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THE ORIGIN OF HEGEL'S DESIRE IN FICHTE

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The chapter on Self-Consciousness in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*¹ / *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (*PhG*) seems to introduce the concept of desire without justification. This appears to disrupt Hegel's claim to a thorough and independent dialectical argument. Not only does desire appear with no supporting argumentation, but the concept itself goes on to play a major role in Hegel's system. Many have assumed that the argument for desire is missing, but recently several scholars have begun to uncover an implicit reliance upon Kant, Fichte, and Schelling. Going beyond these scholars, I will argue that Hegel's reliance upon Fichte is much more extensive than has been previously thought.

I begin by looking at the way that presuppositions may have clouded the issue in the past. If the work is viewed as an analysis of historical progress, sometimes called the "anthropological" reading, then desire can be seen as an event, something that arises at some point in history.² Alternatively, if the *PhG* is primarily about the self-other relation within the structures of consciousness, sometimes called the "phenomenological" reading, desire becomes a condition of the possibility of self-consciousness.³ The tradition of interpreting Hegel anthropologically, in terms of historical development, has had a long and influential reign. Many contemporary scholars have cited, as particularly influential, an introduction to a series of lectures on the *PhG* given by Alexandre Kojève. These lectures influenced Sartre and French Hegelianism,⁴ but criticism has begun to mount against its anthropological reading. With respect to Hegel's use of desire in these early sections of *PhG*, Neuhouser, for example, has criticized Kojève's understanding of Hegel's argument. According to Neuhouser, Kojève has interpreted Hegel's

¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977).

² George Armstrong Kelly, "Notes on Hegel's Lordship and Bondage," In *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Alasdair MacIntyre (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1972), 192. Kelly is here referring to the work of Alexandre Kojève; all subsequent references to the lectures of Kojève will be based on Kelly.

³ Kelly, 199ff. See also, Scott Jenkins, "Hegel's Concept of Desire," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 47:1 (2009): 116n38. Jenkins calls this the *Anstoß* reading.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 191n5.

argument as if it were teleological,⁵ which suggests that desire is used in an *ad hoc* manner.⁶ Kojève himself had criticized this as a weak form of argument despite admitting that Hegel probably had other intentions besides the social in mind.⁷ And, given the fact that Hegel claims that all of the steps of his argument are rigorous, this weak link in the chain becomes a problem for Hegel's overall project. It would mean that Hegel has made a significant blunder in a very early stage of the work.⁸

Kelly has called Kojève's introduction an "artful exegesis." His subsequent critique makes one wonder if this ascription is not sarcastic.⁹ Kelly, argues that it is a mistake to allow the anthropological reading to cloud our view of the *PhG* so that we see it only in terms of historical development rather than in terms of subjectivity.¹⁰ If Kelly and Neuhouser are correct, this means that the true Hegel has been obscured, and that the real nature of his system is in need of recovery. The alternative, then, is the phenomenological view. On this reading, the primary, or underlying, analysis that Hegel is engaged with concerns the internal consequences that are produced by the perception of an external conflict between self and other.¹¹ This is not to say that Hegel would disavow any association with social aspects of historical development, but it is to say that the work primarily operates within the realm of the subject. Yet, the developmental aspects that Hegel employs are very prominent. If the phenomenological reading is correct, these aspects work to obscure the underlying nature of the project. Moreover, the historical theme is not only strong, but it builds throughout the work. Taylor, therefore, points out that the phenomenological view is

⁵ Frederick Neuhouser, "Deducing Desire and Recognition in the Phenomenology of Spirit," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 24:2 (1986): 244.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 245.

⁷ Kelly, 192.

⁸ Neuhouser, "Deducing," 245. See also, Charles Taylor, "The Opening Arguments of the Phenomenology," In *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Alasdair MacIntyre (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1972), 150. Taylor has also stated that there is a missing argument for desire in *PhG*.

