sāṃkhya calls this *prakṛti*, which they identify to be the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*). Among that which partakes in causation, that which is experienceable is *manifest* (*vyakta*) *prakṛti,* and that which is unexperienceable is *unmanifest* (*avyakta*) *prakṛti*.[21] Initially, the milk is manifest in the material cause, while yoghurt is unmanifest. Later, yoghurt is manifest, while milk is de-manifest. Thus, the Sāṃkhya argues that the effect (yoghurt) is contained in the cause (milk). Therefore, it cannot be *new*. The Naiyāyika trades the notion of a material cause for an instrumental cause (*samavāyi kāraṇa*), that is, milk, and proposes that whatever is there in the bowl initially *is* milk—which is *destroyed*—leading to the *production* of yoghurt in the bowl. That which is destroyed goes out of existence, while that which is produced begins (*ārambha*) to exist. Therefore, that which is destroyed is no longer perceived, and that which is produced is perceived for the first time. Thus, the Naiyāyika argues that the effect isn't contained in the cause. Therefore, it must be *new*.[22] Let us review their major objections to each other and then review how they may respond to said objections—paving the way for Uddyotakara.

The Sāṃkhya objects to Naiyāyika's position that the destruction of milk followed by the production of yoghurt is procedurally identical to what happened inside the bowl during Case C, from §2.1. The Sāṃkhya would point out that in Case C, the milk in the bowl was *replaced* with yoghurt. Whatever/whoever emptied the bowl of milk could have made it so that the bowl was refilled with sand, hair or anything else.[23] Thus, Sāṃkhya would argue that such replacement is *arbitrary*. When the milk is completely destroyed, there is *nothing* left in the bowl to ensure what is produced in the aftermath of the milk's destruction is yoghurt. Sāṃkhya argues the Naiyāyika cannot account for the uncontroversial pragmatic fact that milk left to sour will always, without exception, under normal conditions and accompanying auxiliary

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[21] In [NV 458.5–459.2], both Sākhmya and Nyāya use the words 'experiencable' and 'perceivable' interchangeably—and they are alluding to the colloquial understanding of the terms. See Dasti and Phillips, 112. I shall refrain from using 'perceivable' given there is a disagreement between Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya-Yoga regarding the nature of perception (*pratyakṣa*) and cognition (*jñāna*) as captured in Phillips, 33–50 and in Mohanty, Jitendra Nath (2000) 'Chapter Two: Theory of Knowledge (*Pramāṇa*-Theory).' *Classical Indian Philosophy: An Introductory Text*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 12–13. Therefore, I use 'experience' wherever I wish to invoke said colloquial understanding.

[22] Matilal, 41–48; Shaw 214–23; Chakrabarti, Arindam (Unpublished Manuscript) Chapter 2, *The Book of Questions: Analytical Introduction to Indian Philosophies.*

[23] Before the bowl was emptied, the fact that it contained milk posed no restriction, whatsoever, on what can replace the milk in the bowl during its refilling.

causes, curdle and produce yoghurt (instead of non-yoghurt). Therefore, for Sāṃkhya, the Naiyāyika's proposal fails as an explanation for Case D and conflates Case D with Case C. Which is to say, under the Nyāya causal view, if the effect has to be something *new* that comes about—as opposed to it being pre-existent in the cause as a potentiality—then it can be arbitrary, hence failing to account for causal regularity.[24]

The Naiyāyika objects to Sāṃkhya's position, claiming that it violates a key assumption that is conventionally (and empirically) taken to be sound—which even we granted during §2.1. The Naiyāyika claims that milk containing yoghurt, in any way, is inherently troublesome because then it would *not* be the case that no bowl of milk is, simultaneously, a bowl of yoghurt, and no bowl of yoghurt is, simultaneously, a bowl of milk. For on the Sāṃkhya position, a bowl of milk, in some way, would also be a bowl of yoghurt and vice versa![25] They could demonstrate the philosophical consequences of such a violation by showing how a commitment to the Sāṃkhya position jeopardises each of our answers in §2.1 to Q_3 concerning Cases

[24] Psillos, 131. See footnote 4.

[25] This has two ill consequences for Sāṃkhya, according to Nyāya:
(i) It has not been explicitly stated thus far, but the nature of considerations in Section §2.1 result from a common-sensical understanding of processes like emptying, refilling, causation, etc. and concepts like 'bowl', 'milk', 'yoghurt', 'one/two things', etc. Veridically accounting for pragmatic experience is the core of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika's philosophical enterprise and methodology. Pragmatic concerns like using yoghurt (and not milk) for cold condiments and using milk (and not yoghurt) for hot beverages are examples of what the Naiyāyikas identify as successful voluntary day-to-day actions (*parvṛtti*). See: Phillips, 7. For them, any metaphysical position which fails to explain or, worse, obstructs such actions is inherently lacking and philosophically worrisome. Hence, the Naiyāyika would claim the Sāṃkhya position to be metaphysically flawed, given its violation of how we common-sensically distinguish between milk and yoghurt.
(ii) Recall that the paper introduced the Q_1 with "...given two *distinguishable* entities *X* and *Y*…". Sāṃkhya view threatens Indiscernability of Identicals because if one entity contains the other, then they cannot be completely discernable from each other. See: Forrest, 2. Perhaps, for Sāṃkhya, they are partially non-distinct (*abheda*) as is pointed out in: Shaw, 215. Additionally, the *satkāryavādin* and the *asatkāryavādin* agree that causation involves change. If the *satkāryavadin* is to commit to the effect being contained in the cause, prior to the effect being brought about, then they must also commit to the cause being contained in the effect, *after* the effect is brought about. See: Matilal 1975. Therefore, if milk contains yoghurt, in some way (qua them being *abheda*), prior to the yoghurt coming about, then yoghurt must contain milk, in the same way (qua them being *abheda*), after the yoghurt comes to be. Therefore, on the Sāṃkhya view, an entity which is both milk and yoghurt *changes* into an entity which is both milk and yoghurt. If the Sāṃkhya agrees to this, then there is virtually no change happening wherein this becomes a case of self-causation—which is a position that both Nyāya and Sāṃkhya are opposed to.

A–D, with a drastic consequence for Case D.[26] Under Sāṃkhya view, in Case D, the answer to "Have we now considered one thing or two things?", will have to be, "One thing, or two things, or four things": one thing such that the thing that is both milk and yoghurt in the bowl brings about itself (qua self-causation); *or* two things such that the milk (that contains yoghurt, pre-causation) brings about the yoghurt (that contains milk, post-causation) because the milk is not destroyed post-causation; *or* four things such that the milk which is yoghurt brings about the yoghurt which is also milk. The Naiyāyika would claim that Sāṃkhya's proposal is too much of a departure from the common experience of things for it to be tenable, such that in attempting to explain Case D, it nullifies the commonsensical assumptions granted during Cases A–C. Which is to say, if the effect is *not new*, then there is no need for it to be brought about, for it is already pre-existent (but, as shown, this pre-existence receives massive pushback from the Naiyāyika).

The Naiyāyika would respond to the Sāṃkhya objection of arbitrary replacement via their theory of absences, specifically *prāgabhāva*.[27] We shall see the indirect yet significant relevance of the Naiyāyika response in §3.4 and how it affects Uddyotakara's reconstruction of the Sāṃkhya position. For the illustration here, Sāṃkhya's response to the Nyāya objection is of primary exegetical relevance to Uddyotakara. Sāṃkhya would defend their original answer to Q_3 in Case D, that is, "Two things," as opposed to the Naiyāyika charge of "One thing, or two things, or four things," by alluding to their notion of *manifestation,* for only manifest things are experiencable.[28] Therein, Sāṃkhya claims that our consideration in Case D, as in Cases A–C, has been exclusively of manifest things. The singular thing that is both milk and yoghurt is not experienced. Similarly, the bowl of milk that is also the bowl of yoghurt and vice versa is also not experienced. Only milk is manifest in the bowl, and after some time, yoghurt is manifest—as is experienced. Hence, Sāṃkhya continues to insist that Case D features a consideration of two manifest things.

We shall see what Uddyotakara makes of manifestation in §3.2. Having introduced the relevant positions in the *asatkāryavāda* versus *satkāryavāda* debate, let us first

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[26] Our answers occurring in §2.1 to Q_3 under Cases A–C change as follows, if the Sāṃkhya view is granted: (i) During Case A, when we considered a bowl of milk for my long neglected cereal, our initial answer was "one thing". Under Sāṃkhya view, the answer will be "either one thing or two things", either one thing—i.e., a bowl containing the thing that is *both* milk and yoghurt—or two things, i.e., a bowl of milk which is *also* a bowl of yoghurt. (ii) During Case B, when we considered a bowl of yoghurt, our answer was "two things". Under Sāṃkhya view, that answer will be, "Either two things or four things". Either two bowls containing milk and yoghurt separately or a bowl of milk which is also a bowl of yoghurt and another bowl of yoghurt which is also a bowl of milk. (iii) Since our answer for Case C was the same Case B, with different pairs, under Sāṃkhya view, our answer accordingly changes to "Either two things or four things". Either the same bowl, first containing the thing that is both milk and yoghurt, and then containing the thing that is both yoghurt and milk; or a bowl of milk which is also a bowl of yoghurt then becomes a bowl of yoghurt which is also a bowl of milk.

[27] Chakrabarti, Kisor Kumar (1978) 'THE NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA THEORY OF NEGATIVE ENTITIES', *Journal of Indian Philosophy, October 1978,* **6**(2), 135.

[28] Sāṃkhya's position of only that which is manifest being experienceable is exploited by Uddyotakara, as will be illustrated in [3.2.3], in §3.2.

move on to modelling the causal views of Nyāya and Sāṃkhya—and uncover some insights about the philosophical friction between them that has, hopefully, been illustrated within §2.

§ 3. The Logic of Uddyotakara's Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika 458.5–459.2

For both Nyāya and Sāṃkhya, causation involves at least two events.[29] For Nyāya, causation comprises an event featuring the *destruction* of the cause and an event featuring the *production* of the effect. Both events are *in* space (*dik*) and time (*kāla*), which are uncaused.[30] For Sāṃkhya, causation comprises an event featuring the *de-manifestation* of *prakṛti* as the cause qua unmanifest (*avyakta*) *prakṛti* and an event featuring the *manifestation* of *prakṛti* as effect qua manifest (*vyakta*) *prakṛti*. While space and time are not uncaused, there is no internal consensus in Sāṃkhya regarding the nature of spatiotemporality.[31] Notwithstanding Sāṃkhya's reluctance

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[29] The quantification marker 'at least' that qualifies the expression 'two events' is of utmost importance to my modelling of the Nyāya's and Sāṃkhya's causal views and it is warranted by said models being 'basic', as postulated in §3.1. It important to note that more complex models are possible which capture a more nuanced understanding of the respective causal views of Nyāya and Sāṃkhya, but for the purposes of the illustrating the philosophical disagreement captured in the sub-debate in [NV 458.5–459.2], the basic models suffice. My models are basic because they postulate the aforementioned two events to be successive, as captured by [3.1.N.1–2] and [3.1.S.1–2] in §3.1, wherein the destruction/de-manifestation occurs at t_{n-1}, while the production/manifestation occurs at t_n. Given n and 1 are natural numbers, as will be designated in §3.1, it is trivially true that n is the successor of (n -1). In complex models, these two events may not be taken to be successive, wherein if production/manifestation occurs at t_n, then destruction/de-manifestation may occur at t_{n-z}, such that z is also a natural number, but $n \geq z > 1$. However, my basic models shall remain consistent with such complex models, in so far as, it is the case that $n > (n - 1)$ and it shall remain the case that $n > (n - z)$. Therefore, even if in complex models the two events are not taken to be successive, it still remains the case akin to my basic models, that the event featuring production/manifestion occurs *later than* the one featuring destruction/de-manifestion.

[30] For Nyāya, milk and yoghurt are ontologically (qua constitutionally) distinct from space (*dik*) and time (*kāla*), that are ontological sub-types of *substance* (*dravya*), which in turn, is one of the seven fundamental ontological categories (*padārthas*) of Vaiśeṣika, which is the sister school of Nyāya (hence on most occasions, but not all, 'Nyāya', 'Vaiśeṣika' and 'Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika' can be used interchangeably). See: Sharma, Chandradhar (1962) 'Chapter Eleven: VAISHEṢIKA', *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, Barnes & Noble, Inc.,165. Space and time qua substances are independently existent (time does not exist in space and viceversa) whereas milk and yoghurt qua spatiotemporal entities require space and time as a part of their metaphysical ground. Therefore, space and time are not caused, space and time are that *within* which causation occurs.

[31] As established, almost encyclopedically, in Kumar, Shiv, (1983) 'SĀṀKHYA-YOGA CONCEPT OF TIME', *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* **64**(1/4), 129–35, it is clear that there are radically different views of time prevalent among Sāṃkhya philosophers and Yoga philosophers—Yoga being the sister school to Sāṃkhya (hence on most occasions, but not all, 'Sāṃkhya', 'Yoga' and 'Sāṃkhya-Yoga' can be used interchangeably). Kumar covers a variety of philosophical positions on space and time proposed by Īśvarakṛṣṇa, Patañjali, Vyāsa, Vācaspari Miśra, Vijñānabhikṣu, Hariharanand Aranya, Gauḍapāda, Aniruddha, Brahmamuni Parivrājaka, and Kṣemendra, and captured in commentaries *Yuktidipikā*, *Jayamaṇgala*, and *Sāṃkhyasūtra*. He concludes that there is no consensus on the nature of time besides the Sāṃkhya-Yoga's 'fundamental differences' with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. See: Kumar, 135. Sāṃkhya-Yoga does not construe time and space to be substances, unlike Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika's time-substance (*kāla*) and space-substance (*dik*) which are uncaused. The only uncaused elements (*tattvas*) within the Sāṃkhya's ontological framework are *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, as we shall encounter in §3.3. It should also be noted that such far-reaching

to commit itself to a succession of moments, that is, duration (*krama*), Sāṃkhya is committed to *moments* (*kṣaṇa*) and, by extension, to spatial aspects of whatever features during moments.[32] Sāṃkhya's commitment should be considered in tandem with both schools' acceptance of an asymmetric causal relation and their commitment that causation is not momentary, such that the above-described two events (for both schools) are not simultaneous. Given such a consideration, I propose that we understand whatever is common between the Nyāya and the Sāṃkhya notions of a moment the way McTaggart understood it: as a position within a B-Series.[33] This allows us to parse temporal markers like 'prior to, ' 'after, ' 'now, ' 'simultaneously, ' etc., in a way that is agreed upon by both parties. Granting this, we can use a simplified[34] B-Series, which is so only insofar as it designates *earlier than* and *later than* relations between its positions, to model Sāṃkhya's and Nyāya's respective causal views and thereby glean the logical form of Uddyotakara's arguments in [NV 458.5–459.2].

§ 3.1 Modelling Nyāya's and Sāṃkhya's Causal Views

For entities/events X and Y and time-instances …,t_{n-1}, t_n, t_{n+1},… where $t_{\lambda \pm \mu = \zeta}$ is such that λ, μ, and ζ are natural numbers and time instances are understood as designating positions within a simplified B-Series, Nyāya's and Sāṃkhya's causal views can be modelled as follows. For $n > 1$; $0 \geq m \geq 1$: if X causes Y at t_n, then X is experiencable at t_{n-2}, X is no longer experienciable at t_{n-1} and remains unexperienceable at t_n and

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disagreement between the two schools regarding space and time is the reason that when attributing any notion of causal regularity to both schools, as I did in footnote 4, following two notions are disqualified: "i. c is spatiotemporally contiguous to e; ii. e succeeds c in time;" Psillos, 131.

[32] In Burley, Mikel (2007) *Classical Sāṃkhya and Yoga: An Indian Metaphysics of Experience*, Taylor & Francis Ltd., 104–07, Mikel Burley acknowledges the type of inconclusiveness that Shiv Kumar identifies in Kumar, 135, and declares: "Such interpretive manoeuvres seem highly dubious, and ought not to be considered as the final word on the Sāṃkhya position [on space and time]" Burley, 105, with the parenthetical clause added by me. Burley does not offer the final word himself because for him the Sāṃkhya problem of space and time is only instrumental to the problem of how the three *guṇas* of *prakṛti* are related to space and time. Ibid., 106. Notwithstanding, he seems to err towards Vyāsa's position, in *Yogabhāsya*, which proposes "...an atomic theory of time, according to which time is, in reality, nothing other than a succession of indivisible momentary units (*kṣaṇa*) and it is merely our ordinary view, wherein time is conceived in terms of artificial durations, such as hours and days and nights, that is a mental construction. The moments are genuinely existent, and follow one another in a procession; and it is to such a procession of moments, says Vyasa, that the yogin refers by means of the term 'time'." Ibid., 105. Comparing it with Vijñānabhikṣu's position and *Sāṃkhyasūtra*'s view, Burley concludes [sic]: "... the implicit view therein is that time and space obtain only within empirical reality – the realm of thought and perception – and cannot be ascribed to the unmanifest ground of that reality, comprised of the three guṇas in their dormant state." Ibid., 106. I subscribe to Burley's view of Sāṃkhya space and time, throughout this paper, because given our discussion in §1–2, both Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya-Yoga would uncontroversially agree that causation features within our empirical reality, given their staunch defense of causal regularity.

[33] This would enable us to understand whatever is common between the Nyāya and the Sāṃkhya notions of an event as the content of a position within the B-Series. McTaggart, John McTaggart Ellis (1908) 'The Unreality of Time,' *Mind* **17**(68), 458.

