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HEGEL AND THE UNIVERSAL HISTORIOGRAPHY¹

ABSTRACT

Hegel's commentary on the so-called *universal history* (*Allgemeine Geschichte*) is one of the established interpretative presuppositions in the scholarly approach to his *Lectures in the Philosophy of World History*. The term "universal history" first appeared in the editions of Eduard Gans and Karl Hegel. Both editions were based on the editing and compiling of different manuscripts and transcriptions. The term was further transmitted in later editions. However, in the preserved materials, this term does not emerge in the chapter on the modes of reflective historiography. With the emergence of new critical editions of Hegel's *Lectures*, through comparative analysis of different sources, it is not only possible to show how the term *universal history* is not emergent in Hegel's account of the varieties of historiography, but it is also possible to trace how it appeared in the first editions of the *Lectures*. The absence of *universal history* in preserved texts on varieties of historical writing raises the question about the status of the first mode of reflective historiography, which Hegel describes through the terms of *surveys* and *compilations*, describing it as the historiography of a people, a land, or the whole world. This multitude of possible definitions opens up space for new interpretations of Hegel's theory of historiography.

KEYWORDS

Hegel, philosophy of history, history, universal history, reflective historiography, historiography

Universal History?

Classic editions of Hegel's *Lectures in the Philosophy of World History* were developed as compilations of various textual sources for the courses taught for five semesters during Hegel's Berlin professorship.² Because standard editions, and sometimes even critical ones, were based on the compilations, with frequently added titles and chapters, this process inevitably led to deviations from

1 This paper is developed from a chapter of the doctoral dissertation *Hegel and Problem of Historiography* (Atanasković 2021, specifically pages 216–226).

2 I will use *Lectures* to refer to Hegel's *Lectures in the Philosophy of World History*, and *Introduction/Introductions* for Hegel's introductory chapters to his *Lectures*.

the original materials. The contemporary critical edition (*Gesammelte Werke*, published by Felix Meiner) is based on the attempt to reconstruct the separate courses of Hegel's *Lectures*, and this premise makes some rooted prejudices and unfounded textual interpretations obsolete.³ One such interpretative presupposition is the interpretation of the so-called first mode of reflective historiography as universal history (*Allgemeine Geschichte*).⁴

In this paper, I will demonstrate that we do not possess valid proofs for the conclusion that Hegel ever used the term *universal history* (*Allgemeine Geschichte*) for one of the modes of reflective historiography. Furthermore, I will explain how the term *universal history* constitutes an editorial artifact in the context of Hegel's account of the types of historical writing, which undoubtedly influenced later interpretations of his theory of historiography. Finally, I will propose a conceptual framework, based on Hegel's text, better suited to understanding the so-called first mode of reflective historiography, drawing the implications of this shift in interpretative focus for Hegel's theory of historical writing.⁵

In contrast to the texts of the classical editions of Hegel's *Lectures*, the term *universal/general history* does not appear in preserved manuscripts or edited transcriptions in paragraphs about reflective historiography. In the text of the

3 For the history of editions see Grossmann (1988: 51–70).

4 German *Allgemeine Geschichte*, as it appears in editions of Hegel's *Lectures*, could also be translated as *general* or *common history*. However, since translating it as *universal history* is the most prevalent practice, this term will be used in our text.

