

INTRODUCTION

Hegel represents without question one of the most important figures in the European intellectual tradition. Most all of the major schools and movements of contemporary thought such as phenomenology, existentialism, Marxism, critical theory, structuralism, pragmatism, and post-structuralism have their origins in his work.¹ In addition, a number of disciplines such as intellectual history, sociology of knowledge, and hermeneutics find in Hegel an important forerunner. Reflecting on Hegel's influence, the French philosopher Merleau-Ponty writes that one can rightly claim "that interpreting Hegel means taking a stand on all the philosophical, political, and religious problems of our century."² However, Hegel's influence has been far from unproblematic, and his reputation has always been the source of a strikingly wide divergence of opinion, not the least of which is due to his profoundly obscure manner of expression. While many scholars are repelled by Hegel's language, regarding it as an obstruction to clear thinking and honest communication, others find in his neologisms and stilted prose a sign of the profundity of a thought that renders its darkest secrets only to the initiate. Due to these disputes, Hegel's influence and the true meaning of his philosophy have often been poorly understood. But, indeed, we must first come to terms with Hegel himself if our goal is to begin to develop an informed opinion about the major trends of contemporary thought which have their origins in his philosophy. Thus, as Merleau-Ponty says, "no task in the cultural order is more urgent than reestablishing the connection between . . . the . . . doctrines which try to forget their Hegelian origin and . . . that origin itself."³ In short, if we are to be in a position to evaluate the current practice of philosophy in an informed manner, we must first return to Hegel.

The story of the influence of Hegel's philosophy is an extremely troubled one. In the Anglo-American philosophical tradition, his reputation has suffered for many years as a result of a number of misinterpretations, misconceptions, and outright caricatures of his thought. However, in the last few decades there has been an outpouring of literature on Hegel in the world of Anglo-American philosophy. What has been dubbed the

“Hegel renaissance”⁴ has fortunately produced a body of literature that has gone a great distance toward correcting the numerous misconceptions surrounding Hegel’s thought and toward reinstating the philosopher in his rightful place as one of the most important minds of the modern age.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE *PHENOMENOLOGY*

Hegel only actually wrote four full-length books in his lifetime: the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the *Science of Logic*, the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, and the *Philosophy of Right*. Of all of Hegel’s texts, it is his *Phenomenology of Spirit* which has been the most influential for the later development of European philosophy. This can be seen by a brief glance at the history of Hegel studies and the role played in it by the *Phenomenology*.

In France, Hegel had for many years been ignored, disregarded, and even derided until around 1930 when two events coincided to bring his philosophy into the mainstream in the French academic world⁵—a place which it since then has never fully relinquished. Perhaps the single most important event in French Hegel research was the influential lectures delivered by the Russian emigré Alexandre Kojève.⁶ Between 1933 and 1939 Kojève lectured at the École des Hautes Études on the *Phenomenology* and handed down his provocative and highly idiosyncratic Marxist reading of Hegel to a whole generation of French intellectuals. Most all of the leading philosophers and social scientists in the French-speaking world of the day were in attendance, and in the years following Kojève’s lectures, each of them reinterpreted and transformed Hegel’s philosophy in a different and significant way. Thus, French phenomenology, existentialism, structuralism, and poststructuralism all in a sense had their start in Kojève’s lecture hall. The second important event in French Hegel studies was the non-partisan work of Jean Hyppolite, which served to establish Hegel even more fully in the French academy. In two installments in 1939 and 1941, Hyppolite published the first French translation of the *Phenomenology*, and then in 1946, followed his masterful commentary on that text, which is still the most complete to date, namely his *Genèse et structure de la Phénoménologie de l’esprit de Hegel*.⁷ Thus, Kojève and Hyppolite together served to introduce Hegel into the world of French letters. It is interesting to note that both men concentrated almost exclusively on the *Phenomenology*, making it by far the most important Hegelian text in the French-speaking world. The years that followed these events saw the French academy dominated by the new existentialist philosophy of Sartre, Camus, and Merleau-Ponty. In this atmosphere,

Hegel's *Phenomenology* was as alive as ever. Reflecting back on this period, Hyppolite writes, "After 1946, the *Phenomenology*—along with Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* and Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*—became the fundamental book that was referred to in all French philosophical circles."⁸ The chapter by the French Hegel scholar Vieillard-Baron, which is translated here for the first time, represents one of the most important contributions to our understanding of this text that issues from the French tradition of Hegel research.

Although the *Phenomenology* has never been *the* Hegelian text in German Hegel studies as it has been in the francophone world, it nevertheless still probably outdistances all other candidates as the most discussed and most disputed Hegel work in the German academy.⁹ Ever since Haering's celebrated lecture in 1933,¹⁰ which called into question the unitary structure of the *Phenomenology*, the overwhelming proliferation of literature that has appeared in response to this issue has given the *Phenomenology* the central position in German Hegel research that it still enjoys. Haering's thesis that Hegel changed his mind about the conception of the work during its composition set off a long debate which has still not been satisfactorily resolved.¹¹ Since then, we have seen the appearance of Scheier's detailed commentary on the *Phenomenology*,¹² which is the only one in any language to rival Hyppolite's in precision and detail. In addition to this, there have appeared a number of shorter studies¹³ on individual sections which have continued to make the *Phenomenology* a theme of current debate in the classroom and in German journals. Essays from the well-known German Hegel scholars Nusser and Schöndorf have been allotted a place in the present collection as representatives of this important tradition of scholarship.

