Essays on Hegel's *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*

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References and Abbreviations

Through this volume references to Hegel's works use the following abbreviations:

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The "Struggle for Recognition" and the Thematization of Intersubjectivity

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Although Hegel's concept of recognition and its significance for the account of intersubjectivity became a central topic for many recent publications of Hegel scholars, there is a noticeable deficiency in literature discussing this problematic on the material of Hegel's *Philosophy of Spirit*. In contrast to the vast amount of publications on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* of 1807, a good portion of which deals exclusively with questions of intersubjectivity and recognition, there are only a few—mostly dating back to 80th–90th—investigations into the conceptual role of intersubjectivity in the mature *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*. Furthermore, the authors of those publications are in a serious disagreement about the conceptual status of Hegel's account of intersubjectivity as well as the role of the latter in the constitution of an individual human subjectivity in the theory of subjective spirit. For commentators the most troublesome and puzzling appears the dense section of the *Encyclopedia* "Phenomenology," especially its subsection on self-consciousness (§§ 424–37) where Hegel formulates his positive account of mutual recognition. The existing confusion among commentators concerns the significance of the "Phenomenology" section in the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* and the real function of the concept of recognition in the thematization of intersubjectivity. Perhaps the most negative interpretation of the role of recognition and intersubjectivity in Hegel's late system is offered by Axel Honneth. He identifies a real potentiality of Hegel's concept of recognition for developing what he calls "a formal

conception of ethical life," but maintains that all the promising insights about intersubjectivity and recognition that Hegel has date back to his early Jena period, still prior to the 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit*. They are, however, completely lost in his system of a "monologically self-developing spirit"[1] where intersubjectivity becomes reduced to a temporal subordinate episode of the spirit formation. This position is echoed in Jürgen Habermas' interpretation of the role of intersubjectivity in Hegel's system. According to Habermas, Hegel's intersubjective intuitions visible in his early works are fatally harmed by the peculiar subjectivism of his later philosophy centered around the concept of the "ego" or "absolute self-consciousness," which is unfolded in the *Logic*. As a result, "[i]ntersubjectivity is repressed by subjectivity, leaving no presence in the presentation of the absolute idea."[2]

In general agreement with Honneth and Habermas are also some prominent Hegel scholars. For example, Vittorio Hösle maintains that "the thematization of intersubjectivity does not assume any vital role in Hegel's system." He further notices that due to "the fundamental limits of his [Hegel's] philosophy, [i.e.] his inability to categorically distinguish between subject-subject and subject-object relations,"[3] Hegel cannot really grasp the intersubjective or subject-subject relation effectively. The reading that reduces Hegel's account of recognition to a single-subject theory is also offered by Adriaan Peperzak who claims that "the entire sense of the 'struggle for recognition' in the *Encyclopedia* phenomenology is not at all consisting in the thematization of intersubjectivity [. . .], but only in a process through which the immediate or abstract self-consciousness must become another for itself in order to be able to identify with itself."[4] It should be said, in all fairness, that there are commentators who hold contrary views on significance of intersubjectivity in late Hegel, emphasizing intersubjective character of self-consciousness and considering mutual recognition as a foundation for the constitution of the subject in Hegel.[5] However, those commentators are dramatically outnumbered and not always consistent in their views. For example, Hermann Drüe, who points to the intersubjective character of recognition in Hegel, yet believes that Hegel's account of self-consciousness is not thought of as the actual development of consciousness, but is rather a pure logical and historic-fictional conceptual construction.[6]

In the light of such a critical disagreement and real confusion in understanding the role of recognition and intersubjectivity in Hegel's late system it is crucial to take a closer look at *Encyclopedia Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, especially at its section on the phenomenology of spirit, where, in my opinion, Hegel lays out his concept of intersubjective recognition and develops it as a condition of self. This reading of the section is largely supported by the 1827–28 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit*[7] and Hegel's remarks concerning recognition and "Philosophy of Spirit" in general that are provided there. Thus the further delving into *Encyclopedia* "Phenomenology" should be supplemented by discussion of Hegel's *Lectures* that can shed light on the issue under consideration.

The goal of this chapter is to uncover a real function of the ("Phenomenology") section on self-consciousness within Hegel's *Philosophy of Spirit* and discuss it as a positive account of intersubjectivity that is formulated in terms of the "struggle for recognition." Thus the main focus will be on the subsection on self-consciousness (§§ 424–37) where the theme of mediation of consciousness in recognition of and by other consciousness becomes an important element in the unfolding of the full structure of consciousness.

