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FREEDOM FROM, FREEDOM TO, AND FREEDOM IN: A HEGELIAN ACCOUNT

This paper argues that important forms of freedom may be analyzable not only in terms of “freedom from” and “freedom to” but also in terms of the proposed category of “*freedom in*”.

It is one thing to be free *to* dance, and another thing to be free *in* dancing; one thing to be free *to* lead a self-directed life and another thing to be free *in* leading a self-directed life; one thing to be free *to* relate to others as a moral or legal person, a family member, or a citizen, and another thing to be free *in* being related to others as a moral or legal person, a family member, or a citizen. Such freedom-in has two important facets: a relational one (constituted in one’s relations to others and institutions), and an agential one (consisting of the exercise, or process of doing something), which come together in such “relational, processual states” as self-realization through social roles.

Hegel’s theory of social freedom, embedded in his notion of *Sittlichkeit* or ethical life, illustrates this structure of freedom, especially its relational variant.¹ Hegel’s theory of social freedom is a multifaceted one and in addition to the concrete relations mediated by social roles, it includes in a sublated form also a layer of “reflective freedom” embedded in his idea of morality, and a layer of negative freedom embedded in his account of abstract right. Arguably these forms of freedom are also relational -- while the analyses abstract from institutional reality, or *Sittlichkeit*, they constitute important forms of interpersonal recognition -- and so contain an important element of relational “freedom in”².

Another important notion of freedom which is arguably analyzable in terms of “freedom in” is the Republican notion of non-domination. Read from the viewpoint of Hegel’s social philosophy, it can be seen as a form of social freedom. All aspects of social freedom embody non-domination: domination violates directly negative liberty, and indirectly reflective freedom (via the servile attitude that comes with domination); and non-domination informs modern *Sittlichkeit*, where everyone is free. A closer analysis of Republican non-domination shows that it also contains an aspect of “freedom in” (relations of non-domination, which need to be present) – in addition to “freedom from” (domination, which needs to be absent).

The other aspect of freedom-in is agential. Especially the “reflective freedom” embedded in Hegel’s idea of *Moralität*, illustrates the *agential* variant of “freedom in”. The analysis of the agential aspect of freedom-in draws from Charles Taylor’s distinction between opportunity and exercise concepts of freedom.

Section One of this article will provide essential background by analyzing the two traditional concepts or models of freedom: negative freedom and positive (especially reflective) freedom, and the aspects of “freedom from” and “freedom to”. Section Two will introduce

¹ This paper relies on the vast scholarship that has analyzed Hegel’s notion of freedom with the help of the notion of recognition. The threefold analysis of freedom, see Neuhouser 2000, Honneth 2014. See also Ikäheimo 2022, Patten 1999, Pippin 2008, Siep 2014, Williams 1992, Wood 1990, Yeomans 2012.

² I use “freedom in” and freedom-in interchangeably; both are admittedly clumsy expressions.

the notion of freedom-in, showing that the *agential* form of freedom-in it is at play in reflective freedom. Section Three turns to the relational aspect of freedom-in with reference to Hegel’s theory of social freedom, which is arguably a third concept of liberty, going further than negative or reflective freedoms. Further, the relational aspect of freedom-in will cover also the (sublated) negative and reflective freedoms. Section Four discusses the Republican notion of non-domination, showing how it contains equally the aspects of freedom-in and freedom-from, and examines how exactly it is embedded in Hegelian social freedom. Section Five discusses how the two facets of freedom-in come together in agential, relational states such as self-realization through social roles. Section Six is a brief conclusion.

1 Freedom from, freedom to, negative, positive

After Isaiah Berlin’s classic essay, it was thought that negative freedom is a form of “freedom from”, and positive freedom a form of “freedom to”.³ Let us call this interpretation the “straightforward view”. (In naming this positive freedom 1, or reflective freedom, I anticipate the next sections which introduce social freedom as another type of positive freedom).