With respect to Hegel's influence on Anglo-American philosophy, it is useful to recall that there has been a long history of Hegelianism in both Great Britain and the United States.¹⁴ In America two main schools of Hegel research arose in the middle of the nineteenth century in St. Louis and Cincinnati. Great Britain also saw important early expositors of Hegelian philosophy in men such as T. H. Green (1836–82), Edward Caird (1835–1908), and later F. H. Bradley (1846–1924), Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923), and J. M. E. McTaggart (1866–1925). Although the *Phenomenology of Spirit* did not play a central role in these traditions, it has since come to the forefront of Anglo-American Hegel scholarship. Since the "Hegel renaissance," there have appeared a number of important works in English on the *Phenomenology*,¹⁵ and it has established itself as one of the preferred Hegelian texts for classroom use.¹⁶ In fact, in the Anglo-American world, the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right* (complemented occasionally by the introduction to the

Lectures on the Philosophy of History) are virtually the only texts in the Hegelian *corpus* ever taught in American universities on a regular basis.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE *PHENOMENOLOGY*

The *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which was originally published in 1807, was Hegel's first major philosophical work, and it represented the fruit of his six-year stay at the University of Jena, where he held his first real academic post. During his years as *Privatdozent* in Jena, he often made reference in his course announcements to a forthcoming work which would be a systematic statement of his philosophy.¹⁷ Such a statement was particularly important to him at the time for two personal reasons. First, he had yet to achieve a philosophical reputation of his own. His friend and colleague Schelling had attained success very early, gaining recognition for his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800) and being awarded a professorship at Jena at the age of twenty-three. During Hegel's time at Jena, he was largely laboring in Schelling's shadow and for most philosophers at the time was seen as little more than someone in Schelling's school. Only when Schelling left Jena in 1803 was it possible for Hegel to establish his own academic identity. Thus, it was not by accident that Hegel at this time began work on the *Phenomenology*. A second reason for the importance of the *Phenomenology* for Hegel was a very practical one. Prior to Jena, he had worked long and bitter years as a house-tutor in Bern and Frankfurt. Only with the inheritance that he received upon the death of his father in 1799 was he able to try to embark upon a university career, which was a potentially hazardous undertaking financially since at the time the lectureships or positions as *Privatdozent* were unsalaried. As Hegel saw Schelling's star rising, he became increasingly aware of the need to produce his own philosophical system if he were to have any chance of one day securing a professorship. Like Schelling, who enjoyed success at a remarkably early age, Fichte, as a young man of twenty-nine, became a leading intellectual figure in Germany in one fell swoop with his *Attempt at a Critique of All Revelation* in 1792. In contrast to these two thinkers, Hegel was already in his mid-thirties and had yet to produce anything resembling a major work. Thus, the *Phenomenology* was for him to represent the first systematic statement of his thought and it would serve as an important stepping stone in his incipient academic career.

Manuscripts dating from the Jena years prior to the *Phenomenology* have been published and discussed at length in the literature.¹⁸ These manuscripts, referred to as the *Realphilosophie* or the *Jena System*, repre-

sent a philosophical system which contains much of the structure and content of the later *Encyclopaedia*. This leads us to believe that while Hegel was working on his philosophical system, he was struck by the need to introduce or justify the system with another work. This might then have been the motivation behind his abandoning the system at that time and turning his attention to the *Phenomenology*.

The *Phenomenology* is thus intended as the introduction to his philosophical system and for this reason has become a useful text in courses on Hegel. In Germany there has been a long debate surrounding the question of the status of the *Phenomenology*. Many see the work not as an introduction to the system but rather as the actual first part of it. These controversies are based largely on philological evidence which seems to indicate that Hegel came to reconsider the conception of the book during its turbulent and hurried composition. According to this view, he originally conceived of the work merely as an introduction to a philosophical science; however, while he was writing, the text grew out of control in his hands, and it came to include material that belonged, properly speaking, to the philosophical system itself. Thus, it is argued, Hegel was obliged to change his original conception of the work from that of a mere preface or introduction to that of a substantive part of the system. This change in conception is allegedly reflected in the change in titles that the book went through.¹⁹ First, the work was called *The Science of the Experience of Consciousness*, which was then later replaced with the title, *Science of the Phenomenology of Spirit*. The first title indicates that the work was merely supposed to explore the experience of consciousness, but with the change to the second title Hegel seems to acknowledge that the material treated moves beyond individual consciousness to a collective social-historical entity which he calls "spirit."

The ambiguity of the task of the *Phenomenology* comes out clearly in the introduction to the work itself where Hegel tells us, on the one hand, that at the end of the text's labyrinthine argument "consciousness will arrive at a point at which it gets rid of its semblance of being burdened with something alien, with what is only for it, and some sort of 'other,' at a point where appearance becomes identical with essence, so that its exposition will coincide at just this point with the authentic Science of Spirit."²⁰ This indicates that the goal of the *Phenomenology* is to dissolve the subject-object split and to reach the standpoint of Science, where such a split is no longer present. Thus, the experience of consciousness is prefatory to a Science which issues from it as a result. Yet, on the other hand, he writes, "the way to Science is itself already *Science*, and hence, in virtue of its content, is the Science of the *experience of consciousness*."²¹ Here Hegel says explicitly that the *Phenomenology* is not merely

an introduction but rather is itself already a science. These seemingly contradictory statements are representative of the central philological dispute surrounding the *Phenomenology*. Hegel explains the metamorphosis of the text at the beginning of the *Encyclopaedia*:

In my *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which on that account was at its publication described as the first part of the System of Philosophy, the method adopted was to begin with the first and simplest phase of mind, immediate consciousness, and to show how that stage gradually of necessity worked onward to the philosophical point of view, the necessity of that view being proved by the process. But in these circumstances it was impossible to restrict the quest to the mere form of consciousness. For the stage of philosophical knowledge is the richest in material and organization, and therefore, as it came before us in the shape of a result, it presupposed the existence of the concrete forms of consciousness, such as individual and social morality, art and religion.²²

Here Hegel indicates that the analysis had to proceed beyond consciousness to include more sophisticated forms of social and historical existence which were already implicit in it. Thus, on this account, the *Phenomenology* is much more than merely an introduction or an analysis of consciousness.