I

The organization and systematization of the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* remain controversial issues for Hegel scholars. If one adheres to the traditional linear approach where the *Philosophy of Spirit* is interpreted as a kind of a *genetic* development of spirit then the role and function of many of its subsections and systematical parts become questionable. This is especially true about the "Phenomenology" section, which does not fit well a pure genetic model of spirit development.[8] Another theoretical difficulty concerning *Encyclopedia* "Phenomenology," which should not be ignored, is that it appears to be a successor of the *Phenomenology* of 1807, and not only in title, but what is more important, in its general structure and execution. The overall systematization and the most important stages of the "pathway of consciousness" of the *Phenomenology* of 1807, though slightly or sometimes substantially modified, are reproduced in the *Encyclopedia* "Phenomenology." Both of the issues mentioned above, the systematization of *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* and relation between the two versions of the *Phenomenology*, have been the subject of several studies[9] and cannot be further analyzed here. Yet, for our topic, it is important to recognize that by all respect to conceptual similarities of the two texts of the *Phenomenology*, there are essential differences in their aims and functions. The *Phenomenology* of 1807 was intended to be an introduction to Hegel's "System of Science" and as such was supposed to provide a solid epistemological foundation for the future system. It thus appears as a kind of "genealogy" of knowledge from pure immediacy and sense

certainty to conceptual (absolute) knowing. The aim of the *Encyclopedia* "Phenomenology" is more modest and systematically less profound; it is largely determined by the purpose of the philosophy of spirit within mature Hegel's system. The latter is the deduction of the concept of spirit, which is laid down as the process of achieving the unity of self-consciousness.[10]

The aim of the "Phenomenology" within the *Encyclopedia* system is to examine perhaps the most crucial stage of this development, namely, the transformation of consciousness from the natural immediacy (the abstract I = I) into self-consciousness and then by the means of reciprocal recognition into universal self-consciousness as an intersubjectively mediated result. As Robert Williams points out, "The Phenomenology is supposed to show the development from the I in its immediacy, wherein it takes itself to be a bare, abstract, self-seeking particular, through the struggle for recognition and master/slave, to the I through which reciprocal recognition has become a universal consciousness, a 'We'."[11] Self-unfolding of spirit in phenomenology does not appear as a linear progression. It is an intricate multistep process that is animated and driven by the dialectic of difference, opposition, and overcoming of this opposition at the next, more complex level of the spirit's development. This development coincides with the development of the I, the individual self, which is a real agent acting in the world. A real function of the *Encyclopedia* "Phenomenology" should be thus understood in terms of the requirements for the self-constitution and self-realization of the I and conditions for meeting those requirements. A systematic examination of those requirements is approximately represented in the main division of the "Phenomenology" section into "Consciousness" (§§ 418–23), "Self-consciousness" (§§ 424–37), and "Reason" (§§ 438–39). The main question of the subsection on consciousness is the question of how the I is able to identify itself as a conscious individual, capable of reflection and propositional attitude. This is a question about the condition of our awareness of the world. In the subsection on self-consciousness the main focus is shifted to the inquiry into self and the self-awareness that should be established and discovered in the context of our essential interdependence and intersubjective interrelation. The realization of universality of the I and its necessary mediation with the world (including other individuals) becomes then the main topic of the subsection on reason. All of these inquiries are essential to Hegel's central concern, the nature and development of (human) freedom that is understood as a process of establishing real autonomy, self-positing, and self-organizing activity of individual toward the totality of being for itself and at home in its own world. In the "Phenomenology" this liberation is not yet complete, but it undergoes a significant stage, where the I breaks

from its natural immediacy and "atomic" individuality, and by the means of the struggle of recognition achieves the level of universality and community (the development of universal self-consciousness and social reason).

The task of the "Phenomenology" within the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* is thus to show intersubjecive character of this liberation and the necessity of intersubjective relation for self-realization of the I, for the very possibility of selfhood. The details of intersubjective liberation Hegel provides in the subsection on self-consciousness.

