

## *Introduction*



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It seems fair to say that the discipline of the history of philosophy has been somewhat out of fashion. This is due likely not only to the influence of the “analytic turn” in Anglo-American philosophy or the postmodern movement in continental philosophy but also, at least recently, to the increasing pedagogical emphasis on “doing” rather than merely “studying” philosophy. There appears to be a presumption that in merely studying the history of philosophy a student will become basically a passive observer or witness to the thoughts of the great philosophers but will not him or herself be an engaged participant in philosophical thinking. Socrates often enough is held up as a model of the actively engaged philosopher and the Socratic method is touted in many academic disciplines, in addition to philosophy proper. One can wonder whether the fashionable appropriation of the thinker Socrates is aimed at enhancing an appreciation for the pursuit of truth or whether it is actually motivated by a desire of sophistical wisdom, such as a desire for strategies of persuasion that fulfill goals of popular culture, e.g., becoming a successful marketer, leader, innovator, etc. We are witness to a crass “instrumentalization” of knowledge that turns the value of philosophy into a means of empowering individuals, in the sense that philosophy might be advertised as ideal preparation for the pursuit of a law degree or some other profession that requires a command of logic and argument, or as a personal tool for developing the capacity to see through the sophistry of others so that one is less likely to be hoodwinked by scam artists, phony gurus, or others (including our politicians?) who prey on human naiveté and ignorance. Per-

humanity, of World Spirit, historically constitute progressive development, specifically, in society, politics, culture, art, religion, and philosophy. He also believed that his own historical period provided a significant culmination in this development and that his philosophy gave expression to it, giving a sort of closure to the process by narratively bringing it all to an end (completion) without bringing it all to a halt (termination). What kind of development would occur in the future was not something that philosophy could discover for Hegel, but he was confident that, whatever form it took, it would be based upon the milestone achievements that had already come to pass.

Perhaps it will be helpful to sketch out an overview of Hegel's philosophical system in order to locate the place and significance of the history of philosophy. We find the structure of the overall system in the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*,<sup>2</sup> which effectively comprises Hegel's lifework in philosophy, at least from the publication of his first major work, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807),<sup>3</sup> which Hegel considered as the "first part" of philosophy, in the sense of an introduction or entryway. The first edition of the *Encyclopedia* appeared in 1817, was later enlarged in 1827, and again augmented in 1830, the year prior to his death. As a comprehensive systematic work, or as Hegel liked to put it a "scientific system of truth," it comprises the essential dimensions of philosophical thought, as reflected in its basic threefold division: (1) Science of Logic, (2) Philosophy of Nature, and (3) Philosophy of Spirit. Anyone familiar with this system knows that there is a tripartite "rhythm" that runs throughout, so that the Science of Logic is divided into the Doctrines of Being, Essence, and the Concept; the Philosophy of Nature into Mechanics, Physics, and Organic Nature; and the Philosophy of Spirit into Subjective Spirit, Objective Spirit, and Absolute Spirit. Each of these divisions of the Philosophy of Spirit is also subdivided: Subjective Spirit into Anthropology, Phenomenology, and Psychology; Objective Spirit into Abstract Right, Morality, and Ethical Life; and Absolute Spirit into Art, Religion, and Philosophy.

The Philosophy of Spirit is about humanity in all of its multifarious forms of life activity (although I should not beg the question as to whether Spirit is reducible to humanity per se, so let us say that it is perhaps about humanity as incarnational of Spirit). There is a definite progression to greater levels of complexity as we move within Subjective Spirit from considering the human soul as an entity of the natural world, to human consciousness, self-consciousness, and reason, and next in Objective Spirit to various levels of social and political interaction, leading to the thematization of the historicity of the development of human institutions in the world as embodiments of self-conscious freedom, all within the domain of what Hegel called "*Realphilosophie*." However, when we arrive at the capstone of Hegel's system, the level of Absolute Spirit, something quite remarkable happens. Heretofore, at least in the realms

haps there is an expectation that a command of philosophy can enable individuals to become more efficient at manipulating the legal system to their benefit, which becomes more important in our increasingly litigious society. It is ironic, but not really surprising, that recent educational trends toward “practical philosophy” should remind anyone who has the slightest acquaintance with the history of ancient Greek thought of the very *raison d’être* of those itinerant teachers of wisdom and virtue from whom Socrates was at pains to disassociate himself. Moreover, the current preoccupation with what is called “critical thinking” and “applied philosophy” in undergraduate courses seems to promote an almost exclusive concern with the present, as if our challenges and problems are of an age so advanced from past epochs that we likely have little to learn from them that will be of value. Might it not be the case, however, in light of critical global developments of recent years, that the prevailing wisdom about the value of history is quite deficient and that the lack of attention to our cultural, social, political, and philosophical past has resulted in a diminished ability to act thoughtfully?

