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**Actualization through Constraint: an Analysis of Hegelian Self-Consciousness in
Fascism-Exclusionary Expression and in Modular Orchestral Composition**

This discussion focuses on the conditions required for progression into self awareness in accordance with the philosophy of G.F.W. Hegel. It analyzes two representations of freedom- freedom of speech and freedom of musical composition- that must undergo a concretization process in order to enable movement into self-consciousness. Each representation produces a shared element of sociality after transcending its negation by way of Hegel's dialectic process, and one additional component of practicality and corporeality in each can be observed. Hegel's dialectic refines a perceived object into an understandable concept. Freedoms of discourse and aesthetic are mere objects, and they cannot facilitate self-consciousness until they have been critically examined and improved upon with the responsible omission of particular freedoms. Omission thereby serves as negation. It is a constrained freedom, an alteration to the original perception, and the actualization of these freedoms are dependent upon it; boundless freedom in speech creates environments of exploitation and violence, while boundless freedom in music composition fails to produce creations that are comprehensible.

In "Self-Consciousness as a Living Kind", author Lucian Ionel claims that Hegel's *Phenomenology* "promises to overcome the one-sidedness of an idealist account of

subjectivity... by revealing the insufficiency of the shape in which self-consciousness initially presents itself and by indicating how this insufficiency is to be overcome, once this shape of consciousness properly articulates itself” (Ionel 77). Once the initial presentations of these freedoms have incorporated their appropriate negations, they become sublated into concepts of fascim-exclusionary speech and modular orchestral composition. Before any negation there is only one-sided subjectivity within a consciousness engaging with either forms of freedom. This is because boundless speech is only sustainable and practical in existence for itself, for as soon as there is externality from the consideration of other consciousnesses, it is met with the obstacles of adjusting to others’ freedoms. Additionally, boundless compositional freedom can only exist if verification of the resulting production rests solely in the opinion of the creator. It must adjust its creative parameters to obtain external approval or to exist at all in a way that can be understood. These sublated improvements therefore provide the possibility for resolution of the one-sidedness originally present before any negation. Qualities of sociality, corporeality, and practicality become observable, which Ionel explains are the elements of subjectivity that constitute “Hegel’s comprehensive conception of self-consciousness.” The subjectivity, experienced as a single consciousness engaging with either form of freedom, is therefore now in a position to move into self-consciousness.

The abstract objects of speech and aesthetic freedom can be refined into concepts that are capable of moving a consciousness engaged with them into a consciousness primed for self-awareness. This movement will be illustrated by a demonstration of the insufficiency of both objects’ initial perception in section I, followed by an explanation of the initial perception’s negation in Section II. Finally, section III will demonstrate how the application of the object’s

negation sublates the object into a concept that is satisfactory for Hegel's requirements for self-consciousness.

I. Problems of Absolute Boundlessness

To begin the examination of insufficient ideas of freedom, consider the United State's involvement in foreign affairs. When the U.S. employs uncriticized freedom as an actor on the global stage, the results are disastrously problematic. A mutable term, 'freedom' has been invoked to secure any and all American interests in the support of authoritarian nationalism worldwide, thus presenting a starting place for the Hegelian dialectical process: freedom before negation.

Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman explain in their book *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* that U.S. administrators are responsible for numerous human rights violations; America funds and trains the militias of certain underdeveloped states susceptible to the advancement of authoritarian motives. Latin America, for example, became a major diaspora when thousands of citizens were killed, tortured, or dispersed upon the U.S. intervention of sponsorship for neo-fascist regimes, the introduction of U.S. trained military juntas, and counterrevolutionary aid. Regarding the *Report on Torture* by Amnesty International (AI), Chomsky and Herman provide that "AI estimates 15,000 death squad victims in the small country of Guatemala between 1970 and 1975, a thousand in Argentina in 1975 before the military coup and the unleashing of a true reign of terror. The AI Annual Report for 1975-1976 also notes that 'more than 80%' of the urgent appeals and actions for victims of human torture have been coming from Latin America... Hideous torture has become standard practice in the U.S. client fascist states" (Chomsky, Herman, 9,10). Furthermore, the military junta were

“directly installed by [the U.S.] or are the beneficiaries of our direct intervention...using military equipment and training supplied by the United States.” These neo-fascist juntas then go on to serve the interests of the U.S., and are explained to be responsible for “a ‘lobotomization’ of the intellect and the ‘cultural genocide of our time,’” citing a Latin American journalist who parallels their condition of exile in 1975 to fascist Europe of 1933-1940 (Chomsky, Herman, 15-16). It is further explained that “the widespread use of torture and political assassinations... create ‘a climate of fear and uncertainty to discourage any form of opposition’” regarding the suppression for revolutionary action (Chomsky, Herman, 15-16). While the U.S.’s status as “leader of the free world” is based on claims to preserve human life and liberty, the U.S. involvement in Latin America also supports suppression of “reformers, democrats, and radicals” by way of counterrevolutionary aid. Right-wing military regimes are therefore stabilized. Regardless of sovereignty, U.S. endorsed neo-fascism has shaped “the primary characteristics of other states in its domains in accordance with its interests” (Chomsky, Herman, 15-16).

