

# 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 discussed the origin of this important work of Hegel. Melita Theologica is printing today the third stage of this paper where the author offers an exegesis of §§40-51 of the Encyclopedia of 1830.*

### 3. Exegesis of §§40-51 of the Encyclopedia

These paragraphs are part of the “*Vorbegriff*”, in the Wallace edition, the “Preliminary Notion”. This “*Vorbegriff*” is the introduction to the philosophical system, the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. The aim of this introduction contains several problems:

1. The *Phenomenology* was supposed to be just such an introduction. Why does Hegel feel constrained to repeat another introduction here? Hegel himself addresses this issue in §25 of the *Enc.* as also in a note on a manuscript of 1831, reprinted on p.578 of the *Phän*, ed. Hoffmeister, indicating that Hegel had considered at that time the revision of the *Phenomenology*, but had rejected the plan, because it represents only “the *abstract Absolute*.” The problem here can be condensed with these words: In 1831 Hegel knew that in 1807 his concern with the “phenomenology of consciousness” is a merely psychological approach to the nature of thought and the Concept. That approach undercuts the nihilistic element in the movement of pure thought, expressed in part I of the Nürnberg and also the Heidelberg and Berlin *Logic*, i.e. in the later two versions, the first part of the *Encyclopedia*. Negativity is in the mature concept of the concept just one element in the movement of thought.

2. Hegel had already in the *Phenomenology* asserted that philosophy must commence without presuppositions. This idea was a cardinal notion in the post-Kantian Idealism, i.e. with Schelling, Fichte, Jacobi, Hegel. That programme is traceable to Kant himself, who admitted empirical date, i.e. ultimately the “thing in itself” as the only legitimate “presupposition” of

philosophizing, therewith, however, introducing new “presuppositions”, i.e. the “thing in itself” and the “transcendental subjectivity”. The mature Hegel realizes that the concept is its own presupposition, but it can be this only if within it “being” and “nothing” are identical, which identity is perceptible only if the concept is understood as a process of becoming. To *understand* this, one cannot write an “introduction” to philosophizing. For making “introductory remarks” on this issue means stating the presuppositions of it. The thought must proceed by itself, without presuppositions. Yet, Hegel felt constrained to write such an introduction, and he is rather self-conscious in a letter to his friend Daub of August 15, 1826 (*Briefe* vol. III, p. 126) of the inordinate length which this new introduction - that ought and *cannot* in truth be - is attaining.

3. Thirdly, this “*Vorbegriff*” is in the “Table of Contents” (pp. 29-32 of the Nicolin/Pöggeler edition of the *Enzyklopädie*) included in the body of the *Logic* itself. The “*Vorbegriff*” is comprised of §§19-83 of the “Science of Logic”, which is the “First Part” of the *Encyclopedia*. But §§1-18 are also called “Einleitung”, i.e. “introduction”. These first eighteen paragraphs are therefore an introduction to an introduction.

Within the “Preliminary Notion”, i.e. “*Vorbegriff*”, §§19-25 develop the logic of the Concept as moving from “immediacy”, i.e. unconceptual experience (*Erfahrung*), “feeling” (*Gefühl*) or “representation” (*Vorstellung*) to the conceptual determination of the content of experience feeling and, representation. Insofar as experiences, feelings and representations are not without reality, but nonetheless only *potential* reality, they are abstract. Their real content is identical with the content of philosophical knowledge, but it is the “work of the concept” to sluff off the abstract nature of a reality still in a state of conceptless disarray. The concept recognizes itself in realizing experience’s, representation’s and feeling’s content. The movement of the Logic is the logical disclosure of the Concept’s own inner truth and reality. Insofar as that truth is always identical with the truth experienced by “us” in everyday life, as also throughout the history of humankind and of philosophy the Concept’s self-recognition has historical dimensions. It is here where the *Logic* of the *Encyclopedia* begins.