I offer these initial comments not only because the question “Why study the history of philosophy?”—indeed, why study Hegel’s history of philosophy?—is clearly relevant for us, but also because it was a concern for Hegel. Hegel was not only a great philosophical thinker but a committed teacher who had a firm idea of what it was to do and to teach philosophy properly and of the value of philosophy, not just to philosophers but to society and culture as a whole—philosophy was the most important element of liberal education. The *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*,<sup>1</sup> as well as those on art and on religion, were delivered not to academic philosophers but to students. Hegel lectured on the history of philosophy for a total of nine courses, and while in Berlin he gave these lectures regularly, every other year, until his death in 1831. There is little doubt that he personally hoped as a teacher of philosophy to have an influence upon his young middle class students, many of whom would aspire to various professions, including the civil service. It is also likely that he was not very much interested in imparting to these students the skills of critical thinking, at least in our now popular sense, but rather more interested in nurturing intelligence as vision and a sense of purpose. Accordingly, for Hegel, the study of the history of philosophy was not an antiquarian pursuit but rather an investigation into the very nature of philosophical intelligence and its development through time. Insofar as all philosophy is in quest of truth and intelligibility, the history of philosophy is an account of the successive attempts historically to articulate this, to attain a conceptualization of what Hegel calls the “absolute.” These attempts form no simple sequence but rather constitute lines of development which, while not perfectly smooth, do exhibit progress and suggest a logical pattern. Hegel was convinced that, overall, the activities of

of nature and spirit, philosophical thought has focused on the fundamentally temporal dimensions of human existence, activity, and thought. Indeed, in these areas philosophical consciousness has become increasingly historical and sensitive to the time-boundedness of Spirit, while also appealing to the basic categories of pure thinking articulated in the Logic, categories of the Idea, in order to provide intelligibility to human experience and institutional life. The move to Absolute Spirit does not abandon the historicity of self-consciousness, as is clear in Hegel's historical treatments of art, religion, and philosophy. Nonetheless, there is a shift in thematic focus from what is occurring in time to the timeless, from the finite to the infinite, from the relative to the absolute. This shift might be thought analogous to Augustine's distinction between knowledge (*scientia*) and wisdom (*sapientia*), where in the first case reason deals completely with worldly matters, whereas in the second, reason elevates itself to pure contemplation of eternal truths, and of God Himself. There is no doubt that Hegel thought art, religion, and philosophy involved a more direct consideration or contemplation of the Absolute (although he would have disputed Augustine's distinction insofar as it presupposes a fundamental separation of God and humanity; moreover, Hegel's *Vernunft* or "higher reason" is operative at every level of his philosophical system). As we move from the external sensuous expressions of the Absolute in art, to the more internalized "picture thinking" of mystical intuition in religion, and finally to the conceptualizations of philosophy, we get increasingly more adequate consciousness of the Absolute (of Truth, God, Ultimate Reality . . .), which is also to say that Spirit thereby attains optimal self-consciousness and self-knowledge (Spirit is its own object in a kind of purified manner, parallel to thought having itself as its own object in the Logic, but with all of the particularities of nature and of spirit having been developed and thus presumed).

This contemplation of the Absolute in philosophy occurs not only in Hegel's philosophical system as a whole, in *his* philosophy, but also in the study of the history of philosophy, Hegel would argue. The section of the *Encyclopedia* entitled "Philosophy" originally (in the first 1817 edition) comprised a mere six paragraphs that focused on the syllogistic relationships among Logic, Nature, and Spirit. There is some uncertainty as to the relation between history of philosophy and this final section of the *Encyclopedia* since, as Frederick Beiser has noted in his introduction to the Bison Book Edition of the English translation of the *Lectures* by E. S. Haldane (1995), "Hegel never gave the history of philosophy a firm and unambiguous place in his system. The main exposition of his system, the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* of 1830, ends with philosophy as the highest manifestation of reason, the final self-awareness of reason; but it accords no specific place to the history of philosophy as such" (xxii). Moreover, the *Lectures*, while de-

fining the nature and purpose of philosophy, do not position the history of philosophy anywhere in the overall system, and while Hegel does seem to consider the history of philosophy a part of the philosophy of history, its exact position is left indeterminate. Beiser concludes, “it seems that we must give the history a negligible, or at best a minor, role in his system. At least we cannot assign it any numbered paragraph, any neat and tidy corner” (Ibid.).

