

# Hegel's Faith

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*Abstract:* Suppose that to have faith in a proposition  $p$  is to attribute to  $p$  the property of being true without having a justification for doing so. It is often assumed that there is an upfront distinction between believers and philosophers: though both endorse conjunctions of controversial propositions, believers do so by resorting to faith, whereas philosophers can avoid appealing to faith and even to, say, faith\*, to attribute some other property distinct from that of being true to  $p$  without having a justification for doing so. But can philosophers really avoid appealing to faith and faith\*? This essay argues that, in his *Science of Logic*, Hegel points to an affirmative response in defending that his system's first principle is not "hypothetical". Yet, a Pyrrhonian challenge problematizes Hegel's response in: spelling out Hegel's faith or faith\* in at least one of his system's propositions; and indicating that the distinction between believers and philosophers is not as upfront as it is usually believed but, rather, is to be drawn in nuanced terms.

## Introduction

*[Yhwh] said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you' (Genesis 12:1).<sup>1</sup>*

Let us suppose that to have faith in a proposition  $p$  is to attribute to  $p$  the property of being true without having a justification for doing so.<sup>2</sup> Never mind what precisely counts as 'being true'; this essay is neutral on theories of truth, e.g., the classic correspondence theory or other ones. The term 'proposition' is used here in the broad sense of a possible bearer of the property of being true, or other properties, such as those of being: justified; processually true or justified through the course of an exposition; meaningful; aesthetically appealing; politically pertinent; rationally undeniable, say, insofar as only a 'fool' (to put it in Saint Anselm's (2009) terms) who falls short of personhood could irrationally reject it; etc. Hereafter, this conjunction of properties is called  $C_p$ . Moreover, never mind what precisely counts as a justification. Let us suppose, yet, that it does not count as a justification to attribute to  $p$  the property of being true or any other property within  $C_p$  by underlying that: this is indicated by scriptures (e.g., according to a reading of the quoted passage from the book of *Genesis*); one has been taught to do so by tradition (e.g., one's parents, religious school and/or community); and one is sentimentally

compelled (e.g., out of awe) to do so. Consider Jews who follow what Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel calls in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, the ‘religion of sublimity’ (VPR II 669 / 561).<sup>3</sup> Jews have often had faith in propositions, such as:

- (J-O) *Yhwh* exists.
- (J-E) A revelation is a cognitive way to apprehend and/or to justify the postulation of *Yhwh*, while indicating that (J-O) is true and has all sorts of properties within  $C_p$ .<sup>4</sup>
- (J-N) One should believe in (J-E) because to do so is to act in accordance with *Yhwh*’s will in altruistically sacrificing one’s selfish urges (e.g., to stay in one’s country with one’s kindred in the house of one’s father) for the sake of achieving agreement with the other members of the Israeli community, even if one does not fully rationally understand *Yhwh*’s commands (e.g., ‘go from your country, kindred and father’s house’).<sup>5</sup>

It is often assumed that there is an upfront distinction between believers and philosophers. On the one hand, they both endorse conjunctions of controversial propositions, such as: ontological (e.g., (J-O)), epistemic (e.g., (J-E)), or normative (e.g., (J-N)) ones. On the other hand, it is often assumed that believers do so by resorting to faith, whereas philosophers can avoid appealing to faith or even to, say, faith\*, to attribute any property within  $C_p$  to  $p$  without having a justification for doing so. But can philosophers really avoid appealing to faith and faith\* while endorsing a controversial conjunction of propositions? This question is motivated by what may be called  $\text{Beginning}_{\text{Text}}$ , the first section of Book I of Hegel’s *Science of Logic*. In the  $\text{Beginning}_{\text{Text}}$ , Hegel suggests that he appeals neither to faith nor faith\*. On my part, I problematize this claim by articulating a Pyrrhonian challenge based on Sextus Empiricus (2000). According to this challenge, philosophers seem to have two options. *Option 1* is to embrace a faithful conjunction of controversial propositions in recognizing one’s faith or faith\* in at least one proposition. *Option 2* is to remain neutral vis-à-vis any controversial proposition while sceptically searching for an apparently unachievable faithless (that is, non-hypothetical) first principle (in the broad sense of a proposition that more or less implicitly justifies all other

propositions one endorses). Given these options, the distinction between believers and philosophers cannot be drawn in upfront terms but, rather, is to be drawn in nuanced ones.

## 1. A Reading of Section I of Book I of Hegel's *Science of Logic*

### (a) *Beginning: Motivating the Beginning*<sub>Question</sub>

In the *Beginning*<sub>Text</sub>, like in practically all of his texts, Hegel does not explicitly define his technical terms. He also does not clearly distinguish his views from those he attributes to others. So, Hegel seems to articulate *prima facie* inconsistent claims, if not obscure ones, as Bertrand Russell (1945) and Karl Popper (1940, 1994) argue. This factor motivates an exegetical attitude adopted here under the influence of sympathetic readers of Hegel, such as: Robert Brandom (2019) and Markus Gabriel (2017). This attitude does not seek to precisely grasp Hegel's intention; this may be impossible. Rather, this attitude aims to spell out the pertinence of Hegel's texts for contemporary philosophy by: regimenting or defining Hegel's technical terms in non-technical ones not explicitly adopted by him; distinguishing Hegel's views from those he attributes to others; explaining away some of his texts' *prima facie* inconsistent claims; and spelling out that disputes considered by Hegel are still motivated today.

In the *Beginning*<sub>Text</sub>, Hegel addresses what may be called *Beginning*<sub>Question</sub>: 'With what must the beginning of science be made?' (WL 45/21:53). By 'science' (*Wissenschaft*), it is plausible to interpret that Hegel means a faithless conjunction of controversial propositions, such as the one his philosophical system purports to be. To put it in terms that Robb Dunphy (2020) articulates under the influence of Brady Bowman (2013), for Hegel, such system would: demonstrate 'with certainty, or irrefutable reasoning, the truth of one's claims', including its first principle (Dunphy 2020: 21). By a 'beginning' (*Anfang*), Hegel seems to allude to a first

principle. With the term ‘must’ (*muß*), he points to what is to rationally compel philosophers to adopt. This is to read that with the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> what Hegel in fact asks is: what is the most rationally compelling first principle? One of Hegel’s ways to motivate this question is by contraposing his answer to it to that of Karl Leonhard Reinhold (1801). The latter would have ‘repeatedly urged in the later stages of his philosophizing’ that: ‘philosophy can begin only with something which is *hypothetically* and *problematically* true and that at first, therefore, philosophizing can be only a quest’ (WL 48/21:56–57).