Although it is important to be aware of these arguments about the role and purpose of the *Phenomenology*, they are in the final analysis of concern primarily to the Hegel philologist. For this reason these discussions need not excessively exercise us here. The importance of the question of whether the *Phenomenology* is the first part of a science or an introduction to it are easily exaggerated and can stand in the way of attempts to examine the actual content of the work. Whatever the case may ultimately be, Hegel intended that the *Phenomenology*, of all his texts, should be read first, and this is one of the reasons why it plays such an important role in his *corpus*.

THE *PHENOMENOLOGY* IN THE CONTEXT OF HEGEL'S OTHER WORKS

Napoleon's victory at Jena in 1806 caused the university to suspend its work, and Hegel found himself obliged to seek other employment. He worked for a time in Bamberg as the editor of a newspaper and later accepted a job as headmaster of a *Gymnasium* or secondary school in Nuremberg. There he completed his second major work, the *Science of*

Logic,²³ published in two installments in 1812 and 1816. This continuation of his career and biography also represents a continuation in the construction of his philosophical system.

The *Science of Logic* forms a natural sequel to the *Phenomenology*. As was indicated above, Hegel tells us that the goal of the latter is to justify the scientific standpoint. In the introduction of the *Phenomenology*, he explains that the task of that work is to examine critically the various natural points of view or prejudices of common sense. By means of the dialectical method, these views are scrutinized for consistency. Once a given view has proven to be inconsistent, it must be abandoned and a new one found to replace it. When these views have all been examined and the viewpoint of common sense overcome, then we reach the level of science. Each of the views of common sense is characterized by some form of dualism: subject-object, man-God, subject-subject, individual-community, citizen-state, and so on. By the time science is finally attained, these dualisms have all been shown to be no longer viable in the course of the various analyses of the *Phenomenology*. Thus, the central insight of science is the monism that absorbs and overcomes these various dualisms and thus attempts to come to terms with reality as a whole and not just with its component parts taken in isolation. The kind of philosophy that examines the whole is what Hegel calls "speculative philosophy." He characterizes this sort of philosophy by contrast to what he calls "dogmatism," which treats concepts individually and outside of their systematic context:

Dogmatism consists in the tenacity which draws a hard and fast line between certain terms and others opposite to them. We may see this clearly in the strict "either—or": for instance, The world is either finite or infinite; but one of these two it must be. The contrary of this rigidity is the characteristic of all speculative truth. There no such inadequate formulae are allowed, nor can they possibly exhaust it. These formulae speculative truth holds in union as a totality, whereas dogmatism invests them in their isolation with a title to fixity and truth.²⁴

Dogmatism abstracts individual concepts from their organic unity. Speculative philosophy, on the other hand, rejects all absolute dichotomies and tries to see even apparently contradictory statements as parts of a unitary whole. The goal of the *Phenomenology* is thus to overcome the various dualisms of dogmatism and to reach the level of science at which the *Science of Logic* begins.

In his introduction to the *Science of Logic*, Hegel explains the role of the *Phenomenology* in terms of a deduction which is necessary as an introduction to science: "The notion of pure science and its deduction is

therefore presupposed in the present work in so far as the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is nothing other than the deduction of it.”²⁵ We can see the *Phenomenology* then as assuming the dualistic views of common sense and proceeding via a series of *reductio ad absurdum* arguments to prove them inconsistent. The task of the *Phenomenology* is thus to reach the monistic insight of science. The *Science of Logic*, then, assumes a monism and tries analytically to unravel what is bound up in this insight. It begins with the most basic category—pure being—and tries to unpack what is necessarily thought along with this category. In order to think pure being, Hegel argues, one must also be able to think nothing since the concept of nothingness is already analytically contained in the very concept of being. In order to think being and nothing, one must also be able to think becoming, and so on. In this way the universe of other categories is derived, the one from the other, and all of the concepts are shown to be interconnected in a complete system of thought.

In 1816, the same year that the second half of the *Science of Logic* appeared, Hegel returned to university life when he received a professorship at the University of Heidelberg. There he continued to develop his philosophical system, and in 1817 he published the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. In this work, the material from the *Science of Logic* that we know as the first philosophical science, is reworked and condensed in the form of the so-called *Encyclopaedia Logic* or the *Lesser Logic*²⁶ and is complemented by two new philosophical sciences—the philosophy of nature²⁷ and the philosophy of mind.²⁸ With the *Encyclopaedia*, Hegel completes his vision of the system of science. All of his later works are simply expansions on this basic outline.

Hegel left Heidelberg in 1818 to take up a distinguished professorship at the newly grounded University of Berlin, where he remained until his death in 1831. There in 1821 amid a tense political climate,²⁹ he published his last major work, the *Philosophy of Right*,³⁰ which constitutes the most complete statement of his political philosophy. As he tells us in his introduction, this work corresponds to the “Objective Spirit” section of the *Encyclopaedia* and is an elaboration of the material presented there. This is confirmed in the preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, where Hegel writes explicitly, “This compendium is an enlarged and especially a more systematic exposition of the same fundamental concepts which in relation to this part of philosophy are already contained in a book of mine designed previously for my lectures—the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*.”³¹ Thus, the *Philosophy of Right* also forms a part of the philosophical sciences for which the *Phenomenology* prepared the way.

