

HEGEL

REINTERPRETATION, TEXTS, AND COMMENTARY

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CHAPTER VI:

Hegel on History

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The basic structure of Hegel's philosophy of history furnishes another striking corroboration of our reinterpretation: nobody could possibly construe it in terms of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, although there are, as usual, three stages. At first, in the ancient Orient, only *one*, the ruler, is free. The second stage is reached in classical antiquity where *some* are free, but not yet the slaves. The third stage is reached in the modern world with the recognition that *all* men are free, or—as Hegel also puts it, and we have these ideas not only in students' lecture notes but also in his own manuscript—"man as man is free."¹

In another passage, also available in Hegel's own manuscript, he explains this more fully:

"Of world history . . . it may be said that it is the account of the spirit, how it works to attain the *knowledge* of what it is *in itself*. The *Oriental* peoples do not know that the spirit, or man as such, is free in himself. Because they do not know it, they are not free. They only know that *one* is free; but for that very reason such freedom is merely arbitrariness, savagery, dimness of passion, or at times a gentleness, a tameness of passion which is also a mere accident of nature or arbitrariness. This *one* is therefore only a despot, not a free man, a human being.

"Only in the *Greeks* did the consciousness of freedom arise, and therefore they were free; but they, as well as the Romans, knew

¹ VG 156. References to *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte*, ed. Hoffmeister, are followed by an L if they do not refer to Hegel's own manuscript.

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only that *some* are free, not man as such. Plato and Aristotle did not know this; therefore the Greeks did not only have slaves, and their lives and the subsistence of their beautiful freedom were tied to this, but their own freedom, too, was partly only an accidental, undeveloped, ephemeral and limited flower, partly at the same time a harsh servitude of man, of what is humane.

"Only the *Germanic* nations² attained the consciousness, in Christianity, that man as man is free, that the freedom of the spirit constitutes his most distinctive nature. This consciousness arose first in religion, in the inmost region of the spirit; but to build this principle also into the affairs of this world, this was a further task whose solution and execution demands the long and hard work of education. With the acceptance of the Christian religion, slavery, e.g., did not stop immediately; even less did freedom immediately become dominant in states, or were governments and constitutions organized rationally and founded on the principle of freedom. This *application* of the principle to worldly affairs, the penetration and permeation [*Durchbildung*] of the worldly condition by it, that is the long process which constitutes history itself" (VG 61 f.).

That history is the story of the development of human freedom, is the central idea of Hegel's philosophy of history. This is its heart, and all the rest receives its blood from it.

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Hegel speaks of reason in history, and his twentieth-century editors—first, Lasson and, following him, Hoffmeister—have taken the liberty of calling the volume containing the critical edition of the introductory lectures on the philosophy of history *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte* (Reason in History). Yet Hegel never claims that history has been rational in every detail. On the contrary, its abundant irrationality is so plain that it requires no special philosophical effort to see it. What does call for the exertions of a philosopher is to find some reason in history. It is pertinent to recall Hegel's early essay on "The Positivity of the Christian Religion"

² The term *die germanischen Nationen* obviously refers to the Protestant nations of northern Europe and cannot by any stretch of the imagination be taken to mean merely "the Germans"; yet this is a point where Hegel has been mistranslated and misrepresented again and again.

and his decision, in 1800, to view the past in a different perspective, with the faith that what so many millions have died for was "not bare nonsense or immorality" (H 12).

There is a moving passage, again in Hegel's own manuscript, that suggests that he no longer found it easy to talk or write about the wretched side of history. The prose is complex, but the thought is perfectly clear:

"When we consider this spectacle of the passions; when the consequences of their violence and the folly that accompanies not only them but even, and indeed pre-eminently, good intentions and legitimate aims, come before our eyes—the ills, the evil, the destruction of the most flourishing realms that the human spirit has created; when we behold individuals with the deepest sympathy for their indescribable misery—then we can only end up with sadness over this transitoriness and, insofar as this destruction is not only a work of nature but of the will of men, even more with moral sadness, with the indignation of the good spirit, if there be any in us, over such a spectacle. We can raise such events, without any rhetorical exaggeration, merely by putting together all the misfortune that the most glorious peoples and states as well as individual virtues or innocence have suffered, into the most horrible portrait, and thus intensify our feeling into the most profound and helpless sadness which cannot be balanced by any conciliatory result. . . . But even as we contemplate history as this slaughter bench on which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of states, and the virtue of individuals have been sacrificed, our thoughts cannot avoid the question *for whom, for what final aim* these monstrous sacrifices have been made" (VG 79 f.).

The explicit mention of innocence is noteworthy. Hegel does not believe that suffering proves guilt. Recalling how a former fellow student at Tübingen later related that the young Hegel had "found special pleasure in the Book of Job on account of its unruly natural language" (H 3), one wonders whether it was only the language that attracted him. Hegel's letter to Knebel, written in December 1810 (translated in D) comes to mind, too: So far from closing his eyes to the misery of humanity, Hegel needed his work, his philosophy, to cope with it. He tried to show himself and others that the indubitably monstrous sufferings recorded throughout history had not been altogether for *nothing*. There is something we can show in return for all this, though it cannot balance the

misery: while even Plato and Aristotle, not to speak of the sages of India, had not known that man as such was free, this was now widely recognized, though it might still take considerable time before such freedom would be fully actualized.

In Hegel's mature work the emphasis is almost the opposite of the Book of Job, and also far from Nietzsche and some of the existentialists. Mostly, he stresses the goal rather than the sacrifices, the growing recognition of freedom rather than the slowness of its implementation, and reason rather than unreason.

If we ask why, two reasons offer themselves. They are supplementary. First, as Goethe said: "The greatest men always are attached to their century by some weakness."³ Or we might express the same point by likening Hegel in one respect to his "world-historical individuals," whom we shall have to consider in a moment: he, too, knew "for what the time had come."⁴ Either way, his distribution of emphasis reveals him as a man of the nineteenth century, not of the twentieth—not necessarily a child of the nineteenth century, but perhaps rather one of those who helped to mold its distinctive temper.

As we follow Hegel's development, we may also venture a psychological explanation, which is in no way incompatible with the first point. Human misery was perfectly obvious to him. His closest friend, Hölderlin, had become insane, and now this most lovable human being, by far the most gifted poet of his generation, vegetated mutely toward his long delayed death. Hegel's only sister lived on the verge of madness and was deeply despondent. His only brother had been killed in the Napoleonic wars. His mother had died when he was barely thirteen. It did not seem manly to Hegel to dwell on that aspect of life. But it was never far from the surface and found expression in, for example, his writings and lectures on tragedy and his immense admiration for Sophocles and Shakespeare. On the rare occasions when it finds more direct expression, as in the passage we have cited that ends with the image of the slaughter bench, one gets the feeling that he did not altogether trust himself to speak of these matters.

The popular view of Hegel as an "optimist" is certainly mis-

³ *Elective Affinities* (1809); *Maximen und Reflexionen*, §49.

⁴ VG 97 L: *was an der Zeit, was notwendig ist*. Cf. Nohl 143, cited at the beginning of section 12, above: what is there said to be "a need of our time" is precisely what is at stake here.

leading. He never shared the view that gained ground in the later nineteenth century, and beyond that until 1914, that happiness had grown throughout history, and that ultimate happiness was around the corner. Nor did he believe that gradually so much had been learned from history that at long last tragedy was avoidable. On these points he expressed himself with vigor:

"What experience and history teach is this: peoples and governments have never learned anything from history and acted according to what one might have learned from it" (VG 19 L).

"History is not the soil of happiness. The times of happiness are empty leaves in it" (VG 92 L).

It would not go too far to call his vision of history tragic. The themes represented here by a few quotations are pursued throughout and recur again and again.⁵ Hegel is still far from the type of the "Alexandrian" scholar of the later nineteenth century, whom the young Nietzsche derides in his first books. He is much closer to Nietzsche himself; say, to Zarathustra's "I have long ceased to be concerned with happiness; I am concerned with my work." Hegel says of the world-historical individuals: "It is not happiness they choose, but toil, struggle, work for their purpose."⁶ That Hegel personally felt the same way appears from his two letters to his bride in the summer of 1811 (D): indeed, immediately upon becoming engaged he hurt her feelings by questioning whether "happiness is part of the destiny of my life."

Hegel is also close to Nietzsche when he says that "*nothing great* in the world has been accomplished *without passion*" (85). Or when he attacks envy (100 ff. L). Indeed, part of this attack deserves a place here:

"What schoolmaster has not demonstrated to his class that Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar were driven by such passions and were therefore immoral men? From which it immediately follows that he, the schoolmaster, is a more excellent human being than they, because he does not possess such passions, which he can prove, for he has not conquered Asia, nor vanquished Darius and Porus. He lives comfortably, to be sure, but he also lets live. . . . For a valet there are no heroes, says a familiar proverb. I have added—and Goethe repeated this two years later—not be-

⁵ For example, 34 f. L, 72 L, and 100 L.

⁶ VG 100 L; cf. 93 L. The Zarathustra quotation comes from the first chapter of Part IV.

cause there are no heroes but because he is a valet.⁷ . . . Homer's Thersites who reproaches the kings is a stock figure of all ages. Blows, i.e., a beating with a solid stick, he does not receive in all ages, as he did in Homer's; but his envy . . . is the thorn he carries in his flesh⁸; and the undying worm that gnaws him⁹ is the torment that his excellent intentions and reproofs remain without any success in the world" (102 f. L).