The lack of media transparency about what has actually occurred in Latin America, and explicit support of this behavior in favor of U.S. nationalism is technically a protected ideology under capitalism. The endorsement of neofascism is evidenced herein to be inherently emergent of what Hegel might ascribe as unscrutinized freedom. Therefore, the initial presentation of freedom is a false representation of what its extension truly entails, and is insufficient in its pre-negation form.

Now consider freedom in the realm of aesthetics. The idea of creating art is inherently boundless. In a free society, artists have liberty to construct as they please. They are typically inhibited only by factors of motivation or understanding of a craft. This liberty may result in the production of art that is comprehended and emotionally experienced by an audience. It may also

however produce obscurity that is interpretable only to its creator, or an obscurity that asserts no purpose for comprehension at all.

If art is produced only for its own sake, it does not support an Hegelian progression; it is not yet truly expressed. Hegel discusses that an object exists in and for itself upon initial conceptualization, presenting insufficiently, at this time, to discern the truth of itself. As explained in §166 of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "what the object immediately was in itself- mere being in certainty, the concrete thing in perception...proves to be in truth, not this at all; instead, this in-itself turns out to be a mode in which the object is only for another" (Hegel, Houlgate, 87). For the object to develop concretely, it must transcend the "in itself"ness of obscurity. It follows therefore that art which is created purely for art's sake cannot, in the shape of sense-certainty, progress toward its truth; it has only existed for itself. It ceases to be fully realized until it exists for another.

Art that omits any need or desire to be recognized by an audience inhibits the secondary shape of consciousness, but this can be remedied by the inclusion of parameters to an otherwise boundless creative agency. Orchestral music offers particular compositional format structures that creators utilize like templates, guiding the composition into a digestible experience for the listener. This calculation of experience is not necessarily required for the construction of comprehensible art, but an explicit example in which classical orchestration produced profound listener reactions is detailed in Teresa Marrin Nakra and Brett F. BuSha's article *Synchronous Sympathy at the Symphony: Conductor and Audience Accord*. Traditional research has commonly evidenced a production of emotional stimuli from exposure to classical music, and in broadening the scope of emotional susceptibility, this article focuses on a study of affect comparisons between conductor and audience during a concert of the Boston Symphony

Orchestra. Through electrocardiogram and self-reported measurements, Nankra and Busha explain that the study findings were as follows: “1) the conductor’s heart rate variations were temporally aligned with structural patterns in the musical scores; and 2) these variations strongly correlated with the average emotional intensity measurement of the audience.” This correlation thereby evidences an emotional potency of parameter-respecting composition that relinquishes ultimate creative freedom by confining itself to identifiable formats for the consumption consideration of another.

II. Negation Upon the Initial Perception

In order to actualize the idea of freedom, that is, in order to make accessible essential freedoms to all persons, it is necessary to exclude expression that permits or encourages any form of fascism. This is because fascism, as evidenced above, is an ideology that explicitly denies freedom outside its own interest, a blatant contradiction to the initial intention of freedom.

A non-criticized utilization of the free press has allowed what Chomsky and Herman have coined “brainwashing under freedom”- the installation of measures that seek to convince the American people that neofascist activity is justified. They explain that “since the installation and support of military juntas, with their sadistic tortures and bloodbaths, are hardly compatible with human rights...the United States and Western Europe have been hard-pressed to rationalize state policy.” Under the protections of unregulated freedom of expression, Chomsky and Herman explain that “the primary solution has been massive suppression [of] the extensive torture and killing, the diaspora, the major shift to authoritarian government...and the U.S. role in introducing and protecting the leadership of this client fascist empire” (Chomsky, Herman, 12).

This is fascism *permitting* expression, and a negation to absolute expressive freedom must hereby be applied: a requirement of transparency by way of regulating the press for legitimacy. This would prevent public brainwashing and perhaps instill a sense of urgency. If regulated to require factual representations of military activity, citizens of the free world could be stirred to action against these egregious human rights violations.

However, there also exists today outright support of American authoritarian nationalism displayed through blatantly exploitative behaviors of individuals, judiciary, and leadership. It is therefore necessary, in observation of the inevitable violent consequence of permitting fascism, to deny freedom of any expression that encourages alignment with such authoritarianism. This is to say, fascism must be excluded from expression in the actualization of preserving freedom of expression.

Regarding music composition, if the purpose of aesthetic creation is to exist purely for the act of creation, to exist as art “in and for itself” then there is no need to criticize any subsequent intangibility; the purpose has been met. However, in order to produce its true essence and become the shape of consciousness adequate for self-consciousness, the inclusion of parameters is necessary.

Orchestral music has provided a tangible delivery method for emotional expression since its earliest creation in the medieval period. By the time of its progression of complexity in the baroque period (commencing around year 1600), the artform became elegantly refined, offering formatted structures to organize what may have been an otherwise imperceivable mess of sound. Johann Sebastian Bach for example is celebrated as having one of the most extensive compositional catalogs, with appreciation spanning from its origination in the 18th century well into contemporary times. Few musical formats can attest to similar widespread recognition to

those which Bach utilized and popularized. It is perhaps because of the predictability in this modular writing form that such a volume of composition was produced at all.