During his years in Berlin, Hegel gave extremely popular lectures on the philosophy of history,³² aesthetics,³³ philosophy of religion,³⁴ and the

history of philosophy.³⁵ At the peak of his career, he died suddenly during a cholera epidemic in Berlin on 14 November 1831. The years after his death saw the formation of the right and left Hegelians who battled for his heritage. The student notes from Hegel's lectures were collected and later published and today count as useful supplements to his published works. Through his writings and those of his influential students, Hegel has remained an influential figure in European philosophy up through our own day.

THE HETEROGENEOUS CONTENTS OF THE *PHENOMENOLOGY*

Much of the power and beauty of the *Phenomenology* is to be found in the extremely rich and diverse material which constitutes its subject matter. Here we find an account of Greek tragedy, medieval court culture, the pseudosciences of phrenology and physiognomy, forms of Romantic morality, Kantian ethics, traditional epistemological conundrums, sundry religious beliefs, and so on. The heterogeneous nature of the contents of the *Phenomenology* has posed great difficulties for commentators and has led to many mistaken approaches in the secondary literature.

In the face of the wide range of themes in the text, many commentators have simply concluded that the *Phenomenology* is an unsystematic and chaotic work. According to this interpretation, there is no single argument or guiding thread which runs through the entire text. Walter Kaufmann, an outspoken advocate of this view, writes, "One really has to put on blinders and immerse oneself in carefully selected microscopic details to avoid the discovery that the *Phenomenology* is in fact an utterly unscientific and unrigorous work."³⁶ Instead of a systematic text, the *Phenomenology* is seen simply as a patchwork of diverse discussions and analyses with no connection or relation. Thus, the view is that "The *Phenomenology* is a loose series of imaginative and suggestive reflections on the life of the spirit."³⁷ Kaufmann reduces the contexts of the book to the exigencies of the historical moment, claiming that, given the turbulent composition of the *Phenomenology*, we should not be surprised that the result was something chaotic and unsystematic: "The central point of our philological excursus is, of course, to show how Hegel himself handled his system: not as so much a necessary truth, deduced once and for all in its inexorable sequence, but rather as very neat and sensible way of arranging the parts of philosophy—not even the neatest and most sensible possible, but only the best he could do in time to meet the printer's deadline."³⁸ Kaufmann goes so far as to suggest that Hegel's preoccupation with the imminent birth of his illegitimate son was one reason for the

confused and unsystematic structure of the *Phenomenology*. Although putting weight in these far-fetched biographical speculations is idiosyncratic of Kaufmann, the idea that the *Phenomenology* is an unsystematic text has many adherents in every tradition of Hegel research.

The natural result of the belief that the *Phenomenology* is an unsystematic text is that many essays and shorter works on the *Phenomenology* take certain themes or analyses out of their systematic context and use them as the focal point of discussion. Thus, Hegel's account of the Enlightenment, lordship and bondage, Stoicism, and so forth, are treated in an episodic manner with no attention paid to their role in the overall structure of the work. The strategy is to discover what insights Hegel has on the various topics he discusses without asking further to what use he intends to put them in his system. Kojève's interpretation is a good example of this tendency. By reading the entire text in terms of the lordship and bondage dialectic, Kojève overtly ignores Hegel's own claims about the necessity of the systematic structure of the *Phenomenology* and distorts the meaning of this individual section. This clearly represents a fundamental problem of interpretation since for Hegel these analyses are only meaningful in their systematic context.

Another obvious difficulty that arises from the heterogeneous content of the work is what can be referred to as the unevenness of many books on the *Phenomenology*. Many such works provide interesting and insightful accounts of some aspects of the book, while at the same time they seem to neglect others altogether. This is a natural enough tendency given that every commentator has his or her own strengths and weaknesses. It is, however, regrettable to the extent that each analysis and discussion in the *Phenomenology* is supposed to play a role in the overall structure of the work. As Kant says of his system, "For pure speculative reason has a structure wherein everything is an organ, the whole being for the sake of all others. . . . Any attempt to change even the smallest part at once gives rise to contradictions, not merely in the system, but in human reason in general."³⁹ Thus, we cannot ignore or treat lightly individual sections or parts of a systematic philosophy without doing damage to the whole. Ideally, Hegel's analyses would all be treated uniformly since they are all equally important in the systematic structure of the work. The problem with a number of approaches is that they badly distort Hegel's intention in the *Phenomenology* by ignoring the work's systematic structure. The goal of the present collection is to try to combat these problems by viewing the *Phenomenology* as a systematic text. There has, of course, been much debate about the nature of this structure, but no one can reasonably deny the fact that Hegel intended for there to be one, however complex, *ad hoc*, or disjointed it ended up being.

HEGEL'S SYSTEMATIC PRETENSIONS

One of the most celebrated slogans in the *Phenomenology* is "The True is the whole."⁴⁰ Understanding what Hegel means by this is crucial for an appreciation of the notion of system in his thought. In many places Hegel insists that philosophical knowledge must form a systematic structure. In the *Encyclopaedia Logic*, for instance, he says of the absolute Idea,

The science of this Idea must form a system. . . . Truth, then, is only possible as a universe or totality of thought. . . . Unless it is a system, a philosophy is not a scientific production. . . . Apart from their interdependence and organic union, the truths of philosophy are valueless, and must then be treated as baseless hypotheses, or personal convictions.⁴¹

Also, in the preface of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel flatly claims, "The true shape in which truth exists can only be the scientific system of such truth."⁴² This claim is echoed a little later in the preface, when he says, "knowledge is only actual, and can only be expounded, as Science or as *system*."⁴³ These unambiguous statements leave no doubt about the importance which Hegel ascribes to the systematic nature of the philosophical enterprise. In this general insistence on the systematicity of philosophical knowledge, Hegel in no way differs from the other major representatives of the German idealist tradition; Kant, Fichte, and Schelling no less ardently insist on systematic philosophy. The question that we must now address is how Hegel conceived of a systematic body of knowledge.