This passage indicates that, for Hegel, Reinhold’s response to the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> is that:

(No<sub>1st</sub>) In fact, there is not a most rationally compelling first principle.

The reason is that one who aims to support a philosophical system would have to have faith in at least one of the system’s propositions (e.g., its first principle) by unwarrantedly attributing to it the property of being true. For Reinhold (in Hegel’s reading), then, no faithless philosophical system seems achievable so that philosophers have the aforementioned *Option 1* and *2*. As the last quoted passage indicates, Hegel takes Reinhold to endorse the latter option. The same, Manfred Frank (2004) argues, can be stated about early German romantic poets, such as: Friedrich Hölderlin; and Friedrich von Hardenberg who wrote under the pseudonym Novalis and was Reinhold’s student. Indeed, in echoing his professor, Hardenberg argues that if ‘the concept [of an ‘absolute foundation’] contained an impossibility [as Reinhold suggests] —then the ‘urge to philosophize would be an infinite activity’ (Novalis 1960: 269 / quoted in Frank 2004: 39).

Hegel’s second way to motivate the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> is by contraposing his answer to it to that of most philosophers who, Hegel suggests, more or less implicitly presuppose that:

P.1 The most rationally compelling first principle is either a realist or an idealist proposition.<sup>6</sup>

The ‘or’ in P.1, as Dunphy (2020) indicates, ‘must be understood *exclusively*’ (Dunphy 2020: 7). Evidence that Hegel takes most philosophers to (*pace* Reinhold) endorse P.1 is provided by a Beginning<sub>Text</sub>’s claim that is not to be attributed to Hegel himself: ‘the beginning of philosophy must be either *something mediated* [*Vermitteltes*, that is, a mediated object] or *something immediate* [*Unmittelbares*, that is, an immediate object]’ (WL 45/21:53). An example of a realistic proposition is (J-O). An example of an idealistic proposition is (J-E). Respectively, these propositions show commitment to the existence of what Hegel calls an ‘immediate object’ (*Unmittelbares*), and a ‘mediated object’ (*Vermitteltes*) (WL 45/21:53). Under the influence of Willard van Orman Quine (1951, 1976, 1992), let us take a proposition to show commitment to the existence of an object when it can be regimented or (more or less implicitly) suggests a proposition that can be regimented into an existential proposition of first-order logic, e.g.,  $\exists x (Px)$  —assuming that ‘P’ stands for any predicate, such as: ‘being an immediate object’.

An immediate object, to put it in Wilfrid Sellars’s (1997) terms, is a ‘given’ (e.g., *Yhwh*), that is, something that exists or is supposed to exist over and above any mediated object (e.g., a revelation).<sup>7</sup> A mediated object is a ‘means’, that is, a cognitive or a supposedly cognitive way to apprehend and/or to justify the postulation of an object. Immediate and mediated objects have a ‘determinate content’ (WL 45/21:53). For Hegel, an object has this content if and only if it is possible to individuate it in differentiating the object from other objects through property-attribution. Consider *Yhwh*. Jews give *Yhwh* a determinate content by attributing to *Yhwh*, say: the beginning property of motivating the dispute over (J-O) by making persons wonder about *Yhwh*’s existence; the proceeding property of spelling out with (J-E) a criterion to deal with this dispute; the ending property of indicating with (J-N) how one is to act; etc.

For Hegel, ‘water’, ‘the one’, ‘nous’, ‘idea’, ‘substance’ and ‘monad’ are examples of objects philosophers have taken to be immediate ones with a determinate content (*WL 45/21:53*). Other examples of such objects whose existence was embraced by contemporary philosophers are: ordinary objects (e.g., tables); abstract objects (e.g., sets); and ‘physical objects’ in Quine’s sense of any ‘aggregate material content of any portion of space-time, however ragged and discontinuous’ (Quine 1976: 497). Let us call realists those philosophers who begin by more or less explicitly endorsing the existence of ‘givens’, such as these. By idealists, let us understand philosophers who more or less explicitly begin by endorsing the existence of ‘means’, that is, mediated objects with a determinate content. Examples of mediated objects considered by Hegel are: ‘thinking,’ ‘intuition,’ ‘sensation,’ ‘I,’ ‘subjectivity,’ etc. (*WL 45/21:53*). Further examples of such objects are: contextual conditions (e.g., Kuhn’s ‘scientific paradigms’); Quinean ‘conceptual schemes’; and criteria for what there is, e.g., accordance with the rules of ordinary language; indispensability for physics; maximization of theoretical virtues, such as ‘conservatism, generality, simplicity, refutability and modesty’ (Quine 1992: 20)); etc.

Like the past philosophers considered by Hegel, most 20<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary philosophers have also more or less implicitly responded to the *BeginningQuestion* by presupposing P.1. Evidence that this is so is given, for instance, by works by Quine, and those influenced by him, e.g., David Lewis (1986); Daniel Dennett (1991); Theodore Sider (2011); etc. These philosophers show commitment to P.1 because they presuppose the existence of ‘givens’ (e.g., ‘physical objects’) or ‘means’ (e.g., a criterion for what there is, such as the aforementioned ones).<sup>8</sup> There have also been those who suggest a response to the *BeginningQuestion* similar to Reinhold’s and early German romantic poets. This is the case with Richard Rorty (1999) who

argues that no philosopher has gotten to ‘that fabled place ‘beyond hypotheses’’ (Rorty 1999: 10).<sup>9</sup> So, the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> is as motivated today as it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*(b) Proceeding: Spelling Out a Criterion to Deal with the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>*

P.1 is the first premise of an argument implicitly articulated in the Beginning<sub>Text</sub>.

Henceforth, Argument H. This argument is a *reductio ad absurdum*; it starts by supposing P.1 so that it can be shown that this premise leads to an absurdity. So, the conclusion of Argument H is:

~P.1    The most rationally compelling first principle is neither a realistic nor an idealistic proposition.

In contradicting Reinhold, early German romantic poets and Rorty, Hegel supports ~P.1 by suggesting that there is one faithless philosophical system: Hegel’s philosophical system itself, which (at least in principle) would not have to be supported by appealing to faith or faith\* in a first principle or in any other of the system’s proposition. Argument H has two other premises:

P.2    The most rationally compelling first principle is *not* a realistic proposition.

P.3    The most rationally compelling first principle is *not* an idealistic proposition.