The first part of the “Preliminary Notion” (*Vorbegriff*) is comprised of §§26-36, “A”, the “First Attitude of Thought to Objectivity” (pp. 47-59 in the Wallace-Findlay edition, pp. 59-64 in the Nicolin/Pöggeler edition). It bears in the original German edition the title “Metaphysics”. (Wallace-Findlay leave out this title, as also the category “A”. Why?) The second section, “B” in the Nicolin/Pöggeler edition, has the title “Second Attitude of Thought to Objec-

tivity". It runs from pp. 64 top. 85, 37-60 (pp. 60-94 in the Wallace-Findlay edition). The "Preliminary Notion" is rounded out with "C, The Third Attitude of Objective Thought to Objectivity", §§61-78 (pp. 86-102 in the Nicolin/Pöggeler edition, pp. 95-112 in Wallace-Findlay). §§ 79-83 has the heading: "More Precise Concept and Subdivision of the Logic".

From here, the work proceeds to its three parts: Logic, §§ 84-244, Philosophy of Nature, §§ 245-376, and the Philosophy of the Spirit, §§377-577. The Wallace-Findlay version has only the first part, called simply *Logic*. The whole *Encyclopedia* is capped off with a quotation in Greek from Aristotle's *Metaphysic*, Book XII, 7. It does not bear a §sign. It is the part of the *Metaphysic* where Aristotle speaks of "thought thinking itself" being the "highest and best" activity. Hegel wants to indicate with this quotation that the whole of western metaphysics is "conceptualized", i.e. realized in his own thought. And surely realization is more than the unrealized form it had in Aristotle.

Back to the "Preliminary Notion" (*Vorbegriff*): As indicated, the "First Attitude to Objectivity" carries the title "Metaphysics" in the German edition. As for Hegel Logic is not only a process of thought but simultaneously the process as it has historically realized itself in the history of philosophy, "metaphysics" refers not only to a segment within the subject "Philosophy". Hegel lectured at Nürnberg, Jena and Heidelberg on "Logic and Metaphysics". Traditionally, these were two separate sections within philosophy. But already the Nürnberg *Logic* in fact draws these two together. In the mature Hegel Logic and Metaphysics are one and the same thing. But historically, there was an epoch in the history of philosophy that can be called the epoch of "metaphysics" §§26-36 is appropriately labelled "metaphysics". Wallace-Findlay should not really have omitted that title, however confusing Hegel's own chapters and subdivisions might be. For "Metaphysics", the "First Attitude of Thought to Objectivity", is followed by two parts within the "Second Attitude", namely "Empiricism" (§§37-39), and "Critical Philosophy", (§§40-60).

Hegel locates his own thought, the Logic of the Concept, within the "Critical Philosophy" that built on "Empiricism" which itself is an outgrowth of continental "Metaphysics". For the sake of philosophy-historical nature of Hegel's own logic, which has simultaneously a historical, i.e. developmental, processual quality, I turn our attention to §§40-50 of Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, i.e. the *Logic*.

§40: Kant further developed "empiricism", i.e. experience was to be the "sole foundation for cognition". The "critical turn" in philosophy arises from the fact of an inconsistency: a) empirical sensation does not...apprehend more

than individuality." Simultaneously, however, "universality and necessity" are apprehended. Critical philosophy therefore assigned the latter to the "spontaneity of thought". Thought itself is "*a priori*". Hegel calls these categories of thought those of the *understanding* (*Verstand*), and he sharply distinguishes them from *reason* (*Vernunft*). But moving from understanding to reason, Hegel's own unique move, does not yet happen in §40. Hegel only *hints* at his critique of Kant and of "critical philosophy" with the concept "underivative connections of opposites". Hegel's own explanation of Kant's "synthetic judgments a priori". For the "opposites" connected or mediated in Hegel's concept are nothing but the "thing in itself", which Kant had to "presuppose" (without wanting to presuppose anything but sense-perception", but which Hegel discovers as nothing but the concept itself. In the mediating process, which is a process of the double negation (for the juxtaposition of knowing subject and known object is a "negative activity" that needs to be negated), the logic of truth reveals itself.