⁹ Kelly, 191.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 192.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 195.

most visible in the early chapters of the *PhG*.¹² Despite this difficulty, these scholars conclude that Hegel's system is fundamentally about the self-other relation, he is merely approaching this relation from many angles and at many stages of development.¹³

Working within the phenomenological reading, then, the earlier stages of *PhG* rise to prominence as the best place to engage in an analysis of Hegel's goals and methods. In the transition from the consciousness stage to the self-consciousness stage we see many elements that will seem familiar to any student of German Idealism. This advancement (between the two stages) involves a change in the mode of relating to the world: theoretical to practical. It also involves a change in the object of phenomenological consideration: an ego's consciousness of objects to its consciousness of itself. And most importantly, we see a shift from seeking to know (the object) to seeking to satisfy (itself).¹⁴ This transition is motivated by the previous failure to conceive of objects in the world in purely objective terms. Objects cannot be perceived in themselves without some modification on the part of the perceiver. This requires a radical reversal of perspective that moves truth from the objective world to the subject.¹⁵ This shift brings to mind both the empiricist/rationalist contest and the Kantian (Copernican) revolution, the turn to the subject. It is no coincidence that we see these themes nestled deeply into these early stages of Hegel's system.

The anthropological reading has led scholars from Marx to Kojève to view the sudden inclusion of desire as *ad hoc*. But, on the phenomenological reading, desire can be viewed as coming from within Hegel's immediate academic context: primarily Schelling, Fichte, and Kant. Given this context, Hegel can both be excused for making certain assumptions and for using

¹² Taylor, 161.

¹³ Kelly, 201-203.

¹⁴ Frederick Neuhouser, "Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord," in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 37.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 37.

certain methods. I will discuss Hegel's sources and context later, at this point, I will focus on the methodology that he received from his peers.

Neuhouser has argued that desire comes out of a transcendental argument that is nested within the overarching dialectical structure. However, there is no obvious evidence in the text for this conclusion.¹⁶ Neuhouser argues that the transcendental interpretation is best because it would save Hegel's claim that his system is rigorous and that it does not allow outside concepts to come in, and because it can be shown that desire was implicitly presupposed at an earlier stage.¹⁷ Of course, this is not a straightforward transcendental argument in the style of Kant or Fichte. Transcendental arguments begin with fixed preconceived understandings of concepts, then they deduce the conditions that make these concepts possible. Hegel, instead, is engaged in dialectical argumentation. These arguments build gradually toward their conclusions. They begin by establishing the possibility of a concept and by defining the task at hand, thus carving out a space for a concept. On this basis the argument proceeds to flesh out what the concept means.¹⁸ At the self-consciousness stage, by a sort of transcendental argument, Hegel is revealing for "us" that desire has already been developed, implicitly.¹⁹ This gives us a basis for understanding how and why Hegel is introducing desire at this stage. But it remains to be seen how desire is being defined by Hegel, how it is being used, and what desire accomplishes once it is made available. To link Hegel to Fichte, these questions must now be answered.

Within the progress of the dialectical movement, consciousness finds that it must account for the unity that it has in its perception of objects. It accomplishes this by viewing itself as the unifying agent. This means that the conscious self is seeking after an explanation for the unity that

¹⁶ Neuhouser, "Deducing," 249.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 251.

¹⁸ Neuhouser, "Desire," 39. See also, Neuhouser, "Deducing," 244.

¹⁹ Neuhouser, "Deducing," 251.

it finds in perceived objects.²⁰ In the act of identifying itself as the source of the unity (of universals mediating knowledge), it is shifting the direction of its gaze from object to subject because only subjects can establish and use universals. In this move, therefore, consciousness becomes self-consciousness and it also sees itself as the source of knowledge.²¹ In these early stages of self-consciousness, the subject sees that the world beyond itself is alive, it is an organic whole, but it also sees itself as distinct and superior to it. It does not yet see the way in which it is connected to it.²² At this stage, there is a gap between object and subject, but there is also a connection between them. This is where Hegel uncovers desire.²³ The desire is to consume the object and make it into something that is “for-itself.” This also implicitly produces the necessity of the other, to be made explicit at a later stage.

Self-consciousness seeks to be free, self-sufficient. The object offends it as an obstacle to this goal. Thus, to be satisfied, self-consciousness seeks to find some kind of confirmation from the world that it is free. It is first driven to negate objects, to destroy them as a way to establish its self-sufficiency. But, destruction also reveals the inexorable connection between the two. Within the development of the subject, the self-consciousness is set the task of reconciling these contradictory views about the subject-object relationship, as both independent and necessarily connected.²⁴ In light of this task, Hegel must show that consciousness, as it relates to objects, lacks a certain feature. This missing feature must be necessary for self-consciousness. Hegel must also show that the negation of some other is the only way that this missing feature can be accounted for.²⁵ Hegel writes, “In the deduction of desire we saw that it was only in contrast to

²⁰ Hegel, *PhG*, 101. See also, Taylor, 161.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 107-108. See also, Neuhausser, “Deducing,” 246.

