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## **Freedom in Hölderlin and Hegel: Activities of a Monad With All Windows Open**

### **1. Introduction**

“[F]reedom means that the other thing with which you deal is a second self – so that you never leave your own ground but give the law to yourself.”<sup>1</sup>

“[L]iberty is the distinguishing feature of man. To renounce one’s liberty is to renounce one’s manhood.”<sup>2</sup>

Hegel frequently declares his philosophy as a whole to be a “philosophy of freedom.”<sup>3</sup> But, perhaps, the time is ripe – for both the Left and Right Hegelians – to stand Hegel on his head once more. This time, for his professed difference from the Greek conception of freedom, in particular, Plato’s account of freedom. In the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* Hegel chastises Greek ethics as being deficient in the recognition of “subjectivity”, contrasting Rousseau as the promoter of “the principle of the conscious free will of individuals.”<sup>4</sup> Hegel’s criticism of what he regards as the subjugation of individual freedom in the Greek conception of freedom is analogous to the “notorious criticisms” Hegel’s political thought has received: that in his account of freedom, individual liberty is subordinated to the powers of the state.<sup>5</sup> Hegel’s conception of freedom has been criticized as “anti-individualism”, disregarding the claims of individual natural right, relegating the individual as a mere contingent manifestation in contrast to what is truly real, which is a supra-individual “ethical substance.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Logic, Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, translated by W. Wallace, Oxford 1982, § 23 and the Remark to § 24, 39.

<sup>2</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on History of Philosophy*, III, translated by E. S. Haldane, London 1955, 401.

<sup>3</sup> Hegel, *Logic*, § 23.

<sup>4</sup> Hegel, *Lectures on History of Philosophy*, II, § 114, § 115.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Pippin, “Hegels practical philosophy: the realization of freedom”, in: *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, edited by Karl Ameriks, New York 2000, 181. See also, Michael Theunissen, “Die verdrängte Intersubjektivität in Hegels Philosophie des Rechts”, in: *Hegels Philosophie des Rechts*, edited by D. Henrich and R. P. Horstmann, Stuttgart 1982.

<sup>6</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, translated by H. B. Nisbet, Cambridge 1991, § 145.