II

Hegel's starting point is that the I as self-consciousness is a creature of desire. Desire reveals a fundamental lack and emptiness in the self that must be filled through the overcoming of separateness and independence of external objects. This is how Hegel clarifies this point in the *Lectures*: "The lack in me appears as an external object. The latter is only something that is not an end in itself and has no absolute independence. The object has thus proven itself to be without independence in self-consciousness. This is the standpoint of desire."[12] Hence desire makes me realize that I am missing something to be complete and makes me aware of my difference from the object, the not-I. Behind all types of desire a deep dialectic at work: embodied human life depends for survival on the external world and, as a result, part of the self is always outside itself and the otherness of objecthood is already launched in self. Thus the two realms (of the self-consciousness and of the external objects) which appear in desire as opposing to each other are not distinct and must be conceived as one integrated world. The unity resulting from the subject's "desiring" relation to the object sustains life itself. This is the idea that one's self-certainty can be achieved only if one's real unity with the external world is established. By reconciling what is subjective and what is objective, Hegel contends that this unity is nothing else but revealing of *freedom* itself, "the free self . . . that remains in its identity with itself."[13] Yet at first this freedom is "completely abstract" and "formal freedom, because [actual] freedom . . . comes to be through and out of consciousness, [. . .] through another, which is its condition."[14] The two important moments should be noticed here. First, the reconciliation that Hegel has in mind here is not a momentary act; it is a long and complex process. Freedom is a practical achievement; it occurs within the time of, and on the basis of, the living world. Second, the actual freedom is not achievable at a pure individual level. For consciousness to be able to

distinguish itself from the external world and at the same time be aware of both world and itself, it has to be mediated in and by other consciousness. This mediation becomes a means of overcoming of purely "atomic" individuality and attaining of actual freedom. Here Hegel is clearly departing from a view of the I as a closed and monological (atomic) entity. The I's "openness" to the world is the condition of the full self-realization of (self) consciousness and formation of the individual self-identity.

For Hegel, the self is created in its continuous struggle to overcome the foreignness of the other. The immediate self suffers from the delusion of self-sufficiency under which the difference from others is absolute and must be negated through the arrogation of absolute sovereignty. The other is treated as inferior and inessential, of lesser value and importance than self.[15] This "negative relation" of self-consciousness to its object is an integral part of the self's desire for self-certainty, for its self-identity. A difficulty arises from the fact that, in pursuing desire, the self tends to destroy (negate) its object (e.g., by consuming it), even though so doing thwarts the sense of self-certainty. Indeed, the first reaction of the desiring self when faced with the other is to seek immediate satisfaction and heal the split between subject and object by negating the object. The desire for food, for instance, negates the otherness of the food itself by eating it. But even after hunger is satisfied, the self retains its partiality: the only result of this very act is self's *illusory* self-identity, which does not differentiate humans from animals. Furthermore, in the act of desire self-consciousness is caught in particular bind. The object, which self-consciousness took to be a pure nothing, gains the character of independence precisely in the movement of self-consciousness to negate and destroy it. Nevertheless, it *must* continue to supersede and thus negate the object, for self-consciousness must realize itself as the unity underlying the difference between itself and the apparent otherness. Self-consciousness remains stuck in a vicious circle of desire, destruction, and the resurgence of desire. True satisfaction eludes it, and its unity with itself *in the other* cannot be made explicit. Thus Hegel can say that "it is in fact something other than self-consciousness that is the essence of desire," because the living object, now independent, is a stubborn unity only *for* self-consciousness and not *for itself*. Human desire is thus addressed not by an object, but by the other self-consciousness. Hence the next step for the self is to accept its dependence on the other but to keep the relation between self and other external. The force of this necessary requirement ushers in a new stage in Hegel's phenomenological reflection, and it marks the beginning of true self-consciousness in the process of leaving behind the sensuous world. The desire that self-consciousness has and needs to satisfy in order to get a sense of its existence as an independent subject is a desire to be desired by others, that is, a desire for *recognition*:

> There is a self-consciousness for a self-consciousness, at first *immediately*, as one thing for *another*. In the other as I, I immediately behold my own self, but I also behold in it an immediately real object, another I absolutely independent in face of myself. The sublation of the *individuality* of self-consciousness was the first sublation; self-consciousness is thereby determined as *particular*.—This contradiction supplies the urge to show itself as a free self, and to be there as a free self for the other,—the process of *recognition*.[16]

We can already see that for Hegel all self-conscious desire is ultimately desire of self. Since the unity of self-consciousness is the true unity underlying the apparent difference between self and sensuous world, the negation of the apparent difference through a negation of the immediate object constitutes the attempted realization of self-consciousness' unity. As such, all "desire for the immediate object" is truly a *self-conscious* desire for the unity of self-consciousness.

