

# HEGEL'S ENCYCLOPEDIA OF 1830

## §§ 40-51 : AN EXEGESIS

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*This paper moves in three stages. In the first stage the relation of the 1830 Encyclopedia to Hegel's early writings is examined. In the second stage the author discusses the origin of this important work of Hegel. In the third stage (to appear in the next issue of Melita Theologica) the author offers an exegesis of §§40-51 of the Encyclopedia of 1830.*

### 1. *The Relation of the Encyclopedia of 1830 to Hegel's earlier writings: The Central Point of Hegel's Philosophy.*

Dieter Henrich wrote in his important book *Der Ontologische Gottesbeweis*:<sup>1</sup>

"To be sure, Hegel always held on to the opinion that the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* ought to be the introduction to the *Logic*. This opinion is understandable in view of the meaning of the content of this work, announced as such an introduction. Nonetheless, Hegel considered meaningful and convincing also this other form of an introduction: "Skepticism, a negative science carried through all forms of the finite knowledge, would also present itself as such an introduction."<sup>2</sup>

Henrich is referring to the inevitability of the *Logic*, not the *Phenomenology* being the real introduction to Hegel's system. This inevitability is prefigured,

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1 (Mohr; Tübingen 1960, <sup>2</sup>1967,): This work is henceforth referred to as *OG*.

2 *Enzyklopädie der Philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (Heidelberg, <sup>2,3</sup>1827/30 ed. Henning 1840 with explanations and additions, quotation from Henrich, *OG*) 210.

but not executed in the *Phenomenology*, where Hegel masterfully describes theaporetic entanglements of reason trying 1. to proceed without any presuppositions, as the Kantian transcendental idealism had programmatically proclaimed any true philosophy to *have* to proceed, while at the same time 2. proceeding with such presuppositions as the “thing-in-itself” and its correlate, the “synthetic unity of apperception”. Hegel understood that Kant’s criticistic philosophy was not so at all. It presumed to be capable of overcoming the dogmatism of empiricism by showing that contrary to concepts orienting themselves by objects or experience, the latter of necessity have to orient themselves by concepts, which have to be “presupposed *a priori*” (*KdrV*, B, xvii). Kant had called this “inversion” and “Copernican Revolution of thought” (*ibid*). But Hegel realized that this revolution was at best half completed, and therefore no revolution at all, for the bifurcation of “thing-in-itself” and “transcendental synthesis” still is maintained. Hegel suggested this solution in the *Phenomenology*.

“If we designate knowledge as the Notion, but essence or the True as what exists, or the object, then the examination consists in seeing whether the Notion corresponds to the object. But if we call the essence or in-itself of the object the Notion, and on the other hand understand by the object, the Notion itself as object, viz, as it exists for an other, then the examination consists in seeing whether the object corresponds to its Notion. It is evident, of course, that the two procedures are the same.” (*Phen.* 53, *Phän.* 71.)

Hegel had discovered the concept of the concept, in Miller’s translation, the Notion of the Notion, using and simultaneously rejecting Kant’s concept “*an sich*”, “in itself”, and had understood that the essence, truth and dignity of reality “in itself” is nothing but the Notion’s objective criterion with which the subjective notion has to be brought into correspondence. Seeing whether the object corresponds to its Notion is identical to the act of seeing whether the (subjective) notion corresponds to the object *if* that identity is a process of verifying the subjective notion by its objective criterion, which verification simultaneously also can distinguish the phenomenal appearance of an object from its objective essence and truth, i.e. its Notion. But this process is identical with the movement that takes place in the logic, i.e. the logic of the concept or the Notion. Hegel had discovered that movement in the *Phenomenology*, but it gained self-evidence only in the *Logic*, for the stringency of the idea really is disturbed by subjective and psychological contaminants reflecting on “consciousness” or “spirit”, as the new Miller translation states. But if the Nürmberg *Logic* of 1812/16 is the heart of Hegel’s system, the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* builds on that centrality of the logic of the concept. For it is divided

into three parts: Part I, "The Science of Logic" (often in English-speaking circles called the "Lesser Logic"), §§19-244; Part II, "The Philosophy of Nature", §§245-376; and Part III, "The Philosophy of Spirit", §§377-577. We shall deal only with the first, most important steps of the first part, of the "Science of Logic". I chose to concentrate in our discussion on this portion for two main reasons: 1. as illustrated, both the *Logic* of 1812/16 as also Part I of the *Encyclopedia* ("Lesser Logic") are central to Hegel's system. They are central 2. because of the double negation, or the critique of the critique or the self-revelation of the Concept ("Notion", in A.V. Miller's translation). Also experience suggests that a thinker's mature thought is the goal that must be presupposed as the beacon guiding incipient trials.