5 Contemporary interpretations of Hegel's philosophy of world history are mostly based on the new critical edition of the *Lectures*. However, in some aspects, older editions (starting with the work of Eduard Gans) were terminologically canonical to the degree that even the newest interpretations sometimes reflect terminology added by editors. One of the examples is the usage of the term *Allgemeine Geschichte* for description of the first mode of reflective historiography, which is (as I will describe) textually not well founded. For example, Tim Rojek in his study *Hegels Begriff der Weltgeschichte* uses the term *Allgemeine Geschichte* to denote the first mode of reflective historiography (Rojek 2017: 86–131). Even though, his approach is most detailed analysis of the *first mode of reflective historiography* through the very specific concepts Hegel uses to describe this historiographical practice. Rojek uncovers a complex conceptual network which lies hidden behind the common denominator of *universal history*, while still using the term. Another example is the usage of the term by Peter C. Hodgson in his book *Shapes of Freedom*. In a brief survey of the modes of historical writing, he uses *universal history* to describe the first sub-class of reflective historiography (Hodgson 2012: 15–16). There are also examples of the authors omitting term in the context of the first mode of reflective historiography. C.J. Bauer in his study *Geheimnis aller Bewegung ist ihr Zweck*, does not use explicitly *Allgemeine Geschichte* to denote the first mode of reflective historiography, while he approaches reflective historiography integrally and in comparison with Droysen's *Historik* (Bauer 2001: 322–353). He occasionally uses the term *Allgemeine Geschichte* but not explicitly to denote the first mode of reflective historiography in distinction with other modes (Bauer 2001: 156; 158; 160). In the study *Hegels formale Geschichtsphilosophie*, Max Winter does not use the term *Allgemeine Geschichte* to describe reflective historiography. Instead, describing its first mode, he uses the functional concepts of *Kompendien* and *Kompilationen* (Winter 2015: 84–86).

Lectures from 1822/23, in versions composed by Griesheim, Hotho and Keller, mutually similar sentences appear, all continuing very brief characterization of reflective historiography: “First...one expects surveys of the whole people or world history; these are also compilations of already extant writers of history, reports of others, specific type of compilation is dependent upon purpose.” (Hegel 1996: 7; Hegel 2015: 8-9).⁶ Somewhat different, albeit also similar definition, appears in the manuscript from 1828:

...here are expected surveys of the whole history of the people, or land, or, above all, the whole world; in order to fulfill such a requirement, it is necessary to produce histories. Such historical books are then necessary compilations out of the already produced reports of original official writers of history, of the distant reports and accounts. Their sources are not perceptions and the language is not that of the perception of those who have themselves witnessed events... (Hegel 1995: 130)

Neither of the cited sources mentions the term *Allgemeine Geschichte*, which emerges for the first time in the *Lectures* edited by Gans. Here we can read: “Here, first of all, belong surveys of the whole history of a people or a land, or the world, in short, that which we call universal history (*Allgemeine Geschichte*)” (Hegel 1837: 6). This sentence is also to be found in the edition of Karl Hegel, as well as in some of the later editions. (Hegel 1848: 7).⁷ However, the currently

6 All the translations of Hegel’s manuscripts and transcriptions of his *Lectures* are by the author. For the complete English translation of the manuscripts (Hegel, G. W. F. 1995. *Vorlesungsmanuskripte II (1816–1831)*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1995.) as well as the translated reconstruction of the separate course of the *Lectures* from 1822/23 (Hegel, G.W.F. 1996. *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte. Band I: Nachschriften von 1822/23*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner) see translation by R.F. Brown and P.C. Hodgson (Hegel, G.W.F. 2011. *Lectures in the Philosophy of World History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press).

7 Upon the editions of Eduard Gans and Karl Hegel is also based the contemporary edition of Hegel’s works edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel. In their edition term *Allgemeine Geschichte* also emerges as the first mode of reflective historiography as it is found in Eduard Gans’s edition, Hegel, G.W.F. 1989. *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, p. 14. Only in Lassons’s edition (Hegel, G.W.F. 1917. *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte. Einleitung in die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*. Leipzig: Felix Meiner) does *Allgemeine Geschichte* disappear from the *Introduction* based on Hegel’s manuscript of the 1822. and 1828. Hoffmeister later commented that term *Allgemeine Geschichte* is result of K. Hegel’s abbreviation of the words *allgemeinen Geschichtschreiber*, Hegel (1994: 11). See Hegel, G. W. F. 1994. *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte. Band I: Die Vernunft in der Geschichte*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner, p. 11. Also, see the separate manuscripts of the texts from 1822. and 1828, as well as the appendix to the Suhrkamp edition. Because the term *Allgemeine Geschichte* as a description of the first mode of reflective historiography was absent from Lasson’s and Hoffmeister’s critical editions, interpretations that used these editions resulted in the omission of the term *Allgemeine Geschichte* as description of the first type of reflective historiography. For example, Jacques D’Hondt in his 1966. book *Hegel, Philosophie de l’Histoire Vivante*, treats the chapter usually associated with the *first mode of reflective historiography* (sometimes denoted as *universal history*) as a general