Hegel points to a criterion to deal with the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> and justify P.2 and P.3. This criterion (henceforth, Hegel’s criterion) is accordance with three requirements: Self-Awareness; Non-Contradiction; and Elimination. Self-Awareness is a requirement satisfied by the one who does not presuppose as a first principle a controversial ontological proposition. The latter is a proposition that requires further justification insofar as it shows commitment to the existence of at least one immediate object or mediated object with a determinate content whose existence has been previously challenged. According to Hegel, philosophers have traditionally lacked Self-Awareness. He points to this direction in the 1831 second preface of his *Science of Logic* in

stating that: ‘all too often and all too vehemently have I been confronted by opponents incapable of the simple consideration that their opinions and objections imply categories which are presuppositions and themselves in need of being criticized first before they are put to use’ (*WL* 20/21:18). Hegel concludes that ‘lack of self-awareness in this matter is incredibly profound’ (*WL* 20/21:18). So, realists and idealists would not have been aware that to embrace a realistic proposition or an idealistic proposition as a first principle is a disputable move. Accordingly, against those who embrace a realistic proposition as a first principle, Hegel defends P.2. He also defends P.3, *pace* those who take a first principle to be an idealistic proposition.

The second requirement adopted by Hegel is Non-Contradiction. This constrain is satisfied by the one who does not more or less implicitly embrace as a first principle a self-contradictory proposition. ‘It is easy to show’, Hegel argues, ‘that [the beginning of philosophy] can be neither [a mediated object] nor [an immediate object]; so either way of beginning runs into contradiction’ (*WL* 45/21:53). The first contradiction Hegel indicates is that between P.2 and its denial,  $\sim$ P.2. Realists would point to  $\sim$ P.2 by more or less explicitly stating that an immediate object (e.g., an ordinary object) exist. Yet, they would also show commitment to P.2. This would occur because to back up the postulation of an immediate object, realists would implicitly embrace the existence of at least one mediated object (e.g., perception). Against realists, Hegel endorses P.2 under the basis that those who reject this premise embrace a self-contradictory proposition: P.2 and  $\sim$ P.2. Hegel suggests that idealists would also assume a self-contradictory proposition: P.3 and  $\sim$ P.3. They would embrace  $\sim$ P.3 by more or less explicitly stating that any mediated object (e.g., perception) exists. However, they would also implicitly point to P.3. This is because to back up the use of a mediated object, they would have to embrace the existence of at least one immediate object (e.g., ordinary objects).

Elimination, the third requirement adopted by Hegel, is satisfied by the one who eliminates the distinction between immediate and mediated objects. This distinction would have to be eliminated because all objects are neither immediate nor mediated ones, even though they may all be inaccurately described either by: a realistic vocabulary traditionally adopted to portray the former; or an idealistic vocabulary traditionally used to depict the latter. Consider *Yhwh* and ordinary objects. The former and the latter have usually been depicted realistically, that is, as ‘givens’. On the other hand, revelation and perception have been usually described idealistically, that is, as ‘means’. However, *Yhwh* and ordinary objects can also be depicted idealistically, say, as being ‘mediated’ by revelation and perception, respectively. Revelation and perception would also be depictable realistically, say, as ‘givens’ that exist over and above any means. The Beginning<sub>Text</sub> supports the elimination of the distinction between immediate / mediated objects through passages, such as: ‘*there is nothing in heaven or nature or spirit [Geiste] or anywhere else that does not contain just as much immediacy [Unmittelbarkeit] as mediation [Vermittlung]*’ (WL 46/21:54). ‘So’, Hegel continues, ‘both these determinations prove to be *unseparated and inseparable* and the opposition between them nothing real’ (WL 46/21:54). This is Hegel’s way of suggesting that what exists is to be described beyond realistic and idealistic vocabularies. Yet, given the pervasiveness of these vocabularies, it may be impossible to do so. What Hegel does, then, is not to articulate a radically new technical language that depicts what exists in neither realistic nor idealistic terms. He, instead, relies on what may be called a moderately new technical language that portrays what exists by mixing these vocabularies. Practically all passages of Hegel’s works are evidence that he does so. The same can be stated about a paradoxical expression that he sometimes uses to describe his view: ‘absolute [a sort of realistic term] idealism [that is, an upfront idealistic term]’ (EL §45).<sup>10</sup>

If P.1, P.2 and P.3 are true, then so is  $\sim$ P.1. So, argument H is valid. This becomes explicit if it is considered that four corollaries can be derived from this argument's premises, even though the *Beginning<sub>Text</sub>* does not explicitly show so. The first corollary is C.1: the most rationally compelling first principle is an idealist proposition. C.1 follows by disjunction elimination (DE) from P.1 and P.2. By DE from P.1 and P.3, a second corollary follows, C.2: the most rationally compelling first principle is a realistic proposition. The third corollary is C.3, a contradiction that follows from C.2 and P.2 by conjunction insertion (CI): the most rationally compelling first principle is and, yet, is not a realistic proposition. The fourth corollary, C.4, is another contradiction: the most rationally compelling first principle is and, yet, is not an idealistic proposition. C.4 follows from C.1 and P.3 by CI. From either one of the stated contradictions,  $\sim$ P.1 follows by *reductio ad absurdum* (RA). Argument H can be formalized by assuming that: f is a first-order predicate that stands for 'being the most rationally compelling first principle', and that I and M are second-order predicates.<sup>11</sup> Respectively, R and I stand for: 'being a realistic proposition'; and 'being an idealistic proposition'. Formally, Argument H is:

- P.1<sub>F</sub>     $\forall f (Rf \vee If)$   
P.2<sub>F</sub>     $\forall f (\sim Rf)$   
P.3<sub>F</sub>     $\forall f (\sim If)$   
C.1<sub>F</sub>     $\forall f (If)$ , DE from (P.1<sub>F</sub>) and (P.2<sub>F</sub>)  
C.2<sub>F</sub>     $\forall f (Rf)$ , DE from (P.1<sub>F</sub>) and (P.3<sub>F</sub>)  
C.3<sub>F</sub>     $\forall f (Rf \wedge \sim Rf)$ , CI from (C.2<sub>F</sub>) and (P.2<sub>F</sub>).  
C.4<sub>F</sub>     $\forall f (If \wedge \sim If)$ , CI from (C.1<sub>F</sub>) and (P.3<sub>F</sub>).  
 $\therefore \sim \forall f (Rf \vee If)$ , RA from C.3<sub>F</sub> or C.4<sub>F</sub>.

(c) *Ending: Answering the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>*

An equivalent way to formally state the conclusion of Argument H is:  $\exists f (\sim Rf \wedge \sim If)$ , a regimented version of  $\sim P.1$ .  $\sim P.1$  indicates that, for Hegel, the most rationally compelling first principle can be negatively described as being neither a realistic nor an idealistic proposition. Positively speaking, Hegel argues that his philosophical system's first principle is:

(H-O) '*Pure being*' exists (WL 48/21:56).

