



# COGNITIO

Revista de Filosofia  
Centro de Estudos de Pragmatismo

São Paulo, v. 25, n. 1, p. 1-12, jan.-dez. 2024  
e-ISSN: 2316-5278

 <https://doi.org/10.23925/2316-5278.2021v22i1:e67540>

## DOSSIÊ HEGEL E A LÓGICA / DOSSIER HEGEL AND LOGIC

### Practical and pragmatic aspects of the identity of philosophy(ies) as a system through systematizing concepts

Aspectos práticos e pragmáticos da identidade da(s) filosofia(s) como sistema através da sistematização de conceitos

Ricardo Pereira Tassinari\*  
ricardotassinari@gmail.com

**Abstract:** Is it possible to view and constitute philosophy today as a unique system, as proposed and demanded by Hegel? The existence of a plurality of opinions, worldviews and kinds of knowledge seems to challenge it, especially today when one talks of many kinds of philosophies. In an attempt to answer that question positively, this paper outlines *a possible solution* by introducing a set of general concepts, herein referred to as *Systematizing Concepts*. Particularly, practical, and pragmatic aspects of the set of systematizing concepts and their uses are discussed, especially regarding the concepts *spirit* and *Absolute Spirit*. Their context of discovery and development was the culmination of studies and research performed over more than 30 years in the areas of science and philosophy. The inspiration for elaborating and proposing them came from Hegelian philosophy, mainly from the Hegelian demand onto Philosophy: to be seen as a System. Although coming from those studies and research, the set of Systematizing Concepts is synthetically introduced here, without quoting those works, because the intention is to show that they, as concepts, may be autonomously understood generally through the explanation of them, their interrelationships and the experiential organization they provide, their context of justification. They establish a general understanding herein, pointing out *a possibility* of how to deal systematically in a practical and pragmatic way with the various opinions, worldviews and kinds of knowledge and philosophies in a unit. In this sense, they would allow us to view and handle Philosophy as a System, even today.

**Keywords:** Absolute Spirit. Interpretations of Hegelian Philosophy. Philosophy as a System. Systematizing Concepts.

**Resumo:** É possível ver e constituir a filosofia hoje como um sistema único tal como proposto e exigido por Hegel? A existência de uma pluralidade de opiniões, visões de mundo e tipos de conhecimentos parece desafiar isso, especialmente hoje, quando se fala de muitos tipos de filosofias. Na tentativa de responder positivamente a essa questão, este artigo descreve uma possível solução, introduzindo um conjunto de conceitos gerais, aqui denominados *Conceitos Sistematizadores*. Particularmente, são discutidos aspectos práticos e pragmáticos do conjunto de conceitos sistematizadores e seus usos, especialmente quanto aos conceitos *Espírito* e *Espírito Absoluto*. Seu contexto de descoberta e desenvolvimento foi o culminar de estudos e pesquisas realizados ao longo de mais de 30 anos nas áreas da ciência e da filosofia. A inspiração para os elaborar e propor veio da Filosofia Hegeliana, principalmente a partir da exigência hegeliana de que a Filosofia fosse vista como um Sistema. Embora advindo desses estudos e pesquisas, o conjunto dos *Conceitos Sistematizadores* é aqui introduzido sinteticamente, sem citar esses trabalhos, pois a intenção é mostrar que eles, como conceitos, podem ser autonomamente compreendidos em linhas gerais através da explicação deles, de suas interrelações e da organização da experiência que proporcionam, seu contexto de justificação. Eles estabelecem aqui uma compreensão geral, apontando uma possibilidade de como lidar sistematicamente de forma prática e pragmática com as diversas opiniões, visões de mundo e tipos de conhecimentos e filosofias em uma unidade. Nesse sentido, permitiriam ver e tratar a Filosofia como um Sistema, ainda hoje.



Artigo está licenciado sob forma de uma licença Creative Commons Atribuição 4.0 Internacional.

\* Universidade Estadual Paulista "Júlio de Mesquita Filho".

**Palavras-chave:** *Conceitos Sistematizadores. Espírito. Espírito Absoluto. Filosofia como Sistema. Interpretações da Filosofia Hegeliana.*

## 1 Introduction: the systematizing concepts

One of the great legacies of the Philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel is the view (and development) of Philosophy as a System. The view of Philosophy as a System is particularly important because it means not having multiple realities according to the various views; to the contrary, it seeks to establish a universal understanding of reality, even with the diversity of possible views. However, how can a view of Philosophy as a System with such a diversity of philosophical views and interpretations, which even incorporates them, be established today? A positive answer to this question will be given here by showing how such a view is possible with certain concepts, herein referred to as *Systematizing Concepts*.