§41. The juxtaposition (Wallace: "contrast", p. 66:2) between subject and object remains operative, but the inconsistency arose in the critical philosophy of perceiving the "universal" among the experienced individual data as an "a priori constituent" (Wallace, 66:7ff), i.e. as the contribution of thought, while simultaneously presuming to be an "objective" quality of universality and necessity. The Wallace-Findlay version expresses this inconsistency (p. 66:14-12 from bottom) as "already knowing before you know - the error of refusing to enter the water until you have learnt to swim." What is meant here is that the Critical Philosophy (Kant) had not recognized that investigating thought-determinants, i.e. categories and concepts, is mind investigating itself. You cannot merely investigate the mechanism of thought. That is the famous reduction of philosophy to "epistemology" in Kant. Hegel realized that this "reduction" misses the true nature of philosophy, for philosophy is nothing but the Concept's self-recognition. This is what Hegel means when he says:

The forms of thought must be studied in their essential nature and complete development: they are at once the object of research and the action of that object. Hence they examine themselves: in their own action they must determine their limits, and point out their defects. This is that action of thought, which will hereafter be specially considered under the name of Dialectic, and regarding to which we need only at the outset to observe that, instead of being brought to bear upon the categories from without, it is immanent in their own action. (p. 66:9-bottom of p.).

Hegel summarizes his analysis of the Kantian "critical philosophy" as a pre-critical critique with these words:

Up to this point, the discussion has shown three meanings of objectivity: First, it means what has external existence, in distinction from which the subjective is what is only supposed, dreamed, &c. Secondly, it has the meaning, attached to it by Kant, of the universal and necessary, as distinguished from the particular, subjective, and occasional element which belongs to our sensations. Thirdly, as has just been explained, it means the thought-apprehended essence of the existing thing, in contradistinction from what is merely our thought, and what consequently is still separated from the thing itself, as it exists in independent essence. (Wallace-Findlay, p.68:4ff).

§42. *The Theoretical Faculty.*

Kant had pointed to the content of the “intuitions” (*Anschauungen* to be *multiple*, but the “Transcendental Analytic” of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* had shown that that multiplicity has unity and cohesion in the “synthetic unity of apperception”, which is *a priori given*. That “primary synthesis” Kant finds to be *accomplished* in the “categories”. Hegel asks legitimately, how the synthetic unity of apperception arrives at the categories? Hegel moves from Kant, who merely provided the “quarry” (RA) of the “common logic”, to Fichte, who exhibited “the *necessity* of these categories”, “giving a genuine *deduction* of them. (Fichte had shown Kant to be still “precritical” insofar as he had shown at the “transcendental subjectivity”, supposedly “free” in its “spontaneity” to produce the categories (like space and time) in terms of which the “multiplicity” (i.e. fragmentariness) of reality can be *understood* (i.e. seen as unified), is in reality totally *dependent* on the “thing in itself” i.e. on “empirical sense-reality”; Fichte had thus shown that the Kantian subject was not at all free, but rather bound.)

Hegel praises and criticizes Fichte at the same time. The “merit” (Wallace-Findlay, p. 69:2) I have just pointed out. The shortcoming, in my own words: Fichte has *not shown* how the deduction of the categories, as also logical judgements, are no longer “taken merely from observation and so only empirically treated, but be deduced from thought itself.” I.e.: Such logical process is an activity of thought itself, an *objective* activity, and activity in which I participate subjectively.

§§43, 44. The Kantian “categories” are supposedly objective and subjective: subjective insofar as they are provided by the “transcendental subjectivity”, objective insofar as they are conditioned by the material that is supposed to be known. For this reason they “are incapable of being determinants of the

Absolute.”<sup>21</sup> Because of this inadequacy, which is an inadequacy of inconsistency, they are “incapable of knowing the Things-in-themselves.”

In the *Zusatz to §44* Hegel expresses for the first time how he moves from “unity of apperception”, or from the unifying concepts to “God”, or, expressed differently, to his “theological” logic. But he had already expressed it in the first sentence of § 44, for the “Absolute” and “God” are identical. For this reason, Hegel also says: “The Thing-in-itself (and under ‘thing’ is embraced even Mind and God) expresses the object when we leave out of sight all that consciousness makes of it...” (Wallace, p. 72:5ff). To repeat something I had suggested before: The unsatisfactory nature of the postulated “thing in itself” is nothing but the Absolute, God, the Concept (Notion), which knows itself in the subjective knower. Hegel says that the Kantian version of the “Thing in itself” is completely abstract, *negative*. *It is important to observe this element of negativity, for it becomes an important element in Hegel’s “negation of the negation”*.