available transcriptions and manuscripts do not indicate the existence of such a description of the first mode of reflective historiography in Hegel's *Lectures*. On the contrary, they leave us traces from which we could infer how, in Gans's edition, the first mode of reflective historiography came to be denoted as universal history. In the manuscript of the introduction to the *Lectures* from 1828/29, in the passage where Hegel explains his concept of the reflective historiography, he underlines that such a mode of historical writing comes in different forms, and that among these forms appears also: "...that what we customarily call historians in general..." (Hegel 1995: 129). Therefore, the word *general*, in this sentence is not an adjective referring to the mode of historical writing, but it is an adjective referring to the act of naming, Hegel writes: "...im allgemeinen Geschichtschreiber zu nennen pflegen" (Hegel 1995: 129). It appears that parts of the paragraph, where Hegel speaks about reflective historians in general, were moved a couple of passages lower in the text during Gans's editorial work, ending up in the chapter about the first mode of reflective historiography. This becomes even more obvious if we compare the same passage from Gans's edition with the paragraph on reflective historiography from the manuscript of the *Introduction* to Hegel's *Lectures* from 1828/1829. In Gans's edition, we can read almost the complete text of the paragraph on reflective historiography in general (from Hegel's *Introduction* of 1828/29) within the paragraph on universal history. A particularly striking moment in this comparison appears in Gans's edition: after the sentence defining the first mode of reflective historiography as universal history, Gans's edition continues with the passage from Hegel's manuscript (1828/29). The very passage in which reflective historiography is described as the type of historiography most often identified with historians in general.⁸

Therefore, it is most likely that the sentence (from Gans's edition) on the first mode of reflective historiography as universal history (Hegel 1837: 6) is a consequence of Gans's modification of Hegel's words on historians in general from the manuscript of the *Introduction* for the *Lectures* of 1828/29. (Hegel 1995: 129). Furthermore, it is interesting that earlier editors of Hegel's texts were not attentive to the significantly different structure of the two introductory texts,

characterization of reflective historiography, treating pragmatic historiography as the *first mode* of reflective historiography, D'Hondt (1966: 376-381). A different example constitutes the study of B.T. Wilkins *Hegel's Philosophy of History* based on the translation of R.S. Hartman (Hegel, G.W.F. 1953. *Reason in History*. New York-Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill), in which K. Hegel's edition is compiled with Gans's and Lasson's editions, resulting in preservation of the sub-chapter on *universal history*. The significance of this terminological solution is reflected in Wilkins, resulting in questioning Hegel's reason to place *universal historiography* as the first, and not as the last mode (closest to the philosophical historiography) of reflective historiography (Wilkins 1974: 31-33).

8 If we compare this place in Gans's edition, Hegel (1837: 6-8), with the text of Hegel's manuscript, Hegel (1995: 129-130), the overlap is striking, and this points to the conclusion that Gans has most likely used the manuscript from 1828/29 as part of the material for the composition of his *Introduction* to the *Lectures*.

and they opted to use the later text from 1828 only as an addition to the *Introduction* structured in the same manner as the text from 1822. Such an approach led to the incorporation of Hegel's general characterization of reflective historiography from 1828 to the text on the first mode of reflective historiography from the transcriptions from 1822. However, neither of the two of Hegel's *Introductions* offers a clear solution to the relationship between reflective historiography and its various types. Interpretation of the so-called first mode of reflective historiography – setting aside a simple reduction of it to the genre of universal history – could shed some light on this complex relationship between reflective historiography and its various sub-types.

Why there are no examples of typical universal historians?

