

Magnetic Somnambulism in Context. Hegel's Criticism of Kluge on Hypnosis

Andrés Ortigosa Peña

University of Sevilla, Spain
Email aortigosa@us.es
ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4223-0299>

Abstract. This paper aims to explore Hegel's conception of hypnosis, which he considers a pathological state. Much of the literature on Hegel's views on hypnosis suggests that his conception is influenced by the Marquis de Puységur, the discoverer of this phenomenon. However, this paper explores the possibility that Hegel's conception of hypnosis originates from the mesmerist Kluge. To show this, we analyse Hegel's critique of hypnosis, which aligns more closely with Kluge's proposal on hypnosis than that of Marquis de Puységur.

Keywords: animal magnetism, feeling soul, hypnosis, psychopathology, subjective spirit

Magnetinio somnambulizmo tyrinėjimai: Hegelio kritika Klugės hipnozės sampratai

Santrauka. Šiame straipsnyje siekiama ištirti Hegelio hipnozės, kurią jis laiko patalogine būseną, suvokimą. Didžioji dalis literatūros, tyrinėjusios Hegelio požiūrį į hipnozę, teigia, kad jo suvokimą paveikė Markizas de Puységuras, hipnozės reiškinių atradėjas. Tačiau šiame straipsnyje tyrinėjama galimybė, kad Hegelio hipnozės suvokimas kyla iš mesmeristo Klugės darbų. Siekdami tai atskleisti, ištirsime Hegelio hipnozės kritika, kuri daug tiksliau derinasi su Klugės teiginiais apie hipnozę nei su Markizo de Puységuro hipnozės interpretacija.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: gyvūnų magnetizmas, jaučianti siela, hipnozė, psychopatologija, subjektyvi dvasia

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Introduction

When interpreting the thought of an author, it is essential not to ignore the context in which they lived. However, we often forget that the philosophers we study had beliefs that are now obsolete. These beliefs are topics that we sometimes ignore because we consider them irrelevant today. However, in their time, they were significant. For this reason, some less recognized topics should be explored.

In this study, we address Hegel's response to the hypnotists of his time. The hypnotists Hegel focuses on were also mesmerists. Notably, these extended beyond the well-known Marquis de Puységur (Greene 2021). Nevertheless, the limited literature on the subject has typically focused on Puységur to explain Hegel's understanding of hypnosis, which has become somewhat clichéd. However, it is possible that another, less well-known, hypnotist had a decisive influence on how Hegel understood hypnosis.

The task of investigating the influence of mesmerism on Hegel's thought has become necessary due to the current state of scholarship on German idealism. In what follows, I will briefly outline this panorama to contextualise this study properly.

The Philosophy of spirit is being studied more now than in previous decades, leading to the emergence of new works dealing with subjective spirit. For years, monographs on subjective spirit were relatively scarce. Amongst them, the most popular were the books by Fetscher (1970), Greene (1972), Bonito Oliva (1995), Stederoth (2001), and Inwood (2010). However, in recent years, there has been a significant resurgence in interest in subjective spirit. In my view, this renewed interest has led to the development of at least three methods of explaining subjective spirit. This does not imply that researchers are confined to using a single approach. I am not classifying Hegelians; rather, my focus is solely on the methodological approach to researching Hegel's philosophy of subjective spirit.

First, one way to explain the philosophy of subjective spirit is by emphasising its systematic value. For example, the chapters by Westphal (2019) and Gabriel (2019) in a recent publication deal with subjective spirit in general, privileging its place within the system to explain certain concepts used by Hegel. Therefore, the explanation stems from its position within the system, connecting what precedes it with what follows. This approach emphasises the interrelation of concepts, taking Hegel's system as a basis.

Secondly, there are those who consider the Logic to be at the heart of the Hegelian system. For this reason, they explain the rest of the system's parts by taking Logic as their foundation. Consequently, they also explain subjective spirit through its relationship with the Logic. Thus, Ng's (2018) approach to the concept of mind and life is dependent on the relationship between the Logic and the philosophy of subjective spirit. In this vein, Redding (2016) has also applied Hegel's Logic to elucidate aspects of the philosophy of subjective spirit, specifically, psychology. Similarly, Nuzzo (2013) addresses the well-known 'problem of the beginning' within the context of the philosophy of subjective spirit. There is, therefore, an explanatory model of the philosophy of subjective spirit based on the primacy of Hegel's Logic.