Hegel shows that both: the thing in itself, as also the reflexive subjectivity are “purely abstract” and “negative”, they are without any content whatsoever. Furthermore, these two forms of negativity are closely related: The *caput mortuum* of the artifact of the “thing itself” “is only a product of thought...it is the work of the empty ‘Ego’ which makes an object out of this empty self-identity of its own.” (Wallace-Findlay, 72:11ff, my emphasis, RA). Hegel continues: “One can only read with surprise the perpetual remark that we do not know the Thing-in-itself. On the contrary there is nothing we can know so easily” (end of §44, p.72). For it is as a conceptual product essentially identical with it.

§45. *Understanding* does not recognize this, however. Only *Reason*, the faculty of the Unconditioned...“discovers” this. Subjective understanding knows itself in the “thing itself”, and this “knowledge” is identical with the higher category of understanding. However, this insight is still completely indeterminate, not yet having any experiential knowledge at all.

§46. The path to recognition is the path to *determinate concreteness*. But the realm of determinate concreteness is the realm of plurality, Wallace translates “*mannigfaltigen Zusammenhang*” with “complex interconnection” p.(74:5f). Hegel moves in the following to the “application” of the Kantian

21 Wallace. 72:1f; I have modified his translation to render more adequately the original, RA

insight to “metaphysics”, for the “application” to empirical entities is for the Logic only the first step to an all-emcompassing concept of the Concept.

§47. Hegel has in §46 moved away from the “application” of the concept to only an empirical entity, and toward its “application” to metaphysics itself. That application dealt in §33 with the “first” part of metaphysics, “ontology”. §34 dealt with “rational psychology”; §35 dealt with “cosmology”; and §36 with “natural or rational theology”. The point of §47 is now to interpret the Kantian “epistemology” in terms of the problem of metaphysics as such, not only to “concrete” objects. But metaphysical reality deals with infinite entities:

1) The first infinite is the soul. Hegel’s “critique” of the Kantian critique (§46, *Zusatz*, end) concentrates on Kant’s transferral of *empirical* categories into those of *thought*. That transferral “suffered” from a certain error, the error of “fallability”, referred to by Hume, who had observed that such categories as “generality” and “necessity” cannot be encountered in the empirical realm, only in thought, and that is a “fallacy” to mix the one with the other. Hegel supplies in the second sentence of §47 his critique of that fallability, and it is in its brevity a masterpiece of his method. Furthermore, it discloses the “identity-in-difference” of the finite with the infinite subject, or, as he said in the “Einleitung” to the *Phenomenology*, the identity of subject and substance. This “identity” is referred to *verbatim* in points (3) and (4) (Wallace-Findlay, p.75:1-2, Nicolin/Pöggeler, p.71:12-14). The four ways in which the subject is identified. In abbreviated shorthand, the subject is identified as (1) *determining*, and as (2) *singular* or an abstractly simple. But this knowledge of singularity is possible only on the basis of knowledge of *multiplicity* outside of me.<sup>22</sup> *Only over against* that plurality, that is, in a real sense only together with that plurality, the “self-samehood” (Wallace-Findlay: “one and the same”) is the “identity” of the subject specified. This thought is expressed more fully in (4), where that *identity* is qualified as “distinguishing”, i.e. as *differentiating* itself from all the things outside me. In this way the Kantian critique of “rational psychology” is completed. Kant had criticized the tradition of rational psychology with special reference to Mendelssohn<sup>23</sup> as incapable of resolution of the problem of the nature of the subject. This incapacity emerged in Mendelssohn as what Kant characterized as a “paralogism”, i.e. as a “fallacious conclusion” or also as the “illusion” of thinking that the problem of claim contradicted by counter-claim

22 Wallace-Findlay has p. 75:2 instead of *Mannigfaltiges*, “variety”, which only partially renders the plurality of Hegel’s formulation.