During the second half of the 19th century Hegel was almost totally forgotten in Germany and abroad, particularly in Anglo-Saxon lands, where the idealistic turn was only half-heartedly taken, if at all. But in Germany, the *Encyclopedia* became in 1870 the first and only book representing Hegel's writings in the newly founded standard "Philosophische Bibliothek" of the Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg. It dominated the German interest in Hegel, scant as it was. Only in 1907 did the *Phenomenology* join the late work; it quickly gained the reputation as Hegel's preeminent work, especially in Anglo-Saxon countries, paradoxically and unjustly eclipsing the earlier fame of the *Encyclopedia*. Why was this so? Good reasons can be given for this historical and systematic injustice:

a) Hegel's early works became known only through Nohl's publication of Hegel's *Theologische Jugendschriften* in 1907. This fact stimulated a renewed interest in Hegel, but now focusing on his early thought.

b) That also explains the publication of the *Phenomenology* in the "Philosophische Bibliothek" in 1907. This work quickly took centre stage.

c) The teens and twenties are characterized by a concern with Hegel's social and political philosophy (Franz Rosenzweig's *Hegel und der Staat*, 2 vols. München and Berlin, 1920, written 1908-14, but published only in 1920, is a good example). To understand this phenomenon we must take into consideration the political turmoil between 1914 and 1933 in Germany. But concern with Hegel's social and political philosophy was prejudicial against the purposely more basic and systematic content and structure of the *Encyclopedia*.

d) These same reasons also favoured Hegel's great lecture series on *World History*, on the *History of Philosophy* and on *Religion* with their predominant social concern with the "objective" and "absolute spirit".

But these accidents of the historical, social and political environment within which Hegel was more recently studied tended and still tend to provincialise Hegel's true concern with an all-encompassing philosophic system; this tendency is tenacious even today, where Hegel is criticised because his "putative presuppositions are not adequate to the real world experienced in natural, everyday experience."<sup>3</sup> Flay shows that

"the absolute standpoint" has not been reached by Hegel, "and the whole system (has therefore been)...brought into question."<sup>4</sup> Flay concludes that the "natural attitude", which Hegel also purports to make the starting point of his analysis, "denies validity to the project of articulating the structure of comprehensive intelligibility. While it may seem at first sight that this projected result affects only the *Phenomenology*, it will in fact affect the system as a whole."<sup>5</sup> Flay summarizes his criticism this way: "Put in a formula, the presupposition (in Hegel) is that the referents for the principle or ground of totality and for the principle or ground of intelligibility are one and the same. The presupposition is that intelligibility and totality, in the ultimate sense of each, are grounded in the same locus, and thus that there is such a thing as a comprehensive principle of intelligibility or some common ground on the basis of which particular perspectives, interest frameworks, compartments, and domains of reality are held together as a whole. Put in common sense terms, the presupposition is that the world out there is a whole and makes sense as a whole."<sup>6</sup>

Flay would deny that presupposition. As he said elsewhere, in reply to my reading of Hegel, "There is no guarantee in either the religious or the philosophical doctrine. Hell still exists.." And Flay ultimately finds it necessary

3 Joseph FLAY, *Hegel's Quest for Certainty* (State University Press; Albany 1984) see pg ix, x, and *passim*, see esp. 249ff.

4 *Ibid.*, 251.

5 *Ibid.*, 252.

6 *Ibid.*, 171,172.

to put not only Hegel's, but all "rational insight into question".<sup>7</sup> Underlying this view, expressed in Flay's more recent book, as quoted, is an irreconcilability, i.e. a lack of mediation between the reason and reality, and between the concept (Notion) and the object. This renunciation of mediation is reminiscent of Schelling. It is characteristic of Schelling's influence on Marxism. It is characteristic of the broad influence of Existentialistic philosophy's renunciation of reason in favour of the "absurd". And it is characteristic of the various forms of amalgamations of these schools of thought. Flat argues that Hegel hopes to assert the "natural attitude". But if this attitude is identical with the renunciation of mediation and reason, then Flay's argument cannot be convincing, nor can his critique of Hegel.

