

Hegel

Hegel
by Edward Caird

With an Introductory Note by Mary Jansen



Cambridge Scholars Press Ltd.
Adelaide, London, and Washington

Hegel

by Edward Caird, with an introductory note by Mary Jansen

The main body of this book first published in 1883 by Blackwood and Sons,
London and Edinburgh

The introductory note first published 2002 by

Cambridge Scholars Press

26028 Iverson Drive South Riding, VA 20152 USA

79a Manor Waye, Uxbridge UB8 2BG, UK

21 Desauarez Street, Kensington Park, South Australia 5068, Australia

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

A Library of Congress catalogue record for this book has been requested

A National Library of Australia catalogue record for this book has been
requested

Copyright © Cambridge Scholars Press for Introductory Note

All rights for introduction reserved. No part of the introduction may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN 1904303102

Contents

Introductory Note	vii
1. Lehrjahre—the School and the University	1
2. Wanderjahre—Hegel as a Private Tutor at Berne and Frankfort—his Philosophy in its Development	13
3. Hegel and Schelling—Jena, 1800-1807	37
4. Hegel after the Battle of Jena—the School at Nürnberg	53
5. Hegel as a Professor at Heidelberg and Berlin—his Character and Influence	63
6. The Problem of Philosophy—Statement of it by Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel	89
7. The Principle of Contradiction and the Idea of Spirit	105
8. The Hegelian Logic	117
9. The Application or Development of the Logical Idea— Relation of the Hegelian Principle to Christianity—the Hegelian Philosophy after Hegel	143
Notes	173
Index	175

Introductory Note

Edward Caird was born in 1835 and died in 1908. At the time he wrote this book, he was Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow (a post which he held from 1866 to 1893), although the most popular edition of this book (the “cheap edition”) states that he was a fellow of Balliol college, a post which he indeed did hold from the time he left Glasgow to 1907.

Edward Caird is usually described as a Hegelian, although it has been noted that he may have been as equally if not even more profoundly influenced by Kant. Although as his first major work, *A Critical Account of the Philosophy of Kant* (1877) suggests, he could be quite critical of Kant’s methods, Kant’s influence, whether comparable to Hegel’s or not, is beyond question. Equally, any Hegelian influence is far from straightforward, and as most readers of the present book will not fail to observe, less than overwhelming. Indeed what one notices page after page is that Hegelian ideas have gone through considerable machinery in the mind of Caird before appearing in the form they do. Caird and Hegel are so visibly different that considerable caution is necessary before stating the oft-repeated fact: Caird is a Hegelian.

The distance between Hegel and Caird is furthered by a quality he possessed which many of his colleagues, concerned with similar issues and forming part of the same British idealist effort lacked: a remarkable literary skill. The present book is ample evidence of this skill, and if one were to insist on a mutual exclusivity between scholarly and literary works, one would, in all likelihood, subsume the present book under the latter category. It includes few footnotes, few references are made directly to Hegel’s work, and few of the attributes of genuinely scholarly work as evidenced among Caird’s colleagues, is present.

This literary style should not be allowed, however, to mislead the reader into thinking that Caird was not a genuine scholar. Far from it—what was meant in the above paragraph is that his *style*

is not scholarly, and that, in reference mainly to the present book which was intended for a wider readership than the academics of Caird's time. But his literary style assisted Caird as well in his social and political activities. Contrary to Thomas Hill Green, who has often been criticised for his inability to speak in public, (not to mention a mild antipathy to writing), Caird was able to use his literary/verbal skills to stimulate change and reform.

For the present book, this literary skill means that it can be read by a larger number of people than any other British idealist work on Hegel, and that may be doing both Caird's and Hegel's ideas the greatest service.

Preface

THE main authorities for the life of Hegel are the biographies of Rosenkranz and Haym—the former a pupil and devoted disciple of Hegel, the latter a critic whose opposition to Hegel’s philosophical principles has passed into a kind of personal bitterness, which construes his simplest actions. Some additional details may be derived from Hotho (“Vorstudien für Leben und Kunst”), from Ruge (“Aus früherer Zeit”), and from Klaiber (“Hölderlin, Hegel, und Schelling”). The books and articles written in Germany for or against the Hegelian philosophy it is impossible to enumerate, for almost every one who has written about philosophy in recent times has written about Hegel. Daub, Marheineke, Göschel, Rosenkranz, Erdmann, Gabler, Vatke, and Ruge are the names of only a few of the most important adherents of the school. The ablest attack upon Hegelianism which I have seen is by Dr. A. Schmid (“Entwickelungsgechichte der Hegelischen Logik.”) To English readers Hegel was first introduced in the powerful statement of his principles by Dr. Hutchison Stirling. Mr. Wallace, in the introduction to his translation of the lesser Logic, and Mr. Harris, the editor of the American “Speculative Journal,” have since done much to illustrate various aspects of the Hegelian philosophy. Other English writers, such as the late Professor Green, Mr. Bradley, Professor Watson, and Professor Adamson, who have not directly treated of Hegel, have been greatly influenced by him. Mr. Seth has recently written an interesting account of the movement from Kant to Hegel.