23 *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, ed. Vorländer, Meiner Gerlag; Hamburg 1956 370; B, 399)

rested with the object under consideration, in this case with the nature of the human soul. The famous Kantian resolution was identical with his “transcendental” turn: We cannot know anything at all of the “things in themselves”, in this case of the “soul”. The “illusion” of attempting to resolve the “paralogisms” of reason by paying attention to the nature of the thinking subject (or soul) rests in *not perceiving that the “error” rests in thought itself, which of necessity introduces contradictory, i.e. different judgments into the identity of the subject*. Kant says: The “error”, i.e. the “different” judgments that can be made about the identity of the subject, rests with thought itself, not in the subject at all. Kant had arrived at this conclusion through his discovery of the Humeian “fallaciously” applied to a specific empirical datum like the soul (Wallace-Findlay, p. 75:10-20). Hegel resolves the issue, as indicated above, by showing that the essence or substance of the “subject (Kant’s “thing in itself”) is identical with the concept of the subjective thinker reflecting on this “thing in itself”; recognizing this “identity” is the “determining activity” of the “subject” itself, which is therefore both *substance* and *subject*. But in §47 this self-identifying activity of the logical process is not yet clearly specified.

§48. 2) The second infinite is the “world”. As with the first infinite, also here “antinomies” are encountered. Antinomies are encountered when two contradictory statements about one and the same thing are claimed to be true *of necessity*. The Kantian antinomies are fourfold:<sup>24</sup> I. (*Thesis*) The World has a beginning in space and time, and (*Antithesis*) The world is eternal in time and space; II, (*Thesis*), All parts of the world are simple, joined parts; and (*Antithesis*) nothing is simple in the world, everything is complex and conjoined; III (*Thesis*) Things happen in the world not only through the laws of cause and effect, but also from freedom, and (*Antithesis*) everything in the world is completely determined. Hegel observes, as he did in §47 in the *Zusatz*, that the problem *appears* to be solved in seeing that the contradiction does not adhere the object itself, but only thought. Hegel says this solution is “trivial” (Wallace-Findlay, p. 77:11, Nicolin/Pöggeler, p. 72:41); the triviality rests in the (profound) contemporary predisposition to treat the appearing world with great “tenderness” (*ibid*), whereas thought is qualified as the falsifying villain: No objection is found in tracing the error “only” to reason. The categories themselves that know the “world” contain the contradictions, according to this way of thinking, characteristic of the naive, i.e. unreflected, as also to Kant’s disposition.

Hegel again here, in this §48, reveals his solution to the issue:

Probably nobody will feel disposed to deny that the *phenomenal* world presents contradictions to the observing mind; meaning by the world as it presents itself to the *senses* and the understanding, to the *subjective mind*. But if we compare the *essence* of the world and the *essence* of the mind, it does seem strange to hear how calmly and confidently the modest dogma has been advanced by some (Kant et al, RA), and repeated by others, that the thinking essence, and not the worldly essence is that which contradicts itself.<sup>25</sup>

What Hegel is suggesting here is that Kant had indeed seen correctly the contradiction - the "paralogism", the "antinomy" - to rest in reason itself, but he specifically suggests that the contradiction, (i.e. "differentiation") originates not only in the "thinking essence", but also in the "wordly essence". Furthermore, this differentiation which proposes a "*thesis*" against an "*antithesis*" in the Kantian antinomy of reason is not a differentiation (i.e. "contradiction" of two essences, but rather of one essence only, of the "concept", as Hegel says later. *Position* and *negation*, thesis and antithesis are activities of *Vernunft* (Reason), and the "sensual" *Verstand* cannot comprehend, because it is too limited in scope, that it fallaciously keeps the antinomy away from Reason out of a misguided "tenderness" for the "appearing", phenomenal world, assuming in that misguided perception that what glitters is also true gold. The determining, delimiting, defining qualities of reason are not only subjective, but rather inhere the "essence" of the world itself, its "essence", its "concept" being identical with the "essence" of reason itself. Hegel further elaborates this in the First Part of the *Encyclopedia*, the "Science of Logic", where he elaborates the process of logic in three parts, the doctrine of being, the doctrine of the essence, and the doctrine of the concept and of the idea. The first sentence of the doctrine of the essence is "Being is the Concept only *in itself*" § 84 (p.123, Wallace-Findlay, p. 105 Nicolin/Pöggeler), § 112, the first sentence of the "Science of Essence", states that "Essence is the concept as *posited* Concept." And § 160, the first sentence of the "Science of the Concept", begins with the statement: "The concept is the *freedom* which as the *power, being substantially for itself*, is in its identity with itself that which is *determinate in and for itself*." [p.223, Wallace-Findlay, p.151, Nicolin/Pöggeler]. The important thing to observe is that being and essence, concept and the differentiating specificity of a thing known are one and the same thing. But this means that reason is not an