[34] This is so because beyond causation featuring events that are earlier than and later than each other, Nyāya and Sāṃkhya disagree about the the ontological status of time and space. Both schools will further disagree with each other and McTaggart on the notion of *change*. McTaggart, 458–61.

t_{n+m}, while Y is unexperienceable at t_{n-2} and t_{n-1}, Y is experienceable at t_n and remains experienciable at t_{n+m}. This is explainable as follows:

[3.1.N] According to Nyāya:	**[3.1.S] According to Sāṃkhya:**
X is undestroyed at t_{n-2}. X is destroyed at t_{n-1}. X remains destroyed at t_n and t_{n+m}.	X is manifest at t_{n-2}. X is unmanifest at t_{n-1}. X remains unmanifest at t_n and t_{n+m}.
Y is unproduced at t_{n-2} and t_{n-1}.	Y is unmanifest at t_{n-2} and t_{n-1}.
Y is produced at t_n. Y remains produced at t_{n+m}.	Y is maninfest at t_n. Y remains manifest at t_{n+m}.
At a given t, no entity/event can be both destroyed and undestroyed, or both produced or unproduced, or both produced and destroyed.	At a given t, no entity/event can be both manifest and unmanifest.
A new entity/event comes about at t_n.	No new entity/event comes about at t_n.

Having obtained [3.1.N] and [3.1.S] as basic[35] models of the Nyāya and Sāṃkhya causal views, respectively, having stated Nyāya's *asatkāryavādin* position and Sāṃkhya's *satkāryavādin* position as discussed in §1–2 in [3.1.N.4] and [3.1.S.4] respectively, we can move on to extracting Uddyotakara's arguments from [NV 458.5–459.2].

§ 3.2 Enter Uddyotakara: Locating the Contradiction

Uddyotakara inquires about the nature of Sāṃkhya's manifestation.[36] Uddyotakara's Sāṃkhya, which presents Uddyotakara's reconstruction of the Sāṃkhya view, clarifies that it is the *mechanism* of bringing about effects.[37] I formulate Uddyotakara's response as follows:

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[35] See footnote 29.

[36] Uddyotakara's inquiry is presented during his commentary on [NS 4.1.49] and [NB 242.16]. Here Vātsyāyana [NB 242.16] poses the the question "Something produced does not exist prior to its production—this is certain. Why?" to Gautama's claim in [NS 4.1.49], "Because production and destruction are observed." Dasti and Phillips, 112.

[37] "Sāṃkhya objector: The chief cause, the material cause, has a purpose embedded in it, the purpose of *manifesting* latent individual effects." Ibid., p.112. Note, such an understanding of manifestation should not be confused with manifestation being the *efficient cause* of all effects.

[§ 3.2.1] Argument Against Manifestation as a Mechanism

P1: It is not the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n.[38]

P2: If an entity/event is manifest at t_n, then it is brought into existence at t_n.

P3: If an entity/event is brought into existence at t_n, then it could not have existed prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}), and so it is a new entity/event that comes about at t_n.

P4: *E* is an event/entity that is manifest at t_n.[39]

C1: *E* is brought into existence at t_n.[40]

C2: *E* could not have existed prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}), and so *E* is a new entity/event that comes about at t_n.[41]

C3: It is the case that a (at least one) new entity/event comes about at t_n.[42]

C4: It is not the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n AND it is the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n.[43]

This is where Uddyotakara first identifies a contradiction[44], as Sāṃkhya's commitment to manifestation goes against Sāṃkhya's original *satkāryavadin* answer to Q_2—the answer that we have elaborated upon in §1–2 and modelled in [3.1.S.4]. The contradiction has the following form: Sāṃkhya is committed to *nothing new* coming about post-causation, yet they are committed to manifestation, due to which *something new* must come about.

In response, Uddyotakara's Sāṃkhya locates the effect to be a property of the material cause, and since the material cause is existent pre-causation, then the effect must be, too.[45] Uddyotakara responds as follows:

[§ 3.2.2] Argument Against Effect as a Property of the Material Cause

P1: It is not the case that a new entity/event comes about t_n.[46]

P2: Unmanifest Y is not numerically identical to manifest Y.[47]

P3: Nothing can be both manifest and unmanifest at a given time-instance.[48]

C1: If unmanifest Y is a property of the material cause prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}), then manifest Y cannot be a property of the material cause prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2},

[38] By [3.1.S.4].
[39] Sāṃkhya's position in [NV 458.5–459.2].
[40] From P2 and P4.
[41] From P3 and C1.
[42] By simplifying C2 to extract the right conjunct and then existentially generalising.
[43] From P1 and C3.
[44] Ibid., 112.
[45] Ibid., 112.
[46] By [3.1.S.4].
[47] By Leibniz's Indiscernability of Identicals. Forrest, 1.
[48] By [3.1.S.3].

t_{n-1}).[49]

P4: If manifest Y is not a property of the material cause prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}) and manifest Y comes about at t_n, then it is brought into existence at t_n.[50]

P5: If an entity/event is brought into existence at t_n, then it could not have existed prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}), and so it is a new entity/event that comes about at t_n.

P6: Manifest *E* is an event/entity that comes about at t_n.[51]

C2: Manifest *E* is brought into existence at t_n.[52]

C3: Manifest *E* could not have existed prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}), and so manifest *E* is a new entity/event that comes about at t_n.[53]

C4: It is the case that a (at least one) new entity/event comes about at t_n.[54]

C5: It is not the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n AND it is the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n.[55]

Uddyotakara shows that only an *unmanifested effect* could be understood as a property of the material cause, which is definitionally distinct from *manifested effect*, which is what comes about—therefore, something new still comes about, and the contradiction persists.[56]

In response, Uddyotakara's Sāṃkhya clarifies that it is not unmanifested effects that pre-exist in the material cause. Effects simplicter, that is, entities/events, are what pre-exist in the material cause, and such pre-existence is the reason for them being unmanifested. Manifestation of such entities/events does not amount to new entities/events coming about but pre-existent entities/events becoming experiencable post-causation.[57] Uddyotakara responds as follows:

[§ 3.2.3] Argument Against Experience of the Manifested Entity/Event

P1: It is not the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n.[58]

P2: There is no time-instance prior to t_n (that is, t_{n-m} where $n \geq m$) that features an event wherein entity Y is experienceable, as Y is unmanifest prior to t_n (at…t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}).[59]

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[49] From P2 and P3.
[50] From C1.
[51] Sāṃkhya's position in [NV 458.5–459.2].
[52] From P4 and P6.
[53] From P5 and C2.
[54] By simplifying C3 to extract the right conjunct and then existentially generalising.
[55] From P1 and C4.
[56] Dasti and Phillips, 112.
[57] Ibid., p.112.
[58] By [3.1.S.4].
[59] By [3.1.S.2]. Also, see footnote 28.

P3: If the experience of *Y* is an event that comes about at t_n, when *Y* is manifest, then it is brought into existence at t_n.[60]

P4: If an entity/event is brought into existence at t_n, then it could not have existed prior to t_n (at … t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}), and so it is a new entity/event that comes about at t_n.

P5: The event featuring the experience of the entity *E* comes about at t_n when *E* is manifest.[61]

C1: The event featuring the experience of *E* is brought into existence at t_n.[62]

C2: The event featuring the experience of *E* could not have existed prior to t_n (at …t_{n-2}, t_{n-1}), and so it is a new event that comes about at t_n.[63]

C3: It is the case that a (at least one) new entity/event comes about at t_n.[64]

C4: It is not the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n AND it is the case that a new entity/event comes about at t_n.[65]

In response, Uddyotakara's Sāṃkhya offers three alternative postulations of manifestation, but Uddyotakara refutes each of them along similar lines.[66] Therefore, [NV 458.5–459.2] culminates in Uddyotakara concluding that Sāṃkhya's commitment to the *satkāryavādin* position (qua P1 of [3.2.1], [3.2.2], and [3.2.3]), in tandem with their commitment to manifestation, leads to a contradiction that Sāṃkhya cannot resolve. Due to such irresolvability of Uddyotakara's identified contradiction, he establishes the philosophical merit of the *asatkāryavādin* answers to Q_2 and Q_1, and concludes that an effect is, indeed, a *new* entity/event that begins (*ārambh*) to exist post-causation, when it is brought about because pre-causation that effect (*kārya*) is non-existent (*a-sat*).[67]

§ *3.3 Enter Sandman: The Contradiction Does Not Follow*

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[60] From P2.
[61] Sāṃkhya's position in [NV 458.5–459.2].
[62] From P4 and P6.
[63] From P5 and C1.
[64] By simplifying C2 to extract the right conjunct and then existentially generalising.
[65] From P1 and C3.

[66] The three alternative postulations presented by the Sākṃhya are as follows: (i) It is a "situation" of the material cause wherein the situation is the effect; (ii) It is "a distinct configuration" of the material cause; (iii) It is the "flourishing of the essential nature" of the material cause. Uddyotakara shows (i) to be a sub-species of the effect-as-a-property postulation of the effect, and that (i) is thus refuted by [3.2.2]. As for (ii), Uddyotakara utilizes a distinction criteria similar to that of P2 in [3.2.2] and argues that (ii) entails a distinct configuration of the material cause that did not exist pre-causation, and therefore said distinctness of the configuration imports a *new* configuration. Finally, he points out that (iii) is redundant, given Sāṃkhya's earlier understanding of manifestation as effect-bringing-about-mechanism and that (iii) is refuted by [3.2.1]. In this way, Uddyotakara concludes the irresolvability of the contradiction first encountered in [NV 458.5–459.2]. Ibid., p.112–13.
[67] As Gautama states in , [NS 4.1.50], i.e. the Nyāyasūtra verse right after [NS 4.1.49],"What is proved, however, by our understanding is the prior non-existence of the effect." Ibid., 113.

I refute P2 in [3.2.1], P4 in [3.2.2], and P3 in [3.2.3]. It should be noted that notwithstanding the antecedent of each of these three conditional premises, they share the same consequent: "It [entity/event] is brought into existence at t_n." However, Uddyotakara's reconstructed Sāṃkhya position involving something coming into or being brought into existence is inherently misguided, given Sāṃkhya's ontological commitments. This leads to the failure of the said premises, and, thereby, Uddyotakara's arguments are unsuccessful in establishing the contradictoriness within Sāṃkhya's position.

Sāṃkhya is ontologically committed to twenty-five[68] metaphysical categories (*tattvas*) —out of which two are co-fundamental categories, namely, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* and the remaining twenty-three are hierarchically organised sub-categories of *prakṛti*. For Sāṃkhya, everything in the world (and beyond) is compositionally reducible to some or all of these categories and permutations thereof. As for their existential status:

(i) Per [SK 3], *puruṣa* is uncaused and is causally inefficacious, and [SK 17] establishes that *puruṣa* is existent.[69]

(ii) Unmanifest-*prakṛti* and manifest-*prakṛti* together form *prakṛiti*. Per [SK3], unmanifest-*prakṛti* is uncaused but is causally efficacious. Per [SK 3], while all of manifest-*prakṛti* is caused, it is subdivided into causally efficacious and causally inefficacious categories.[70] As established by [SK 8], unmanifest-*prakṛti* is existent despite being

[68] See the end of footnote 70.

[69][SK 3]: "*Mulaprakrti* is uncreated; the seven – 'the great' (*mahat*) and the others – are creative and created; the sixteen, meanwhile, are [merely] created; *puruṣa* is neither creative nor created." Burley, 165. Additionally, Burley states, "SK 3 distinguishes four ontological genera on the basis of whether each is creative or created, or both, or neither." Burly, 92. I understand 'uncreated' and 'uncreative' as uncaused and causally inefficacious, respectively. SK 17: Purusa exists due to:7 composites [being] for another's sake, the opposite of the three *guṇas* etc., [the need for] a controller, [the need for] an enjoyer, and the process [being] for the purpose of aloneness.

[70] See footnote 69 for [SK 3]. Unmanifest-*prakṛti* includes *mulaprakṛtipradhāna*. Burley notes that, "Yet there is certainly a sense in which the manifest forms are profoundly and inescapably dependent upon their unmanifest ground, and it is perhaps for this reason – that is, to indicate this relation of dependence or conditionality – that the author of the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* uses the terms 'cause' (*karaṇa*) and 'effect' (*kārya*) apparently synonymously with 'unmanifest' (*avyakta*) and 'manifest' (*vyakta*) respectively." Burley, 94. Additionally, manifest-*prakṛti*, is divided into two sub-classes: "2. The seven principles referred to simply as 'the great (mahat) and others'. From verses that occur later in the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* it can be inferred that, in addition to mahat (which is also called *buddhi*), the seven principles comprise *ahaṃkāra* plus the five modes of sensory content (*tanmātras*). These are all both creative and created (*prakṛti-vikṛti*).3. A group of sixteen principles, comprising *manas*, the five sense-capacities (*buddhīndriyas*),the five action-capacities (*karmendriyas*), and the five elements (*bhūtas*). These are all merely created (*vikāra*), and are not themselves creative." Burly, 92. *Prakṛti* and *puruṣa* along with the seven principles (from 2) and the sixteen principles (from 3) amount to twenty-five principles (*tattvas*).

> unexperienceable.[71] Manifest-*prakṛti,* being either temporal or spatio-temporal, is experienceable and therefore is, trivially, existent. Furthermore, the dissimilarity between unmanifest-*prakṛti* and manifest-*prakṛti* is established in [SK 10], featuring ways in which they are opposites of each other.[72] However, notably, none of these distinguish their existential statuses from each other. Hence, both manifest-*prakṛti* and unmanifest-*prakṛti* are existent.

Given (ii), one may impute a Meinongianism[73] to Sāṃkhya, wherein those entities (for example, square-circles) that are necessarily unexperienceable must be existent. However, this is not the case because, for Sāṃkhya, that which is not uncaused and can never be caused and is causally inefficacious is non-existent (*asadkāraṇāt*)—having no being whatsoever (qua subsistence, abstinence, etc.).[74] Therefore, existent entities, exclusively unmanifest-*prakṛti* and manifest-*prakṛti*, partake in causation. This is to say that X cannot bring about Y unless both X and Y exist. Anything non-existent cannot begin to exist, and anything existent cannot cease to exist. Therefore, I postulate the relevant ontological commitment of Sāṃkhya as follows:

> Ω_S: It is the case that everything that exists, neither came into existence nor can go out of existence.

Given Ω_S, Uddyotakara's reconstruction is axiomatically erroneous. For Sāṃkhya, while it is the case that an event/entity can be manifest at t_n or a manifest event/entity comes to be at t_n, and one can experience such an entity/event for the first time at t_n—it is not the case that such an event/entity is brought into existence at t_n. Therefore, each of P2 in [3.2.1], P4 in [3.2.2], and P3 in [3.2.3] turns out to be a *false* conditional premise featuring a true antecedent but a false consequent. Hence, the conclusions of all three arguments do not follow, and by extension, Uddyotakara's contradiction does not follow.[75]

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[71] [SK 8] states that "The non-apprehension of that [i.e. *prakṛti*] is due to subtlety, not non-existence; it is apprehended by means of its effects." Burley 165. Additionally, indirect evidence for the existence of unmanifest-*prakṛti* occurs in [SK 9] and I share Burley's reading, who shares John Davies' reading here: "As Davies and I read it, SK 9 can, in short, be understood as containing a transcendental argument for the existence of unmanifest prakṛti. Beginning from the fact of manifest existence, in the form of the various generic constituents of our everyday experience, we can observe that there is, for us, an irresistible urge to assume that all of this experience must have an unmanifest ground, and hence we are obliged to postulate the existence of that unmanifest ground." Burley, 96–97.

[72] [SK 10]: "The manifest is caused, temporal, spatially limited, active, non-singular, dependent, a cipher, composite, conditioned; the unmanifest is the opposite." Burley, 166. "Put in positive terms, this means that it is: (a) unconditioned; (b) eternal (in the sense of being atemporal, as distinct from being continuously enduring); (c) non-spatial (i.e. without spatial limitations, and hence without location or form);(d) inactive." Burley, 93–94.

[73] Reicher, Maria Elisabeth (2025) *Meinongianism*, Cambridge University Press.

[74] This occurs in an excerpt from John Davies' *Hindu Philosophy: The Sānkhya Kārikā of Iśwara Kṛishṇa* as quoted in Burley, 96: "*Asadkāraṇāt* (literally from non-existence, non-cause) implies that there is an identity in the terms non-existence and non-cause."

[75] In [3.2.1], due to the falsity of P2, C1 does not follow, due to which C2 does not follow and, by extension, C3 does not follow—thereby making it so that C4 does not follow. Similarly, in [3.2.1], due to the falsity of P4, C2 does not follow, due to which C3 does not follow and, by extension, C4 does

It would not be a complete re-evaluation of Uddyotakara's logical moves, if we were to end our inquiry at a refutation. Therefore, let us see why Uddyotakara reconstructs Sāṃkhya's position in the way he does and identify the grounds for his error.

§ 3.4 Uddyotakara's Equivocation and Nyāya's Ontological Commitments

Uddyotakara seems to understand verb phrases like 'brought about' and 'comes about' as 'brought into existence' and 'comes into existence' and hence reconstructs the Sāṃkhya position to involve something coming into existence when it comes about. I do not register this as an arbitrary misunderstanding. Instead, I take this to be an equivocation on his part, given Nyāya's ontological commitment, the specific way in which it differs from Saṃkhya's, and how it is presented within the Nyāya causal view.

