

HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHICAL DEVELOPMENT

By RICHARD KRONER

I. YEARS OF EXPERIMENT

Hegel was born in Stuttgart in 1770, when the Age of Reason and Enlightenment was closing and the day of the Romantics was at hand. Both these contemporary influences affected his thinking, and he derived another, no less powerful, from his early education at the Stuttgart Gymnasium. This was the influence of Greek and Roman ideas.

The realms of learning which attracted him most during his school years were religion and history, and especially the history of religion. A paper "On the Religion of the Greeks and Romans" by the seventeen-year-old Hegel shows that his philosophical genius was already alive. "The wise men of Greece," he wrote in this essay, "thought that the deity had endowed every man with means and energies sufficient for his happiness and that it had modeled the nature of things in such a way as to make it possible for true happiness to be obtained by wisdom and human goodness." Other papers are even more philosophical. One has the title "On the Judgment of Common Sense about Objectivity and Subjectivity of Ideas."

In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel reflects on his own experience as a schoolboy. "The instruction of youth, it is true, has to be carried through in solitude, but one should not assume that the scent of the spiritual world does not permeate this solitude after all and that the power of the universal mind is not strong enough to take possession even of these remote sections of life."¹ In his early years he was molded by this "universal mind," by European history, and particularly by the Greeks. But he also felt the impact of modern thought. When he was eleven years old, Schiller's drama *The Robbers* was first being performed, and although the boy probably was not yet attending the theater, the spirit of Schiller must sooner or later have reached the "remote section" of Hegel's life, kindling enthusiasm for the ideals of the great poet.

In the fall of 1788 Hegel entered the *Stift* at Tübingen, a theological seminary where many celebrated sons of Swabia had been educated-among them Johannes Kepler, the astronomer, and, in Hegel's own time, Schelling and Hölderlin. The influence of this school on Hegel, at least in its immediate effects, was not very strong. Obviously dissatisfied with the lectures he was attending, he found the "universal mind" in things outside the school curriculum-in Greek and especially Platonic philosophy, which he studied privately, and in contemporary events of the literary and political spheres.

In 1788 Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* appeared. In 1789 the French Revolution broke out. In 1790 Kant published the *Critique of Judgment*, perhaps the greatest of all his works, certainly the most comprehensive and stimulating, with exciting new ideas about truth and

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beauty, nature and art, the purpose of God and the place of man in the universe. In the same year Goethe's drama *Tasso* and the fragment of *Faust* were published. In 1792 a revolutionary theological and philosophical essay was published anonymously under the provocative title *Attempt at a Critique of All Revelation* (*Versuch einer Kritik aller Offenbarung*). Since the publisher was Kant's and since Kant's philosophy of religion was eagerly expected, the public surmised that the work was his. But the author was actually Fichte, whose star was just then beginning to rise. These years also saw the rediscovery of Spinoza's philosophic system, created more than a century before but exercising little influence on European thought.

Growing up in such a world—a world of great political, philosophical, and poetical movements, of spiritual adventures, of tremendous undertakings and convulsions—Hegel could not fail to be stirred. The Spinoza revival, especially, left permanent traces in Hegel's mind, as it did in Fichte's and Schelling's. It is no exaggeration to say that German speculative idealism is Spinozism worked out on the level of Kant's critical philosophy. Of course, Spinozism as it was adopted by the representatives of Storm and Stress was no longer the rationalistic system of its author. It was instinct with the new impetus of an age which denied the sovereignty of reason and insisted that poetry and faith had rights of their own.

Hegel grew up when the Age of Reason was in decline and the Age of Emotion and Imagination was conquering the German soul. The official atmosphere of the Stuttgart school and of the Tübingen Seminary was still that of enlightened reason, but the world outside was dominated by the new spirit. And the writings of the young Hegel, though they show marks of his academic education, give evidence on an increasing scale of the direct influence of the new movement. Especially from Herder's books and pamphlets Hegel learned that reason has to be animated by emotion, reflection by insight, argumentation by enthusiasm, in order to satisfy the entire man and reach the depths of reality.

THE IDEAL OF FOLK RELIGION

In considering religion historically, particularly the contrast between Greek folk religion and Christian book religion, Hegel began by accepting folk religion as interpreted in the light of Herder's ideas. Greek religion was to Hegel the religion of imagination and enthusiasm—the values exalted by Storm and Stress. Christianity appeared as the religion of Enlightenment dominated by reason. There can be no question where the sympathies of the young man lay; they were with his own generation, not with that of his teachers. This is clear from manuscripts written when he was about twenty-five years old.

Religion, he then held, should not be learned from books or confined to dogma, memory, and moral rules; it should not be a theological religion. Rather it should be a living power, flourishing in the real life of a nation, in their habits, ideals, customs, actions, and festivals, in their hearts and will, in their deeds as well as in their imagination. It should be popular, not clerical. It should be the concern not of a special church but of the nation as a whole. Its sphere should not be restricted to private persons but should be one with the political organization of the republic. Religion should be not otherworldly but humane. Unlike the gloomy religion of the cross, it should glorify not suffering and martyrdom but joy and earthly

life. It should appeal to the senses and natural emotions rather than to the intellect. It should not be scholastic but should captivate the sense of beauty as Greek religion did.

The young Hegel would have liked to give up his own Christian faith and go back to the days of Greek paganism. He shared that love and admiration for the Greeks which was then common to many German poets and writers and especially to his close companions in the *Tübinger Stift*, Schelling and Hölderlin. The friends of Greece idealized antiquity. They venerated Hellas as a country that had attained to a sublimely humane civilization based upon political freedom, philosophical wisdom, and artistic perfection.

Throughout his life Hegel retained his vivid admiration for the ancient Greeks, their political institutions and ethical virtues, the profundity of their tragedies and the beauty of their architecture and sculpture. But, as he grew older, his youthful enthusiasm became more temperate. This change began while he was still at Bern, after he started studying the moral philosophy of Kant; reaction deepened during his years in Frankfurt, with the synthesis of his Hellenic ideals and theological studies.

THE INFLUENCE OF KANT

Before Hegel achieved this synthesis, he began to read Kant thoroughly, especially his *Critique of Practical Reason* and *Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason*. Some authors today have tried to minimize Kant's influence upon Hegel. In vain. To eliminate the Kantian element in Hegel's philosophy is like eliminating the Platonic element in Aristotle. Hegel became a Kantian the moment he understood the revolution brought about by Kant's Critical Philosophy; and he remained a Kantian throughout his life, no matter how much he disputed many of Kant's doctrines and even his fundamental position. Hegel would never have found his dialectical method without the "Transcendental Dialectic" in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.²

Greek religion was conceived of by Hegel as a humane and national religion, Christianity as an institutional and statutory (i.e., "positive") religion rooted in a foreign book and in an unpopular dogma. Kant seemed to suggest a third type of religion based entirely on man's autonomous conscience and moral reason. Is "rational faith," as Kant styled this moral religion, superior to both Greek paganism and dogmatic Christianity? Is it perhaps, as Kant thought, the only true form in which man can attain to a knowledge of God? Several passages in Hegel's writings during these years intimate that he was ready to answer these questions in the affirmative.

The weight of Kantian doctrine in Hegel's thinking was obviously increasing. He criticized Christian religion not only by comparing it with Greek folk religion but also by considering it in the light of Kant's moral rationalism, which rejects the "positive" elements in all religions as merely historical and therefore not purely religious.

² See Richard Kroner, *Von Kant bis Hegel* (2 vols.; Tübingen, 1921-24); also Herbert Wacker, *Das Verhältnis des jungen Hegel zu Kant* (Berlin, 1932); and Georg Lasson's introduction to Hegel, *Jenenser Logik, Metaphysik und Naturphilosophie* (Leipzig, 1923), pp. xxiv and xxvi.

Hegel's most interesting "experiment" with Kant's philosophy is an essay on the "Life of Jesus,"³ in which Jesus appears as a teacher of Kant's purely moral religion. "Pure Reason completely free of any limit or restriction whatsoever is the deity itself." In this essay Jesus advises men to revere "the eternal law of morality and Him whose holy will cannot be affected by anything but by the law."⁴ Jesus says: "You were commanded to love your friends and your nation, but you were permitted to hate your enemies—I say however unto you: Respect mankind even in your enemy, if you cannot love him."⁵ And again: "Act on the maxim which you can at the same time will to be a universal law among men. This is the fundamental law of morality—the content of all legislation and of the sacred books of all nation".⁶

Now this is not the Gospel. It is Kant, speaking through Jesus. If people wonder how Hegel could write such strange things, the answer is not too difficult: he was writing not for publication but to probe the doctrines and principles he found in the movements of his day. Since he was educated in a theological seminary, it was natural for him to interpret the teachings of Jesus through Kant's ideas and ideals. This was his way of appropriating Kantian philosophy to himself. In writing a life of Jesus with the conceptual tools of Kantian ethics, Hegel did not intend to commit himself to this interpretation.

Hegel went on to expand this experiment from an interpretation of the life of Jesus to a discussion of the origin of the Christian religion as a whole. The chasm between the ethics of Kant and the doctrine of the Christian church is evident. How could that chasm originate if the founder's message substantially agreed with the principle of Kant's ethics or, rather, with the fundamental law of reason itself? How can the gulf between reason and revelation ever be understood? This cardinal question arose in the mind of the young thinker.

Are there perhaps some incidents in the life of Jesus which forced him to express the law of reason in a form that deviated from reason and thereby became "positive"? True and pure religion is rational and moral; the Christian religion is ecclesiastical and encumbered with creeds, statutes, rites, rules, and dogmas—with all the elements of Judaism from which Jesus was trying to free religion. How did the religion of Jesus become transformed into the "positive" Christian religion?

Hegel tried to answer this question in *The Positivity of the Christian Religion*. Positivity, he wrote, is in a certain sense nothing else than historicity. Every historical fact is positive in that it is not purely and merely rational but conditioned and encompassed by historical circumstances. A religion is a historical reality; as such, it cannot be as abstract and definite as the law of reason. In this sense Greek religion was as positive as Judaism or Christianity. But Greek religion, in spite of its historically positive character, is more in agreement with moral freedom and autonomy than the doctrine of the Christian church. It had no statutes, no dogma, no creed, no codified moral rules, no church, no theology. It did not need all these positive institutions, which fetter human conscience and regulate human life. The Greek was a free man,

³ Herman Nohl, *Hegels theologische Jugendschriften* (Tübingen, 1907), pp. 73-136.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 78

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 84

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 87

went to live in accordance with his own views and to enjoy his political liberties. His imagination was as free as his political status.

The Greeks were the masters of their own inner and outer life. That is why they developed neither theological systems nor ecclesiastic institutions. The moral law was alive in their souls, in a natural undisturbed harmony with reason, as their whole life was in complete harmony with nature; so their religion could be a happy play of imagination. Hellenic enthusiasm and Kantian ethics joined to form one front against Christianity, with its positive code of thought and action, its theoretical and practical system of life.

How did this positive system arise? Hegel gives several reasons for this phenomenon—among them, the historical circumstances under which Jesus first appeared. Jesus lived in the midst of a people deprived of its political freedom and secluded in its religious precinct, conforming to rules of almost monastical rigidity. These circumstances necessarily affected the early Christian community. Later on, after it was adopted by the proletariat of the Roman Empire, the positivity of Christian religion became even more marked.

While Jesus aimed at a purely moral religion and fought against superstition and positivity, he could not help generating a church by positive means. He was bound to connect respect for the holiness of moral law with respect for the holiness of his own person. Thus the seed of ecclesiastical authority and of the positivity of all religious forms and institutions was planted. This is the tragic origin of the Christian church.

Obviously, Hegel was fighting especially against the Roman Catholic church and took his examples from its history. The Protestant church is viewed as a fresh attempt at a purely moral religion, purged of all positive elements. "Great men have claimed that the fundamental meaning of 'Protestant' is a man or a church which has not bound itself to certain unalterable standards of faith but which protests against all authority in matters of belief."⁷

II. YEARS OF DISCOVERY

In 1796 Hegel moved from Bern to Frankfurt, where he spent the most fruitful years of his spiritual growth. His work of this period shows an abrupt change in his intellectual and philosophic views, in his style and cast of mind, in his whole personality. While he was at Bern—during the years of experiment—the spirit, subjects, taste, and style of his writings had been stamped by the Age of Reason and Enlightenment. Suddenly he broke with this tradition.

The change of style from *The Positivity of the Christian Religion* (or more precisely of Parts I and II, Part III having been written much later) to *The Spirit of Christianity* is so radical as to be almost alarming. The author of the first essay might have been a contemporary of Moses Mendelssohn, Lessing, Sulzer, or Kant; the author of the second was evidently a contemporary

⁷ See below, p. 128.

of Jacobi, Herder, Schleiermacher, Fichte, Schelling, and Hölderlin. A century seems to separate these two essays, which are the work of one man, writing in successive years.

