

From G's letter of 3/22/50 on Hegel's concept of Condition,
Vol. II, pp. 98-106

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The phil. of his est'd by the Levellers & the masses in the
Fr. Rev. was that mankind in history, in temporal history, could
arrive at a classless society. The abstraction that the ENLIGHTENMENT
made of this, involving socialist soc. phil. was that reason
can guide mankind to knowledge & technique. Thruout the 19th c.
the scientists & philosophers operated upon this latter premise
reaching its most pure expression in Pragmatism & perishing
before our eyes in the misery of the Atomic Scientists today.

The Soc. Dem., expressing the continued dev. of science of the
productive forces, under mon. cap., cont'd. the rationalist
premises of the Enlightenment in a new org'd. form. Their phil.
was, broadly speaking, the doctrine that "evil" was only a
vestige of primitive chaos & that given time, all this irrational
matter would be redeemed by (mind (science)). The moment this
"progressivism" was undermined by WW I, Fascism & WWII

Contrast this with Hegel in the section on Condition. The
action of the masses of the Fr Rev had already est'd. the
principle that limited sovereignty of the people was impossible
& the contradictions contained therein must lead... This contrad.
had been pursued to possible alternatives by Fichte & Schelling.
This is the his. condition which Hegel began & resemblance to
our own is evident

(Fichte with his concept of the isolated indiv. & Schelling
driven by the contradiction of the existing reality to the
positing of a totalitarian God were the concrete phil. enemies
Hegel faced)

The essence of H's argument is this: It is necessary to get
rid of the concept of ground as a substratum, but when you
get rid of this concept of something behind the immediate you
have not by any means gotten rid of the fact that the immediate
is the result of a MEDIATING process. It is the self-mediating
self-repelling, self-transcending relation of Ground which
externalizes itself in the immediate existent.

Hence the relentless phrasing & rephrasing of his thesis
that "THE FACT EMERGES OUT OF GROUND". Forget this, become
enamoured of all your positive sciences. In the end you will
have to return to a transcendentalism or in modern times to
a totalitarianism.

We have seen that "in real Ground, Ground as content and Ground
as relation are only foundation. The former is only posited
as essential & as ground; the relation is the something of
Grounded as the indeterminate substratum of a varied content,
a connexion of it which is not its own reflexion but a reflexion
external & therefore only posited." (italics added)

How to avoid this need for an External Reflexion to connect
the content of Ground & that of Grounded? Only by transcending
the relation of Ground which implies a substratum & recognizing
that the (2) contents presuppose one another, mutually condition
one another, are in the relation of conditioning mediation.
Or in other words, that the "ground-relation as Reflexion
into self-identity is equally essentially self-externalising
reflexion." (p.98)

What distinguishes the method of thinking in terms of condition
from that of thinking in terms of Ground? The condition is
both presupposed Being-in-itself and also a positedness. It

Handwritten notes on the left margin:
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- "Fichte with his concept of the isolated indiv. & Schelling driven by the contradiction of the existing reality to the positing of a totalitarian God were the concrete phil. enemies Hegel faced"
- "The essence of H's argument is this: It is necessary to get rid of the concept of ground as a substratum, but when you get rid of this concept of something behind the immediate you have not by any means gotten rid of the fact that the immediate is the result of a MEDIATING process. It is the self-mediating, self-repelling, self-transcending relation of Ground which externalizes itself in the immediate existent."
- "Hence the relentless phrasing & rephrasing of his thesis that 'THE FACT EMERGES OUT OF GROUND'. Forget this, become enamoured of all your positive sciences. In the end you will have to return to a transcendentalism or in modern times to a totalitarianism."
- "We have seen that 'in real Ground, Ground as content and Ground as relation are only foundation. The former is only posited as essential & as ground; the relation is the something of Grounded as the indeterminate substratum of a varied content, a connexion of it which is not its own reflexion but a reflexion external & therefore only posited.' (italics added)"
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Both determined & indeterminate. "In other words, it is in itself its Being-in-Itself & its Content." It is both Form & Content. "Accordingly there is here only one whole of Form & equally only one whole of Content." (p.101)