But what is the reason why our time too returns to Hegel? What is the "Bedürfnis" of our time that we should find Hegel's thought of interest? There are two main reasons, both closely interrelated:

1. One might be called a crisis in the concept of freedom, which is variously labelled as the crisis of liberal democracy, a crisis in the concept of an understanding of freedom as without commitment or bondage. For Hegel this crisis is identical with the commitmentless. (pardon the formulation) "simple negativity" or also "pure negativity".<sup>8</sup> Hegel saw this negativity as realized politically in the terrors of the French Revolution, which he calls "Absolute Freedom and Terror".<sup>9</sup> Also, reality has lost "substance and truth" through the progress of the positive sciences. Tangibly we experience this in the "suffering" of the "separation" of man from nature, which is the severance of "reason" (*Verstand*) from conceptless nature. *Verstand* relates only "negatively" to nature. (This problem is exemplifiable in the "ecology crisis"). *Philosophically*,

7 *Ibid*, 171, 172., of his "Comment" to my "The Dialectic in Hegel's Philosophy of History", 149-172 in Robert L. PERKINS (ed.), *History and System. Hegel's Philosophy of History*. (State University Press; Albany 1984).

8 "Vorrede zum System der Wissenschaft", *Phänomenologie*, ed. Hoffmeister (Hamburg 1952) 20, 21.

9 *Phän*, *ibid*, 414ff, see esp. 418 on "pure negation."

Hegel sees this unmediated negativity to gain dignity in Kant and Fichte.

2. This development is identified by Hegel as a “loss of substance and truth”, embodied for Hegel in the “irony of the Romantics”, which needs both to be affirmed as also to be rejected. It needs to be affirmed because the “substance” of the old political and social and religious institutions are overcome.<sup>10</sup> Simultaneously, the French Revolution, as the *Zeitgeist* generally, of which Hegel considered the German idealistic philosophy from Kant to Fichte the most significant expression, is hopelessly Romantic. Herein lies the “irony”<sup>11</sup> of Romanticism, which really just continued and heightened the “purely negative” separation and reflexivity of the Enlightenment.

In reply to this development, Hegel said: “In my view,...all depends on understanding and expressing the True not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject*.”<sup>12</sup> This means that the negativity of pure reflexivity, as of the Enlightenment, as of “pure freedom”, must be negated. The awkwardness of the Kantian separation of the transcendental subjectivity (knowing subject) and the “thing in itself” must be overcome. It is awkward, because it claimed to proceed without presuppositions, knowing only what *can* be (empirically) known, and yet *postulated* theoretically the “transcendental unity of apperception” and the “thing in itself” lying behind the phenomenon, and *postulated* practically the *necessity to assume* “God, freedom and immortality” if freedom is to be real at all. Hegel knew that this is neither the road to true knowledge, nor to moral freedom.

But for Hegel this development is not simply to be “purely negated” or destroyed. One cannot go behind the development of the Enlightenment, trying to restore a pre-Enlightenment frame of mind. It was the “irony” of the Romantics to believe they could do this, for they only accentuated in this endeavour the fallacy of “pure negativity”. No, the negativity must be *truly*

10 J. RITTER, *Hegel und die Französische Revolution* (Suhrkamp Verlag; Frankfurt 1962) 22, 33, 58.

11 See H.G. GADAMER, *Wahrheit und Methode* (Mohr; Tübingen 1965) 162ff, 172ff, 258, see also G. ROHRMOSER, *Emanzipation und Freiheit* (Goldmann; München 1968) 80, 166: “Romantic irony is for Hegel a product of the infinite reflection within the subject itself, a reflection by means of which it keeps substance at a distance. For its incapacity to externalize itself it pays with the emptiness of its arrogant absoluteness”.

12 *Phenomenology*, tr. A.V.. MILLER, 9f, my modified transl., *Phän*, ed. Hoffm., Hbg, 1952, 19).

overcome, it must be "aufgehoben", i.e. made to be one of the elements of the new thought. Hegel did this by recognizing that the "essence", i.e. *substance* behind the Kantian "phenomenon", its "concept (A.V. Miller: "Notion") is identical with the knowing *subject*, i.e. with the "concept" that knows the phenomenon, but this identity is now recognized as retaining a difference (i.e. "negativity") within it: Knowledge (or also modern human freedom) has an objective criterion by means of which to "measure" or "examine"<sup>13</sup> whether it is "*substantial*", i.e. "truthful" knowledge. Simultaneously, the appearing object can in that recognition also be measured, for it has become "different" from what it originally was through negative contrasting or comparing it to its "essence" and "substance", i.e. "concept". Hegel expresses this with the famous Kantian terms "in itself", derived from Kant's "thing in itself", which he modifies with the negative "for itself", to arrive at the systematic "in and for itself". In the "Preface" to the *Phenomenology* Hegel expresses this negative movement thus:

"Thus the life of God and divine cognition may well be spoken of as a play of love with itself; but this idea sinks into mere edification, and even insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the pain, the patience and the labour of the negative. *In itself*, that life is indeed one of untroubled equality and unity with itself, for which otherness and alienation, and the overcoming of alienation, are not serious matters. But this *in itself* is abstract universality, in which the nature of the divine life *for itself*, and so too the self-movement of the form, are altogether left out of account. If the form is declared to be the same as the essence (i.e. content, RA), then it is *ipso facto* a mistake to suppose / that cognition can be satisfied with the in-itself or the essence...Just because the form is as essential to the essence as the essence is to itself, the divine essence is not to be conceived and expressed merely as essence, i.e. as immediate substance or pure self-contemplation of the divine, but likewise as *form*, and in the whole wealth of the developed form. Only then is it conceived and expressed as an actuality...The True is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development. Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a *result*." <sup>14</sup>

Elsewhere Hegel expresses this same thought with the famous theological words:

13 *Prüfung!*, *Phän.* A.V. MILLER 52f, *Phen Hoffm.*, 70:11-72: 42.

14 *Phen.*, A.V. MILLER, 10f, *Phen.*, ed. Hoffm., 20-21.

“But that an accident as such, detached from what circumscribes it, what is bound and is actual only in its context with others, should attain an existence of its own and a separate freedom - this is the tremendous power of the negative; it is the energy of thought, of the pure ‘I’. Death, if that is what we want to call this non-actuality, is of all things the most dreadful, and to hold fast what is dead requires the greatest strength. Lacking strength, Beauty hates the Understanding for asking of her what it cannot do. But the life of Spirit is not the life that shrinks from death and deems itself untouched by devastation, but rather the life that endures it and maintains itself in it. It wins its truth only when, in utter dismemberment, it finds itself.”<sup>15</sup>

If I may just interject a refresher of memory here: What is called today the “choice movement”, allied with much, often unreflected jargon of the American Civil Liberties Union, as also most - so I am told - of the “ideology” of the legal establishment in this country (represented by such constitutional lawyers as Norman Cantor and such biologists, dabbling in philosophy and politics as Garrett Hardin), is squarely addressed by Hegel’s just-quoted words: “But that an accident as such, detached from what circumscribes it, what is bound and is actual only in this context with others, should attain an existence of its own and a separate freedom - this is the tremendous power of the negative; it is the energy of thought, of the pure ‘I’.”<sup>16</sup>

But that our US Constitution can also be interpreted with the help of Hegel, in such a way that the individual gains its “substantiality and truth”, not at the expensive, but rather at the gain of true freedom and true “choice”, I have shown elsewhere.<sup>17</sup> There are many lawyers and law professors who support my view (without specific reference to Hegel), such as Paul Freund and Howard Berland, both of Harvard Law School, and Milner S. Ball of the University of Georgia School of Law, Athens.

## 2. *The Origin of the Encyclopedia.*

Hegel had published at Jena, where he was from 1800 to 1808, the *Phenomenology* which was to be the “introduction” to the “System of Science”.

15 *Phen*, A.V. MILLER, 19, *Phen*, Hoffm., 1920.

16 *Ibid*, 19.

17 ROLF AHLERS, “The Dialectic in Hegel’s Philosophy of History”, 149-172, including J. Flay’s Comment, in Robert L. PERKINS, *History and System. Hegel’s Philosophy of History*. (State University Press; Albany 1984).

The *Logic* was to be the first part of that system. When Hegel came to Nürnberg as Rector of the "Gymnasium", i.e. high school, in 1808, he carried out this goal and published a three volume work, the *Logic*, in 1812, 1813 and 1816. But Hegel was confronted with another task during his Nürnberg obligations. The Bavarian Ministry of Culture had determined that the four upper classes of the Gymnasium students should be prepared for a decent study of philosophy at the university. The Ministry established guidelines for such an instruction. Part of these guidelines determined that "the previously individually taught subjects of speculative thought should be gathered together into a *philosophical encyclopedia*."<sup>18</sup> A clue to the structure of the *Encyclopidia* dividing it into paragraphs is Hegel's comment in the "Vorrede" of the *Phenomenology*, where he says: "Only what is completely determined is at once exoteric, comprehensible and capable of being learned and appropriated by all."<sup>19</sup>

Hegel was faced with the task of educating high school students according to government guidelines. To fulfil this task, he prepared several manuscripts, and the present *Encyclopedia* appears to be an edited collation of several of these manuscripts. It appears that in 1810/11 the lecture cycle of the "Encyclopedia" was complete and in "systematic order".<sup>20</sup> During the first Nürnberg years, Hegel lectured on "Philosophical Preparatory Science" or simply on "Philosophy". But during the last years at Nürnberg he lectured consistently on "Philosophical Encyclopedia".