At the beginning stage of the recognition, however, the two consciousnesses know they need the other's desire and recognition, yet believe that they can forgo or force it through the exclusion, marginalization, or suppression of the other. Here desire is totally narcissistic; the other is only the foil in a quest for unreciprocated prestige, typically evident in the relationship between master and slave. In this "one-side" relation, the other is accepted in its difference, but not in its identity with the self, that is, not as a free independent subject. Thus, there must be established a special relation between myself and another self that exists on one's own terms, as an independent I seeking its own self-identity and self-certainty. This requirement of self-certainty cannot be satisfied by simple intellectual identification of other persons who acknowledge my intellectual capability; they have to recognize me as a free individual who is conscious of his own freedom for self-determination (self-actualization). But this recognition must be reciprocal. My freedom remains a simple abstraction unless it is not challenged and eventually "approved" by other individuals who at the same time also seek my recognition of their freedom. "The freedom of every individual exists only insofar as he is recognized as free by the others, and the others have in him the consciousness of their own legitimacy . . ."[17] Thus, mutual recognition is the third step, which completes and overcomes

the first two. Now the other is accepted both in her identity and in her difference from self and, as a result, self discovers itself as integrally related to the other. The other's recognition and desire allows self to see itself reflected in another self and create a nexus of links and dependencies that affect all aspects of both selves. Recognition works if it is mutual. I must be recognized by someone I recognize as human: I must reciprocally know myself in another. Yet, mutuality of recognition is not a mere fusion; mutual recognition necessarily acknowledges the difference of the two independent selves and dissymmetry in their relation to each other. When full mutual recognition operates, the two selves stand in a relationship in which the self-understanding of each passes through the other, and the relationship of each to the other depends on the self's self-relation. It is possible only if each of these two selves maintains its independence and potential self-identity (free agency) as a person.

Hegel's account of mutual recognition is thoroughly normative. This normativity is not posited as an ideal, which ought to be (yet may be not inevitably) achieved, but rather as a necessary condition for individual freedom. Hegel argues that individual freedom is possible and justified only on the basis of reciprocal acceptance of mutual obligations to acknowledge and respect others' free individual agency and rights to freedom.

Recognition is both an essential characteristic of phenomenology of identity and an integral element of a theory of knowledge. I can only become a certain type of person, if I recognize in the other the characteristics of that type which are then reflected back onto me. I cannot change myself therefore without changing the other and changes in the other who stands in recognition of me change the self too. As epistemological phenomenon, recognition, by assuming the object to be another subject, turns knowledge into a process of cultural mutuality and exchange, and self-knowledge into self-exploration and self-control through the understanding (and appreciation) of the other. It is worth noticing though that in contrast to the *Phenomenology* of 1807, in *Philosophy of Spirit* recognition is to a lesser extent a pure theoretic-epistemological concept. Here Hegel moves from theoretic-epistemological to the life-world sense of recognition, which is discussed in terms of the intersubjective interactions between individuals.

The mutual recognition culminates for Hegel in "the affirmative awareness of oneself in the other self."[18] This is the stage, when self achieves its real (and not anymore illusory) and complete self-identity. As full self-consciousness, self is now the "unity of oneself in one's other being." Identity embraces both being for oneself and being for another and is achieved by accepting self as the "identity of identity and non-identity."[19] The self-