Perhaps the easiest way to understand his claims about speculative philosophy is to consider the example of a mosaic. A mosaic is, of course, an aggregate of tiles which, when seen at a sufficient distance, collectively form a picture or some kind of design. If one is too close, the general design becomes indiscernible, and, instead of seeing a picture, one can recognize the individual tiles. Hegel's conception of philosophy is something like this. Individual concepts and propositions are the analogue of the individual tiles in the mosaic. When these concepts are taken out of their larger context and treated alone as atomic entities, then they lose their true meaning, just as a tile abstracted from the mosaic of which it is a part, in a sense, loses its meaning. The concepts have the meaning that they do only in their particular relation to other concepts, just as a given tile has the meaning it does only by virtue of its particular place in the mosaic. The speculative philosopher is one who tries to see all of the concepts and propositions in their systematic connection.

Even concepts or propositions which seem at face value to be contra-

dictory are rendered consistent once they are placed in their true systematic context. Hegel writes, "The Speculative stage, or stage of Positive Reason apprehends the unity of terms (propositions) in their opposition—the affirmative, which is involved in their disintegration and in their transition."⁴⁴ In a similar passage from the introduction to the *Science of Logic*, Hegel writes, "It is in this dialectic as it is here understood, that is, in the grasping of opposites in their unity or of the positive in the negative, that speculative thought consists."⁴⁵ Speculative philosophy thus overcomes contradictions by understanding the individual concepts in their proper relationships *vis-à-vis* one another.

The mechanism by which contradictions are overcome and dissolved is, of course, the dialectic. For Hegel, individual concepts are not simply negated by contradictions and then discarded only to be replaced by other notions; instead, the concepts are all linked together, and the one develops out of the contradictions implicit in the another. Hegel describes his conception of the dialectic with an organic metaphor:

The bud disappears in the bursting-forth of the blossom, and one might say that the former is refuted by the latter; similarly, when the fruit appears, the blossom is shown up in its turn as a false manifestation of the plant, and the fruit now emerges as the truth of it instead. These forms are not just distinguished from one another, they also supplant one another as mutually incompatible. Yet at the same time their fluid nature makes them moments of an organic unity in which they do not conflict, but in which each is as necessary as the other, and this mutual necessity alone constitutes the life of the whole.⁴⁶

As a plant grows and develops, specific forms and structures develop out of others; a bud, grows into a blossom and a seed into a stock. So also in philosophy individual forms or concepts develop out of one another. Seen from a certain limited perspective, the later forms appear to be the contradiction of the earlier ones, but when we examine the matter more closely, we find that they in fact belong to the same organic entity, just as the seed, the bud, and the blossom are all parts of a single plant. For Hegel, the goal of philosophy is to grasp this entire entity in its organic unity and to lay bare its principle of development. It is in this sense that the truth is the whole.

This account of the necessity of the system in Hegel's philosophy clearly demonstrates that the "patchwork" interpretations of the *Phenomenology* are fundamentally mistaken in their approach. If we neglect Hegel's insistence on speculative philosophy, then we risk missing the thrust of his philosophy entirely since for him systematicity is necessarily

bound up with the project of philosophical enquiry as such and is not merely one approach among others. In this respect the content and the form of his philosophy cannot be separated without loss to the whole. Given Hegel's unambiguous account of the necessity of a systematic approach to philosophy, we as interpreters would do well to attempt to understand the parts of the *Phenomenology* in their systematic context.

THE *PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT* READER

The primary goal of the present collection is to make the *Phenomenology of Spirit* more accessible to students and general readers by making more readily available a number of influential interpretive essays. This task is necessitated by Hegel's dense language and the complexity of the text as a whole, which render the work rather daunting for the non-specialist. The essays, which have all been chosen for their clear prose and honest exegetical attempts to explain the individual sections at issue, should do much to eliminate the difficulty involved in a first reading of this difficult text. In order not to complicate matters for readers unfamiliar with traditional criticisms of Hegel's position or with critical debates in the literature, an effort has been made to select articles which are self-contained and primarily interpretive; for this reason, otherwise useful essays offering critical, philological, and historical accounts of the *Phenomenology* have been omitted. In addition, the present collection has tried to bring together the best things written on the *Phenomenology* by the most distinguished Hegel scholars in a way that would ensure something resembling systematic coverage.

The guiding idea behind this collection has been to try to present a picture of the *Phenomenology* as a systematic text, as Hegel himself intended. This idea is an attempt to improve upon the shortcomings in the literature on the *Phenomenology* outlined above: (1) the unevenness of many analyses, and (2) the patchwork or episodic readings. First, as was mentioned above, many commentaries on the *Phenomenology* fall short since the diversity of material often proves to be too great for the abilities of a single commentator. In this collection, the best material on individual sections by a number of different authors with different interests and specializations has been selected so as to obviate this problem. Second, the present collection attempts to avoid the patchwork readings of the *Phenomenology* both in its format and in its selection of essays. With respect to format, our volume closely follows the table of contents of the *Phenomenology* itself in order to avoid neglecting major sections. The essays together form a sort of dialogue with the *Phenomenology* itself. The goal

here is to get as much coverage of the primary text as possible and to avoid lopsided readings that focus only on individual sections. The selection of essays was also informed by the desire to underscore the systematic nature of the text. Most of the authors featured here make some effort to situate the section at issue in the larger context of the work. Readings of this kind are intended as an alternative to the patchwork or episodic interpretive trend.