²² Neuhausser, “Deducing,” 247-248.

²³ Hegel, *PhG*, 105, 109. See also, Neuhausser, “Deducing,” 248.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 38. See also, *PhG*, 105.

²⁵ Neuhausser, “Deducing,” 258.

something other than itself that the 'I' could attain self-consciousness and that this 'contrasting' involved not only awareness of the other but its supersession as well."²⁶

Self-consciousness, according to Hegel, seeks to satisfy an urge to see itself as free, as undetermined by anything external to it. It desires to see itself in the world in the same way that it sees itself internally.²⁷ This provides the basis for a motivation, or a drive, within self-consciousness. Thus, it is the mismatch between the internal conception and experience that produces the desire. Self-consciousness views itself as essential and the object as inessential. It is certain of this and thus seeks to confirm this in experience by force.²⁸ Desire evolves as it encounters difficulties in achieving this objective. The subject needs an object that can validate it without being removed by the process of validation itself. Self-consciousness eventually comes to realize that only another subject, like itself, can provide this validation. While this solves some problems, it does not remove them all because the presence of another self-consciousness makes it more obvious than ever that the self depends on an other.²⁹ In this way, desire morphs into recognition, which is another necessary condition of self-consciousness at this later stage, but it is also a modification of desire; it is desire at a higher level.³⁰ The self-consciousness, as it advances to the stage of Lordship and Bondage, now has the need to be recognized as sovereign by another subject. Intersubjectivity is thus introduced into the dialectic even while the relationship remains grounded in the functions of subjectivity. This means that the earlier work, that more obviously concerned phenomenological consciousness, is the basis for intersubjectivity.³¹

²⁶ *PhG*, 109. See also, Neuhouser, "Deducing," 258.

²⁷ Neuhouser, "Desire," 38-39. Neuhouser also cites, Hegel's *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, §424Z. Future citations of the *Encyclopedia* are from Neuhouser.

²⁸ Neuhouser, "Deducing," 252-253.

²⁹ Neuhouser, "Desire," 45.

³⁰ Neuhouser, "Deducing," 257.

³¹ Kelly, 196.

As I have highlighted above, Hegel has been accused of bringing desire into his dialectic in violation of his own claims to be providing a rigorous and presuppositionless analysis.³² On first reading desire appears to come “out of the blue.” However, if Neuhouser, *et al.*, are correct, then Hegel brings in desire by means of an implicit transcendental argument in a way reminiscent of Kant and Fichte. This leaves unanswered the question of just how this concept is being transferred between stages and the extent to which Hegel’s usage of the concept is original.

In search of a source for desire, regarding the Lordship and Bondage stage, Kelly suggests that many of the elements involved in the dialectic, including desire, can be “distilled from mythology.” He also suggests a link to Plato who discusses the relation between the struggles in the state and the struggles in the soul.³³ Taylor sees a connection between pre-Kantian empiricism and Hegel’s consciousness stage. He then connects Kant to self-consciousness.³⁴ Most scholars today affirm that there is definitely some kind of link with Kant’s philosophy. Kant’s subjective turn contains many similarities to the changes that Hegel’s consciousness undergoes. Not only do we see a change in the object of consideration (from the thing to the self), but also a change in the way that consciousness relates to the world (from theoretical to practical).³⁵ Thus, it was Kant who introduced the basic conception of struggle at the core of human phenomenology.³⁶ However, few scholars have given a significant role to Fichte in this context. Even Neuhouser, in his earlier work, omits any mention of him. Yet, in his later work Neuhouser has begun to see a stronger connection, even though he quickly defers to Kant.³⁷ Only Kelly has given significant

³² Neuhouser, “Deducing,” 243-245. See also, Taylor, 150, 157.

³³ Kelly, 211.

³⁴ Taylor, 161.

³⁵ Neuhouser, “Desire,” 37.

³⁶ Kelly, 217n63.