But why is the name of the first mode of reflective historiography important? Even though Hegel most likely did not use the term *universal history* to describe the first mode of reflective historiography, is it not obvious that his examples of such a practice: *history of a people, a land or the world*, are to be found under the genre of *universal history*? This discrepancy holds as problematic only insofar as we presuppose that Hegel's theory of historiography aims to portray historiographical genres. However, Hegel's survey of non-philosophical historiography is not an overview of genres, which becomes apparent from the beginning of his *Introduction*, where he analyzes *original historiography* as a constitutive practice for the political memory of the community, rather than a simple genre of writing (Atanasković 2022: 92-99). In that regard, focusing on *universal history* makes other fundamental determinations of the first mode of reflective historiography fade into the background of interpretation. The terms Hegel uses in his *Introduction* to the *Lectures* (1822/23 and 1828/29) to describe the first mode of reflective historiography are *survey* and *compilation*, and it is striking how examples of *universal* or *world* history are almost absent. Hegel does not mention Voltaire's *Essay on Universal History*.⁹ At the same time, references to later *universal histories* are mostly lacking. He does not refer to Herder's *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Mankind*,¹⁰ and there is also no mention of Fichte's *Grundzüge*.¹¹ Such omission of philosophical universal histories in the passages concerning the first mode of reflective historiography could be understood as a consequence of the polemical nature of Hegel's *Introductions*. It could be interpreted as a sign of the author's distance from previous philosophical histories.¹² But, the examples of historians he mentions are equally unusual for engagement with *universal history*. Hegel

9 Voltaire. 1756. *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations et sur les principaux faits de l'histoire depuis Charlemagne jusqu'à Louis XIII*. Paris.

10 Herder, J. G. 1784-1791. *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 1–4. Riga–Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

11 Fichte, J. G. 1806. *Die Grundzüge der gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner.

12 See Prole (2006: 79–109).

speaks, above all, about Livy, and to a lesser degree about Johannes von Müller and he mentions Ranke only in passing remarks. Possible references to contemporary or at least recent attempts at engagement with universal historiography are almost completely missing. There is an obvious omission of the historians of the Göttingen school. When Hegel speaks about the first mode of reflective historiography, he does not refer to J.C. Gatterer and his *Outline of Universal History*,¹³ nor to works such as Meiner's *Outline of the History of Humanity*¹⁴ or Eichhorn's *World History*.¹⁵ All of these prominent absences lead to the conclusion that typical universal history was not Hegel's paradigmatic example for the first mode of reflective historiography.

Hegel was not unaware of the practice of contemporary historians. On the contrary, he attentively followed developments in the field. Therefore, his omissions are not to be interpreted as accidental. Universal historians of Hegel's time were writing world histories, but more frequently they were writing histories of lands or peoples. A great example of such an approach are Ranke's first works: *To the Critique of New Historical Writers*, and *Rulers and Peoples of Southern Europe in the 16th and 17th Centuries*.¹⁶ When in 1828, Hegel expanded his introduction to the lectures of 1822, he also included his critique of Ranke's attempts to approach the past through detailed surveys (Hegel 1995: 134), which indicates that at that time he was very well acquainted with his work.¹⁷ However, in the expansion of the *Introduction* from 1822, Hegel was not referring to the innovative synthesis of textual criticism and universal history as a central characteristic of Ranke's historiography. Instead, his critique was aimed at something he saw as unnecessary work on details more appropriate to the novels of Walter Scott. (Hegel 1995: 134-135).¹⁸ In that sense, for

13 Gatterer, J. C. 1765. *Abriß der Universalhistorie nach ihrem gesamten Umfange von Erschaffung der Erde bis auf unsere Zeiten erste Hälfte nebst einer vorläufigen Einleitung von der Historie überhaupt und der Universalhistorie insbesondere wie auch von den bisher gehörigen Schriftstellern*. Göttingen: Verlag der Wittve Vandenhoeck, 1765.

14 Meiners, C. 1785. *Grundriss der Geschichte der Menschheit*. Lemgo: Meyersche Buchhandlung.

15 Eichhorn, J. G. 1814. *Weltgeschichte*. Göttingen: Röwer.

16 Ranke, L. 1824. *Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtsschreiber. Eine Beylage zu desselben romanischen und germanischen Geschichte*. Reimer: Leipzig und Berlin; Ranke, L. 1827. *Fürsten und Völker von Südeuropa im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, F. Perthes: Hamburg.

17 Jaeschke remarks that Hegel was acquainted with the three famous works of Ranke, apart from the two books mentioned above, it is also worth noting the *Serbian Revolution* (1829). (Ranke, L. 1829. *Die serbische Revolution. Aus serbische Papieren und Mittheilungen*, Verlag F. Perthes: Hamburg), Jaeschke, *Anmerkungen* in Hegel (1995: 424).