While it is correct that we cannot assign definitively a place to the history of philosophy, there are some other things to consider when thinking about the place or role of Hegel’s history of philosophy within the overall system. First, Hegel considered the *Encyclopedia* to be an outline (*im Grundrisse*) of his philosophical system. In the introduction to the third edition, he says “As *Encyclopedia* science is not presented in the detailed development of its specification, but limited to the origins and the basic concepts of the particular sciences” (quoted in Behler, xxiv). Ernst Behler comments that the *Encyclopedia* was Hegel’s basic philosophy text and he used it in his lecture courses on his system of philosophy, as well as on various parts of the system. In these lectures, Hegel provided “vivid enactment” of the *Encyclopedia*: “To see a lively element in these texts, one should consider that Hegel reworked them until the end of his life and constantly gave them new shape. In this structure, his *Encyclopedia* has become the basis and synopsis of the extraordinarily influential lectures of Hegel” (xxv). Even in the first 1817 edition of the text, Hegel is clear in the Preface that “the nature of an outline not only precludes a more exhaustive treatment of the content of ideas. It also limits the discussion of the systematic derivation of the evidence which such an encyclopedia must contain, and which is indispensable for a scientific philosophy. The title [*Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*] should suggest partly the scope of the whole, and partly the intent to leave the details for oral delivery” (46).

Second, if we follow Beiser’s recommendation that we give the history of philosophy a “negligible, or at best minor” role in Hegel’s system, then we should do the same for the lectures on the philosophy of art and the lectures on the philosophy of religion, each of which are cast in a historical/developmental context not indicated in the section on Absolute Spirit in the *Encyclopedia*. However, according to the late Quentin Lauer, the philosophy of Absolute Spirit, the final stage in the Philosophy of Spirit, “constitutes the quantitatively major portion of the legacy Hegel has bequeathed to posterity (although, paradoxically enough, very little of it was published by Hegel himself—the courses he gave were transcribed by students and ultimately published posthumously) . . . the whole corpus of Hegel’s writings . . . fit not only neatly but also convincingly into this systematically articulated structure.”<sup>4</sup> Moreover, even if we note that the philosophy of art and religion can

be placed more easily into the system because of the treatment of art and religion in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, there is a strong implication even in this work that there must be a philosophy of philosophy to complete the account of the final achievement of Absolute Knowing in Absolute Spirit. Hegel's course lectures on the history of philosophy explicitly perform this task. "It is precisely in and through its history that we see what philosophy is. On this interpretation, then, the history of philosophy would be the philosophy of philosophy, the coping stone of the philosophy of absolute spirit and of the whole Hegelian system" (9).

With these preliminaries, let me introduce the essays in this volume, which take up a variety of important issues including the relation of Hegel's history of philosophy to his system of philosophy as a whole.

*Part I. Method, Beginnings, and Perspective in  
Hegel's History of Philosophy*

It is appropriate that an investigation of Hegel's history of philosophy begins with a discussion of method, for with any philosopher—and with Hegel in particular—method is the key that opens the door to the philosophical system. Of course, Hegel's philosophy is his entire system and, while what is called his "dialectical method" runs throughout, this is no mechanical procedure that operates in some homogeneous fashion. Indeed, Hegel eschews purely formal methods that abstract excessively from the content of a subject matter. The method must preserve the relation between form and content and this means that, accordingly, it must be determined according to the specific nature of the matter at hand. For instance, the two disciplines of history of philosophy and the philosophy of history might at first seem to require very similar, if not identical, methods. However, this initial supposition is likely to be misguided in that the content of the history of philosophy, which comprises all of the noteworthy philosophies and philosophers of the past, is quite different from the content of the philosophy of history which, to a great extent, is an account of the actions of world historical figures, particularly as they influence the development of culture, society, and politics. On the other hand, what both of these disciplines have in common is an integral connection to Hegel's Logic, which comes first in Hegel's overall system and which obviously must play a significant role for method.