Accordingly, the conclusion of Argument H can be positively depicted as:

(H-1<sup>st</sup>) There is a most rationally compelling first principle: (H-O).

(H-1<sup>st</sup>) can be regimented into:  $\exists f (H)$  — assuming that 'H' stands for the second-order predicate 'being the proposition (H-O)'. For Hegel,  $\sim P.1$  and (H-1<sup>st</sup>) mutually imply one another. This is to read him as pointing throughout the *Beginning<sub>Text</sub>* to the formula:  $\exists f (\sim Rf \wedge \sim If) \leftrightarrow \exists f (Hf)$ .

But what does (H-O) mean? A negative response to this question is that, for Hegel, this proposition: is *not* a controversial ontological one; *cannot* more or less presuppose or be a self-contradictory proposition; and does *not* presuppose that the immediate /mediated object distinction accurately depicts what there is. If (H-O) had these three features, it would violate Hegel's criterion in disrespecting: Self-Awareness; Non-Contradiction; and Elimination, respectively. To positively spell out what (H-O) means, three steps must be given. Such steps, in showing that Hegel takes (H-O) to be the only proposition able to respect Hegel's criterion, characterize the beginning of what has been called Hegel's 'dialectics'. This term may be taken to refer to a 'given' (that is, a process to put it in realistic terms) and to a 'means' (that is, a method to put it in idealistic terms) that through a speculative relation<sup>12</sup> constitute one another

within three moments: ‘thesis, anti-thesis [and] synthesis’ (Popper 1940: 404). As Michael Forster (1993: 130) argues, these moments have not always been described very precisely. Let us attempt to do otherwise in spelling the three stated steps as follows.

First, Hegel suggests that (H-O) is to be read at the moment of Thesis as an extremely vague proposition. Due to its extreme vagueness, this proposition would have three features: (i) commitment to an object (that is, ‘pure being’) with an indeterminate content; (ii) uncontradictability; and (iii) exemplification of Hegel’s moderately new technical language. Hegel suggests that (H-O) has feature (i) at the moment of Thesis by underlying that at this moment pure being is: ‘unanalyzable’ and ‘complete emptiness’ (WL 52/21:62). Given this factor, (H-O) would also have feature (ii) at the moment of Thesis. At this moment, this proposition would also have feature (iii). This is because Hegel relies on his moderately new technical language in depicting pure being somehow realistically in terms of something that does not ‘presuppose’ (WL 23/21:27) anything<sup>13</sup> in being ‘*what is there before us*’ (WL 47/21:55); ‘*simple immediacy*’ (WL 47/21:55); etc.

Second, Hegel suggests that (H-O) is to be read at the moment of Anti-Thesis as a moderately vague proposition. Due to its moderate vagueness, this proposition would still have features (i), (ii) and (iii). (H-O) would still have feature (i) at the moment of Anti-Thesis because, at this moment, pure being would merely seem but not really cease to be ‘unanalyzable’ or ‘complete emptiness’ (WL 52/21:62). This would occur because (H-O) would enter into a relation with a proposition that merely seems but does not really contradict it:

(H<sub>Nothing</sub>) ‘*Pure nothing*’ exists (WL 51/21:60).

For Hegel, this proposition merely seems to contradict (H-O) because it is usually presupposed that pure being and pure nothing have distinct properties, such as: that of being an ‘identity’ that

all beings share insofar as they exist; and that of being a ‘non-identity’ that all beings lack insofar as they are not non-beings. However, at the moment of Anti-Thesis, (H-O) and (H<sub>Nothing</sub>) do not really contradict one another. This occurs because at this moment pure being and pure nothing are objects with indeterminate contents. This is what Hegel indicates with the claim that ‘*pure being and pure nothing are [...] the same*’ (WL 59/21:69). Given this factor, (H-O) would continue to have feature (ii) at the moment of Anti-Thesis. (H-O) would also continue to have feature (iii) at this moment. What changes is that now Hegel uses his moderately new technical language differently. He depicts pure being in the somehow paradoxical realistic as well as idealistic terms of: something that is an ‘absolute immediate [and] just as absolutely mediated’ (WL 50/21:59); ‘the concept of the unity of being and non-being’ (WL 51/21:60); ‘the identity of identity and non-identity’ (WL 51/21:60); etc.

Third, Hegel suggests that (H-O) is to be read at the moment of Synthesis as a proposition that has two further features. The first is that now (H-O) seems to finally lose its vagueness. This occurs because it seems that one can finally describe ‘pure being’ as an object with a determinate content. One way to do so, for instance, is by individuating pure being in attributing to it the property of being an ‘identity’ that all beings share insofar as they exist. Pure being, then, would finally be distinguishable from pure nothing. The reason is that one can also individuate the latter by paradoxically attributing to it the property of ‘being’ a ‘non-identity’ that all beings lack insofar as they are not non-beings. Once pure being and pure nothing are individuated, (H-O) and (H<sub>Nothing</sub>) seem to contradict one another. Therefore, one may be inclined to conclude that (H-O) ceases to have features (i), (ii) and (iii). This is not, though, the most persuasive reading. The reason is that Hegel also suggests that (H-O) has at the moment of

Synthesis a second further feature. This feature is that of ultimately needing to be read as or replaced by a new proposition:

(H<sub>Becoming</sub>) Becoming exists.

This proposition, like (H-O) at the moment of Thesis, is extremely vague and, so, has features (i), (ii) and (iii). This is because it: relies on the concept of ‘becoming’ that at first is just as ‘unanalyzable’ or ‘empty’ as that of pure being at the moment of Thesis; cannot, so, be contradicted; and exemplifies Hegel’s moderately new language by committing oneself to an object (‘becoming’) that is neither exactly an immediate nor a mediated one but somehow both. This is to state that (H<sub>Becoming</sub>) gives rise to a second Thesis-Anti-Thesis-Synthesis series that finishes by replacing (H<sub>Becoming</sub>) by a new proposition that likewise has features (i), (ii) and (iii). This new series, by its turns, gives rise to another series and so on up to the *crucial moment* when one masters Hegel’s philosophical system. This system’s first principle, then, is in a never-ending process of being reformulated. This is what Hegel indicates in underlining that: ‘the beginning of philosophy is the ever present and self-preserving foundation of all subsequent developments, remaining everywhere immanent in its further determinations’ (WL 49/21:58). Note that the italicized *crucial moment* is one when, in relying on his moderately new technical language, Hegel describes pure being in the somehow idealistic terms of: an ‘absolute knowledge’ that would eliminate the ‘separation of the subject matter [a ‘given’] from the certainty of itself [a ‘means’]’ (WL 29/21:33).<sup>14</sup>