CHAPTER I: Lehrjahre—the School and the University

THE great movement of thought which characterises the nineteenth century is a movement through negation to reaffirmation, through destruction to reconstruction—in Carlyle's language, through the "everlasting no" to the "everlasting yea." Its great men are men who, like Mirabeau, have "swallowed all formulas," yet have not in the process lost their faith in the spiritual powers and destiny of man; whose emancipation from the weight of the past, from the life of custom and tradition, has only revealed to them more clearly the permanent basis of human faith and hope, the eternal rock on which all human beliefs and institutions are built. Their greatness is measured by the completeness with which the whole movement of the time, negative and positive, has mirrored itself in their intellectual history, and by the degree in which they have mastered its striving elements, and brought them to a unity as factors of their own inner life. Their weakness is measured by the degree in which they have become the passive organs and spokesmen of one or other of the opposite principles of revolt or reaction, or have yielded successively to the alternate tides of popular feeling as they swayed from one extreme to the other. No man, indeed, who is in the midst of such a social and intellectual movement, and not yet looking upon it from the vantage-ground of history, can completely gather into himself the whole spirit of an age, or enter with the sympathy of complete understanding into both of its opposed enthusiasms. No man, even if he does so, can be so far independent of the process in which he is a part, as never in the hour of revolt to confuse anarchy with liberty, and never, when the time of reconstruction comes, to be tempted to use for the new building some of the "wood, hay, or stubble" of the old which has been tried in the fire and found wanting. No man is allowed to play providence or to escape paying the penalty of the limitations of his individuality and his time. Any approximation,

however, to such a comprehensive result—any life that escapes the fanaticism of abstract denial or abstract reaffirmation of the ideals and faiths of the past, and escapes it not merely by applying the leaden rule of temporary expediency and ordinary common-sense, but by the way of a deeper insight, and a firmer grasp of the unity that binds together all the aspects of the many-sided reality—any life, in short, which does not merely change with the changing time, but has a true progress or development in it, must be of the highest interest and instruction for us. In it, as in a kind of microcosm, we can spell out more clearly the lesson which in the wider macrocosm it is so hard to read. It is this comprehensiveness of experience, this openness to both of the leading currents of tendency in their time, and this constant effort—more or less successful and on a wider or smaller scale—to reach a point of view from which these tendencies might be understood and harmonised, that gives such value to the life and writings of men so different in every other respect as Wordsworth and Carlyle, as Comte and Goethe. It is this also which lends interest to the great movement of German philosophy which began with Kant, and the ultimate meaning of which was expressed by Hegel. For that movement was, above all, an attempt to find a way *through* the modern principles of subjective freedom—the very principle which produced the Reformation of the sixteenth and the Revolution of the eighteenth century—to a reconstruction of the intellectual and moral order on which man's life had been based in the past.

George William Frederic Hegel was born at Stuttgart, the capital of Würtemberg, on the 27th August 1770, five years before the birth of Schelling, eleven years after the birth of Schiller, both of whom, like himself, were Würtembergers. The inhabitants of the Swabian highlands have long been distinguished from the other Germans by peculiarities of dialect and character, by a mixture of shrewdness and simplicity, of religious enthusiasm and speculative free-thinking, which has led Mr. Seeley to name them the Scots of Germany. By position and race, Swabia belongs to the South, by religion to the North, a circumstance which of itself tended to keep alive an intenser religious and intellectual life in a

country that might regard itself as a kind of outpost or advanced-guard of Protestantism. In their general characteristics the Swabians form a sort of middle term between the different branches of the German nation. The hard rationalism and practical energy which distinguishes the Protestant North, and especially Prussia, is in them softened and widened by what the Germans call the *Gemüthlichkeit* of a southern race, and has given rise to a certain meditative depth of nature, which sometimes leads to abstruseness and mysticism, but is less apt to let its consciousness of the wholeness or organic unity of truth be broken and disturbed by the antagonisms of reflection. It is worth noting in this reference, that while the first two leaders in the great philosophical movement of Germany, Kant and Fichte—those who especially asserted the freedom and independence of man, and set the self above the not-self—belonged to the North; the last two, Schelling and Hegel, those who rose above this one-sided idealism to a consciousness of the spirituality of the world and of man's unity with it and with his fellow-men, belonged to the South, and indeed to this same region of Swabia.