Said concepts result from studies and research performed over more than 30 years in the areas of science and philosophy, their *context of discovery*. The inspiration for elaborating and proposing them came from Hegelian philosophy, mainly from Hegelian demand that Philosophy be seen as a System. Nonetheless, said studies and research are not herein quoted, because the intention of this paper is to show that the Systematizing Concepts are self-supporting in the sense that they may be autonomously understood here in general lines through the explanation of them, their interrelationships and the experiential organization they provide, their *context of justification*.

Notice that the aim here is to show that they establish a *possible* general understanding, as concepts, *pointing out how to deal systematically with the various opinions, worldviews and kinds of knowledge and philosophies in a unit*, which is necessary to understand the world in which we live as a whole, not presenting the details of those opinions, worldviews and kinds of knowledge and philosophies.

In this sense, practical and pragmatic aspects of the set of systematizing concepts and their uses will also be particularly discussed, especially regarding the systematizing concepts *spirit* and *Absolute Spirit*. The conjunction of the terms *practical* and *pragmatic* herein refers to: (1) a knowledge of practice and a practice of knowledge; (2) the possibility of performing actions that change what surrounds us, in which one also understands the reasons why one acts and why facts occur; and (3) the existence of possible experiences which come to be in accordance with an anticipation through concepts. As will be shown, the foremost reason (and basis) for proposing them is the need to practically and pragmatically understand the world in which we live.

## 2 Reality for each one (of us)

As pointed out, the foremost reason for proposing the Systematizing Concepts herein is the need to *understand the world in which we live, including ourselves, in a practical and pragmatic way*, particularly, in which there are multiple opinions, worldviews and kinds of knowledge and philosophies. In this context, for such an understanding, the comprehension of people's behavior is imperative. Notably, one's behavior depends on one's features and, especially, on their opinions, worldviews, and the kinds of knowledge they have. Correlatively, their opinions, worldviews, and the kinds of knowledge they have, define what reality is for them.

In this sense, the *first systematizing concept* here is *reality for each one (of us)*, which enables dealing with such a phenomenon. In general terms, *reality for each one (of us)* is the understanding each one (of us) has of the world in which we live, including ourselves, or even of Life as a whole, or of the Totality. This concept is implicated in the practical and pragmatic understanding of the world in which we live.

Certainly, reality for one is a complex understanding that involves and depends on many things (for the one) and their relationships (in a whole).

In a certain sense, considering the differences between the realities for each one, it may be said that *each one of us lives in their own and different reality (from one another)*. Such a statement may seem a little shocking because we generally assume a unique reality. Despite this, each of us *conceives reality*

differently (usually very differently), and reality for each one is one's understanding of it, which leads us to speak of *different realities for each one*. What is assumed here is not that there is not a unique reality, but that *there are different realities for each one (of us)*. People interpret events differently according to what they think reality is, that is, according to what reality is for each of them.

This is the case for all of us. For example, consider a religious person praying, followed by an extremely unlikely event occurring, which solves their problem. For this person, such an event was an act of God. On the other hand, for an atheist, it was only a coincidence or a consequence of a blind physical process, not performed by God. What is *reality for one* is not *reality for another*, and vice versa.

In particular, living with other people, we can see (asking them what human beings are, what life is, what the world in which we live is, what the whole is, etc.) that they understand and experience reality in their own and specific ways, different from our own realities. The expression of the reality for each one (of us) leads to the concept of one's philosophy.

### 3 One's philosophy

Philosophy is herein developed to understand what reality is (for us), the world in which we live. To understand it, including ourselves, it is necessary to understand the behaviors of groups of people. As mentioned, one's behavior depends on what reality is for the one. Consequently, to understand the behavior of a group adequately and accurately, it is necessary to understand what reality is for each one in the group.

It may be referred to as *one's philosophy*, the understanding and the expression of what reality is for one. Note that this meaning of the term *philosophy* is one of those registered in dictionaries and is how it is usually understood by common sense.

Certainly, the concepts of *one's philosophy* and *reality for one* introduced here are extreme and radical, and different from how they are commonly used in philosophy. This does not prohibit using them, which will be done here. The introduction of such concepts has the intention of emphasizing and always keeping in mind the necessity of understanding what reality is for one, to understand their behavior and the world in which we live, especially in a practical and pragmatic way.

It must be noted that *one's philosophy* is herein understood to be more than a mere system of one's assertions about what the world is. *One's philosophy* expresses *what reality is* for the one. Thereby, it will be assumed here that, in the end, the two concepts are intimately connected and may be identified: *one's philosophy is the reality of the one*, and *reality for one is one's philosophy*. In this sense, the *second systematizing concept* here is *one's philosophy*; it is (the content and its possible expression of) what reality is for the one, especially one's view and understanding of the World in which we live, including ourselves, or of Life as a whole, or of the Totality. The exposure of one's philosophy furnishes access to reality for the one.