Once this is done, it would become explicit that Hegel’s philosophical system is a ‘circle in which the first becomes also the last, and the last also the first’ (WL 49/21:57). This is Hegel’s way of arguing that his first principle (‘absolute ground’) is also its last ‘*result*’ (WL 49/21:57). This is insofar as the very decision of endorsing (H-O) as a first principle would only be justified

throughout the course of an exposition that Hegel spent his whole career developing. Such an exposition would show that, *pace* Reinhold, (H-O) is ‘not anything provisory, still problematic and hypothetical, but must be determined through the nature of the matter at issue and of the content itself’ (WL 49–50/21:58). This exposition would also show that (H-O) never ceases to have features (i), (ii) and (iii). It follows that to embrace (H-O) as a first principle would be the only way to respect Hegel’s criterion in articulating through dialectics a faithful philosophical system that speculates or is constituted by pure being’s ‘self-revelatory process’. It also follows that if Hegel is correct, there is an upfront distinction between believers and at least one philosopher, that is, Hegel himself. This is so in that Hegel’s system would not appeal to faith or faith\*. Let us, however, problematize this view.

## 2. A Pyrrhonian Challenge

### (a) *Modern Scepticism vs. Ancient Scepticism*

Hegel, as Forster (1989) indicates, aimed to reply to scepticism throughout his career. He also distinguished modern scepticism from Ancient scepticism. By the former, let us understand a stance that more or less implicitly embraces P.2, but rejects P.3 while responding to the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> by suggesting that the most rationally compelling first principle is a particular kind of idealistic proposition that shows commitment to the existence of what may be called a negative mediated object. By this object, let us understand a ‘*shine*’, a ‘phenomenon’ or an ‘appearance’ (WL 342/11:246) with a determined content that spells out a ‘subjective criterion’ (WL 45/21:53) that renders cognitively impossible the apprehension and/or the postulation of any ‘given’ immediate object, such as a thing-in-itself. Hegel seeks to reply to modern scepticism in the Beginning<sub>Text</sub>. Evidence for this is the fact that this text highlights that there have been those who are: ‘skeptically looking for a subjective criterion against dogmatic philosophizing’ (WL

45/21:53). Later in the *Science of Logic* (see *WL* 342–343/11:246–247), Hegel associates this stance with Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottlieb Fichte. ‘Idealism, whether Leibnizian, Kantian, Fichtean, or in any other form’, Hegel underlines, ‘has not gone further than scepticism in this: it has not advanced beyond being as determinateness’ (*WL* 343/11:247). Let us assume that Argument H provides a pertinent reply to idealism. The same, yet, does not seem to be the case regarding the Ancient scepticism of Sextus Empiricus (2000).

This kind of scepticism is not explicitly considered in the *Beginning<sub>Text</sub>*. In fact, later in the *Science of Logic*, Hegel only alludes to it once as a stance that points to the ‘antinomy [...] in every concept which it encountered in the sciences’ (*WL* 158/21:180). This is not to state that Hegel was not interested in Ancient scepticism. In spelling out that modern sceptics are less persuasive than Ancient sceptics, Hegel published in 1802 an essay on scepticism (*VSP*) that defends that ‘against dogmatism’, Ancient sceptics ‘must necessarily be victorious’ (*VSP* 335/245). It seems motivated, then, to contrapose Hegel’s mature views of the 1830s to a Pyrrhonian challenge based on Sextus Empiricus’ views. The aim of this challenge is neither: to provide a detailed reading of such works<sup>15</sup>; nor to spell out Hegel’s particular reading of them.<sup>16</sup>

What is crucial here is to understand the aforementioned Pyrrhonian challenge as a stance distinct and more challenging to Hegel than modern scepticism. This stance is that of Pyrrhonists who: suspend judgement on any response to the *Beginning<sub>Question</sub>*, while insinuating that it does not *seem* to be rationally compelling to lose one’s neutrality in doing otherwise. The term ‘seem’ in the last phrase is not to be read as evidence that Pyrrhonists are committed to the existence of a negative mediated object, or to the proposition that the most rationally compelling principle is an idealistic proposition that shows commitment to such an object. Instead of articulating some sort of ‘theory of seeming’ by endorsing this sort of object, with the term ‘seem’, Pyrrhonists are

less ambitious. With this term, Pyrrhonists merely seek to indicate that they are unable to be rationally compelled to make any judgement on the *BeginningQuestion*. Hereafter, the term ‘seem’ will be applied in such sense so that it becomes explicit that Pyrrhonists are distinct from those who attribute properties to propositions, such as:

~ (H-1<sup>st</sup>) The most rationally compelling first principle is not (H-O).

(No-1<sup>st</sup>) In fact, there is not a most rationally compelling first principle.

*(b) Agrippa’s Five Tropes*

What forces Pyrrhonists to be rationally compelled to remain neutral on whether any response to the *BeginningQuestion* (such as ~ (H-1<sup>st</sup>) or (No-1<sup>st</sup>)) has any property (e.g., to be true or those in  $C_p$ ) is an appeal to five tropes that Diogenes Laertius (2018) attributes to ‘Agrippa and his school’ (in Book IX, chapter 11, §88). The first trope is that of *Dispute*. It is through this trope that Pyrrhonists indicate that there have been disputes on the *BeginningQuestion*. For instance, as indicated in the last section, Hegel responds to this question by endorsing (H-1<sup>st</sup>), whereas others (e.g., realists, idealists, Reinhold, early German romantic poets and Rorty) point to distinct directions, say, by endorsing: P.1, ~P.2, ~P.3, ~ (H-1<sup>st</sup>); (No-1<sup>st</sup>), etc. Therefore, Pyrrhonists suggest, it does not *seem* (in the stated sense) that one has a rationally compelling reason to lose one’s neutrality vis-à-vis the *BeginningQuestion*. It seems, instead, that one is to suspend judgement on this question until those who do otherwise find an agreement among themselves. Yet, if one were to resist doing so, an appeal to a second trope may be made.