18 Beiser questions the understanding of Hegel's position as distant from contemporary historiography, even ascribing to Hegel's thought a form of historicism (Beiser (1993: 270-300). Such an approach, resolving Hegel's quarrel with then contemporary historiography in favor of his own historicism, is akin to Dilthey's reevaluation of Hegel's thought in *Der Aufbau der Geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* (Dilthey 1970: 115) and his *Jugendgeschichte Hegels* (Dilthey 1990: VI). For a detailed analysis of the relationship between Hegel's philosophy of history and 19th-century historicism as a later development, see Jordan (1998: 205-224).

Hegel, the deficiencies of Ranke's approach are closer to Livy's alleged *dryness*, even though Ranke tries to escape it through detailed narration. (Hegel 1995: 134). Accordingly, Ranke appears to Hegel as close, if not closer, to the classical writers of reflective historiography than to the contemporaries writing *universal histories*. The reason for this unusual comparison is to be found in Hegel's specific theory of different modes of historical writing. For Hegel, different kinds of historiography are not to be thought of as mutually exclusive practices, and none of them is to be understood as a specific prerogative of an epoch or characteristic of a school of historiography. Instead, the different modes of historiography are to be understood as aspects of the integral art of historical writing. These modes are specified and connected at different times and in different political communities. From there stems the diverse nature of Hegel's examples. The first mode of reflective historiography appears as an assembly of practices characteristic of historians with very different approaches and interests, but with a common tendency to step outside the boundaries of their time. The latter distinguishes reflective historians from the original ones: they are not writing about the immediate experience of their community. This contrast between different historiographical practices raises the question: why does the practice, to that degree determined by politics as historiography, turn itself from the record of contemporary events to the past, and what appears as its object?

What is the object of the first mode of reflective historiography?

To answer the last question it would be helpful to summarize Hegel's description of the first mode of reflective historiography from the original manuscript and transcriptions of the *Lectures*: 1) These are the histories of a people, land or the whole world; 2) Such histories appear as surveys, they are made as compilations, and their language is not that of perception. (Hegel 1995: 130). To begin with, it is clear that people, land, or the world as objects of historical writing require a degree of a general approach. However, it is also important to note that Hegel does not address how these histories constitute stories about events tied to a specific political community or state. Is it then possible that the state is not the object of the first mode of reflective historiography? For Hegel, historiography is co-emergent with the development of the first political institutions, and they appear in their immediacy in the narratives of the original historians.¹⁹ If preoccupation with the political institutions and the state is *conditio sine qua non* of historiography, then it is possible that Hegel used the term *state* in the context of reflective historiography synonymously with the *land* (Hegel 1995: 130). While he presupposed that historians are interested in the peoples living in organized states constituting world history insofar as its subjects are nations (Hegel 1995: 124-125). However, it is also

¹⁹ On the parallelism between the emergence of historical prose, written law and the state, see Atanasković (2022a: 66). For a specific place in Hegel, see Hegel (1996: 193).

possible that Hegel's omission of the state as an object of reflective historiography is of greater theoretical importance, and that the state is not a direct object of reflective historians, while it is still a necessary and immediate motivating reason for their writing.

The first mode of reflective historiography does not take a single state as its immediate object. Instead, the object of its narration is given as something outward to the political community in which the historian writes. Its object is still contained in the present, but the present in the sense of the spirit (Hegel 1995: 129). The perspective of a reflective historian appears as removed from the immediacy of his time and community. But the distance constitutes the precondition of his historical account.²⁰ For him, the present moment appears in a broader sense, through the continuity of political institutions, always unfinished and in the process of development. (Hegel 1996: 193). In such a process, contemporary political institutions cease to figure as direct objects of his narration. About which particular state, which institutions, which law, and political situation should such a historian write an account? In the end, what rule does he apply when choosing his topic? From Hegel's standpoint, such a choice is never guided by simple curiosity. It rather emerges from direct interest stemming from the actual political reality in which the historian lives and works (Hegel 1995: 132-133).²¹ Therefore, a historian's choice of topic is always relevant for his immediate present in a constitutive sense, while his approach transcends immediacy of a particular state as his political community.²²

For Hegel, strictly speaking, states are constituents of history, but reflective historiography encounters them mediated through stories about people, land, or the world. These are the three distinct levels at which the first mode of reflective historiography encounters the life of the spirit and understands the link between present and past through the succession of particular shapes of historical states and their mutual relations.²³ Therefore, it is easy to

20 This distance is a constitutive aspect of historiography already in ancient times, as in Polybius, Plb. 1.4. Polybius *Histories* Hegel describes as a particular example of successful historiography in its original sense. See Hegel 1996: 8; 2015: 9 and 1995: 132.