Angelica Nuzzo's essay, "Hegel's Method for a History of Philosophy: The Berlin Introductions to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy (1819–1831)," analyzes Hegel's notion of a "history of philosophy" in the several Introductions to his lectures held between 1819 and 1831. In particular, she provides a systematic and methodological reconstruction of the argument

concerning placement of the discipline of history of philosophy within the system of philosophy. The two “principles” she proposes to explicate Hegel’s methodology of a history of philosophy are the “principle of parallelism” that ties history of philosophy to speculative Logic (the claim is that the succession of the systems in the history of philosophy “corresponds” to the succession of the categories in the development of the Logic) and the “principle of synchronicity,” which allows Hegel to tie the history of philosophy to the histories of the other figures of absolute spirit. Her basic thesis is that Hegel’s method for a history of philosophy amounts to a combination of the principles of parallelism and of synchronicity.

Nuzzo’s essay does much to clarify the relation between the logical structure of the entire system of philosophy and the historical development of the rationality that the system embodies. In so doing, she helps us to understand both the scientific character of Hegel’s presentation of the history of philosophy and its systematic necessity within Hegel’s philosophy overall, thus alleviating the paradoxes associated with philosophy’s having a history.

In addition to the matter of beginning with method, and how a consideration of method helps us to begin to tackle Hegel’s history of philosophy, there is also the issue of where Hegel begins his historical account of the philosophical tradition, in particular its cultural origins. In his essay “With What Must the History of Philosophy Begin? Hegel’s Role in the Debate on the Place of India Within the History of Philosophy,” Robert Bernasconi takes up the question of the place Hegel assigned to Indian thought. Locating his discussion in the context of the so-called Oriental Renaissance in early nineteenth century Germany, and taking advantage of the new edition of Hegel’s lectures on the history of philosophy and using it in conjunction with Hegel’s review of Wilhelm von Humboldt’s translation of the *Bhagavad-Gīta*, the author reconstructs the trajectory of Hegel’s thought on this subject. The result is that we can no longer say that Hegel simply dismissed Indian thought from philosophy. There is perhaps a confusion between such a dismissal and Hegel’s rejection of Friedrich Schlegel’s account of Indian philosophy as the source of Western philosophy. Moreover, there is the possibility that Hegel expressly considered—and rejected—beginning his lectures on the history of philosophy with India and not with Greece. This suggests that, in this case at least, Hegel’s philosophical chauvinism is more complicated than is usually portrayed.

Nonetheless, Hegel’s Eurocentrism is undeniable and raises serious questions about criteria for inclusion in a holistic account of the history of philosophy, presuming that there is some universal tradition of philosophy, and that there can or must be unity in its narrative account. Both Hegel and Schlegel made this presumption, but Hegel restricted it to the Western

tradition on the basis of coherence rather than inclusiveness. India could be the point of departure (as “preliminary” or “presupposition” of philosophy) for the Western world, and Western philosophy, but it could not be an intrinsic part of its development, since philosophy can flourish only under conditions of freedom, not in naturalistic absorption. Perhaps it is the hazard of any historical presentism that development will be seen as necessarily leading to one’s own place in the present and that one must focus on intelligible lines of continuity within a tradition of a *we* (compare the debate about whether the concept of universal human rights is fundamentally Western in origin and meaning). Perhaps, also, the possibility of a more inclusive coherent account requires reaching a level of development not yet attained, but within reach.

Andrew Fiala, in “The Dawning of Desire: Hegel’s Logical History of Philosophy and Politics,” is interested in analyzing and critiquing the way Hegel handles his “chicken-or-egg” problem: the occurrence of philosophy presupposes the existence of political freedom, but the development presupposes the idea of free spirit brought about in philosophy. He emphasizes that for Hegel the history of philosophy is a retrospective undertaking from the vantage point of the present, in which we see the organic connections between the whole of spirit. Fiala explains this by discussing Hegel’s account of the logic of historical development, including the accounts of historical causality and organic development, and further indicates the limits of Hegel’s account by considering his use of the language of “desire” and his use of the metaphor of the “flash” that initiates the dawning of Western philosophy. Moreover, he argues that the problem of origins is primarily a problem for *us*, we Western philosophers and historians who identify our own search for origins with the Greeks, and concludes that if today *we* return to Hegel and to the Greeks with other questions that stem from our concern with Eurocentrism, patriarchy, etc., we should conceive of these concerns as a continuation of the attempt begun with Hegel’s history of philosophy: the attempt to locate the origin of our present philosophical and political concerns. Such critical contemporary concerns indicate a newly developed set of ideas that have their origin in the implicit desire for philosophical truth and universal political freedom found in both Hegel and in the Greeks.