The long preface of the *Phenomenology* is one of the most widely read sections in the entire Hegelian corpus. There Hegel discusses his philosophical methodology at some length and tries to show how his conception of philosophy differs from that of his contemporaries. In his essay, John Sallis treats above all the first part of the preface, exploring some of Hegel's most famous methodological slogans. He takes seriously Hegel's claim that philosophy, since it is not esoteric and not immediately comprehensible to common sense, must offer an initial "presentation" of itself to allow the uninitiated to pass beyond the prejudices of common sense and to gain access to Science. Sallis sees the *Phenomenology* as the execution of this presentation and its preface as a presentation introductory to this presentation. The introduction to the *Phenomenology*, although considerably shorter than the famous preface, is by no means less important. There as well we find some of Hegel's most forthright statements about his conception of philosophy and about the methodology used in the work. It is in the introduction that he discusses his notion of dialectic, his doctrine of determinate negation, the phenomenological actor or the view of common sense which he calls "natural consciousness," as well as the role of the *Phenomenology* in relation to Science. This rich section of text is taken up by two chapters in the present collection. In his chapter, Kenley R. Dove examines the decisive issue of a criterion of truth internal to consciousness which Hegel discusses in his introduction. On the basis of his analysis, Dove argues that the methodology of the *Phenomenology* is in fact not dialectical; instead, he claims it is descriptive since it merely observes and describes the movement of consciousness. Kenneth R. Westphal offers an exegetical and critical discussion of the introduction, focusing on Hegel's attempt to come to terms with the paradoxes involved in positing any criterion for knowing.

It is with the "Consciousness" chapter that Hegel begins the actual march to scientific knowing. In the three sections of this chapter, he gives cutting criticisms of a handful of epistemological theories with deep roots in the tradition. Katharina Dulckeit's chapter treats the problem of reference in "Sense-Certainty," the first section of the "Consciousness" chapter. She argues, contrary to the accepted view, that Hegel in fact does not deny that reference to particulars is possible;

rather, in "Sense-Certainty" he attempts to give an account of the conditions which are necessary for such reference. "Perception," the second section of the "Consciousness" chapter, is treated by Merold Westphal's essay. Westphal locates the discussion of "Perception" in the context of the development of the "Consciousness" chapter as a whole, tracing the movement from knowledge based on sense to knowledge based on understanding. His employment of a number of parallel analyses in the history of philosophy such as those of Plato, Descartes, and Kant, elucidates many aspects of Hegel's dense discussion. The difficult and disputed "Force and Understanding" section is analyzed by Joseph C. Flay's article, which examines Hegel's celebrated yet deeply obscure account of the inverted world. Taking Hegel at his word, Flay tries to understand the figure of the inverted world as an absurd position and offers an account of how the dialectic is led from this absurdity to self-consciousness.

The "Self-Consciousness" chapter, with its famous discussions of the lordship and bondage dialectic and the unhappy consciousness, is for many commentators a preferred locus in the *Phenomenology*. In the present collection, two essays are devoted to the influential analysis of the struggle for recognition and the dialectical relation of the lord and the bondsman. In his chapter, George Armstrong Kelly outlines the distorting influence of Kojève's Marxist interpretation of this relation. Kelly argues that this famous dialectic is multilayered in its meaning and cannot be adequately understood in a one-dimensional way only via its social aspect as Kojève tries to do. He then offers a corrective reading of this analysis by sketching its heretofore neglected dimensions. Howard Adelman's essay includes a useful account of Hegel's extremely obscure analysis on life and desire before proceeding to analyze the dialectical movement of the lord and the bondsman. Adelman attempts to interpret and illustrate Hegel's account with reference to the story of primitive human relations in Genesis. The second famous discussion in the "Self-Consciousness" chapter is Hegel's account of the unhappy consciousness; the chapter by John W. Burbidge is dedicated to this. Burbidge, discussing the entire section "Freedom of Self-Consciousness," argues that the unhappy consciousness does not represent the particular historical moment of medieval Catholicism, as Baillie and others have assumed, but rather is a universal form of human consciousness.

The extended and difficult "Reason" chapter, despite its crucial role in the *Phenomenology*, has long been neglected, and the two essays offered here are meant to correct this trend. In Alasdair MacIntyre's seminal study "Hegel on Faces and Skulls," he examines Hegel's treatment of the pseudosciences of physiognomy and phrenology in the long and dense "Observing Reason" section. MacIntyre shows that surprisingly

many of the key claims of these dubious intellectual enterprises are still alive and well today in a number of contemporary materialist doctrines. He thus demonstrates that Hegel's criticisms of these pseudosciences are not merely bygone chapters in the history of philosophy which we can comfortably forget, but rather are every bit as relevant for us as they were for Hegel and his contemporaries. Hegel's famous and ironical discussion of the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom" constitutes the first analysis in the third section of the "Reason" chapter and is discussed in Gary Shapiro's essay. Following Lukács' interpretation, Shapiro tries to make a case for the importance of this section in the overall movement of the work.

The "Spirit" chapter is one of the richest in the entire text. Here Hegel systematically examines the stages of world history beginning with the ancient Greek *polis* and working up to his own age. In her essay Patricia Jagentowicz Mills critically examines Hegel's famous discussion of Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone* with which the "Spirit" chapter begins. She carefully analyzes Hegel's account of the drama in both the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right* and uses it as a measuring rod for understanding the role of women in Hegel's philosophy as a whole. In the second section of the "Spirit" chapter, which is entitled "Self-Alienated Spirit," Hegel analyzes Diderot's work *Rameau's Nephew* as an example of modern alienation. This section is treated by David Price's essay, which meticulously analyzes Hegel's quotations from Diderot's text in order to arrive at a general theory of how and why Hegel incorporates literary works and characters into his own philosophical system. Also to be found in the "Self-Alienated Spirit" section is Hegel's treatment of the Enlightenment, which is analyzed by Karlheinz Nusser's essay. In addition to his account of Hegel's view of the French Revolution, Nusser interprets the lordship and bondage dialectic as the first step toward a revolutionary theory and discusses in some detail the dialectical movement in "Spirit" that leads up to Hegel's account of the French Revolution. Nusser ultimately tries to resolve the apparent contradiction pointed out by Habermas that Hegel was an advocate of the French Revolution but at the same time a critic of individual revolutionaries. The final section of the "Spirit" chapter, "Spirit that is Certain of Itself," begins with "The Moral Worldview" and concludes with Hegel's famous account of the beautiful soul. Both of these important discussions are treated in this collection. Moltke S. Gram's essay examines this entire third section, beginning with the "Moral World-View" and moving up to the "Religion" chapter. By recreating the historical context, he tries to show that Hegel's targets in this section are the early German Romantics. In his conclusion, Gram, like Price, tries to give a general account of the meaning of literary works for the systematic structure of the *Phenomenology*. Daniel P.