What is perhaps most like Nietzsche and Sartre is Hegel's constantly repeated insistence that "the organic individual produces himself: it makes of itself what it is implicitly; thus the spirit, too, is only that which it makes of itself, and it makes of itself what it is implicitly."¹⁰ This is almost a definition of spirit: "Spirit is this, that it produces itself, makes itself into what it is" (74). Compare this with Sartre's: "Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism."¹¹ Of course, Sartre applies emphatically to each individual what Hegel had more often said of spirit and of peoples, and Sartre does not stress as Hegel does—but this is a mere truism in any case—that potentially one was all along what one makes of oneself explicitly. Where they really differ is in Sartre's suggestion that we could have chosen to make something utterly different of ourselves—a point Hegel does not discuss.

On a related point, however, Sartre's moral is also Hegel's. Sartre presents this as the distinctive doctrine of existentialism: "Man . . . is therefore nothing else but the sum of his actions. . . . For the existentialist, there is no love apart from the deeds of love; . . . there is no genius other than that which is expressed in works of art. The genius of Proust is the totality of the works of Proust. . . . In life, a man commits himself, draws his own portrait, and there is nothing but that portrait. No doubt, this thought may seem comfortless to one who has not made a success of his life."¹²

Hegel says in a similar vein—and only Descartes, Husserl, and Heidegger are mentioned more often in Sartre's *Being and Noth-*

⁷ *Phenomenology*, about 5 pages before the end of "VI. Spirit": Lasson's ed., 430; Glockner's ed., 510; Baillie's, 673. Goethe, *Elective Affinities*.

⁸ Alludes to II Corinthians 12:7.

⁹ Alludes to Mark 9:44, 46, 48.

¹⁰ VG 151; cf. 54 L, 58 L, 67 L, 72 f. L. Cf. also C II.1.8.

¹¹ "Existentialism is a Humanism," in *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, ed. Kaufmann, 291.

¹² *Ibid.*, 300.

ingness than Hegel—"What man is, is his deed, is the series of his deeds, is that into which he has made himself. Thus the spirit is essentially energy and one cannot, in regard to it, abstract from appearance" (114 L). Elsewhere, Hegel notes "that often a difference is made between what a man is internally and his deeds. In history this is untrue; the series of his deeds is the man himself. . . . The truth is that the external is not different from the internal."¹³

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From Hegel's own point of view, however, all this is incidental to the central point that history relates the development of freedom. And when in the following passage he contrasts youth and maturity, we know by now that he is not merely comparing his own wisdom with his students' lack of it but also, and perhaps mainly, his hard-won insight with the views of his own youth:

"It is easier to see the faults of individuals, states, and the governance of the world than to see what they contain of truth. For as long as one is negative and reproaches, one stands nobly, with a lofty mien, above the subject, without having penetrated into it and grasped it and what is positive in it. Certainly, the reproach may be well founded; only what is faulty is much easier to find than what is substantial (e.g., in works of art) It is the sign of the greatest superficiality to find what is bad everywhere and to see nothing of the affirmative and genuine. Age generally makes milder; youth is always dissatisfied; that is due to the maturity of judgment in age which does not merely, from disinterestedness, put up with the bad, too, but which has also been taught more profoundly by the seriousness of life and been led to the substantial and solid aspect of the matter

"Thus the insight to which philosophy should help us is that the actual world is as it ought to be God rules the world; the content of his government, the execution of his plan, is world

¹³ VG 66 L; cf. also 100 L. Hegel also anticipates Spengler both in stressing the organic unity of all the aspects of a culture (121 L, with an appropriate bow to Montesquieu), and in pushing the organic metaphor still much further: "The spirit of a people is a natural individual; as such, it flourishes, is strong, declines, and dies" (67 L). On the following page this point is developed further, in language at points quite close to Spengler's.

history; to grasp this is the task of the philosophy of world history, and its presupposition is that the ideal accomplishes itself, that only what accords with the idea has actuality. Before the pure light of this divine idea, which is no mere ideal, the semblance that the world is a mad, foolish happening disappears. . . . What is ordinarily called actuality is considered something rotten by philosophy; it may well seem, but it is not actual in and for itself. This insight contains what one might call the comfort against the notion of absolute misfortune, of the madness of what has happened. Comfort, however, is merely a substitute for some ill that ought not to have happened, and is at home in the finite. Thus philosophy is not a comfort; it is more, it reconciles, it transfigures the actual, which seems unjust, into the rational . . ."¹⁴

Until we reach "the insight . . . that the actual world is as it ought to be," all one can say against Hegel is that he generalizes too much. Whether the positive or the negative is easier to see, and which it is more important to point out, depends greatly on the historical context. After the polemics of the Enlightenment, and after he himself had written his fragments on folk religion and "The Positivity of the Christian Religion," Hegel might well feel, as he put it in 1800, that "the horrible blabbering in this vein with its endless extent and inward emptiness has become too boring and has altogether lost interest—so much so that it would rather be a need of our time to hear . . . the opposite" (H 12). In another time and place, the horrible blabbering in quite a different vein might make it a need of the time to hear some pungent criticism.

The second half of the long quotation is open to even graver objections. Here Hegel goes against the spirit of not only his early fragments but also the preface to the *Phenomenology*, where he had announced that "philosophy, however, must beware of wishing to be edifying" (I.2.9). Then he had felt that philosophers must not "aim at edification and replace the pastor"¹⁵; now he seems to be doing just that. In these lectures "God" comes to his lips easily and frequently, and philosophy is invoked frankly to offer more than comfort, to reconcile us to the horrors of life and history, and to transfigure the actual—by what looks like a verbal trick.

In any ordinary sense of these words, Hegel himself does not

¹⁴ VG 77 f. L. Cf. 29 ff. L, 42 L, 48, 52 L.

¹⁵ Jena "aphorism" #66, *Dok.* 371; Ros. 552.

believe that "the actual world is as it ought to be." This dictum depends on calling actual only what "accords with the idea." What is ordinarily called actual (*wirklich*) is admittedly "rotten"—but simply not called actual "by philosophy." Is it really an "insight" that reconciles Hegel to the terrors of history, or merely the redefinition of "actual"?

First of all, it should be noted that Hegel's definition is not offered *ad hoc* at this point. It goes back to the famous preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, to the discussion of this category in the *Logic*, and beyond that to the *Phenomenology*. Beyond that, it goes back to Aristotle and Plato. Plato had taught that only perfect justice and goodness, perfect circles and squares—or in other words, only what he called the Forms—were actual; everything in the world of experience that participates imperfectly in these Forms is not actual but mere appearance. Aristotle had abandoned the belief in otherworldly Forms, had found the Forms *in* things, as entelechies which strive toward actuality through development. Hegel does not believe that a pattern of a perfect state is laid up in the heavens, to echo Plato's famous remark in the *Republic* (592); he does believe, however, that there is a Concept of the state that existing states actualize more or less—and then suggests in places that those states that are not states in the highest normative sense of that word are not actual.

While it makes perfectly good sense to say of a badly drawn circle that it is not actually a circle, seeing that the definition of a circle is generally and precisely understood, it would involve stretching a point, more often than not, to say that a poorly instituted state is not actually a state. But to go still further and say that it is not actual is surely utterly misleading. And if Hegel's comfort and reconciliation to misfortune and madness depended solely on this redefinition of terms, his philosophy of history would be far worse than it is.

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The following quotations, all from *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte*, explain the major points of Hegel's approach. The first requires comment: "The philosophical approach to history has no other intention than to eliminate the incidental" (29 L). *Das Zufäll-*

ige would usually be translated as "the accidental," but "incidental" is equally legitimate and in this case much clearer. All historiography involves the distinction between what really matters and what is merely incidental. (Hegel creates confusion by not keeping this contrast distinct from that between the accidental and the necessary.) No historian can relate everything. Historiography always requires selection—indeed, selection of a very few events out of an indefinite number. The historian who would relate the whole of world history in one volume, or for that matter in three or four volumes, must be even more selective. And he might as well be clear about his principle of selection. What nations shall he include? What individuals shall he mention by name?

This is the problem Hegel faces in his lectures. The same problem confronts not only those bold enough to write a history of the world but also teachers who offer some such survey either in one course or in a sequence of several courses. Should one discuss Bulgarian history at some length? Or Athens? And should Barbarossa be mentioned? And Charlemagne?

The standard solution is surely this: one leads up to one's own society. One includes what seems "necessary" for the development of this society, and one omits what is irrelevant. A German will discuss both Barbarossa and Charlemagne, a British teacher, pressed for time, probably the latter but not the former. Both will mention Caesar, Alexander, and Athens; neither will spend any time on Bulgaria. Whether they will say frankly what their principle of selection has been and call attention to its subjectivity, is doubtful. They are more likely to say that this *is* world history. And perhaps they will add, as most American secondary school teachers do, that their own society is the freest society that has ever existed—without the least inclination to compare it with any contemporary societies that might possibly claim to have achieved at least as much, if not somewhat more, freedom. Comparisons with earlier societies that were less free are almost inevitable; and if the teacher is British or American, Magna Charta will be presented as a milestone. In sum, in almost all American secondary schools history is taught as the gradual growth of freedom, specifically in the development of the teacher's and students' own society.

It has often been suggested that it was ridiculous of Hegel to present Prussia as the culmination of the development of freedom, but to this one may offer two brief replies. First, the point depends

wholly on comparing different societies in the 1820s, as there is no suggestion whatsoever in Hegel's lectures that history will not go on; on the contrary. And at that time it would have been less ridiculous to single out Prussia than, say, the United States in which there was a large slave population.

Secondly, Hegel does *not* present Prussia as the culmination of the historical process, and his construction of world history does not depend on any such implicit assumption. That Germany was, during Hegel's lifetime, in the forefront of Western civilization seems undeniable; but Hegel does not say that Germany represents the pinnacle of the historical process. He merely believes, and wants to show, that for all its many ups and downs there has been a slow and painful development to the point where it is widely admitted, certainly in the Protestant North of Europe, that all men as such are free. And he understands world history as the gradual development of this recognition.