Hegel was called to the university of Heidelberg in the Fall of 1816. Since he had prepared the "Encyclopedia" so carefully and intensively over several years, it is not surprising that he began lecturing on this topic right off. Simultaneously Hegel began preparing his material for book form and publication, and the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* appeared quickly after, in the summer of 1817. This is the Heidelberg edition. The full title in fact included two more words: "...in Outline." Hegel knew that his total system needed far more space to elaborate, but for text-book purposes this "outline" could suffice, and Hegel had accomplished a condensed version of his system, no small feat. In the introduction he specifically mentions that only the desire to give a text-book to students caused him to publish the *Encyclopedia* earlier than he would otherwise have wanted to do.

18 K.ROSENKRANZ, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegels Leben* (Berlin 1844-1969) 254-255.

19 7, MILLER, 17, Hoffmeister editions.

20 NICOLIN/PÖGGELER, *Enzyklopedie von 1830* (Hamburg 1969) xxiv cfr. Bibliography.

Originally, at the stage of the planning and writing of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel had hoped to write the "system" in these parts: 1. Logic, 2. Philosophy of Nature, and 3. the Philosophy of the Subjective Spirit. The *Logic* was the only part of that original plan that was finished. Both other parts were never tackled. The *Encyclopedia* sidetracked those original plans. In fact, after the *Encyclopedia* Hegel published only one more complete book, the *Philosophy of Right* of 1821. Hegel was at Berlin since 1818. The *Encyclopedia* however contains all of the parts which Hegel originally wanted to tackle: The *Logic* appears again, in different form, in Part I of the *Encyclopedia* (§§19-244) - in Anglo-Saxon lands it is often called the "Lesser Logic", the "Philosophy of Nature" is Part II (§§245-376), and the "Philosophy of the Subjective Spirit" as also the Philosophy of Right (the Philosophy of the objective spirit) are both contained in Part III of the *Encyclopedia*, (§§377-577), the first section of which (§§387-482) is the "Philosophy of the Subjective Spirit", the second (§§483-552) is the "Philosophy of the Objective Spirit", and the third (§§553-577) is the Philosophy of the Absolute Spirit. Hegel wrote at Berlin a separate *Philosophy of Right*, because it had been very condensed in the *Encyclopedia* of 1817. It also became necessary as the natural explication of issues he had raised in a lecture on the "Philosophy of World History". As Hegel lectured on this issue separate from the "Encyclopedia", so also on "Aesthetics", "Religion" and "History of Philosophy". All of these topics are also contained in the *Encyclopedia*, albeit very condensed. But these topics were not published, at least not yet.

In Berlin the *Encyclopedia* became *the* book. In 1827 the second edition was published. It was completely reworked and expanded. It had almost twice as many pages and 100 §§ more than the first edition. And it was very difficult for Hegel to complete the work for this second edition; as with all of his publications, almost sheer force was necessary to make him complete the work. Hegel asked his former colleague Daub to read and correct the galleys.

The work was quickly sold out and in July, 1829 the publisher contacted Hegel for a third edition. The third edition appeared in 1830. It was again completely worked over. Whole paragraphs were switched around, added, formulations were changed, and other changes took place. The desire had been throughout, however, to retain the "outline" character of this work. That meant that Hegel did not want to go into detail, and there is testimony in his correspondence that he was unhappy with the successive expansion of the work, because through this expansion the "outline" character was in jeopardy.

To understand the *Encyclopedia* correctly, I must emphasize once more that it was intended as a "compendium", as a "guide" to his lectures. In England

and in America, and in English speaking lands, a "textbook" in philosophy is not strange. In Germany this is today a strange notion. But the *Encyclopedia* really contains both ideas: Modern German philosophy lectures usually bring something original, an interpretation of philosophy or a portion of it quite original to that lecturer. For this reason "textbooks" are not often used in modern German universities. English and American universities use textbooks that sometimes attempt to refrain as much as possible to present the author's opinion and present philosophy "as it really is or was". The stress is to help the student to understand. Hegel's *Encyclopedia* is both: It is original, highly original in presenting Hegel's thought. Simultaneously it has "textbook" quality, insofar as it attempts to make understandable - in conjunction with the lectures - what Hegel attempts to say.

Hegel read before his classes a paragraph either wholly or in part, and then added free explanations. The printed explanations in our German text were not read before the group of students.

The third sub-section of this article - the exegesis of §§ 40-51 of the *Encyclopedia* - will appear in the next issue of *Melita Theologica*.

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