	Freedom from	Freedom to
Negative Freedom	interference, physical obstacles, sanctions	
Positive Freedom 1: (“Reflective Freedom”)		do what one autonomously or authentically values and wills (<i>Wille</i>)

Table One. Positive and Negative Freedom, the Straightforward View

Negative freedom, on this (and indeed almost any) reading focus on freedom from obstacles. The obstacles include physical ones that prevent one’s action just like a stone can be prevented from rolling down the hill (Hobbes 1651), or a stone wall can prevent crossing a border, or a bouncer can intentionally physically intervene and block someone’s entry to a building. If the bouncer decides not to intervene, then one’s negative liberty is not affected (see below for how this can however be a case of domination, on the Republican understanding).⁴

Another important class of obstacles are not physical but are based on institutional statuses; so negative freedom is centrally freedom from sanctioned and coercively upheld regulations (Bentham 1776). Crossing a border can be sanctioned effectively even in the absence of physical obstacles, and entrance to a building can be sanctioned even in the absence of bouncers.⁵ Any legislation can be seen to involve limitations of freedom in this sense.

Positive freedom, on this reading, is analyzed in terms of what one is free *to* do. Even in the absence of external interventions and sanctions, one may be prevented by psychological features -- ranging from addictions and compulsions to akrasia, lack of self-respect or courage, and other forms of “heteronomy” -- from leading a genuinely autonomous, self-

³ The classic source is Berlin 1959 and the essays in Berlin 1969.

⁴ See Pettit 2001 and section 4 below.

⁵ See Searle 2010 on the distinction between stone walls and sanctioned borders which require “status functions” to work. Lagerspetz 1998 discusses (in Finnish) seven conceptions of freedom in an illuminating way.

directed or self-determined life; so that one lacks self-control or self-mastery. So one main candidate for a free life is that one is free *to* lead a life autonomously.

Kant's moral theory (1785) famously emphasized this understanding of individual autonomy: being ruled by one's practical reason, unhindered by passion, desire, compulsive motivation. Rousseau's earlier, collective version (1762) emphasized collective acceptance of a law that everyone is subjected to: only when everyone is subject to a shared law, can we be free from being subjected to the arbitrary will of others. So, in a striking contrast to mere negative liberty Kant and Rousseau think that freedom consists in holding certain impulsive or unlawful actions in check. Being subject to one's own impulses, even in the absence of external coercion, is unfreedom that can be countered by obeying one's own reason (Kant) and being subject to sanctioned shared law that binds everyone is a form of freedom – in striking opposition to Bentham's view (Rousseau). This is *positive* freedom, because understanding it as a form of freedom instead of unfreedom requires understanding the value of the end that one is enabled to follow, and the disvalue of the ends that one is blocked from following.

While Kant or Rousseau stress the importance of who sets the law (first-personally, individually or collectively), other views of positive liberty could simply state that to ability to do important, strongly valued, things, is central (Taylor 1979a). Another classic view of positive liberty is that especially ends that are related to something like one's "true self" or authentic self, or one's central capabilities and whose pursuit counts as self-realization have the privileged position and are central to positive freedom (e.g. T.H. Green 1879, some readings of Hegel and Marx and Rousseau).

One more aspect of freedom that is typically related to positive accounts of freedom is the idea of real, effective freedom. (See e.g. van Parijs 1995). This sense of freedom is at stake when it is examined whether a person can afford to do the things that they are otherwise permitted to do – it focuses on various external resources (and perhaps abilities and skills) that are needed in realizing one's aims. Libertarian nightwatchman states would not be in the business of providing anyone such resources, despite otherwise valuing freedoms.

On a closer look, it is however hard to see why this would be related specifically to positive liberty, rather than be about a form of obstacle: lack of resources (and perhaps abilities and skills). The same goes for addictions and compulsions that were central foils of Kantian autonomy – logically speaking freedom *from* addictions and compulsions suggests that they are a threat to negative freedom and not merely to positive freedom. The "straightforward view" linking negative freedom and "freedom from" and positive freedom and "freedom to" starts to crumble.

This takes us to Gerald MacCallum (1967) who showed that freedom (both negative and positive) typically has both the aspect of "freedom from" and an aspect of "freedom to".⁶ There may be some exceptional usages, but indeed it seems that the best characterization of negative and positive freedom appeal to both. The real distinction between Hobbesian or Benthamian or Libertarian conceptions of "negative liberty" on the one hand, and Kantian,

⁶ MacCallum 1967.