Armed with this insight, he tells his students that there has been reason in history; that all has not been in vain; that one must approach the study of history with this faith; but that for him it is no mere faith but "a result with which I am acquainted because I am already acquainted with the whole" (30).

"But we have to take history as it is; we must proceed historically, empirically" (30). That does not mean that one even *could* approach history without any prior ideas in one's head. "Even the ordinary and mediocre historian, who may believe and pretend that his attitude is only receptive . . . brings along his categories and sees the data through them." And now comes the famous epigram: "The world looks rational to those who look at it rationally" (31). The other way around: "If one approaches the world only with subjectivity, then one will find it as one is constituted oneself; everywhere, one will know everything better and see how it should have been done, how things should have happened" (32 L).

People say that it is presumption to try to understand Providence, but "When theology itself has been reduced to such despair, then one has to seek refuge in philosophy if one wants to know God." It is "a tradition that God's wisdom is to be recognized in nature"; how much more, then, should it be discoverable in human history, considering that this, much more than nature, is the realm of the spirit (42 L). "The time must finally have come to comprehend

this rich product of creative reason—world history. . . . Our approach is to that extent a theodicy, a justification of God, which Leibniz still attempted metaphysically" (48).

Considering these "edifying" remarks in the context both of these lectures and of Hegel's other writings, it seems unquestionable that they are mere frills. At the University of Berlin, where he gave these lectures, he was the colleague of Schleiermacher, in whom he had early recognized a "virtuoso of edification" (H 55), and whether he liked it or not, they were rivals. Hegel did not disdain this contest and sprinkled these lectures on the philosophy of history with polemical remarks, suggesting that he had to defend God and divine Providence against the theologians.

The way had been pointed not only by Lessing's and Kant's essays on history, with their explicit references to Providence, but also by Schiller's celebrated line, in the poem "Resignation": *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht* (world history is the world's last judgment). For Hegel this can only mean: This is the only *Weltgericht* there will be; there is no judgment beyond this. Schopenhauer, an avowed atheist, also adopted Schiller's line, but in a different spirit:

"If one wants to know what men, considered morally, are worth on the whole and in general, one should contemplate their fate, on the whole and in general. This is need, wretchedness, misery, torment, and death. Eternal justice rules: if they were not, on the whole, worth nothing, their fate, taken on the whole, would not be so sad. In this sense we can say: the world itself is the world's last judgment."¹⁰

This is surely the wisdom of Job's friends, albeit without God. Hegel, though he speaks of God, is less moralistic and in this respect more remote from popular theism. His "theodicy" finds much less justice in the world than Schopenhauer does: in effect, it does not acquit God of the charge of cruelty and injustice, it merely calls our attention to extenuating circumstances. There is *some* reason in the madness of history, and the suffering is not *wholly* pointless.

Hegel's view is similar to Einstein's formulation, carved over a fireplace in Fine Hall, at Princeton University: *Raffiniert ist der Herr Gott, aber boshaft ist er nicht*, which has been translated: "God's sly, but he ain't mean." One might also render it, less

¹⁰ *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, I, §63.

irreverently: "God is subtle but not malevolent." And, of course, he is not omnipotent. That is Hegel's point, too—a point that is as easily demythologized in his case as in Einstein's. The great physicist knows from his results that there is some reason in nature, and in his further researches he proceeds on the assumption that more regularities amenable to mathematical formulation are to be found.

They are not easy to discover; they do not meet the eye; they are exceedingly subtle. But the world has not been abandoned to mere accident.¹⁷ Even as the physicist might say with Hegel, "The world looks rational to those who look at it rationally," Hegel could say with Einstein, "God is subtle but not malevolent."

For the subtlety, Hegel coins a famous term: "One can call it the *cunning of reason* that it lets the passions do its work, while that through which it translates itself into existence loses and suffers harm."¹⁸ The point does not depend on this non-theological anthropomorphism; in Hegel's own manuscript it is stated a little earlier in these lectures in admirably straightforward form: "in world history the actions of men also produce results quite different from their purposes" (88).

Hegel himself goes on to give the example of a man who sets fire to another man's house and, unintentionally, causes a huge conflagration. Moreover, his action may also lead to his punishment. "The only point to stick to in this example is that in the immediate action we may find more than lay in the will and consciousness of the agent" (89). Similarly, the importance of world-historical individuals is not reducible to their purposes. At times, they may well have been driven largely by ambition and other passions; but they also produced results they did not intend and, however far this may have been from their consciousness, they contributed in the long run to the development of freedom in the modern world.

World-historical individuals are not mysterious entities either: they are simply those individuals who belong in a world history of moderate size. Some very admirable kings, not to mention non-political figures, may safely be omitted from any such highly con-

¹⁷ Einstein's formulation should not be construed as solemn theology, and Professor V. Bargmann recalls how Einstein said to him: "*Manchmal glaube ich, er ist doch boshaft, weil er uns an der Nase herumführt*" (Sometimes I believe he is malevolent after all because he leads us around by the nose).

¹⁸ VG 105 L. For a more comprehensive quotation of this passage see C III.3.28.

densed account—and really have to be left out—while some others, whose moral character is not necessarily any better, have had world-historical consequences and therefore have to be included. And the same goes for world-historical peoples.

Not being an envious Thersites, Hegel went further than necessary in the opposite direction and became rhapsodical (97 ff.), but these passages we have only in his students' notes, and in that lecture he may have got carried away a bit. What he says fits *some* of these individuals very well—for example, Pericles among those Hegel knew, Lincoln among those he did not—but also makes sense when applied to Alexander and Caesar.

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Studying Hegel's philosophy of history, one should keep in mind that for him history is not everything but merely occupies one niche in his system. There are other points of view, and in one passage in these lectures Hegel poses the same contrast that Kierkegaard later presented in a famous passage of his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*¹⁹:

"When, e.g., we see a man kneel and pray before an idol, and this content is reprehensible from the point of view of reason, we can nevertheless cling to his feeling that is alive in his prayer, and can say that this feeling has the same value as that of the Christian who worships the semblance [*Abglanz*] of truth, and as that of the philosopher who immerses himself in eternal truth with his thinking reason. Only the objects are different; but the subjective feeling is one and the same" (51 L).

Hegel, to be sure, goes on to point out that feeling is not everything, and "when we confront the fight of the Greeks against the Persians, . . . we are quite conscious of what interests us; namely, to see the Greeks liberated from barbarism" (52 L). In history we are concerned with the objective results of actions, not with merely subjective feelings. Indeed, the feelings of the men at Marathon hardly concern the historian, and the feelings of those who fought in battles that were not destined to become world-historical are ignored altogether.

¹⁹ Princeton University Press 1944, 179 f.

"When we thus put up with seeing the individualities, their purposes and the satisfaction of these, sacrificed, while their happiness is abandoned to the realm of the forces of nature and thus to accident, and we consider the individuals altogether under the category of means, there is nevertheless one side to them which we refuse to consider only from this point of view, even in relation to what is highest [presumably, freedom]; for there is something that is emphatically not subordinate, something in them that is by its own nature eternal, divine. This is *Moralität*, *Sittlichkeit*, religiosity" (106).

Moreover, human beings "participate in this rational purpose and are thereby ends in themselves—ends in themselves, not only formally . . . individuals are also ends in themselves according to the contents of the purpose"²⁰—for the freedom that is at stake in history is, after all, *human* freedom.

Once more Hegel returns to the non-historical point of view: "The religiosity, the *Sittlichkeit* of a limited life—of a shepherd, a peasant—in its concentrated inwardness and its limitation to a few and wholly simple conditions of life has infinite value, and the same value as the religiosity and *Sittlichkeit* of well-developed knowledge and an existence rich in the scope of relations and actions. This internal center, this simple region of the right of subjective freedom, the hearth of willing, deciding, and doing, the abstract content of conscience, that in which guilt and value of the individual, his eternal judgment, is enclosed, remains untouched and outside the loud noise of world history—outside not only external and temporal changes but even those which are involved in the absolute necessity of the Concept of freedom" (109).

In the margin of his manuscript, Hegel noted at this point: "*Sittlichkeit* in its true form—in the state." While this idea is developed more fully in the *Philosophy of Right*, it is also repeatedly discussed in these lectures, and in any case it deserves some account in this book.

The good state combines "with its general purpose the private interests of the citizens" (86). "It is the actuality in which the individual has and enjoys his freedom" (111 L). "All that man is he owes to the state; . . . All value man has, all spiritual actuality, he has through the state alone" (111 L). "It is the absolute in-

²⁰ VG 106. Where our omission of three and a half lines begins, Hegel had written in the margin of his manuscript: "see Kant."

terest of reason that this ethical whole should exist; and this interest of reason constitutes the right and merit of the heroes who established states" (112 L). "Only on this soil, i.e., in the state, can art and religion exist. . . . In world history one can discuss only peoples who have formed a state. . . . Indeed, all great men have formed themselves in solitude, but only by working for themselves upon what the state had already created" (113 L). "Thus the state is the more precisely defined object of world history in which freedom gains objective existence" (115 L). "An Athenian citizen did, as it were, from instinct what was his share. . . . *Sittlichkeit* is duty . . . second nature, as it has rightly been called; for the first nature of man is his immediate animal being" (115f. L).

At this point, we can leave behind lecture notes and revert to Hegel's manuscript in which he takes note of "the direct opposite of our Concept that the state is the actualization of freedom, namely the view that man is free by nature. . . . That man is free by nature is quite right in the sense that he is free according to the Concept of man, but thus only according to his destiny,"²¹ i.e., only *in himself*. To be sure, people have assumed a state of nature, but hardly as a historical condition that could actually be encountered somewhere. "Conditions of savagery one can indeed find, but they are seen to be tied to passions of brutality and acts of violence and at the same time, however undeveloped, to social institutions, which are supposed to limit freedom" (116).