CONDITION = Being

~~The condition~~ Condition is His. His. both determines & indeterminate, is both Ground-relation & Content. His. is the "truly unconditioned; it is Fact in itself." "the one essential unity, equally as Content & Form." (The para. on p.102 contains Hegel's truly brilliant attack on transcendentalism of any kind. "he whose is self-movement, there is no God, substratum, substance, etc. outside of the Fact itself.") In His., Condition which is itself Ground. "the relation bet. Condition & Ground has vanished; they have been reduced to a Show... The activity of the Fact is to condition itself & to oppose itself as Ground to its Conditions: but its rel. as rel. as of Conditions & of Ground is a showing within itself, & its attitude to them is its going together with itself."

Banky / Off / Ground

NB at the stage to which we have reached. To summarize briefly (1) We had the pure relation of Essence, self-mediation, self-repulsion & self-transcendence: The laws of motion of this pure Reflection (the Determinations of Reflection) in general: Identity, Oppo. Contrad., Ground.

(2) With Ground entered upon the real Reflection -- the setting up of real opposites of Form & Matter & their unity in Content.

(3) Then we saw an attempt to determine the Ground & saw this on the brink of being transformed into a repudiation of self-transcendence. We found then that we could avoid this dead-end only by transforming the concept of Ground into that of Condition, with this transformation we reach the concept of a totality of movement -- the Fact in-itself.

THE FACT IN ITSELF, however, is going to confront us with new contradictions. Being immediate & external, "the re-est'd. sphere of Being" (p.103) it will appear as a "manifold lacking unity", "growing rank as determinateness of Being" (104)

This is precisely what happens in the 19th c. We have an enormous multiplicity of facts, facts, facts, in which "the unity of Form is submerged" The scientist therefore begins thinking that he is dealing with positive immediates, reality, directly, until the end of the 19th c., he realizes with ~~Rosenberg~~ Einstein that all these facts are only relative

At this stage Hegel holds tight to the general conception that it was thru self-transcendence that all these facts came to be.

He reminds us "The Fact is before it exists." "when the Fact is posited, this process is an emergence." And by this means that the Fact was 1st in Essence & 2ndly as Determinate Being. "when it emerges into existence it is immediate" but immediate in such a manner that it is mediated only by the disappearance of mediation." In other words, all these facts were the result of self-mediation, self-repulsion & self-transcendence. Hence he concludes:

Facts as result of self-mediation

Testing
W. H. ...

"The Fact emerges out of Ground. It is not grounded in or posited by Ground in such a manner that Ground remains as sublatum; the process of positing is the egress of Ground towards itself & its simple disappearance. The union is the egress of Ground towards itself & its simple disappearance. The union with the Conditions gives to Ground external immediacy at the moment of Being."

But NB:

"But Ground does not obtain these as something, external, nor by means of an external relation; but as Ground it turns itself into positedness; in positedness its simple essentiality coincides with itself, & in this self-transcendence is the disappearance of its difference from its positedness; that is, it is simple essential immediacy."

...Hence, the Fact, as it is the Unconditioned, so also is it the Groundless, & emerges from Ground only insofar as Ground has perished & is no ground; it emerges from the Groundless, that is, from its proper essential negative or pure Form. This immediacy mediated by Ground & Condition & self-identical by the transcendence of mediation is Existence."

Ground in unity with its conditions -- that is the actual dev. of the working class in Capital.

R's additon/9/22/51

Because Aristotle's Absolutes were based on Greek society which had slavery, it had to be that of "Pure Form"--mind of man would meet mind of god & contemplate how wondrous things are.

Because Hegel's Absolutes were grounded on the rev. upheavals which put an end to ~~slavery~~ serfdom because its basis was freedom, they had to be a ~~way~~ way of man ~~with man on earth~~ ~~so that even when that Absolute is placed in heaven it has an earthly quality of theory & practice.~~

hence the constant return of the struggle for freedom