Hegel's thinking was as strikingly altered as his style. The author of *The Spirit of Christianity* was no longer the cautiously pondering and soberly reasoning representative of the Age of Enlightenment. He was a Christian mystic, seeking adequate speculative expression.

Hegel went through a period of self-estrangement to find himself in the end—a pattern of thinking which was to be characteristic of him throughout his life, part of the very fabric of his dialectical method. It was his peculiar gift to be able to project himself into the minds of other people and of other periods, penetrating into the core of alien souls and strange lives, and still remain the man he was. Later on, he used this ability to make other intellectual worlds intelligible by illuminating them, as it were, from within. Hegel was now to find himself. And it is of profound significance that he discovered his own soul by discovering the soul of Jesus.

In *The Positivity of the Christian Religion* Hegel's thinking had been anti-Christian, or at least anti-ecclesiastical. The essay is permeated by hostility to Christian teaching, or at least to Christian institutions, which stemmed from two sources: Hegel's love for Greek "folk religion" and his devotion to Kant's ethical doctrine. In *The Spirit of Christianity* a new feeling is apparent: deep sympathy for the doctrine of the Gospel, which had come to Hegel as the result of his inner struggle. This essay shows how the fusion of Greek Soul and Kantian Reason (a fusion of basic importance in his mature philosophic system) permitted Hegel to rise to the plane on which he could understand the message of Jesus.

The soul of Greek religion is beauty; the reason of Kantian philosophy is morality. Hegel concluded that ultimate truth was moral beauty, and this truth he discovered in the Gospel. The moral principle of the Gospel is charity, or love, and love is the beauty of the heart, a spiritual beauty which combines the Greek Soul and Kant's Moral Reason. This is the synthesis achieved in *The Spirit of Christianity*.

Within the new synthesis, Judaism took the place of Christianity as the villain of the piece. He denounced its "ugliness"—the opposite of Greek beauty. He blamed the Israelites for secluding themselves instead of joining other peoples and for slavishly submitting to a God as jealously exclusive as they were themselves. The spirit of the Greeks is union; that of the Israelites, disunion. The Greeks lived in friendship with Nature; the Israelites, in hostility toward her. So Judaism appeared to be radically opposed to the message of Jesus, who introduced into biblical religion the mood and spirit of the Greeks. The faith he created was a synthesis of Judaism and Hellenism.

Since there is a certain spiritual kinship between Judaism and Kantianism, the new faith of Jesus may also be conceived of as the synthesis of Hellenism and Kantianism. Both the Old Testament and Kantian ethics exalt the idea of moral law and the relentless transcendence of the Absolute. Both are utterly remote from any personal mysticism and gnosticism and rigidly separate the spheres of God and the world.

It is this rigorous separation that Hegel combats. Judaism and Kantianism represent, roughly speaking, a markedly monarchical theism; while Hellenism has, besides its poetical

polytheism, a tendency toward pantheism which takes shape in Stoicism. It is Hegel's thesis that Jesus teaches a pantheism of love which reconciles Greek pantheism with Judaic and Kantian theism.

What personal experiences gave a fresh approach to the essays Hegel wrote at Frankfurt? This question is hard to answer. I believe that not only the growth of his own personality but other circumstances—association with his friend Hölderlin, the sensitive poet who adored Greece with all the pathetic love of a Christian heart—contributed a good deal to Hegel's new way of thinking. All his earlier experiences, combined with a renewed consideration of the meaning of the Gospel, brought about a deeper recognition of its truth. Hegel's interpretation is, it seems to me, one of the most remarkable attempts of its kind and belongs among the great commentaries on the inner life and destiny of Jesus.

In order to penetrate into the core of the teaching of Jesus, Hegel used the terms and categories of Kant's ethical philosophy; but, in doing so, he transformed and adapted them. The result was as much an original exposition of Christian love as it was a new ethical and speculative conception of God—as much a criticism of Kant as an adaptation of the Christian faith through philosophic meditation. It was also an attempt to reconcile the ideal of Hellenic humanism with Kantian moralism. This reconciliation, Hegel believed, was foreshadowed by the message of Jesus.

PANTHEISM OF LOVE

Hegel's first original philosophy might be called a "Pantheism of Love," arrived at through his opposition to Kant's strict contradistinction between duty and inclination, moral law and natural impulse, reason and passion. Like Schiller, Holderlin, and the Romantics, Hegel took exception to this harsh dichotomy, which threatened the unity of human personality. He tried to confute Kant by passing beyond him.

Kant had insisted that man as a moral agent is autonomous, that it is his own practical reason which dictates the moral law: man is—or rather, ought to be—his own master. But this is just the difficulty. Because he ought to master himself, man is not really free but is divided against himself, half-free and half-slave. At best, he is his own slave, enslaved by his master, reason. The message of Jesus overcomes this diremption and unifies man inwardly. This is the import of the remission of sin and redemption by divine love. The new ethics preached by Jesus is not rational; it is an ethics of love. And love performs what reason can never perform: it harmonizes not only man with man but man with himself.

The commandments of Jesus are commandments only as to their outer form, not as to their inner essential meaning. The form of an imperative is inadequate to the innermost life of the soul, since an imperative is necessarily conceptual, while life is an integral whole. The division into master and slave, into "ought" and "is," is the result of conceptual analysis. But life is substantial unity, undivided totality. All lines separating spheres or zones of living unity are artificial, mechanical, coercive. They tear asunder what belongs together and rend the unity of life.

Jesus fulfilled the law by restoring dismembered life to its original integrity. More powerful than the Categorical Imperative is that spiritual inclination which conforms freely and instinctively to the law. This inclination is called love. It is the metaphysical center of life, the inner counterpart of beauty. It heals the discord of duty and inclination, of will and heart. It is the expression of the divine origin of man. In it the opposite aspects of the human mind are originally united—subjectivity and objectivity; animal and rational nature; individuality and universality; motive and law; the psychological and ethical, physical and metaphysical, realistic and idealistic, volitional and intellectual powers of man's soul.

Hegel's Pantheism of Love has all the characteristics of his future metaphysic. It aims at a reconciliation of opposites, tries to overcome one-sided rationalism, one-sided emotionalism, or one-sided empiricism. It is dialectical in its structure, although its method is not yet dialectical in the strict sense of the word. Hegel still feels that there is no possible logical path to ultimate truth, that a living unity of spiritual experience must take the place of a constructed unity of concepts.

"Since the divine is pure life, anything and everything said of it must be free from any [implication] of opposition. And all reflection's expressions about the relations of the objective being . . . must be avoided. . . . Only spirit can understand and comprehend spirit. . . . Hence it is only in spiritual terms that the divine can be spoken of."⁸ These words contrast sharply with more mature utterances, in which Hegel flatly rejects exaltation or enthusiasm as a means of attaining to truth and sees the possibility of a conceptual system in which the divine content is expressed by logical oppositions.

It is not difficult to recognize the link between this early theological speculation and Hegel's mature philosophy. What Hegel rejected in framing the Pantheism of Love, he never reaffirmed later on. He found a new logic, a new rationalism to solve the problem insoluble by the rationalism he had overcome in his earlier years. He found a method to perform by logic what, in the first period, seemed performable by the living spirit alone.

In the year 1800 Hegel wrote a manuscript that summed up his views to that time and, in addition, foreshadowed an inclination toward Schelling's philosophy. What he had called "Life" in his earlier manuscripts he now—in the fragment of 1800—tries to understand in terms of a biological metaphysics. He identifies the mystery of organic unity with the mystery of the Real and regards the relation between the organism and its parts as the primordial opposition out of which all metaphysical contradictions arise.

Organic unity, if conceived as a particular element of the living being, is unable to unify the parts. It is in itself a part among other parts. But, viewed in its true essence, it is no such part but the whole of all parts. How can we conceive this relation? The problem is not confined to the particular organism; it extends to the universal organism or to the organic universe—to the All of Life, to "Nature." Hegel wrestles with the problem of reconciling the opposites—the same problem he had encountered in his interpretation of the Gospel. The Whole and the Parts, the

⁸ See below, p. 255.

Universe and the Particular Objects, the Infinite and the Finite, the Unlimited and the Limited are united in the Whole, the Universe, the Infinite.

How is this possible? And how can this all-embracing unity be comprehended? Hegel is confronted by this oldest of problems, one which he avoided for a long time because he felt its tremendous import more strongly than any of his contemporaries, perhaps more than any European thinker since the great days of metaphysical speculation in ancient times. But now he can no longer avoid it. It has gripped him fast and will hold him as long as he lives.

Hegel still takes refuge in religion. He still maintains that religion alone can offer the key to this mystery. Philosophy cannot vie with religion. Spirit, not thought, is life.

Thus during his years at Frankfort—the years of discovery Hegel's spiritual life, his intellectual struggles, his affinities and antipathies were gathered into a synthesis which foreshadows his later philosophy. The fragment of 1800 enunciates this synthesis clearly. It shows that the deepest root of Hegel's system was a personal religious experience; living through this experience, he contended with all the influences of his time, especially with Fichte and Schelling. In an attempt to articulate his mystical certainty and embrace the contrasts of thought, he proposed as a formula the "union of union and nonunion"⁹—his future philosophic system in a nutshell. In this system a triumphant victory was won over the powers about to destroy the unity of Hegel as a person.

The manuscripts of this final youthful period disclose the energy of Hegel's intellect as well as the agitation of his heart. The struggle of his life was directed toward an inner peace that would satisfy reason and soul by a gigantic metaphysical conception.

III. ROMANTICISM

During Hegel's young manhood he was an enthusiastic Romanticist; and, although he became in his maturity an ardent realist and an outspoken critic of Romantic views, strands of his early romanticism are woven into the pattern of his final philosophy. The Romanticism Hegel knew was the Storm and Stress movement developed to its ultimate conclusion. Jacobi, Herder, Hamann, Pestalozzi, and other leaders of Storm and Stress were combatting the ideas of the Age of Enlightenment, but most of them could not free themselves entirely from the concepts of enlightened reason.

The Romanticists were completely emancipated. A few representatives of Storm and Stress became Romanticists themselves. Fichte may be reckoned as belonging to both movements: his *Wissenschaftslehre*—or *Lore of Science*, as Coleridge aptly translated the title—though a typical product of Storm and Stress, prepared the ground for certain Romantic theories. Schelling, who had been a disciple of Fichte, developed into the philosophical apostle of Romanticism.

⁹ See below, p. 312

The most original thinker of his time, Hegel was also more deeply indebted to his contemporaries than to anyone else. He was influenced by both Fichte's *Lore of Science* and Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism*. He followed the paths pointed out by Kant and Fichte, Schiller and Schleiermacher, by the leaders of Storm and Stress and by the Romantics.

The Romantic mind is scornful of sharp boundary lines between realms of thought and life. It deliberately confounds poetry with philosophy or both with prophecy, imagination with reality, actor with spectator, the divine with the human, the ideal with the real, life with dream. The Romanticist believes in the unity underlying all these zones and divisions. Fusing science and religion, psychology and physics, mind and matter, he anticipates a universal science which would happily comprise them all. Some Romanticists tried to compass this end by a poetical interpretation of nature. Others adapted ethics to physics, or religion to poetry.

Hegel was a Romanticist in his longing for unity; he was anti-Romantic in the way he gratified this longing. Like the Romanticists, he firmly believed that all things were ultimately one and that boundaries were merely provisional. In the writings considered above he called this basic unity "Life"—a term which retained some of its original spell over him even after it had been superseded by the word *Geist*, which means either "mind" or "spirit."¹⁰ But he insisted that ultimate unification was to be brought about by a rational rather than a Romantic method. While the Romanticists were content with denying ultimate separation, indulging in pictorial language and paradoxes to give force to their negation, Hegel tried to demonstrate that distinctions break down before the tribunal of logic. He was convinced that the more accurately we think, the clearer becomes the impossibility of drawing clearly defined boundaries between our concepts. The original unity of all things is for him not the object of a mystical or poetical intuition but a truth discovered by logic. Not imagination alone, but understanding and reason, witness to the truth of the Romantic creed, which thus stands revealed as something more than Romantic. Hegel's Preface to *The Phenomenology of Mind* is the most powerfully worded document of this conviction.