Hegel was of a family which traced its descent to one Johann Hegel, who was driven from Carinthia by the Austrian persecution of the Protestants towards the end of the sixteenth century, and which, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, gave many of its sons to the humbler branches of the civil service of Würtemberg. His father, of whom we know little, was an officer in the fiscal service, a man of the orderly habits and the conservative instincts natural to his place. His mother, whom he lost in his thirteenth year, and of whom he always cherished a grateful remembrance, seems to have been a woman of considerable education and intelligence. He had a younger brother, Louis, who became a soldier—and a sister, Christiane, between whom and the philosopher there appears to have been a strong bond of affection. We catch a glimpse of a quiet *bourgeois* household, governed by a spirit of honesty, economy, and industry, and in which the education of the children was the most important concern. After receiving some instruction from his mother, Hegel was sent to a so-called Latin school in his fifth year, and in his seventh to

the gymnasium of his native city. He seems to have been distinguished only as a thoroughly teachable boy, ready to acquire knowledge of any kind, but with no predominant taste or capacity in any one direction. He showed from the first the patient methodical habits of the race of civil servants from which he had sprung, and was, in short, that uninteresting character, “the good boy who takes prizes in every class, including the prize for good conduct.” At the age of fourteen he began to keep a diary—it was the age of diaries—but this did not indicate in him any premature tendency to self-consciousness or self-analysis. In fact he found nothing particular to chronicle in it, except the progress of his reading, and sometimes he uses it merely as a means for practising himself in the writing of Latin. There is perhaps a tinge of boyish pedantry in the premature seriousness with which he records the progress of his studies. A strong expression of affection and gratitude to one of his teachers, called Löffler, who had given him private instruction in addition to the regular class lessons, and who died when Hegel was in his fifteenth year, is almost the only utterance of individual feeling to be found in the diary—“How often and how happily did he sit by me, and I by him, in the little chamber!” For the rest, the contents of the diary are an echo of the enlightened views of the day, which Hegel heard from his teachers, and read in the popular text-books of science and philosophy which they put into his hands. In this spirit he points out the evils of intolerance, and the necessity of thinking for one’s self, condemns the superstitions of the vulgar, notices the similarity of the miracles of all ages and nations, and suggests that there is not much difference between the purchase of heaven’s favour by direct offerings to the gods and the modern substitute of gifts to the Church—all with the wisdom of a little Solon of the *Aufklärung*.

The one study, however, which seems to have taken a deep hold upon him, and which towards the end of his school years awakened him for the first time to some freshness and originality of remark, was the study of Greek poetry. The tragedies of Sophocles especially cast an abiding charm on him, and the “Antigone,” which he always considered the masterpiece of dra-

matic poetry, was twice translated by him—once in prose, and again, at the university, in verse. The elective affinity which thus drew Hegel to the pure undefiled well of Greek art lay very deep in his nature, and produced the greatest effect in all his subsequent work, both positively and negatively. Even during his youth he seems scarcely to have felt any charm in the romance of diseased sentimentalism for which Werther set the fashion in Germany, and which was afterwards repeated in weaker echoes by Schlegel and others. Nor, though as we shall see he afterwards came under the power of Christian and romantic art, did he ever feel anything but repulsion for that formless emotional tendency which was often in his day confused with it. “Early penetrated by the nobility and beauty of Greece,” says Rosenkranz, “he never could recognise genuine Christianity in a form which excludes the earnest serenity of antique art.” His usual universality of intelligent sympathy seemed to give way to a certain bitterness of antagonism when he was brought face to face with any example of the Rousseauist disease of self-consciousness; and even in a mystic like Hamann, who attracted him by the humorous riches of his thoughts, Hegel discovered an element of “hypochondria” to which he was unable entirely to reconcile himself. But Greek art came to him as the vision of a realised harmony of existence, in which there was no war of subject and object, of ideal and real; and even from his first contact with it, he found in it his native element. “At the name of Greece,” as he declared to his students long afterwards, “the cultivated German feels himself at home. Europeans have their religion—what is transcendent and distant—from a further source, from the East, and especially from Syria; but what is here, what is present, science and art—all that makes life satisfying, and elevates and adorns it—we derive, directly or indirectly, from Greece.”