Hegelian, Rousseauian, Taylorian “positive liberty” on the other hand can however be done while using the notions of “freedom from” and “freedom to” to analyze both of them.

A central conceptual distinction is that between doing whatever one happens to want, and doing what one autonomously wills – the distinction between *Willkür* and *Wille* (see Kant 1785, Hegel 1821). This gives us two aspects of two concepts of freedom, and thus a more complex view (see Table 2).

	Freedom from	Freedom to
Negative freedom	interference, physical obstacles, sanctions	do whatever one happens to wants (<i>Willkür</i>)
Positive freedom 1: “reflective freedom”	interference, physical obstacles, unjustified sanctions, but also compulsions, inner obstacles, lack of resources etc.	do what one autonomously or authentically values and wills (<i>Wille</i>)

Table 2. Negative and positive freedom, a more Complex View

The aim of this section has been to introduce this more complex reading where the distinction between “freedom from” and “freedom to” is orthogonal to a recognizably different minimal or negative (e.g. Hobbes) and demanding or positive (e.g. Kant) notions of freedom. The most minimal, Hobbesian, notion of freedom is the idea of freedom *from* interference, *to do whatever one wants*. “to be free is, more or less, to be left alone to do whatever one chooses.”(Lovett 2022, 1.1). By contrast, the more demanding ideas of freedom is to make evaluative distinctions concerning the aims that one is free to do: goals that are authentic or autonomous or represent one’s free will (*Wille*), in contrast to desires that one does not reflectively endorse. This is a form of positive liberty, or what Honneth (2014) calls “reflective freedom”.

With these preliminaries, we are now in a position to take a look at the category “freedom in”. The analysis will be done in two steps, first concentrating on the agential aspect and then the social or relational aspect. It will turn out that in a complex analysis of notions of freedom all layers of freedom -- negative, positive, and “third” conceptions of liberty -- will include aspects of freedom *from*, *to* and *in*.

2 The agential aspect of “freedom in”: Opportunity vs Exercise

Charles Taylor (1979a) has stressed the importance of the distinction between *opportunities* and *exercise* for notions of freedom.⁷ This idea of exercise, and actually leading a free life⁸

⁷ Taylor 1979a. This idea of actualization of freedom is of course central for Hegel. Cf. Wood 1990, who argues that self-realization is central for Hegel. See also Ian Carter 2022, §7.

⁸ Indeed, perhaps the value of freedom is best seen in the value of “leading a free life”, where freedom is a necessary aspect of a valuable whole, a whole which would be of less value in an un-free variant. Other important aspects include the subjective experiential quality, and objective success and worthwhileness of a person’s specific goals, which each partly explain the value of the good life as well – but a *free*, good life is importantly more valuable, unless freedom turns out to be mere bogus value. (For discussion, see Laitinen 2022).

takes us from *freedom-from* and *freedom-to* onto a significant, undertheorized aspect of freedom, which can be called *freedom-in*. The freedom *to* make a self-governed choice is a matter of having an opportunity, which precedes and cannot logically depend on whether or not one exercises that freedom. By contrast, what Taylor calls the “exercise concept” of freedom suggests that freedom is realized *in* one’s leading a self-governing life (i.e. a free life): the claim is that one is free *in* living the life of self-governed choices and acting accordingly. If one has the opportunity *to* engage in such a life, but chooses not to, one has shied away from freedom. This cannot be explained with the notion of “freedom-to”: the degree of one’s freedom to pursue a self-directed life does not depend on whether one chooses to pursue or not.

In the debates on negative and positive liberty, Taylor’s distinction between an opportunity concept and exercise concept is sometimes misleadingly taken to coincide with the distinction between negative and positive liberty.⁹ Or more precisely, this is misleading if negative liberty is straightforwardly understood as “freedom-from” and positive liberty as “freedom-to”. This is hardly coherent, as opportunities are literally freedoms *to* do something, whereas in the actual exercise, one has gone beyond the freedom-to-do (which one had whether one chooses to exercise that freedom or not) into doing. The structure of the exercise concept is, rather, that in the happy cases one is free *in* doing what one does, one actualizes one’s freedom precisely in acting, while in the preceding situation when one is free to do so but has not yet done so, the free activity remains a mere possibility. The difference between claims that “I am free to dance” and “I am free when I dance” is readily understandable.