Nyāya is ontologically committed to negative entities (*abhāvas*).[76] They are classified in two ways, based on (a) type of non-existence and (b) duration, as follows:

(a.i) *annyonyābhāva*, the non-existence responsible for the *difference* between two entities.[77]

(a.ii) *samsargābhāva*, the non-existence responsible for the *absence* of an entity on or in another entity[78], subdivided into:

(a.ii.i) *prāgabhāva*, prior absence, the non-existence that comes to an end but is beginningless.[79]

(a.ii.i) *pradhvaṃsābhāva*, posterior absence, the non-existence that has a beginning but never comes to an end.[80]

(b.i) *atyantābhāva*, everlasting non-existence that neither has a beginning nor an end.[81]

(b.ii) *sāmayikābhāva*, temporary non-existence that has both a beginning and an end.[82]

Given (a.ii.i), (a.ii.ii), and (b.ii), it is evident that Nyāya has a way of making sense of something coming into existence due to the ending of its non-existence and something ceasing to exist due to the beginning of its non-existence. Given Ω_S and the discussion in §3.3, Sāṃkhya can parse (a.i) and (b.i) within their ontological

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not follow—thereby making it so that C5 does not follow. Again, in [3.2.3], due to the falsity of P3, C1 does not follow, due to which C2 does not follow and, by extension, C3 does not follow—thereby making it so that C4 does not follow.

[76] Nyāya inherits this commitment from their sister school, Vaiśeṣika. Sharma, 171–80.

[77] Chakrabarti 1978, 134.

[78] Ibid., 134.

[79] Ibid., 135.

[80] Ibid., 137.

[81] Ibid., 137.

[82] Ibid., 138.

framework but cannot parse (a.ii.i), (a.ii.ii), and (b.ii). Therefore, I postulate the relevant ontological commitment of Nyāya as follows:

> Ω_N: It is the case that some existent things can go out of existence, and it is the case that some non-existent things can come into existence.

Be that as it may, merely juxtaposing Ω_N and Ω_S is insufficient to sustain a charge of equivocation against Uddyotakara. To see how Ω_N features in Nyāya's causal view that Uddyotakara is committed to, we must harken back to the end of §2.2. Therein, Sāṃkhya charged the Naiyāyika with a failure to account for causal regularity as the latter's causal view amounts to the arbitrary replacement of milk in the bowl with yoghurt. We now have the tools to articulate Nyāya's response. The Naiyāyika stipulates that there is a prior absence (*prāgabhāva*) of yoghurt in milk such that when milk turns into yoghurt, the said beginningless absence of yoghurt in milk comes to an end. Extending the stipulation, there is a posterior absence (*pradhvaṃsābhāva*) of milk in the yoghurt such that when the milk turns into yoghurt, the absence of milk begins in the yoghurt and never comes to an end.

Nyāya points out that it is inconceivable that *after* a particular spatiotemporal token of milk *completely* turns into a particular spatiotemporal token of yoghurt, it can again turn into another spatiotemporal token of yoghurt, which is numerically distinct from the previous token of the yoghurt.[83] Therefore, it must be the case that the existence of the milk-token comes to an end when the non-existence of the yoghurt-token (*prāgabhāva*) comes to an end. Inversely, it must be the case that the non-existence of the milk-token (*pradhvaṃsābhāva*) begins when the existence of the yoghurt-token begins. Therefore, milk is *destroyed* and yoghurt is *produced* when milk turns into yoghurt. In this way, Ω_N is captured within [3.1.N.1], [3.1.N.2], and [3.1.N.3]. This is radically different from Sāṃkhya, as established in §3.3, wherein exclusively that which is existent can partake in causation because, for Nyāya, both that which is existent and that which is non-existent play a role in causation.

Therefore, whenever Sāṃkhya claims that the effect or the experience of it is brought about by manifestation, Uddyotakara equivocatively understands Sāṃkhya to be claiming that that they are brought into existence, and hence P2 in [3.2.1], P4 in [3.2.2], and P3 in [3.2.3], feature the same false consequent.

§ 4. Conclusion

Having established that the contradiction identified by Uddyotakara in Sāṃkhya's position does not follow from the arguments presented by him, it is the case that [NV 458.5–459.2] fails as a defense of Nyāya's *asatkāryavādin* answer to Q_2 and Q_1. Such failure does not amount to a defense of Sāṃkhya's *satkāryavādin* answer to Q_2 and Q_1 because, since this failure results from an equivocation on Uddyotakara's part, [NV 458.5–459.2] would be disqualified as a legitimate sub-debate within the

[83] Shaw, 213–69.

asatkāryavāda versus *sakāryavāda* debate due to Uddyotakara's fallacious understanding of Sāṃkhya's position (*pariṇāmavāda*).[84] Besides, Uddyotakara's is not the final word on *asatkāryavāda* or *satkāryavāda*.[85]

Therefore, even though Uddyotakara's supposed contradiction does not follow, the fierce philosophical friction, as illustrated in §1–2, between Nyāya's *asatkāryavādin* position and Sāṃkhya's *satkāryavādin* position remains unresolved. It would be uncharitable to altogether discard [NV 458.5–459.2] as a viable site for legitimately observing said friction. That being said, it would be good to recall the Naiyāyika's penultimate objection to Sāṃkhya's position in §2.2, right before Uddyotakara enters into the debate. Specifically, the Naiyāyika took issue with Sāṃkhya's explanation of Case D because Sāṃkhya was committed to a position that was too much of a departure from how we common sensically understand the world—an understanding that we rely upon in our day-to-day activities.[86] Notwithstanding the failure of [NV 458.5–459.2], is there a philosophical commitment that was non-erronoeusly attributed to Sāṃkhya during our inquiry, which could face a similar backlash from the Naiyāyika?

In light of Ω_N, I would say that the Naiyāyika may identify a similar departure from common sensical understanding to Sāṃkhya's commitment to Ω_S. Therein, re-emerges the aforementioned philosophical friction, taking the form of a

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[84] Nyāya identifies three types of debates: debate for truth, i.e., *vāda*; debate for victory, i.e., *jalpa*; and a destructive debate of contrarians, i.e., *vitaṇḍā*. According to Nyāya, a philosophical debate should be a *vāda*. To ensure they demarcate *vāda* from other forms of debate by restricting the kinds of argumentative maneuvers admissible in a *vāda* as compared to a *jalpa* or a *vitaṇḍā*. The rules of a *vāda* are such that a participant in a *vāda*, i.e. a *vādin*, is obligated to argue/philosophise in good faith while being charitable to their opponent, a fellow *vādin*. See: Dasti and Phillips, 175–80. The rules of a *vāda* strictly prohibit using clinchers, equivocation, and misleading objections to prove, defend, or refute a philosophical position, as they promote bad faith and uncharitability towards one's philosophical opponents. If it can be established that a *vādin* has utilized any of these for their philosophical proof/defense/refutation, said proof/defense/refutation is rendered inadmissible within that *vāda*. See: Ibid., 178–79. Uddyotakara, refuting Sāṃkhya's causal view and proving/defending Nyāya's causal view in [NV 458.5–459.2] as an *asatkārya-vādin* and an *ārambha-vādin*, is bound by these rules. The equivocation committed by him, as established in §3.3–3.4, renders his refutation and proof/defense in [NV 458.5–459.2] inadmissible in a *vāda*. The debate [NV 458.5–459.2] is reduced to a pseudo-*vāda* featuring an erroneous reconstruction of the opponent's position by a supposed *vādin* whose philosophical competence cannot be relied upon, and good faith cannot be established, notwithstanding whether such an equivocation was accidental or intentional on Uddyotakara's part. Nyāya's strictness about these rules is exemplified in their three-fold classification of equivocation (*chala*), featuring Nyāya's epistemological and semantic contentions against it: Equivocation with words; Equivocation over generality; and Equivocation over secondary meaning. See: Ibid., 150–54. Out of these three, I register Uddyotakara to be committing equivocation over generality and equivocation over secondary meaning. *Nyāyasūtra* construes them as follows: [NS 1.2.13]: "Equivocation with generality is rendering an unintended meaning through excessively generalizing a meaning that is possible." Ibid., 152.; [NS 1.2.14]: "Equivocation over secondary meaning is denial of the real meaning when a description designates something through imaginative use of its property." Ibid., 153.

[85] Famously Vācaspati Miśra composed *Nyāyavārttikatātparyaṭīkā*, which is a commentary on Uddyotakara's *Nyāyabhāṣyavārttika*, and *Tattvakaumudī*, which is a commentary on Īśvarakṛṣṇa's *Sāṃkhyakārikā*. Both these commentative texts extend the disagreement between *asatkāryavāda* and *satkāryavāda.* See: Potter 2011, 453–54.

[86] See (i) in footnote 25.

disagreement about ontological commitments. From Ω_N, it follows that Nyāya also holds that:

> Ω_{NS}: It is not the case that everything that exists, neither came into existence nor can go out of existence.

Whereas, from Ω_S, it follows that Sāṃkhya also holds that:

> Ω_{SN}: It is not the case that some existent things can go out of existence, or it is not the case that some non-existent things can come into existence.

It should be noted that Ω_{NS} and Ω_S are contradictory, and so are Ω_{SN} and Ω_N.[87] The nature of such contradictoriness is distinct from that identified by Uddyotakara as it is exclusively inherent to neither Nyāya nor Sāṃkhya. Instead, in my understanding, such contradictoriness emerges due to the mutual incompatibility of Nyāya's and Sāṃkhya's ontological commitments and could serve as fertile grounds for a debate about ontological commitments, that is, a meta-ontological debate.

I pause my inquiry here with a final comment. As for *asatkāryavāda* and *satkāryavāda*, we have been relishing a philosophically and exegetically rich inquiry into the nature of effect (*kārya*) and causation. Translating *a-sat-kārya-vāda* as Non-Existent-Effect-ism and *sat-kārya-vāda* as Existent-Effect-ism, perhaps we can relish more by a focused inquiry into what it means to be existent (*sat*) and non-existent (*a-sat*).[88]

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[87] The propositional logical form of Ω_S is P and that of Ω_{NS} is $\sim P$. The propositional logical form of Ω_N is $(Q \wedge R)$ and that of Ω_{SN} is $\sim Q \vee \sim R$ which is logically equivalent to $\sim(Q \wedge R)$ by Negation of Conjunction postulate of De Morgan's Laws.

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Can Moderns Live Rightly?

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Abstract

In a modern world stricken by evils of all kinds, can we truly live rightly? Reconciliationists like Marx think that we need to figure out a way to be at home in modernity before developing a legitimate answer to this question. Ethical individualists, on the other hand, say yes to the right living question, reminding us of the power of our own agency. Pessimistic holists will disagree with both parties, invariably pointing to evidence both empirical and theoretical that highlights structural inequalities in modern peoples' opportunities to basic liberties, civil rights, education, healthcare, offices of authority, and so on. Historically, philosophers have placed Adorno and his No Right Living Thesis in the latter camp. In this paper, however, I defend a constructive account of Adorno's practical philosophy. I argue that, although Adorno is a negativist and a holist, his normativity actually has significant positive value. Adorno, like all great philosophers, provides hope for the future, and hope for human beings. Like myself, Adorno takes it that moderns can and *should* ultimately aim to live rightly. In contrast to most recent scholarship, I make my positive case for Adorno in a way that preserves his characteristic emphasis on antinomies, or irresolvable puzzles, in modern social life.

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§ 0. Introduction

Freyenhagen (2013) takes Adorno's practical philosophy to rest on the following evaluative claim:

"There is no right life within the wrong."[2]

Freyenhagen calls this assertion the 'No Right Living Thesis.'[3] It has three main implications: that, given modernity's social and historical circumstances, (1) we are not in a position to realise *eudaimonia*, (2) we are not in a position to live self-determining lives, and (3) we are not in a position to live morally upright lives.[4] Adorno provides three primary arguments which support his No Right Living Thesis: (1) the existence of practical antinomies, (2) the ideological nature of modern social life, and (3) the centrality of bare living in the modern social world. In the following section, I draw on Freyenhagen to provide a brief sketch of each component of the No Right Living Thesis. In the section after, I consider some objections and replies to bolster Adorno's position. Finally, I suggest that, although Adorno's normative prescriptions for better living are negative, such normativity actually has positive, albeit antinomical, value. I argue this means, with some caveats, that Adorno thinks moderns can and should ultimately aim to live rightly.

§ 1. No Right Living

The No Right Living Thesis sits at the intersection of ethics and politics. It stands in sharp contrast to the liberal philosophical project, which is characterised by a primacy of ideal theory and justice, as well as a strong emphasis on explanatory and ethical individualism.[5] Adorno, on the other hand, is a holist about the social world.[6] For him, the individual is inextricable from society, and society is inextricable from the individual. Adorno's practical claims, then, are primarily directed at the collective causal powers of social roles and institutions, not the causality of individual morality. Freyenhagen nicely expresses this macro-level feature of Adorno's social ontology by drawing a parallel to Hegel's absolute idealism, which conceives of totality as a spirit (*Geist*) that encompasses the truth of everything, including the teleological development of world history (*Weltgeschichte*).[7] But Adorno, like Marx, is a historical materialist. For him,

[2] *MM*, 4: 43/39.
[3] *A* 53.
[4] Timothy J. Hinton (2024). *Adorno: Lectures.* North Carolina State University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies.
[5] See for example, Michael Freeden (2015). "Philosophical Liberalism: Idealizing Justice." In: *Liberalism: A Very Short Introduction, Very Short Introductions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 94-107.
[6] Social holism is the notion that all of the social elements in a system are interconnected. This means that the meaning of the system itself is "irreducible to the meaning or function of one or more of the system's constituent elements." See Shane J. Ralston (2015). "Holism." In: *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, First Edition. Edited by Michael T. Gibbons. John Wiley & Sons, 1.
[7] See for example, *PhR*, §185R.

Freyenhagen thinks, it is not a spirit, but *society* which is the whole. And instead of encompassing absolute truth, "the whole is the untrue."[8] Furthermore, while Hegel's paradigm of world history progresses through teleological development in a positive dialectic, Adorno's materialist conception of history works in a sharply *negative* dialectic. Like Hegel, Adorno takes it that society has progressed through a starting point of undifferentiated unity and into a period of large-scale alienation, or differentiated disunity.[9] For both thinkers, social antagonism acts as a progressive historical force. But instead of then naturally developing towards a more concrete determination—an overcoming of such alienation in a step which in Hegel I'll call differentiated unity—Adorno's dialectic posits that the modern social world is stuck, rooted in pervasive estrangement. So, Adorno's philosophical project is one which is both practically and theoretically situated in nonideal theory.

On the face of it, there are two ways in which one might interpret Adorno's conception of right living: (1) as a strong form of moral uprightness, or (2) as a weak form of merely acceptable living conditions. In his practical philosophy, however, I take it that Adorno is primarily concerned with (1). While Adorno seems to concede that (2) could be realized from the *ex ante* products of internal, individual transformation, he thinks it is impossible that (1) could be realised without radical, collective change in the external social whole. So, from Adornian holism emerges a causal connection between right living and *external injustice*. I take it that Adorno would agree with the following claim, which endorses a strong form of Levinas-like negative responsibility:[10]

Even if one is perfectly ethically integral *herself*, i.e. internally, she cannot live rightly if she benefits from, or is exploited by, external injustices in the modern social world.

Unlike Levinas, however, Adorno does not conceive of the evils of modernity as an aversive Other. For Adorno, society has already infiltrated the individual, and individual ends are subordinated by society's exchange demands. In this way, modern individuals are mere "appendages of the machine,"[11] no more able to live rightly than society is able to be right. Put in another way, no one individual can on her own change the radical evils that characterise modernity on a social, systematic level.[12] Adorno's moral picture, then, stands in sharp contrast to that of ethical

[8] *A* 36.
[9] For the sake of explaining Adorno's negative dialectic, I have taken it for granted that he thinks society has progressed through a stage of undifferentiated unity. But in his lectures, Adorno says that he suspects it to be more likely that we are merely unable to "give an account of the excess of suffering and injustice without which [substantial ages in which the individual lived in harmony with the collective of which he was a member] would not have existed" (*HF* 208).
[10] See for example, *EFP* 82-89 for a more thorough account of Levinas' position on negative responsibility.
[11] *MM*, 4: 13/15.
[12] Ibid., 42/39.

individualists like the Stoics, whose vision of the good life is exclusive to the inner.[13] Adorno's negativism forms the basis of his first argument for the No Right Living Thesis: the pervasiveness of social antinomies in modernity.[14]

Following Kant, an antinomy can be understood as a practical paradox, or an irresolvable conflict between two sides with an equal claim to being justified.[15] An Adornian antinomy can be understood as a Kantian antinomy with the additional condition that such a conflict is only irresolvable within the modern social world. Throughout his work, Adorno primarily centers his discussion of antinomies around micrological analyses, or case studies which help bring the broader, interrelated elements of the modern social world into better focus.[16] As a holist, Adorno takes micrological analyses to be an especially crucial form of study, since they reveal the irreducibility of constituent social parts from their proper whole. This inductive methodological emphasis, which is characteristic of Adorno's overall philosophical work, reveals one of his key thoughts: That moral theory alone is insufficient for the provision of normative guidance in modernity. Instead, such prescription must be derived from, but not limited to, critical interdisciplinary assessment of case-specific risk.[17] I will return to this point in §2 and §3.

The first micrological analysis of Adorno's which Freyenhagen takes to be relevant vis-à-vis the No Right Living Thesis is that of the private life. In it, Adorno interrogates the question of whether it is possible for people to truly be at home in modernity. I think that, as opposed to philosophical reconciliationists,[18] Adorno falls on this point into the camp of *political* reconciliationists like Marx, who think that being at home in modernity is something which must be irreducibly transparent, or self-evident prima facie. On this view, because there is evidently pervasive

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[13] See for example, William O. Stephens (2020). "The Stoics and Their Philosophical System." In: Kelly Arenson (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Hellenistic Philosophy*. Routledge, pp. 22-34; see also Pierre Hadot (1998)."The Inner Citadel, or the Discipline of Assent." In: *The Inner Citadel: The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*. Translated by Michael Chase. Harvard University Press, pp. 101-127.