25 Wallace-Findlay, 77:16-24; Nicolin/Pöggeler, p. 73:6-11. Accents original. My translation (RA) is true to Hegel's original. Wallace's is frankly in need of improvement.

empty, *indeterminate* form, the *empty identity*, to which Hegel refers in §48, [Wallace-Findlay, p. 77:9 from bottom, Nicolin/Pöggeler, p. 73:17-18]. If reason is only an empty form, it thinks nothing. Rather, determinate and determining specificity is an "activity" of reason itself, so that we must say as Hegel says in §48:

The Antinomies are not confined to the four special objects taken from Cosmology: they appear in all conceptions, notions, and Ideas. To be aware of this and to know objects in this property of theirs makes a vital part in a philosophical theory. For the property thus indicated is what we shall afterwards describe as the Dialectical element in logic.

One final point about the end of §48 in the Wallace-Findlay edition, specifically p. 79:15-16 from bottom (This *Zusatz* is missing in the Nicolin/Pöggeler edition. It stems from the Hotho/Henning/Hinrichs/Michelet lecture notes and cannot be considered authoritative. Nonetheless, it is a valuable passage.) The Kantian categories are "empty" forms without which we cannot know determinate reality; these forms must yet be filled with determinate *content*. Hegel emphasizes here (as elsewhere) correctly:

It is quite correct to say that we can go beyond every *definite* space and beyond every *definite* time (that is to say, there is some legitimacy in Kant's notion that time and space like other categories lies beyond the specific "here and now" just as the *form* always lies *beyond* the specific *content* contained in the form, RA): but it is no less correct that space and time are real and actual only when they are defined or specialized into 'here' and 'now' - a specialization which is involved in the very notion of them.

This statement is important because *Kierkegaard's* criticism of Hegel as slighting the "here and now" and the specifics of reality has caused our time to neglect the profound relation between Kierkegaard's and Hegel's concern. It is high time that the proximity of Kierkegaard to Hegel is perceived, a proximity recently highlighted by Stephen Dunning, *Kierkegaard's Dialectic of Inwardness: A Structural Analysis of the Theory of Stages*.<sup>26</sup>

§ 49. 3. "The third object of Reason is God". We know already from Hegel's *Phenomenology*, from the *Nürnberg Logic* and from the *Heidelberg Encyclopedia* that for Hegel "God is identical with the "Absolute Spirit", "truth", "essence" and the "Concept". We also know, as clarified e.g. in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, the "Concept specifies itself", i.e. specification of

reality in its multiple determinedness, is truth's "own doing". This means that "empty", i.e. merely formal "categories" are not "applied" to "specific" contents, as in the Kantian thought. Rather, as phenomenal reality is disclosed *as* merely phenomenal, also the truth, i.e. the essence behind the appearance appears, and *Sein* (i.e. being) "negates" the mere *Schein* (i.e. appearance).

What Hegel says in the second sentence of §49 can be said of all merely "understanding" reason: "For the understanding all determination is merely a *barrier* and a negation." Hegel wants to say: "To place something means to know it in all specificity and determinedness. But getting to know it as such is merely the subjective participation in objective act of the Concept's self-revelation.

The traditional view of God was to view him as limitless, i.e. as *indefinite*. Since God is known traditionally as the "sum of realities", i.e. as the most real *essence* (*Wesen* in the German, hence "being" in Wallace's rendition is wrong). As completely indeterminate *essence*, God remains the *simple abstractum*. [Wallace-Findlay, p.79:7 to end of p., Nicolin/Pöggeler, p.73-74] God, understood as pure essence, must necessarily remain purely abstract, if he is known *specifically*, i.e. *as* God. But such specificity is traditionally, also in Kant, accorded only to *being* (i.e. to the material *content* of the supposedly empty *essential forms*.) That material *being*, traditionally always standing over against conceptual forms, is therefore also available only as the equally abstract *being*. In the context of this way of thinging, exemplified by Kant, thought and being, essence and existence, can never be "united".