The state is important in Hegel's philosophy because it is, he argues, the actualization of freedom, and because it alone makes possible the further development of spirit—the realm of absolute spirit. Hence the hyperbolic dictum that all of man's spiritual actuality and value depend on the state: Hegel refers specifically to the moral-ethical dimension and to art, religion, and philosophy; but beyond that he considers the state as the hearth of all that raises man above the brutality of beasts.

He opposes the view that man is free by nature, while the state curtails this freedom. Without the state, freedom remains merely man's destiny; without the state, freedom is not actual. A hundred and forty years later he might have pointed to the collapse of the

²¹ *Bestimmung* could also be rendered as "determination" or even as "definition." In the title of Fichte's famous book, it has been rendered still differently: *The Vocation of Man*.

state in the Congo, not by way of suggesting, contrary to the facts, that the state that broke down had been good and had actualized the freedom of those living in it—plainly it had been bad by Hegel's standards—but only to show that such a collapse and the sudden removal of the restraints associated with a state does not mean freedom. To ensure freedom, maintain security, and make possible the development of art and philosophy, a good state is wanted.

"In order to . . . establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty," those who framed and ratified the Constitution of the United States of America did not find it expedient or at all possible to replace British rule with anarchy, a return to nature, and the abolition of all states and all restraints; they established a state. That men who revere their constitution and learn this preamble by heart as children should find Hegel's association of the state with freedom perverse and talk as if it were self-evident that the state merely abridges our natural freedom is a triumph of thoughtlessness, which illustrates the bankruptcy of any common sense that prides itself on spurning philosophy.

64

It is interesting to note that most of the passages that have given offense come from the students' notes, not from Hegel's manuscript; this also applies to the following remarks. They take up Hegel's old polemic against Kant's moral philosophy as lacking content, and find *Sittlichkeit* in the concrete life of a community.

"When one wants to act, one must not only will the good, but one must know whether this or that is the good. But what content is good or not good, right or wrong, that is given for the usual cases of private life in the laws and customs of a state. There is no great difficulty about knowing that.

" . . . The morality of the individual then consists in fulfilling the duties of his station; and these are easy to know: what these duties are is determined by one's station. . . . To investigate what might be one's duty [or: what duty might be] is unnecessary rumination; in the inclination to look upon the moral as something difficult, one might sooner recognize the hankering to get rid of

one's duties. Every individual has his *station* and knows what rightful, honest activity means . . ." (94 L).

As examples of the "usual cases," Hegel gives the conduct of children toward their parents, or the situation in which one man owes another a sum of money. "There is nothing difficult here. The soil of duty is civic life"; and the individual must assimilate the customs (*Sitten*) and the *Sittlichkeit*—or the mores and morality—of his people.²²

Here Hegel sketches in a few bold strokes what in *The Lonely Crowd* is described at immense length as "tradition-directedness." Insofar as he himself accepts this orientation, one is led to reflect that times have changed, and situations have multiplied in which even in ordinary life it is no longer easy to know one's duty.

Confronted with Kierkegaard's great crux, what Abraham was to do when God asked him to sacrifice his beloved son, many sensitive and thoughtful people may still agree with Kant's forceful reply, published forty-five years before *Fear and Trembling* (1843) in *The Quarrel among the Faculties*: "Abraham would have had to answer this supposedly divine voice: 'That I ought not to kill my good son, that is wholly certain; but that you, who appear to me, are God, of that I am not certain and never can become certain even if it should resound from the (visible) heavens.'"²³

Kierkegaard's book, however, became timely when millions found themselves in situations where they felt uncertain, as a matter of fact—even if Kant was quite right that they ought not to have felt uncertain—whether they should or should not report their parents to the government, and how they should conduct themselves toward their Jewish or non-conformist neighbors, or toward people who had been publicly branded as Communists, or who had taken the Fifth Amendment, or toward Negroes. When is civil disobedience permissible? When is it a duty?

Hegel did not suppose that tradition-directed *Sittlichkeit* was the alpha and omega of moral philosophy. Loving tragedy as he did, he could not have thought so; and the philosophy of history was one place to take note of the limitations of such an ethic.

"In the course of history, the preservation of a people, a state,

²² VG 95 L; cf. 67 L, as well as the idea in the preface to the *Phenomenology* that the individual must assimilate the work of the world spirit.

²³ Original ed., 1798, 102 f. (the third footnote in the section entitled "*Friedens-Abschluss und Beilegung des Streits der Fakultäten*").

and the preservation of the ordered spheres of its life, is one essential moment. . . . The other moment, however, is that the stable persistence of the spirit of a people, as it is, is broken because it is exhausted and overworked; that world history, the world spirit proceeds. . . . But this is tied to a demotion, demolition, destruction of the preceding mode of actuality. . . . It is precisely here that the great collisions occur between the prevalent, recognized duties, laws, and rights and, on the other hand, possibilities which are opposed to this system . . ." (96f. L).

In times of transition, the old mores no longer offer certainty, and the ethical world is rent by tragic collisions. It seems obvious that what Hegel still considered largely irrelevant to the lives of his listeners is of immediate and vital concern to young people who, partly for that reason, feel attracted to existentialism. While British moral philosophy, even after World War II, still proceeds on Hegel's assumption that in the usual cases there is no great difficulty about knowing what is right or good, Sartre has followed Kierkegaard in concentrating on the exceptional cases, those that are not ordinary, more interesting, and by no means so easy to resolve. And since World War II, the extraordinary is no longer exceptional.

In his lectures Hegel mentions two figures who are associated with great collisions: Socrates and Antigone. "The Greeks in their period of flowering, in their cheerful *Sittlichkeit*, did not have the Concept of general freedom . . . or *Moralität*, or conscience. *Moralität*, what the spirit's return into itself is, reflection, the spirit's search for refuge in itself, was lacking; that began only with *Socrates*" (71 L). In a similar vein, Hegel said later in these lectures: "Socrates is celebrated as a teacher of morality, but we should rather call him the *inventor* of *Moralität*."²⁴ As the champion of a new principle, he was a world-historical figure who eventually triumphed posthumously; but he was also a tragic figure²⁵ who was put to death.

Antigone, on the other hand, stood for time-honored *Sittlichkeit*, opposing a tyrant. "Sophocles' Antigone says: the divine commandments are not of yesterday, or of today; nay, they live without end, and nobody could say whence they came. The laws of

²⁴ Glockner's ed., XI, 350.

²⁵ *History of Philosophy*, Glockner's ed., XVIII, 119.

Sittlichkeit are not accidental but the rational itself" (112 L). Here there is no reference to Antigone's martyrdom; but elsewhere, of course, Hegel spoke of it many times, by no means only in the *Phenomenology* (H 30).

This is as good a transition as any from history to the realm of absolute spirit: Hegel's repeated praise of Sophocles' *Antigone*, though all of these passages come from his lectures on the realms of absolute spirit, may help to round out his view of the state. Had he been the statist and totalitarian he has been called, how could he possibly have so loved this play, which is a song of songs on civil disobedience?

Hegel called this tragedy "one of the most sublime and in every respect most excellent works of art of all time" and the "absolute example of tragedy."²⁶ And he also spoke of "the heavenly Antigone, the most glorious figure ever to have appeared on earth."²⁷

To understand Hegel on history, one should keep in mind the over-all structure of his system; and as this example shows, some awareness of what he says in his lectures on the three realms of absolute spirit dispels at one blow many misconceptions about his philosophy of history and of the state. There is no ambiguity, no metaphysical jargon, no uncertainty about that last brief quotation: it is as good a clue as any to what Hegel meant and did not mean when he spoke of the state.

In yet another way this praise of "the heavenly Antigone" is of immense interest: the phrasing makes it almost impossible not to think of Jesus, and to note that Antigone is here placed above him.

65

Hegel's treatment of Christianity in his last years has often been misunderstood. Among religions, he considers it supreme insofar as it seems to him to come closest to the truth comprehended ultimately in his philosophy. His references to Judaism and Islam reveal no sympathetic understanding and are patently unjust; like almost all other writers on these religions throughout the period of the En-

²⁶ *Aesthetik*, II, Glockner's ed., XIII, 51; and *Philosophy of Religion*, II, Glockner's ed., XVI, 133. Cf. also the passage cited from *Aesthetik*, XIV, 556, in H 13.

²⁷ *History of Philosophy*, II, Glockner's ed., XVIII, 114.

lightenment and the nineteenth century, he compares Judaism and Christianity only to affirm the superiority of the latter.²⁸

In its relation to philosophy, however, religion, including even Christianity, is as a child compared to a man: it is an anticipation in less developed form of what finds mature expression in philosophy. In the very lectures on history that we have been considering, Hegel compares the three realms of absolute spirit (124 f. L). He considers religion first, then proceeds:

"The second form of the union of the objective and subjective in the spirit is *art*: it steps more into actuality and sensuousness than religion; at its most dignified it has to present, not the spirit of God but the form of the god, and what is divine and spiritual in general. The divine is to be presented to intuition by it.

"But the true does not only reach notions and feelings, as in religion, or intuition, as in art, but also the thinking spirit. Thus we come to the third form of union—*philosophy*. This is in the manner indicated the highest, freest, and wisest form."