Thirdly, explanations can be formulated by attending only certain sections of subjective spirit, resulting in highly specialised studies. Some of them, like Gabriel (2020), have dealt with psychology to relocate the issue of placement in the system. Psychology has also been explored in detail by Winfield (2010), and, in a monographic form, by Herrman-Siani and Ziglioli (2016), amongst others, to generate a dialogue with current topics in the philosophy of psychology. Traditionally, however, researchers in this third group have focused more on psychology and less on anthropology, as that aspect of Hegel's system aligns more closely with the current topics in the philosophy of psychology.

Anthropology is the first moment of subjective spirit. In anthropology, Hegel considers unconsciousness and preconsciousness. As Battistoni (2022: 209) notes, anthropology, compared to other sections of Hegel's system, has historically garnered less attention from researchers. This happens, in general, in all three methodological approaches. However, in recent years, this section has begun to receive more scrutiny. Some monographs have been devoted to it, such as that of Arndt and Zovko (2017), precisely because it is essential for the whole constitution of the philosophy of spirit. Others, like Dryden (2021), provide reasons why anthropology is the basis of all subjective spirit, its main foundation. Moreover, commentaries on anthropology have been published, such as those by Corti (2016), Mowad (2019), de Laurentiis (2021), and Maurer (2021).

Now, with this new boom in anthropology, interest in certain topics has returned. One of them is that of psychopathology according to Hegel. It is true that the idealist philosopher was never a psychiatrist; nevertheless, he wrote about psychiatry from his own philosophical system. Studies have been done on this. The most classic study is probably that of Berthold-Bond (1995). Recently, some new studies have appeared, such as that of Caldeira (2019). Additionally, there is a substantial body of articles explaining madness according to Hegel in relation to other parts of the system, including the investigations by Wu (2020) and Žižek (2009) that focus on habit and madness. However, the relationship between psychopathology and hypnosis has been overlooked by the academia. Therefore, the subject of my study is quite specific: within the lesser-explored domain of anthropology, I aim to examine why hypnosis is, according to Hegel, a psychopathological state. To achieve this, it is necessary to explore Kluge's influence on Hegel's system.

This is not to say that the influence of mesmerism – and consequently, hypnosis – on Hegel has been completely ignored. Magee (2013; 2001: 213–222) has brilliantly explored this topic in several studies, particularly through an examination of Hegel's correspondence. However, I do not want to explain mesmerism from Hegel's philosophy, as Magee's writings already serve this purpose. Instead, my goal is twofold: first, to elucidate the relationship that existed between mesmerists and hypnosis; and second, to demonstrate how Hegel related the mesmerists' hypnosis to a psychopathological state.

In Hegel's work, there are mesmerists who had a significant influence. For instance, Marquis de Puységur had a notable influence on the Hegelian conception of hypnosis, as Greene (2021) showed. However, he may not be the only influence worth considering. If we examine Hegel's texts carefully, particularly his *Vorlesungen*, we notice the presence of Kluge as well.

For this task, I will first briefly highlight the significance of mesmerism in Hegel's time. Following this, I will focus on Kluge's mesmerism. In the third section, I will explain Hegel's understanding of mesmerism, revealing how he associates hypnosis with psychopathology. My hypothesis is as follows: Hegel's characterisation of hypnosis as a psychopathological state serves as a critique of Kluge.

Kluge's mesmerism

In 1779, Franz Anton Mesmer believed he had discovered the existence of an invisible fluid that he called 'animal magnetism' (*tierischer Magnetismus*). The influence of this discovery lasted until the beginning of the 20th century, giving rise to hypnosis as a healing technique at the beginning of the 19th century (Crabtree, 1988). Originally, animal magnetism was not a theory related to hypnosis, but rather a physical theory. Magnetism, in general, is an invisible force that can be found in minerals and living things. Mesmer's proposal was that magnetism existed as a fluid in the animal kingdom with a very special role: it was the force that drove animals to live, their vital impulse, a kind of *Lebenskraft*.