[14] Throughout the paper, I employ a core understanding of the word "modernity" to refer not only to the current time, but to societies which "are built on the principles of individual freedom and instrumental mastery." See Peter Wagner (2020). "Modernity." In: *The Cambridge Handbook of Social Theory*. Edited by Peter Kivisto. Cambridge University Press, pp. 143-162.

[15] See B 425-461; see also *A* 55.

[16] Ibid., 54.

[17] Ibid., 166.

[18] Here, I am drawing on Michael O. Hardimon's (1992) distinction in "The Project of Reconciliation: Hegel's Social Philosophy." *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 165-195. I should say here that I have changed my stance on Hegelian reconciliation. For a view of my earlier position, see Luke T. Metzger (2024). "In Defense of Hegelian Reconciliation." *Aporia*, Brigham Young University, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 13-26. My position now is that to call Hegel a reconciliationist, as Hardimon does, is somewhat reductive. I do think that Hegel's social project is one of figuring out how to be at home (*Heimatlichkeit*) in the social world. But in Hegel's system, there is only dialectical progress, no closure. Any unity which is captured via double negation is immediately and dynamically overcome by further contradiction. Hegel's conception of world history, then, does not seem to be a secularised eschatology, but rather a dynamic dialectical progression of truth within itself (a decisive improvement over the dualistic arbitrariness of the Platonic dialectic). This constant positively rational progress emerges from a *self*-sublation (*aufheben*) of nothing external to itself. See Julie E. Maybee (2020). "Hegel's Dialectics." In: E. N. Zalta & U. Nodelman (Eds.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

alienation in the modern social world, modernity itself cannot be a home.[19] In the following section, I will say more about this position and its relationship to Adorno. But for now, let us turn back to Adorno's study of the private life, which comprises only a constituent part of this larger relation.

In Aphorism No. 18, Adorno hones in on one object of particular interest to private life in the modern whole: dwelling, or shelter. Here, he observes that modernity levels various social pressures on people, e.g. the pressure to buy a nice house, that make it difficult, or even impossible, for them to feel at home in their own dwellings.[20] Namely, Adorno thinks that capitalist consumerism forces (not coerces)[21] people to pursue unimportant things for fear of feeling left out.[22] If people do not give in to these pressures, feeling at home starts to seem precariously unimportant. But if they do, the feeling of home becomes distorted by fleeting impulsivity. Then there are the homeless: those who are considered free and equal citizens in a liberal democracy, but lack even the most basic rights and liberties to exercise the causal powers to pursue unimportant things in the first place. These reflections on dwelling lead Adorno to an antinomy: we should not, but also need to, make ourselves at home in the modern social world.[23] One salient example of this kind of antimony is private property. While Adorno takes the legal regime of private property to be necessary in modernity, since without it we would risk "ending up destitute or precariously dependent on the good will of others or social institutions,"[24] He also points out that the institution of private property allows certain people to retain much more than is needed to live comfortably. As a result, those who retain less end up suffering needlessly. This raises a host of social problems. In particular, Adorno thinks that using the fact that ownership rights are necessary for survival in a defense of one's own possessions is dangerously ideological.[25]

This leads me to Adorno's second argument for the No Right Living Thesis: the inevitable entanglement of ideological claims in modern social life. Here, we can roughly say that ideology refers to a systematic set of beliefs about the social world.[26] But since Adorno conceives of the social underbelly of the modern world as

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[19] Ibid., 171. That alienation is evident in modernity to begin with is a characteristic feature of the political reconciliationist project.
[20] *MM*, 4: 38.
[21] Here, I am using Cohen's distinction between force, which entails that *X* must do *A* because no reasonable alternatives are available, and coercion, which entails that *X* must do *A* because no alternatives are available at all. See G. A. Cohen (1983). "The Structure of Proletarian Unfreedom." *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 3-33.
[22] *MM*, 4: 38.
[23] Ibid., 39.
[24] *A* 55.
[25] Ibid, 59.
[26] See for example, Michael Freeden (1998). "Ideology." In: *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Taylor and Francis.

morally reprehensible and "radically evil,"[27] This second argument might be better reframed as the idea that moderns inevitably develop *false consciousness*, or misperceptions about their real position, in the social world.[28] As I take it, there are four main elements to Adorno's understanding of false consciousness. First, false consciousness manifests on the micro level as individually mistaken self-consciousness about the social world. Second, false consciousness manifests on the macro level as a systematically deluded ideology. Third, the role of false consciousness is to reproduce itself such that people become reconciled to the social world by their blindness to true social realities.[29] And fourth, false consciousness either stabilises or legitimises oppression. We might think of an example of this sort of characterisation of false consciousness, in modernity, as the meritocratic American Dream originally proposed by Benjamin Franklin.[30]

Franklin's version of the American Dream advocated for individualistic self-realisation on an unabashedly constitutional basis, placing economic opportunity within seemingly easy reach for those who worked hard and spent frugally. But because such a materialistic conception of what it meant to realise personal dreams in America was far from the true reality, Franklin's model of the self-made man quickly developed into a target of social criticism in, for example, Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* and Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.[31] Importantly, Franklin's model was not just imposed by Franklin himself. People in positions of power adopted and reproduced its sentiments to legitimise their place in the social hierarchy, blinding and reconciling both themselves and others to the true social realities of the late eighteenth century, a time when most immigrants coming to the United States suffered from significantly restricted social mobility.[32] Just as Franklin's model of the self-made man restricted the practical capacities of both those who adopted his model and those on whom it was leveraged, I think that Adorno's schema of false consciousness can broadly be understood as a form of

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[27] *A* 30.

[28] Cf. Marxist interpretations of false consciousness, which are often limited to the realm of the political superstructure. Adorno's view of false consciousness, on the other hand, is unconstrained by anything but modernity itself. See Ron Eyerman (1981). "False Consciousness and Ideology in Marxist Theory." *Acta Sociologica*, Vol. 24, No. 1/2, Work and Ideology, pp. 43-56.

[29] This third feature of Adornian false consciousness aligns nicely with the Platonic notion of false consciousness. As presented in the Allegory of the Cave (*Republic* 514b–518d), Plato's picture of false consciousness is famously exemplified by prisoners who are enslaved and reconciled to their false belief that shadows represent real objects in the world.

[30] See Benjamin Franklin (1758). "The Way to Wealth." In: *Poor Richard Improved.* Extracted from the Doctor's Political Works.

[31] Alfred Hornung (1999). "The Un-American Dream." In: *Amerikastudien / American Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 4, pp. 545-553.

[32] See for example, the 1790 U.S. Naturalization Bill, H. R. 40, which limited new citizenship to "free white person(s)...of good character." Courtesy of the *Archives of the U.S. Capitol.*

social unfreedom—one which is collectively self-imposed.[33] As Rousseau famously put it: "Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains."[34]

For Adorno, many of these chains are forged, in modernity, by capitalism. While as members of liberal democracies people conceive of themselves as free and equal citizens, they are in reality hopelessly bound to the ebb and flow of capitalist commodification, which Adorno thinks has entered into all social relations. Adorno specifically directs his criticisms of commodification, or the transformation of individual use-value into common exchange value,[35] towards the sort of hypercommercialised marketisation which characterises a modern mutation of capitalism he calls *late capitalism*.[36] Whereas early Marxist critiques of capitalism positioned exchange value as intrinsic, i.e. goods are sold based on the value they have in themselves, Adorno's late capitalism goes a step further by positing that individual use-value is, in modernity, grossly transformed and fetishised by exchange value.[37] That is, the genuine use value (*Rang*) of something like a piece of art, e.g. its ability to organically challenge a viewer's preconceptions, is replaced by the social value (*gesellschaftliche Schätzung*) it has on the exchange market, e.g. its ability to be sold for a price.[38] Adorno takes commodification to be the primary and most pervasive source of alienation in modernity. To further unpack this claim, however, it might be helpful to briefly sketch two primary tendencies which Adorno thinks all modern societies exemplify: (1) the elimination of individuality, and (2) the inversion of means and ends.

The first tendency, the elimination of individuality, entails an indifference towards individual life, including the objectification and depersonalisation of people.[39] In modernity, Adorno thinks that people are constantly being put into broad, general, and therefore disposable categories as particularity becomes eliminated. More specifically, he thinks that workers are treated with a lack of respect for their individuality by employers and employment contracts. Take, for example, the recent plight of migrant workers in Qatar, who have only barely been paid enough to sustain their own basic needs, much less their unique lives outside of the workplace.[40] The second tendency, the inversion of means and ends, obtains in a similarly Marxist vein, when human beings become subordinated to their own creations.[41] For Adorno, this is best exemplified in late capitalist society when

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[33] *A* 169.
[34] Rousseau, J. J. (1997). "Of the Social Contract or Principles of Political Right." From: *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings.* Cambridge University Press, 351.
[35] *Das Kapital*, Vol. 1, Hamburg: Meissner, 1867; *Marx and Engels Werke*, 1956–90 MEW, XXIII/ *Marx Engels Collected Works*, 1975–2005, MECW, XXXV, Ch. 1.
[36] My thanks to an anonymous referee at the UPJA for drawing my attention to this crucial distinction.
[37] *LC* 232-246.
[38] *DE* 128.
[39] *A* 26.
[40] Mohamed (2023). "Migrant workers in Qatar should not be exploited and abused like I was." *Amnesty International.*
[41] *A* 28.

production and maximisation of profit become undertaken for their own sakes. Take, for example, the recent Amazon strikes, in which workers have claimed that even their bathroom breaks are strictly timed by employers to maximise efficiency in the workplace.[42] Here, commodification takes on a life of its own, and blinds people to the unpleasant social realities of inequality, injustice, suffering, and evil. Late capitalism, then, not only perpetuates, but is itself an Adornian form of false consciousness. It "abjures [moderns'] autonomy."[43]

This leads me to Adorno's final argument for the No Right Living Thesis: the centrality of bare living in modern social life. Here, Freyenhagen takes Adorno to mean roughly this: that while "human life used to be conceived as encompassing all aspects of human existence, it is increasingly narrowing down to only two aspects: consumption and production."[44] It is alarming to Adorno, in other words, that modernity has become increasingly privatised and material. This 'bare life' is not one which Adorno thinks can truly be worth living, both in the sense that it cannot be morally acceptable, and in the sense that it cannot actively be shaped by the modern agent whose life it is. Part of the reason why is because Adorno thinks that such a life severely lacks autonomy, or positive freedom.[45] When we become beholden to untrue social realities—and Adorno thinks that we cannot help but do this, since we are irreducibly constituent members of a corrupt modern whole—it becomes impossible for us to act as self-determining agents. Following Kant, I think Adorno means here that false consciousness prevents us from forming true practical conceptions of ourselves, and therefore from being able to act on normative reasons at all.[46] As I have claimed, Adorno thinks that all individual ends which indeed may seem to be taken up freely are ultimately hijacked by modernity's telos of uninspired exchange commodification. The Adornian modern, then, seems to scrape by without any meaningful say in the direction of the course of their own life. This is an especially haunting thought, particularly for the atomized liberal ideal.

It is also, in part, why Adorno thinks that we are not in a position to realise *eudaimonia.* Although Adorno concedes that we may be able to foster some ultimately illusory form of subjective happiness in modernity, a robustly Aristotelian *eudaimonism* entails a rational and positive *activity* of the self,[47] which is inconsistent with the deterministic bare life. Furthermore, Aristotelian *eudaimonism* is lived (1) in accordance with virtue (2) over the course of a complete life (3)

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[42] Dearbail Jordan & Zoe Conway (2023). "Amazon strikes: Workers claim their toilet breaks are timed." *BBC Business News.*
[43] *DE* 127.
[44] *A* 63.
[45] See for example, *ND*, 6: 222, 230–1, 239.
[46] See for example, *SN* 92.
[47] *EN*, 1097b22–1098a20.

unmarred by external misfortune.[48] But (1) cannot be realised in Adornian modernity because it requires autonomous *praxis*.[49] Adornian modernity leaves no room for moral uprightness (2) in a complete life because it is marked by pervasive alienation. And, as I have claimed, Adorno thinks that right living is inseparable from the presence of (3) collective, external evil. But while Adorno holds that a strong form of moral uprightness is impossible in modernity, he does concede that there are better and worse ways of living in it. Morality is hardly unimportant, Adorno says, since "without evil there would be no good; without a rift [between individual and society] to provide mankind with its substantial security within a given society, the idea of freedom and with it the idea of a condition worthy of human beings would not exist."[50]

§ 2. The Possibility of Reconciliation

There is no shortage of objections to Adorno's position.[51] In this section, however, I am most interested in the following question: Does Adorno think that reconciliation to the social world is possible at all? To begin to provide an answer, I would like to revisit what Michael Hardimon (1992) calls the political reconciliationist position. Recall that in sharp contrast to the philosophical reconciliationist, who thinks that the modern social world *is* a home but just does not look or feel like it,[52] The political reconciliationist thinks that the modern world is not a home at all. On this view, if it is not plainly obvious that we are at home in our social world, and if there is truly a need for a detailed philosophical account to help us become reconciled with both our world and ourselves, then we cannot be at home at all.[53] Here, it seems that Adorno and the political reconciliationist agree. But this leads to a prima facie antinomy. As I will sketch it, the antinomy consists of the following two sides, both of which at first seem to have an equal claim to justification: (1) because

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[48] Here, I highlight the main features of Aristotelian *eudaimonism* that conflict with Adornian modernity. However, perhaps the most marked characteristic of Aristotelian normativity is its implication in a life form's *ergon*, or unique teleological function, *qua* member of that life form's respective kind, or 'species.' That is, a life form is considered good or bad based on whether it is able to carry out its appropriate function, e.g. a good acorn is one that grows into a strong oak tree. Aristotle's prudential, functionalist conception of normativity, as Freyenhagen points out in *A* 232-251, is actually quite consistent with Adorno's negativism, since Adorno takes humanity's *ergon*, i.e. its full potential for good, to be presently suppressed by the evils of modern social life.

[49] Although Adorno does think that there is one prime virtue, which is modesty (*Bescheidenheit*). See *PMP* 251–2/169–70; see also *ND* 6: 345/352; *MM*, Aphorism No. 6, 4: 29/27–8.

[50] *HF*, 287–288.

[51] See for example, William P. Nye (1988). "Theodor Adorno on Jazz: A Critique of Critical Theory." *Popular Music and Society*, Vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 69-73; Jürgen Habermas (1990). *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Translated by Frederick G. Lawrence. The MIT Press; Fredric Jameson (1991). *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism.* Duke University Press.

[52] Although, as Hardimon notes, the philosophical reconciliationist does not automatically jump to this conclusion. Rather, her project of reconciliation derives its practical power from the philosophical theory it provides, develops, and affirms. See Michael O. Hardimon (1992). "The Project of Reconciliation: Hegel's Social Philosophy." *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 171.

[53] Ibid., 172.

Adornian modernity itself consists of pervasive, irresolvable antinomies, Adorno seems to be committed to being unconcerned with reconciliation. But because he is also committed to the claim that pervasive alienation is rooted in the external, collective social whole, it seems that he must agree with the political reconciliationist that (2) the ideal way to dispel the alienation that marks modernity (and therefore to realize the way to reconciliation and true right living) is through collective, material social transformation.[54]

For now, I will characterise both (1) and (2) as Adornian. Let us explore some potential objections. One might swiftly object to (2) by pointing to cases where collective social conditions *have* been transformed, but individuals are left unaffected, their false consciousness still intact. Consider, for example, the case of a sheltered college student who, against all odds, makes it through all of her coursework without having any of her fundamental beliefs challenged. To such a worry, I think the response (from either camp) would be this: the kind of ideal, collective social transformation envisioned on this view *aims* to challenge, but does not necessarily change, false consciousness. The goal is not to impose or dogmatize knowledge, but simply to provide greater opportunity for people to reach towards the truth. This might quickly lead to another worry: how could Adorno be committed to both (1) and (2) when his thesis is that there is no right living? Here, the Adornian response is as follows: there is only no right living within *the wrong.* And the wrong, for Adorno, is strictly modernity. It is only within *modernity* that irresolvable antinomies are pervasive. In future, differently structured societies, this could very well change. Importantly, however, the prima facie antinomy I have presented stems from the fact that Adorno himself does not seem to be particularly concerned with a project of reconciliation, nor with the prospect of building towards a better future.[55] Instead, it seems that he merely leaves room for the slim possibility that current social conditions could undergo a drastic enough transformation from which right living could be realised. Adorno's tempered attitude here stands in sharp contrast to the ambition of the political reconciliationist project, which takes building towards a better future to be an actively pressing endeavor.[56]

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[54] Recall here Marx's famous line against Feuerbach that "philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it." See Robert C. Tucker. (1978). "Thesenuber Feuerbach," in Marx Engels Werke (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1983), 3:535 ("Theses on Feuerbach," in The Marx-Engels Reader, 2d ed., ed. [New York: Norton], 145).

[55] Indeed, it seems that Adorno takes modernity to be condemned to the kind of uninspired status quo Martin Luther King Jr. called "negative normalcy." In his seminal *Letter From Birmingham Jail* (1963), King describes such a state as "the absence of tension," which is more "devoted to order than to justice" (p. 3). What I ultimately attempt to highlight in this paper, however, is that Adorno still thinks it is imperative that we break through the "facades [of such a status quo] into which our consciousness crashes" (*ND* 17).

[56] See for example, Wendell Bell (1991). "Values and the Future in Marx and Marxism." *Futures.* Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd., pp. 147-162.