In philosophy, mythical notions (*Vorstellungen*) and subjective feeling (*Gefühl*), as well as intuition (*Anschauung*), are transcended at last by genuine comprehension. When Hegel avails himself of Christian categories, he never implies acceptance of the Christian faith in the supernatural, in miracles, or in the incarnation and resurrection; he merely finds the Christian myths more suggestive and appropriate anticipations of his philosophy than the myths of other religions. And occasionally he enjoyed the accents of edification, both as a device for showing his students that his own ideas were not as far-fetched and counter-intuitive as they might seem, and as a means of polemicizing a little against the theologians.

The reference to "the form of the god," in the passage just quoted about art, obviously refers primarily to Greek sculpture. "What is divine" emphatically includes Antigone and Goethe's Iphigenia (cf. H 7). Hegel never scruples to call *Sittlichkeit* divine, and says, for example: "The ethical [*das Sittliche*] is the divine of religion as action."²⁹

Consider the way Hegel introduces the brief section on "Revealed Religion" in his *Encyclopedia*. At this point, not only Logic, philosophy of nature, and philosophy of subjective spirit lie behind us,

²⁸ For example, VG 58 L, 126 f. L, 133 L.

²⁹ *Aesthetik*, Glockner's ed., XII, 316.

but also objective spirit with its discussion of the state and the passing remarks on history. We are in the realm of absolute spirit, and the five pages on art now give way to five on "Revealed Religion." The paragraph begins in a manner that, taken out of context, would sound pious enough: once again Hegel insists on the importance of *knowing* God and attacks the theologians who make things shamefully easy for themselves by claiming "that man knows nothing of God." Against them, Hegel insists that it is the whole point of the doctrine of revelation that God is not envious but makes himself known. He sounds more orthodox than many theologians—and thus uses a device employed previously by David Hume in his *Dialogues*. But then comes the conclusion:

"To grasp in thought, correctly and definitely, what God is as spirit, that requires thorough speculation [Hegel's odd way of saying that it requires *philosophy*; i.e., not theology which he has derided in the immediately preceding sentence]. To begin with, this contains the following propositions: God is only God insofar as he knows himself; his knowing himself is, furthermore, a self-consciousness in man and man's knowledge of God that goes on to man's knowing himself *in* God" (§564).

What does this mean if not that God does not know himself until man knows him; and since "God is only God insofar as he knows himself," God comes into being only when man "knows" him. Findlay has therefore called Hegel "the philosopher . . . of liberal Humanism."³⁰ One may cavil at "liberal": the temperament of the mature Hegel was conservative rather than liberal. But his religious position may be safely characterized as a form of humanism.

Even as one does not call a man a stage in the development of the embryo, but the embryo a stage in the development of a man, Hegel does not call the force that eventually becomes spirit as man develops, say, a late stage in the evolution of some *élan vital*; rather he sometimes speaks of pre-human manifestations of this force as manifestations of spirit. In the narrower sense, we should not speak of spirit until we reach man; and therefore only the third part of the system is called "philosophy of spirit." The same

³⁰ Hegel, 354; cf. the argument for this conclusion on 342. While I do not agree with several of Findlay's points on 342, his non-supernatural interpretation is certainly right.

point is made in the lectures on history: "The realm of the spirit is what is produced by man" (50 L). And in another passage Hegel even says: "The *world spirit* is the spirit of the world as it explicates itself in the human consciousness" (60 L).³¹

This should have caused no misunderstanding, had it not been for Hegel's occasional references to God. His choice of the word "spirit" had been very heavily influenced by the religious connotations of this term. What was he to call the force whose manifestations he wished to trace mainly in the ethical sphere, in history, in art, in religion, and in philosophy, but of which it would also make sense to speak when discussing nature? "Spirit" served admirably and at one blow connected Hegel's thought not only with the Christian tradition but also with the decidedly un-Christian, humanistic poetry of Goethe, Schiller, and Hölderlin: their verse was full of references to *Geist*, not always, though usually, in the singular. Moreover, *Geist* also retained the meaning of the etymologically related "gist"; for example, when Mephistopheles, instructing a young student, drops the "pedantic tone" and says: "The spirit of medicine is easy to know" (line 2011).

Geist, like the Latin *spiritus*, Greek *pneuma*, and Hebrew *ruach* (and unlike *mind*, *nous*, and *logos*) also means breath and wind, is essentially a moving force and the essence of life. Etymologically, it is also related to "yeast" and "geyser," and conceptually it is associated with the notion of a ferment and an eruptive force.³² Still, one can also speak, as Goethe had done derisively in *Faust*—in the Fragment published in 1790—of "the spirit of the times." Faust's lines to Wagner bear quoting because they show what possibilities the use of this term opens:

What spirit of the times you call,
Is but the scholars' spirit after all,
In which times past are now reflected. (577 ff.)

Once having chosen this eminently suggestive word, Hegel sometimes could not resist equating it with God, instead of saying clearly:

³¹ Rosenkranz already noted that Hegel, when he spoke of the *Weltgeist*, "did not mean God but mankind in its totality" (206).

³² Cf. R. Hildebrandt's article on *Geist* in Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, reprinted separately, Halle, 1926, and the long footnote in my *Nietzsche* (1950), 207, Meridian ed., 385.

in God I do not believe; spirit suffices me. Of course, there was ample precedent for his occasional unorthodox use of "God." The Greeks had made rather free with *theos* and *theoi*, and Hegel on the gods in Homer is very good indeed and still worth reading, both for those interested in the Greeks and for those interested in Hegel's conception of God, gods, and the divine.³³ Aeschylus and Sophocles, Plato and Aristotle had used such terms freely, too; and Gilbert Murray remarks in his superb book on *Five Stages of Greek Religion*: "A metaphysician might hold that their theology is far deeper than that to which we are accustomed, since they seem not to make any particular difference between *hoi theoi* [the gods] and *ho theos* [god] or *to theion* [the divine, a term Hegel likes to use, too]. They do not instinctively suppose that the human distinctions between 'he' and 'it,' or between 'one' and 'many,' apply to the divine."³⁴

In addition to his beloved Greeks, Hegel saw before him the example of Spinoza and, in his own time, the poetry of Goethe, Schiller, and Hölderlin, who also liked to speak of gods and the divine. So he, too, sometimes spoke of God and, more often, of the divine; and because he occasionally took pleasure in insisting that he was really closer to this or that Christian tradition than some of the theologians of his time, he has sometimes been understood to have been a Christian.

That he, in turn, became a precedent for theologians like Tillich and Bultmann, is undeniable. But if one should consider the procedure of all three reprehensible, there are still important differences in Hegel's favor. What he did very occasionally, *en passant*, by way of being *geistreich*, they have made their full-time occupation. And considering the whole weight and tenor of his work, he was ever so much less likely to be misunderstood in his own time. Above all, far from treating the latest philosophy as a remarkable anticipation of Christianity, provided only that the latter were radically reinterpreted on the basis of this philosophy, Hegel presented the very opposite picture: in his system Christianity was treated as an anticipation in mythological form—on the level of vague notions and feelings—of truths articulated in philosophy.

The culmination of Hegel's philosophy is neither the philosophy

³³ *Asthetik*, Glockner's ed., XII, especially 302 ff., and XIII, especially 60 ff.

³⁴ Anchor Books ed., 67.

of history nor that of religion but the history of philosophy. And to this we shall now turn. It is of very considerable interest but offers no immense difficulties and may therefore be discussed briefly.

66

Hegel's *History of Philosophy* begins with very remarkable introductory lectures, which we shall consider last. They are now available in German in a critical edition, in a volume of roughly three hundred pages, edited by Hoffmeister. For the rest we still have to rely on the three volumes of the nineteenth-century edition, reprinted without change under Glockner's editorship.

The apportionment of space is surprising but revealing: Chinese and Indian philosophy are allotted a little over 30 pages; Greek philosophy about 930 pages; medieval philosophy just over 100; and modern philosophy, from Bacon to Hegel, less than 430.

Greek philosophy up to Socrates: almost 300 pages. Socrates and the Socratics (Megarians, Cyrenaics, and Cynics): about 130 pages. Plato: about 130 pages. Aristotle: about 130 pages. "Dogmatism and Skepticism" (Stoics, Epicureans, New Academy, and Skeptics): about 165 pages. Neoplatonism (from Philo to Proclus and his successors): 94 pages.

Introduction to medieval philosophy: 21 pages. Arabic and Jewish philosophy: 11 pages. Scholasticism: 80 pages, including over 7 on Anselm, barely over 1 page on St. Thomas, and 5 on Occam. Renaissance philosophy, including Pomponatius, Ficinus, Bruno (20 pages), Vanini (6), and Petrus Ramus: about 40 pages.

In the last part, on modern philosophy, many philosophers are little more than mentioned. Those who receive detailed attention are: Bacon (18 pages), Jacob Böhme (32), Descartes (37), Spinoza (43), Malebranche (6), Locke (22), Hobbes (5), Leibniz (24), Wolf (8), Berkeley (5), Hume (7), Jacobi (16), Kant (60), Fichte (30), Krug (8 lines), Fries (3 lines), Schelling (38 pages), and "Result," which begins "The present standpoint of philosophy . . ." (8 pages).

In sum: Almost two thirds of the history of Western philosophy is taken up by Greek philosophy. The pre-Socratics get three times as much space as all of medieval and Renaissance philosophy taken together. No single medieval philosopher really interested Hegel,

and nothing in this whole period of one thousand years seemed as important to him as Anselm's ontological argument for the existence of God.

Giordano Bruno and Jacob Böhme would not receive comparable attention in modern histories of philosophy, nor would Neoplatonism get so much more attention than all British philosophers taken together. Kant gets half as much space as either Plato or Aristotle; the whole of "Recent German Philosophy," including Kant, a little more than either Plato or Aristotle alone.