However, Mesmer was not alone in his theoretical proposal. He tried to provide hard evidence for his theory, which appealed to many people. If it was true that animal magnetism drives animals to stay alive, then, by controlling it, we can influence the health of animals, including humans. Following this idea, Mesmer focused on people for whom the medicine of his time had no cure. If he was wrong, then his experiments would not work. Now, if his theory was true, he could cure those deemed incurable by the doctors of his time.

According to Mesmer, illness occurred when the positive and negative forces within a body were unbalanced. For this reason, magnets were used to restore this magnetic balance, thereby facilitating healing. Today we know that it was based solely on suggestion, but the 'medical' phenomenon of animal magnetism became well-known for years. Hence the followers of this discipline were called 'magnetisers' or 'mesmerists'.¹ Due to the popularity of this scientific theory, a famous magnetiser, Wolfart, came to treat an unusual number of high-status clients, including Schleiemacher, Solger Savigny, Chancellor Hardenberg, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and even Fichte, amongst others. Therefore, animal magnetism, although nowadays eclipsed and considered obsolete, was indeed of strong relevance in its historical context.

The Mesmerists of the 19th century decided to advance Mesmer's research, due to believing in the existence of some magnetic fluid. On the part of Kluge, this led to a profound study about the unconscious – especially focusing on what was being called 'somnambulism', which is a form of hypnosis – intended to facilitate the cure of psychopathological disorders. This research centred on what Mesmer referred to as the "dark part of consciousness" (*dunkles Bewusstsein*). As some other researchers have shown, this is what, years later, Freud would call the 'unconscious' (Fara 2005: 180; Tinterow 1970).

¹ There were many mesmerists. On the difference amongst mesmerists see: Gantet (2021).

Kluge's interest in animal magnetism led him to investigate the possible relationship between this scientific theory and the human mind. In 1815, he published a new work for magnetisers: his *Versuch einer Darstellung des animalischen Magnetismus als Heilmittel*. He provided an unexpected twist on what animal magnetism was. Kluge was aware that animal magnetism was sometimes dismissed as pseudoscience due to its association with the "realm of the spirit" (Kluge 1815: xii). For this reason, the new paths that mesmerist physicians such as Heineken, Gmelin, and Wienholt introduced to medicine were being ignored and discredited by means of *ad hominem*. However, in Kluge's view, the application of mesmerism to other scientific areas was an important innovation in medicine that deserved recognition (Kluge 1815: iii–ix). Thus, he tried to avoid the disqualifications of mesmerism by modifying its terminology. He changed 'animal magnetism' to a term more aligned with the spirit realm. To do so, he shifted from *tierischer* to *animalischer* Magnetism. The former German term, *tierisch*, refers strictly to the zoological aspect, while Kluge chose the latter, *animalisch*, to evoke the Latin *anima*, signifying the life force present in all living beings. Thus, the term acquired a much broader application, extending to all living things (Kluge 1815: x–xi).

After this, he responds in a general way to the critics of animal magnetism. Kluge argues that there are two forces whose principles are unknown and whose scientific value is unquestioned, known only through their effects.² These are electricity and galvanism. At that time, they were truly novel, and very little was known about them. Kluge placed them on the same level as animal magnetism (Kluge 1815: §1, 3). According to him, animal magnetism was not a false principle; it was akin to electricity or galvanism: because of its recent discovery, the principle that caused it was not yet understood, though its effects were observable (Kluge 1815: §11, 15). Hence the interest amongst magnetisers in using it alongside treatments for "diseases of the soul" (*Seelenkrankheiten*). Mesmerists, such as Kluge, Heineken, Gmelin, Wolfart, and Wienholt, had successfully treated patients by following this theory. Therefore, the effects were empirically verifiable, even if the underlying principle remained elusive.