This is where Adorno and the political reconciliationist diverge. While the political reconciliationist sees ideal, collective transformation as being shaped through positive agency, an Adornian social transformation must be *negative,* since the bare life affords no positive freedom for self-determination.[57] This significantly complicates things. If, on Adorno's view, our social whole cannot at least in part be reshaped through initiative, modernity's only hope for right living lies strictly in an exercise of the kind of freedom afforded by the absence of obstacles, barriers, constraints, or interferences external (and in Adorno's case, deterministically internal) to them.[58] Of course, negative agency is still *agency.* In this case, it does not necessarily entail passivity, only that modernity is forced (not coerced) to either omit to act, or refrain from acting, if social conditions are to be radically transformed. Freyenhagen calls this negative normative prescription an 'ethics of resistance.'[59] Here, Adorno advises us to exercise our negative causal powers to *resist* wrong life. Adorno does this because, as I have claimed, he thinks that there *are* better and worse ways of living within the wrong. In fact, Adorno actually takes individual moral agency to warrant a great deal of importance (just not primacy) in the pursuit of a better social future.[60] Accordingly, the main purpose of his ethics of resistance is to provide practical, albeit negative, normative guidance from which this agency can benefit. Adorno's ethics of resistance can be roughly summed up by what Freyenhagen calls 'the new categorical imperative,' which commands us to "arrange our thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself, so that nothing similar will happen."[61]

But while living less wrongly in the wrong does constitute a kind of determination, this does not mean (as it does for Hegel)[62] that we can know anything positive about such determination. In other words, although Adorno takes resisting forms of the wrong life to warrant a great deal of practical import, this does not allow us to say that we can live rightly automatically.[63] To say the least, this revelation seems to make the possibility of *future* right living increasingly improbable. How can radical social transformation ever occur if we can't even make an active difference in our own lives, our efforts towards resistance still hopelessly subjected to the "changing forms of repression?"[64] The fact that Adorno leaves this possibility of future reconciliation open while also denying positive self-determination points to one, perhaps unsatisfying, answer: that because of the current evils in modernity, we cannot know what the future holds, nor what the human good actually is (since on

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[57] *CM* 85.
[58] See for example, Isaiah Berlin (1969). "Two Concepts of Liberty." In: *I. Berlin, Four Essays on Liberty*, London: Oxford University Press: 118–72. New ed. in Berlin 2002: 166–217.
[59] *A* 162.
[60] *PMP* 250/168.
[61] *ND* 365.
[62] See for example, *PhR* §324R.
[63] See for example, *ND*, 6: 161–3.
[64] *A* 166.

Adorno's view, our collective human potential has yet to be realised historically).[65] It is possible that we could live rightly in the future, but for this to happen, a great collective shift would have to occur. Adorno does not do much in the way of explaining how this might happen. But the postulate of such a collective shift *does*, on Adorno's view, crucially help us make sense of the true social world.[66]

This is the practical power of the No Right Living Thesis. It aims to provide a sober account of modernity's current evils and injustices. It is a critical, experimental reflection on the present, but it is importantly not a *completed* project. Adorno does, however, give us something to chew on—a negative picture of what a postulate of positive freedom would look like: "In view of the concrete possibility of utopia, dialectics is the ontology of the false condition. A right condition would be freed from dialectics, no more system than contradiction."[67] I take up the consequences of this claim in the next section.

§ 3. Negative as Positive

As Freyenhagen rightly notes, Adorno's commitment to epistemic negativism does not automatically make him susceptible to objections about an analytic connection to the good.[68] That is, we do not necessarily or symmetrically know the good or how to attain it just by virtue of the fact that we are presently well-acquainted with the bad. Consider the case of pain. When we feel pain, it is not obvious that we need to know what pleasure is like to intuit that the absence of pain is intrinsically preferable to its presence. This, of course, (for most people besides masochists) is because pain feels bad, and is meant to feel bad. But just because what is bad does not automatically have positive epistemic implications does not mean that it cannot have negative ones which are *positively motivated*. In the following, I will suggest that, although the No Right Living Thesis has decidedly negative normative implications, it actually has underlying positive value. Contrary to most current scholarship, the way in which I do this takes us up a weaker approach that preserves Adorno's characteristic emphasis on irresolution.[69] I think that a nice way of beginning to cash out my view is by situating it in what Korsgaard calls a "double-level theory," a model which reconciles Rawls' distinction of moral

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[65] See, for example: "Without exception, human beings have yet to become themselves. By the concept of the self we should properly mean their potential, and this potential stands in polemical opposition to the reality of the self" *ND*, 6: 274/278.
[66] *A* 243.
[67] *ND* 11.
[68] See *A* 209 - 231.
[69] Cf. Yvonne Sherratt (2002). *Adorno's Positive Dialectic*. Cambridge University Press, which takes a strong, ideal approach to unearthing positive features of Adorno's normativity. I take the view that Adorno does not have a hidden ontology, and that his normativity is plainly negative. But I do suggest, more weakly, that this normativity crucially turns on a positive postulate, and is derivative of what I take to be a positive, albeit antinomical, view of philosophical inquiry itself.

philosophy into ideal and nonideal theory.[70] Applying this model to Adorno's normativity, the Rawlsian ideal initially seems to posit that options of active resistance are open to modern agents who hope to exercise their negative causal powers and live better within the wrong. In the nonideal, however, where options of resistance may be unavailable,[71] It seems that Adorno thinks there is no possibility for agency at all. But as I have claimed, Adorno only thinks that we lack positive freedom *presently*.

A consequence of this feature of Adorno's project is that it rules out what social and political philosophers call "backwards-looking" models for achieving rectificatory or corrective justice, such as the black radical liberalism famously endorsed by Charles Mills.[72] For Adorno, the evils of our past have led us to our present. They cannot and should not be reconciled. Instead, although Adorno does not say it outright, our only option seems to be to negatively pursue "big-tent," forward-looking strategies to address inequality, injustice, suffering, and evil.[73] So, after a more thorough pass, it seems that we can revise the double-level theory: the exercise of negative agency, as I will put it, actually represents the Rawlsian nonideal,[74] while the ideal can be understood as Adorno's *postulate* of positive freedom, i.e. the absence of dialectics. Ideal, in this sense, might be pejorative for Adorno—something which is entirely unrealistic given our current circumstances. But the fact that Adorno thinks we need a positive postulate at all to make sense of the social world as it is leaves open the possibility of future revision, our collective human potential yet unfulfilled.

Although Freyenhagen identifies this feature of Adorno's normativity, I think that he undersells how practically powerful an idea it really is. Adorno is effectively saying that, given the alienating nature of modernity (some features of which are surely better now than ever before, given significant advances in medicine, technology, civil rights, and so on),[75] it is certain that there is a wealth of potential for human good yet untapped. That this may be *solely* because of history's failings is for now orthogonal. My own stance here is more weakly that of proto-Kantians like Waldron (2017), who think that the capacity of acting for reasons (beneficial or harmful, determined or undetermined) confers significant value onto human beings

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[70] See Christine M. Korsgaard (1986). "The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil." *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 15(4): 325-349.

[71] For example, because of coercion, or losses in cognitive function, or excesses of physical or mental pain.

[72] See Charles W. Mills (2017). *Black Rights/White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism.* New York: Oxford University Press; see also Charles W. Mills (1997). *The Racial Contract.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

[73] Here, I am using language from Derrick Darby (2023). *A Realistic Blacktopia: Why We Must Unite to Fight.* New York: Oxford University Press.

[74] Indeed, along with everything that Adorno says outright, since his entire enterprise works from the nonideal.

[75] In fact, Adorno himself goes so far as to claim that modernity currently has the productive and material resources necessary to mitigate the suffering of its constituents, but continues to perpetuate it anyways. See, for example: "The productive forces would directly permit [mitigation] here and now, and as the conditions of production on either side relentlessly prevent it." (*ND* 203).

themselves.[76] I shall call proponents of this view *capacity-first value theorists.* Capacity-first value theorists afford primacy of value to human capacities, not their exercise, because it seems that most attempts to construct philosophical criteria for *persons-first value* are ad hoc.[77] That is, such attempts struggle to categorically define what makes persons valuable in themselves, or intrinsically valuable, without excluding certain persons from the picture. Of course, capacity-first value theorists are committed to the similarly agent-relative position that capacities are only valuable insofar as it is a live possibility that they can be exercised, since this is what gives them practical significance. Critics, then, might worry that such a view excludes, for instance, children and those with certain disabilities. But I take it that Adorno's view is, conveniently, *agent-neutral.* That is, it generates the same kind of normativity for all agents, giving them common aims.[78] Adorno thinks that *all* human beings ought to attempt to resist wrong living, to negatively organise their thoughts and actions so as not to live in a world where something like Auschwitz could happen again. Here, I think real reasoning-giving force begins to emerge from Adorno's assertion that we need a positive postulate to make sense of the modern social world. Not all ends will end well, and not all attempts at living rightly will bear fruits, since we cannot (presently) know what the human good is. But the capacity for goodness and its future exercise is a powerful one. On this view, it grounds an agent's value.[79]

Now, bracketing my claim that a postulate of positive freedom holds unexpectedly important practical power, the foregoing reflections have as of yet failed to shed light on perhaps Adorno's most pressing and holistic practical antinomy about modernity: that although we ought not deny the possibility of a better future so as not to deny that the suffering pervasive in modernity is worthy of being addressed, we also cannot affirm it so as not to affirm the evil that characterises it.[80] Adorno is right to be puzzled by such a grave observation, and I think that worries along this line of thought inform the crux of his practical philosophy. But since practical antinomies, as a consequence of being themselves, have opposing sides with equal claims to justification, I find that the solution to most of them is this: either way is okay. This is where I disagree with Adorno. To make meaningful and pragmatic progress towards reshaping our current social world, we will have to bite the bullet and make painful choices. The radical evils of modernity should not be reason alone for people to give up the hope of leading more than merely acceptable lives. When hope is lost, so is philosophy. But by furnishing us with what he takes to be a

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[76] Jeremy Waldron (2017). *One Another's Equals*. Cambridge MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 240.
[77] L. Nandi Theunissen (2020). "Common Humanity." In: *The Value of Humanity*, Oxford University Press, 26.
[78] Derek Parfit (1984). *Reasons and Persons*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 27, 143. Recall here Adorno's claim that modernity exemplifies the elimination of individuality.
[79] L. Nandi Theunissen (2020). "On Valuing and the Good Life." In: *The Value of Humanity*, Oxford University Press, 101.
[80] See for example, *ND* 17.

truthful account of the current social world, it seems that Adorno *does*, perhaps just implicitly, supply us with a small but impactful bit of what his own observations about modernity sorely fail to capture. While Adorno agrees with the political reconciliationist that the modern social world is far from being a home, I take it that he would agree with Hegel on the following claim:

It is vital that the active provision and development of philosophical understanding helps moderns to grasp the true nature of their social world.[81]

For both Hegel and Adorno, pursuing truth serves a *positive* purpose, even if that truth is not ultimately worth coming to terms with. The truth, in other words, is something for which, in each case, we deeply owe it to ourselves to *actively* seek. For Adorno, this is because the truth helps reveal modernity's great failings, and its miring in alienation. But although on Adorno's view we cannot help but become subject to such failings, coming closer to the truth crucially helps us to avoid blindly and mindlessly becoming a part of them: "Thought that does not capitulate before wretched existence comes to nought before its criteria, truth becomes untruth, philosophy becomes folly. And yet philosophy cannot give up, lest idiocy triumph in actualised unreason (*Widervernunft*)."[82]

In this way, I think that Adorno understands positive critical reflection as the *arche,* or first principle, of his negative ethics of resistance. While acts of resistance are themselves negative, the agency required to bring them about is derived from an underlying axiom of polemical, positive philosophical inquiry, the goal of which is to "*construct* keys before which reality springs open."[83] Take, for example, the initial political resistance to apartheid in South Africa, which was ignited in the late 1940s after a widespread critical inquiry into the systematicity of the state's racist policies.[84] Resistance, in this case, originated in, or derived from, a positive social reaction to wrongness. This is the distinct sort of resistance that I think Adorno has in mind when he makes negative normative prescriptions to moderns. I'll call it *positively axiomatic resistance.* We might contrast positively axiomatic resistance, or resistance that derives its practical power from a fundamentally positive impetus like critical philosophical inquiry, to the sort of resistance that gets off the ground because of a negative axiom. Take, for example, Smith's New Year's resolution to stay away from sweets. When confronted with a sweet, Smith recalls his negative resolution to refrain from indulging his cravings, and initiates a process of resistance. This resistance is actualised by the negativity of Smith's maxim, so that the negativity of refraining as a principle is indexed to the negativity of resistance as

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[81] See for example, *PhR*, Preface, 14.
[82] *ND* 404.
[83] Theodor W. Adorno. (1977). "The Actuality of Philosophy." *Telos: Critical Theory of the Contemporary*. (31): 120-133. The italics are my own, and highlight Adorno's positive use of the word "construct."
[84] See for example, Edward A. Tiryakian (1960). "Apartheid and Politics in South Africa." *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 682-697.

an act. In Adorno's case, however, resistance to, say, purchasing a piece of fine art (*schöne Kunst*) solely because of its exchange value, can only be actualised by the potentiality of a prior polemical inquiry into the social and intellectual character (*geistiger Gehalt*) of modern art as a whole.[85] A positive investigation, in other words, must necessarily take place before any negative act of resistance can subsequently come to fruition. Of course, Adorno is naturally skeptical of a fundamentally positive philosophical process (and indeed, of the philosophical enterprise entirely),[86] since it often leads to failure, and must itself be consistently challenged. But this is, antinomically, precisely the reason philosophy can and must go forward.[87]

On a corollary point, it is worth noting that Adorno's practical philosophy mirrors the dialectical antagonism he takes to characterise history and reality itself. When philosophy ceases to be challenging, and indeed frustrating, Adorno thinks that it has lost its purpose.[88] Like Nietzche, Adorno's philosophical task is doubly creation and destruction.[89] To make progress, Adorno says, we must tear down old forms of thought, and then tear them down again. But while this experimental approach makes plain its negative problematization of the modern whole, what I have been attempting to highlight is that it also not only invites positive revision, but fundamentally *turns* on it. Although Adorno doesn't think it is possible that moderns can live rightly in the present, I think that he does think we can, and in fact should, aim to live in a *future* where right living is not only possible, but normative. As I have claimed, we already know something negative about such a future, just by virtue of the badness which presently pervades modernity. That is, to truly live rightly, and not merely better, society as a whole must exemplify the absence of dialectics. Only then will an ethics of resistance no longer be required, and will autonomy become possible.[90] And it is here, I think, that Adorno presents a glimmer of real hope. For maybe when we start to realise that philosophy itself has a positive purpose, we can start to find common ground, to begin paving the way towards a better future, and ultimately towards a strong form of true right living. For Adorno, philosophy is, at least in part, the positive motivation which has the unbridled potential to inspire a negative utopia: "Critical thought alone, not thought's complacent agreement with itself, is what may help bring about [real] change."[91]

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[85] See for example, *AT* 9.
[86] *ND* 4.
[87] See for example: "In principle, philosophy can always go astray, which is the sole reason it can go forward" (*ND* 14).
[88] *ND* 23.
[89] Alex Thomson (2006). *Adorno: A Guide for the Perplexed*. Continuum: London, 5.
[90] *ND* 403.
[91] *CM* 122.

§ 4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have defended a constructive account of Adorno's practical philosophy. With the foregoing, I have recounted the main components of the No Right Living Thesis, explained what I think is its relationship to the political reconciliationist position, parried several common objections leveled at Adorno's position, and ultimately suggested that the No Right Living Thesis' negative normative implications actually have underlying positive value. I have suggested that such underlying positivity is derived from (1) the necessity of a postulate of positive freedom and unrealised teleological human good in comprehending the true nature of the modern social world, and (2) Adorno's implicit view that philosophy itself must have positive impetus in order for an ethics of negative resistance to be legitimate *imprimis*. This positivity reveals Adorno's guarded but poignant sentiment that, although moderns cannot live rightly in the present, they must do everything in their power to create a better future where right living is not only possible, but normative, and where dialectics and an ethics of resistance are therefore necessary no longer.

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Towards a Moderate Metaphysical Interpretation of Hegel: Lucy Allais' Interpretation of Kant's Critical Idealism and Its Relevance to Contemporary Hegel Scholarship

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Abstract

Divergent readings of G. W. F. Hegel's work have proliferated over recent decades, alternating between the two extremes of deflationary or metaphysical interpretations. This paper seeks to bridge the divide between these incompatible perspectives. On the one hand, deflationary views reduce Hegel's system to an epistemological methodology that makes no metaphysical claims. On the other hand, metaphysical views claim that Hegel develops an ontology from Kant's philosophy. Interestingly, an analogous divide exists among scholarship of Kant's critical idealism which Lucy Allais' moderate metaphysical interpretation addresses directly. As such, I aim to adapt Allais' interpretation of Kant to help resolve the anarchy that permeates studies of Hegel. First, I outline the deflationary and metaphysical readings of Kant; the incompleteness of the former and the inconsistency of the latter; and present Allais' moderate metaphysical interpretation as a synthesis of these views which combines their respective advantages. I then outline an analogous divide among Hegel interpretations to uncover an implicit reading of Kant that

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dominates Hegel scholarship, leading towards a new typology of Kant-Hegel scholarship. This analysis foregrounds my adaptation of Allais' approach to Hegel's case, allowing me to sketch a tentative, moderate metaphysical interpretation of Hegel's philosophy.