Most of Hegel's early writings, permeated with the spirit of Storm and Stress, offer an interpretation of the Gospel and Christian dogma culminating in the idea of Love. Love overcomes all differentiations of life and thought and restores the original unity of all men. Love is wiser than understanding and reflection. The soul that loves reaches God. Hegel also reflected on the function of spirit—a power that conquers the citadel of division by unifying the most tenacious of all oppositions, the opposition between objectivity and subjectivity. Christianity arose as the religion of spirit. But it was the fate of Christianity to call back an already defeated enemy. Spirit submits to the necessity of becoming objective itself as creed and dogma, or as codified faith in preference to the love that binds the community together. The conclusion of the essay on *The Spirit of Christianity* is therefore gloomy and destructive. The intent of Jesus cannot be maintained in his community. Neither love nor even spirit can bring about absolute reconciliation—the ultimate goal of life and thought. Is there any other light? Any other possibility of reaching the goal?

¹⁰ See below, p. 24.

Hegel turned to Greek folk religion as exhibiting the unity of national life and religious belief. This philhellenic affection is in itself a Romantic trait. The Romantics like to look back to some state of perfect happiness and beauty—a Romantic counterpart of a biblical paradise characterized by a quasi-historical nature. Thus Hegel called Greece the "paradise of the human spirit."¹¹

Other Romantics—especially Wackenroder, Novalis, and, later on, Friedrich Schlegel—extolled the Catholic Middle Ages, and Hegel, too, praised medieval features. But he was realistic enough to see the weaknesses of past civilizations, and he was anti-Romantic in glorifying the present as the fruitful moment or *kairos* given to his generation that it might consummate the work of earlier periods.

The Romantic poets regarded beauty as a metaphysical principle and extended its dominion over the universe. Schelling, following them, crowned his Philosophy of Nature by a speculative aesthetics which exalted the man of creative genius as the apogee of nature. Hegel, at first accepting Schelling's aestheticism, finally rejected this Romantic creed. Although the principle of beauty was high in his scale of values, it reached its position not as an aesthetic but as an ethical and religious principle.

"Truth is beauty intellectually represented,"¹² we read in one of the early writings. But how can beauty—and particularly that spiritual beauty called "love"—be represented by intellectual means? Can this be done at all? The Fragment of a System of 1800 seems to deny the possibility. Ultimate truth cannot be construed by conceptual methods. The intellect is unable to vie with the immediacy and fullness of life. Love outshines speculation, which, after all, must be based on reflection, and therefore on distinctions and separations. Even the categories of organic life used by Hegel in an attempt to solve the metaphysical problem ultimately fail. Not the intellect but finite life alone can rise to infinite life.

This result could not permanently satisfy the speculative ambition of Hegel's mind. As a mere phase in his development it was destined to yield to further investigations. Hegel became convinced that philosophy, confronted with the problem of ultimate reconciliation, must let religion take the lead. But religion, as his historical studies had demonstrated, did not offer a final solution. "It is the fate [of the Christian religion] that church and state, worship and life, piety and virtue, spiritual and worldly action can never dissolve into One."¹³ In this respect Greek religion was more successful. A way should be found to preserve and unite the scattered elements of perfection: the harmony of a national religion, the truth of the Gospel, and the demands of speculation. Through speculation, absolute harmony and absolute truth should be gathered up into one great synthesis. Hegel searched for this solution.

The early writings hint at the direction in which Hegel may have been seeking new light. Speaking about the mystery of the Eucharist, he says that "love, made objective . . . reverts once more to its nature, becomes subjective again in the eating."¹⁴ Here a consequential

¹¹ See below, p. 325.

¹² See below, p. 196.

¹³ See below, p. 301.

¹⁴ See below, p. 251.

discovery is made. A way seems to open for resolving the hardest and most comprehensive of all oppositions.

There is a mysterious circle in religious experience. Spiritual life objectifies itself and then turns back to itself, so that it comes full circle—but not without first enriching the mind. The inner life is revealed by a symbolic act in the outer world, and the outer world is retransformed into an inner experience. Could this process perhaps have a wider scope than its symbolical and ritual meaning would indicate? Could it point to a hidden law of the spirit itself? Moreover, if it should be possible to express this law in universal terms, would not the basic problem of speculation be solved? A great avenue opens. The union of opposites might be achieved when the thinking mind traverses the circle adumbrated in the religious rite. This unification may turn out to be reunification of that which is originally one, and the process of diversification and reunification may manifest the very essence of the underlying unity.

The early writings throw a little more light on this subject. Is the dogma of the Trinity perhaps an intellectual attempt to comprehend that divine process through which the believer inwardly passes while taking part in the Lord's Supper? "The culmination of faith, the return to the Godhead whence man is born, closes the circle of man's development."¹⁵ The child knows God without being taught. It is still united with the source of life. In its development the child becomes separated from his origin. Faith at last restores the original harmony. This circular course is necessary. There can be no love, no life, without disunity and return to unity. Disunity and unity, connection and disconnection, are intrinsically conjoined. This spiritual relation obtains not only between man and God but also between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity appears as a process by which the original unity of life is divided as well as restored. Hegel's future method is clearly anticipated by this early trinitarian speculation. Even the later distinction between understanding (reflection) and reason (speculation) is foreshadowed by the distinction of intellect and spirit.

At an early stage in his development Hegel saw clearly that the intellect, trying to conceive things divine, necessarily encounters contradictions and that these contradictions, far from being fatal to comprehension, make it possible to grasp life. "What is a contradiction in the realm of the dead is not one in the realm of life,"¹⁶ he exclaims jubilantly. The sphere of thought as opposed to that of life is dead. Is there any access to the realm of life by means of thought? If so, it is obvious that extraordinary efforts must be made to —find it and make it available to everyone. Hegel's dissatisfaction with the negative result of his position of

1800 is not only to be inferred as psychologically probable; it is explicitly stated by Hegel himself. In a memorable letter dated November 2, 1800, he wrote to Schelling: "In my scientific development which began with the more subordinate needs of man, I was compelled to proceed toward science (philosophy), and at the same time the ideal of my youth had to be transformed into the form of reflection, into a system." He adds that he is still engaged in this undertaking, implying that he is not yet content with the result he has reached. The letter is the expression of a man still seeking his definite position and not yet certain of himself.

¹⁵ See below, p. 273.

¹⁶ See below, p. 261.

What was certain in him was his ideal. But the task implied in this ideal—of reconciling life and thought, faith and reason, spirit and intellect, and of expressing the ideal in the form of reflection—was not yet discharged. To this task the years from 1800 to 1807 are dedicated. In the philosophical language of these years, the opposition between life and thought appears in the form of an opposition between intuition and reflection. Is there any possibility of unification? Is there an intuition which can be cast in reflective terms—a reflection which spontaneously returns to intuition? In other words, is there an intuitive reflection or a reflective intuition? An intellectual power equal to the spirit? The final answer is affirmative. Within the intellect itself there is such a power; Hegel calls it "reason." Reason leads the intellect to ever higher levels of insight—up to the highest stage of complete reconciliation.

HEGEL AND SCHELLING

In 1801 Hegel joined, as he styled it,¹⁷ the "literary rush" of Jena, the intellectual capital of letters and philosophy. Here Fichte had given his powerful lectures about the first principles of all philosophy, arousing the enthusiasm of young students by his imperious mind and moral idealism. In the University of Jena he had initiated a Kantian movement which marked the victory of the philosophical revolution throughout Germany. In Jena the Romantics, Friedrich and Wilhelm Schlegel, Novalis, Tieck, and others, had written their manifestoes and preached the new gospel to the world. Here Schiller had taught history and Goethe had composed some of his classical poems. Schelling in 1790 had begun to lecture about the philosophy of nature and had soon gathered a crowd of ardent adherents who went into raptures when the young master told them that Nature is not a mechanical process in which dead atoms are pushing and pushed but creative and divine power, a stream of life, organizing itself and enlivening all things.

When Hegel entered this arena of intellectual competition, the poets and thinkers were about to scatter. The heyday of Romanticism was already waning. The Schlegels had left Jena, Novalis had died in 1800, Schiller had moved for the short remainder of his life to Weimar, the seat of the Muses, and Fichte, after many an unpleasant quarrel with the students and the government, had gone to Berlin. Jena was on the decline. The "rush" was over. Soon even Schelling would desert the university. But this was just the hour for Hegel's rise. He is the heir of the Romantics, of Fichte and of Schelling, and of Jena's Kantianism. He preserved the thoughts disseminated by them, and he fulfilled what they had promised.

Moreover, Hegel was called upon to transcend the horizon of the Romantics, to reconcile their revolutionary message with the more sober views of Enlightenment, to transform their dreams and fantasies into realistic concepts. He was called upon to intellectualize Romanticism and to spiritualize Enlightenment, to achieve the synthesis of all the German movements since Leibniz and Winckelmann, Lessing and Mendelssohn, Herder and Jacobi, up to his own time.

Hegel was no cool spectator of these movements. He was deeply moved by them himself. But he was very modest in expressing his own thoughts. His letter to Schelling

¹⁷*Briefe von und an Hegel* (Leipzig, 1887), p. 26.

(November 2, 1800)¹⁸ is the best example of this stern self-criticism. "I have watched your great public career," Hegel wrote, "with admiration and joy. I assume you exempt me from speaking about it in a humble way or from attempting to show you that I too can do something myself. I will avail myself of the middle course and say that I hope we will meet again as friends. I look to you full of confidence that you may recognize my unselfish efforts though their sphere be lower than yours, and that you may acknowledge some value in them."

In the eyes of the world—and probably in his own and in Schelling's eyes, as well—Hegel was his friend's pupil and disciple. When Hegel became a lecturer at the University of Jena, he qualified for the appointment with a dissertation *De orbitis planetarum*, in which he subscribed to Schelling's philosophy of nature. Together with Schelling, he announced philosophic disputations for the winter semester 1801/2. With Schelling he edited a philosophic journal, *Kritisches Journal der Philosophie*, in 1802 and 1803, in which they published their own articles anonymously, making the authorship uncertain for a century—until Nohl discovered an authentic list of those written by Hegel. But, in spite of this close collaboration, there was a definite divergence between the views of the two men, and the gulf widened the longer their association lasted. The final break between them came with the publication of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* in 1807.

Differences of character, temperament, interests, inclinations, and spiritual valuations separated the friends from the outset. Schelling was fascinated by the world of sense and aesthetic beauty; Hegel was stirred by the spiritual world and the riddles of the soul. Schelling was primarily interested in speculations about nature; Hegel, in speculations about God as manifested in history. These differences were enough to create a certain divergence of outlook, but they need not have meant a break between the two men. Schelling, after all, had to admit that there is a certain duality between nature and mind, and this duality compelled him to produce a philosophy complementing the philosophy of nature. In fact, he never asserted that the philosophy of nature was all-embracing. In his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), he maintained that nature and mind are two different and parallel branches of Totality, and he concluded that mind in its sovereign products furnishes the key to the understanding of nature. But the final clash was nevertheless inevitable, because in philosophy all depends upon the question of primacy. Schelling, at least in these years of companionship with Hegel, was convinced that ultimately the unity of nature and of mind had to be conceived in terms of a universal philosophy of nature and not in those of a universal philosophy of mind. But precisely this had been Hegel's conviction. It was "the ideal of his youth."

The difference between Hegel and Schelling was not at first apparent. Slowly, cautiously, Hegel was trying to express what seemed inexpressible, to think through what seemed unthinkable. His philosophic system did not spring full-panoplied from his mind like Athena from the head of Zeus; it was born after enormous pangs of travail. The decisive step was taken as early as 1801, when he discovered the principle of his method and the foundation of his whole system. But his views between 1800 and 1807 were still in a state of continuous modification, transformation, and growth.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

CRITICISM OF SCHELLING

Before Hegel became a member of the teaching staff in the University of Jena, he wrote—"in a few months"¹⁹ during the spring and summer of 1801—his first significant book, *The Difference between the Systems of Fichte and Schelling*. It appeared after Schelling had published in the same year *The Presentation of My System of Philosophy*. At first glance Hegel seems to take sides with his friend. And so he does; but this is only half the story. He also praises elements in Fichte's philosophy which were not accepted by Schelling. Far from writing as a blind adherent of Schelling's, Hegel assumes the role of an umpire between the adversaries, surveying the views of both men with equal sympathy but also with critical strictness, and reserving the right to reject either system.

This attitude agrees strikingly with the last paragraph of Hegel's philosophic sketch completed the year before. There he has said that a religion which does not reconcile the conflict between Objectivity and Subjectivity, or between Nature and the Ego, but instead insists upon the ascendance of the Ego over Nature (as Fichte's system does) would be preferable to a reconciliation, "if the union [of the eternal] with the temporal were ignoble and ignominious."²⁰ The meaning of these words may be subject to different interpretations. In any case, it is clear that Hegel was uncertain as to which system was to be preferred—that of Schelling, which tried to reconcile Nature and Ego, or that of Fichte, which repudiated this reconciliation. The doubtful words may imply either that the final decision depends on the character of the reconciling system or that it depends on the character of the moment in which the reconciliation would be achieved.²¹ "Ransoming the time" would in both cases be allowed only if such an undertaking were honest and decent; Fichte's solution was the "worthiest and noblest," if no honest and decent association with the moment were possible. Whether the moment had already come in which the time could be honestly and decently redeemed was doubtful. The character of the system of Schelling did not seem to support this assumption.