³⁷ Neuhouser’s earlier work is from 1986, Neuhouser, “Deducing.” His later work is from 2009, Neuhouser, “Desire.”

credit to Fichte in his role in providing Hegel with much of his material.³⁸ Kelly suggests that, on some issues, Schelling and Fichte were “in the air.”³⁹ He points out that, obviously, Hegel had given much thought to both Schelling and Fichte since he had written a book in 1801 that attempted to mediate their systems (*Differenz des Fichte'schen und Schelling'schen Systems / The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*).⁴⁰ And, he thinks that it would be a mistake to conclude that Hegel rejected everything from Fichte’s system, or to conclude that Hegel’s arguments against Kant and Fichte entail a rejection of the various struggles and dualisms that these previous philosophers saw within the subject. The dichotomy between the finite self and the absolute self are not completely abandoned by Hegel, though this may seem to be the case.⁴¹ Kelly concludes that Hegel and Fichte shared the goal of trying to find an origin for social conflicts within the phenomenology of the self.⁴² Despite all of this, Kelly does not go into great depth about the specific connection between Fichte and Hegel on the issue of desire.

Skipping the remainder of my case for a Fichte-Hegel connection for a moment, I now turn briefly to Schelling. Here again, we find that Kelly is the primary advocate making the case for an influence on Hegel. For a time, Hegel and Schelling were close friends. Schelling’s account of natural forces being a source of rudimentary attraction and repulsion is found repeated in *PhG*’s earliest stages. Yet, the fact that Hegel found a place for Schelling does not mean that he did not also find a place for some of Fichte’s ideas; as resources for Hegel, they are not mutually exclusive. And, as will be shown, the structures within the ego that Hegel employs in self-consciousness owe much more to Fichte than to Schelling.

³⁸ Kelly, 210-211.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 212.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 210.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 213.

Fichte – Hegel Connections

Many connections can be found to link Hegel's use of the concept of desire back to Fichte's system. I list below a few of the more prominent instances.

Fichte deals extensively with the necessary elements of consciousness within a system of drives. In summary, self-awareness only comes in terms of being aware of an object as distinct from the self. In addition to simple awareness, the self also feels the need to see itself as free. This comes in terms of the moral law, the first law of the self, which is the drive to be the whole of reality. Fichte writes in the 1794 *Wissenschaftslehre (WL)*, "The object is merely posited, insofar as there is resistance to an activity of the self; no such activity, no object."⁴³ Fichte also writes:

The original striving after a causality in general within the self is genetically derived from the self's law, that it shall reflect upon itself and shall demand that, in this reflection, it be found to be the whole of reality; both being requisite, as surely as it is to be a self. This necessary reflection of the self upon itself is the basis of all its going forth outside itself, while the demand that it exhaust the infinite is the basis of its striving after causality in general; and both are grounded solely in the absolute being of the self.⁴⁴

Hegel invokes the same, or similar, concepts. The subject of self-consciousness passes beyond mere awareness of the object to an awareness of itself as necessary for the constitution of the object. This also places the object in opposition to itself. This resistance is something that self-consciousness must overcome. Hegel writes:

Consciousness, as self-consciousness, henceforth has a double object: one is the immediate object, that of sense-certainty and perception, which however for self-consciousness has the character of a negative; and the second, viz. itself, which is the true essence, and is present in the first instance only as opposed to the first object. In this sphere, self-consciousness exhibits itself as the movement in which this antithesis is removed, and the identity of itself with itself becomes explicit for it.⁴⁵

This shows that self-consciousness views itself as essential, and the object as inessential. It views itself as the law giver who is sovereign over the object. It demands to be self-sufficient in itself,

⁴³ J. G. Fichte, *Science of Knowledge (Wissenschaftslehre, 1794)*, eds. and trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 229. Cited hereafter as *WL*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 243.

⁴⁵ Hegel, *PhG*, 105.

autonomous, and sovereign over the object. This demand constitutes the self's drive, and this is the self's practical nature, its moral law.⁴⁶ Yet, this relationship has a hidden aspect to it. Self-consciousness is also, unbeknownst to itself, admitting a necessary connection between itself and the object. At this stage, the task of the self is to find some constructive way to deal with this necessary connection. These points illustrate that both Fichte and Hegel make the object the precondition of consciousness. They both place the object in opposition to the self producing conflict. They both make opposition to the object the basis of a moral law for the subject. The main difference is that Fichte clearly places this within the subjective realm, while, for Hegel, the placement is ambiguous. On the phenomenological reading, however, their placements match.