Another important habit Hegel took with him from school. In his sixteenth year he had commenced the practice of making copious extracts from every book that interested him; and to judge from the manuscripts which are still preserved, he already found interest in almost every branch of science accessible to him. This habit he continued through life; so that there are very few impor-

tant literary or scientific products of his time—indeed few great literary or scientific products of any time—of which he had not made a full analysis, and even copied out the principal parts. In this way he gradually accumulated a considerable number of well-arranged commonplace-books—for in everything he was exact and orderly—and, what was still more valuable, he acquired the habit not only of grasping the general meaning of the authors he read, but of entering into their specific quality, and appreciating even that subtle flavour of individuality which is conveyed in the minute turns of style and phraseology. True culture, as he afterwards taught, must begin with a resolute self-effacement, with a purely receptive attitude, and it is only through such an attitude that we can attain to that vital criticism which is virtually the criticism of the object by itself. Speaking of the Pythagorean method of education, in which the pupil was condemned to silence for five years, Hegel says that, “in a sense, this duty of silence is the essential condition of all culture and learning. We must begin with being able to apprehend the thoughts of others, and this implies a disregarding of our own ideas. It is often said that the mind is to be cultured from the first by questions, objections, and answers, etc. In fact, such a method does not give to it real culture, but rather makes it external and superficial. By silence, by keeping ourselves to ourselves, we are not made poorer in spirit. Rather by it we gain the capacity of apprehending things as they really are, and the consciousness that subjective opinions and objections are good for nothing, so that we cease at last even to have them.” This counsel is no doubt somewhat hard to follow, and it is not without danger of being misinterpreted in the case of minds whose vital power of reaction on what they have received is comparatively feeble. But for minds whose springs cannot be broken by any weight of information, who possess that “robust intellectual digestion which is equal to whole libraries,” it is nothing less than intellectual salvation. At any rate it is certain that Hegel had proved it upon himself from the earliest years.

At the age of eighteen Hegel left the gymnasium for the university. Destined by his parents for the Church, he was sent with a bursary to the theological seminary of Tübingen—an institution

in which some show of monastic discipline was kept up. The members of the “Stift” wore a peculiar dress, and were subjected to a somewhat petty system of punishments—generally by deprivation of the customary portion of wine at dinner—for all offences against the regular order of the place. Of course theology took the first place in the prescribed order of study, though the course was divided into a philosophical and a theological portion, the former occupying two, and the latter three years. There was at the time no one among the professors of Tübingen who was capable of permanently influencing and guiding a pupil like Hegel. Some of them acknowledged the influence of Kant, then the rising star of philosophy, so far as to make him an occasional subject of lecture, and even to pervert his principles to the support of the old system of doctrine—not a difficult thing with an author in whom the letter so often falls short of the spirit. But there was not among them even one thoroughly trained disciple of Kant, who could teach the new ideas with sympathy and intelligence. Accordingly Hegel soon learnt to take the university work as a routine to be got over with the minimum of attention, and we even find that he was specially reprimanded for the frequency with which he had incurred the penalties for absence from lecture. There is evidence, however, that he steadily pursued his reading in classical authors, adding to them many modern writers, especially Rousseau, whose works were the key to the great political movement then rapidly coming to a head in France. For such reading Hegel was well prepared by his previous training; for Rousseau transcended the individualistic commonplaces of the philosophical text-books, which Hegel had been patiently copying out at school, mainly in this, that his passionate fervour of belief, his native sympathy with the poorer classes, and his sense of social injustice, changed them from the light playthings of literature into the winged shafts of speech that make men mad. Hegel and his companions, among whom was Schelling—younger in years than Hegel, but much more precocious in intellectual development—formed a political club, in which the ideas of the Revolution were discussed; and Hegel, we are told, was distinguished among its members as the enthusiastic champion of lib-

erty and fraternity. There was even a tradition—which has now been proved to refer to another time—that he and Schelling went out one fine spring morning to plant a tree of Liberty in the market-place of Tübingen. At any rate, it is certain that Hegel fully shared in the wonderful hopes which at the time stirred all that was generous and imaginative in Europe.

“Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven.”