conscious individual, created through the other's desire, retains the separation from the other as one part of his identity and recognizes himself both in the other and in his difference from her. In this sense, self-consciousness both negates the split between self and other and preserves it. At the same time, the self can never be *absolutely* self-identical: it is a dialectical combination of self and otherness, of sameness and difference. Identity is therefore dynamic, always on the move. It is ongoing dialogue and interaction with others, which keeps changing the image others have of myself and redrawing my own self-image. The *relation* between self and other, one's reciprocally concerned engagement with another conscious individual, is the essence of the phenomena Hegel calls the *universal self-consciousness*. It should not be understood as an absolute ideal, neither as a "third self-consciousness" emerging from the relation between self and other. Rather these are *intersubjective* ties that are manifest through recognition. These ties are a realization of communal (social) drive[20] that the self-consciousness has and that is essential in shaping personality. For Hegel, the relationship between self and the other is crucial for the construction of both self and community. The self is not a simple, stable entity fully identical with itself that, once formed, then goes into the world and build relation with others from a position of self-sufficiency. While Descartes and Kant had presented consciousness as a solitary entity confronting the outside world, Hegel insists that self is constituted reflexively and is radically dependent on the action of others. The struggle for recognition is the key social relationship, and as such is the main form of practical intersubjectivity. In this sense, recognition is a mode of socialization. But the other's recognition of my identity makes me also aware of my specificity and difference from all others and thus helps my individuation. Hence Hegel believes that individual self is created in and through struggles amongst people for the reciprocal recognition of their identity.

Hegel's insight here is that I become an actual individual only through a *universal* self-consciousness. My (unconditional) freedom is possible only as the *universal* freedom, a common freedom that we all share. There is no free self without other individuals: others and their freedom become a constitutive moment of myself and my own freedom. "Freedom [as unconditioned] . . . comes to be through another, which is its condition."[21] The other becomes thus an indispensable condition for the self-consciousness and the actualization of my own freedom. Despite the resemblance between Hegel's and Kant and Fichte's treatments of the self as well as the similarities in used terminology, Hegel's account of intersubjectivity differs from all previous interpretations. He derives the principle of intersubjectivity

as a fundamental practical principle that is grounded in the concept of self-consciousness and thus is essential to the structure and development of the self. Contrary to Kant and Fichte, for Hegel, recognition is not an outward requirement,[22] but rather the very condition of self-consciousness that can be satisfied by engagement in (intersubjective) interactions with other free individuals.

In this sense, significance of the section "Self-consciousness" within the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* is that it shows *the necessity* of overcoming a pure individual level of subjectivity (the stage of isolated solitary individuality) and of manifesting universality of the self.[23] Hegel hints on this issue in the *Encyclopedia*,[24] but it is more clearly articulated in the *Lectures*. Consider the following remark:

> . . . [T]the self-consciousness must be for another self-consciousness, and the individual must come into relation to another. This has been called a social drive, but in fact it is reason, the unity of self-consciousness.
>
> The fundamental point is that this unity must be realized, and it can be realized only in the self-consciousness of other individuals. The material, in which the I, freedom, can be realized, can only be another self-consciousness. The latter is the reality, the objectivity, and the externality of the first.[25]

The intersubjective interaction is thus not an arbitrary act. It is rather necessitated by the very concept of self-consciousness. The latter is possible *only* in relation to other self-consciousness and *only* as intersubjective.[2] No (self)-actualization and no (self)-realization of the I are achievable without the mediation by another. Only through the mediation and the following suspension of this mediation the universality is possible.

Even though at the stage of self-consciousness Hegel mainly deals with the individual particularity, the structures of the "*universal self-consciousness*" appear as the essential elements of individual consciousness in its striving for self-certainty.[27] Hegel makes it clear that developing of real individual (actual self) is a concrete universal process in which each of us necessarily participates and through which we become aware of ourselves and the external world. This process can occur only if an individual interacts with other individuals collectively pursuing their own goals. Hence self can acquire its real individuality (its sense of self-certainty and true freedom) only in and through its own activity, activity that is not only directed towards the world, but is also mediated through reciprocal relations and interactions with other people.

In the *Lectures* Hegel clarifies his positive concept of recognition further. Here it becomes clear that his account of self-consciousness is not a logical construction or a historical fiction (Drüe) or a kind of "monological" theory that has a limited (internal) use (Peperzak). The process of recognition is for Hegel not just a means for achieving the level of universal self-consciousness or reason (Hösle).[28] Instead, this is a real process of intersubjective interaction only by and through which one's self-awareness is possible. The agents of this interaction are not abstract concepts, but real individuals who live and act in the actual world.

> There are two real, independent beings confronting each other. [. . .] They are both personally, absolutely independent, and nevertheless they are for each other. This I know that the other is an I, but in it appearance it confronts me like a thing, like something completely external to me. This is the highest contradiction—the most perfect indifference towards each other, and [yet] perfect unity and identity. The suspension of the contradiction—for it cannot remain a contradiction—is the process of recognition.[29]

Recognition comes about through a dramatic struggle that arises from the encounter of two self-consciousnesses. Hegel describes this life and death struggle in terms of the dynamic master-slave relationship. The ultimate lesson of the master-slave dialectic is that the realization of our capacities as individuals in the world requires the mutual recognition of ourselves as members of a community.