Freedom is also dealt with in a similar fashion by both philosophers. Of course, this is also linked to morality as we just saw in the summaries above. Fichte writes, "once what is subjective in the I has been separated off and has been thought of, in accordance with our earlier description of the same (§2), as an absolute power of freedom, then what is objective in this relationship to freedom is, for this same freedom, the moral law."⁴⁷ Here, Fichte is explicitly linking freedom with the moral law of the self. The self feels its freedom as an ought. It is the nature of the self to be free and it is driven to exercise its freedom by pushing against the object that resists it. This is the origin of the primary drives in Fichte. He also states, "Nothing that is in the self is there without a drive."⁴⁸ and it is the basis of his system to account for everything in terms of the activity of the self. Therefore, because the self is described by Fichte as a system of drives, it follows that Fichte views the self as entirely composed of drives, the drive to be autonomous, the desire to be independent, free.

⁴⁶ Neuhouser, "Desire," 38.

⁴⁷ J. G. Fichte, *The System of Ethics: According to the Principles of the Wissenschaftslehre*, trans. Daniel Breazeale (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005), 102.

⁴⁸ Fichte, *WL*, 284.

Hegel sees freedom similarly. The subject is driven toward the goal, to see itself as free, and this accounts for the practical nature of the self.⁴⁹ Self-consciousness is something that thinks of itself as sovereign and autonomous and this, in turn, causes it to think that it ought to be such and to experience itself as such. This produces a fundamental drive in self-consciousness. In relation to the world of objects, this produces a drive to be validated as sovereign and self-sufficient.⁵⁰ He writes, “self-consciousness is thus certain of itself only by superseding this other that presents itself to self-consciousness as an independent life; self-consciousness is desire.”⁵¹

Fichte thought that the goal toward which the self is driven, the ideal, was unattainable. To attain the ideal is to lose awareness. “The self which, regarded in general as an intelligence, is dependent on a not-self, and is an intelligence simply to the extent that a not-self exists.”⁵² Hegel makes achieving this goal the aim of self-consciousness. The satisfaction of the desire is attempted in several unsuccessful ways, but each new way represents an advance within the dialectic. Ultimately, of course, Hegel views this ideal as the realization by the self that the structure of its object is the same as the structure of itself.⁵³ Hegel writes:

For experience is just this, that the content—which is Spirit—is in itself substance, and therefore an object of consciousness. But this substance which is Spirit is the process in which Spirit becomes what it is in itself; and it is only as this process of reflecting itself into itself that it is in itself truly Spirit.⁵⁴

This, apparently, avoids the consequences that Fichte had predicted, loss of consciousness. Yet, in the current stage, self-consciousness, Hegel and Fichte agree about the unattainability of the ideal. Regardless of whether or not Hegel’s ultimate stage attains the goal, and no matter the consequences, his version of the Fichtean project seems to come to the same conclusion.

⁴⁹ Neuhauser, “Desire,” 38.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 39. See also, Hegel, *Encyclopedia*, §424Z.

⁵¹ Hegel, *PhG*, 109. See also, Hegel, *Encyclopedia*, §427Z.

⁵² Fichte, *WL*, 231.

⁵³ Allegra de Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 246.

⁵⁴ Hegel, *PhG*, 487.

There is also an association of terminology. Fichte characterized the desire of the self in terms of the phrase, “for itself.” The object that has been posited by the self is what causes the self to feel limited. The self is “limited *for-itself*.”⁵⁵ The desire is to restore its free activity “for itself.” Of course, the self also posited the object in the first place, “for itself.”⁵⁶ Hegel makes use of the same terminology in the Self-Consciousness chapter. By seeing unity in the objective world, self-consciousness perceives the object, and it also sees that the object is not “for itself.” He writes, “Self-consciousness which is simply *for itself* and directly characterizes its object as a negative element, or is primarily *desire*, will therefore, on the contrary, learn through experience that the object is independent.”⁵⁷ For Hegel, a lack of the property “for-itself” is the basis for the realization that the object is independent. For Fichte, the same property, given by the same terminology, is the basis for the feeling of limitation. Both ultimately derive desire from the lack of this same property. We also see in this phrase the great underlying theme of both systems. This is nothing other than the “interior consequences wrought by the external confrontation of the self and the other.”⁵⁸ And, while this concept may have ancient beginnings, it is clearly being discussed by these two men within the same milieu. This is what joins their discussions together and allows for a certain amount of familiarity to be presumed on the part of their readers. The use of the same terminology may be the way in which Hegel is signaling his readers to remember what Fichte had done before. Blatantly, Hegel writes, “Self-consciousness is . . . ‘I am I.’”⁵⁹