Jamros in his essay treats the final discussion of this section “Evil and Its Pardon.” He analyzes the role of conscience for Hegel and tries to show how it plays the crucial role in the transition from the “Spirit” chapter to “Religion.”

“Religion,” the penultimate chapter of the *Phenomenology* has been somewhat neglected in Anglo-American scholarship despite its crucially important role in the text. Here Hegel works through manifold forms of religious consciousness which culminate in Christianity. He dedicates the first major section of the “Religion” chapter to what he calls “natural religion.” The essay by the French Hegel scholar Jean-Louis Vieillard-Baron has been included for its treatment of this material. The author situates Hegel’s discussion in its historical context and gives a careful paragraph by paragraph analysis of the first form of natural religion, “God as Light.” The third section in “Religion,” entitled “Revealed Religion,” contains Hegel’s celebrated analysis of Christianity. This material is taken up by two essays in this collection. The German Hegel scholar Harald Schöndorf offers a detailed commentary on the actual experience of this form of consciousness, which constitutes roughly the second half of the “Revealed Religion” section. He demonstrates how the dialectical movement of the externalization and reconciliation of Christ plays the crucial role in Hegel’s Christian theology. In his essay, Martin J. De Nys treats this same material in a more thematic fashion, specifically by examining the motifs of mediation and negativity in religious consciousness as they appear in these pages.

The final chapter of the *Phenomenology*, “Absolute Knowing” has been extremely controversial. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is that the conclusions that one reaches about this short chapter have far-reaching consequences for one’s interpretation of Hegel’s philosophy as a whole. In his essay, Mitchell H. Miller Jr., addresses the major issues posed by this final chapter. He reconstructs Hegel’s account of the path to absolute knowing taken in the *Phenomenology* and offers an interpretation of the meaning of absolute knowing for Hegel’s claims about the system. The final essay in this collection tries to give a view of the overall systematic structure of the *Phenomenology* in a manner consonant with Hegel’s own systematic pretensions. Using key explanatory passages at the beginning of major sections of the work, the author sketches the interlinking architectonic structure of the work which is *ipso facto* offered as a refutation of the “patchwork” reproaches and interpretations of the *Phenomenology*.

The hope is that these essays together will be an aid above all to the student of Hegel and the non-specialist attempting to come to terms with this difficult thinker for the first time. In addition, for the professional

philosopher and Hegel scholar, this collection conveniently brings together influential essays on the *Phenomenology* by some of the most distinguished contemporary Hegel scholars in the French, German, and Anglo-American traditions. Another goal of the present collection is to establish fruitful points of contact between these various traditions of Hegel scholarship by means of the essays translated here for the first time from French and German. The main objective of this collection is, however, to understand Hegel's philosophy as he intended it to be understood, namely, as a systematic enterprise. These essays will thus help us to correct the long-standing interpretive trend which views the analyses of the *Phenomenology* episodically. For these reasons, it is hoped that this collection will be beneficial to both students and scholars alike and will serve as an impetus for Hegel studies in the world of Anglo-American philosophy.

NOTES

1. Cf. Merleau-Ponty: "All the great philosophical ideas of the past century—the philosophies of Marx and Nietzsche, phenomenology, German existentialism, and psychoanalysis—had their beginnings in Hegel." "Hegel's Existentialism," in *Sense and Nonsense*, trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia Allen Dreyfus (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 63.

2. *Ibid.*, 63.

3. *Ibid.*, 64.

4. See Henry Harris, "The Hegel Renaissance in the Anglo-Saxon World Since 1945," *The Owl of Minerva*, 15 (1983): 77–107; Frederick G. Weiss, "A Critical Survey of Hegel Scholarship in English: 1962–1969," in *The Legacy of Hegel: Proceedings of the Marquette Hegel Symposium 1970*, ed. J. J. O'Malley, K. W. Algozin, H. P. Kainz, and L. C. Rice (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 24–48.

5. Cf. Jean Hyppolite, "La *Phénoménologie* de Hegel et la pensée française contemporaine," in his *Figures de la pensée philosophique: Écrits (1931–1968)*, tome I (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971), 231–41.

6. Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947). Translated as *An Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, ed. Alan Bloom, trans. J. H. Nichols (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1969).

7. Paris: Aubier, 1946. In English as *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman. (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1974).

8. Hyppolite, "La *Phénoménologie* de Hegel," 235.

9. Cf. Vojin Simeunovic, "Die Aktualität von Hegels *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," *Praxis* 7 (1971): 73–83; Bruno Puntel, "Hegel heute. Zur *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 80 (1973): 133–60.

10. Theodore Haering, "Entstehungsgeschichte der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," in *Verhandlungen des III. Internationalen Hegel Kongresses 1933*, ed. B. Wigersma (Haarlem: N/VH.D. Tjeenk Willink & Zn. and Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1934), 118–36.