In considering the problem of origins in Hegel’s conception of history, and in particular the role (or lack thereof) of Eastern cultures in his historiography, Fiala returns to the issue of Hegel’s Eurocentrism previously raised by Bernasconi. Both authors agree that Hegel recognized that the Greeks were indebted to the East but apparently not enough to allow it a genuine world historical role—the Orientals are consigned to pre-history. Both authors also recognize the complexity of Hegel’s Eurocentrism and chauvinism. Fiala’s essay helps to unravel that complexity by giving a philosophical ac-

count of it, suggesting the “necessity” of an origin understood as a “dawning of the light.” Whether such an account can deal fully with the issue of temporal and causal explanation is a larger topic.

## Part II. *Accounts of the Philosophical Tradition in Hegel*

In turning to Hegel’s views on the great philosophers of the past, it perhaps goes without saying that a discussion of Socrates, who is sometimes referred to as the father of philosophy (somewhat ironically given his midwifery skill), is particularly valuable. We tend to think of Socrates as defining the vocation of the “love of wisdom” and as providing archetypal expression of philosophical “desire” (with Fiala, the *Trieb* that Hegel attributes uniquely to the Greeks). However, the nature of Socratic wisdom appears paradoxical. When the oracle at Delphi proclaimed that Socrates was the wisest of men, Socrates was apparently astounded, since he did not think himself wise, and yet his piety would not allow him to contradict the gods. His interpretation of the oracle was that his wisdom must lie in his awareness of his ignorance, and that this constituted his superiority to others who claimed to possess wisdom in the sense of real knowledge of various matters. Nevertheless, there are still questions about how much or how little Socrates really knew and about how much he pretended to know or not to know. Socrates’ ironic style (scripted, of course, by his famous student Plato) leads one to wonder how serious Socrates was about the pursuit of wisdom. Does Socratic irony communicate an authentic commitment to truth or is it a mere jest that is intended to deflate all claims to truth? Is Socrates the founder of philosophy or is he the first postmodernist?

These are the sorts of issues addressed in Robert Williams’s essay “Hegel on Socrates and Irony.” According to Williams, the possibility of viewing Socrates as the “founder of unphilosophy” was raised by Friedrich Schlegel, who looked to Socrates in support of his own account of irony. Not surprisingly, Hegel opposed this appropriation of Socrates. For Hegel, Socrates is to be taken quite seriously in inaugurating philosophy and more specifically in introducing and advocating the principle of self-determining subjective freedom. As Williams indicates, to understand how Socratic irony is also serious we must address the prior question (in the spirit of Socratic method), what is irony? By distinguishing between destructive and constructive irony, and showing how the former is self-defeating and leads to an *Aufhebung* in the latter, it is possible to defend Hegel’s criticisms of Schlegel, as well as to defend Hegel against Kierkegaard’s later Schlegelian rejection of Hegel’s portrait of Socrates.

Skepticism has been a major challenge to systematic philosophy historically and Hegel’s discussion of it in his history of philosophy is important

for meeting that challenge. Hegel's refutation of skepticism, as a position that is not internally coherent and rests upon dogmatism, is fairly well known but his analysis of the varieties of skepticism and his preferences for some versions over others, along with the extent to which skepticism can be incorporated into his philosophical system, is less evident in the literature. Will Dudley in his essay "Ancient Skepticism and Systematic Philosophy" intends to provide clarification on these matters. According to Dudley, the standard interpretations of Hegel on skepticism are deficient, particularly on Hegel's account of the varieties of ancient skepticism, as well as on what Hegel finds valuable in any of them. Is Hegel's method influenced by skepticism or does he find value in it for other reasons? What is the fundamental difference between ancient and modern skepticism that makes the former preferable? In this essay, the author explains the standard view of Hegel's treatment of skepticism, reviews Hegel's analysis of the ancient skeptics to clarify his evaluation of them, and proposes a way of understanding the relationship of skepticism to Hegel's dialectical method and philosophical system.