The second trope is that of *Regress*. Through it, Pyrrhonists highlight that were one to attribute any property to any response to the *BeginningQuestion*, it seems that one would have to resort to another proposition. Yet, were one to attribute any property to the latter, it seems that an

appeal to another proposition would have to be made and so on. Consider (H-O). As indicated above, Hegel argues that this proposition has the property of not being ‘provisory’, ‘problematic’ or ‘hypothetical’ (WL 49–50/21:58). Rather, (H-O) would have the property of being processually true or justified through the course of an exposition Hegel spent his whole career articulating: that of his philosophical system. Yet, Pyrrhonists underline, to justify this property-attribution to (H-O), it seems that Hegel more or less implicitly resorts to another proposition:

(H-E) To proceed in accordance with Hegel’s criterion by articulating Argument H and appealing to dialectics is a cognitive way to apprehend and/or to justify the postulation of pure being, while indicating that (H-O) is true or has at least one property in  $C_p$  (e.g., to be processually true or justified through the course of an exposition that never ceases to back up (H-1<sup>st</sup>)).

Hegel more or less implicitly likewise attributes a property within  $C_p$  to (H-E): that of ultimately being rationally undeniable. Consider the aforementioned 1831 second preface of his *Science of Logic*. In this text, Hegel states that ‘there is something stupid [*Albernheit*]’ about those who reject (H-E) while contradicting Hegel’s criterion and presupposing distinctions that Hegel rejects, such as that between ‘immediacy’ and ‘mediation’ (WL 21/21:19). Let us bring attention to Hegel’s term, ‘stupid’ [*Albernheit*]. This term echoes the eighth paragraph of Anselm’s *Proslogion*’s third chapter where the ‘fool’ who says in one’s heart that there is no Christian God is described as being ‘stupid [*stultus*] and foolish [*insipiens*]’. Accordingly, Pyrrhonists may suggest that it seems that Hegel’s procedure is not as original as he seems to believe. This is so in that Hegel seems to express what might be called a quite traditional properly dogmatic ‘subtle’ violence: that of suggesting that one’s others (e.g., those who disagree with one’s criterion to deal with the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>) fall short of personhood while pointing to a somehow quite narrow notion of rationality or, to put it in Greek terms, *logos*.<sup>17</sup> This violence may be called ‘subtle’ because it is distinct from corporeal kinds of violence, such as that of

hurting someone with ‘a shot from a pistol’ (WL 45/21:53). Yet, the properly dogmatic violence is quite upfront. Indeed, it rationally compels Pyrrhonists to remain neutral on the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> while underling that any sort of property-attribution to (H-E) seems to require an appeal to another proposition, say:

(H-N) One should believe in (H-E) because to do so is to act in accordance with pure being in altruistically sacrificing one’s selfish urges (e.g., to erect a faithful philosophical system) for the sake of achieving rational agreement with all persons<sup>18</sup> by convincing them (e.g., through Hegel’s purportedly faithless philosophical system) that Hegel’s 19<sup>th</sup> century European or, more narrowly, German community is the freest and, accordingly, is to serve as a model that, albeit imperfect, all other communities should strive to achieve.<sup>19</sup>

Yet, Pyrrhonists emphasize, to attribute any property to (H-N) would likewise require an appeal to another proposition and so on *ad infinitum*. It seems, then, that one is to suspend judgement on the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>. Yet, if one were to resist doing so, an appeal to a third trope may be made.

The third trope is *Relativity*. This trope points out that property-attribution to any proposition (e.g., (H-O), (H-E) or (H-N)) that is to ultimately back one’s response to the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> seems to be relative to one’s own: psychology; culture; gender; race; community; political bias; etc. This seems, Pyrrhonists underline, the case with (H-O), (H-E) and (H-N). Especially the latter seems quite connected to a 19<sup>th</sup> century colonialist assumption that though few would endorse today, Hegel, like several 19<sup>th</sup> century Europeans, seems to have taken for granted, especially in his 1822/ 1823 *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*. The assumption is that: there is a non-culturally biased criterion (e.g., agreement with Hegel calls ‘freedom’) for measuring the value of distinct communities which shows that the European community or, more narrowly, the German community is, albeit imperfect, somehow ‘superior’ to others.<sup>20</sup> Pyrrhonists, then, are rationally compelled to emphasize that it seems that one is to suspend judgement on the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>, while, nonetheless, considering that an appeal to a fourth trope can be made.

The fourth trope is *Hypothesis*. This is to underline that it seems rationally compelling to react to the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> by endorsing the aforementioned *Option 1*. This is to embrace a faithful philosophical system, while recognizing one's own faith or faith\* in at least one of the system's propositions, e.g., (H-O), (H-E) or (H-N). If Hegel were to do so, he would acknowledge that his first principle is merely 'provisory', 'problematic' or 'hypothetical' (WL 49–50/21:58). Given that he does not do so, Pyrrhonists may appeal to a fifth trope: *Circularity*. This is to point out that one may ultimately run into a circle while backing up one's response to the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>. This is done, for instance, by someone who argues that (H-O), (H-E) or (H-N) is the most rationally compelling first principle because (H-O), (H-E) or (H-N) is the most rationally compelling first principle. As indicated above, Hegel acknowledges that his system runs into a 'circle' (WL 49/21:58). However, what he does acknowledge, Pyrrhonists underline, is that this is a reason for taking this system to be a faithful one, that is, one that shows faith or faith\* in (H-O), (H-E) or (H-N).

Given these tropes, Pyrrhonists conclude that it seems to be rationally compelling to remain neutral on the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>, in endorsing *Option 2*. This is to follow Reinhold (at least in Hegel's reading) in remaining neutral vis-à-vis any philosophical system while engaging oneself in an endless sceptic inquiry for an apparently unachievable faithless first principle.

*(c) Replying to Hegel's Possible Reply*

How would the late Hegel of the 1830s reply to the stated Pyrrhonian challenge? Given that Hegel does not mention Ancient scepticism in the Beginning<sub>Text</sub>, it is not easy to answer this question. A plausible speculation, yet, is that: Hegel would articulate a new version of a view he defended in the stated 1802 essay. This view is that Agrippa's tropes are 'completely useless

against [his] philosophy' (VSP 335/245). This is insofar as Hegel's philosophy would commit itself to a proposition that Pyrrhonists would have to presuppose to formulate these tropes:

(H-R) There is 'Reason' (VSP 336/246).