11. Cf. Hans Friedrich Fulda, "Zur Logik der *Phänomenologie* von 1807," in *Materialien zu Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Hans Friedrich Fulda and Dieter Henrich (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1973), 391–422; also in *Hegel-Tage Royaumont 1964: Beiträge zur Deutung der Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hegel-Studien*, Beiheft 3 (Bonn: Bouvier, 1966), 73–102; Otto Pöggeler, "Zur Deutung der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," *Hegel-Studien* 1 (1961): 255–94; Otto Pöggeler, "Die Komposition der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," in *Hegel-Tage Royaumont 1964. Beiträge zur Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hegel-Studien*, Beiheft 3. (Bonn: Bouvier, 1966), 27–74, also in *Materialien zu Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Hans Friedrich Fulda and Dieter Henrich (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1973), 329–90.

12. Claus-Artur Scheier, *Analytischer Kommentar zu Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes: Die Architektonik des erscheinenden Wissens* (Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1980).

13. Klaus Kähler and Werner Marx, *Die Vernunft in Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1992); Matthias Kettner, *Hegels Sinnliche Gewißheit*. (Frankfurt and New York: Campus, 1990); Manfred Negele, *Grade der Freiheit. Versuch einer Interpretation von G. W. F. Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1991).

14. William H. Goetzmann (ed.), *The American Hegelians: An Intellectual Episode in the History of Western America* (New York: Knopf, 1973); David Watson, "Hegelianism in the United States," *Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain* 6 (1982): 18–28; David Watson, "The Neo-Hegelian Tradition in America," *Journal of American Studies* 14 (1980): 219–34.

15. Cf. bibliography.

16. Cf. Robert Solomon, "Teaching Hegel," *Teaching Philosophy* 2 (1977–78): 213–24.

17. Cf. Heinz Kimmerle, "Dokumente zu Hegels Jenaer Dozententätigkeit (1801–1807)," *Hegel-Studien* 4 (1967): 21–99.

18. These works are as follows in German: *Jenaer Systementwürfe I–III*, volumes 6–8 of *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. the Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1968). The English translations are as

follows: G. W. F. Hegel, *The Jena System, 1804–5. Logic and Metaphysics*, translation edited by J. W. Burbridge and G. di Giovanni (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986); *The Jena Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit (1805–6)* in *Hegel and the Human Spirit*, trans. Leo Rauch (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983); *First Philosophy of Spirit* in G. W. F. Hegel, *System of Ethical Life and First Philosophy of Spirit*, ed. and trans. H. S. Harris and T. M. Knox (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979).

19. For a complete account see Friedhelm Nicolin, "Zum Titelproblem der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," *Hegel-Studien* 4 (1967): 113–23.

20. PhS §89; PhG 61–62. (PhS = *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977]; PG = *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, volume 9 of *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften [Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1968–]).

21. PhS §88; PG 61.

22. EL §25; Enz. 50. (EL = *Hegel's Logic: Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. William Wallace [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975]; Enz. = *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, volume 19 of *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften [Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1968–]).

23. In English as *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1989).

24. Hegel, EL §32 Remark; *Werke*, 8: 98–99. (*Werke* = *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Werke in zwanzig Bänden* [Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970]).

25. Hegel, SL 49; WL 33 (SL = *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller [London: George Allen and Unwin, 1989]; WL = *Wissenschaft der Logik*, volume 21 of *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften [Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1968–]).

26. In English as *Hegel's Logic: Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

27. In English as *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature: Part Two of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

28. In English as *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind: Part Three of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. W. Wallace and A.V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

29. Cf. Adriaan Peperzak, *Philosophy and Politics: A Commentary on the Preface to Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), 15–33.

30. In English as *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).

31. Hegel, PR, preface, p. 1; RP 19. (PR = *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952]; RP = *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts oder Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft im Grundrisse*, volume 7 of *Sämtliche Werke*, Jubiläumsausgabe in 20 Bänden, ed. Hermann Glockner [Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1927–40]).

32. The standard English translation is *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (New York: Willey, 1944; New York: Dover, 1956; Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1990).

33. The standard English translation is *Hegel's Aesthetics*, 2 vols., trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975). Cf. also the earlier translation: *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, 4 vols., trans. Francis Plumptre Beresford Osmaston (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1920).

34. The standard English translation is *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 3 vols., trans. Ebenezer Brown Speirs and J. Burdon Sanderson (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., 1895; rpt. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967). New edition: *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 3 vols., ed. Peter C. Hodgson, trans. R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson, and J. M. Stewart (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984).

35. The standard English translation is *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 3 vols., trans. E. S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1894–96); rpt. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

36. Walter Kaufmann, “Hegel’s Conception of Phenomenology,” in *Phenomenology and Philosophical Understanding*, ed. Edo Pivcevic (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 229.

37. *Ibid.*, 220.

38. Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: A Reinterpretation* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), 243.

39. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N. Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1929), B xxxvii–viii.

40. Hegel, PhS §20; PG 19. Cf. EL §16; Enz. 41–42.

41. Hegel, EL §14; Enz. 41.

42. Hegel, PhS §5; PG 11.

43. Hegel, PhS §24; PG 21.

44. Hegel, EL §82; Enz. 92.

45. Hegel, SL 56; WL 41.

46. Hegel, PhS §2; PG 10. Hegel uses the same metaphor in his lectures on the philosophy of history: “And as the germ bears in itself the whole nature of the

tree, and the taste and form of its fruits, so do the first traces of Spirit virtually contain the whole of that History.” PH, p. 18; VPG, p. 45 (PH = *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree [New York: Willey, 1944]; VPG = *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, volume 11 of *Sämtliche Werke*, Jubiläumsausgabe in 20 Bänden, ed. Hermann Glockner [Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1927–40]).