For example, consider how Sir Isaac Newton expresses his understanding, and thus his experiencing, of absolute time and space in the *The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*: "Absolute, true, and mathematical time, of it self and from its own nature, flows equably without relation to anything external [...] Absolute space, in its own nature, without relation to anything external, remains always similar and immovable."

Particularly, in this quotation, Newton described *reality for him*, as part of *his philosophy*. In this sense of *one's philosophy* and *reality for one*, what the great philosophers did was to express *reality for themselves in their philosophies*. Typically, we study a philosopher in the History of Philosophy to understand what reality is for the philosopher (even if only in part) by means of their philosophies.

## 4 Philosopher in a broad sense

From the herein (radical and extreme) adopted sense of *one's philosophy*, each one of us is a *philosopher in a broad sense*. *Philosopher in a broad sense* refers to an agent that makes and lives their own philosophy and is the *third systematizing concept*. Such a meaning of the term *philosopher* is also registered in the dictionaries, and used by common sense, being a radical and extreme concept since it is universal, i.e., everyone is a philosopher in a broad sense. Despite this, it is not useless, because their philosophies differ from each other. Particularly, the term *philosopher in a broad sense* is used here to highlight that (1) *every one* of us acts as a philosopher when one defines reality for oneself, (2) one's philosophy is needed to explain and to understand one's behavior, and (3) one's philosophy is also necessary to explain and to understand the world in which we live.

Although, according to the Systematizing Concepts, everyone is considered a philosopher in a broad sense and has their own philosophies, it does not diminish the importance of being a philosopher or studying philosophy as usually understood in philosophy. On the contrary, people who study philosophy are the most capable of understanding one's philosophies, and thus, according to the Systematizing Concepts, the most capable of really understanding and explaining the world we live in, including ourselves. Moreover, *studying philosophy in the area of philosophy is the unique and necessary way to come to really understand and explain the world in which we live*. In particular, the Systematizing Concepts provide the conditions and elements to think about and explain why this is so.

## 5 Degree of elaboration of a philosophy

A major difference between one's philosophies is their *degrees of elaboration*. *The degree of elaboration of a philosophy* is the *fourth systematizing concept* here. The greater the set of questions and the range of responses proposed by a philosophy aiming to understand and explain the world we live in, including ourselves, or of Life as a whole, or of the Totality, the greater the degree of elaboration of the philosophy.

In this sense, the concept of *degree of elaboration of a philosophy* is important in the context of elaborating philosophies (by someone, including by us) to understand the world in which we live. The greater the degree of elaboration of a philosophy, the greater the understanding of the world in which we live (by that philosophy).

Notably, by studying other philosophies, especially those presented in the History of Philosophy, people are more capable of developing or understanding a philosophy with a greater degree of elaboration.

Notice that the philosophies of the philosophers studied in the History of Philosophy have a high degree of elaboration. Because of this, they have influenced history with what reality is for them, as expressed by their philosophies. Particularly, the (new) studies about their philosophies can also expand the degree of elaboration of the current philosophies and philosophical views.

In this context, the concept of *degree of elaboration of a philosophy* makes the adopted concepts of *one's philosophy* and *philosopher in a broad sense* more useful, because it allows us to differentiate one's philosophies (and the philosophers in a broad sense) according to said degree. It takes a lot of work to develop a philosophy with a high degree of elaboration. Particularly, they allow us to start to *practically* and *pragmatically* deal with the plurality of opinions, worldviews and kinds of knowledge and philosophies. That is, these concepts allow us to start to make it possible to have a knowledge of practice and a practice of knowledge, performing actions that change what surrounds us, in which we understand the reasons why we act and why facts occur. They establish possible experiences which come to be in accordance with their anticipations through concepts. In this way, the following systematizing concept is also introduced to deal with the plurality of opinions, worldviews and kinds of philosophies and specific knowledge in a unit.

## 6 System of (all possible) philosophies

Regarding the main task here, to practically and pragmatically understand the world we live in, including ourselves, it must be noticed that: there are many different philosophies (including present philosophies, past philosophies, historical ones, and potential future philosophies).

In this context, to adequately and accurately understand the behavior of a group of people, it is necessary to understand their philosophies and, correlatively, what reality is for each one in the group.

In this regard, each philosophy is related to one another. Thus, more than a mere aggregate, a set of philosophies constitutes a *system*. A *system of philosophies* is constituted by *philosophies and the relationship between them*.

Therefore, to practically and pragmatically understand a group of people, it is necessary to understand the system of their philosophies. For example, to practically and pragmatically understand a part of history adequately and accurately, it is necessary to understand the system of philosophies of each one of the historical actors involved. It is particularly clear if, in the end, one's philosophy is the reality of the one, and reality for one is one's philosophy.