It is a commonplace that one's judgment is most unreliable when one comes to the recent past and one's contemporaries, and it would not have been surprising if Hegel had left out some philosophers who now seem to be of the first rank. Thus John Passmore has said at the beginning of *A Hundred Years of Philosophy* (1957): "It is a salutary reflection that had I written this book in 1800 I should probably have dismissed Berkeley and Hume in a few lines, in order to concentrate my attention on Dugald Stewart—and that in 1850 the centre of my interest would have shifted to Sir William Hamilton" (7f.). He also remarks that "Mill knew practically nothing of Hume" and that "interest in Hume dates back to the edition of his works by T. H. Green and T. H. Grose (1874); Berkeley . . . was little regarded as a philosopher until the publication of A. C. Fraser's edition (1871)" (11).

It is pleasing to find that Hegel gave Hume seven pages, and Berkeley five, to Dugald Stewart's page and a half. Between 1827 and 1829, Krug, whom the young Hegel had attacked (H 17), published his *Allgemeines Handwörterbuch der philosophischen Wissenschaften, nebst ihrer Literatur und Geschichte*,³⁵ in five volumes. He gave Stewart about a third of a page, Berkeley a little more than a page, and Hume more than three. Locke, too, he gave over three; Fichte got over three; and Hegel two, very unfriendly, of course.

It is not particularly surprising that both Krug and Hegel did better than Passmore thinks he himself would have done. One works in a tradition, and while British philosophy was not part of the mainstream of the German philosophical tradition in Hegel's day, and therefore received proportionately little attention, both Berkeley and Hume had been prominently mentioned by Kant and could not

³⁵ "General Cyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, together with their Literature and History."

be ignored. Through Kant they had gained a place in the tradition. Hegel, of course, did not merely include Hume. He considered him the greatest representative of a major approach to philosophy—one of the four he selected for discussion in the preliminary part of the *Encyclopedia* (see H 19).

Even of England it is not true that interest in Berkeley and Hume "dates back" only to the 1870s, as Passmore suggests: In 1857 George Henry Lewes gave twenty pages each to Berkeley and to Hume, and none at all to Stewart, in *The Biographical History of Philosophy*.³⁶ Lewes, of course, had been to Germany; he had devoted one of his earliest essays to an appreciative account of Hegel's *Aesthetik*; and in 1855 he had published what is widely considered his major work, a *Life of Goethe*. And George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), for whom he left his wife in 1854, had translated into English the major works of two of Hegel's leading disciples: D. F. Strauss's *Life of Jesus* (tr., 1846) and Ludwig Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* (tr., 1854).³⁷

T. H. Green, to whose edition of Hume's works Passmore credits the origin of interest in Hume's philosophy, has been fittingly called "the most typical English representative of the school of thought called neo-Kantian, or neo-Hegelian."³⁸ It would seem that the British discovered Hume's philosophical significance by way of Kant and Hegel.

Hegel has sometimes been accused of reading his ideas into his predecessors. The essential generosity of his approach should not be overlooked. Instead of concentrating on the follies of his predecessors and then saying, as it were, "But I say unto you . . .," Hegel makes no point of his own originality but tries to show how the labors of the great philosophers of the past add up. Hence he gives so much attention to the Neoplatonics, to Bruno, and to Böhme. Another man might have relied on public ignorance of works from which he had actually received much inspiration, in an effort, not necessarily entirely deliberate, to appear more original than he was in fact. Hegel goes to the opposite extreme. When he has found much that is good and helpful in a man, then he discusses him at length even if others might not deem him worthy of so much attention in a history of philosophy.

³⁶ Second edition, "much enlarged and thoroughly revised," 2 vols., New York, D. Appleton and Co., 549–68 and 569–88.

³⁷ For Strauss's and Feuerbach's attitudes toward Hegel, see D 1831 and 1840.

³⁸ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition.

His attitude is aptly summarized in one of his Berlin aphorisms (Ros. 556): "Once a man has reached the point where he no longer knows things better than others—that is, when it is a matter of total indifference to him that others have done things badly and he is only interested in what they have done right—then peace and affirmation have entered his mind."

It would be pointless here to discuss in detail Hegel's interpretation of his predecessors. To say that he was exceedingly well read and informed for his day would be a laughable understatement. His lectures on the subject established the history of philosophy as an area of central importance for students of philosophy: no great philosopher before him had given such lectures or insisted on his students' study of this subject. This part of his system thus represents one of Hegel's most noteworthy accomplishments, and as a contribution of truly revolutionary importance it forms a very fitting culmination for the system.

67

In conclusion, let us consider the introduction to these lectures. (The end has already been discussed in H 13). The first lecture Hegel gave as a professor at Heidelberg, October 28, 1816, was the introductory lecture of his course on the history of philosophy and survives in his manuscript. We shall begin with a remarkable passage from that:

"I hope I shall succeed in earning and gaining your confidence. To begin with, however, I may not claim anything except that you should bring along confidence in science and confidence in yourselves. The courage for truth, the faith in the power of the spirit, is the first condition of philosophy. Man, since he is spirit, may and should deem himself worthy of the highest; of the greatness and power of his spirit he cannot think grandly enough. And with this faith, nothing will be so coy or hard that it will not open up for him. The initially concealed and locked up essence of the universe has no strength to resist the courage to know; it must uncover its wealth and its depths before the eyes of such courage and let it enjoy them.

"The history of philosophy represents for us the gallery of the noble spirits who, by the boldness of their reason, penetrated into the nature of things, of man, and into the nature of God, un-

veiling its depth for us and through their work presenting to us the treasure of the highest knowledge. This treasure, of which we ourselves want to partake, constitutes philosophy in general; its genesis is what we shall learn to know and comprehend in these lectures" (5f.).

Almost all of this passage was emphasized by Hegel himself in his manuscript. *This* is the introduction to the pinnacle of Hegel's philosophy. He did not introduce history, art, or religion in a remotely comparable tone.

When Hegel went to Berlin he rewrote the beginning and fashioned an altogether new manuscript for his first lectures, beginning October 24, 1820, and wrote what in print comes to over fifty pages. The following quotations come from this manuscript:

"Immediately we encounter the very common view of the history of philosophy that it has to narrate the *store of philosophical opinions* as they resulted and presented themselves in time. When people speak pleasantly, they call this material opinions; those who consider themselves able to express the matter with more thorough judgment call this history a *gallery of follies*, or at least of *aberrations* . . ." (25).

"One sees, on great matters . . . the greatest spirits *erred*, for they have been refuted by others" (26).

"What could be more useless than to get to know a series of mere opinions? what more boring? . . . An *opinion* is merely *mine* [*Eine Meinung ist mein*: an inspired pun that crystallizes an important point]. . . . Philosophy, however, contains no opinions; there are no philosophical opinions. . . . Philosophy is objective science of the truth. . . . *Truth, however, is one*; the instinct of reason has this insuperable feeling or faith. Thus only *one* philosophy can be the true one. And because they are so different, the others—one infers—must only be *errors*" (27).

"About this reflection one might say first of all that, however different philosophies are supposed to be, at least they have *this in common*, that they are *philosophy*. Whoever, therefore, studied or mastered any philosophy at all, if it really is a philosophy, would thus master some philosophy. This excuse and argument that clings merely to the difference I have compared elsewhere³⁹ with a (pe-

³⁹ *Encyclopedia* (1817), §8; (1827), §13. The point that follows has come to be widely associated with Gilbert Ryle's *Concept of Mind* (1949), as if it represented an entirely new insight. Ryle never said it did.

dantical) invalid whom his doctor advises to eat fruit and who is offered cherries or plums or grapes, but who will not take any . . . because none of these are *fruit* but merely cherries or plums or grapes" (28).

"But this proposition that truth is only *one*, is itself still abstract and formal. And what is most essential is to recognize that the one truth is not a merely *simple abstract* thought or proposition; rather it is something *concrete*" (29).

" . . . The idea is essentially *concrete*, the unity of differentiated determinations. It is at this point that the knowledge of reason differs from the knowledge of the mere understanding, and it is the business of philosophy to show that the true, the idea, does not consist in empty generalities but in something general that is essentially particular and determinate. . . . Here the consciousness not yet trained in philosophy steps back and says that it does not *understand* this. That it does not understand this means first of all that it does not yet find this among its customary notions and convictions. . . . But to *understand* it and form some notion of it is easy. *Red*, e.g., is an abstract sensuous notion, and when ordinary consciousness speaks of red it is not of the opinion that it is dealing with anything abstract. But a rose that is red is a concrete red; it is a unity of leaves, of form, of color, of smell, something living and growing in which many such abstractions can be differentiated and isolated, and which can also be destroyed and torn, and which is nevertheless, in all the manifoldness it contains, *one* subject, *one* idea. Thus the pure abstract idea is essentially not something abstract, not empty simplicity like red, but a flower, something essentially concrete. Or to take an example from a determination of thought, the proposition 'A is A,' the principle of identity, is an entirely abstract simplicity. . . . But when I go on to the category of *ground* [*Grund*], this is already an essentially concrete determination. Ground, the grounds, what is essential in things is also that which is identical with itself and rests in itself; but ground is at the same time defined as something that goes out of itself to relate itself to something of which it is the ground. The simple Concept, therefore, contains not only what the ground is but also the other of which it is the ground; the cause contains also the effect. Something that was supposed to be a ground, taken without anything of which it is the ground, is no ground; just so, something that is supposed to be determined as a cause, but without effect. . . . This, then, is what it means to be

concrete: to contain not only *one* immediate determination but also another.

"After having thus explained the nature of the concrete, I now add about its significance that the true . . . has the drive to *develop* itself. Only the living, that which is spirit, moves and stirs essentially, and develops. The idea, concrete in itself and developing, is thus an organic system, a totality which contains a *wealth of stages and moments*."