The German language has only one word for mind and spirit, and it would be hazardous to say which of the two English terms is nearer to the German *Geist*. Some translators have rendered it by "mind," some by "spirit." I venture to suggest that the whole "secret of Hegel" (as Hutchison Stirling calls it) rests upon this double meaning of the word *Geist* and upon the overtones which are missing in either of the English words. *Geist* denotes both the human mind and the divine spirit. Even the English "Ghost" in the phrase "the Holy Ghost" is *Geist* in German. These linguistic facts are, like all linguistic facts, more than merely linguistic; they embody experiences and feelings, forms of apprehension, and an interpretation of just those things which matter most in philosophy. Schelling did not recognize that the deepest problem concerns the relation between the divine and the human, between mind and spirit. Therefore his reconciliation of Nature and Ego was not so "worthy and noble" as Fichte's resignation. Fichte at

¹⁹ K. Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben* (1845), p. 149.

²⁰ See below, p. 319.

²¹ This interpretation is suggested by the letter to Schelling (see n. 18 above) in which Hegel writes: "Wishing and hoping to meet you I must also honor destiny and must expect from its favor the manner of our meeting." These words show the significance Hegel ascribed to the anticipated meeting.

least had understood the depth of the human mind. The *Wissenschaftslehre* was a shining proof of this.

This limitation in Schelling's philosophy was connected with another. Not only did he fail to recognize the real problem which needed solution; he did not apply the only possible method which might generate a solution through a reconciliation of opposites. Schelling saw clearly that the logic of reflection is unable to transcend the sphere of distinctions and differences; that it is the fate of the intellect to become entangled in insoluble antinomies. But he found no way out of these difficulties other than a leap into intuition. In order to justify his procedure, Schelling called his intuition "intellectual."

Hegel was aware that this intellectual intuition was a tour de force which violated the intellect without reconciling it with intuition. He did not say this in so many words, but the implication is clear. Schelling's method was no better than Jacobi's appeal to an inner experience which would assure us of the existence of a personal God without any proof; in fact, it was the same kind of escape from the obligations of philosophic demonstration. It was a flight into an area outside and beyond philosophy, the resignation of the philosopher in favor of the poet.

Hegel at no time shared in the Romantic conception of the poet as the perfect philosopher. In his early writings he had denied this idea. He held that religion, not poetry, opens the door to the deepest things; that a spiritual, not an aesthetic, "intuition" must underlie reflections about ultimate truth; that the inner beauty of the heart, not the outer beauty of artistic perfection, provides the model and standard of speculation. Only in one respect was Hegel's position of 1800 precisely parallel to Schelling's in the same year: they both abandoned any attempt to transform their deepest insights into an adequate philosophy. Like Schelling, Hegel appealed to a realm beyond reflective thought. With Schelling this realm was poetry; with Hegel, religion.

In 1801 Schelling boldly asserted that he had found the philosopher's stone. His new system, he claimed, solved the ultimate riddle. Hegel cannot have been blind to the limitations of Schelling's thinking. He realized too well the nature of the difficulties not really mastered by his friend. He understood the terrible struggle of the intellect that tries to cope with the antinomies, and he knew the only way in which these antinomies could be conquered. But the daring stroke of Schelling's philosophic system shook his mind, inflamed his heart, and awakened the energies of his speculative genius. It challenged him to find a solution which would satisfy the mind by combining Romanticism with the critical conscience of logical reflection. In this situation he subjected the system of Fichte to a new examination by confronting it with Schelling's.

AMALGAMATION OF SCHELLING AND FICHTE

The two philosophies, stripped of their errors, were shown in Hegel's essay to supplement each other. Fichte recognized that the Ego has ascendancy over Nature, that the Absolute has to be conceived as absolute Ego, not as absolute object; or, in other words, that the principle of subjectivity represents the synthesis of itself with that of objectivity. This

Kantian inheritance, which Fichte failed to carry through to its ultimate conclusions, Hegel resolved to maintain.

In proclaiming an absolute principle that would unite the opposites and reconcile Ego with Nature, or subjectivity with objectivity, Schelling was nearer the truth than Fichte. But Schelling failed because he, like Spinoza, fell into the extreme of an absolute objectivity or an objective absolute in which the struggle of the Ego was completely eliminated for the sake of perfect rest and indifference. In his philosophic system of 1801, finished and published just as Hegel arrived on the scene, Schelling depicted absolute synthesis as an absolute identity in which all differences were absorbed by the One. The struggle dominating the system of Fichte was replaced by a quasi-aesthetic equilibrium. Schelling could propose this solution because he regarded the philosopher as a man privileged, like the poet, to discover the vision of cosmic beauty.

Hegel was not tempted by this pseudo-aesthetic solution. He was independent enough to realize that the world is not so harmonious as it appeared in Schelling's teaching. Schelling had appeased rather than reconciled the opponents. It is to the interest of reason, Hegel says in his essay, to unify objectivity and subjectivity. But this interest is not served by denying the opposition and the movement it entails. Life means both fight and peace, revolt and redemption, cross and resurrection. If the absolute identity is alive, the opposites must be contained in it. "Diremption is one of the factors of life that composes itself by eternally opposing itself; and totality in its supreme vitality is possible only through a restoration out of supreme separation."²² So far Fichte was right in maintaining the contrast between the absolute and the relative, the infinite and the finite, affirmation and negation, as elements within the Ego. Contrast, Fichte insisted, is the inescapable condition of life.

But Fichte concluded that life is by nature finite. The opposites break up the Ego only as long as we conceive the Ego as being finite and striving after perfection and unification. About the nature of the infinite Ego, apart from the life of the striving finite Ego, we know nothing. In this respect Fichte remained loyal to the Kantian principle of self-restriction and criticism. The absolute Ego is beyond even the loftiest speculation.

Seeing the virtues and weaknesses of Fichte's and Schelling's philosophies, Hegel aimed at an amalgamation of the two. The essay of 1801 outlines this prodigious undertaking, and in many passages it also hints at Hegel's future system. Intuition has to join discursive reflection. It has to become reflective itself. The intellect has to transcend itself not by mere intuition but in a rational fashion, methodically, systematically. It must destroy its own destructive separations. The victory of truth over reflective intellect can be achieved only as a resurrection. The way leads through the, death of separation and returns to the life of primordial identity. Thus may opposition, within the highest unity, be healed by the intellect itself.

In contrast to Schelling's esoteric Romanticism, Hegel believes—as he did throughout his development—that this solution agrees with the position of the common man. "Speculation . . . understands common sense very well, while common sense cannot understand what

²² Hegel's *Werke*, I, 174.

speculation is doing."²³ Speculation articulates the feeling of an identity underlying all distinctions; this feeling is alive in common sense. "Speculation demands in its highest synthesis . . . even the annihilation of the (reflective) consciousness itself. . . . This night of mere reflection and calculating understanding is the noon of Life, and in it both (life and reflection) can meet."²⁴

The self-annihilation of reflection has to be carried out by contradictions. "If one reflects merely on the formal element in speculation and clings to the synthesis of knowledge in a purely analytic form, then the antinomy, the self-canceling contradiction, is the highest formal expression of knowledge and of truth."²⁵ The logical conclusion attained here seems a far cry from the theological approach of Hegel's former writings. But the emphasis on reason is foreshadowed in those early papers; and the missing link between Hegel the theologian and Hegel the logician is supplied by the pamphlet on *The Difference between the Systems of Fichte and Schelling*.

IV. HEGEL'S FIRST SYSTEM

Next to Hegel's early writings, the most informative document about his development is a manuscript probably written between the fall of 1801 and the fall of 1802 and unpublished during his lifetime. Its first editors, Hans Ehrenberg and Herbert Link, gave it the title *Hegel's First System*.²⁶ As Georg Lasson, the second editor, has pointed out, the system in this manuscript is not yet complete.²⁷ The philosophy of mind is not included, and the philosophy of nature is fragmentary. Nevertheless, this is Hegel's first philosophic system; though fragmentary, it is the earliest plan of the building he was going to raise.

The manuscript shows Hegel's first attempt to produce that "logical knowledge" which he had postulated in the essay on *The Difference between the Systems of Fichte and Schelling*. In the first two divisions he offers the preliminary form of his famous Logic. Since logic is the fundamental science in Hegel's system—taking the place of what in other philosophies is called metaphysics and what Hegel himself in the first draft partly calls so—the primitive form of this science may be expected to throw light on Hegel's intentions and his future development. Studying the draft, we find our expectations justified. Hegel carries through what he promised to do and what he had declared necessary in his book on Fichte and Schelling. Logic is a systematic triumph over the fundamental contradictions of metaphysical speculation. It is therefore a science of the basic principles not only of knowledge and thought but also of Being and Existence.

How could life be comprised within a philosophical or conceptual system except at the cost of so analyzing it as to destroy its unity? Pondering on this problem, Hegel was confronted

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 192-93.

²⁶ "Nach den Handschriften der Kgl. Bibl. in Berlin im Auftrage der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften," herausgegeben von Hans Ehrenberg und Herbert Link. Eingeleitet von H. Ehrenberg (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1915).

²⁷ *Jenenser Logik, Metaphysik und Naturnphilosophie*. Aus dem Manuscript herausgegeben von Georg Lasson (Philos. Bibl., Bd. 58 [Leipzig, 1923]). This text is far better than that of the earlier edition.

with the same problems as Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason*—the problem of the limits of logical knowledge and consequently of science and metaphysics. The title of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* suggested the same problem. Schelling had overrun the limits drawn by his predecessors and boldly declared that, though the Absolute cannot be known by reflection, it can be known by metaphysical vision. But Schelling's Absolute excluded the variety and multiplicity of experience and reduced our empirical world to a lifeless abstraction in which the alleged fullness of vision did not appear. It was the "*caput mortuum* of abstraction"—the dead concept already denounced by Hegel in his early writings. Curiously enough, in expounding his intuition, Schelling set forth his views in thin and purely rationalistic terms. Instead of insight and information, the reader of his *Presentation of My System* is put off with pseudo-mathematical symbols and pre-Kantian definitions pretending to express highest wisdom, but actually veiling an empty concept of Identity. Intuition is claimed, but it does not work. What really works in that system is scholastic reflection and formalistic analysis. Knowledge is frustrated before it is gained.

Evidently Schelling had no "logical knowledge" whatever; he completely lacked any insight into the limits and nature of knowledge itself. This was the consequence of the primacy of natural philosophy and of the neglect of any science of logic. Hegel demanded the methodical self-destruction of that intellect which was elevated in Schelling's system. Kant had started down the road in the right direction. Fichte had taken an important step farther. And now the last step is due. The problem of the limits of knowledge has to be solved radically by a science which would inquire into the nature of all principles and categories and show how rationalistic thinking is forced to transcend itself owing to the contradictions to which it inevitably leads. A science of this kind would show how the limits of thought can be made visible and transcended at the same time, and would complete the work begun by the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This science Hegel called "Logic."

This Logic deviates from all former conceptions and schemes of logic: it moves. Thought is made mobile. Indeed, it is always mobile as long as it is living thought and not a dead classification of terms. A stable universal, a changeless definition, a fixed proposition, can never grasp the truth. For truth is a living truth. The new Logic which penetrates into the innermost mystery of Life must be a living, fluid logic. How can we achieve this Logic, contravening as it does all accepted views of logical thought (although common sense has at all times agreed with it)? How can reflection destroy itself? Or, rather, how can thought bring itself back to life from the death of abstraction and opposition? There is no ultimate truth in oppositions; this becomes evident by thinking them. To be sure, to think is to distinguish and to oppose, but it is also to unify and to synthesize. The elements of thought, however, should not be isolated from one another; they should rather themselves pass into each other. This is the fact in all living thinking. This should also be achieved in logical thinking.

To anatomize the life of thought by dissecting it into elements called concepts, propositions, and inferences, as the traditional logic was wont to do, means to misinterpret the real process of thinking. This process is a living one because the living self-actualizes itself in it. A special effort is required to interpret truly this self-actualization. The elements of thought, the concepts, must be conceived not as isolable but as the acts which are constitutive of thinking as such. Or, rather, the thinking self must perceive in them its own activity. They are not objects,

and the process is not an objective one in the sense in which external things are objective. Taken as objects, they contradict each other. To conceive them means therefore to convert their objectivity into subjectivity, and that again means to convert every concept into its own opposite. This is the fundamental insight which enabled Hegel in the fall of 1801 to begin working out the details of his Logic.