Generally, Kluge believes that mesmerists can intercede in the *anima* of a person who is ill. It is here that he innovates with respect to Mesmer. In order to cure people, mesmerists were supposed to use dreaming instead of magnetic stones, for, although magnetic stones could aid in the process, the fundamental aspect was dreaming. Through this technique, now known as 'hypnosis', the mesmerist induced a deep sleep in the patient. This technique was a natural ability. The transition through the different levels of dreaming was not immediate; a specific sequence had to be followed, moving from one level to the next. It was only at the advanced stages that one's consciousness would merge with nature. In order to explain this, now I will briefly outline the levels of dreaming according to Kluge:

² Partly, this is because, at that time, a form of rationality related to the Enlightenment was dominant. However, a contextual analysis would extend beyond the scope of our discussion. On Enlightenment and Hegel, see Palermo (2023).

1. Wakefulness (*Wachen*). The individual is not yet asleep and continues to interact with their environment with a certain level of consciousness (Kluge 1815: §80, 108).
2. Semi-sleep (*Halbschlaf*). Breathing becomes light and deep. We begin to lose control over our senses, especially sight, as the individual feels the desire to close the eyelids (Kluge 1815: §81, 108–109).
3. Magnetic sleep (*magnetisches Schlafen*). The individual has lost the sensitive capacity and no longer feels the contact of the external world with their consciousness. In fact, consciousness begins its journey inward (Kluge 1815: §82, 109–111).
4. Simple somnambulism (*einfacher Somnambulismus*). The individual does not perceive their relationship to the outside world through their senses but can experience the external world through the mesmerist. Thus, what the mesmerist feels is also experienced by that person within their own body. Individuals who reach this state are referred to as *somnambulists* (Kluge 1815: §83, 110–111).
5. Self-contemplation (*Selbstbeschauung*). The somnambulist gains complete access to the interior of their consciousness. In this state, the patient is capable of self-diagnosis. People in this state are called *clairvoyant*, possessing insights that can extend beyond a physician's diagnosis. The magnetiser can even guide the patient in this state (Kluge 1815: §84, 111–112).
6. General clarity (*allgemeine Klarheit; clairvoyance*).³ The clairvoyant transcends their own inner self and merges with nature. They become unresponsive to anything of the external world, yet, through their spirit, they manage to merge with the natural spirit. In this state, they can access higher knowledge, universal truths. The magnetiser's ability to influence is minimal now (Kluge 1815: §85, 112–113).
7. Delight (*Entzückung*). The magnetised individual merges with nature to such an extent that he can merge their spirit even with plants. They are able to feel their 'non-existence'. In this state, the mesmerist cannot intervene. Such individuals must awaken from this state on their own (Kluge 1815: §86, 113).

This is the specific sequence of the levels of dreaming. You cannot skip from the second to the fifth level. You have to follow this sequence. For the first six levels of dreaming, the mesmerist plays a guiding role. The seventh level, however, is reached autonomously by the patient's *anima*. The mesmerist has no influence at this seventh level.

At the fifth level, where self-diagnosis can be achieved, Kluge considers that there is an advance beyond the medicine of his era (Kluge 1815: §85, 112). He believes that, through hypnosis, one can heal people deemed incurable by the traditional medical theories of his time. Now, how does Kluge propose that the mesmerist is able to establish this connection with the patient?

Kluge's answer might seem like magic to us today. He, like Mesmer, considers the mesmerist's ability to be innate. It cannot be learned, but it is a gift of nature. However,

³ Kluge uses both terms, *clairvoyance* and *allgemeine Klarheit*. They are synonyms in Kluge's use.

he also points out that those with the ability to hypnotise must be in good health when performing hypnosis. If the mesmerist is sick, he can infect the hypnotised individual. Furthermore, Kluge adds that the mesmerist must have firm faith in his task and truly believe in his ability to mesmerise (Kluge 1815: §211, 319–323). With this, Kluge is describing how a person can be mesmerised. Hence, one requirement is that the mesmerist is truly confident in his ability. This makes suggestion easier. Each level of dreaming implies a different level of suggestion through a kind of hypnosis.

Kluge's *Versuch* became renowned in Germany, serving as the key reference for mesmerists and those interested in hypnosis for many years. Therefore, it is not surprising that Hegel happened to read it at some point. In fact, as we shall see, if we contextualise Hegel's critique of mesmerism in the *Encyclopedia*, it can be understood as a critique of the levels of dreaming proposed by Kluge.

So much for the explanation of Kluge's mesmerism in context. I will now go on to show how Hegel receives Kluge's theory.