Moreover, when classical music is structured as a symphony, by way of exposition, development, and recapitulation, it presents a familiarity of themes and motifs with aspects of suspense and intensity. This can elicit emotional reactions of a relational nature in the listener's ability to recall and recognize a repeating theme in its variations, often dependent entirely upon dynamic (relative volume) contrast. While these aspects are produced by the musicians, they are directed and articulated at the conductor's discernment, rendering integral her presence and animation. The resulting correlation in *Synchronous Sympathy at the Symphony* is suggested to be brought about by the mechanism of induction, offering that by embodying the particular notations in the composition, the audience was made to feel and engage with the creation. Without the formula of symphonic composition, without progressing the "in itself"ness of musical art to a comprehensible mode of "for another"ness, it is likely to expect that no emotional induction would have occurred.

III. Resulting Constitutive Elements of Self-Consciousness

Referencing again *Self Consciousness as a Living Kind*, it is explained that "the recognition process depicted in the fourth chapter of the *Phenomenology*... is generally interpreted in light of one of three constitutive features of subjectivity: sociality, corporeality and practicality" (Ionel, 79). Recognition enables progression into self-consciousness, for the consciousness can now conceive of itself through exemplification of any of these elements. Contingent entirely upon the negations of the initial shapes of consciousness illustrated above,

the consciousness engaging with concepts of freedom of expression and orchestral composition are now exemplified in alignment with this progression.

The element of sociality appears in both sublated concepts, by way of recognition. Through negation of free expression to non-absolute freedom, freedom of expression has been sublated into expression that excludes fascism. Hegel scholar Robert Brandom explains in his piece, *From Autonomy to Recognition* that “taking someone to be responsible or authoritative, attributing a normative deontic status to someone is an attitude that Hegel...calls ‘recognition’.” If fascism had been tolerated in the initial perception of freedom, or if it had been an emergent consequence of the unregulated freedom, there would not be reciprocal recognition; violent suppression of opposition disables any potential for acknowledgement from the side of the opposed. Brandom continues, “Hegel’s view is what you get if you take the attitudes of *both* recognizer and recognized, both those who are authoritative and those who are responsible, to be essential *necessary* conditions of the institution on genuine normative statuses, and require in addition that those attitudes be symmetric or reciprocal.” Reciprocal recognition cannot occur when the secondary (external) consciousness is outright removed. The deontic assignment is contingent upon the willful participation of the recognizer, herein only observable when violent ideologies that explicitly seek to inhibit the free expression of others are excluded from the freedom of expression. This preservation of true, sustainable freedom of expression, now properly articulated from its initial presentation, also encompasses practicality in the actualization of governance that truly preserves freedom.

Moreover, Brandom explains of recognition that “one can *petition* others for recognition, in an attempt to become responsible or authoritative. To do that, one must recognize them as able to *hold* one responsible or *acknowledge* one’s authority... to achieve such statuses, one must be

recognized by them in turn” (Brandom, 61). It is not sufficient to simply create music and one-sidedly demand that it be accepted in society as such. There is reciprocal recognition when the creator has confined her artistic liberty to meet the comprehensibility requirements for an external consciousness to conversely ascribe legitimacy to the creation. Once it is presented in its sublated form, the authority of the perceiving audience can acknowledge the creation, bearing in its social context an authority of determination through comprehension of the creation. When music as a concept exists purely in and for itself, with no intention of externality, recognition is not possible, because the experience of the consciousness and the concept has been limited to an exclusive, isolated experience. The progression of consciousness toward self consciousness requires external interaction. Whether or not the piece of music is enjoyed is irrelevant; the ability to consider and make judgment upon the music is sufficient for the element of sociality.

And finally, the element of corporeality is observed through modular orchestral composition in the mere embodiment of a classical score that otherwise may not have been produced without the guidance and template structure afforded by classical formats. This production can be credited to appreciating that the constraints of such composing serve as a skillful intervention to the process of creation (not necessarily in service of creativity per se, but in the explicit act of bringing an idea to fruition). Author Richard Sennett discusses essential aspects of skilled craft construction in his novel *The Craftsman*. In addition to praising the necessity of dedicated procedure, he also speaks to the importance of resistance. By describing cell walls and membranes, he illustrates the complex nature of selective permeability, extrapolating the metaphor to other biological and sociological interactions. The metaphor then meets a philosophical interpretation in application of John Dewey’s pragmatism. Sennett writes, “Dewey was a philosopher of cooperation; he declares, ‘only when an organism shares in the

ordered relations of its environment does it secure the stability essential to living' ” (Sennett, 227). In orchestral composition, the fairly open term that Dewey uses of “environment” represents the musical score, the space which permits and accommodates creation. The creative product of the composer is dependent upon an ordered relation via formatting the score into recognizable procedure. This provides stability in its comprehension. And thereby, in this “living”, corporeal essence, the consciousness engaging in aesthetic creation can behold a realized product of its own origination and invite contemplation upon itself, invoking the progression into self-consciousness.

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