For the rest, Hegel took part in all the usual incidents of German student life—its *camaraderie*, its conviviality, its enthusiastic friendships, and even, it would seem, its love-making, though with a certain staidness and sobriety which got him the nickname of “old man” or “old fellow.” He was, we gather, genial and good-humoured in manner, and was generally liked by his fellow-students, but not thought to have any very great abilities. Yet he formed special ties of friendship with the two of his fellows in the Stift who afterwards showed original powers—with Schelling, and with a young poet called Hölderlin, whose verses are filled with a kind of romantic longing for Hellenic art and poetry, similar to that which was more powerfully expressed by Schiller in his “Gods of Greece.” Hegel’s association with Hölderlin, with whom he is recorded to have studied Plato and Sophocles, was especially fitted to deepen in his mind the impressions which he already had received in the gymnasium from the literature of Greece. Towards the end of his university career, however, his attention began to be turned more definitely towards philosophy, especially in its relation to theology, and in connection therewith to the ethical works of Kant. And the few pages from his notebooks which are quoted by Rosenkranz show already his characteristic power of concentrating his meaning in pithy sayings—words winged at once with imagination and reflection, which strike their mark like a cannon-ball he had indeed, as we shall see, already entered upon that course of modification and transformation of Kantian principles, out of which his own philosophy was to spring. These studies were, however, altogether hidden from the

authorities of the Stift, who, when he left Tübingen in 1793, dismissed him with a certificate that he was a man of good parts and character, somewhat fitful in his work, with little gift of speech; and that he was fairly well acquainted with theology and philology, but had bestowed no attention whatever on philosophy.

CHAPTER II: Wanderjahre—Hegel as a Private Tutor at Berne and Frankfort—His Philosophy in its Development

THERE is very little to record of Hegel's outward life in the six years after he left the university. The first three were spent by him in the Swiss city of Berne, as tutor in an aristocratic family of the name of Von Tschugg; and the last three in a similar position in the house of a Frankfort merchant called Gogel. Of the special relations between Hegel and his employers or pupils we hear nothing; nor is anything of importance recorded of his various friends and acquaintances in Switzerland, though his biographer has printed the journal of an excursion which he made with two of them in the Bernese Oberland. A few letters from his friends Hölderlin and Schelling kept him aware of the progress of the philosophical movement in Germany, and it was probably in order to get nearer the literary centre that in 1796 he applied to Hölderlin to help him to a situation in Frankfort. In one of his letters to Schelling he expresses an amused weariness of the petty plots and family cabals that made up the politics of the little aristocratic canton of Berne; and, no doubt, his strong political interest also made him desire to be in a better position for observing the great events which were then changing the face of Germany and Europe. In Frankfort, besides, he had the society of his old friend Hölderlin, and through him he was brought into close relations with another friend—a forgotten poet and philosopher called Sinclair—whose influence helped to draw him to the study of the Christian mystics, as well as of the romantic art and poetry of the middle ages.

As regards the development of Hegel's philosophy, however, these six uneventful years were the most important period of his life. It was his period of fermentation, in which the many elements of culture he had accumulated were obscurely conflicting

and combining with each other, and in which the native character of his genius was gradually revealing itself in the new form which it gave to them. The process of accumulation still went on actively—as it went on through all his life—but it now began to be accompanied by a powerful effort to assimilate the matter accumulated, and to change the dead mass of information into the living tissue of thought. Hegel did not, indeed, as he said of Schelling, “carry on his studies in public,” and it is only through the publication by his biographer of extracts from his early notebooks that we are enabled to get below the rounded utterances of the master to the tentative sketches and imperfect studies of the learner. But no more instructive revelation of the secrets of intellectual growth can be found than in the words, sometimes obscure, but always powerful, and not seldom vividly imaginative, in which Hegel struggles for the expression of a thought which is yet inchoate, and, as it were, in process of germination.

Some of the elements out of which that thought evolved itself have been already mentioned. These were the classical and especially the Greek literature on the one hand, and on the other the so-called *Enlightenment* of the eighteenth century. This *Enlightenment* Hegel had received at first in school in its sober German form—in the dry analysis and superficial criticism of the post-Wolffian age; but at the university he came to know it in its more intensive French form, which was to the German enlightenment as wine to water. Through Rousseau he proceeded next to Kant’s ethical works—following in logical order the evolution of that idea of freedom which was the saving salt of the philosophy of the time. If we further remember that Hegel, educated for the Church, had not as yet ceased to look upon himself as a theologian, we shall not wonder that for several years after this his studies were chiefly directed to the more concrete and practical questions of religion and social ethics, rather than to the abstract metaphysical inquiries which were then mainly occupying the followers of Kant and Fichte. It is also noteworthy that the studies in which he sought for the means of answering these questions were primarily historical rather than philosophical; or became philosophical only through his persistent effort to comprehend and in-

terpret history. At first he was chiefly occupied with the history of religion, and especially with the origin of Christianity, and its connection with the Greek and Jewish religions; and while engaged with this subject he wrote a complete life of Christ, and a treatise on the relation of positive to rational religion. In these and other writings of this period, however, he always considered religion in close relation to the social and political life of nations; and in the Frankfort period, his theological studies gradually connected themselves with extensive inquiries into ethics, political economy, and finally, into the physical and natural sciences. At the same time, this regressive movement of thought, as we may call it, led him to examine more fully the development of philosophy in Kant, Fichte, and Schelling. And in the last year of his stay in Frankfort he finally endeavoured to gather up the result of his investigations in a systematic sketch of philosophy, of which, however, only the Logic and Metaphysic and the Philosophy of Nature were at that time completed.