Tanja Staehler's piece, "The Historicity of Philosophy and the Role of Skepticism," picks up the concluding motif of Dudley's essay, the relation of skepticism to Hegel's philosophic system, but also connects to it a theme found in our very first essay by Nuzzo, the historicity of philosophy. Staehler is interested in examining how Hegel came to the view in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* that skepticism is not really the "invincible opponent of philosophy," but rather is actually a "moment" or stage within philosophy as a constructive endeavor. However, in order to accomplish this, the basic character of philosophy must be clarified, in particular as to how it begins and then proceeds in a temporal development. On the basis of these considerations, the author outlines Hegel's discussion of skepticism in several different texts. She identifies two important insights that Hegel arrived at regarding the relation of skepticism to philosophy: (1) ancient skepticism helps to provide a beginning for philosophy by overcoming the "convictions of natural consciousness," and (2) skepticism in its true form is an implicit moment within every philosophical system. Moreover, skepticism is not merely a negative moment in philosophy (incomplete skepticism) but rather functions to express the principle of "determinate negation" and fosters the elevation of consciousness to a new and higher shape, what Hegel calls in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* "thoroughgoing Skepticism." According to Hegel, implicit in Sextus Empiricus's account of Pyrrhonian Skepticism with its various "tropes" there is an important critique of the metaphysics of the understanding (*Verstand*). However, while "thoroughgoing skepticism" is scientific and provides a presuppositionless beginning for philosophy, it does not reach the stage of speculative thinking *per se*. Rather, speculative ideal-

ism embraces it and raises it up as the moment of determinate negation in both the conceptual and historical development of thought.

The question of the role that a particular philosophical tradition, school of thought, or philosopher plays in Hegel's own philosophical system is certainly not restricted to a consideration of Socratic wisdom or of skepticism. On the other hand, when considering Hegel's account of the philosophical tradition, it is not likely that every philosopher in the history of philosophy had an equal or even significant impact on Hegel's own thought. There are signal moments and figures that stand out, however, and Rousseau is one of them. In "The Place of Rousseau in Hegel's System," Allegra De Laurentiis assesses Hegel's overall interpretation of Rousseau in the light of his comments on "volonté" in the *Encyclopaedia Logic* §163, Addition 1, in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, where Hegel discusses Rousseau on will, contract, and freedom, and in the *Philosophy of Right*. While Hegel appears in places to be either underestimating or exaggerating the extent of Rousseau's contribution to a "history of the awareness of freedom," the author believes that by integrating passages on Rousseau from these works we can reconstruct a coherent interpretation of Rousseau by Hegel. Rousseau, Hegel claims, is the first thinker for whom the concept of *will* is the pivotal element of a theory of the right-of-state and who also disclosed to modernity the dialectical-speculative nature of human freedom. The author provides an outline of three major features of Rousseau's political philosophy as Hegel discusses them in the lectures on the Pre-Socratics, on Plato's Republic, and on French philosophy: (1) Rousseau's political "atomism," (2) the fallacious logic of Rousseau's contractarianism, and (3) the "abstract" nature of his notion of individual will as an extreme opposite of Platonism. In the final section of her essay, De Laurentiis discusses passages from the *Encyclopaedia Logic* where Hegel explicates the concept of self-determining identity ("mediated" or "concrete" self-identity) as the ground of any concept of practical self-determination and she shows how this notion of identity, in turn, makes intelligible a metaphysical concept of personhood that Hegel considers both the implicit source of and the effective solution to Rousseau's "paradoxes of freedom."

Merold Westphal's essay discussing Hegel's relation to Spinoza, "Hegel Between Spinoza and Derrida," reenacts the sort of ambivalence (or shall we say, dialectical evaluation?) that was brought out by De Laurentiis on Hegel's view of Rousseau, but for obviously different reasons. On the one hand, Hegel affirms Spinoza's doctrine of the one, infinite substance as essential to philosophical speculation (philosophical holism, both ontological in that the one substance is *causi sui* and epistemological in that it is fully present to intelligence that partakes of its infinite self-relation). On the other hand, he criticizes Spinoza for not seeing that substance must also be conceived as

subject, i.e., as inwardly active self-determining spirit, which is essential for self-consciousness and freedom as the highest expressions of God. Hence, Hegel holds that philosophy begins with Spinoza's standpoint, but must also go beyond him in articulating the role of subjectivity in the Absolute (and presumably this "beginning" with Spinoza is relative and contextual, given the other beginnings that Hegel locates in the history of philosophy).