The thinking self acts in positing itself. However, since (in the case of "logical knowledge") the self is the subject as much as the object of its acts, it cannot posit itself (as object) without "negating" itself (as subject). To be its own object (and this means to be a subject) is to be its own contrast. To posit itself is to oppose itself to itself, and again to cancel this opposition, or to return from self-objectification to itself, as the subject. Fichte, in his *Wissenschaftslehre*, had made a good start. But he had still conceived of the living activity of the self in terms of propositions. The acts of self-positing and self-negating seem to fall apart in his system, as if they were two different acts. The living self is caught in the net of logic. The problem is to make logic so fluid and alive that the living self can think itself in it.

Hegel's Logic undertakes to solve this problem. It is a logic of life, the logic he had been seeking ever since he had recognized life as the medium in which opposites both arise and dissolve. (a) It is a logic of spirit. The spirit is operative in its method. The intellect separates and objectifies, but spirit reunites and resubjectifies. The intellect, however, is not a second power, opposed to spirit. It is itself a phase or moment of spirit, for it is spirit which divides itself and unifies itself. (b) The new Logic is also a logic of reason, for reason differs from the intellect or the understanding in being speculative. (c) And it is a logic of intuition, for intuition underlies the self as thinking and the self as thought; it is the power that unifies both. But, unlike the intuition of Schelling or Jacobi or Coleridge, this intuition is not merely opposed to understanding; it is also at one with it in the living movement of logic. (d) This logic, finally, is a logic not only of knowledge, of thought, of the living self, but also of Being, Existence, and Reality. The movement of thought can no longer be opposed to its objects, since these objects themselves move in it.

The objects of the logic are concepts. But these concepts are not what a psychological logic might mean by concepts, merely subjective ideas. They are form and content at the same time. They express the nature of things, and that nature is thought in them. The very meaning of the term "nature" points to the identity of thing and concept, of content and form within the concept. The "nature" of a thing is something thought, but it also is something operative in the thing. It is, in other words, what Plato meant by Idea and what Aristotle meant by Eidos or Essence. Hegel renews, on the level of Kant and with his reflective insight, the ontology and metaphysics of Aristotle.

All this is achieved in the first draft of the Logic. It is not surprising that the language of this Logic is difficult and that much penetrating study is required to comprehend Hegel's forceful phrases. This Logic is the outcome of hard and continuous labor of all the inner struggles which the early writings and especially the essay on Fichte and Schelling reveal. It is the fulfilment of what the young Hegel had been groping for in his pantheism of love and his interpretation of the Eucharist. Although Hegel still separates logic and metaphysics in the traditional way, it is a speculative and metaphysical logic.

This new Logic is of necessity as dialectical as the movement of thinking itself. "Dialectic" originally meant "conversation" or "dialogue," and Hegel's dialectic, like Plato's, might be called "the dialogue of mind with itself." Logic, like thinking, moves from opposites to opposites, posing, opposing, composing the contents of thought, transforming them into ever new concepts or categories. But it is by no means the mere application of a monotonous trick that could be learned and repeated. It is not the mere imposition of an ever recurring pattern. It may appear so in the mind of some historians who catalogue the living trend of thought; but in reality it is an ever changing, ever growing development. Hegel is nowhere pedantic in pressing concepts into a ready-made mold. The theme of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, like the motif of a musical composition, has many modulations and modifications. It is never "applied"; it is itself only a poor and not even helpful abstraction of what is really going on in Hegel's logic.

The first draft of the Logic shows all the main peculiarities of his mature work. But in detail it is yet undeveloped. Many parts of the so-called "greater" Logic are not yet present. The whole structure is simpler and is therefore in some respects only the more illuminating. The principal difference between the first draft and the later system is the distinction between logic and metaphysics. What Hegel calls metaphysics in the draft of 1801 coincides to a certain extent with some chapters of his later Logic, but in part it contains discussions about subjects from the old rationalistic systems, about the Soul, the World, and the Supreme Being. Other chapters are akin to the principles of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* and deal with the theoretical Ego, the practical Ego, and the absolute Ego (which is called absolute Spirit, or Mind—a departure from Fichte). It goes without saying that even the traditional themes are treated in an untraditional fashion.

LOGOS AND MIND

The duality of logic and metaphysics points to a limitation in Hegel's thinking. While in his mature system the tripartition of logic, philosophy of nature, and philosophy of mind (or spirit) is carried through, and the logic is completely united and identified with metaphysics, this tripartition is not yet achieved in 1801. Perhaps this is why Hegel did not finish his manuscript. The philosophy of nature is fragmentary, and the philosophy of mind does not exist at all.

The term "mind" or "spirit" is much richer and deeper than the term "Ego" or "Consciousness." The difference between them marks the difference between Hegel and Fichte, between infinite subjectivity and finite subjectivity, between a system pre-eminently theological and a system pre-eminently ethical. In his concept of Geist Hegel found the inseparable connection between mind and spirit, between the human and the divine. This is the greatest of all his discoveries. The early writings, especially *The Spirit of Christianity*, tell the story of this discovery. Hegel is the founder of the philosophy of mind. In the system of 1801 the concept of mind is the crowning result of the logical development. If we disregard what we know about Hegel's religious experiences from his early theological studies, we may describe the position now reached as the result of a mere amalgamation. His idea of mind unites Fichte's Absolute Ego with Schelling's Absolute as the Identity of objectivity and subjectivity, of Ego and Nature.

The origin of this new metaphysics of mind is recognizable in the draft of 1801. By blending the principles of Fichte and Schelling, Hegel was able to transform Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* into his metaphysical logic, that is to say, into a logic which concerns not only the categories and principles of human knowledge but the forms and categories of Being itself. By this fusion, logic becomes metaphysical—metaphysical because ontological as well as epistemological (and ethical). Hegel's failure to discard the separation of logic and metaphysics completely may show that he did not yet realize the full implications of the synthesis.

The opposition of Knowledge and Being, or Thought and Reality, lies at the bottom of the opposition of subjectivity and objectivity. The latter terms were derived from Kant's and Fichte's epistemological and ethical approach to philosophy; the former has been the traditional terms of metaphysics since the days of Eleatic speculation. It is the glory of Hegel's philosophy that he resumed the ancient tradition without relapsing into its errors and illusions: he reconciled the old truth with the new, Greek methods with the idealism of Kant and Fichte.

The fusion of Fichte and Schelling, on the one hand, of German and Greek thought, on the other, is not completed in the draft. This is what makes its study so illuminating. Glancing into the laboratory where Hegel's ideas are developing, one sees that the first system is like the early stage of an embryological process. The future organs and joints are about to be formed; the future structure of the organism is visible but as through a film. Certain elements in the embryological evolution of an organism, reminiscent of earlier stages in the genealogy of the species, vanish in the course of development. Similarly, traces of Fichte and Schelling, still noticeable in the earlier draft, disappear later through assimilation into the mature system.

ABSOLUTE MIND

The logic of 1801 culminates in a chapter on the Absolute Mind. In it the theoretical Ego and the practical Ego are unified, or rather unify themselves, for it is the Absolute Mind which from the outset is acting through them: they are nothing but abstract and dependent "organs" of the mind, or, as Hegel prefers to say, they are "moments" in the dialectical movement. Mind is the unknown factor of Kant's theory of knowledge; it is the "thing-in-itself," which is no thing at all, but the living ground of all existence. "This idea of the Thing-in-Itself realizes itself in metaphysics in that there knowing becomes its own content."²⁸ "The theoretical Ego finds itself as the Supreme Being. . . . It finds its own opposite therefore as itself or in itself." It closes the "circle of reflection," "it is mind, i.e., it is reasonable."²⁹

At the conclusion of his chapter on the Absolute Mind, Hegel introduces an important distinction. He contrasts the Absolute Mind in its reality and the Idea of the Absolute Mind; in other words, he declares that the logic even in its metaphysical part is not yet the completion of thought and speculation, that the fundamental opposition is not yet entirely overcome, that the final reconciliation cannot be brought about altogether by logic and metaphysics. "The mind as it is made manifest so far is only Idea."³⁰ To actualize itself, to work out the basic identity of Idea

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-79.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

and reality, mind has to wander through the sphere of Nature as its great opponent, its own "nothing"; it has to find its own essence in its opposite (philosophy of nature), and it has to return to itself, to the Idea, to Logic (philosophy of mind). Logic and metaphysics unfold absolute mind only in the form of its ideality and in its categories, not yet in its concrete historical reality.

In the system of 1801 Hegel does not describe this transition from logic to the philosophy of nature in the well-known fashion of the "great logic,"³¹ i.e., as an act by which the Absolute Idea "resolves to dismiss itself deliberately out of itself." Here he designates this intricate transition as a "falling-off." It seems as if the biblical idea of the Fall of Man was preponderant in his thought, as it was in Origen and, some years after Hegel had written his draft, also in Schelling.³² Hegel points eventually to the consummation of the movement of the mind. The mind must return from its apostasy as "victor over itself." "This totality of the return exists in itself and does not pass over into another. . . . There is no longer any transition into a beyond."³³

FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

The number of papers Hegel found time to write during his early years at Jena is astounding. In 1801—besides the essay on Fichte and Schelling, the dissertation on the orbits of the planets, and the fragmentary draft of his first philosophic system—he also wrote, or at least began, an essay on the relation between faith and knowledge;³⁴ in 1802 he wrote an essay on natural law.³⁵ These were both published in the *Critical Journal of Philosophy*, the first in 1802, the second in 1802/3. Since Hegel did not lecture on the philosophy of mind before the winter of 1803/4, the two essays represent his earliest exposition of this part of his philosophy.

The essay on "Faith and Knowledge" deals with the basic metaphysical problems in so far as they concern the relation between religion and philosophy. Ever since his adolescence, Hegel had been involved in a struggle between faith and knowledge. The ultimate decisions in philosophy, he thought, depend upon the answer to the question of how far the truths of faith can be grasped with the intellect. At first a student of theology planning to become a minister of the church, he had instead become a lecturer in metaphysics at a university. The issue was as much a problem of his own life, as it was one of philosophy. No wonder that the tenor of his essay has a somewhat personal note. Although Hegel never writes personally about "his" philosophy—as Schelling did when he called one of his books *The Presentation of My System of Philosophy*—the reader is made to feel how intimately the author is concerned.

"The contrast between faith and reason is in our time a contrast within philosophy itself."³⁶ Is any knowledge of things-in-themselves possible? This question is not confined to epistemology. If it is possible to know things as they are in themselves, then we must know

³¹ "Great logic" refers to Hegel's *Science of Logic* (1813-16) as distinguished from the "small logic," which forms the first part of the *Encyclopedia*.

³² See my *Von Kant bis Hegel*, 11, 228.

³³ *Jenenser Logik*, p. 186.

³⁴ *Glauben und Wissen* ("Faith and Knowledge")

³⁵ *Über die wissenschaftlichen Behandlungsarten des Naturrechts* ("On the Scientific Methods of Studying Natural Law").

³⁶ Hegel's *Werke*, I, 3.

them as God knows them. Because Kant saw the connection between the theory of knowledge and the knowledge of God, he denied all knowledge of things as they are in themselves. This philosophic decision, Hegel says, and the method of reflective subjectivity which it entailed, are fruits on the tree of Protestantism. The reformers made an end to the confident rationalism of the Scholastics. They cut the bond of amity between knowledge and faith, between human intellect and divine revelation, between the temporal and the eternal. By denying philosophy the power of penetrating into the essence of things, Kant and his disciples gave their blessing to this separation.