21 Bauer remarks that this motivating factor is *general* (*Allgemeine*) for any form of historical writing, Bauer (2001: 158).

22 State, in a sense of its rational constitution, for Hegel, is not to be understood only in historical terms. In that sense, every approach to the state as an exclusively historical object is questionable from the strictly Hegelian point of view. The following citation from Hegel's *Introduction* of 1822/23 is instructive. Regarding history, Hegel writes: "... from it we could learn nothing about the state, because the state is worldly rationality, which is actual rationality. Different constitutions follow one after another in differentiation of their principles, and always in that sense that the earlier becomes overcome through the later. Rationality of the state is that principle of unity in itself, which sets against these abstract aspects." Also: "In the case of the constitution of the state, later principles are not already contained in the earlier. Because of this, we could learn nothing from ancient history" See Hegel (1996: 81); Hegel (1995); Hegel (2015: 68).

23 Rojek insists on a wider approach that historiography gains with concepts of *people, land, and the world* (Rojek 2017: 87-96). *Land, people, or the world*, as concepts, are

understand Roman historiography as writing about the Roman people or the history of Italy as a history of land. Both of these levels of generality open the field through which the succession of different forms of ethical life is visible. Even Hegel's own philosophical historiography presupposes the gap produced by reflective historians. Gap between the immediacy of the historical object and its mediated nature through the history. When Hegel writes about the Roman state in the singular, he presupposes an object with historical development: kingdom, republic, and empire are different moments in the development of a single object not reducible to any of its particular historical shapes. But such an approach is not without its problems. It appears unusual as writing about the French state, where a sense of continuity between the *ancien régime* and the republic is established only through the common denominator of *the state*. To write a history of a people or a land is something entirely different from providing an account of a particular state – it is also different than writing a philosophy of history guided by principles enabling the unification and universalization of particular historical narratives.

On the level of the theory of non-philosophical historiography, Hegel omits explicit engagement with the problems that emerge from historical writing about the *state* in singular.²⁴ From Hegel's standpoint, it is challenging for the solely historiographical approach to find the unifying principle for its narration outside of the generality of the concept. Hegel tries to solve the last problem only through his philosophical approach, unifying different forms of historical institutions into a specific principle that mediates the differences. Speaking

mediatory in the widening of horizons, but the insistence upon the generality of these terms is to be taken with a theoretical precaution. The widening of the horizons of historical narration is to be understood in the case of reflective historiography in terms of the separation between the immediate object of historical narration and of its reflection in historical narrative. Therefore, reflective historiography is equally determined by the shape and concerns of the present political community in which the author lives and works, as it is a work of original historiography. The specific relationship between political and historiographical practice separates historiography from non-historical forms of narration. In that sense, Hegel speaks about history as the prose of the unfinished present of the state, in his *Introduction* to the lectures of 1830/31 (Hegel 1995: 193).

²⁴ This problem is tackled only in the chapter concerning rational (*verständige*) history (Hegel 1995: 136-137). Here Hegel writes about historical accounts that attempt to understand general historical development, guided by concepts. This type of historiography operates on a greater level of generality than the first mode concerned with surveys and compilations. However, Hegel's *Introduction* from 1822/23 reveals to us that he approaches that type of historiography as rarely successful. He mentions Montesquieu as a successful example, while devoting more space to the critique of unsuccessful pragmatic narratives (Hegel 2015: 10-12). In 1828/29, the section was expanded, with a strong emphasis on the conceptual generality of the second type of reflective historiography. But Hegel's manuscript provides only an account without examples of the *Verständige Geschichte*. This lack of examples, together with strong emphasis on unsuccessful attempts (1822/23), points to Hegel's general reluctance regarding a purely historiographical approach to the state, which appears as a particular state (in its immediacy), or as a concept, where it is the object of philosophy.