Hegel's critique of magnetic somnambulism (hypnosis)

A. What is pathological in animal magnetism?

Between Puységur and Kluge

Hegel's first contact with mesmerism was probably in Tübingen in one of Johann Friedrich Flatt's courses. Hence, much of the inspiration for his philosophy of subjective spirit comes from these courses (Reid 2013: 43). In Jena, Hegel's interest in animal magnetism became more evident. As Magee (2008) has ascertained through the philosopher's correspondence, Hegel and Schelling frequently exchanged letters while in Jena. In 1807, Schelling recommended a paper by his brother, Karl Eberhard Schelling, on animal magnetism to Hegel. In 1810, Hegel's correspondence with Peter van Ghert revealed that he was already well acquainted with animal magnetism. In fact, his conception is close to the one he will maintain during his lectures on subjective spirit (Magee 2008: 30). In 1817, when Hegel published the first edition of his *Encyclopedia*, he included *omens*, *somnambulism*, and *animal magnetism* as subjects of anthropology (GW 13: §320)⁴. However, it is in the third edition of the *Encyclopedia*, in 1830, that we find his criticism of Kluge most explicitly.

The anthropology of the *Encyclopedia* of 1830 is divided into three sections: the natural soul, the sentient soul, and the actually real soul. In discussing this topic, I will focus on the second one. The sentient soul (*fühlende Seele*) encompasses the sensations and experiences which individuals encounter before the development of consciousness. It represents the moment in the biopsychological development of any person in which the feeling life (*Gefühlsleben*) begins to emerge, which is the basis of the psyche and human affectivity (Maurer 2021: 115–127).⁵

⁴ GW = Hegel, G. W. F., 1968

⁵ This constitutes the *Leiblichkeit*, which is, at this stage, identified with the soul. For more on this topic, see Asmuth (2016).

This necessary moment of the soul can be pathological. In §406, Hegel points out that, for a person who is mature and has reached the level of spirit (*Geist*), the *Gefühlsleben* is a surpassed stage. A mature psyche's regression to the *Gefühlsleben* is seen as a disease, as if the spirit has failed to transcend the soul. It is a regression of the spirit to the soul. How can it be that a spirit regresses to a previous stage? This is where magnetic somnambulism comes in, as we shall see.

Hegel points out that magnetic somnambulism represents one way the spirit might return to this regressive state, to the soul (*Enz C*: §406)⁶. This phenomenon signifies a return from self-conscious life to a preconscious state of life. Return to the realm of immediacy signifies moving in the opposite direction to the healthy teleological development of the soul and self-consciousness. Now, if magnetic somnambulism was a state induced by magnetisers to heal and cure, why does Hegel classify it as pathological?

In §406, Hegel notes that, because of the encyclopaedic character of his work, he cannot prove the existence of animal magnetism.⁷ Nevertheless, he gives it credibility. Let us note that Hegel differentiates between *animal magnetism* and *magnetic somnambulism*. He points out that what produces the pathological state – the regression from *Geist* to the *Gefühlsleben* – is *magnetic somnambulism*. Thus, Hegel differentiates between the two concepts.⁸ The first is the existence of an invisible fluid, as we have already seen; the second refers to the practices exercised by mesmerists. Kluge and Marquis de Puységur were familiar with animal magnetism; both had established hypnosis as a therapy to cure patients, employing similar techniques that Hegel judged as 'pathological'.

According to Hegel, every return in the teleology of the spirit from the *Geist* to the soul is a mental pathology (Berthold-Bond 1995).⁹ This is because the spirit advances by moments. Each moment is present as a presupposition in the next. Thus, the spirit necessarily presupposes the soul. This is the Hegelian 'overcoming' or 'sublimation' (*Aufhebung*) (Inwood 2010: 394–395). Now, in what sense is somnambulism pathological? Once the soul opens itself to the spirit, then it should not regress, as the spirit presupposes the soul. Therefore, any technique that causes a regressive state from the spirit back to the soul is categorised by Hegel as pathological.¹⁰ Let us consider now how hypnosis works.