Compare the claim that one is free *to* realize one’s fundamental purposes in one’s life with the claim one is free *in* realizing one’s fundamental purposes in one’s life. The former refers to facts about situations, which are not altered by one’s choices. The latter refers to different ways of living: one is free *in* living a self-determined life in pursuit of one’s most cherished goals, but one lacks such ‘freedom-in’ if one lives a life of social conformity instead; say, because one lacks the courage or otherwise ends up taking the conformist route. On the other hand, as will be central below, the Hegelian approach emphasizes that such freedom-in can be actualized through social roles¹⁰, so the point is not the rebellion against social expectations – rather the point is the conceptual structure of freedom being realized, actualized in some stretches of life. The opportunity concept focuses only on features of antecedent situations, what one is free to do, whereas the exercise concept of freedom-in focuses on the actualization. Acting autonomously or realizing one’s true self is an actualization of freedom. To be free is not merely to have an opportunity (to so act or realize) or “freedom to”; one is free *in* actual exercise.

Some theorists challenge the distinction between opportunity and exercise, and point out that the absence of all factors that could prevent the action *x* is, quite simply, equivalent to the realization of *x*.¹¹ But without extra premises that is not so: one may enjoy the absence of obstacles to do either *x* or *y*, and one may have as such sufficient motivation to do either, but choose to do only one of these. Exercise quite understandably goes further than opportunity.

⁹ For example Carter 2022, §7, refers to “this defence of the positive-negative distinction as coinciding with the distinction between exercise- and opportunity-concepts of freedom”.

¹⁰ See Hardimon 1994.

¹¹ Nelson 2005; Carter 2022, §7.

This understanding of the exercise-concept of freedom can be captured in the following table.

	Freedom from	Freedom to	Freedom in
Negative	interference, (domination)	do whatever one happens to want (<i>Willkür</i>)	-
Positive 1: Reflexive	interference, (domination), but also compulsions, inner obstacles, etc.	do what one autonomically or authentically values and wills (<i>Wille</i>)	doing so; self-realization; leading a free life
	(opportunity)		(exercise)

Table 3: The Agential exercise-concept of “freedom-in”

3. The Relational Aspect of “Freedom in”: Hegel’s Social Freedom as a Third Concept of Liberty

The preceding analysis of agential forms of freedom-in remained in the confines of negative vs reflective notions of liberty. The Hegelian notion of social freedom, as developed especially in *Philosophy of Right* (1821) presents a third concept of liberty in addition to the negative and reflective notions of liberty. On the traditional distinction between negative and positive liberty, the reflective and social layers of freedom are best classified as forms of positive liberty. This is insightfully articulated in Neuhouser (2000) and Honneth (2014). This section argues that such social freedom brings to fore the *relational* aspect of “freedom in”.

The Hegelian idea of freedom, especially “social freedom” related to *Sittlichkeit*, is a matter of standing in relation to others, of being recognized by others or occupying a societal role.¹² The logical form of all freedom for Hegel is that of “being (with) oneself in another” – this is especially visible in social freedom, but holds also of one’s relations to the natural world or the universe as a whole, and to one’s inner world.¹³ In this essay, the focus is on the social world.

One can approach the idea of “being (by) oneself in another” with a simple observation. There are two ways in which one can be free from interference and domination: either in the absence of others, or in relation to others. Only in the latter mode does one enjoy a standing or status (say, that of a free citizen, instead of a slave). Of course, it is only in that mode that one *needs* such a standing or status, either, as regulating relations to those others. Empirically speaking, there is no choice here: we co-exist simply as a matter of fact, like it or not. But an evaluative follow-up question can be raised: should we like it or not? Are the others mostly obstacles, hindrances, and disablers, or does their presence also enable, facilitate, constitute something valuable?

As there are many good things that human co-existence enables (from emotional interaction to joint political action and participation in historically evolved practices), such co-existence can be preferred, or regarded as a blessing, for many reasons. Importantly, such co-existence

¹² Hegel 1821/1991; Honneth 2014; Neuhouser 2000; Pippin 2008.