Hegel is quite correct: That unity was called by Kant the "Ideal of Reason", (*Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, *ibid*, B 595). Hegel goes beyond Kant in §§ 50 and 51 insofar as he overcomes the "form-content", "thought-matter" and "ideal-reality" dichotomy. He overcomes this dichotomy in two ways, the first proceeding in §50 from *being* to thought, the second in §51 from *thought* to being. Both procedures must be seen as dialectically happening simultaneously. That simultaneity is the "Beginning of Hegel's Logic",<sup>27</sup> §50. We must remember here that Hegel does not talk only about God, as one would talk about "tree" or about "this tree". Hegel is talking here about the method to reflect the relation of thought and being *per se*.)

27 See my essay "The Absolute as the Beginning of Hegel's Logic", *Philosophical Forum*, VI:2/3 (Spring, 1976) 288-300

§ 50 deals with the first path, proceeding from being to thought. The unreflected assumption about “being” is the “immediacy” of the world in infinite multiplicity or variety. Wallace just avoids (p.80:13) the concept *Unmittelbare* p.74:15 in the Nicolin/Pöggeler rendition. That avoidance is unfortunate. For it is often not understood what “mediation” and the “immediate” mean. Just briefly: Anything “immediate” is abstract. Conceptualizing something *as* something, i.e. knowing it in its essence and truth is for Hegel<sup>28</sup> just as much an activity of that essence and truth itself as it is of the thinking subject, which in reality just participates in that revelatory process. That process itself is identical with mediation. Mediation makes concrete, just as thinking is for Hegel an act of making concrete, specific.<sup>29</sup>

That process if *mediation*, i.e. “elevating” (*aufheben*) the world out of its plural immediacy to “God” is the mechanism of the traditional “proofs of God, i.e. the cosmological and the physico-theological proofs. Those “proofs” are for Hegel identical with the process of *thought*. I am deviating in the following from the Wallace-Findlay translation. Hegel says literally in §50: (in the sentence begun by Wallace with “Suppose”, p.80:19, middle of p.)

To *think* means to strip (this fullness) of the form of its isolated unconnectedness and accidental nature, and to grasp (i.e. understand) it as a universal and absolutely necessary being which determines itself and acts by general purposes or laws - to grasp it as different from the being at the commencement, as God.

Hegel correctly refers once more to Hume’s critique of the cosmological and the physico-theological proofs, most simply (oversimplifyingly, in fact) statable thus: From plural data general laws cannot be derived; in ethics, this “fallability” takes the form: prescriptive sentences cannot be derived from descriptive ones. Hegel refers to Hume and to his previous elaboration of Kant’s “paralogisms” in § 47.

Hegel’s *Zusatz* - not identified by Wallace by smaller print, as in the Nicolin/Pöggeler rendition, criticizes the Kantian-Humeian critique. Hegel uses in this critique words that are central to his thought, i.e. to the *progression of the logic of the Concept*. [Wallace-Findlay, p.80:2 from bottom ff; Nicolin/Pöggeler, p.74:2 from bottom ff]. The central concepts are “transition” or “passage”

28 as for H.G. Gadamer see e.g. *Wahrheit und Methode*, Mohr; Tübingen 1965

29 I have clarified this process of mediating concretization of truth in Hegel’s thought in the essay “Endlichkeit und Absoluter Geist in Hegels Philosophie” *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung* 29:1 (1975) 63-80