Moreover, to understand (practically and pragmatically, adequately, and accurately) the world in which we live, including ourselves, it is necessary to understand the System (with a capital *S*, designating a proper noun) of (all possible) philosophies (rather than understanding *some* systems of philosophies). Therefore, the *System of (all possible) philosophies* is the *fifth systematizing concept*. The System of (all possible) philosophies is constituted by all possible philosophies and the relationships between them.

Notice that even if we are not able to expose all possible philosophies (and their details), it does not make the *concept* of System of (all possible) philosophies unintelligible, meaningless, or practically and pragmatically useless. On the contrary: (1) it reminds us of the need for the diverse philosophies already present, and the new ones that may arise, to practically and pragmatically understand the world in which we are living; (2) it points out the need to think about them as a system; (3) it precisely enables us to deal with the already present philosophies, and the new ones, in a system that also considers all others philosophies; and (4) it enables us to think about the whole System of (all possible) philosophies at once without excluding any one, allowing us to universally think about philosophy. Broadly speaking, thinking about philosophies universally is only possible with such a concept of System of (all possible) philosophies. For example, in this sense it can be compared with the system of every human being, which allows us to deal with all of them and to think about us at once as a whole, not excluding anyone and thinking about everyone universally, even if we are not able to point out each individual. General concepts may support these universal properties, as can be clearly seen when we deal with infinite objects, such as the set of all natural numbers  $N = \{0, 1, 2, 3, \dots\}$ ; without those types of general concepts we would not be able to think about those entities universally.

## 7 Scientific-philosophical illusion

Often, people tend to naively take *reality* as what is *reality for themselves*. This fact may be referred to as the *Scientific-Philosophical Illusion*. It consists of naively taking as true the scientific and philosophical knowledge (or our own philosophy) that we currently have, without considering (1) it is one of the possible philosophies in the System of (all possible) philosophies and (2) it is not the most accurate one. In this sense, *Scientific-Philosophical Illusion* is the *sixth systematizing concept*.

According to the Scientific-Philosophical Illusion: (1) reality for us (now) is just one possible reality (among many others possible for us), (2) it is not the most accurate, and (3) it can always be improved.

Notice that the Systematizing Concepts allow us to deal systematically in a unit with the various possible philosophies and their possible realities for them. They organize the System of (all possible)

philosophies and the realities for them. Therefore, it is possible to maintain the system of Systematizing Concepts and to consider that (1) the momentary reality for us is one of the possible ones, (2) it is not the most accurate one (besides it is more accurate than others), and (3) it can always be improved. In this sense, the Systematizing Concepts are not negatively affected by the Scientific-Philosophical Illusion. On the contrary, they allow us to overcome it, thus they are consonant with it, and such an illusion confirms their usefulness.

## 8 Self-consciousness

The *seventh systematizing concept* is *self-consciousness*. It is introduced by considering the last consequences. The term *self-consciousness* herein refers to human beings insofar as they (or part of them) are capable of recognizing that: (1) reality is always reality for us (even herein); and (2) the (momentary) reality for us (now) is just one possible reality (among many others possible for us), (3) it is not the most accurate one, and (4) it can always be improved.

As self-consciousness, we can recognize that the reality for ourselves (now) is our consciousness (now), and our consciousness (now) is the reality for ourselves (now).

## 9 Thing-in-itself, thing-for-us, and object

For us as self-consciousness, there are things that *are possible to be* in our consciousness (whether they currently and actually are or not) and, among them, there are things that *are currently and actually* in our consciousness. The first one will herein be referred as *thing-in-itself*, and the second as *thing-for-us*.

*Thing-in-itself* and *thing-for-us* are, respectively, the *eighth* and the *ninth systematizing concepts*. The *thing-in-itself* is the thing considered as existing by itself and in itself, and which one seeks to understand. The *thing-for-us* (now) is our understanding of the thing provided for by current science and philosophy (or our own philosophy).

Reality is always reality for us. Particularly, *thing-in-itself* is also our concept. As such, things-in-themselves are elements of *reality for us*. The thing-in-itself indicates the goal of our process to understand. When trying to understand the thing-in-itself, each moment of its understanding appears for us as the thing-for-us. In the end, the (ultimate) understanding of the thing-in-itself for us will be the system of all moments of the thing-in-itself as the thing-for-us, i.e., the set of all moments of the thing-for-us and the relationships between them.

In this sense, the *tenth systematizing concept* is *object*. The *object* is the thing-in-itself considered as the system of all moments of the thing-for-us. It is introduced to indicate such a final identity of the thing-in-itself as the system of all moments of it as the thing-for-us.