We may best understand the process of formation through which Hegel's philosophy was going during these six years, if we keep hold of two leading conceptions which were always present to his mind. The one is the idea of freedom or self-determination; the other is the idea of man's life, natural and spiritual, as an organic unity of elements, which cannot be separated from each other without losing all their meaning and value. The former of these was the great principle of the eighteenth century, which was gradually being deepened and transformed in the writings of Rousseau, of Kant, and finally of Fichte. The latter revealed itself to Hegel in the first instance through the religious and political life of Greece. His main difficulty was that these two equally essential ideas seemed to lead in different ways, and to be hardly capable of reconciliation with each other. With this difficulty we find Hegel wrestling in the first writing of his which bears the distinct mark of his genius; and it was the sting, and almost agony, of it which stimulated his unceasing researches in nearly every department of historical and scientific knowledge, and his equally unceasing efforts to penetrate into the inner meaning and uniting principle of the knowledge so acquired. Finally, it was as the solution of

this difficulty that the central idea of his philosophy first revealed itself, and it was in constant reference to it that that idea was gradually worked out into a systematic view of the intelligible world in its relation to the intelligence. It is necessary for us, therefore, clearly to understand what these opposite tendencies involved, and how, in the thought of Hegel, they struggled with each other.

The principle of Freedom, as it was first asserted in the Reformation, involved an opposition of the inner to the outer life of man, of conscience to external authority, of the individual as self-determined in all his thought and action to all the influences and objects by which he is, or might be, determined from without. In thrusting aside the claim of the Church to place itself between the individual and God, Luther had proclaimed the emancipation of men not only from the leading-strings of the Church, but, in effect, from all external authority whatever, and even, in a sense, from all merely external teaching or revelation of the truth; for the principle which was announced in the first instance in reference to religion, the central truth of man's being, must inevitably make its way to the circumference, and affect all other elements of his life. If the true knowledge of God be that which comes through the inner witness of the spirit, no other truth can ultimately be accepted in a different way. If the divine law, to which alone absolute submission is due, is revealed by an inward voice, which is one with the voice of our own conscience, no other lawful rule and authority can be merely external. We cannot recognise as *real* any object which is not brought into intelligible relation with our own immediate self-consciousness. We cannot recognise as *just* any command in obeying which we are not obeying our better self. Luther, therefore, had begun a "war of the liberation of humanity," which could not cease until everything foreign and alien, everything that was not seen to form a part of man's own inward life and being, was expelled from all relation to it, and even condemned as meaningless and unreal. *Sub hoc signo vincas*. This is the controlling idea which has ruled the modern movement of civilisation, and the name in which all its great speculative and practical victories have been won.

This principle of freedom was, however, almost necessarily narrowed and distorted by the antagonism in which it first expressed itself. An idea which is used as a weapon of controversy, is on the way to lose its universality and to be turned into a half-truth. Thus the doctrine that nothing ultimately can have authority or even reality for man which is not capable of being made his own and identified with his very self, might be understood to mean that the truth of things is at once revealed to the undeveloped consciousness of the savage or the child, and that the immediate desires of the natural man are his highest law. In place of the duty of knowing for one's self, and of undergoing all the hard discipline, intellectual and moral, which is necessary in order to know, might be put an assertion of the "rights of private judgement," which was equivalent to the proclamation of an anarchy of individual opinion. As the modern struggle for emancipation went on, this ambiguity of the new principle began to reveal itself; and the claims which were first made for the "spiritual man"—*i.e.*, for man in the infinite possibilities of his nature as a rational or self-conscious being, capable of an intellectual and moral life which takes him out of himself, and even of a religious experience which unites him to the infinite—were reasserted on behalf of the "natural man," *i.e.*, of man conceived merely as a finite individual—an atom set among other atoms in a finite world, and incapable of going beyond it, or even beyond himself, either in thought or action. Hence the strange contradiction which we find in the literature of the eighteenth century, which with one hand exalts the individual almost to a god, while with the other hand it seems to strip off the last veil that hides from him that he is a beast. The practical paradox, that the age in which the claims of humanity were most strongly asserted, is also the age in which human nature was reduced to its lowest terms—that the age of tolerance, philanthropy, and enlightenment, was also the age of materialism, individualism, and scepticism—is explicable only if we remember that both equally spring out of the negative form taken by the first assertion of human freedom.