Here Hegel indicates an essential feature of human self, that its reality lies not in solitary existence but in interaction with other selves. This is an interaction that is mediated not only by "externality" (the objective world), but also by others and is "an infinite relation of myself to myself . . . *in the being of other persons.*"[30] But this being is not just a disinterested coexistence. For Hegel, a man acquires the characteristics of self only in the *fact of him being recognized* by other free practical agents. A question may be raised of how then we can act freely and autonomously if we are so dependent on the recognition by the others and thus are ultimately interdependent beings. The point that Hegel makes clear in the *Encyclopedia* and then, based on the broad social material, further explicates in the *Philosophy of Right* is that our free agency is possible only as a result of recognition of fundamental conditionality of our fundamental freedom upon intersubjective interactions and interrelations. Yet this recognition is not an abstract act of acknowledging of our sociality and dependence on

social institutions. This is also recognition of our mutual interdependence, which is normative for manifesting our individual free agency. Thus, the very phenomenon of recognition is for Hegel the most important means for becoming the actual self, a "fully fledged person" that freely determines itself. Hegel shows that in order for the recognition to take place, self must define itself in relation to *others* who are not only distinct from, but are also opposed to self. The process of recognition is thus a dialectical progression toward the unity of conflicting entities in which the otherness of what is opposed is not simply consumed, but rather is appropriated in a way that allows development to higher stages of consciousness.

III

The key theme of Hegel's discussion of a struggle for recognition is that the development of an individual is impossible without an actual engagement with other people in the world. This involves recognizing a very basic feature of our mutual interdependence, even as thinkers, namely, our intersubjectivity. Hegel is confident that subjectivity and individuality are always intersubjectivity and communality, because individual self is necessarily mediated through its relations with others. In *Lectures* he writes:

> Self-consciousness thus reaches beyond itself; it continues in another self-consciousness so that there are no longer two self-seeking individuals opposed to each other; rather there is a single self-consciousness, and thus it is a universal self-consciousness . . . The substance of this self-consciousness is the universality of a self-knowledge that leaves behind self-seeking [particularity] and that continues itself in union with the other.[31]

The specifics of mutual interdependence lie in the fact that, although it results from our individual activity, it necessarily has fundamental universal elements in it. This universality is determined by the very character of communal (social) connections. Although intersubjective relations are heterogeneous, they always have something in common, namely, similar ways of behaving, both bodily and linguistically, without which interaction among individuals cannot take place. What is common in each of us and without which our life would be impossible is our communal and social nature. This is what Hegel designates here as "universal self-consciousness" and later on—in the next section—"social reason."

In the later chapters of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, Hegel further explains the idea of intersubjectivity by highlighting its centrality to human social life in the various forms of its appearance. By examining social dimensions of human individuals, including customs, practices, and institutions within which individuals become who they are, he shows that individuals and social institutions are mutually interdependent; neither exists nor has the character it does without its proper complement. Yet already in the "Phenomenology" section, and especially its subsection on self-consciousness, Hegel shapes and underlines the whole concept of the theoretical principle of intersubjectivity.[32] Hegel makes it clear that the coexistence of free agents and their interaction presuppose as an a priori condition the idea of *community* of individuals that is, not historically, but transcendentally, prior to these individuals. A "we" grounds the "I"; it is not only that my freedom is possible only because my agency is acknowledged by others, but the very concept of individuality is a reciprocal concept and can be thought only in relation to another self. Making recognition a crucial element of the progression of the self toward its sheer self-awareness, Hegel demonstrates that individuals are conscious of themselves only as "universal" individuals, participants in collective values (and institutions), not as the atomic individuals, bearers of independent selfhood of their own. Unlike Descartes or Fichte, whose approaches to subject and subjectivity can be described in terms of "atomistic individualism," Hegel develops a position may be called "moderate universalism."[33] According to his view, epistemic and ontological justifications cannot depend simply on the single individual subject. Each ontological and epistemic principle must be developed in a justificatory process that must obtain not merely individual but collective validity. It is not sufficient to assess someone's judgment individually; it requires mutual assessment of many rational individuals. Thus, although individual autonomy and the epistemic and ontological conditions of the individual subject are necessary for rational justification and real affirmation, only collective ("universal") autonomy can fully achieve such a justification. The same point holds true regarding the social practices and principles that govern communal life, which likewise can be justified only in and through interrelations among individuals.