But there is also a peril in the Protestant principle. By cutting the link between the two spheres, it runs the risk of denying the possibility of reforming the world and shaping things temporal. It may sublimate and spiritualize faith to such a degree as to make it ineffective in our daily life. The task of binding together the two spheres remains. If religion does not fulfil this task, reason will do it. The movement called "Enlightenment" had the merit of substituting for the medieval synthesis of opposites a rational, humanistic, secular unity by insisting that happiness is the goal of both reason and life. But Enlightenment failed because it interpreted happiness in secular terms only. "When happiness is conceived of as Idea, it ceases to be something empirical and accidental. . . . Every philosophy is nothing but the supreme felicity construed as Idea."³⁷

"The beautiful subjectivity of Protestantism is transformed by Enlightenment into an empirical subjectivity, and the poetry of its grief. . . . into the prose of a satisfaction with this finite world."³⁸ This basic defect is not completely remedied by either Kant or Fichte. On the contrary, although recognizing the shallowness of Enlightenment, they have not succeeded in rising above it. Their philosophy is engaged in investigating man instead of God. "Man and mankind are their absolute principles, namely, a fixed and insurmountable finitude of reason, rather than a reflected splendor of eternal beauty."³⁹

In a fragment probably written about the same time as his essay on "Faith and Knowledge" but never published by Hegel, he speaks even more frankly about the part philosophy has to play in administering the inheritance of Protestantism and Enlightenment. Philosophy, he says, has to establish "a new religion in which the infinite grief and the whole gravity of its discord is acknowledged, but is at the same time serenely and purely dissolved. . . . To embrace the whole energy of the suffering and discord that has controlled the world and all forms of its culture for some thousand years, and also to rise above it—this can be done by philosophy alone."⁴⁰

The doubts and hesitation which characterized the fragment of 1800 are now completely superseded by an exalted confidence in the power of speculation. Philosophy is no longer assigned a place below religion; on the contrary, it is destined to replace religion, completing the development initiated by the Reformation. Philosophy is called upon to do what faith alone can never achieve: the absolute reconciliation of absolute opposites. Speculation

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴⁰ Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben*, p. 141.

must comprehend "the absolute suffering." Only thus can "the supreme totality rise in all its seriousness and out of its deepest ground . . . into the joyous freedom of its true form."⁴¹ (In speaking of "infinite grief" and "absolute suffering," Hegel has in mind the Crucifixion, the supreme example of contradiction and opposition.)

Whether Hegel was prompted to take this extreme position by his own religious and philosophic impulses, whether he was encouraged by the example of Schelling, whether he was stimulated by the fact that he now had the literary world as his audience, or whether his genius carried him away after so many careful self-restrictions, we shall never know. But we do know that this was a determining period in his life. It settled once and for all the relation between faith and speculation in Hegel's mind.

NATURAL LAW

The essay on "Natural Law" is among Hegel's most interesting writings. The title is misleading, because the real subject concerns the central issue of the philosophy of mind—the relation between reason and history, or the historicity of rational ideas, especially of those which dominate moral and civil life. Here, as much as in the realm of religion, Hegel had been at home since his youth. The relations between legality and morality, between history and rationality, had long occupied Hegel's attention—a fact made clear by his theological and political writings. But the emphasis upon the idea of natural law is new.

The science of jurisprudence, Hegel states, has been treated in a double way, empirically and rationally, or historically and systematically. Kant and Fichte had shown that all positive legislation is ruled by universal principles and that their validity is neither established by empirical science nor rooted in changing historical situations. These principles are a priori and are based upon reason itself. This thesis, Hegel insists, true though it is, needs to be supplemented. The share of reason in positive law is limited; it is indispensable as a formal constituent, but it does not guarantee the legitimacy of a positive law. And all laws are positive. A law, be it juridical or moral, is always both historical and rational.

Empiricism has therefore a certain truth, but empirical theories in their usual form are not equal to the task at hand. They are not truly empirical but rather rational in an uncritical fashion. They lack unity and system, on the one hand, and genuine historical foundations, on the other. They represent a muddled fusion between extremes. Ideas like the right of the strongest, the state of nature, the social impulse, or the social contract are as rationalistic as a priori principles are, but they are arbitrary and unsystematic. This confusion betrays a dim awareness of an original unity underlying the duality of empirical and rational elements. But this is not enough. Such awareness has to be replaced by dialectical philosophic knowledge, for dialectic alone can cope with the unity in diversity and the diversity in unity.

The formalism of Kant and Fichte is therefore as little satisfactory as the empiricism of the English thinkers. "Empiricism presents the detailed content confusedly and in connection with other details which in their essential reality form a whole that is organic and alive; and this whole is killed by dissection and by empiricism's elevation of unessential and isolated

⁴¹ Hegel's *Werke*, I, 157.

abstractions to the rank of ultimacy."⁴² Moral formalism offers no remedy, because it, too, dissects life without resuscitating it by a living dialectic. "The ideal does not come to terms with reality . . . the real remains absolutely opposed."⁴³ The truth is that historical and rational nature are in substance one. Therefore Kant's principle, in spite of its sublimity, cannot be ultimate. "It is out of the question to deny the position of Kant; but it has to be maintained that this position is not absolute . . . and that, since morality is something absolute, that position cannot be the position of "morality."⁴⁴ What Hegel wrote in his essay on The Spirit of Christianity reappears here in a more mature form. The same arguments against the formalism of Kant are repeated in a more philosophic and radical fashion.

Hegel also renews the old ideas of folk religion which in his youth competed with the universality of moral principles and the Christian religion. The ideal of an intimate bond between moral reason and the life of a nation continues. In the third chapter of the essay on "Natural Law," where Hegel develops the true method of the unification of empiricism and rationalism, he writes: "The absolute moral totality is nothing else than a people."⁴⁵ The Hellenic Ideal once more comes to the fore. Throughout his life Hegel paid homage to the ethical loftiness of the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, the drama in which Athene, representing at the same time the nation and the idea of law and right, resolves the tragic conflict and reconciles the moral opposites. "Moral totalities, such as peoples are, constitute themselves as individuals. . . . This individuality is the side of reality, without this . . . they are only *entia rationis* (*Gedankendinge*)."⁴⁶

The primal unity of reality and ideality, of nature and morality, manifests itself as the totality of a people. In it are rooted morality and legality. They do not spring from a separately existing reason or from separately existing desires or interests, but are manifestations of the totality of life and ultimately of the Absolute Mind in which everything has its source. The distinctions of Kant and Fichte, though they lack ultimate truth, have a relative existence and validity. "Cleavage is one of the factors of life."⁴⁷ The difference between morality and legality (between the subjective and the objective element within the objective spirit, as the *Encyclopedia* and the *Philosophy of Right* formulate this difference) is strongly emphasized in all writings of Hegel.

In the essay on "Natural Law" Hegel calls the sphere of Right "relative morality." Life, torn asunder, is differentiated, or rather it differentiates itself. It is as much absolute as relative, as much universal as particular. This is the fundamental insight. Only because Life is divided against itself, can it integrate itself. Morality and Legality are ways of this self-integration, but they are themselves separated from each other and must therefore integrate themselves. They do not yet represent the ultimate stage of moral reality. This reality exists as the totality of a people, as its will and its self-organization in the state. But even the state is not yet the fulfilment of the self-development of the mind. It is the result of the dialectical movement of morality. This movement transcends the sphere of the objective mind and enters the ultimate

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 342.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 345-46.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 348-49.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

⁴⁶ *Loc. cit.*

⁴⁷ Hegel's *Werke*, I, 174.

sphere of absolute mind. The essay of 1802, however, does not yet shed full light on these divisions of Hegel's later philosophy.

The influence of Schelling's philosophy of nature is evident in Hegel's discussion, here and also in the manuscripts of the following years. "As in the nature of the polyp the totality of life is as much present as in the nature of the nightingale and the lion, so the mind of the world enjoys in every figure its more or less developed self-feeling and in every people, in every totality of morals and laws its own essence and itself."⁴⁸

Peoples are the manifestations of the Absolute Mind; but they themselves, as mere manifestations, are not absolute but relative. This difference is reflected in the difference of classes. Obviously influenced by Greek traditions, Hegel distinguishes two main classes: the free man or the "individual of absolute morality," and the masses, who represent the "bodily and mortal soul of a people and its empirical consciousness."⁴⁹ The upper class embodies "the absolute living mind," "the absolute indifference of the ideality and the reality of morality." It stands for the Absolute within the relative reality of historical peoples. While the individuals of the lower class are related to those of the upper class "by fear, confidence, and obedience," the perfect unification of the two classes is reserved to religion, where all serve one God in common.

The connection between these ideas and those in the essay on "Faith and Knowledge" and in the draft of 1801 is not quite clear, perhaps not even in Hegel's own mind. This may be one reason why the first statement of his philosophy remained fragmentary. During the following years Hegel developed his system in new drafts, probably along the lines of the lectures he was giving simultaneously at the university. His modifications affect not the Logic but the so-called "*Realphilosophie*" which comprises both the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of mind. His lectures of that period also dealt with ideas to be developed in *The Phenomenology of Mind*.

V. ROMANTICISM MADE RATIONAL

In 1806, when Hegel left Jena after Napoleon's victory over the Prussians, his personal relations with the Romantics ended. Thenceforward his attitude toward life was determined by the gravity of the events which followed the defeat of Prussia, and his thinking reflected the transition from the revolutionary to the reactionary era in the political history of Europe.

The Phenomenology of Mind marks the end of the Jena period. This is without doubt one of the strangest books ever written, and the unprepared reader will find it thoroughly confusing. In his *History of Modern Philosophy* Wilhelm Windelband says that the generation able to understand the *Phenomenology* has died out. While this was certainly true, much has been done during the past few decades to regain an understanding of Hegel and make his language intelligible. Even so, many obscure passages remain open to various interpretations.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 415; see also my *Von Kant bis Hegel*, 11, 218-54.

⁴⁹ Hegel's *Werke*, I, 391.

The work claims to be rational, but it shows every evidence of having been written under inspiration. In fact, it unites extremes seldom or never before united. It is vehemently anti-Romantic, yet it is undoubtedly the most Romantic of all Hegel's writings. Passages resembling the oracular words of Hamann, "the magician of the north," are at variance with the intentions of a thinker who declares that "cold necessity in the subject matter," not "ecstasy," is guiding the progress of his thought; and who rejects those who seek edification instead of insight, intuition instead of knowledge. Methodical and sometimes tedious pedantry contrasts strikingly with a highly metaphorical style. Moreover, the very idea of this new science is somewhat Romantic, as the following account will show.

The ideas in Hegel's earlier writings reappear in, or between, the lines of this work. Hardly any new speculations are added to those we have already traced in the development of his thought. But many ideas are now clarified, others are intensified and enlarged. The book contains the main traits of Hegel's system—ordered and presented according to a particular plan, and infinitely more comprehensive than anything he had written before. All philosophic problems are discussed, all philosophic sciences are gathered together as in a pantheon of ideas. Arguments and conclusions are drawn up before our eyes in endless array. The *Phenomenology* may be called a modern *itinerarium mentis ad Deum*, "the journey of the mind to God." The knowledge of God, or the Absolute, is the final goal of this voyage.

Whatever Hegel may say, it is doubtful whether reason alone is the pilot steering him through the sea of meditation. Reason, to Hegel, was not the reverse of intuition, but an inspired understanding, a unique combination of revelation and speculation. This pilot's skill seems neither teachable nor imitable.

The reader often feels completely lost. Clouds of contradiction and dialectic obscure the course, and he does not know which way to go. He may well guess that a passage refers to certain facts of history or of literature, but to what facts he is at a loss to discover. At times long, dry discussions are suddenly interrupted by stormy outbreaks which defy understanding. At times everything is clear, and the reader enjoys the splendor of truth shedding light on human perplexities; but again the sky clouds over, and everything is lost in the darkness of obscurity.

Hegel himself called the *Phenomenology* his "voyage of discovery"—and this it may be, in its details. But in principles and method Hegel is no longer the seeker. He is now a seer, surveying the spirit of nations and cultures, of creeds and doctrines. But though he aims at universal and all-comprehensive knowledge, he concentrates at will on particular periods and particular opinions. Whatever is the same throughout all the vicissitudes of history, and whatever is never the same but changes continually, grows, and transforms itself from century to century in ever new configurations—all is collected and united in one prodigious panorama.

The *Phenomenology* is the epic of the human mind, the adventurous story of human errors and human illusions. It is also the life of eternal and divine truth. Hegel seems to be familiar with all the recesses of the human conscience as well as with the ultimate perspectives of all sciences. He watches the ever changing spectacle of human tragedy and human comedy. The very soul seems to lie open to the penetrating glance of this speculative magician, high priest of the Absolute. "Truth," we read, "is the bacchanalian revel, where not a soul is sober;

and because every member no sooner gets detached than it *eo ipso* collapses straightway, the revel is just as much a state of transparent unbroken calm."⁵⁰

In the Preface to the *Phenomenology* Hegel explains the purpose of his work. First of all, it is intended as an introduction to his philosophy, preparing the way for the metaphysics he had found it so difficult to teach at Jena. Everyone has the right, we read in the Preface, to demand that philosophy can be understood; after all, philosophy is a science, not an oracle. It consists of concepts, not of "apocalyptic utterances." "Intelligibility is the form in which science is offered to everyone, and is the open road to it made plain for all. To reach rational knowledge by our intelligence is the just demand of the mind which comes to science."⁵¹ Although the *Phenomenology* is supposed to clarify Hegel's Philosophy, no book is less suited to a beginner. No book demands greater power of concentration and abstraction, more learning and philosophic training, deeper wisdom or richer spiritual experience.