Marquis de Puységur, known as a French disciple of Mesmer, was the discoverer of hypnosis. The case of Victor, whom Puységur succeeded in curing by applying hypnosis

⁶ *Enz C* = [Hegel, G. W. F.] 1971.

⁷ We must remember that Hegel's *Encyclopedia* is a collection of theses without explicit development. The explicit development was reserved to his oral lectures, as he revealed to Cousin: "this book [the *Encyclopedia*] is but a succession of theses, the development and clarification of which is reserved for oral courses" (Hegel 1887: 169, Document 547).

⁸ In Hegel's times, animal magnetism and somnambulism were generally seen only as one and the same phenomenon. However, Hegel, by virtue of being familiar with Mesmer's ideas and the variances amongst mesmerists, clearly differentiated between the mesmerist development of physics (e.g., Kieser) and the mesmerist development of psychiatry (e.g., Marquis de Puységur and Kluge).

⁹ A normal development of Spirit is from *Seele* to *Geist*. Without this, Hegel's system could be contradictory, especially on objective Spirit. On this, see: Morani (2022: 169–171).

¹⁰ Due to the length limitations, it is not possible for me to dwell any longer on Hegel's understanding of psychopathology. For a good study on this, see De Laurentis (2021: 153–175); Chepurin (2018); Eldridge (2014).

for the first time, is widely recognised (Marquis de Puységur 1786: 28). However, what is surprising about Puységur is his belief that, through hypnosis, sick people have the ability to discover how to heal (Marquis de Puységur 1786: 28–41). Moreover, Puységur thought that somnambulism could bestow certain superior capacities on people. Briefly, these capacities included:

“(a) the ability to self-diagnose illnesses and self-prescribe effective remedies, (b) the clairvoyant ability to do the same for individuals with whom they were placed in rapport, (c) the ability to read the mind of the magnetiser, and (d) the ability to share the physical sensations of the magnetiser” (Crabtree 2019: 209).

Following Crabtree, we can state that Puységur believed he had found a way to improve the lives of many when he discovered hypnosis. By hypnotising someone, one could influence that person’s magnetic balances, which would be a significant advancement in the medical field, as evidenced by the patients cured through Puységur’s hypnosis. Owing to his success, his ideas rapidly gained popularity in France, and many of these reached Germany, where Kluge and Hegel were amongst his main readers (Crabtree 2019: 212).

Given the situation, Hegel could be referring to Puységur with the term *magnetic somnambulism*. This assumption seems to have a reasonable basis. Indeed, at first glance, it seems evident that, by ‘somnambulism’, he is alluding to Marquis de Puységur. This is how Greene (2021) understood it. However, I maintain that, at this juncture, Hegel is actually thinking of Kluge. This is not to diminish Marquis de Puységur’s influence on Hegel, but rather to suggest that, when Hegel speaks of regressive states from the spirit to the soul, the descriptors ‘pathological’ and ‘unhealthy’ specifically refer to Kluge’s mesmerist theory. This interpretation becomes clear when we consider Hegel’s approach to *clairvoyance*.

My first argument is that Hegel alludes to the fact that clairvoyant states are absurd. Specifically, he states that “it is absurd to treat this visionary state as a sublime mental phase and as a truer state, capable of conveying general truths” (Enz C: §406 / GW 20: §406). Clairvoyants were addressed by both Puységur and Kluge. Therefore, in the *Encyclopaedia*, it is unclear to whom he is referring. However, if we turn to *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes*, from 1827/28, then the picture becomes clear. Hegel indicates that this form of magnetism is no longer credible (GW 25/2: 688–689). Nevertheless, his critique is not directed at all forms of animal magnetism but only at Mesmer’s version. It is then that Hegel acknowledges Puységur as the discoverer of clairvoyance (GW 25/2: 692). However, in his explanation of clairvoyance, he follows Kluge, as we shall see.

First, it is necessary that the feeling life of a person can be affected by another person. That is why the patient can be manipulated by the mesmerist. In Hegel’s terms: “the two main conditions of magnetism are this being in itself and at the same time in another” (GW 25/2: 690). That these are the two main conditions means that they are the necessary conditions. If the patient is not in himself, the mesmerist cannot act. On the other hand,

if the mesmerist cannot be in the patient, then he cannot guide him towards healing or self-diagnosis, that is, towards the fifth level of dreaming according to Kluge. As a result, there must be a feeling life susceptible to the mesmerist's influence.