In addressing *Dispute*, the early Hegel defends that (H-R) cannot be disputed. This is insofar as even Pyrrhonists would inevitably rely on it. 'The rational', Hegel points to this direction, 'is always and everywhere, self-identical' (VSP 336/246). Given so, it would be impossible to 'demand for a ground [for H-R] that is advanced in the sphere of oppositions, and repeated endlessly' (VSP 337/247). (H-R), then, would be immune to *Regress*. (H-R) would also be immune to *Relativity* because evidence of its existence would be given by each and every rational thinking, including that of Pyrrhonists who, accordingly, would be unable to show that (H-R) 'stands in a necessary relation to another' that renders (H-R) relative (VSP 336/246).<sup>21</sup> (H-R) would also not be an 'unproved assumption [whose] counterpart could with equal right be presupposed unproven in opposition' (VSP 336/247). This is because (H-R) would have no 'opposed counterpart' in including within itself any kind of opposite (VSP 336/247). (H-R), then, would be immune to *Hypothesis*. Moreover, (H-R) would be immune to *Circularity* because it would refer to a 'relation' within which 'nothing is reciprocally grounded' (VSP 336/247). The new articulation that, it is plausible to speculate, the mature Hegel would endorse in replying to the Pyrrhonian challenge would replace (H-R) by (H-O) in spelling out that the points made about the former apply to the latter. This is to state the following:

(Reply) In articulating their tropes, Pyrrhonists, like all philosophers, would give evidence of (H-O) in implicitly showing that this proposition is immune to Agrippa's five tropes.

On their part, Pyrrhonists can insist that (Reply) does not seem to rationally compel one to drop one's neutrality vis-à-vis the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>. In fact, with (Reply), Hegel seems to

merely attribute to (H-O) another property: that of being immune to Agrippa's five tropes insofar as Pyrrhonists would presuppose (H-O). In doing so, Hegel does not seem to solve the dispute over the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> in a rationally undeniable way. Instead, what he seems to do is to rely on a somehow idiosyncratic concept of reason while providing further evidence that the very Pyrrhonian challenge articulated in the last sub-section rationally compels one into rational neutrality vis-à-vis the Beginning<sub>Question</sub>. Consider that, once articulated, (Reply) and/or the proposition that (H-O) has the property of being immune to Agrippa's five tropes may be addressed through *Dispute*, *Regress*, *Relativity*, *Hypothesis* and *Circularity*. To do so is to problematize Hegel in emphasizing that these propositions also seem to: give rise to disputes; need to be further justified by other propositions; be merely relatively justified; be endorsed as problematic hypotheses; and/or lead to circles. This is to state that it does not seem that in appealing to such tropes, Pyrrhonists are implicitly committed to: a somehow idiosyncratic concept of reason that would be immune to Agrippa's tropes; and/or to a controversial proposition, such as (H-R) or (H-O). What seems rationally compelling is to problematize Hegel's take on the Beginning<sub>Question</sub> in indicating that his philosophical system is a faithful one that requires faith or faith\* in (H-R), (Reply), (H-O), (H-E) or (H-N). Given that Agrippa's five tropes can be used against any purportedly faithless system, the points made against Hegel throughout this section seem to generalize. In other words, all philosophers seem to have two options: *Option 1* and *2*.

## Conclusion

Given *Option 1* and *2*, the distinction between believers (e.g., Jews who believe in (J-O), (J-E), (J-N)) and philosophers who champion philosophical systems (e.g., Hegel who appeals to (H-O), (H-E) and (H-N)) is not as upfront as it is usually believed. This occurs in that, like

believers, philosophers must resort to faith or faith\* in more or less implicitly attributing the property of being true or any property within  $C_p$  to at least one proposition, without having a justification for doing so. As indicated above, Hegel's philosophical system illustrates that. This is so in that the one who aims to support this system, must ultimately have faith or faith\* in (H-R), (Reply), (H-O), (H-E) or (H-N). In doing so, one's procedure would resemble that of a believer who has faith in (J-O), (J-E) and/or (J-N). In fact, it is not an exaggeration to defend that what Hegel ultimately accomplishes is an implicit proposal: that of a new kind of faith in a new God ('pure being') that is to replace the faith in other Gods, e.g., *Yhwh*.

Indeed, Hegel's aim of postulating pure being as a new kind of God<sup>22</sup> becomes explicit when his *Science of Logic* is read in connection with his *Lectures on Philosophy of Religion*. A passage from the latter's manuscript is that: 'God [like pure being in the *Science of Logic*] is the beginning of all things and the end of all things' (*VPR* I 84 / 3). It seems, then, that Hegel's God (pure being) could also be ultimately individuated by properties similar to the ones Jews have attributed to *Yhwh*, such as: the beginning property of motivating the very dispute over (H-O) by making persons wonder about pure being's existence; the proceeding property of spelling out with (H-E) a criterion to deal with this dispute; and the ending property of indicating with (H-N) how one is to behave. However, distinct from what Hegel takes the Jewish reading of *Yhwh* to be, Hegel's God (pure being) seems: to be a rationally apprehensible universal 'living God' (*VPR* III 271 / 196) of all persons as opposed to an 'alien' (*VPR* III 327 / 250) to reason God of a particular community.<sup>23</sup>

This essay's conclusion, yet, is that: albeit believers and philosophers both resort to faith or faith\*, a distinction between them is to be drawn. Yet, this is to be done in nuanced terms. Such terms start to be spelled out when it is highlighted that believers and philosophers are

‘subtly’ distinct in that: whereas philosophers (e.g., Hegel) have usually been open to multiple sources, believers tend to excessively privilege a source over others.<sup>24</sup> This occurs when believers exclusively consider one kind of scripture and attribute the property of being true or any property within  $C_p$  to at least one proposition just because this proposition is in scriptures. Philosophers have not usually done so, albeit some of them have referred to scriptures as a way to illustrate their views. Indeed, this is the case even with Medieval philosophers. Like believers, the latter philosophers attribute the property of being true or other properties in  $C_p$  to propositions contained in scriptures. Yet, they aim to back up this move by relying on justificatory resources, such as: that of articulating arguments that are not in scriptures.

Believers and philosophers are also ‘subtly’ distinct in a second sense: whereas philosophers (e.g., Socrates) have often been so to speak ‘deviants’ who problematize tradition (e.g., by casting doubt on the dogmas of a dominant religion), believers tend to excessively privilege tradition. This is attested by the fact that believers have often attributed the property of being true or any property within  $C_p$  to at least one proposition merely because of teachings they have received from their parents, religious school and/or community. This is not how philosophers have usually proceeded. By contrast, philosophers have often problematized such teachings, say, by articulating philosophical systems that create dissensus and contradict dogmas.