In contrast to Fichte, who also stresses the importance of intersubjective relations for the self's development, but for whom intersubjectivity is an arbitrary notion, Hegel contends that intersubjectivity is a necessary active engagement with concrete communal and social life. He views intersubjectivity as a crucial element of the life of any individual. The self-awareness and the sense of individuality of any person are mediated by relation to

other people. If one's free agency is not acknowledged by other (rational) subjects, one cannot become properly conscious of oneself and one's freedom. The relations between self and others are fundamental to human awareness and activity. The otherness that consciousness first experiences as a barrier to its goals is the (apparent) external reality of the natural and social world. This apparent externality blocks individual freedom and independence. Yet this otherness cannot be destroyed without destroying oneself; thus, there must be a state of reconciliation between the other and the self so that consciousness grasps itself through the other. This stage of reconciliation involves and requires reciprocal recognition.[34] Through acknowledging the other as another and likewise as a self, one comes to recognize oneself as a free and conscious being. One's self-consciousness or self-awareness is possible only through mutual recognition by other subjects; this justifies our collective and ultimately social nature. This is why the intersubjective activity that animates our spiritual, that is, our communal life takes place in a broad context of social reality and is a crucial part of the process of enculturating the self.[35] The mechanisms of this enculturation as well as the ways we express ourselves collectively and culturally Hegel illuminates in the further sections of the philosophy of subjective, objective, and absolute spirit.

Notes

1. Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, trans. J. Anderson (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity Press, 1995), 61.

2. Jürgen Habermas, "From Kant to Hegel and Back—The Move towards Detranscendentalization," *European Journal of Philosophy* 7, no. 2 (1999): 149.

3. Vittorio Hösle, *Hegels System. Der Idealism der Subjectivität und das Problem der Intersubjektivität*, 2 vols. (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1987), 370, 379.

4. Adriaan Peperzak, *Selbsterkenntnis des Absoluten. Grundlinien der Hegelschen Philosophie des Geistes* (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1987), 40.

5. See, for example, arguments developed by Franz Hespe in "System und Funktion der Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes," in *Psychologie und Anthropologie oder Philosophie des Geistes*, ed. Hespe und Tuschling (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1991), 490–521, as well as in "Hegels Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes im enzyklopädischen System," in *Hegels enzyklopädisches System der Philosophie*, ed. Hans-Christian Lucas, Burkhard Tuschling und Ulrich Vogel (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2004), 221–68. Another passionate advocate for this reading of Hegel's *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* is Robert Williams. See his *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1998). This interpretation is especially emphasized in the translator's introduction to G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit*, trans. and intro. Robert Williams (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). See also Heikki Ikäheimo, *Self-Consciousness and Intersubjectivity: A Study of Hegel's Encyclopedia Philosophy of Subjective Spirit (1830)* (Jyväskylä, Finland: University of Jyväskylä Publications in Philosophy 67, 2000).

6. See: Hermann Drüe, "Philosophie des Geistes (§§ 377–577)," *Hegels Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenchaften (1830). Ein Kommentar zum Systemgrundriß*, ed. Herbert Schnädelbach (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2000), 260–61.

7. See VPG; first English translation appeared in 2007, as LPS.

8. Hegel himself greatly contributed to such a suspicion toward phenomenology by not even mentioning it in the title of his lectures on philosophy of subjective spirit. In the official lecture announcement, the course was listed under the title *Anthropologie und Psychologie oder Philosophie des Geistes*. See *Briefe von und an Hegel in 4 Bände*, Bd. 4, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister, Friedhelm Nicolin (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1977), 122.

9. See, for example, Hespe, "Hegels Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes"; Burkhard Tuschling, "Die Idee in Hegels Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes," *Psychologie und Anthropologie*, 522–75; Burkhard Tuschling, "Von der Monade zum subjektiven Geist: Leibniz, Hegel," in *Geist und Willensfreiheit. Klassische Theorien von der Antike bis zur Moderne*, ed. Edith und Klaus Düsing, Hans-Dieter Klein (Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, 2006), 83–106. These topics are also touched upon in VPG (1827–28): xii–xv.