But what exactly is Derrida doing in this account? Well, it seems that once we have gone to Kant from Spinoza and realized that Reason's demand for the unconditioned cannot be met without falling into transcendental illusion, we are already thrown into the postmodern predicament. Moreover, the thrust of Kant's critique of the totalizing thinking of Spinoza, which by extrapolation would apply to Hegel as well, is perhaps found in a postmodern such as Derrida—except, as Westphal points out, Derrida considers himself an Hegelian holist of sorts, i.e., without eschatology, completed totality, or the Absolute. I will leave the details of Derrida's "holism" to Westphal's account in his essay and only suggest here that while bringing a post-Hegelian thinker like Derrida into a discussion of Hegel's history of philosophy will appear anachronistic, we must remember that for Hegel the history of philosophy is intrinsically related to the nature of philosophy and that to consider and evaluate Hegel's place in the history of philosophy, without merely reiterating his own view of his place, perhaps requires that we go beyond him and consider explicitly our own temporal perspective—if, for example, Fiala is correct in the claim that the history of philosophy must be *for us*. Moreover, even when focusing on what Hegel thought about the nature of philosophy and its conceptual capacity, we cannot avoid confronting the issue of what philosophy can and cannot accomplish, historically and presently.

### *Part III. System, Progress, and Culmination in Hegel*

The first essay in this section, Kevin Thompson's "Systematicity and Experience: Hegel and the Function of the History of Philosophy," takes up explicitly the issue I raised earlier, and that Angelica Nuzzo addresses in a particular way: the relationship of Hegel's history of philosophy to his system of philosophy. Is there a function for the history of philosophy within the Hegelian system overall? Whereas Nuzzo's essay focuses on the methodological tie between history and system, and hence emphasizes connections to Hegel's *Logic*, Thompson is more interested in looking at the system overall and thus gives special attention to Hegel's *Encyclopedia* as a system of philosophical science. According to Thompson, Hegel claimed that the history of philosophy is the temporal development of the system of philosophy and that it is as such that it fulfills a special function necessary for justifying the system of reason as a whole. However, the history of philosophy appears to

occupy no specific place, no position, within the system of philosophical sciences. How, then, Thompson asks, are we to understand the relationship between the historicity and systematicity of philosophy?

The key to resolving this dilemma lies in the concept of rational justification. For Hegel, reason demands that the system of philosophical science provide its own justification of itself from within itself, and that this same system also demonstrate that it accords with actuality. The first requirement is satisfied by the “speculative proof” constituted by the system’s inherent circularity, while the second, what Thompson calls the “experiential proof,” is fulfilled by the history of philosophy. The aims of this essay are thus to identify the function of the history of philosophy in relationship to the system of philosophical science and to understand specifically how the historical character of this discipline uniquely enables it to serve this function. It begins with an account of the speculative and experiential requirements that reason places on the system of philosophical science and then turns to the challenge posed by the history of philosophy proper, showing how in his lectures Hegel attempted to resolve the contradiction embodied in the concept of a history of truth. The author concludes by demonstrating how this resolution determined for Hegel the proper relationship between the systematicity and historicity of the system, one which keeps both distinct and connected the speculative and the experiential dimensions.

The question as to whether there is progress in the history of philosophy, and indeed in history overall, is for us one of the most controversial. It is not only that since Hegel’s time much has transpired historically to raise doubts about such progress but also that the meaning and nature of progress require clarification and justification. Vittorio Hösle in his essay “Is There Progress in the History of Philosophy” addresses the problem head on. He first presents the main positions on this question, in a triadic order, and discusses them with regard to their strengths and weaknesses. The basic approaches are (a) philosophy without history of philosophy, (b) history of philosophy without philosophy, (c) history of philosophy based on a philosophical view. Within the last position, one can distinguish views that accept progress in the history of philosophy—sometimes linear, sometimes dialectical, as in Hegel’s case—typological theories, and theories of cycles (which in fact assume a helicoid or spiral development).