§ 0. Introduction

Interpretations of G. W. F. Hegel's theoretical philosophy are as extensive and varied as schools of thought in contemporary English-speaking academia. Among these contested interpretations of Hegel's theoretical philosophy, I discern two extremes: deflationary and metaphysical interpretations. The deflationary interpretation reduces Hegel's system to an epistemological methodology, which makes no claims that transcend the limits of possible human experience. Comparatively, the metaphysical view of Hegel's work posits that Hegel develops a post-critical ontology—that is, he develops a metaphysical system which builds upon and overcomes the impasses of Kant's critical idealism.[2] Due to Hegel's considerable output, readings of his work necessarily focus on particular texts (for example, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* [1807/2018]) rather than his oeuvre as a whole.[3] This partiality presents a problem for any survey seeking to adequately organise these disparate interpretations. A more fine-tuned approach is thus required.

A similar division between deflationary and metaphysical interpretations persists among scholars of Kant's transcendental idealism.[4] Here one should not forget that Kant's critical philosophy is of central significance to Hegel since his approach

[2] It should be mentioned that the deflationary approach can already be observed in attempts to bridge Kant and Hegel through a "category theory" (*Kategorienlehre*) among the Marburg School of Neo-Kantianism (Ollig, H-L (1979) *Der Neukantianismus*, Sammlung Metzler, 111-118.). However, this historical period (i.e., from Hermann Cohen's publication of *Kant's Theorie der Erfahrung* (Kant's Theory of Experience) in 1871 to Ernst Cassirer's death in 1945) is beyond the scope of the present paper, which has the ambition to address unresolved issues in contemporary Anglophone scholarship. Be that as it may, I hope that the problems addressed here have implications for other periods of Kant-Hegel scholarship. Here, I take "deflationary" and "metaphysical" interpretations to only refer to tendencies in 20th- and 21st- century English-speaking scholarship. The metaphysical approach has been called "traditionalism"—specifically, the view that Hegel wanted to go beyond Kant's limits to experience—which has its roots in the work of Charles Taylor (Taylor, Charles (1975) *Hegel*, Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139171465) and derives from an emphasis on Hegel's notion of "Spirit" (*Geist*). Similarly, the deflationary interpretation has been referred to as "nontraditionalism"—that is, the view that Hegel sought to 'eliminate' the limits of experience 'from within' Kant's critical project. I am particularly interested in the "non-metaphysical" current within "nontraditionalism", which has its recent origin in the work of Klaus Hartmann. This latter interpretation is popular among contemporary analytic and pragmatist philosophers who seek to 'reconstruct Hegel's theoretical philosophy in non-metaphysical terms, setting aside those Hegelian aspirations which do not fit the mould.' (Kreines, James (2006) 'Hegel's Metaphysics: Changing the Debate', *Philosophical Compass* **1**, 466-468. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-9991.2006.00033.x)

[3] Hegel, G W F (1807/2018) *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Terry Pinkard, trans, Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781139050494

[4] By transcendental idealism, Kant understands that objects external to us have empirical reality, but they are also transcendentally ideal, i.e., they are 'nothing as soon as we leave out the condition of the possibility of all experience and take it as something that grounds the things in themselves.' (Kant, I (1781/1998) *Critique of Pure Reason*, Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, trans, Cambridge University Press, A28/B44. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511804649)

attempts to systematise transcendental idealism while eliminating what he considered to be its problematic dualisms.[5] Put simply, Kant's primary aim was to argue that knowledge claims must be restricted to the bounds of possible experience if they are to remain valid, for theoretical claims beyond these limits lead to irresolvable paradoxes. Rather than the broader context of this project, readings of Kant are generally divided over the more specific issue of how to best characterise the distinction between appearances and things.[6] The deflationary interpretation rejects the view that Kant's distinction between the sensible world of appearances and the non-sensible world (or the *noumenal* realm—that is, what is not given in any possible experience) is ontological. Instead, they posit that Kant's distinction is either purely methodological or epistemological. Meanwhile, metaphysical interpreters argue that Kant's critical idealism asserts the existence of non-sensible, non-spatio-temporal things which can be only accessed through reflection.[7]

Both of these approaches have significant limitations that fail to capture Kant's enterprise as a whole. Briefly put, the deflationary view minimises the metaphysical commitments implicit in Kant's notion of the thing-in-itself as a source of sensory content irreducible to the subject. Conversely, the metaphysical interpretation overemphasises the role of things-in-themselves—in particular, by claiming that they have a causal relationship with our senses—which leads to a neglect of Kant's central (epistemological) concerns in the *Critique* and often proves inconsistent with the limits he places on knowledge claims. These limits are central to Kant's project, for he does not think the validity of knowledge can be guaranteed without restricting our claims to the bounds of possible experience. The careful exegete thus demands a middle approach that adopts the advantages and avoids the limitations of each interpretive extreme while maintaining consistency.

Fortunately, Lucy Allais' moderate metaphysical interpretation (hereafter MMI) offers this balanced view. Put simply, Allais argues that, for Kant, *the things about which we know possess an independent existence that remains beyond our cognition; conversely, appearances are mind-dependent while being irreducible to mental entities*.[8] This reading of Kant is advantageous due to its exhaustive treatment and convincing synthesis of the prevailing interpretations of Kant. To date, a comparable approach has yet to emerge in scholarship on Hegel's philosophy, which remains in a state of unresolved sectarianism. This predicament is perhaps due to the long-politicised character of Hegel's philosophy. Indeed, immediately following his death, the Left and Right Hegelians disagreed on the correct interpretation of his views regarding

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[5] Beiser, F (2002) *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism, 1781-1801*, Harvard University Press, 370. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjghtq5

[6] Kant defines the term "appearance" [*Erscheinung*] as 'the undetermined object of an empirical intuition.' Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A20/B34.

[7] For an excellent critical survey of the deflationary and metaphysical interpretations of Kant's transcendental idealism, see Ameriks, Karl (2017) 'Recent Work on Kant's Theoretical Philosophy', *American Philosophical Quarterly* **19**, 1-11.

[8] Allais, Lucy (2015) *Manifest Reality: Kant's Idealism & his Realism*, Oxford University Press, 9.

politically polarising concerns like the state and religion.[9] But what is important for our purposes is that interpreters of Hegel often contrast him with undefended deflationary readings of Kant. Although this approach likely owes its source to the constraints demanded by academic writing, it has contributed to a lack of communication between the two spheres of scholarship.

To help remedy this situation, I propose to adapt Allais' MMI to our reading of Hegel to alleviate the limitations of both deflationary and metaphysical readings. It should be noted that this essay is, therefore, not a comparative study of Kant and Hegel. Rather, it seeks to demonstrate structural affinities between Kant and Hegel scholarship and thereby motivate the relevance of Allais' interpretive methodology for our understanding of Hegel. As such, this essay will not require a close study of Kant's and Hegel's writings but only their reception in English-speaking academia.[10]

To be sure, in § 1, I will briefly outline key features and authors of the deflationary and metaphysical readings of Kant. In § 2, I will summarise Allais' MMI as a compromise between these views, which proposes innovative strategies concerning Kant's understanding of intuition and his relational account of perception. I argue, accordingly, that Allais preserves the exegetical advantages of previous Kant interpretations (that is, his spirit in the deflationary and his letter in the metaphysical)[11] while avoiding the incompleteness of the deflationary interpretation and the inconsistency of the metaphysical interpretation. In § 3, I will present the analogous divide between Hegel interpretations that I draw from Karl Ameriks to argue that an implicit deflationary reading of Kant dominates scholarship on Hegel's philosophy.[12] To resolve the impasses of these interpretive tendencies, in § 4, I will sketch a tentative MMI of Hegel that is enriched by Allais' strategies. As will become clear, a unique feature of this MMI is its open-ended interpretive framework which expands and organises the diversity of specific Hegel interpretations.

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[9] Two Left Hegelians of particular note are Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Due to their massive posthumous political influence in the 20th century, Hegel's work often became associated with socialist politics and the fortunes of communism (for further detail, see Rockmore, Tom (2006) *In Kant's Wake: Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*, Blackwell Publishing, 49-53). Additionally, Karl Popper wrote an influential text which propagated the idea that Hegel was an authoritarian thinker, whose worship of the state influenced 20th-century totalitarianisms (Popper, Karl (1971) *The Open Society and its Enemies* The High Tide of Prophecy: Hegel, Marx, and the Aftermath, Princeton University Press). A limitation of Popper's analysis is that it lacks an appreciation for Hegel's (albeit not unqualified) support for the Prussian Reform movement, which was a relatively progressive political force in its day. For some more balanced and historically sensitive accounts of Hegel's political views, see Beiser, Frederick (2005) *Hegel*, Routledge, 222-223; Losurdo, Domenico (2004) *Hegel and the Freedom of Moderns*, Marella Morris and Jon Morris trans, Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822385608; and Pinkard, Terry (2000) *Hegel: A Biography*, Cambridge University Press, 418-494.

[10] For examples of studies that engage in a comparative investigation of Kant and Hegel, see Huseyinzadegan, Dilek (2015) 'On Hegel's Radicalization of Kantian Dualisms: "The Debate between Kant and Hegel"', *Hegel-Jahrbuch* **1**: 149-154. https://doi.org/10.1515/hgjb-2015-0125; and Ferrarin, Alfredo (2016) 'Reason in Kant and Hegel', *Kant Yearbook* **8**: 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1515/kantyb-2016-0001

[11] Here I mean to say that the centrality of epistemological concerns in Kant's critical philosophy ("the spirit") is emphasised in the deflationary interpretations. On the other hand, the ontological assumptions implicit in Kant's written works ("the letter") are highlighted by the metaphysical interpreters.

[12] Ameriks, Karl (1992) 'Review Essays: Recent Work on Hegel: The Rehabilitation of an Epistemologist?' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* **52**, 177–202. https://doi.org/10.2307/2107755

§ 1. The deflationary and metaphysical interpretations of Kant's idealism

The interpretations of Kant's transcendental idealism fall between two extremes: the deflationary interpretation and the metaphysical interpretation.[13]

As the reader will recall, the deflationary interpretation posits that Kant's distinction is methodological or epistemological. Writers, such as Peter Strawson,[14] praise Kant's aim to establish limits to experience but reject Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism. Though Strawson reignited interest among Anglophone scholars in Kant's work, there has been a proliferation of interpretations since him. L. W. Beck, Gerold Prauss, H. E. Allison, and Rae Langton interpret the noumenon-phenomenon distinction (drawn originally by Kant) as two perspectives of a single thing.[15] However, these theorists diverge in their interpretation of what exactly distinguishes Kant's conception of appearances and things-in-themselves: Langton argues that it is distinct properties; Beck holds different explanations to be central—that is, the causal and empirical framework of natural science describes appearances, whereas things cannot be described by natural scientific explanations; and Allison and Prauss believe the distinction relies upon different perspectives.[16] To be more specific: Allison holds that appearances and things in themselves are two different ways of considering an (ontologically) singular thing, and thus the distinction is purely epistemic.[17] By contrast, though Langton agrees that there is one world, she holds that the distinction is characterised by the unknowable, intrinsic properties of things as opposed to the knowable, extrinsic/relational properties of appearances.[18] Consequently, Allison provides a more idealist reading of the distinction as mind-independent/mind-dependent, whereas Langton posits a more realist reading of the distinction as the difference of properties belonging to the thing. Despite these divergences, all aforementioned scholars reject the view that Kant made metaphysical claims—that is, that he made claims about a mind-independent reality beyond the limits of any possible experience.

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[13] I take this distinction from Lucy Allais' work, *Manifest Reality*. Frederick Beiser makes a related, yet broader, distinction between subjectivist and objectivist interpretations of Kant (Beiser, *German Idealism*, 17-19.). However, I avoid using this dichotomy to guide my review of the secondary literature on Kant for two reasons. First, Beiser's distinction encompasses interpretations of Kant's general philosophy, whereas I only survey interpretations of Kant's critical idealism. Second, Beiser's distinction considers work such as Neo-Kantian interpretations, whereas I only consider secondary literature situated in contemporary debates in Anglophone Hegel scholarship.

[14] Strawson, Peter (1966/2019) *The Bounds of Sense: An Essay on Kant's* Critique of Pure Reason, Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429447075

[15] "Phenomena" denote appearances that are cognised through our sensibility and categories (e.g., substance and causation), whereas "noumena" denote knowledge of an object insofar as it exists independently of appearances. Beck, Lewis W (1960) *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, University of Chicago Press; Prauss, Gerold (1971) *Erscheinung bei Kant: Ein Problem der "Kritik der reinen Vernunft"*, De Gruyter; Allison, Henry E (2004) *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense, Revised and Enlarged Edition*, Yale University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1cc2kjc; Langton, Rae (2001) *Kantian Humility: Our Ignorance of Things in Themselves*, Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/0199243174.001.0001

[16] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 607.

[17] Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, 16.

[18] Langton, *Kantian Humility*, 12-13.

While Kant is clearly concerned with epistemology, a problem arises for the deflationary interpretation when considering his opposition to Berkeleyan idealism,[19] which is apparent in his reaction to the Göttingen Review, an influential journal which disseminated philosophical, scientific, and literary scholarship in the late 18th century. One of its reviews of his key work, *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), claimed that transcendental idealism is merely a variation of Berkeley's idealism, the view that we perceive only ideas which are modifications of ourselves. For example, when I observe the colours of a book before me, Berkeley believes that these colours are perceptions in my mind. To diffuse these criticisms, Kant wrote the Refutation of Idealism for the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1787/2007).[20] Briefly put, he argues that objects are not simply products of our perception but exist independently of how they appear to us—that is, he argues that the possibility of objective experience presupposes an external world.[21] Allais supports this view that Kant does not reduce objectivity to perceptions, writing that Kant rejects the idealist approach 'that sees the immediate objects of perception as mental items on the basis of which external objects are inferred.'[22] According to this reading, Kant cannot be identified with any type of psychologism which aims to reduce the totality of appearances to cognitions in the mind, as has become popular among cognitive scientist interpretations of his work.[23] Seen in this light, deflationary interpretations obfuscate Kant's efforts to distinguish himself from idealisms that reject or are sceptical of the existence of a mind-independent reality. Alternatively, deflationary interpretations have the benefit of providing a clear explanation of the epistemological aspects of Kant's idealism. The problem nonetheless remains that these readings provide an incomplete picture of his general philosophy—that is, while they correctly emphasise Kant's central focus on the status of knowledge, they fail to grasp his underlying realist commitments.

Comparatively, the metaphysical interpretation holds that the thing–appearance distinction indicates the existence of non-sensible, non-spatio-temporal things which are only accessed via the intellect. This interpretation is represented by authors including M. S. Gram, who argues that Kant holds that things exist independently of

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[19] George Berkeley was an Irish philosopher who promoted the doctrine of immaterialism: the view that objects only existence as perceptions, which is summarised by his expression "*esse est percipi*" (to be is to be perceived; Berkeley, George (1710/1972) *The Principles of Human Knowledge with Other Writings*, G J Warnock ed., William Collins Sons.). 61421980348

[20] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 88-91.

[21] It is beyond the scope of this essay to determine whether Kant's critique of Berkeley is cogent, for I merely wish to indicate his opposition to such a position. For further details of this argument, see Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B275-276.

[22] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 9.

[23] Although these interpretations may have significance to contemporary science, care should be taken in separating the historical Kant and the contemporary Kant. For a critical analysis of the psychological interpretation of Kant's notion of the transcendental, see Beiser, *German Idealism*, 166-169. Of course, this is not to say that discourse between these fields is not significant unto itself. I concede to the view that there are potential insights made available through engaging with contemporary interpretations of Kant. And so, one should not merely segregate historical and contemporary interpretations of Kant. It is nonetheless important to hold this distinction in mind when engaging in these discussions, as one may unintentionally project their own attitudes and perspectives onto Kant if they are not adequately sensitive to his historical and philosophical context (I thank the anonymous referee who pointed out this subtlety to me).

our real experience because if we have knowledge of something, then we must be affected by it.[24] Similarly, R. E. Aquila criticises Allison's two-aspect view and argues that things must be ontologically distinct from appearances if things-in-themselves are not in space or time—that is, given in our experience of the natural world.[25] Regardless of the differences among the metaphysical interpreters, they agree that Kant makes irreducibly metaphysical claims about the nature of things-in-themselves which remain fundamental to the success (or failure) of his epistemology.

Analogous difficulties arise for the metaphysical interpretation of Kant. Recall that this interpretation claims that things-in-themselves possess an existence which is distinct from the objects of knowledge. From this, we can see that this reading violates the limits which Kant imposed on himself in his critical idealism. Indeed, critical idealism aims to guarantee the validity of our knowledge claims, and Kant holds that such a guarantee is possible only if we restrict those claims to what may be given in any possible experience.[26] Kant thus calls the existence of something that is independent of any possible experience the thing-in-itself (*Ding an sich*). The necessity for this concept arises because Kant assumes that appearances are purely relational; however, if we were to assume only appearances exist, each appearance would refer to another, leading to an infinite regression of relations. To remain consistent, therefore, he concludes that something other than appearances must act to ground them.[27] Accordingly, if, as the metaphysical interpreters claim, Kant holds the view that there is an existence of non-sensible, non-spatiotemporal entities, then the positing of things-in-themselves does not actually commit Kant to an existing feature of reality.[28] Rather than the appearances that compose empirical reality presenting a substantial frame of reference, they appear as a veil of illusion superimposed over some more substantial reality. For this reason, the metaphysical interpretation proves equally unsatisfactory as the deflationary interpretation because it ultimately contradicts the spirit behind Kant's critical philosophy—that is, his aim to provide an epistemological account of human experience.[29]

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[24] Gram, Moltke S (1975) 'The Myth of Double Affection', in *Reflections on Kant's Philosophy*, William H. Werkmeister, ed, University Press of Florida.