As the individual thus fell back upon himself, throwing off all relations to that which seemed to be external, the specific reli-

gious and social ideas of earlier days lost power over him; and their place was taken by the abstract idea of God and the abstract idea of the equality and fraternity of men—ideas which seemed to be higher and nobler because they were more general, but which for that very reason were emptied of all definite meaning, as well as of all vital power to hold in check the lusts and greeds of man's lower nature. Thus the ambitious but vague proclamation of the religion of nature and the rights of man was closely associated with a theory which was reducing man to a mere animal individual, a mere subject of sensations and appetites, incapable either of religion or of morality. For an ethics which is more than a word, and a religion which is more than an aspiration, imply *definite* relations of men to each other and to God, and all such relations were now rejected as inconsistent with the freedom of the individual. The French Revolution was the practical demonstration that the mere general idea of religion is not a religion, and that the mere general idea of a social unity is not a state, but that such abstractions, inspiring as they may be as weapons of attack upon the old system, leave nothing behind to build up the new one, except the unchained passions of the natural man.

In Rousseau and Kant we find an attempt to develop this abstract principle of freedom into a social system, without altering its abstract or negative character. Rousseau, indeed, saw that the claims made in behalf of the individual must rest on something in him higher than his individual nature. Accordingly, he speaks of a *raison commune* and a *volonté générale*, which is different from the reason and the will of the individuals as such, and which makes them capable of association. But as he regards this universal reason and will merely as a common element in natures which are otherwise unlike each other, and not as a principle which binds them together by means of their very differences, he is unable to develop any organic conception of the social unity. Kant, in like manner, sees in the consciousness of self an element which is common to all men, and which makes community between them possible; and in the idea of self-determination—*i.e.*, of a determination which is conformable to the nature of the self—he finds the principle of all morality. But as he also is unable to show any

connection between this general idea and the desires and capacities which determine the particular relations of men to each other and to the world, his morality remains a soul without a body; and it is only by a mystification that he *appears* to be able to get beyond his general principle, and to derive particular laws of duty from it.

Now it is at this point that Hegel takes up the philosophical question. To him, as a son of the Protestant *Aufklärung*, the idea of freedom—the idea that in knowledge and action alike man must be self-determined, that he must find *himself* in the object he knows, and realise *himself* in the end to which he devotes himself—now and always remained axiomatic. In the university, when he was “an enthusiastic champion of liberty and fraternity,” he accepted the idea in all the one-sidedness of its first revolutionary expression: and even some years afterwards, we find him writing in the same spirit to Schelling in reference to his account of the Fichtean exaltation of the *ego* over the *non-ego*. “I hold it one of the best signs of the times, that humanity has been presented to its own eyes as worthy of reverence. It is a proof that the nimbus is vanishing from the heads of the oppressors and gods of the earth. Philosophers are now proving the dignity of man, and the people will soon learn to feel it, and not merely to ask humbly for those rights of theirs which have been trampled in the dust, but to resume and appropriate them for themselves.” The revolutionary tone which shows itself in these words soon disappeared from Hegel’s writing; but to the principle which underlies them—the rejection of any merely external limit to the thoughts and actions of men—he was always faithful, and it was one of the main grounds of his subsequent break with Schelling. And though, in the latter part of his life, Hegel is often supposed to have become politically a reactionary, and though he really did lean to the Conservative side in the immediate politics of Prussia, he never to any degree modified his belief that the principle of liberty is at the root of the political as of all the spiritual life of man. Thus, in one of his latest courses of lectures, he declared that Luther, in asserting that each man must find the truth for himself, had laid down the guiding idea of all subsequent history. “Thus was raised the last ban-

ner around which the nations gather—the banner of the free spirit, which, in apprehending the truth, still abides with itself, and which, indeed, can only abide by itself as it apprehends the truth. This is the banner under which we serve, and which we carry.” If Hegel, then, ever became in any sense an enemy of the *Aufklärung*, it was only on the ground of a deeper interpretation of that principle of freedom which gave the *Aufklärung* its power and value. His controversy with it, like his controversy with Kant and Fichte, was so frequent and unsparing only because he stood so close to it, and even, in a sense, on the very same ground with it. He could afford to be more charitable to those with whom he had less in common.