In the second part of his essay, Hösle argues for the congruence of a helicoid-type theory with Hegel’s approach and on this basis attempts to answer the question of progress in philosophy. He begins by noting that skepticism in the face of the “irreducible plurality” of philosophies is not only an unattractive alternative but cannot maintain its own consistency if it takes a dogmatically negative stance and fails to recognize its own contingency and transitoriness (note the essays by Dudley and Staehler on Hegel’s views on skepticism). Also, we should not confuse progress in the history of

philosophy with progress in the history of science, the latter of which is of a linear character (although Thomas Kuhn would beg to differ). In any case, the scientific study of philosophical development historically requires a unique approach to the evolution of philosophical thought, one that emphasizes the helicoid character of the various cycles of development. The author attempts to sketch the main cycles of philosophical development, sometimes disagreeing with Hegel's explications but clearly operating in the spirit of Hegel's systematic approach. Höslé remarks at the end of his essay that despite the fact that Hegel remains a "towering figure" for anyone interested in the relation of history and truth, we can no longer be Hegelians. Nonetheless, he demonstrates effectively that we can still be (h)egelians in using Hegel's approach as a model not only for reinterpreting the evolution of philosophical thought up to Hegel but also for interpreting the evolution up to our present.

The essays in this collection focus on various issues in Hegel's history of philosophy, for example, relating to method, philosophical science, philosophical beginnings, logical and temporal development, systematicity, progress, etc. It is fortunate that we have an essay at the end of these discussions that is about the end of philosophy as Hegel understood it, an important issue not to be neglected. Jere Surber's essay "The 'End of History' Revisited: Kantian Reason, Hegelian Spirit, and the History of Philosophy" responds to longstanding disputes over the significance and scope of Hegel's idea of an "end of history," especially as applied to the history of philosophy, by arguing that, although this notion must be taken in a "strong sense," its range of application remains limited to the "System of Reason" first outlined by Kant and completed by Hegel. On this reading, based especially upon Hegel's *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, "Spirit" is viewed as the "ground for the possibility" of the fulfillment of Kant's projected systematization of reason but cannot itself be included within the scope of even a "strong version" of the "end of history."

The "strong version" of the "end of history thesis" is as follows: that "the 'end of history' necessarily includes the complete conceptual determination of the sphere of reason, the 'completion' of the history of philosophy as a rational (conceptual) enterprise, and the 'end' of 'universal' history as a temporal sequence capable of 'rational comprehension'" (212). Among those who would accept this as an accurate interpretation of Hegel's thesis, as opposed to those who would propose a weaker and perhaps more palatable version, there is the critical response that this thesis is a reversion to pre-Kantian, precritical, metaphysics. Surber's intriguing claim is that Hegel's thesis is in a very important sense precisely Kantian, albeit "developed objectively" and brought to completion. It is not just that Kant himself held a view about the "end of history" but that his own "systematization of Reason" signals that end, understood in a particular way.

However, while it is one thing to signal the end or completion of the development of the systematization of “sphere of Reason,” it is another to do the same for the realm of Spirit, the realm of human life, action, and culture. It is clear that Hegel thought his Science of Logic, and his philosophical system overall, brought about an end in the first sense. However, if the “strong thesis” applies also to “universal history,” i.e., world history as Hegel explicated it in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, has not the “strong thesis” an application to the realm of Spirit as well? Surber does not believe so, but thinks that for Hegel the “end of history” must be understood fundamentally in terms of the final fulfillment of Kant’s project in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, which means satisfying Kant’s criterion for system, “the unity of the manifold of knowledge under one idea” (217). Still, what are the implications for the realm of world history and for Hegel’s present, other than the obvious point that it must be understood rationally according to guiding principles of the completed philosophical system?

Surber’s quite provocative concluding thesis is that Hegel’s completion of philosophy in the “sphere of Reason,” the construction of a “rational conceptual system,” means that for the subsequent new world epoch “the ‘dominant’ concept is now, in his own ‘present day’ and ‘for us’ as well, no longer reason, but Spirit” (218), meaning that not only will World Spirit continue to take on new forms in the future but that philosophy will also continue, not in pursuit of the already completed task of the systematization of Reason but of the “ongoing task of mediating between the various cultural and historical forms which Spirit continues to produce. . . .” (219). I’ll leave it to the reader to analyze and evaluate this remarkable interpretation, but suffice it to say that if true—of Hegel and of history—we are left with the happy irony that the “end of history” is also a new beginning, one that perhaps offers even greater opportunities than existed in Hegel’s present to build a world that can give greater concrete expression to the Hegelian thesis that “What is rational is actual and what is actual is rational.”<sup>5</sup>

### Notes

1. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E. S. Haldane, introduction by Frederick C. Beiser (University of Nebraska Press, 1995).
2. G. W. F. Hegel, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*, trans. Steven Taubeneck, ed. Ernest Behler (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1990).
3. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).
4. Quentin Lauer, *Hegel’s Idea of Philosophy* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), 7.
5. G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 10.