[25] Aquila, Richard E (1979) 'Things in Themselves and Appearances: Intentionality and Reality in Kant', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* **61**, 293-308. https://doi.org/10.1515/agph.1979.61.3.293

[26] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A20/B33.

[27] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 258.

[28] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 10. By "reality" I simply mean that which exists independently of any concrete instance of empirical observation. E.g., Kant would hold that if I look at my bookshelf, its spatio-temporal features are structured by my cognition; however, he would reject the potential inference that the bookshelf would cease to exist if I looked away from it to gaze out my window.

[29] This has been an ongoing issue within Kant studies for some time. Indeed, several authors have attempted to address this gap before Allais (see, e.g., Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*; Ameriks, Karl (2000) *Kant's Theory of Mind: An Analysis of the Paralogisms of Pure Reason*, Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/0198238975.001.0001; Palmquist, Stephen (1993) *Kant's System of Perspectives: An architectonic interpretation of the Critical Philosophy*, University Press of America; McDowell, John (1996) *Mind and World: With a New Introduction by the Author*, Harvard University Press, https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674417892). However, in contrast to Allais' interpretation, these texts still tend to reproduce predominantly metaphysical or epistemological readings of Kant.

§ 2. Allais' moderate metaphysical interpretation of Kant

In *Manifest Reality* (2015), Allais explicates her MMI of Kant's epistemology in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.[30] This compromise appears as the thesis that Kant maintained: that things-in-themselves possess an existence independent of our cognitive knowledge and that appearances are mind-dependent while not being merely intellectual entities.[31] The MMI is thus neatly summarised by three key propositions:

(1) Kant considers appearances and things-in-themselves as aspects of the same things.

(2) Kant holds there to be an aspect of reality which we cannot cognise.

(3) Kant believes that the mind-dependent objects of our cognition are grounded by this uncognisable reality.[32]

The MMI therefore supports the claim of the metaphysical interpretation that there are some metaphysical claims in Kant's work—that is, there is an aspect of reality independent of our cognition. Yet it also accords with arguments from the two-aspect view (the most widespread deflationary interpretation).[33] As we have already seen in § 1, there are significant drawbacks to both interpretations. Now we shall see how Allais overcomes these issues.

Allais' MMI approach combines the advantages of the deflationary and metaphysical positions while parrying the incompleteness of the former and the inconsistency of the latter. Allais clarifies this synthesis in stating that '[on] my reading, Kant's

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[30] This book is the culmination of a long-term study of Kant's work (Allais, Lucy (2004) 'Kant's One World', *The British Journal for the History of Philosophy* **12**, 655-684. https://doi.org/10.1080/0960878042000279314; (2006) 'Intrinsic Natures: A Critique of Langton on Kant', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* **73**, 144-169. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1933-1592.2006.tb00608.x; (2007) 'Kant's Idealism and the Secondary Quality Analogy', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* **45**, 459-484. https://doi.org/10.1353/hph.2007.0050; (2009) 'Kant, Non-conceptual Content, and the Representation of Space', *Journal for the History of Philosophy* **47**, 383-413. https://doi.org/10.1353/hph.0.0134; (2010a) 'Transcendental Idealism and Metaphysics: Kant's commitment to things as they are in themselves', *Kantian Yearbook* **2**, 1-31. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110222937.1; and (2010b) 'Kant's argument for Transcendental Idealism in the Transcendental Aesthetic', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* **110**, 47-75. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9264.2010.00279.x). However, I will only refer to *Manifest Reality* because it is the most complete expression of her MMI.

[31] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 9.

[32] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 19.

[33] The two-aspect view is summarised by Allison, who writes that his 'epistemologically based understanding of transcendental idealism requires that the transcendental distinction between appearances and things in themselves be understood as holding between two ways of *considering* things (as they appear and as they are in themselves) rather than as, on the more traditional reading, between two ontologically distinct sets of entities (appearances and things in themselves)." *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, 16. For a critique of the two-aspect reading, see Allais, Lucy (2015) 'Against Deflationary Interpretations', in *Manifest Reality*, 77-97.

distinction is based on epistemological considerations, and has epistemological consequences,' as in the deflationary interpretation; she writes that 'it also involves metaphysical claims about what exists and about the mind-dependence of the aspect of reality of which we can have knowledge,' as in the metaphysical interpretation. Hence, Kant's view is a 'careful combination of realism and idealism.'[34] The MMI is advantageous because it does not overstep the bounds of critical philosophy by claiming knowledge independent of experience, as present in the metaphysical interpretation. This is a serious problem to avoid, given that a key motivation for Kant's critical idealism was to guarantee the validity of cognition by restricting knowledge claims to what can be an object of possible experience.[35] Nor does the MMI provide an incomplete presentation of Kant as a purely epistemological thinker, as in the deflationary interpretation. Such a view is incomplete because it fails to reckon with Kant's broader philosophical goals of establishing an attenuated variety of realism—that is, to demonstrate the 'empirical reality of the external world.'[36] Thus, if the thing-in-itself is merely taken as a problematic or heuristic concept, it undermines his conviction in an independent reality, without which 'there would follow the absurd proposition that there is an appearance without anything that appears.'[37] For Kant, while we cannot *know* about this independent reality in any determinate way, that certainly does not preclude the *thinking* of it.

This synthesis of the prevailing tendencies of Kant interpretation leads to two unique features of the MMI:

(A) Allais emphasises the central role of intuition (*Anschauung*) as our acquaintance with objects in Kant's epistemology. By acquaintance, Allais means 'a relation to an object that guarantees the existence of the object and which individuates a specific particular.'[38]

(B) Allais recognises that our interpretation of Kant is dependent upon the assumptions about the nature of perception that we bring to a given reading.

To resolve point (B) regarding the nature of perception in Kant, the MMI adopts a direct realist or relational account. According to Allais, this account of perception proposes that 'restricting what is empirically real to what can feature in a possible perception is not restricting it to what exists in the mind, but instead to what can be directly or immediately presented to minds like ours.'[39] In the context of Kant's epistemological terminology, this relational approach permits a more subtle

[34] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 11.
[35] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Bxxvi, B26.
[36] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 24.
[37] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Bxxvi-Bxxvii. Also, see Ameriks, K (2003) *Interpreting Kant's* Critiques, Oxford University Press, 33-35. https://doi.org/10.1093/0199247315.001.0001
[38] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 14.
[39] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 13.

translation of the term *Vorstellung*, which is often translated as "representation" or "idea". In a relational approach, it may be better translated as "presentation". That is, '[rather] than saying that appearances are things which exist only in minds…Kant can be read as saying that what counts as part of the empirically real world is only what can be presented to us in (relational) perceptual experience.'[40] Allais' relational approach has significant consequences for our appreciation of the thing–appearance distinction, which divides interpretations in Kant scholarship.[41] According to this reading, appearances are not 'just perceptible things,' but rather '*essentially* perceptible or *essentially* manifestable.'[42] Empirical reality is thus restricted to what is presentable to our consciousness, against the metaphysical interpreters. Yet such a position does not necessitate that presentations are reducible to something that exists in the mind, against the deflationary interpretations.

Another consequence of the direct realist account of the nature of perception is its centring of the role of intuition in Kant's epistemology. While concepts allow us to generalise our immediate knowledge of the world, cognition requires that we are also acquainted with objects. Allais understands that what is specific to intuition is that it supplies us with objects (that is, intuition is equivalent to our acquaintance with objects). This view goes against an interpretive tendency in recent Kant studies that tends to identify or obscure the distinction between our sensibility (our ability to be affected by things) and intuition.[43] Moreover, Allais' account accords with Kant's argument that we cannot cognise transcendent ideas such as God, because we can never be acquainted with such entities. And so, the "intuition as acquaintance" aspect of Allais' argument reflects the deflationary aspect of her interpretation. It indicates, further, how the MMI strikes a fine balance between the two extremes while remaining faithful to the spirit and letter of Kant's work.

In short, the success of the MMI of Kant demonstrates how useful resolving interpretive differences can be in driving philosophical research. While I acknowledge that the interpreting of Kant's and Hegel's idealisms remain distinct endeavours, I will show that Allais' strategies can be creatively adapted to resolve analogous problems in scholarship on Hegel's philosophy. However, before this solution is investigated, we must first appreciate the structurally similar but contentually distinct secondary literature on Hegel.

§ 3. Deflationary and Metaphysical Readings of Hegel's Absolute Idealism

[40] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 13.
[41] See Ameriks, 'Recent Work on Kant's Theoretical Philosophy', 1-11.
[42] Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 13.
[43] E.g., Strawson writes that 'we can suppose that the "affecting" objects upon the existence of which – since our intuition is "sensible" – our awareness of particular items non-logically or causally depends are simply those spatially and temporally ordered items themselves to which we apply general concepts.' (*The Bounds of Sense*, 45.) Similarly, Jonathan Bennett asserts: 'For Kant, an intuition is just a sensory state.' (Bennett, Jonathan (1966) *Kant's Analytic*, Cambridge University Press, 54. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511554506)

A unique difficulty of surveying the secondary literature on Hegel, in contrast to Kant, is the lack of a clear dichotomy between approaches. This problem is arguably due to the long and controversial history of Hegel's reception. Whether it be the disagreements between the Left and Right Hegelians following his death; the synthesis of Hegel's work with Freud by the Frankfurt School; the renewed appreciation of Hegel's theoretical and practical philosophy in Analytic philosophy; or the revival of studies of Hegel among Lacanian psychoanalysts, Hegel's philosophy appears less as an individual's coherent body of thought and more like a philosopher's Rorschach test. To organise these varying tendencies, my survey of the secondary literature adopts Allais' distinction between the deflationary and the metaphysical interpretations of Kant.

This section will first briefly discuss Terry Pinkard, Robert Pippin, and Tom Rockmore as exemplars of the deflationary interpretation. Second, it will delineate the metaphysical interpretations of Sally Sedwick, Stephen Houlgate, and Frederick Beiser. From both these tendencies, I will draw out their shared deflationary reading of Kant regardless of whether they affirm his theoretical continuity or discontinuity with Hegel. Following this, I will highlight Slavoj Žižek as a unique interpreter who at different times claims both deflated and metaphysical readings of Kant in contrast to Hegel, despite retaining a discontinuous view of their relationship. These discussions will finally lead to a typology of Kant-Hegel studies which highlights the tendency among Hegel interpreters to understand Kant in an exclusively deflationary or metaphysical way. Using this survey of the literature will motivate the concluding argument in § 4: that a moderate metaphysical interpretation of Kant can aid in the resolution of the differing readings of Hegel.

According to this classification, I consider deflationary interpretations of Hegel as approaches that reduce his theoretical philosophy to an epistemological enterprise. Frederick Beiser clarifies the contemporary impetus for the emergence of these deflationary interpretations. Indeed, he writes that 'since the Hegel renaissance of the 1970s, this scholarship has been under pressure to make its subject appear more respectable to contemporary analytic philosophy.' As a consequence, '[much] recent Hegel scholarship…has attempted to separate Hegel's "rational core" from his "mystical shell."'' [44] According to Beiser, examples of the 'mystical shell' are Hegel's Spinozistic metaphysics, his dialectical logic, and his *Naturphilosophie*. On the other hand, examples of the 'rational core' are the system of categories, Hegel's adherence to Kant's critical project, and 'related arguments.'[45] The epistemological reading of Hegel as a category thinker is represented by Terry Pinkard, who argues that Hegel aims to determine 'how it could even be possible to think coherently about some basic category.'[46] Similarly, Robert Pippin argues that Hegel adheres to and expands Kant's critical project by providing transcendental arguments without the problematic notion of the thing-in-itself.[47] Finally, Tom Rockmore exemplifies a

[44] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 508.
[45] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 508.
[46] Pinkard, Terry (1988) *Hegel's Dialectic: The Explanation of Possibility*, Temple University Press, 5.
[47] Ameriks, 'Recent Work on Hegel', 183.

broader strategy adopted by deflationary interpretations, arguing that Hegel is concerned with justifying the claim to know absolutely while still rejecting foundationalism.[48] Hegel is thus an epistemologist who wants to provide a consistent justification for the certainty of our knowledge claims. This reading leads to the conclusion that Hegel's idealism is essentially a form of pragmatism, a view notably proposed by Robert Brandom.[49]

However, the inherent difficulty of separating the metaphysical and "rational" aspects of Hegel's thought undermines the strength of the deflationary interpretations. Beiser observes that Hegel's philosophy of nature—a metaphysics by any definition—arose from his desire to resolve the problem of knowledge in Kant.[50] What makes Hegel's philosophy unique is the way he introduces the epistemological issues of transcendental idealism into the very heart of standard metaphysical topics. For example, without taking sides in the debate prematurely, it is important to appreciate that Hegel recasts the notion of the absolute—a rather traditional metaphysical concept—by showing its interrelationship with our cognition, whose structure he derives from Kant, rather than statically opposing the absolute and cognition. He criticises, for example, 'the concept of logic [which] has hitherto rested on a separation, presupposed once and for all in ordinary consciousness, of the *content* of knowledge and its *form*.' [51] Therefore, the deflationary interpretation is an incomplete reading of Hegel's work, as we found in Kant's case. This is ultimately because, despite elucidating significant features of Hegel's epistemology, these readings fail to appreciate its inseparability from his metaphysical commitments.

In general, metaphysical interpretations of Hegel argue that his theoretical philosophy makes ontological claims. Such a view is represented by Sally Sedgwick, who believes that Hegel aims to overcome the inconsistencies in Kant's idealism. This line of thought holds that Kant's epistemology does not guarantee that the form of experience of the knowing subject reveals the reality of what we intuit through our senses and leads Sedgwick to a naturalist interpretation that understands the relationship between intuition and concepts as an organic whole.[52] Unlike Sedgwick's naturalist reading, Stephen Houlgate provides a metaphysical interpretation that focusses on the conceptual aspects of Hegel's philosophy, reflected by his privileging of Hegel's work, *The Science of Logic* (1832/2010).[53] Houlgate contrasts his position to Pippin's deflationary reading, arguing that the structures of 'reflexivity' and 'concept' described in the *Logic* are not subjective

[48]Rockmore, Tom (1986) *Hegel's Circular Epistemology*, Indiana University Press, 73. https://doi.org/10.2979/HegelsCircularEpiste

[49] Brandom, Robert (2019) *A Spirit of Trust: A Reading of Hegel's Phenomenology*, Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvfjczmk

[50] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 509.

[51] Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, 24. For a detailed analysis of this interconnection of the absolute and cognition, see Stern, Robert (2009) *Hegel's Metaphysics*, Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199239108.001.0001

[52] Sedgwick, Sally (2012) *Hegel's Critique of Kant: From Dichotomy to Identity*, Oxford University Press, 70, 136.

[53] Hegel, G W F (1832/2010) *The Science of Logic*, George di Giovanni, trans, Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9780511780240

operations of self-reflexivity, as in Kant, but are ontological.[54] This reading thus rejects Pippin's claim that Hegel's *Logic* is indebted to Kant's view that the cognition of objects presupposes subjective activity that is 'apperceptive.'[55] Finally, as discussed above, Beiser criticises approaches that reduce Hegel to an epistemologist, despite acknowledging that 'post-Kantian philosophy arose from an internal critique of Kant.'[56] With that in mind, Beiser positions Hegel's absolute idealism as a 'revival' of metaphysics 'in the very sense prohibited by Kant and Fichte,' which resolves problems in Kant's idealism.[57] This contradicts those deflationary readings which deny Hegel made any positive metaphysical claims that break with Kant's critical idealism. Although Beiser aims to avoid the metaphysical and deflationary readings, he rejects the claim of Allais' MMI that Kant holds that there exist things that are more ontologically fundamental than appearances.[58] Additionally, Beiser holds that the dispute between the two-worlds view (metaphysical) and the two-aspects view (deflationary) is 'sterile and irresolvable.'[59] This position naturally contrasts with Allais' MMI, which aims to resolve the two interpretations. Therefore, Beiser views Kant from a more deflationary perspective than Allais.[60] And consequently, he affirms the discontinuity between Kant's critical idealism and Hegel's absolute idealism, seeing them as 'antithetical.'[61]

To summarise, all these metaphysical interpretations of Hegel view Kant through the deflationary perspective. Perhaps this is because the strategy bolsters a metaphysical view of Hegel by juxtaposing it with the epistemological aspects of Kant's work. Conversely, it could be that their centring of Hegel's metaphysics leads to a deeper contrast with Kant's own metaphysical claims, thereby undermining the possibility of a moderated interpretation of Kant on his own terms. Nonetheless, there is a clear tendency to minimise the diversity of secondary readings of Kant among Hegel interpreters. This not only results in an incomplete picture of the diversity of our contemporary understanding of Kant, but it also undermines the possibility of a comparative account of Kant and Hegel that grasps both their epistemological and metaphysical differences.

From the preceding discussion, we see that some variation of the deflationary interpretation of Kant is shared by both the metaphysical and deflationary interpreters of Hegel. By contrast, when we restrict ourselves to the scholarly context

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[54] Houlgate, Stephen (2005) *Opening to Hegel's Logic: From Being to Infinity*, Purdue University Press, 137-143.

[55] Pippin, Robert B (1989) *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness*, Cambridge University Press, 19-21. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511621109. Kant understands (transcendental) "apperception" to be the unity of consciousness that is presupposed by unity of an individual's empirical experience (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A106-107).

[56] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 662.

[57] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 368-369.

[58] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 662.

[59] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 22.

[60] It is beyond this essay's scope to compare Allais' and Beiser's approaches. Although I cannot justify this argument here, I suggest that Beiser's reading is more faithful to the historical Kant, while Allais' is more internally consistent.