Believers also tend to excessively privilege sentiments over reasons. This is attested by the fact that there have been believers who take propositions, such as (J-O), (J-E) and/or (J-N), to be true just because they feel sentimentally compelled to do, say, out of awe. This is not a procedure common among philosophers. The latter have appealed to stylistic resources, e.g., to rely on metaphors; to resort to irony; to derogatorily depict one’s opponents while expressing the stated ‘subtle violence’; etc. Philosophers, yet, have not usually attributed the property of being

true or other properties in  $C_p$  to proposition only because of sentimental appeals. Rather, philosophers have aimed to back up this attribution by relying on other resources, such as that of: spelling out a criterion to address a dispute. There is, then, a third sense in which believers and philosophers are ‘subtly’ distinct from one another. In short, though believers and philosophers are both faithful, they express faith or faith\* in a ‘subtly’ distinct way.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The translation is that of the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The disputes on whether “*Yhwh*” is God’s proper name and why “Abram” is later renamed “Abraham” will not be discussed in this essay.

<sup>2</sup> Whether this is a descriptive analysis of the concept of faith, or one that is to be normatively adopted is not an issue that can be addressed here. See Amie L. Thomasson (2020) for a take on descriptive and normative analyses.

<sup>3</sup> Abbreviations used:

*EL* = Hegel, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline Part I: Science of Logic*, trans. K. Brinkmann and D. O. Dahlstrom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

*PhG* = Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. T. Pinkard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

*PR* = Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) / Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, edited by Klaus Grotzsch (Hamburg: Meiner, 2017).

*VPR* = Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. I, II and III, trans. R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson, and J. M. Stewart with the assistance of H. S. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) / Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, 3 Parts, edited by Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Meiner, 1983).

*VSP* = Hegel, ‘On the Relationship of Skepticism to Philosophy’, trans. H. S. Harris, in *Between Kant and Hegel*, edited by G. di Giovanni and H. S. Harris (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2000) / Hegel, ‘Verhältnis des Skeptizismus zur Philosophie’, in *Jenaer Schriften 1801-1807 (Werke 2)* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986).

*WL* = Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. G. di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) / Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke* Vol. 11 and 21 (Hamburg: Meiner, 1968–).

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed reading of revelation, see Jean-Luc Marion (2018).

<sup>5</sup> For Hegel, *Yhwh* has the property of being alien to human reason in demanding ‘blind obedience’ (*VPR* II 450 / 349). This God would also be a God of the Israeli community as opposed to a universal God of all persons (*VPR* II 437 / 336). For detailed readings on Hegel’s view on Judaism, see Emil L. Fackenheim (1967, 1973), and the eighth chapter of Jon Stewart (2018).

<sup>6</sup> Note that Hegel does not consider that a first principle could also be a normative proposition, such as (J-N).

<sup>7</sup> For readings of Hegel that connect him to Sellars, see John McDowell (2009) and Robert Pippin (2019).

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<sup>8</sup> Whether Quine and those influenced by him take the conjunctions of controversial propositions they endorse to be faithless ones is a challenging dispute that will not be addressed here. Consider, yet, that Quine describes belief in the existence of physical objects as a ‘myth’ ultimately ‘comparable, epistemologically, to [the myth of] the gods of Homer’ (Quine 1951: 41). Arguably, this passage may be read as evidence that Quine takes himself to appeal to faith or faith\*. For a detailed reading of Quine, see Peter Hylton (2007).

<sup>9</sup> I suspend judgement on whether Rorty endorses *Option 1* or *2*.

<sup>10</sup> For a more detailed take on ‘absolute idealism’, see Frederick Beiser (2005: 53).

<sup>11</sup> Other readers of Hegel have already regimented his language into that of formal logic. See, for instance, Carlos Cirne-Lima (2008) who seeks to formalize Hegel’s whole *Science of Logic*.

<sup>12</sup> For a more detailed characterization of this relation, see Peter C. Hodgson (2005) who argues that: ‘reality is, to be sure, a mirror of consciousness; but *consciousness is also a mirror of reality*. “Speculation” (from the Latin *speculum*, “mirror”) involves a relationship of double mirroring in which there occurs a reversal in the flow of meaning—from object to subject as well as from subject to object (Hodgson 2005: 7).

<sup>13</sup> As Evander Bradley McGilvary’s (1897) indicates, ‘perhaps the objection most often urged against Hegel’s logic is that it is not true to its claim of making no presuppositions’ (McGilvary 1897: 497). My view is allied with those who believe so. On his part, McGilvary reads that Hegel did not aim to start his *Science of Logic* with no presupposition. Instead, this work would presuppose the conclusion of Hegel’s 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which, by its turn, would presuppose the existence of ‘sensuous consciousness’ (McGilvary 1897: 499). It is not this essay’s aim to address McGilvary’s reading in detail or to spell out how the *Science of Logic* is connected to the *Phenomenology*. It is, yet, worthy to underline that if McGilvary’s reading is correct, it would be even easier to attribute to Hegel a faithful philosophical system insofar as he would have faith or faith\* in the proposition, ‘there is sensuous consciousness’.

<sup>14</sup> For a more detailed reading on Hegel’s view on knowledge, see Jens Rometsch (2013).

<sup>15</sup> For such a task, see Robert J. Fogelin (1994). Also consider Felipe G. A. Moreira (2019a).

<sup>16</sup> See Forster (1989, 2005) for such an inquiry.

<sup>17</sup> This violence is discussed in Moreira (2019b).

<sup>18</sup> In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel states that: ‘the nature of humanity is to drive men to agreement with one another, and humanity’s existence lies only in the commonality of consciousness that has been brought about. The anti-human [*Widermenschliche*], the only animalistic, consists in staying put in the sphere of feeling and in being able to communicate only through such feelings’ (*PhG* §69).

<sup>19</sup> Sometimes, Hegel suggests that he is only committed to descriptive propositions as opposed to normative ones, such as (H-N). For instance, in his 1821 *Philosophy of Right*, he states that ‘philosophy’ is the ‘*comprehension of the present and the actual*, not setting up of a *world beyond* which exists God knows where’ (*PR* 20/18). It is plausible to read, though, that Hegel likewise more or less implicitly normatively suggests that one *should* believe his ‘*comprehension of the present and actual*’ in pointing toward (H-N).

<sup>20</sup> For a more detailed take on Hegel’s relation to colonialism, see Robert Bernasconi (1998) and Alison Stone (2020).

<sup>21</sup> Yet, in the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel states that ‘each individual is in any case a *child of his time*, thus philosophy, too, *is its own time comprehended in thoughts*’ (*PR* 21-22/20).

<sup>22</sup> For more detailed takes on such God, see Quentin Lauer (1982) and William Desmond (2003).

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<sup>23</sup> Hegel's God also seems connected to Protestantism, as Fackenheim (1967) and Lu de Vos (2012) indicate.

<sup>24</sup> Yet, this is not to state that philosophers have not also ignored all sorts of sources, e.g., non-European ones.

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