Hegel does not remain within the environment of consciousness for very long. He quickly moves outside the self into the intersubjective realm. The subsequent stages within the Self-Consciousness chapter require that there be more than one subject with which to work. Yet,

⁵⁵ Fichte, *WL*, 261. Italics in original.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 227.

⁵⁷ Hegel, *PhG*, 106.

⁵⁸ Kelly, 195.

⁵⁹ Hegel, *PhG*, 105. Fichte memorably bases the argument for his own system on the formula “I = I.” See, Fichte, *WL*, 96.

Fichte had already made this move; he produces a second self, a second ego, in order to argue for his doctrine of natural right.⁶⁰ Additionally, this move into the intersubjectivity is grounded, for both men, in subjectivity. And, both men each attempted to provide a comprehensive system that produced all things but required no basis itself.⁶¹

Hegel does not give a straightforward/explicit transcendental argument since he nests it within a dialectic progression. But, he does bring desire into the dialectic without establishing it separately. He goes on to show how desire, freedom, object, and self-consciousness form a whole whose parts are each indispensable. Thus, the presence of desire can be later assumed, by the reader, to be a condition of the possibility of self-consciousness. This is Neuhouser's argument,⁶² and it seems to be correct. Hegel's methodology seems to bypass the usual first step of the transcendental argument. That is, he does not bother to explicitly define desire before he argues for it as a condition of the possibility of self-consciousness. Fichte had made just such an explicit transcendental argument for desire. If Fichte's arguments can be associated with Hegel's, then, it can be shown that the "missing" argument for desire in Hegel is not missing at all. Instead, Hegel is merely assuming that the first step of the transcendental argument can be bypassed due to his readers' familiarity with the work of Fichte. Hegel left ample clues, so, if Fichte's fingerprints can be seen all over the Self-Consciousness chapter then it follows that Hegel might have felt comfortable taking a shorter route to the conclusions. Additionally, the alternative would have been to write at least as voluminously as Fichte had on this one point. This would have involved a significant and disruptive departure from his dialectic. Thus, stylistic as well as philosophical

⁶⁰ Ibid., 196. See also, Fichte, *Grundlage des Naturrechtes, Sämmlte Werke*, III (Berlin, 1845), 30ff., and *The Science of Right*, trans. by A. E. Kroeger (Philadelphia, 1869), 48ff.

⁶¹ Fichte, *WL*, 93. See also, Hegel, *PhG*, Introduction: 46-57.

⁶² Neuhouser, "Desire," 39.

reasons may have led Hegel to give desire's origins a quick treatment that he had reason to believe his readers would have immediately understood.

Conclusion

Clearly, Hegel did not merely copy from others. But, it seems clear at this point that he has absorbed much of Fichte's system as a building block for his own larger system. Hegel also seems to have done the same with parts of Schelling's system. As a quasi-historical progression, Hegel was able to include past philosophical and scientific ideas into his own system. Yet, since *PhG* is much more than a history of human ideas, the building blocks that are included must obviously play some significant philosophical role. In the case of Fichte, the role seems to be much more pervasive than the contributions of any other philosopher. This is because the phenomenological structures provided by Fichte's system, appear to be involved in some fashion in all of the stages of Hegel's system after the Consciousness chapter. Hegel also follows a similar strategy: he begins with the structures of consciousness, he uses desire as a fundamental element, and he uses this basis in order to move into intersubjective territory.

I conclude, therefore, that Hegel justifies his usage of the concept of desire implicitly in his presumption that his readers will recognize Fichte's arguments in content and in form. This saves Hegel from the uncharitable interpretations given by many of his readers in the intervening years, and it reconnects him to the historical context in which he worked.

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