"Now philosophy is for itself the recognition of this development, and as thinking that comprehends, it is itself this thinking development. The further this development has reached, the more perfect is the philosophy" (30 ff.).

"Thus philosophy is system in the process of development" (33).

"Now I claim that the sequence of the systems of philosophy in history is the same as the sequence in the logical derivation of the conceptual determinations of the idea" (34).

It is time to stop and take stock. Hegel takes more seriously than any major philosopher before him the problem posed by the disagreement among the great philosophers. Leibniz had made a few scattered remarks about this problem; Aristotle, in the first book of his *Metaphysics*, had related the views of his predecessors and integrated them in his own system. Hegel discusses the problem at some length.

If philosophy were as simple as a single abstract proposition, there would be no point, Hegel admits implicitly, in studying the history of philosophy. But philosophy is highly complex, much more like a flower or a living organism than like a simple quality, such as red, or such a proposition as the principle of identity. Since it is complex and alive, no simple proposition can exhaust it, and even a small collection of such propositions may do justice to only a few aspects of it. Indeed, the possibility arises that different collections of propositions—different philosophies, in other words—might be partially true, might supplement each other, and might therefore be worth studying one after the other. Not only might this be worth while; nobody who wants to do justice to the whole complex organism should dare to venture his own little collection of propositions without first studying the results of the cumulative labor of many centuries. The great philosophers of the past erred in not comprehending their own relation to their rivals in the most fruitful way; indeed they were wrong insofar as they considered their fellow

workers merely as rivals; but for all that they were not a group of fools but "noble spirits" to whose boldness we owe treasures that no single lifetime would ever be sufficient for any one man to amass.

The last quotation may still seem surprising—and *would* be if the *Logic* had been written by Hegel before he had ever studied the history of philosophy. But though the manuscript we are now considering was begun in October 1820, Hegel had lectured on the history of philosophy as early as 1805, and the published version of the lectures draws heavily on the lectures given at Jena.⁴⁰ It has been noted previously that the sequence of the categories in the *Logic* was not determined by any strict necessity, logical or dialectical; that there was no relentless deduction from Concept to Concept; and that the whole structure of the work is much looser than is widely supposed. We now learn, in effect, that one guide for the sequence was a sidelong glance at the history of philosophy. But we may safely add that the statement quoted (from page 34) is something of an exaggeration—which is fortunate both for the *Logic* and for Hegel's *History of Philosophy*. Both are works of abundance in which the author faced the problem of organizing an excessive wealth of materials; he did not try wretchedly to eke out a whole volume by extrapolating from another work. When Hegel gave the course on the history of philosophy in 1829–30, he admitted, according to his students' notes, that there may be some differences; "but in the main points the sequence in the logical realm and in history must be *one*" (278).

One of the most important ideas he wants to establish in this way is no longer controversial: "*that the study of the history of philosophy is study of philosophy itself*" (35). In getting this firmly established, Hegel made a major contribution to intellectual history—and actually helped to create intellectual history as a field of scholarship.

As usual in Hegel, there are many passing points that are of interest. Here it will suffice to mention merely two or three. There is, for example, an interesting discussion of myth and its relation to truth (54 f.). Hegel equates *Dasein* (existence) with *In-der-Zeit-Sein* (being-in-time), a point that almost everybody considers original with Heidegger (37).

⁴⁰ "These [Jena] lectures on the history of philosophy he did not change greatly in his later courses in the versions that have also been printed; he merely elaborated them" (Ros. 201).

There is also a passage that reads like a deliberate polemic against Heidegger's many exegeses of the pre-Socratics⁴¹: Hegel insists "that the *beginning* is the *least formed*, determinate, and *developed* and is the poorest and *most abstract*, and the *first philosophy* is the *wholly general*, *indeterminate thought* and the *simplest*, while the *newest philosophy* is the most concrete and profound. One must know this lest one seek for more *behind the old philosophies* than they contain . . ." (66).

Even those who applaud the warning and approve of the examples Hegel goes on to give may take exception to his praise of "the newest philosophy," which sounds like self-praise. A few pages later Hegel repeats this praise, but immediately proceeds to explain it by saying that in this philosophy "everything that at first appears as something past, must be preserved and contained; it must itself be a mirror of the whole history."

We shall conclude our consideration of these introductory lectures with a quotation whose tone is markedly different from the exuberance of the passage with which we began:

"Every philosophy . . . *belongs to its time* and is biased by its *limitations*. The individual is the son of his people, his world. He may put on airs as much as he pleases, he does not go beyond it . . ." (72).

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Hegel saw what the times were ripe for, and he developed the historical approach to art, religion, and philosophy, to the whole realm of the spirit, to what in Germany are still called *Geisteswissenschaften*.⁴² Under his influence, scholarship in the humanities flourished for over a century; indeed, much of his influence has become permanently embedded in Western civilization.

There is no history of philosophy written since his time that does

⁴¹ On 73 f. there is another such passage: "When the most modern age is called upon to return to the standpoint of some ancient philosophy . . . to get out of all the complications of later times, such a return is not the spontaneous appearance of the first re-learning. . . ." And Hegel calls attention to the implicit authoritarianism of such an approach.

⁴² Much of the discussion of the differences between natural sciences and *Geisteswissenschaften*, by Dilthey, Rickert, et al., is an elaboration of, e.g., VG 70 L.

not bear the stamp of his spirit. Such German scholars as Erdmann, Zeller, and Kuno Fischer, as well as Windelband, stood directly in the main line of this influence, but others—even if they despise him, like Bertrand Russell in his *History of Western Philosophy*—are still following in his footsteps.

Hegel's influence has not been confined to the historiography of philosophy, or to the study of *Geisteswissenschaften*. Liberal Protestantism is unthinkable without it, and so are the British Idealism of F. H. Bradley, T. H. Green, and Bernard Bosanquet, the philosophies of Josiah Royce, Benedetto Croce, and R. G. Collingwood, and large parts of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*.

Much intellectual history since Hegel's time is best understood as a series of revolts against Hegel's influence. It may be stretching a point to bring this under the heading of influence; but there are few men in history of whom such a statement could be made. In the end it matters little whether we call this some sort of influence or not: the significant fact is that without understanding Hegel one can comprehend relatively little of many movements since his time, while a study of his thought opens scores of doors.

The most obvious example, and by far the single most important one, is furnished by Marxism. Marx accepted a great deal from Hegel—especially what he took to be his dialectic, though he claimed that Hegel's idealism turned things upside down. As a matter of fact, Hegel's dialectic never was the rigorous method that Marx and his followers sought to make of it; and this we have tried to show in this book. By depriving it of its primary reference to ideas and applying it instead to modes of production, one cannot make the dialectic more precise; or materialism, "scientific." On the contrary, beliefs are at least *capable* of being literally contradicted and then subsumed in a higher synthesis, while any dialectic of modes of production or material circumstances is bound to be utterly lacking in rigor. The fact that Marxism further claims that the dialectic can be used to make predictions—Hegel never did and, on the contrary, insisted that philosophy must confine itself to the present and past—has led Marxism much further in the direction of pseudo-scientific rigor than Hegel himself ever went. But the fact that Marxism is in this respect intellectually indefensible obviously does not enable us to ignore it; and those who wish to comprehend it must study Hegel.

"One cannot completely comprehend Marx's *Capital*, and espe-

cially the first chapter, unless one has studied and comprehended the whole of Hegel's *Logic*. Consequently, after half a century not one of the Marxists has comprehended Marx." Thus wrote Lenin.⁴³

William James polemicized against Hegel again and again, but hardly knew Hegel and really meant Royce who, ironically, was often less close to Hegel than James was. James's attack against the block universe, though aimed at Hegel, would have found an enthusiastic ally in Hegel. So, of course, would have James's "pragmatic" insistence that truth should make a difference in our lives, that philosophy is vision, and that the realm of faith and morals must not be severed from the realm of epistemology and metaphysics. In James it may have been partly an elective affinity rather than influence that drew him to Hegel's old paths. In his fellow pragmatist, John Dewey, it was clearly a direct influence; for Dewey, as is well known, began his philosophic career as a Hegelian.

In British philosophy, R. G. Collingwood was the last major representative of Hegel's direct influence. But the main drift of British philosophy, since G. E. Moore published his famous "Refutation of Idealism" in 1903, has been a revolt against Hegel's influence, specifically against McTaggart and the other British Idealists. Some of the excesses and the one-sidedness of this movement—features that constitute limitations though they certainly have not prevented a great many fine contributions—must be explained as an over-reaction. Hegel's own conception of the development of philosophy helps us to comprehend these reactions against his impact.

A related movement requires a similar analysis: the so-called New Criticism. Here we have the same reaction against the historical school. The Hegelian as well as the Marxist approach is rejected in favor of close analysis, often with a deliberate disregard for historical context. What had been neglected tends to be made the alpha and omega.

Finally—there is no need for a more inclusive list here—there is existentialism. Even more than Marx, Kierkegaard saw himself in revolt against Hegel; unlike Marx, he was not clearly aware of how much he had taken from the man he fought. Through him, "dialectical" theology and neo-Orthodoxy are almost as incomprehensible without Hegel as is the liberal Protestantism they rose to attack.

⁴³ *Aus dem philosophischen Nachlass*, 99; quoted in Wilhelm R. Beyer, *Zwischen Phänomenologie und Logik: Hegel als Redakteur der Bamberger Zeitung* (1955), 226.