Notice that the word *object* comes from the medieval Latin word *objectum*, formed by *ob-jectum* (*ob* = *in the way of* + *jacere* = *to throw*). Thus, it means *the thing presented to the consciousness*. Apparently, it suggests a certain insurmountable dichotomy in the knowing process between subject, on the one hand, and object, on the other hand. However, the concept of object introduced here allows us to overcome such a subject-object dichotomy in the knowing process. Indeed, knowing something is not all-or-nothing. If so, we would know nothing (because we do not know anything perfectly), and we could not act in the world. If we act, and our action is effective, we know the world in which we live (even if partially). In other words, *knowing has degrees*, and *we are always knowing*, from the lowest degree to the highest. In this way, there is no dichotomy, but a continuum *polychotomy*. The systematizing concept of *object* as *the thing-in-itself that is the system of all moments of the thing-for-us* makes it clear that, once we initially recognize the object, *we know the object*, and from then on, we are always knowing it more and more, even if we have not reached the end, that is, *all* its moments as the thing-for-us.

## 10 System of self-consciousnesses

The *eleventh systematizing concept* is *System of Self-Consciousnesses* (with a capital *S*, designating a proper noun). The System of Self-Consciousnesses is constituted by all self-consciousnesses and the relationship between them. It is the system of human beings considered as self-consciousnesses, i.e., as capable of coming to recognize that: (1) reality is always reality for one (of us); (2) each one (of us) lives in their own reality (for themselves); (3) reality for each one (of us) is just one possibility (among others); (4) the momentary reality (for oneself) is not the most accurate reality; and (5) it can always be improved.

The concept of *System of Self-Consciousnesses* brings with it all exposed systematizing concepts and enables us to establish a general understanding of the world in which we live, always maintaining its unity. Each self-consciousness is a *philosopher in a broad sense* and develops for themselves (and experiences within themselves) *their own philosophy*, as the *reality for them*. Their philosophies have different *degrees of elaboration*, according to their sets of questions and the range of responses to them, which enable them to understand and explain the world we live in, including ourselves. Their philosophies belong to the *System of (all possible) philosophies* and, recognizing it, they can overcome the *Scientific-Philosophical Illusion*. In this context, the concepts of *thing-in-itself*, *thing-for-us* and *object* allow us to deal with the understanding of one thing by the various philosophies and self-consciousnesses. The object is the system of all moments of the thing-for-us, including the moments of the thing for each philosophy and each self-consciousness. The concept of *System of Self-Consciousnesses* leads to a unity of content (and reality for us) present in the System of (all possible) philosophies and allows us to introduce the next systematizing concept.

## 11 Reason

Seeking to practically and pragmatically understand the world we live in, including ourselves, it may be noted as said that *there are various philosophies and realities for them*. Perhaps there are as many philosophies (and realities for them) as there are philosophers (even in a broad sense), or even more, because a philosopher (even in a broad sense) can adopt more than one philosophy in their life. The concept of *System of philosophies* allows us to deal with such a diversity of philosophies and leads us to ask about a reality in which the System of all possible philosophies is possible.

In this context, philosophies also talk about other philosophies. They are in a metaphilosophical context, i.e., in a context that the philosophies can talk about (all possible) philosophies, including themselves. In particular, a philosophy may expose and explain another philosophy, especially exposing its reasons. *In this case, the degree of elaboration and the reality for a philosophy that exposes and explains another are broader than those of that other*. In this sense, the possibility of exposing and explaining another philosophy establishes a (partial and non-linear) order between (part of) philosophies in the Systems of (all possible) philosophies. If philosophy *A* exposes and explains another philosophy *B*, and *B* exposes and explains another philosophy *C*, then *A* exposes and explains *C*, and *A*'s degree of elaboration and reality are broader than those of *B* and *C*.

The main aim here is, as pointed out, to practically and pragmatically understand the world we live in, including ourselves. This includes also practically and pragmatically understanding philosophical diversity and its contents. The systematizing concepts allow us to deal with such diversity in this way. Especially, the philosophy exposed here aims to expose *the broadest reality* (for us) that can encompass all (one's possible) philosophies, with all (possible) realities (for one). If one's philosophy is the reality for the one, then the System of (all possible) philosophies must contain all possible realities for each one of us.

This leads us to the *twelfth systematizing concept*, which is the *Reason* (with a capital *R*) as the broadest reality (for us) that can encompass all (one's possible) philosophies, with all (possible) realities (for one). Notice that, in this sense, all that is intelligible is in Reason, and all in Reason is intelligible.

*Reason* is not taken here as a (human) ability, but as a kind of objective content (possible for us). To get closer and closer to Reason, it is necessary to understand and explain, increasingly, the world in which we live, Life and Totality, necessarily including other philosophies and their realities.