about Roman history, he tries to find the principle of historical unity of different shapes of the Roman state in the Roman constitution: "... Roman principle or Roman political constitution" (Hegel 1996: 406).²⁵

From such an approach, it cannot be inferred that the state, for Hegel, is something not historical, transcending history and factual historical particularities. On the contrary, the state is historical in a measure in which it is a precondition of any objective or subjective history. (Hegel 1995: 192-193). So, our claim here is not that reflective history omits state as its object entirely, but only that it is constituted in an objective rift between historian and the individual state he lives in and through which his historiographical practice is motivated.²⁶ If historian encounters his object in the mediated present of the spirit, he finds himself separated from the immediate representation of his political community. This separation leads to the widening of historical horizons through abstract concepts – such a widening is not only characteristic of the *first mode of reflective historiography*, as it represents a fundamental characteristic of all of its varieties. Even the so-called special historiography, for Hegel, approaches its object at the wider, general level of a specific object or topic followed through history. It is: "...special History from the general point of view" (Hegel 2015: 13). In that sense, special historiography appears as equally universal/general as the first mode of reflective historiography.

Because it is concerned with the object only in its mediated, or abstracted form, reflective historiography necessarily utilizes sources different from the immediate perception. These histories are, as Hegel remarks, compilations of already extant historical representations. Original historian transforms the unfinished present of his own political community into the lasting representation. His immediate objects are events of his contemporary political community. In contrast with such a practice, a reflective historian takes for its immediate

25 Here, precaution is warranted because this formulation is specific to a single textual source. In Hotho's transcription, there is no 'or', but Hegel speaks only about *the Roman constitution*, Hegel (2015: 365). However, the singular use of the *Roman constitution* in the context of the whole history of ancient Rome is indicative of our conclusion that Hegel attempted to equalize different forms of Roman statehood through the one unifying principle of the Roman constitution.

26 It is questionable where, within the framework of Hegel's theory of historiography, the short periods of history, not witnessed by the author, are to be placed. Strictly speaking, reflective history always produces a somewhat wider approach and a greater temporal gap between the historian and the object of his narration. For Hegel, the possibility of rewriting history, about specific events from history, as for example, a new writing of the history of the Greco-Persian or Peloponnesian war, is by itself a highly problematic endeavour. To such a conclusion, two textual places from his *Introduction* are indicative: 1) Insistence upon the sufficiency of original histories for understanding the spirits of peoples from the past (Hegel 1995: 128). 2) Polemical chapter on the critical writing of history (Hegel 1996: 12-13); (Hegel 2015: 12-13). Hegel lacks readiness to embrace the historical importance of the re-evaluation of historical facts through critical engagement with the sources, and he is therefore skeptical about new attempts of critical historiography.

object that which is contemporary in terms of actual historical development. This form of mediated present is to be found in texts and sources, and not in the form of immediate perception. The last is also crucial for the distinction between reflective and original historiography, since *perception* and its *representation* are the terms which Hegel uses to describe the practice of original historians. (Atanasković 2022: 98-105). For reflective historians, perception is not the medium of their work, but creating representation is still the task of their undertaking. Therefore, they operate with previously produced historical representations. By writing a history of the land or the people, the reflective historian creates a narrative on the ground of previous histories whose immediate objects were events of past political communities. In that sense, original history is always history about the specific state, and reflective history emerges as a compilation of already extant prose about the past that was once the immediate present. What lies before the gaze of the reflective historian is an infinite material comprised of fragments of the past created by previous work of original historiography. It could be said that, for Hegel, original historians are motivated by the events and structures of their political community to produce immediate narratives about it, while reflective historians are also motivated by these events but approach its problems through the mediated lens of the past. Such a choice for mediation and reflection is not just a methodological tool made available for more developed historiography, but it stems from the specific type of political communities in which political consciousness is significantly determined through the tradition and duration of the community – it is not by chance that the first reflective historians which are mentioned in Hegel are Roman historians writing histories of Rome as a city which expands through history.