¹³ See e.g. Ikäheimo 2022, Pippin 1998.

is to be preferred even after the developmental or genetic phase of childhood where interaction may be necessary for the development of the central capacities to enjoy freedom.¹⁴ The crucial question here is whether co-existence is to be preferred because it (when structured correctly) entails the realization of *freedom*?

Hegel clearly thinks so. Rational forms of co-existence realize something that is not possible in their absence. Freedom is constituted in relations of recognition: being free is a standing, just like being a slave is a standing. Societal or institutional structures actualize or embody freedom and are of higher importance in themselves over and above ‘facilitating’ other valuable things. Free co-existence, affirmed by each other in relations of recognition, may facilitate other important things – for example, Amartya Sen (1999) argues that poverty and world hunger can be eradicated by guaranteed freedom, even though there is no conceptual connection. For Hegel, erecting the system of such free co-existence is *itself* the goal, the purpose of history even. And even if one does not think that history has a goal or purpose, one can judge that, given the high value of free co-existence, people should take it as their highest goal. And even if not the sole highest goal, at least a very valuable goal.

On this view, freedom in relation to others is a higher, truer, form of freedom *qua* freedom than any freedom in the absence of relations (which is impossible anyway). For Hegel, freedom partly consists in standing in the freedom-friendly relations to others. This view can be expressed by stating that an aspect of “freedom-in” is missing when one does not stand in freedom-constituting relations of recognition to other individuals and institutions.

There are arguments trying to show that lacking the freedom-friendly social roles amount to pathologies or mis-developments, such as indeterminacy (e.g. of responsibilities: who should do what?), anomie, role-lessness or “uselessness”. (Honneth 2014, see also Neuhouser 2022). Naturally, also freedom-unfriendly forms of social relations such as slavery or domination are inconsistent with social freedom. The social roles enable valuable forms of existence, such as the possibility to contribute to the common good, and to fulfil important role-obligations that may be central to one’s sense of identity and belonging. On the Hegelian analysis they are also important in constituting one’s social freedom, which consists in having the recognized standing or status as free.

	Freedom from	Freedom to	Freedom in
Positive freedom 2: Social freedom	indeterminacy (e.g. of responsibilities: who should do what?), anomie, role-lessness, “uselessness” and from freedom-unfriendly roles (e.g. slavery, status domination).	fulfil important role-obligations; contribute to shared good	having the standing or status; [+ <i>in acting accordingly; self-realization through role-obligations (family, civil society, state). See §5 below</i>]

Table 4: Social freedom as “freedom in”.

¹⁴ Taylor 1979b.

If this is correct, then one aspect of “freedom in” consists in having the status or standing of being recognized by others, being related to others. This is fundamentally different from the agential aspect of “freedom in”, but the two aspects also come together fruitfully (see §5).

The third part of Philosophy of Right, focusing on *Sittlichkeit*, provides the analysis of the family, civil society, and state. These contexts provide individuals mutually supportive roles *via* which one can lead one’s life. Arguably, however, also the first two parts of the book contain contexts in which one can be recognized to be free. Thus, to complicate things, Hegel’s social freedom in the context of concrete social roles is one layer of a complex three-layer account of freedom, the other two layers consisting of negative and reflective freedom. They all share the general structure of “being (by) oneself in another”, but are otherwise very different. Hegel’s full account of social freedom contains the three notions of liberty in a structured whole: each of these three has its own sphere of validity, with pathologies or misdevelopments resulting when any of them is applied outside its context of validity. (See Honneth 2014).

In this way, Hegel’s account on the whole synthesizes two modern individualist notions with one deriving more from communal ethics of the Ancients: among the most important ideals that are definitive of the modern era are the *negative personal freedom* from interference to do what one likes (related to the capacity to choose, *Willkür*), the moral autonomy to define what is good and right and act accordingly (related to will, *Wille*). By contrast, the “social freedom” secured via social roles that (objectively) enable personal and moral freedom and constitute or actualize a relational or social aspect of freedom, is a version of the Ancient ideal of communal ethical life, with a modern twist. “Social freedom” complements negative liberty and positive self-determination or self-rule and is in that sense a “third concept of liberty”.