Notice that, if we effectively understand the systematizing *concept* of *Reason*, we come to *know Reason*, even without knowing it in its detail and totality. As seen, knowing an object has degrees, and we are always knowing it, from the lowest degree to the highest, even if we have not reached the end, that is, all its moments as the thing-for-us.

Some content of Reason is reality for us now, and some is not. The systematizing concepts exposed here allow us to expose and deal with Reason and its content, dealing with both the content that is reality for us now, and what is only possible for us now.

It can be said that Reason is an ideal. However, it is not a kind of ideal opposed to reality. On the contrary, it is *an ideal that encompasses (all) reality in itself*, because *Reason* means *the broadest reality* (for us) that can encompass all (one's possible) philosophies, with *all (possible) realities* (for one), as herein exposed. Therefore, despite Reason being an ideal, and having a part that is only possible for us now, and not reality for us now, Reason itself as a whole can be assumed to be (for us) here and now (and everywhere at everytime); it is actual (and not only a possibility). This *ideal and real Reason* contains in itself all of our philosophies, and all living realities experienced by us. In the end, Reason may be thought of as a supreme self-consciousness state that contains (and completely knows) itself and all others.

Particularly, even if we are not able to be aware of all content of Reason, it does not make this concept unintelligible, meaningless, or practically and pragmatically useless. On the contrary: (1) it reminds us of the need to consider the diverse philosophies already present, and the new possible ones that may arise, as well as their realities for them, as belonging to the world we are living in; (2) thus, it reminds us of the need to consider the diverse philosophies already present, and the new possible ones that may arise, as well as their realities for them, in our practical and pragmatic understanding of the world in which we are living; (3) it points out the need to think about it as a unity and a system, in order for there to be only one reality; (4) it also enables us to deal with the System of all possible philosophies, and their realities for them, in our practical and pragmatic understanding of the world in which we live; (5) it enables us to think about the whole reality at once, not excluding anything, allowing us to universally think about reality; (6) finally, it enables us to practically and pragmatically understand that we are always expanding our self-consciousness towards the supreme self-consciousness, because only it is the perfect understanding of the world we live in as a whole. This leads us to the next systematizing concept.

## 12 Spirit

The *thirteenth and penultimate systematizing concept* here is *spirit*. A *spirit* is a self-consciousness that is capable of coming to recognize Reason, and themselves within Reason. In this sense, we all are spirits. The use of the concept of spirit here also brings with it all exposed systematizing concepts. In particular, when using it, a human being is thought of as self-consciousness within a (possible, actual, and real) greater and supreme understanding, Reason. In the end, Reason itself may be thought of as a spirit, the supreme spirit, as the supreme self-consciousness that contains (and completely knows) itself and all others. In this case, it can be referred to as the *Absolute Spirit*. In this sense, the concept of *Absolute Spirit* is a better characterization of Reason, as it also expresses the relationship of all self-consciousnesses between them, with their different philosophies and realities, within Reason as a supreme self-consciousness, or even, the relationship of all spirits between them, including with and within the Absolute Spirit. This use of the term *spirit* was inspired by a possible interpretation of Hegelian Philosophy, which also inspired the elaboration of the Systematizing Concepts here in order to view and oversee Philosophy as a System.



In this way, the understanding of the Systematizing Concepts leads us to *know the Absolute Spirit* (effectively), and to continue to know it better and better, as they maintain themselves and maintain their meanings in the process of knowing it, being themselves systematizing concepts of the Absolute Spirit. Notice that, as highlighted regarding the concept of *Reason*, when we effectively understand the concept of *Absolute Spirit*, we come to *know the Absolute Spirit*, even without knowing it in its details and totality.

Similar to what has been said about the concept of Reason, even if we are not able to be aware of all content of the *Absolute Spirit*, the supreme self-consciousness, it does not make this concept unintelligible, meaningless, or practically and pragmatically useless. On the contrary: (1) it reminds us of the need to consider the diverse and possible philosophies, as well as their realities for them, as belonging to the world we are living in as a whole, including the past, the present and the future; (2) it reminds us of the need to consider them in our practical and pragmatic understanding of the world in which we are living and that, for us, they are our understanding of this world; (3) it points out the need to think about them as a unity and a system, in order for there to be only one reality and only one greatest understanding of the whole; (4) it also enables us to deal with the System of all possible philosophies, and their realities for them, in our practical and pragmatic understanding of the world in which we live; (5) it enables us to think about the whole reality and its knowledge at once, not excluding anything, allowing us to universally think about reality; (6) finally, it enables us to practically and pragmatically understand that we are *always* spirits, expanding our self-consciousnesses towards the supreme self-consciousness, the Absolute Spirit, because only it itself is, by its own herein introduced meaning, the perfect understanding of the world we live in as a whole, or of Life as a whole, or of the Totality. Any other (minor) characterization of the world we live in as a whole, or of Life as a whole, or of Totality, is imperfect.