[61] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 355.

of Kant interpretation, there is broad disagreement over the degree to which Kant made metaphysical claims. Whether interpreters argue that Hegel's thinking is continuous with Kant's by affirming the foundational role of transcendental conditions or apperception (the continuity thesis: hereafter CT) or discontinuous by emphasising Hegel's makes claims beyond Kant's critical limits (the discontinuity thesis: hereafter DT), they share the position that Kant's approach is essentially epistemological and hence does not make metaphysical claims. As a consequence, these readings of Hegel are limited in comparison to Allais' MMI of Kant. Yet there is at least one interesting exception to these readings.

Slavoj Žižek's interpretation presents a unique case that focusses on the transformation between Kant and Hegel, contrasting their work in two different ways. In *Less Than Nothing* (2012), Žižek argues that Kant's 'epistemological dialectics' is 'ontologised' by Hegel. In other words, the logical paradoxes that arise in Kant's treatment of the antinomies are extended to be immanent features of reality as such.[62] However, in other instances, Žižek argues that 'Kant…only goes half-way in his destruction of metaphysics, still maintaining the reference to the Thing-in-itself as an external inaccessible entity…' and thus 'it is not that Hegel 'ontologises' Kant…it is Hegel who 'deontologizes' Kant, introducing a gap into the very texture of reality.'[63] To put it another way, for Žižek, Hegel's removal of the thing-in-itself results in a 'deontologization' of philosophy, as he considers it to be a metaphysical remanent within Kant's critical project. Adrian Johnston identifies this inconsistency in Žižek's work, arguing that the latter position is the more 'dialectical' of the two.[64] Regardless of the consistency of Žižek's positions, both affirm DT. Either Kant is an epistemologist who does not explicate the ontology implicit in his own work as does Hegel (Ž1), or Kant is an ontologist who does not see that his critical methodology already constitutes a radically modern 'de-ontologised' epistemology as does Hegel (Ž2). In summary, his conflicting positions are indicative of the deadlock that scholarship on Hegel's philosophy finds itself in. And so, as original as Žižek's position may be, it coincides with the predominant interpretive schemas that propose a radical discontinuity between Kant and Hegel. Although I concede that Žižek is unique in his argument (Ž2) where he positions Kant as the metaphysician and Hegel as the epistemologist. This contrasts with the tendency of the previous Hegel interpretations which view Kant through a deflationary lens.

In consideration of the above discussion, we have the following typology of interpretations of Hegel in relationship to the given author's reading of Kant:

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[62] As an example of one of Kant's antinomies, he argues that one can theoretically justify both the infinitude and finitude of the world. He thinks that this paradox arises because the world is not able to be an object of experience and thus such arguments cannot appeal to empirical evidence for verification (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A497-A498/B525-527).

[63] Žižek, Slavoj (2012) *Less Than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism*, Verso, 40.

[64] Johnston, Adrian (2019) *A New German Idealism: Hegel, Žižek, and Dialectical Materialism*, Columbia University Press, 15-17.

	Deflationary Kant	Metaphysical Kant
Deflationary Hegel	Pippin, Pinkard, Rockmore, Brandom (CT)	Ž1 (DT)
Metaphysical Hegel	Sedgwick, Beiser, Houlgate, Johnston, Ž2 (DT)	Bertrand Russell (CT)

Table 1: Typology of Kant-Hegel Studies

As can be seen in Table 1, the bottom-right quadrant (Bertrand Russell) claims that both Kant and Hegel made metaphysical claims. Hence, they are continuous with traditional metaphysics, thereby supporting CT. Indeed, the Analytic movement, at least as it is often presented, arose as a reaction to classical philosophical approaches that lacked rigour.[65] The top-left quadrant (Pippin, Pinkard, Rockmore, Brandom) claims, although Hegel may go beyond Kant, that both philosophers are epistemologists, thus supporting CT. The top-right quadrant (Ž1) reads Kant as a metaphysician whose metaphysical assumptions are ironically eliminated by Hegel's move towards an immanent metaphysics, thereby supporting DT. The bottom-left quadrant (Sedgwick, Beiser, Johnston, Houlgate, Ž2) assumes the deflationary view of Kant and argues that Hegel radicalises critical idealism, thus supporting DT.

Although this table presents Kant-Hegel scholarship at a high level of abstraction, it clarifies the limited appreciation of Kant that results when his work is juxtaposed with Hegel's. This limiting effect suggests that the variety of Kant interpretations is diminished rather than enriched by the comparison. Now, recall my argument in § 2 that Kant's critical idealism is not adequately represented either by the deflationary or metaphysical interpretations but rather Allais' MMI. Here we can also observe that these interpretations of Hegel are limited by their one-sided views of his most significant predecessor. To resolve this impasse, I will now sketch a possible MMI of Hegel's work.

§ 4. Towards a moderate metaphysical interpretation of Hegel

A difficulty in adapting the MMI to Hegel is that his work reorganises and reinterprets Kant's terminology in ways distinct to Kant's intentions. This problem derives principally from Hegel's desire to unite the critical aspects of Kant's philosophy with the monism of Spinoza, resulting in a tendency to creatively adapt Kant's ideas to follow the spirit of his work rather than remain strictly to the letter of transcendental idealism.[66]

[65] Redding, Paul (2007) *Analytic Philosophy and the Return of Hegelian Thought*, Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511487620

[66] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 351-352, 361-364.

This asymmetry between Kant's and Hegel's terminologies results in the need to use the strategies in Allais' reading of Kant to establish a MMI of Hegel, outlined in § 2. First, Allais emphasises that intuition is acquaintance in Kant's epistemology. Second, she asserts that any interpretation is conditioned by the reader's prior view of the nature of perception.

To appropriate Allais' second strategy (B), I claim that any interpretation of Hegel is conditioned by our prior assumptions about the nature of being. This claim becomes clearer when we consider that Hegel is an anti-foundationalist thinker. That is, at least in principle, he refuses to make a claim about the nature of being prior to the unfolding of his system. For example, he writes that Logic—the system of the categories of being—'cannot say what it is in advance, rather does this knowledge of itself only emerge as the final result and completion of its whole treatment.'[67] If we are to take Hegel at his word, then there is no *a priori* ontology implicit in his epistemology. Yet I take Alain Badiou's view that the nature of thought is axiomatic.[68] Axiom, understood in the precise mathematical sense, does not here mean self-evident assumption but rather a statement that is posited at the beginning of a line of logical reasoning.[69] An example of an axiomatic proposition is: "there is only one straight line between two points". In the context of mathematics, this statement is considered self-evident and thus the ground for the proof of other non-self-evident propositions, such as: "If the corresponding sides of two triangles are of equal length, then the triangles are congruent." By contrast, a non-axiomatic proposition is something such as the latter statement which requires a proof or it may be a claim that requires empirical evidence, such as: "Some leaves of trees are green." An axiomatised form of thought legitimates itself, therefore, only through the consistency of its discourse. Such an axiom is a decision made by thought prior to its unfolding. And hence, for Badiou, axiomatics is not only a model for mathematics but for thought as such.[70] If we are to think with Hegel, then Badiou's view necessitates explicitly bringing our ontological axioms into the interpretation. Our interpretation of Hegel's presuppositionless philosophy in the *Logic* is thus dependent upon the view of being that we presuppose, consciously or otherwise.

To resolve this issue for my interpretation, I will assume that the nature of being is inconsistent. *Prima facie*, this view of being is not preferable to any other. As we shall see, it is one among many possibilities. Yet I hope to demonstrate in what follows that the unique consequences of this view elucidate the interpretation of Hegel's system. Now, the view that being is inconsistent is articulated by Badiou in *Being and*

[67] Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, 23.

[68] While my inclusion of Badiou may not appear directly relevant to Hegel, Badiou proves to be a singular figure in contemporary philosophy who attempts to bridge an axiomatic approach—one of the key additions I bring to Hegel interpretation—and the German philosophical tradition. A discussion of the compatibility of Badiou's and Hegel's philosophies would, however, constitute a paper unto itself. Therefore, I simply wish to draw attention to the axiomatics present in Badiou's work and some structural parallels between his ontology of inconsistency and Allais' MMI. For discussions on Hegel and Badiou's broader philosophical relationship, see Vernon, Jim and Antonio Calcagno, eds. (2015) *Badiou and Hegel: Infinity, Dialectics, Subjectivity*, Lexington Books.

[69] Bhattacharyya, Anindya (2015) 'Axiom', In *The Badiou Dictionary*, Steven Corcoran, ed, Edinburgh University Press, 21-23. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780748669646

[70] Bhattacharyya, 'Axiom', 22.

Event (2007). In essence, he posits that being, prior to our counting of its parts or prior to its presentation, is a multiple of multiples. That is, it has no atomic parts and cannot be gathered into a whole; it is neither composed of ones nor is a One. Being as such is pure multiplicity. According to Badiou, although being prior to our counting is without structure, there are 'ones' that are an 'operational result' of counting.[71] At this point, I hope the reader sees the motivation for my proposal of inconsistent multiplicity, as its rejection of a rigid notion of being may be understood as the ontological analogue to Hegel's presuppositionless metaphysics. This highly abstract ontology becomes more familiar if we relate it to Allais' relational account of perception. Indeed, if being is inconsistent, then there is an aspect of it that we cannot cognise (Allais' point [2]) or count/present (Badiou). The inconsistent account of being thus supports Allais' point (3) that there are mind-dependent objects (those counted as ones) that are grounded by this uncognisable being (inconsistency). Additionally, whether being is inconsistent or consistent is dependent upon whether we consider being prior to or after the counting process (Allais' point [1] that appearances and things-in-themselves are aspects of the same things). I suggest, therefore, that this view of the nature of being is analogous to Allais' second strategy (B). And so, it permits us to emphasise a key notion in Hegel's work, as Allais does with intuition.

In consideration of the inconsistent interpretation of being prior to the count, I suggest that the notion of intellectual intuition as acquaintance with the universal is central to understanding Hegel's idealism, just as Allais holds that intuition as acquaintance with things is central to understanding Kant's idealism in point (A).[72] This view of the centrality of intellectual intuition accords with Beiser's reading of Hegel, which arguably achieves the nearest MMI of Hegel among previous scholarly work.[73] The centrality of intellectual intuition is apparent in F. W. J. Schelling's absolute idealism, a fundamental influence on Hegel's system. Beiser clarifies this notion in stating that it 'consists in my grasping an individual as a member of a whole, in seeing how its essential nature or inner identity depends on the totality of which it is only a part.' This grasping consists not in my explanation or deduction of an object but rather in my contemplation of it. In other words, I consider the object 'in itself' and 'apart from its relations with other objects' yet also 'see how it is part of a wider whole.'[74] In the language of inconsistent being, this description is analogous to counting, which locates any 'one' as a particular that itself refers to the universal process of counting. Intellectual intuition is thus our ability to be acquainted with the universal in the particular. As such, we need not posit the universal as the framework of being in itself, because being is inconsistent prior to our acquaintance with (or counting of) a particular. There is, however, an important aspect of the metaphysical interpretation that is preserved in this reading: the claim that

[71] Badiou, Alain (1988/2007) *Being and Event*, Oliver Feltham, trans, Bloomsbury, 26-27.
[72] It should be noted that the view that Hegel preserved intellectual intuition after his break with Schelling is controversial. For a defence of this argument, see Schwartz, Daniel (2018) 'The Intellectual Intuition of Hegel's Psychology', Thesis, Georgia State University. https://doi.org/10.57709/12548820
[73] In particular, Beiser criticises both overly metaphysical and deflationary approaches in *German Idealism*, 662.
[74] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 580.

intellectual intuition reflects the metaphysical relationship between human subjectivity and the structure of being.

Despite this concession to the metaphysical view, metaphysical interpreters of Hegel may still criticise my reading of intellectual intuition in the context of inconsistent being. For does Hegel not consider the identity of the universal and the particular to constitute the whole universe (the Absolute)? However, this problem is less significant when we recognise that he intends to preserve the critical aspects of Kant's system while eliminating its apparent inconsistencies. That is to say, Hegel does not seek to contradict the critical limits set by Kant in carrying out his own philosophical project, but rather he seeks to draw what he considers to be the logical conclusion of Kant's philosophical standpoint.[75] Therefore, there remains an interpretive ambiguity implicit in the notion of intellectual intuition, given that, prior to our acquaintance with a particular, we cannot decide the nature of being in itself (in line with Kant's critical demands). This decision can only be made once we have axiomatically presupposed the nature of being that we bring to Hegel's epistemology. Although this reading of intellectual intuition is one among many, my argument is that due to the basic ambiguity in this notion, which cannot be resolved unless a prior (axiomatic) decision has been made about the nature of being, one cannot *a priori* assume that one notion of intellectual intuition is preferable to another. This diversity is already clear from the conflicting characterisations of intellectual intuition that J. G. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel gave to complete Kant's philosophy. However, a textual justification of this reading is beyond the scope of this essay.[76]

On this MMI, Hegel is not reducible to the deflationary or the metaphysical reading. Against the deflationist, I have argued that Hegel is not making purely epistemological claims. For if one is to concretely understand the central category of intellectual intuition as acquaintance with the universal, they must presuppose a view on the nature of being. When this position is assumed, intellectual intuition is revealed to be analogous to a structuring of being via counting. Against the metaphysician, this MMI of Hegel is not reducible to the standard metaphysical readings, because it does not imply that Hegel made transcendent metaphysical claims. Instead, the view that holds being in itself to be inconsistent is argued to be most adequate to appreciating Hegel's philosophical methodology. Furthermore, on this MMI, the prior ontological decision is left open to the reader interpreting Hegel. The axiomatic assumption about being is thus groundless and cannot be justified from within the system Hegel outlined. If there is a justification to prefer one view of being over another, it is only the consequences of any two positions that can be meaningfully compared. I think this reading sheds light on why Hegel remains a

[75] See, e.g., Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, 26.

[76] Nonetheless, there are significant implications if the reader is willing to accept my argument that an axiomatic decision precedes the interpreting of Hegel. In particular, it undermines the tendency among metaphysical interpretations to assert that Hegel supposed determinate (or positive) metaphysical claims in order to construct his system. As such, while my reading undermines strict metaphysical interpretations, it attenuates these views to a degree that retains the metaphysical aspects of Hegel's idealism.

Rorschach test for any philosopher; the many faces of Hegel interpretation reflect the many ontological positions that one may assume (consciously or otherwise) prior to the exegesis and consequent unfolding of Hegel's system.

An advantage of this MMI of Hegel is that it offers a reading that does not unproblematically juxtapose his idealism with a one-sided version of Kant's. Rather than affirm CT or DT, the MMI challenges these standard interpretive approaches and offers a reading of Kant and Hegel as singular thinkers. This singularity thesis (ST) opposes CT and DT by refusing to grasp philosophical thought as embedded in homogeneous linear time. Instead, ST understands that thinking is something that may result in novel philosophical ideas that are irreducible to the historical circumstances in which they emerged.

§ 5. Conclusion

In this essay, I adapted strategies (A) and (B) of Allais' MMI of Kant to resolve the impasse between the two interpretive extremes of Hegel scholarship. After outlining the deflationary and metaphysical interpretations of Kant, I summarised the main features of Allais' MMI. Given its ecumenical and technical strengths, I suggested this approach could similarly resolve Hegel studies' interpretive dichotomy. To address the problem of the asymmetry between Kant and Hegel scholarship, I argued that Allais' interpretive strategies may be adapted to sketch a MMI of Hegel.

The ensuing sketch of a Hegel MMI made two principal arguments. First, thought is essentially axiomatic, and thus any interpretation of Hegel is conditioned by the reader's ontological assumptions. In view of Hegel's aim to create a presuppositionless philosophy, I claimed that the view that being is inconsistent is the most adequate for reading Hegel, in parallel to Allais' point (B). Following from this first claim, I argued that the notion of intellectual intuition as acquaintance with the universal is central for understanding Hegel's metaphysics, in parallel to Allais' point (A).

The implications of the MMI for future readings of Hegel are twofold.

In the first instance, if the reader adopts my argument, then it becomes clear that one cannot reduce Hegel's work to a fixed epistemological methodology or metaphysical position. Nor can they claim that he repeats the errors of pre-critical metaphysics by making transcendent claims about being in itself. Rather, Hegel's theoretical philosophy depends upon an elision of positive metaphysical claims. Importantly, this undermines attempts to reduce Hegel to a traditional metaphysical position that can be easily categorised, for my approach highlights how his project seeks to systematise the logic of these positions through a kind of meta-logic. On the other hand, the epistemological aspect of his system reappropriates the notion of universality in a phenomenological rather than ontological way. As a consequence, any set of ontological presuppositions can fill the interpretive gap implicit in the notion of intellectual intuition. Beyond resolving the interpretive tensions of Hegel's

work, this approach implies that future research should not merely emphasise the epistemological aspects of Hegel's arguments nor the metaphysics underlying them. Research should be instead focussed on how his unique form of idealism provides a mode for thinking through both ontological and epistemological themes in a wholly original way that stands apart from much of the Western philosophical tradition. And that is precisely in his dynamic yet universalistic conception of philosophy.

In the second instance, while Hegel interpreters have consistently situated his work in relation to Kant's to either affirm CT or DT, I propose ST is most adequate for appreciating Hegel's contribution. Moreover, ST indicates a broader way of reading philosophy, which allows for the creative appropriation of philosophers' work in different contexts while avoiding the danger of obscuring the specificity of their philosophical views.

While I aimed to stay faithful to Allais' MMI, I do not claim that my Hegelian adaptation is unique. In fact, given that I argued that any reader will bring their own presuppositions about being to their reading of Hegel, I expect there to be as many MMIs of Hegel as there are clear and distinct ontological positions within philosophy. To that I say:

Let a hundred flowers bloom; let a hundred schools of thought contend.

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