Therefore, that which is reflected by reflective historians is nothing else but the actual present of their political communities as it appears determined through the past representations eminently created by the earlier historians. (Hegel 1995: 130). Reflective historiography constitutes new representations, specifically representations of the past, that figure as the cornerstones of historical memory. While original historians produce places of memory around which the community's political identity is constituted, or better, representations that are expression of political identity, reflective historians are the first creators of historical identity. To summarize: 1) Reflective history is not immediately written as the history of an individual state or political community; 2) Reflective histories have a significant role in the formation of the consciousness of a political community about its own past through the synthesis of the new objects of memory composed from the already present narratives of original historians. There is nothing *universal* which constitutes the starting point or methodological tool of such a historiography. Instead, its level of generality stems from the necessary separation of historical writers and the immediacy of their political community. This separation is constitutive for the *most common* practice of historiography, as Hegel explicitly states, but it does not constitute a specific type of historical writing that could be defined as *universal*.

Conclusion

The term *Allgemeine Geschichte* does not appear in the manuscripts and separate transcriptions of Hegel's *Lectures* in paragraphs concerned with reflective historiography. Therefore, interpreting the first mode of reflective historiography as universal opens more questions regarding Hegel's theory of historiography, and none of them are compatible with the rest of the framework of Hegel's theory of historiography: Why is the first mode of reflective historiography universal and the last special? Why is Livy mentioned as a universal historian, but Hegel does not mention many paradigmatic modern authors? Why is the direct object of such a historiography not the state as a concrete universal? How is it differentiated from a philosophical universal history? These questions give systemic importance to the universal history as the first mode of reflective historiography, attaching more systemic weight to the term than Hegel did in his *Introductions*. At the same time, they divert focus from the specific terms Hegel uses to describe reflective historiography in its most basic form. Using universal history as a descriptive term for a type of reflective historiography attaches more systemic significance to it, while obscuring its significance in the context of Hegel's theory of historiography.

Aporias from the above questions turn to productive moments of Hegel's theory of historiography, if the term universal history is removed from the focus of interpretation. Hegel writes about surveys and compilations to describe the first mode of reflective historiography. These terms are linked to the distinct role reflective historiography serves in human communities, which differs from original historiography. Reflective historiography distances itself from the immediacy of the current political community, only to address its need to understand the present within a broader historical context. For this purpose, historians require a different medium than narration about immediate political events. Reflective historians thus focus on broader horizons defined by the people, the land, or the world. These key terms, while important for reflective historiography, are not exclusive to its first mode. They represent moments necessary for expanding historiographical horizons as communities develop a more complex political consciousness. Removing the term 'universal history' from Hegel's theory enables a functional, rather than ontological, interpretation of non-philosophical historiography. In this way, different modes of historiography are seen as moments within an integral practice of historical writing, rather than as separate types.

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Hegel i opšta istoriografija

Apstrakt

Hegelova obrada takozvane *opšte istorije* jedna je od utvrđenih interpretativnih pretpostavki školskog pristupa njegovim *Predavanjima iz filozofije svetske istorije*. Termin opšta istorija prvi put se pojavljuje u edicijama uređenim od strane Eduarda Gansa i Karla Hegela. Obe edicije bile su zasnovane na uređivanju i kompilaciji različitih rukopisa i transkripcija. Termin je dalje prenet u kasnijim edicijama. Ipak, u sačuvanim materijalima, ovaj termin se ne pojavljuje u poglavlju o različitim načinima pisanja reflektujuće istoriografije. Sa pojavom novih kritičkih izdanja Hegelovih *Predavanja*, kroz komparativnu analizu različitih izvora, nije samo moguće pokazati da se termin *opšta istorija* ne pojavljuje u Hegelovoj obradi različitih vrsta istoriografije, već je takođe moguće utvrditi na koji način se ovaj termin pojavio u prvim izdanjima *Predavanja*. Odsustvo termina *opšta istorija* u sačuvanim tekstovima otvara pitanje statusa prvog načina pisanja reflektujuće istoriografije, koji Hegel opisuje kroz pojmove pregleda i kompilacija, karakterišući ga kao pisanje istorije o narodu, zemlji ili čitavom svetu. Ova mnostrukost određenja, otvara prostor za nove interpretacije Hegelove teorije istoriografije.

Ključne reči: Hegel, filozofija istorije, istorija, univerzalna istorija, reflektujuća istoriografija, istoriografija