In this sense, it may be said that Systematizing Concepts establish a “new” kind of metaphysical or ontological system, in which *the Absolute Spirit is the ultimate reality*. However, it must be noted that its greatest role and function is to allow us to think and deal practically, pragmatically and systematically with the various comprehensions of reality, with all philosophies and their realities (which is precisely its meaning), and especially with the *sui generis* dynamic of the System of Self-Consciousnesses. In this sense, it is a kind of *practical, pragmatic, and concrete concept*. Its metaphysical or ontological character emerges from its own meaning and practical and pragmatic understanding, and from its adequacy, allowing us to understand reality as a whole, with the various comprehensions of reality and their realities, and the proper dynamics they generate in the world we live in, in Life or in Totality. The process of knowing the Absolute Spirit leads us to the next and final systematizing concept, *Philosophy*.

## 13 Philosophy

Finally, the *fourteenth and last systematizing concept* here is *Philosophy* (with a capital *P*, designating a proper noun). *Philosophy* is the activity of elaborating (a series of) philosophies that seek to (better and better) expose Reason (or, more properly, the Absolute Spirit).

As considered here, *reality for one is one's philosophy*, and *one's philosophy is the reality of the one*, and everyone is a *philosopher in a broad sense*. Therefore, Philosophy is an existing activity that is performed all the time by all human beings; it is necessary to understand the world in which we live, including ourselves.

One's philosophy may consciously take itself as Philosophy (as herein proposed and as is being done here). Conjointly, even one's philosophy that does not do it, or is radically against doing it, can be considered as Philosophy. By exposing intelligible contents, it is exposing parts of Reason (and of the Absolute Spirit). As pointed out, Reason (and the Absolute Spirit) is the broadest reality (for us) that can encompass all (one's possible) philosophies, with all (possible) realities (for one), and, in this

case, what any philosophy is performing is (consciously or unconsciously) exposing Reason (and the Absolute Spirit) to itself; it exposes the part that it understands of the broadest reality that can encompass all philosophies and all realities (and which is best characterized as *Absolute Spirit*). In this sense, it must be noted that the reality for philosophies that see themselves as Philosophy is broader than for the philosophies that do not.

In this context, the critical-philosophical dimension does not consist of (only) questioning or denying something (or being able to question or deny it). The critical-philosophical dimension consists in the following dialectical-speculative process: (1) Taking the initial philosophical view (as thesis, to be criticized). (2) Showing its limits and insufficiency (its negation, the antithesis). (3) Showing why and how it may (and perhaps should) be sublated towards a broader philosophical view (the synthesis), that is new to it and comprehends it, its limits and the new content ignored by it. The synthesis makes it possibly a broader comprehension and a broader reality (for us) that encompasses the reality of the initial philosophical view as one of the possible partial views of it. As said, in this case, reality for a philosophy that exposes and explains another is broader than that for this other one. (4) In the end, the process always goes towards Reason or the Absolute Spirit, as shown, and, with the Systematizing Concepts and their meanings, the process becomes the knowing of Reason and Absolute Spirit, and a continuous and increasingly better characterization of them. This allows us to add the term *speculative* to the process characterization (in addition to *dialectical*).

The Systematizing Concepts, with their permanence, allow us to know Reason and the Absolute Spirit (since knowing an object has degrees, and we are knowing it from the first degree, as discussed) and to continue to know them better and better, being themselves systematizing concepts of *Reason itself* or of *the Absolute Spirit itself*.

## 14 Final remarks

This paper has sought to introduce the set of *Systematizing Concepts* and to point out how they provide a *possibility* of viewing and practically and pragmatically dealing with Philosophy as a System, even today. The conjunction of the terms *practical(ly)* and *pragmatic(ally)* herein refers to: (1) a knowledge of practice and a practice of knowledge; (2) the possibility of performing actions that change what surrounds us, in which one also understands the reasons why one acts and why facts occur; and (3) the existence of possible experiences which come to be in accordance with an anticipation through concepts. The systematizing concepts discussed here were: (1) *reality for each one (of us)*, (2) *one's philosophy*, (3) *philosopher in a broad sense*, (4) *degree of elaboration of a philosophy*, (5) *System of (all possible) philosophies*, (6) *Scientific-Philosophical Illusion*, (7) *self-consciousness*, (8) *thing-in-itself*, (9) *thing-for-us*, (10) *object*, (11) *System of Self-consciousnesses*, (12) *Reason*, (13) *spirit*, and (14) *Philosophy*. In this sense, this paper has sought to establish a *possibility* of general understanding, by the Systematizing Concepts, pointing out how to deal practically, pragmatically and systematically with the various opinions, worldviews and kinds of knowledge and philosophies in a unit, which is necessary to practically and pragmatically understand the world in which we live as a whole. It is not the intention for there not to be (many) other visions about philosophy or the world in which we live, different from the herein exposed (possibly, such as that of the reader of this paper). On the contrary, it assumes them (and that they are necessary to constitute itself). In this sense, it is also not the intention herein for the exposition to be able to convince everybody (who sees the world through their own philosophies and realities). It *only* seeks to provide a *possibility* of viewing and practically and pragmatically handling Philosophy as a System, even today, as proposed here, for future discussions.