SPECULATION AND HISTORY

Another purpose of the book is the reconciliation of the individual and mankind. Within the short span of his own life an individual must learn the whole long journey of mankind. This is possible only because the universal mind is operative in every individual mind and is the very substance of it. "What in former days occupied the energies of a man of mature mental ability, sinks to the level of information . . . in this educational progress we can see the history of the world's civilization delineated in faint outline."⁵² Therefore, it must be possible to conceive the development of the mind as a series of steps taken in order to reach its goal.

The *Phenomenology* tries to understand the necessity governing the sequence of these steps. History as an empirical science only narrates what happened and how the events are connected according to the principle of causality and does not disclose the inner coherence of those events determined by the ultimate purpose of the mind. The study of this coherence, while presupposing an empirical knowledge of facts, is not causal but teleological and therefore speculative.

Later, in the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel determines the locus of history as the transition from the objective mind, incarnate in the state, to the absolute mind, embodied in art, religion, and philosophy. In his lectures on the philosophy of history he surveys the whole course of universal history. The task undertaken in the *Phenomenology* is a different one. Here Hegel uses historic figures and events to illustrate the principal steps in the mind of attaining knowledge of itself. Not the past, but the present, is his concern.

The "present," however, is an ambiguous term, denoting what is only now and what is ever now. There is an evanescent present and an eternal present; and the peculiar achievement of Hegel's book is their union. The *Phenomenology* finds the eternal within the present. By reconciling the extremes of time and eternity, it lets existence and essence coincide and thus

⁵⁰ J. B. Baillie's translation (2d ed., London, 1931), p. 105.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 74, 76-77

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

gives fresh speculative meaning to the idea of existence. Not Kierkegaard, but his great master, Hegel, was the inaugurator of existential philosophy.

It is the emphatically expressed thesis of this work that only the existential thinker can think the truth. Therefore, Hegel undertook the immense task of showing the inner unity of past and present. There is really present only so much of the past as was eternal in the past and therefore capable of going on living. "The goal, which is Absolute Knowledge of Spirit knowing itself as Spirit, finds its pathway in the recollection of spiritual forms as they are in themselves and as they accomplish the organization of their spiritual kingdom. Their conservation, looked at from the side of their free phenomenal existence in the sphere of contingency is History; looked at from the side of their conceptually comprehended organization, it is the Science of phenomenal knowledge."⁵³

The "pathway" of Absolute Knowledge is also the pathway of the "natural consciousness" which is the object of the Phenomenology. This consciousness moves toward the goal of Absolute Knowledge where it is at one with the Absolute Mind. It has to move on, because in the beginning—on the most primitive level of mere sensation—it is separated from the Absolute Mind and therefore selfalienated and divided against itself. This separation is the spur that impels it to labor until the inner breach is healed and the unity between natural and spiritual consciousness is achieved. As long as consciousness has not yet reached this goal, it is "unhappy."

"The pathway of the soul which is traversing the series of its own forms of embodiment . . . has a negative significance . . . ; for on this road it loses its own truth (namely, the truth of the natural consciousness). Because of that, the road can be looked on as the path of doubt, or more properly a highway of despair."⁵⁴ The *Phenomenology of Mind*, pursuing this pathway of despair, leads to the point of salvation. It is the story of inner struggles which finally reach the stage of Christian experience and dogma. It is through speculative salvation that the tragic discord of the soul is removed. Accordingly, the book is called the "Science of the Experience of Consciousness,"⁵⁵ "a science of the experience through which consciousness passes."⁵⁶ Its significance is not primarily historical but rather philosophic and religious. Hegel is concerned not with events but with their meaning and their contribution to the solution of the problem called "Man."

The *Phenomenology* is the autobiography of man as the image of God. Man is God's image because of the divine purpose operative in him. Just as biblical history serves purposes other than historiographical information, so its speculative counterpart has a religious (i.e., spiritual and redemptive) aim. The *Phenomenology* issues in a profound reinterpretation of the Christian dogma.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 808.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 135. (My italics.)

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

PROLETARIAN PATTERN

Man's consciousness, though split into that of the world and that of himself, is essentially one. Man has oneness as well as duality. Unable rationally to conceive of the oneness of world and man, he nevertheless feels it—darkly and unconsciously. The *Phenomenology* develops this feeling into knowledge.

Consciousness becomes aware of itself and thus transforms itself into self-consciousness. "With self-consciousness . . . we have now passed into the native land of truth, into that kingdom where it is at home."⁵⁷ Self-consciousness passes through many stages of experience. It begins as the consciousness of impulse, instinct, and desire, and it culminates in the awareness of the "I" as related to a "thou." For it "attains its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness."⁵⁸ Consciousness is satisfied with nothing short of the knowledge that the self is at one first with every other self and ultimately with the absolute Self.

Self-consciousness exists only by virtue of existing for another self-consciousness. It is only by being acknowledged or "recognized."⁵⁹ Recognition of, and respect for, another individual is the condition of an individual's moral existence, and it is also the first step toward the removal of the duality or plurality of persons. Accord, however, is preceded by the antagonism between man and man—a life-and-death struggle. Its outcome is not, as Hobbes would have it, a covenant but the subjugation of the weaker party by the stronger opponent.

In primitive society one man is the master and others are his serfs. This master-serf relation corresponds to the natural self-consciousness in which desire and impulse prevail. The overlord, using his bondsman to satisfy his desires, achieves more than the quenching of his thirst or the staying of his hunger. He gains ascendancy over the other man. The satisfaction derived from spiritual power over another self is the first step toward salvation.

"The master exists only for himself . . . his is . . . the essential action . . . while the bondsman's is . . . an unessential activity."⁶⁰ But this is not the whole truth. The satisfaction of the overlord depends on the labor of his serf and on the serf's will. He loses his absolute independence, while the bondsman, in his turn, attains a certain ascendancy over his master. The inequality diminishes. It transforms itself by logical necessity into interdependence and, consequently, into a mutual recognition and respect. Not only the lord, but also the bondsman, rises to a spiritual position. Both pass beyond the merely natural self-consciousness. The self-consciousness of the subordinate is not condemned to total disintegration. "In serving and toiling, the bondsman actually . . . cancels in every moment his dependence on, and attachment to, natural existence, and by his work removes this existence away."⁶¹

"Albeit the fear of the lord is the beginning of wisdom, consciousness is not therein aware of being self-existence. Through work and labor, however, this consciousness of the

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

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bondsman comes to itself."⁶² The bondsman appears in his own eyes as an independent person, conscious of his moral freedom and dignity. This is achieved because another fear looms behind the fear of the lord—the fear of death. Death is the "absolute master" of man. Man surrenders to the other man only on account of his fear of death. Self-respect can defeat this fear.

"In fashioning the thing, self-existence comes to be felt explicitly as its own proper being, and it attains the consciousness that itself exists in its own right and on its own account. . . . Thus precisely in labor where there seemed to be merely some outsider's mind and ideas involved, the bondsman becomes aware, through his rediscovery of himself by himself, of having and being a 'mind of his own.'⁶³

Perhaps young Marx, reading this, found the germ of his future program. In any case, foreshadowed in these words is the pattern for a labor movement which was to make the proletarian conscious of his existence and to grant him the knowledge of having a "mind of his own."

THE UNHAPPY CONSCIOUSNESS

In the historico-metaphysical procession of the *Phenomenology*, a prominent place is given to the Crusades and medieval Christendom as typifying one stage in the progress of consciousness to self-knowledge. Consciousness is divided against itself. The pathway of the soul is a martyr's way. Man, unredeemed and unreconciled to the eternal mind, is desperate. Tragedy is a metaphysical category, not just a dramatic way of representing life. Mind is by nature tragic because it is opposed to itself and, being its own opposite, is also its own opponent. There is a perpetual fight of mind against mind, within the self as well as between self and self, and even between the human and the divine spirit.

Hegel calls this contrast, as it appears in the medieval consciousness, the antagonism between the Unchangeable and the Changeable. The Unchangeable, in Hegel's language, is indistinguishable from "the Unchangeable One." Changeable man yearns for God the Unchangeable. Although he feels God in his heart, he knows him as his opposite. Thinking is here "no more than the passing clang of ringing bells, or a cloud of warm incense, a kind of thinking in terms of music. . . . Hence we have there the inward movement of pure emotion . . . of an infinite yearning."⁶⁴ But the Absolute Being (in this connection Hegel also calls it the "Other") "cannot be found where it is sought; for it is meant to be just 'beyond.' . . . Consciousness, therefore, can come only upon the grave of its own life. . . . But the presence even of that tomb is merely the source of trouble, toil, and struggle, a fight which must be lost."⁶⁵

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

The crusaders sought the Divine and discovered a tomb. To disclose itself to consciousness, the Immutable must "nullify the certification of its own being."⁶⁶ As the bondsman must be enslaved to the lord in order to gain his moral freedom and dignity, so the medieval Christian has to submit to the Supreme Will in order to gain his religious freedom. However, this deliverance is not the immediate fruit of asceticism.

The cleavage between natural and spiritual consciousness cannot be healed by ascetic exercises. The ascetic is more conscious of his animal nature than natural man because he is constantly engaged in suppressing it. "We have here before us a personality confined within its narrow self and petty activity, brooding over itself, as unfortunate as it is pitifully destitute."⁶⁷

The mortification of the flesh does not achieve the harmony longed for. The chasm perseveres. But through ascetic practices a new level of spiritual life is finally reached. Man has learned to sacrifice his vital self. He "disclaims all power of independent self-existence, and ascribes this power to a gift from above."⁶⁸ Thus he "puts off his unhappy condition." The reconciliation between God and man is initiated, though not yet accomplished. The right balance is still missing. Man's "own concrete action remains something miserable and insignificant, his enjoyment pain, and the sublation of these, positively considered, remains a mere 'beyond.'"⁶⁹

REASON AND REVELATION

Hegel divides religions into three groups: natural, aesthetic, and revealed religions. These three kinds of religion correspond to three kinds of worship. Natural religion reveres God in natural objects. Aesthetic religion makes man, transfigured by poetic imagination, the object of worship. Revealed religion rises to the level of the Absolute Spirit. In the idea of Christ revelation attains its summit. This idea conjoins absolute and individual spirit, the eternal and the temporal, the divine and the human. "That the Supreme Being is seen, heard, etc., as an existent self-consciousness—this is in very truth, the culmination and consummation of its concept."⁷⁰

Natural and Greek religion raise the consciousness (of the world) and the self-consciousness (of man) to the level of the absolute spirit, but revealed religion alone reveals this spirit in its full truth.

Even while Hegel's philhellenism was at its height, his speculation was imbued with the "spirit of Christianity." His chief thesis, that the Absolute is Life, was the expression of his Christian creed, the speculative form of the belief in the Living God and the Living Christ. Life meant to him the spiritual activity of mind and thought rather than a biological process.

God is Life. Christ is Life. Creation and Providence, Revelation and Redemption, are acts of the Living God and the Living Christ. This view is the very foundation of Hegel's system. From

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 266-67.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 760.

the early days of his spiritual awakening Hegel was convinced that speculation at best can reach the truth of revealed religion but never transcend it. Philosophy and religion, he protests over and over again, are twins; though different in form, they have the same content. The form of religion is "presentational"; the form of philosophy, conceptual. The language of revelation is pictorial; that of speculation, rational. But Hegel's own language is often pictorial, especially in the *Phenomenology*, and the distinction between the two forms almost vanishes in dogma and theology, where the language of religion transforms itself into that of reason.

Speculative interpretation of dogma emphasizes the kinship of philosophy and religion. Divine Life, like life generally, implies self-alienation and self-reconciliation. Only he who loses himself can save himself—this saying might be regarded as the motto of Hegel's speculation. Only he who dies can rise. Only he who defies death can enjoy victory over death. Being must pass into Nothing in order to become Existence and Reality. Being and Not-Being, Life and Death, are inseparably bound together. They are what they are only as elements of a comprehensive unity.

Thought also is Life. It has its own death within itself: the element of abstract understanding that analyzes, separates, distinguishes, and thereby kills its object. This death is a necessary stage in the process of thinking. There is no rational insight without analytic understanding. It is the emphasis laid upon abstract understanding which separates Hegel from the Romantics, the poet philosophers, the visionary thinkers, and those who—like Jacobi, Fries, and others—would have intuition or belief supersede the intellect.