At the same time, while it is true that Hegel never swerved from the principle of liberty, it is also true that the philosophical impulse was first awakened within him in a recoil against the abstract and one-sided expression of that principle. Already, in the university, he had turned away with weariness from the platitudes of enlightenment. “He who has much to say of the incomprehensible stupidity of mankind, who elaborately demonstrates that it is the greatest folly for a people to have such prejudices, who has always on his tongue the watchwords of ‘enlightenment,’ ‘knowledge of mankind,’ ‘progress and perfectibility of the species,’ etc., is but a vain babbler of the *Aufklärung*, and a vendor of universal medicines—one who feeds himself with empty words, and ignores the holy and tender web of human affections.” Nor is Hegel much better satisfied with the abstract Kantian morality, though he does not yet see his way entirely to reject it. In the same spirit in which Aristotle objected to the Socratic doctrine that “virtue is knowledge,” he points out that a real morality implies a habitual temper of mind, which cannot be artificially produced by mere teaching, but must be a living growth of character, evolved from the earliest years by the unconscious influence of a society in which religion, laws, and institutions are all moulded by one spirit. Referring to Kant’s admission, that a purely rational religion is an impossibility, he objects to his assertion that all that goes beyond the abstract morality of reason, all that is directed to satisfy the feelings and the heart, must be regarded as mere irra-

tional fetish-worship. The feelings after all, Hegel urges, are not so alien to reason as Kant had supposed, “for love is the analogue of reason, in so far as it finds itself in other men; or rather, forgetting itself, finds another self in others in whom it lives, feels, and energises—in the same way that reason, as the principle of universal laws, recognises itself again in every rational being.” Hence it is only by acting on the heart and the imagination that a character can be produced which is truly at one with reason; while a morality which addresses the understanding is incapable of any practical effect on, the mass of men, and indeed tends to produce an irresolute scrupulous tone of mind which is the reverse of moral strength. “Men who are early bathed in the Dead Sea of moral platitudes come out of it invulnerable like Achilles, but with the human force washed out of them in the process.”

What is the source of this violent reaction in Hegel’s mind against the Kantian ideas. It is easy to see that the idea of a national religion which should harmonise the imagination and the heart with the reason, was derived by him from Greece. Greek life presented itself to Hegel as a solution of a problem which to Kant had only been approximately soluble—the problem of combining the universal with the particular, the reason with the feelings. Greek religion was to him the type of a cult which is not merely a combination of rational religion with more or less of fetish-worship, but in which the ceremonial or symbolic element is brought into harmony with the rational. Christianity, on the other hand, lie at this time regarded as a moral failure, just because it did not combine with any specific national institutions so as to produce a living development of national character. It was a purely spiritual religion, which sought to influence men through the reason alone, and therefore it remained essentially a religion for individuals. “How light in the scale weigh the whole ‘means of grace’ worked by the Church, backed by the most full and learned explanations, when the passions, and the power of circumstances, of education, of example, and of the Government, are thrown into the opposite scale! The whole history of religion since the beginning of the Christian era combines to show that Christianity is a religion which can make men good, only if they are good already.”

The thought first indicated in this way was followed out, and at once deepened and developed, in a number of theological papers written during Hegel's residence in Switzerland, which might be called "Studies of Jewish and Christian religion from a Greek point of view." Judaism was to Hegel the type of an unnatural religion, a religion of external law, which had no relation to the life of the people on whom it was imposed. The Jews, he maintained, were a nation whose advance from a lower to a higher form of social life had not been a process of natural development, but a violent change forced on them from without. The transition from the simple life of herdsmen to the complex order of the state had not in their case taken place gradually and of itself, but through foreign influence. Driven forward by circumstances and by the ascendancy of a great man, they were forced into a struggle for national independence while yet no real capacity for political life had been formed in them. "Their impulse toward independence was merely a craving for dependence on something of their own;" and therefore, in independence they did not, like other nations, achieve for themselves a noble harmony of natural and spiritual life. They were confined by this narrow patriotism to a bare and almost animal existence, or rose above it only to become the fanatical victims of an abstraction. Their God was not a better self to which their life was drawn up, but an external Lord, whose worship divided them from nature, and even made them hate it. Hence their fate is no Greek tragedy which purifies the passions by terror and pity, for such emotions are called forth only "by the necessary error of a noble character." The Jewish tragedy rather excites horror and disgust, for their fate is "like the fate of Macbeth, who reached beyond nature, allied himself with alien powers, and slavishly worshipped beings not identified with himself; and who, after he had trampled under foot all that was holy in human nature, was necessarily abandoned by his gods, and broken in pieces on the very rock of his own faith."¹

Hegel then proceeds to compare the idea of law as presented in Judaism with the Greek idea of fate. Law is altogether indifferent to the individual; it fixes limits for him, and attaches to the transgression of those limits a penalty that nothing can avert. There