In this sense, regarding the possibility of incorporating specific knowledge into Philosophy, practically and pragmatically taken as a System today through the Systematizing Concepts, we can proceed as

follows: (1) said knowledge may be seen as (part of someone's) philosophy; (2) as pointed out, even a philosophical view in radical disagreement with the systematizing concept of *(one's) philosophy* does not refute it and, contrarily, only reinforces it; (3) said specific knowledge is part of a (one's) possible philosophy in the System of philosophies and, according to the Scientific-Philosophical Illusion, it is not the ultimate or the most accurate, and can be improved; (4) said specific knowledge describes reality in a certain perspective that is one (that can be understood) within Reason (and within the Absolute Spirit); (5) as reality for a group of people (that assumes said specific knowledge), their behavior can (and needs to) be practically and pragmatically understood from it and from other parts of their more complete philosophies; (6) it is the same for other people and their specific knowledge; (7) their specific knowledge is part of their self-consciousnesses, philosophies and realities within Reason (the broadest reality for us that can encompass all possible philosophy and all possible reality for one), and Reason can be understood as the supreme self-consciousness, with its relation to our spirits, the Absolute Spirit.

Consequently, the Systematizing Concepts allow us to understand people as spirits in the world in which we live, and to understand the world as (a manifestation of) Reason or the Absolute Spirit. In this sense, *the Absolute Spirit is a practical and pragmatic concept. Reason, as the Absolute Spirit, and we, as spirit, are the (most) real and concrete world in which we live.*

Philosophy, as the activity of elaborating (a series of) philosophies that seek to (better and better) expose Reason or the Absolute Spirit, is a universal concept and activity, and allows us to view and develop Philosophy as a System today (and always). This context and point of view poses a (continuous and eternal) research program that consists of interpreting the various kinds of specific knowledge and philosophies in terms of the Systematizing Concepts and the Absolute Spirit, particularly regarding Hegelian Philosophy, which inspired proposing them.

## Acknowledgements

This article benefits from discussions: (1) at *Classical German Philosophy Research Group of the University of Padua (HegelPd)*, especially with Luca Illetterati, Giulia Bernard, Giulia La Rocca, Armando Manchisi, Luca Corti and Laura Dequal; (2) at *22nd International Meeting on Pragmatism* (special thanks to Ivo Assad Ibri for the invitation), in particular with Michela Bordignon, Iuri Slavov and Agemir Bavaresco; (3) at *XII International Congress of the Brazilian Hegel Society* (special thanks to Luiz Fernando Barrère Martin for the invitation), particularly with Márcia Zebina Araújo da Silva, Marloren Lopes Miranda, Federico Sanguinetti, Inácio Helfer, Pedro Geraldo Aparecido Novelli and Gonzalo Humberto Tinajeros Arce; (4) at the *Hegel and Speculative Idealism Group - Hegel Laboratory (GHIE-LH)*, especially with Márcia Zebina Araújo da Silva, Marco Antônio de Carvalho Bonetti, Fábio César da Fonseca, Washington dos Santos Oliveira, Gabriel Rodrigues Silva, Diogo Carrerette Santana, Edney Augusto Cordeiro da Silva, Guilherme Gregório Arraes Fernandes, Leonardo Mietto Roberto, Guilherme Marcelo De Brito Sanazaria, Sérgio Francisco de Freitas and Alexandre Tuma Junior; (5) with professors Konrad Utz, Sinésio Ferraz Bueno, Rafael dos Reis Ferreira, Vicente Eduardo Ribeiro Marçal and Marcelo Marconato Magalhães; (6) with students (it is impossible to name them all here) of the *Graduate Course of Philosophy* and the *Undergraduate Course of Philosophy of São Paulo State University (UNESP)*. I thank all of them for the occasions, for their insightful remarks and debates.



# COGNITIO

Revista de Filosofia  
Centro de Estudos de Pragmatismo

São Paulo, v. 25, n. 1, p. 1-12, jan.-dez. 2024  
e-ISSN: 2316-5278

 <https://doi.org/10.23925/2316-5278.2021v22i1:e67540>