(*Übergehen*), “leap” (*Sprung*), a genuinely Kierkegaardian concept, “conclusion” (*Schluß, Schlüsse*), “negative activity” and “negation”. The basic point of Hegel’s critique of the Kantian-Humeian critique can be summarized this way: 1. That “transition” is not “syllogistic reason” only, but just as much the “activity” of the substance, essence, truth of that about which the conclusion is made. For the concept determines itself in Hegel’s logic, and this act is primarily an *objective, a substantive* act, hence an act of truth, and only therefore an act in which the subject can participate. 2. That “rising” or “concluding” of the *substance* “negates” the appearance of the world, “demotes” it in the process of revealing its “essence and truth”. The error of the physico-theological and the cosmological “proofs” rested in moving “from one thing which *is* and continues to *be*, to *another thing* (i.e. God, or the general judgement or the prescriptive sentence) which is *supposed to be also*.” [Wallace-Findlay, 81:11f, Nicolin/Pöggeler, p.75:27f] Hegel specifically identifies such a method of logical “concluding” as merely “*affirmative*” [80:10; 75:26]. His critique can be formulated more specifically thus:

But the great error is to understand the nature of thought only in this form of reason. To think the empirical (phenomenal) rather means to recast its form and to transmute into a universal. And thus the action of thought has also a *negative* effect upon its basis: the matter of sensation, when it receives the stamp of universality, *does not remain* in its empirical (i.e. phenomenal) form. By the removal and negation of the shell, the kernel within is brought to the light (see §§ 13 and 23). And it is because they do not express the *negative moments* implied in the elevation of the spirit from the world to God that the metaphysical proofs of the being of God are defective interpretations. If the world is accidental (*zufällig*), it follows that it is only *something falling*, i.e. fallible, phenomenal, which is in itself *nothing*. The meaning of the elevation of the spirit is that the world should indeed have being, which is, however, only appearance, not true being, not absolute truth. (This elevation) signifies that the being resides beyond that phenomenal appearance only in God and that God alone is that true being [81:10ff; 75:28ff].

We need to remind ourselves that this “elevation of God” is “nothing but thinking” itself, i.e. the action of the essence and substance of the world itself. Nonetheless the “phenomenal” world is essential for two reasons: *first* as a “mediating” agent, - considered at first to be being per se -, through which truth can be revealed which is, however, *secondly*, to be demoted or “negated” to mere appearance. The appearing world thus is the “mediating agent”; this mediation needs, however, to be mediated. Wallace does not translate this sentence well. I will attempt to do better:

In the fact that this elevation is a *transition* and a *mediation*, it is just as much an *elimination* or *overcoming* (*Aufheben*) of this *transition*, for that through which God could appear mediated, the world, is rather declared as the Not; only the *nothingness* of the *being* of the world is the bon of the elevation. In this way that which is the mediating element (i.e. the world, RA) disappears, and so mediation itself is overcome in this mediating process [82:9ff; 75:42ff].

Hegel proceeds from here once more to reflect on Jacobi and on Spinoza. For brevity's sake, we must skip this part.

§ 51 In reality this "mediation of the mediation" already contains the "ontological proof", for thought gains existence in the self-revelation or self-specification of worldly essence. But this *content* of Hegel's critique of the Kantian-Humeian critique becomes explicit only in § 51, the "second" way of unifying thought and being. This method moves from the "abstractness of thought to determinedness". Once abstractness has specified itself, it has also gained existence or being. We know the being of a thing when we know it concretely and specifically. Hegel specifically calls this method the "ontological proof" [84:12ff; 77:36ff]. The ontological proof is central to Hegel's thought. That Hegel believes to have implicitly already pointed out this "ontological proof" he specifically states when he says that understanding objects to the ontological proof in the same way as it objected to the cosmological and physico-theological proofs: "It denied that the empirical-phenomenal involves the universal" [84:15 from bottom; 78:2ff]. Hegel here elaborates something that he already clarified before, but with specific reference to Kant's critique of the ontological proof. Kant argued that existence cannot be deduced from thought, like the existence of a hundred dollars cannot be deduced out of the thought of a hundred dollars. (Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B, 627). Hegel advances several arguments: first: also he, as any sane man, surely recognizes that thinking a hundred dollars surely does not produce them in fact. But secondly, God must surely be of a different nature than a hundred dollars. Here lies the crux of Hegel's argument: It is an error of the first order to think of God as of the same nature as a tree or hundred dollars or any other object. God is rather the essence, truth, substance of the world, in short, the *Concept*. In the self-specification of that concept the world is "elevated" to God, and to its own truth at the same time, while in the same process the phenomenal world is "negated" or "demoted" to pure appearance, not being. We had clarified this before, and so we can close this section of our analysis.

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