One complication is that in the Hegelian scheme, even negative liberty is a form of being recognized. So is that then a form of relational or social “freedom-in” as well? Here one could go either way. On the one hand, one way of realizing negative liberty is the absence of others who would interfere or dominate. The status-aspect of being recognized as a person who is entitled to a sphere of negative liberty is not a constitutive aspect of all forms of negative liberty. However, when the negative liberty is backed up by sanctions, laws, institutions (e.g. of civil society), it becomes an important modern form of freedom-in; perhaps this form can be called “relational, institutional negative liberty”.

	Freedom from	Freedom to	Freedom in
Negative	interference, (domination)	do whatever one happens to want (<i>Willkür</i>)	(relations of recognition as a rights-bearer)
Positive I: Reflexive	interference, (domination), but also compulsions, inner obstacles, etc.	do what one autonomically or authentically values and wills (<i>Wille</i>)	doing so; self-realization; leading a free life (exercise) <i>and</i> relations of recognition as a

			moral subject (relational)
Positive 2: Social	...and also from indeterminacy (e.g. of responsibilities: who should do what?), anomie, rolelessness, “uselessness” and from freedom-unfriendly roles (e.g. slavery, status domination).	fulfil important role-obligations; contribute to shared good	having the standing; [+ in doing so; self-realization through role-obligations (family, civil society, state).]

Table 5: Social freedom as “freedom in”.

§4 The Republican Ideal of Non-Domination as a Third Concept of Liberty

We have so far seen that freedom-in comes in two important forms, agential and relational, and that Hegelian Social Philosophy articulates the especially latter. This section has two aims: to first show how also Republican freedom as non-domination contains the aspect of “freedom in”, and then to suggest how it relates to Hegelian social freedom in all of its three layers – negative, reflective and social.

Pettit (1997, 2002) and Skinner (1998, 2002) argue for a Republican conception of freedom as non-domination, as opposed to non-limitation or non-interference, which to them are not adequate conceptualizations of freedom. On this view, it is not interference or limitation per se that matters, but rather the fact that the dominating party is in a position of power, to interfere arbitrary. However, it is still meant as a negative understanding of freedom (see, for example, Pettit 2002).¹⁵

For the republican tradition, the central contrast with freedom is that of slavery.¹⁶

”Imagine a group of slaves with a generally well-meaning master. While the latter has an institutionally-protected right to treat his slaves more or less as he pleases (he might start whipping them just for the heck of it, say), let us suppose that this master in particular leaves his slaves for the most part alone. Now to the extent that he does not in fact interfere with his slaves on a day-to-day basis, we are committed to saying—on the non-interference view of liberty—that they enjoy some measure of freedom. Some find this conclusion deeply counterintuitive: if there is anything to the idea of political liberty, one might think, surely it cannot be found in the condition of slavery!” (Lovett 2022, §1.3).

¹⁵ Arguably the republican ideal of non-domination, discussed by Q. Skinner (2002) and P. Pettit (2001, 2002) turn out to have an aspect of “freedom-in” (and is not fully explicable as “freedom from”). For discussion, see Laitinen 2015, Allen 2006, Bohman 2005, Thompson 2013, Buchwalter 1993, Schupper 2008, Krause 2013.

¹⁶ See also Constant 1819/1988.

That the position of domination matters over and above interference can also be seen when we consider that the slaves may avoid interference because they have internalised the master's wishes and learnt not to make the master angry. They may pay lip-service and behave in a servile way in order to avoid harsher consequences. Having to behave in a servile way certainly diminishes one's freedom. The main constituent of non-freedom is being in a subordinate position where someone else has the arbitrary power to interfere, in a position of being dominated by someone. And accordingly, it defines "freedom as a sort of structural independence—as the condition of not being subject to the arbitrary or uncontrolled power of a master."(*Ibid.*)

This republican ideal of non-domination has been put forward as a third concept of liberty (See Skinner, Pettit). Pettit has argued that it is ultimately a negative concept; here articulated by Lovett 2022:

"Notice that the republican view of freedom is, at least in the broad sense, a negative conception of political liberty. One need not *do* or become anything in particular to enjoy political liberty in the republican sense; one need not *exercise* self-mastery, on any view of what that entails, nor succeed in acting on one's second-order desires (Skinner 1984, 1991, 2002; [...]). Republican freedom merely requires the absence of something, namely, the absence of any structural dependence on arbitrary power or domination"(*Ibid.*; italics added).