What makes Kierkegaard's revolt so interesting is that its influence has by no means been confined to religion. After the first World War, his protest against the Hegelian conception of philosophy as science found a hearing both among professional philosophers and in Western thought generally. When he penned his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* in 1846, he was still "untimely": but, as Nietzsche remarked in *Ecce Homo*, "some are born posthumously."⁴⁴ A century later, "scientific" had come to mean to millions: shallow, mechanical, remote from the genuine problems of life. And Hegel was stigmatized as an "essentialist" and academician, a professor who constructed a system that bore no relation to his concrete existence, a philosopher who paid no heed to living experience. This book has sought to correct this impression.

Kierkegaard's attacks were not based on his own reading of Hegel and were usually as wide of the mark as his remarks about Goethe.⁴⁵ His image of Hegel was derived from the lectures of the old Schelling who had developed a profound resentment when Hegel's fame eclipsed his own. Any detailed analysis of this phase of the Schelling-Hegel relationship would lead us much too far afield: it belongs in a study of Schelling.⁴⁶ But the major documents are listed in chronological order in the Bibliography, under Schelling.

In brief, Schelling could not bear the thought that he himself was, as it were, a steppingstone between Fichte and Hegel, though he did not doubt that Fichte had been a steppingstone between Kant and himself; and he kept making two points. The first, which earned him Heinrich Heine's merciless mockery (D1835), was that Hegel had stolen his ideas. This won Schelling no respect at all. The second point, however, deeply impressed many Christians, including Kierkegaard: Hegel's philosophy, like Schelling's own youthful philosophy, had remained on the level of merely "negative philosophy," and the really significant advance remained to be made now, after Hegel's death; what was called for was a new "positive philosophy."

It was in this context that Schelling created the caricature of Hegel as a mere concept-monger. Indeed, Hegel had come after

⁴⁴ Chapter III, fourth sentence.

⁴⁵ Cf. Carl Roos's Danish study of *Kierkegaard og Goethe* (1955). Roos deals in detail with Kierkegaard as a reader and shows how completely he lacked objectivity and how heavily he was influenced by secondary sources.

⁴⁶ Cf. Fischer and Fuhrmans in the Bibliography and Schelling's letters in *Aus Schellings Leben*, III, pp. 63, 67, 95, 98, 142, 165.

the young Schelling, but the way Christian Wolf had come after the great Leibniz: "This empirical determination was removed instinctively, as it were, by one who came later and whom nature seemed to have predestined for a new Wolfianism, for our age: the *living* and *actual*, to which a former philosophy had attributed the quality of going over into its opposite (the subject) and then to return from this into itself, he replaced with the *logical Concept* to which he attributed, by means of the strangest fiction or hypostatization, a similar necessary self-movement. This last point was entirely *his own* invention and, as one might expect, admired by paltry minds . . ." ⁴⁷

Kierkegaard was soon disappointed by Schelling's lectures, which never lived up to the bold promises made in the beginning. Kierkegaard did not side with Schelling and had no interest in Schelling's historical position. But he did find Schelling's caricature of his erstwhile friend extremely useful as a theme one could develop and vary slightly when in need of a humorous contrast.

Through Kierkegaard, legions of twentieth-century readers who barely know Schelling's name have come to take for granted as historically accurate his spiteful caricature of Hegel. Many people assume that Hegel is the antipodes of existentialism. But the only major so-called existentialist who has shown as much interest in Hegel as Kierkegaard did is Sartre. He was actually sufficiently interested to read Hegel and has never made a secret of his immense debt to Hegel. ⁴⁸

On Hegel's influence on this man and movement or that, many a monograph can be and has been written. The point here is merely to suggest briefly how relevant Hegel is to twentieth-century concerns. No other nineteenth-century philosopher approaches him in this respect, with the sole exception of Nietzsche.

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A brief contrast with Nietzsche may prove illuminating. Nietzsche came from a conservative background. By the time he was thirty-six

⁴⁷ *Vorrede* (preface) for Cousin's book on French and German philosophy (1834), p. xiv; see the Bibliography. Cf. also the passages referred to above in H 39, note 5.

⁴⁸ "Sartre learned to study Hegel in the classes of Kojève just before World War II" (Wilfred Desan, *The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre*, 1965, 52). See Biemel, Klaus Hartmann, and Kojève, in the Bibliography.

he had published eight small books, the last three more radical than his early essays, and during the next few years, before he collapsed at the age of forty-four, he published seven major works and completed three others that were published only later. Shortly before his collapse he also brought out "new editions" of several of his earlier books: he did not rewrite them but added brilliant prefaces and in one case a remarkable final chapter and an appendix of verse as well. His radicalism grew with the speed of his productivity. Like Van Gogh, he was driven to the breaking point in an incredible crescendo.

Hegel was most radical when he was young and never published his boldest essays. When he was thirty-six, he published his first major work, by far his most daring book. When he was forty-four he was in the midst of publishing his second major work. On the heels of that he published his system in syllabus form and then, in 1821, his last book, by all odds the least bold. During the final ten years of his life he did not attempt another book. First he wrote an unexciting preface for the book of one of his followers, then seven book reviews totaling about four hundred pages. In 1827 he published a thorough revision of his system, and three years later another revision, containing a very large number of very small changes. During the last year of his life he revised the first volume of his *Logic* and also made a great many minute and for the most part utterly unhelpful changes in the early pages of the preface to his *Phenomenology*, but died before finishing with the preface.

Saying that one prefers the late Nietzsche to the early Nietzsche, but the early Hegel to the later Hegel would sound highly subjective. But it is a fact that Hegel did his most original work before he went to Berlin and became a famous professor, that his inspiration gradually dried up, and that his growing conservatism went together with a lack of new ideas. His Berlin lectures contain many striking passages and have exerted an immense influence, but they drew heavily on his early notes, and the power to fashion his youthful visions into lasting works was gone. Hegel worked to the end and, far from being as self-satisfied as he has often been pictured, kept revising his lectures as well as his books. But his energies went into relatively insignificant changes, even if he did make thousands of them, and into unimportant reviews of less important books. Once more, Rosenkranz's testimony (16 f.) is to the point: "One cannot find anything more hacked to pieces, more crossed out, more con-

stantly rewritten than one of Hegel's drafts for a letter from the Berlin period."

His early essays are bold both stylistically and in their radical critique of Christianity. In the *Phenomenology* and *Logic* the occasionally very striking prose keeps compromising with the author's notions of what is academically or "scientifically" respectable and solid, but the over-all conception of both projects is bold to the point of foolhardiness. In the *Encyclopedia* the format is cut and dried, but the attempt to offer so much in such a small compass is still anything but timid. Then, beginning about fourteen years before his death, Hegel dared no more.

The *Philosophy of Right* is not, as has been alleged, the work of a timeserver; neither is it a courageous book. The religious views of the later Hegel were remote from all forms of traditional Christianity, but he no longer heeded his own emphatic dictum that philosophy should beware of being edifying, and tried to show that he could be more inspiring, and sound more Christian, than Schleiermacher and other liberal theologians. He came to emphasize what his philosophy had in common with Christianity—what is heard gladly.

He had not always been a tired old man; he had known little peace until he was forty-five. The great battles of the Napoleonic era had never been far away. He had not found it easy to fit into the social structure of his time: while a great many mediocrities were appointed Professors of Philosophy, he was thirty-eight when he settled down to his first decent job—as headmaster of a boys' secondary school—and he was forty-six when he finally obtained an academic chair. (Nietzsche had been a professor for ten years when he retired in ill health at thirty-five.) When Hegel came to Berlin, he palpably enjoyed having finally found peace and security.

After his death, Hegel's works were edited by professors and other highly respectable men who had been his students. Yet his works were edited much more irresponsibly than Nietzsche's, although the editing of Nietzsche has long been considered a scandal. That four words and one erroneous quotation were left out of *The Antichrist* when it was published in 1895 has been cited as proof of the perversion of Nietzsche by his editors, while the fact that scores of changes were made by Hegel's editors, even in the books he himself had published, has excited no interest whatever, except

among a very few Hegel scholars. That abundant "additions" of dubious character were interlarded in the posthumous editions of two of his four books is not considered a scandal, and these "additions" are quoted by the most reputable professors as Hegel's own words. Not one of Hegel's books is better known than "his" *Philosophy of History*, and inadequate translations of indefensible German texts keep being reissued with learned prefaces (cf. H 52 and 53).

It has often been said that Nietzsche was not really a philosopher because he had no system. Some German scholars still suppose that a philosopher without a system is like a square circle. This strange notion is largely due to Hegel's influence, although Hegel himself never denied the name of philosopher to anybody because he lacked a system. Nor are his own books as "scientific" as he would have liked them to be. As long as he was vigorous and original he was not rigorous and systematic, but a writer who thought and wrote in brief units. His span actually tended to be shorter than Nietzsche's: he did not write essays as long as Nietzsche's first five books or the three inquiries that constitute the *Genealogy of Morals* or *The Antichrist*. Even the famous system, which is the work of a professor older than Nietzsche was when he stopped writing, consists of hundreds of short aphorisms, averaging about half a small page in length in the original edition of 1817 and about one small page each in the final, third edition, including the "remarks" that amplify the pithy statements in the beginning. What is systematic is merely the arrangement.

What makes historical work so fascinating is that the realities one discovers are often, if not usually, so different from what everybody thinks he knows about the subject. Studying Hegel is no exception. An archaeologist may bring to light an unknown civilization. A philosopher who studies one of his predecessors cannot ask more than that he might verify Hegel's observation that what is familiar is not necessarily known: *Das Bekannte überhaupt ist darum, weil es bekannt ist, nicht erkannt* (C II.3.22). Under a portrait Hegel once wrote, "whoever knows me will recognize me here": *wer mich kennt, wird mich hier erkennen*. In another sense, these words might conclude this reinterpretation: may those who have long known of Hegel here come to know him; *wer ihn kennt, soll ihn hier erkennen*.