Without these two necessary conditions, the healing of the patient, the attainment of a state of clairvoyance, or anything similar cannot occur. These conditions are pivotal for the possibility of hypnotic sleep. Moving on, the second point connects with Hegelian anthropology: feeling life must be susceptible to influence by another person, not just the sick individual. This is crucial because being in itself, without someone to guide our feeling life, does not lead to a healing process. It is ineffective in restoring health, and it does not account for the phenomenon of hypnotic sleep, but merely that of ordinary sleep.

Who, then, in Hegel's opinion, is the person who has explained how the mesmerist influences the feeling life of the patient? Who has connected it to the capacity for healing? Up to this point, there might be reason to believe that he could be referring to either Puységur or Kluge. Nothing is conclusive yet. However, if we consider Hegel's critique of magnetic somnambulism, it becomes evident that he is indeed referring to Kluge.

B. Hegel's critique of magnetic somnambulism.

A discussion with Kluge

Hegel explicitly states in his *Vorlesungen* that Kluge is the one who has explained how feeling life can be influenced by another individual. Hegel notes: "so that, in his feeling life, in his genius, he has the determinations of another individual" (GW 25/2: 686). He then adds that "Professor Kluge's *History of Magnetism*, no doubt in a brief and dry manner (with references to a more extensive bibliography), sets this out" (GW 25/2: 686). However, he criticises Kluge's approach.

Hegel acknowledges the existence of magnetic somnambulism and the ability of magnetisers to imbue states of interiority, that is, he recognises a transition from self-conscious life to other levels of spirit. However, he distances himself from the notion that clairvoyance represents a higher state of consciousness. He does not believe that self-consciousness is 'overcome', but that clairvoyance is a regressive state of the soul, a regression to the spirit's most primitive level.¹¹ If hypnosis leads to clairvoyance, then there is no overcoming of self-consciousness; instead, we are brought back to the *Gefühlsleben*. This regression in subjective spirit brings about a return to the soul's inherent mode of relating to the external and internal worlds: immediacy (*Unmittelbarkeit*).

¹¹ In this study, we cannot delve further into the radical novelty of Hegel's approach. However, consider the following: Hegel, through his conception of the soul (*Seele*) and the body (*Körper*) as a unity (*Einheit*), is framing the hypnotic dream as a psychosomatic question. This idea, with Aristotelian roots (Padial 2022), is distinctly innovative. According to Berthold-Bond (1995: 32–53), Hegel's contemporaries were divided into two major camps: somatists, like Hufeland or Von Eschenmayer, who viewed animal magnetism as purely somatic, as a purely bodily phenomenon, and those like Van Ghert, Gotthilf von Schubert, or Ennemoser, who considered it a wholly spiritual phenomenon. Hegel, however, diverges from both, drawing on Kluge to argue that hypnotic sleep engages both the bodily and the spiritual dimensions, representing a return to the soul. Moreover, the soul is not comprehensible without the body. As Wolff (1992: 14) pointed out, it is a kind of hylemorphism. On this topic, also see Winfield (2010: 25–42), and Nuzzo (2013).

Hegel states: “The purely sensitive life [...], even when it retains that mere nominal consciousness, as in the morbid state alluded to, is just this form of immediacy” (Enz C: §406N; GW 20: §406A).

In a normal process, the soul evolves into spirit without regression. This is why Hegel considers this phenomenon to be unhealthy. With the return to immediacy, one returns to natural life: “the first effect of magnetism is that the individual is plunged back into his natural life” (GW 25/1: 78). Consequently, “the individual in such a morbid state stands in *direct* contact with the concrete contents of his own self” (Enz C, §406; GW 20: §406). This is why Hegel deems hypnosis pathological: it leads from the realm of mediation to that of immediacy.