10. VPG, xxivff.

11. LPS, 19.

12. LPS, 185.

13. LPS, 185.

14. LPS, 183. See also PM, § 424.

15. "The things are null in themselves." LPS, 185.

16. PM, §430.

17. LPS, 194.

18. PM, § 436.

19. Hegel, *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 140. (G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Wolfgang Bonsiepen und Reinhard Heede, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 9 [Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1980], 197).

20. LPS, 190.

21. LPS, 183.

22. Both Kant and Fichte treat recognition as a necessary requirement for and condition of morality.

23. While Hegel extensively discussed the I in the *Phenomenology* of 1807, at that time he had not yet developed a sophisticated conception of the universal subjectivity that was completed only in *Logic*. In the *Encyclopedia* system, subjectivity is already conceptualized as a principle or essence of spirit. It now appears as a nonempirical universality (cf. PM, § 412) which realizes itself as the I or

(individual) spirit. This apparent dichotomy is nothing else but differentiation of the individual moments and tenets of spirit. They are moments of one and the same reality though, and they are united in the concept of all-encompassing subjectivity (cf. PM, § 215 A).

24. PM, §§ 428–29.

25. LPS, 190.

26. The same point makes Hespe when he states that the "reference to intersubjective conditions of possibility of self-consciousness is not to be understood just as an expression of empirical fact, but rather articulates what self-consciousness *is* according to its concept." Hespe, "System und Funktion der Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes," 511.

27. PM, § 436–37; LPS, 185, 19ff.

28. Hösle, *Hegels System*, 379.

29. LPS, 187.

30. PM, §490.

31. LPS, 194.

32. To avoid a misunderstanding, it is important to distinguish between intersubjectivity as a theoretical principle deduced from the requirement for self-consciousness and intersubjectivity as a practical principle that appears as a requirement for morality and communal life in general. In *Encyclopedia* "Phenomenology" Hegel *sketches* the concept and also *derives* intersubjectivity as a theoretical principle. At the same time, Hegel only *explains* here the concept of intersubjectivity as a practical principle, while still setting the stage for a "real performance": a proof that this concept is true of us human being. This proof is outlined in the philosophy of objective spirit (the deduction of the concept of right). The further details, by bringing more factual historical material, are given in the *Philosophy of Right*. In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel develops his proof for intersubjectivity in terms of the concept of a community of free agents. This community is not just association based on reciprocal recognition, but requires a kind of supraindividual identity that is distinct from and logically prior to the individuals. This supraindividual identity is warranted by intersubjective relations. In the case of a more abstract community of right (at the beginning of the *Philosophy of Right*) that exponent of subjectivity is right itself as the universal substance of the will of the individuals.

33. Here I follow Kenneth Westphal who calls Hegel's unique social ontology "moderate collectivism." See Kenneth R. Westphal, "Spirit," in *The Dictionary of Continental Philosophy*, ed. J. Protevi (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 555–56.

34. "This [condition of self-externality, of being beyond oneself] is the condition of being recognized. In an ethical totality such as family or a state, all are recognized. Thus the struggle for recognition has disappeared." LPS, 194.

35. LPS, 190, 193.

Freedom as Correlation

Recognition and Self-Actualization in Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit

ROBERT R. WILLIAMS

In a recent essay, Robert Pippin asks, "What is the question for which Hegel's Theory of Recognition is the answer?"[1] His answer to this question is that recognition is bound up with the issue of the nature and possibility of freedom and that Hegel's later writings are extensions, not repudiations, of his earlier Jena view. Pippin's claims about the systematic connection between recognition and freedom, as well as the continuity between Hegel's early and mature position are I believe correct. However, understanding the systematic connection between recognition and freedom does not, in Pippin's estimation, require understanding recognition as a theory of self-consciousness or of intersubjectivity. Instead Pippin claims that the "question for which recognition is the answer" narrows to the question, why does Hegel think that a subject cannot be free alone? In answering this question, Pippin presents an account of Hegel that is historicist and constructivist. According to Pippin, it is his radical historicism and constructivism that leads Hegel to recognition.[2]

The question is, how can Pippin's antisubstantialist, constructivist, left-Hegelian interpretation of recognition ground the normative aspects present in Hegel's mature account of ethical life? Pippin concedes that his reconstruction is too constructivist and relativist to do justice to the