While this characterization gets it right that non-domination is freedom *from* domination, and that it is not a matter of freedom in *doing* or *exercising*, it can be argued that it requires the *presence* of something: the positive, recognized standing as a free citizen or free person, protected by institutional sanctions. In the words of Philip Pettit, contrasting the causal effect of institutions with its constitutive role in non-domination:

"to enjoy such non-domination, after all, is *just to be in a position* where no one can interfere arbitrarily in your affairs and you are in that position from the moment that the institutions are in place" (Pettit, 1997, 107; italics added).

Thus, far from being a mere absence, republican freedom is a positive state one may be in. This suggests that this is another central aspect of "freedom in": a relational, social aspect, that goes beyond acting, doing, or exercising one's capacities. It is the Hegelian conception of relational social freedom that captures this nature of freedom the best. Arguably, we do not understand the nature of republican freedom, unless we see it as involving the aspect of freedom-in. Thus, another theory of freedom that centrally involves the idea of "freedom-in" is the republican understanding of freedom.

	Freedom from	Freedom to	Freedom in
Republican freedom	domination	do whatever one happens to want (<i>Willkür</i>)	the recognized standing as a free and equal person, non-slave (Relational freedom)

Table 6. Republican freedom and the relational aspect of freedom-in

How exactly does the idea of non-domination fit Hegel's social philosophy?¹⁷ The most famous passage where Hegel analyses domination is in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, where mastery and slavery or bondage is discussed in the context of struggles for recognition. It turns out that satisfactory forms of recognition can take place only in the absence of domination. That analysis proceeds on a very abstract level of a consciousness facing an external world and itself as a living self-conscious experiencer of the world, and the external world turning out to also contain the same conceptual structure of a living self-conscious experiencer of the world.

The analyses in *Philosophy of Right* presuppose the ultimate outcome of the dialectic of mastery and bondage – mutual recognition between self-consciousnesses. Thus, *Philosophy of Right* presupposes that questions of domination have been settled. It provides a social theory for such self-conscious subjects that regard each other as equal and free self-conscious subjects. The social theory proceeds in terms of five importantly different relations of recognition: in *Abstract Right*, the parties recognize each other as rights-bearing persons, respecting each others' negative liberties.¹⁸ To be an equal rights-bearing subject whose negative liberties are to be respected is to enjoy the position of non-domination. In *Moralität*, the parties recognize each other as self-determining moral agents.¹⁹ The servile lack of self-respect that the position of the subordinate, dominated party is likely to come with is in direct conflict with the self-relations and relations of recognition between free and equal moral subjects. Hegel's brief notes about the antinomy of slavery in *Philosophy of Right* suggest that one constitutive aspect of freedom is taking oneself to be free – such self-relation is hard to sustain in the absence of recognition from others as free.²⁰ These two forms of recognition, in *Abstract Right* and *Morality*, are analyzable in abstraction from the social and institutional setting, but they have the ideal of non-domination built into their very structure.

Hegel understood well that such relations need institutional, sanctioned backing, so he held that while conceptually analysable in abstraction from *Sittlichkeit*, in reality they presuppose and are grounded in existing social and institutional reality. *Sittlichkeit* then comes with three further important concrete forms of recognition in positive social roles, in family, civil society and the state. They each contain not only horizontal forms of recognition between the role-holders, but also vertical forms of institutional recognition – family members are in vertical relations of recognition to the family, the different roles in civil society are in vertical relations to the legal system regulating the market and to the mediating institutions such as corporations, and citizens are in vertical relations of recognition with the state. The vertical relations have a downward aspect, for example where the state recognizes someone as a citizen, and an upward aspect, for example when the citizen recognizes the state as legitimate.