Mediation is a form of necessary ontological relation between two things that are, at first sight, different. In mediation, each part reflects the other in its totality, including in the subjective spirit’s mediation. What is immediate is the affective life (impulses, feelings, and sensations) (Padial 2019: 67–73), where thought is absent. However, as consciousness develops, a person becomes reflective, moving beyond and mastering the affective life. It is thanks to mediation that the human being is not a slave to his affective life. This is why Hegel sees a return to *das Unmittelbare* as pathological. Immediacy is the primal form, the affective life, the *Gesfühlleben*. What is properly human is mediation, which elevates human beings. Therefore, a shift from mediation to immediacy is pathological, opposing the normal development of the *Geist*.¹²

Which mesmerist was it who proposed that clairvoyance was an overcoming of self-consciousness by reaching higher truths? This is Kluge, in his *Versuch*. Which mesmerist associated hypnosis with affectivity? Once again, this is Kluge, in his *Versuch*, not Puysegur. Thus, following the *Vorlesungen*, it becomes plausible that Hegel’s criticism of somnambulism pertains to the attainment of clairvoyant states, as expounded by Kluge.

Conclusion

As explained, Mesmerism was a well-known and significant theory in Hegel’s times. This has been proven by a brief survey of Mesmer’s doctrine in context. His discovery was well-known in Germany and initially accepted by both physicians and philosophers, although Mesmer, unfortunately, later fell into disrepute.

However, as argued in the second section, the mesmerists remained firm in their conviction. Moreover, Kluge, among others, attempted to extend the ‘scientific’ doctrine of animal magnetism to other areas of knowledge. Kluge was one of the best-known mesmerists of his time, although he is now largely forgotten. In his context, he was quite influential through his *Versuch*, particularly for his explanation of the levels of dreaming, briefly outlined in the second section.

¹² This significantly impacts Hegel’s system. Typically, the philosophy of spirit is seen as a teleological philosophy since Findlay (1964) characterised it as such in the mid-1960s. However, examining hypnosis in Hegel’s theory reveals that his system is not a straightforward teleology, but one that permits reversals. This presents a different paradigm for approaching Hegel in future research.

The levels of dreaming, as Hegel notes, are not distinguished from feeling life in Kluge's theory, as was revealed in the explanation of Hegel's reading of mesmerism in the third section. In his reading, Hegel criticises Mesmer's ideas, already discredited by that time, but he acknowledges the phenomenon of magnetic somnambulism (hypnosis). When Hegel criticises magnetic somnambulism, Kluge's influence on Hegel's understanding of this phenomenon becomes evident. This is not surprising, given the popularity of the *Versuch* during Hegel's time, making it a likely reference for him.

When Hegel criticises magnetic somnambulism, he connects it to feeling life (*Gefühlsleben*), as Kluge had explained. This is the differentiating element between Kluge and Puységur. The French physician was the discoverer of hypnosis, as Hegel acknowledges. Yet, Hegel, by emphasising the *Gefühlsleben* as a necessary condition, seems to follow Kluge more closely than Puységur.

However, it is true that, in the history of psychiatry, Marquis de Puységur has generally been celebrated for discovering hypnosis. It is also true that, despite Kluge's prominence in his time, he has since been forgotten by the academia. I believe that this is the reason why references to Hegel's views on hypnosis have tended to focus more on Puységur than on Kluge.

Now, regarding Hegel's critique, one can affirm the precision with which he integrated a novel phenomenon of his time into his philosophical system. Hypnosis appears in his anthropology in the second moment of the soul, because the *Gefühlsleben* pertains to the *fühlende Seele*. Hypnosis takes us back to the life of feeling. Hence its placement in his system, and the individual who pointed this out was Kluge.

It is also admirable that Hegel stood up to the popular thinking of his time. Instead of accepting that hypnosis could lead to higher states of consciousness, as many physicians and philosophers then believed, he viewed it as a step backward. In hypnosis, we do not go beyond our self-consciousness to attain higher truths, as Kluge suggested with his concept of *Klarheit*. Hegel saw it as a transitory psychopathological state because it was a regression from *Geist* to *Seele*. This was a challenge in his time that Hegel courageously posed in the belief that the human being possesses a natural biopsychological development. There is no magic involved. There is a teleology in the development of the spirit. If something, instead of an advance, produces a regression in the teleology of the spirit, it is considered psychopathological. Therefore, hypnosis was necessarily deemed a psychopathological state.

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