Taken together, the institutionally sanctioned rational relations of recognition guarantee a very robust standing of non-domination. Societal relations could be robust even when they are not rational but contain forms of domination, but the reconstruction in *Philosophy of Right* concerns a rational variant which presupposes that domination is not acceptable. Arguably, more democratic versions of the Republican ideal than Hegel's are possible, and

¹⁷ Hegel's Republicanism is convincingly defended by Markku Mäki (2013).

¹⁸ See Laitinen 2017, Quante 1997.

¹⁹ See Laitinen & Sandis (ed.) 2010, Quante 2004.

²⁰ See e.g. Alznauer 2015, Siep 2014, Honneth 1992, Ikäheimo 2022.

on contemporary lights, they are likely to be more rational, and favoured over Hegel's non-democratic version, but Hegel's social philosophy contains a very convincing analysis of the standing on non-domination as an institutionally guaranteed, relational form of freedom, where freedom partly *consists* in standing in those relations: it is a form of freedom-in.

5. Self-realization through roles: how agential and relational aspects meet

To conclude this essay, it is good to discuss how the agential and relational aspects of "freedom in" are related. Conceptually, they seem like separate ideals, and there can be passive aspects of relational freedom, and non-relational activities, but importantly they come together in states that are both relational and agential or processual. The Hegelian ideal of self-realization through social roles, analyzed by Hardimon (1994), illustrates this nicely.

When one is engaged in some activity, when one is Phi-ing, this is a state of activity, or an active state. One is dancing, or swimming the Canal, or leading a life.²¹

The relational aspect of freedom-in concerns social states that can be passive: being recognized as a Citizen or being loved, for example. In having a standing, one is not merely an agent, but a "relational self" – equally an agent and patient, a contributor and a recipient. The passive, patient-like role can be had even in the absence of any activity (say, one is granted the role of a citizen and an institutional rights-bearer at birth), and it is this aspect that is in clearest contrast to the previous "agential" aspect of freedom-in. Thus, in some sense, one can enjoy not only opportunities (freedom to), but actual state of being free (freedom "in"), while doing nothing.

A balanced view of having a social role will stress the active and passive aspects equally: roles typically come not only with rights but also with tasks and obligations. Having the social role defines not only one's "being" but also one's "doings".

Hegel endorses also the exercise-aspect of freedom. Hegelian freedom concerns one's actual ways of being and doing, rather than merely the capability to do and be. In realizing the aims of one's roles (family member, participant in civil society, member of state) is at the same time the activity of self-realization. It is a form of freedom-in in two ways, not mere freedom-to. One is free in realizing one's purposes. The self-realization thereby freely and actively brought about, and being oneself in relations to others are intimately related and of central value in Hegel's social philosophy.

Thus, while in principle the agential and relational aspects can come apart, they can also come together in the most important forms of social freedom.

6 Conclusion

This paper has argued that there is more to freedom than "freedom from" or "freedom to". There are two forms of "freedom-in": A's agential freedom in acting, and the relational freedom of "A being free in relation to B". The former is the case for example when we say

²¹ It is an interesting follow-up question what to think of past achievements in this respect. If one is free in acting, is one also free in having acted: does retirement mean that the degree of one's agential freedom decreases? Hegel, in *Philosophy of Right* 151Z thinks the latter: "man is active only in so far as he has not attained his end and wills to develop his potentialities and vindicate himself in struggling to attain it. When this has been fully achieved, activity and vitality are at an end, and the result - loss of interest in life - is mental or physical death."

that A is not merely free to dance, but is free in dancing. The latter is the case when we say that A enjoys freedom in relation to other agents and social institutions: for example, a free and equal citizen, and not a slave. These both forms of “freedom-in” are arguably conjoined in forms of acting in an institutional role. As a final observation, we can note that the former arguably fits also the more aesthetic and playful notions of freedom of Schiller: one is free *in* playful and artistic processes of self-realization.²²

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²² Sabona Roehr (2003) distinguishes three conceptions of freedom in Schiller, the third one is the “aesthetic state” in which a person does one duty effortlessly and gracefully as if out of instinct, and so called material and formal drives are united with the help of play drive. That conception of freedom seems relevantly to have the grammar of “freedom-in”.

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