"The life of spirit is not one that shuns death, and keeps clear of destruction; it endures its death and in death maintains its being. It only wins to its truth when it finds itself in utter desolation. It is this mighty power, not by being a positive which turns away from the negative, as when we say of anything it is nothing or it is false, and, being then done with it, pass off to something else; on the contrary, spirit is this power only by looking the negative in the face, and dwelling with it. This dwelling beside it is the magic power that converts the negative into being."⁷¹ These solemn words in the Preface of Hegel's work convey the most personal, and at the same time the most impersonal, profession of faith. In a half-pictorial and half-conceptual form they point to the link which holds reason and revelation together. Dialectic passes through contradictions as through its death, but it does not terminate in them. It converts them into being. It establishes the kingdom of its truth on the grave of the intellect. "A contradiction in the realm of the dead is not one in the realm of life."⁷²

Hegel's philosophy is in itself a speculative religion—Christianity spelt by dialectic. Whether or not this speculative Christianity has an objective truth is a question not to be answered here. But I should like to call attention to the grave danger involved in the dialectical reconciliation of reason and revelation.

David Friedrich Strauss, Ludwig Feuerbach, and then like them—Hegelians and also champions of anti-Christian materialism—show the nature and gravity of this danger. Already Hegel, although he states emphatically that revealed religion is a source of speculative

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁷² See below, p. 261.

knowledge, subordinates revelation to reason. According to him, the language of dialectic is the absolutely adequate form of the Absolute, while the language of religion is still veiled and indirect. "Absolute Knowledge," (i.e., philosophy, not revealed religion) is the concluding chapter of *The Phenomenology of Mind*. Philosophy no longer points beyond itself to religion, as in the fragment of 1800; it now comes full orbit within its own sphere—in self-consciousness. This predominance of speculative thought conjures up the imminent danger of a misapprehension of the Word of God. Divine inspiration seems no longer necessary when reason can provide what, in the biblical view, can be taught only by the prophet and the Son of God. The element of thought within faith seems to assume precedence over the element of devotion, of fear and hope and love.

At the end of the *Phenomenology* the word of man seems to prevail over the Word of God; the transformation of revelation into reason seems to imply the transference of the center of gravity from God to man. To be sure, this danger only looms behind the facade of Hegel's system. Hegel himself did not succumb to it. He would have solemnly protested against this conclusion. But the fact that soon after his death some of his disciples drew this conclusion may serve as a warning. There is only one step from the sublime to the trivial. The history of the German mind in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries throws into relief the greatness of the danger. It was not only the banal and the shallow; at the end it was the brutal and the base that triumphed over the sublime. In his essay on "Natural Law" Hegel says that the man of excessive genius was a symptom of the inner disintegration and a portent of the approaching fall of Greek civilization.⁷³ The same might be said about the great German thinkers, the greatest of whom was perhaps the author of *The Phenomenology of Mind*.

VI. THE FINAL SYSTEM

When Hegel left Jena in 1806, he had finished his apprenticeship. He was no longer searching for truth—he had found it, and for the rest of his life he was perfecting his system and applying his distinctive method to all departments of philosophical inquiry. His years at the Gymnasium in Nuremberg, at the University of Heidelberg, and finally at the University of Berlin were to mark his rise to a dominant position in German philosophy.

Before Hegel joined Schelling at Jena, he wrote his friend that he wished he could live for a while in a Catholic town where he might become intimately acquainted with the usages, rites, and life of a Catholic population. His wish came true. From Jena he went to Bamberg, the lovely little town in South Bavaria where half-a-dozen churches and an archiepiscopal palace remind visitors of the ancient Catholic tradition. But his life there was not as he had dreamed it. He was living in religious surroundings and under political circumstances which were opposed to his own convictions. And as editor of the local newspaper, he had to sympathize with the victorious Napoleon.

After a year he was appointed head of the humanistic Gymnasium at Nuremberg, where he was more at home than he had been at Bamberg. Nuremberg was an old Protestant citadel

⁷³ Hegel's *Werke*, I, 389.

which Dürer and other Renaissance masters had adorned with the documents of their genius, and whence in 1415 the founder of the Hohenzollern dynasty had gone to the Mark of Brandenburg, given him as a feudal tenure by the emperor Sigismund. In this historic town Hegel lived for eight years, from 1808 to 1816, in relative quiet and contemplative seclusion, working out the intricacies of his system—especially his Logic.

His school was devoted to classical studies, but no longer in the old tradition of the German Gymnasium as primarily a Latin institution. Under Hegel's regime the curriculum was changed; in addition to the ancient languages, it included mathematics, the elements of the natural sciences, a modern language besides German, and philosophical rudiments. In a school address⁷⁴ defending these changes, Hegel spoke about the value of classical studies, which permit the student to become familiar with both the life of an alien civilization and its peculiar forms of thought as expressed in its language. The dual emphasis is indicative of Hegel's own interest. His mind was preoccupied with self-alienation as a metaphysical principle while working, at the same time, on an analysis of forms of thought.

THE SCIENCE OF LOGIC

The Nuremberg years were devoted to the writing of *The Science of Logic*, the first volume of which appeared in 1812. This so-called "greater logic" is a gigantic work. It combines the results of all ontological and epistemological investigations of the history of philosophy. The abyss of the old venerated riddles of metaphysics opens before the reader. A new solution is offered—the solution first elaborated in the draft of 1801. Greek speculation as well as the principles of modern metaphysics from Descartes and Spinoza to Fichte and Schelling are arranged as necessary steps within the self-movement of the Concept of the Absolute. The Logic is the resurrection and the eternal life of the basic motifs of European thought; it is their transfiguration and reinterpretation within the frame of Hegel's own metaphysical system.

The guiding idea of the draft of 1801 is preserved: the idea of Thought as Life and of Life as Thought. The method is a dialectical movement in which all contrasts emerge and submerge, all categories appear and disappear, all opposite principles arise and subside in a continuous stream that holds them together. Thought is ever changing, but also ever growing, never losing any of its conclusions. All former principles assume the function of elements, or, as Hegel likes to call them, "moments" within the higher principles into which they develop by their own inherent unrest. This unrest is as much the vitality of thought as the logical necessity of the Concept. The highest category is the Absolute Idea which we met in the draft as the idea of the Absolute Mind.

The Logic preserves the insights of Plato and Aristotle, cast in a congenial form and reconciled with the discoveries of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling. The innermost structure of both being and thinking is disclosed. Ultimate difficulties are not avoided; on the contrary they are used as guiding motives of the movement which goes on precisely because no solution is definitive until the very last step is taken and the goal of the whole movement is reached.

⁷⁴ See below, pp. 328-29.

But grand as this logical instrument of thought undoubtedly is, the whole undertaking makes the reader uneasy as to its claims and authority. It is certainly a hazardous undertaking. This Pantheon of all principles might be a graveyard where every breath of life is expired, where the great ideas of former centuries are buried, and death alone remains. But such a stricture, which involves a disbelief—or at least a distrust—in the Logic and its underlying idea, should not prevent us from studying it thoroughly.

The achievement of the Logic as compared with the draft of 1801 lies chiefly in a more complete fusion of logic and metaphysics. Since the Absolute is intrinsically Thought, the doctrine of thinking must be the doctrine of being. Hegel does not demonstrate this truth. It is the very substance of every word he writes.

The categories are so many definitions of the Absolute. They are also the backbone of all reality—be it natural or historical, physical or spiritual, rational or empirical. Because they constitute these opposites, they are what they are: categories. The Absolute divides itself into them and thinks itself in terms of them. Thinking always means distinguishing and then reuniting the distinguished terms, self-alienation and self-reconciliation. This process is the primordial logical phenomenon. It is also the inner metaphysical nature of the Absolute, the core of mind and spirit.

The categories are derived from the Absolute; they are concatenated one with another in the Absolute; the Absolute links them together and, in doing so, unfolds and exhibits its own content. The human mind is permitted to observe this gigantic spectacle because its own inner citadel is occupied by the Absolute which is the very mind of mind. The difference between the divine and the human mind is rooted in the self-differentiation of the Absolute. The self-definition of the Absolute is therefore also the self-definition of the human mind, at least in so far as reason is concerned. The system of the categories is thus the system of reason itself. Reason is the common root of the divine as well as of the human.

Being and knowledge are inseparable—two aspects of the same totality. But as aspects they are distinguishable and not simply exchangeable. Being is the most primitive category, the general presupposition of all logical judgments and of all knowledge. Knowledge, the richest category, comes last in the ascending scale of manifestations. Being is all-inclusive content, knowledge all-inclusive form. Being is the opposite of thought, as the content is the opposite of form. But the opposites are united in the Absolute and by the Absolute.

Being is therefore its own contrary (as every category is). It is its own contrary because it is a category—that is, an element of thought, a concept, and consequently not what we mean by Being. It is all-embracing, but it is itself embraced by thought. It is impossible to separate one aspect or one side. Being comprises all the differences of content and form, of quality and quantity, of finiteness and infinity, of number and quantum, of measure and the immeasurable, and so on. But it is also being in contradistinction to these particular determinations of Being. It is more general or universal than they are (this is a new paradox, since being is more concrete than any particular category). This basic logical antinomy is only a modification of the one discovered by Hegel in *The Spirit of Christianity*, elaborated in the fragmentary system of 1800, and appearing as the basic logical antagonism in the draft of 1801.

Being is Being, but it is also a concept, and it is as a concept that it figures in the Logic. On the other hand, the Logic, just because it is a logic of Being, is not only a logic but also an ontology and a metaphysic. And the concept, *Begriff*, is therefore not only a concept but Being, Life, Reality itself. As a category, Being is the beginning of all thought. But the beginning, taken by itself, is an untenable position. One cannot take one's stand in the beginning; one has to move on, and the category of Being is therefore untenable. It can be preserved only by being transformed. In so far as Being is all-inclusive, its contrast is absolute Nothing. Being passes into this, its contrary. It can be preserved, or it can preserve itself, only by self-alienation. Being is Being only by virtue of opposing itself to its own counterpart: Nothing. There is neither Being nor Life without this antagonism, this self-negation, this death.

Being can exist only by being more than the mere category of being or by embracing its own contrary—nothing. In a certain sense it is commonplace to say that the opposites are identical, for to be opposed to something is to be of the same kind or type. White and black, day and night, high and low, are contraries only because they are the same—colors, periods of the movement of the earth around the sun, determinations of space. But being and nothing are not the same type or kind. They are absolutely opposed to each other and absolutely united. It would be a mere formalism to insist that being and nothing are the same—in the one case affirmed, in the other denied. But there is this truth in formalism: Nothing is indeed impossible without Being righting itself. Being is the fundamental category.

The system of logic has three parts: the logic of being, the logic of essence, and the logic of the concept. The concept is the synthesis of being and essence. In German the word for "essence" has shades of meaning not found in English. *Wesen* means not only "essence" but also "being" (as in "a human being") and "nature" (as in "the nature of things"). All these connotations are operative in the dialectical movement of Part II. The third part, the logic of the concept, contains chapters on subjects which are usually treated in the traditional formal logic, like the notion, the proposition, the inference, and so on. Here the contradictions take their most acute and distinct form. They pass through a series of antagonisms—such as objectivity and subjectivity, necessity and freedom, theory and practice—and are finally resolved and united in the Absolute Idea.

THE "ENCYCLOPEDIA"

The only work in which Hegel ever set down his whole system of philosophy was *The Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. He intended this as a textbook for his students at the University of Heidelberg, where he became a professor in 1816, but it is written in a language scarcely intelligible to anyone not already familiar with his terminology and dialectical method. In 477 short paragraphs he attempts to relate the story of the Absolute.

The Absolute is Spirit. Spirit has to become what it is, has to make itself by its own activity and energy. Spirit is not mere Reason or Logos. It is reason, estranged from itself as Nature and returning from this self-estrangement to itself. Reason is harmonious system in itself in so far as it is comprised in the Logic; the Logic is thus the first part of the system. The Absolute Idea may be described in terms of Christian dogma as God before the Creation; and Hegel

himself says so in the Introduction to the "greater logic." But there is a momentous difference between Hegel's philosophy and Christian dogma: according to Hegel, God before the Creation is not the heavenly Father of Jesus and of man; he is Logos and nothing but Logos.

In this respect Hegel followed in the footsteps of the early Christian Fathers and Greek theologians, who fused the Platonic realm of Ideas and the idea of the eternal Son, Logos. But while those theologians conceive of Logos as the Son, Hegel conceives of him as the only God. From the prologue of the Gospel according to John, Hegel accepts only the words "In the beginning was the Word" and "The Word was God"; he disregards the clause "and the Word was with God." Or, to put it differently, in Hegel's theology God is Logos and Logos is God. There is no other God or no other person in God—at any rate, not "in the beginning." God is Logos, unfolding into the kingdom of Platonic Ideas, eternal 'forms' or "patterns" by which all things are made and without whom nothing is made: the "categories" in which the Absolute Idea defines itself or thinks itself.

The transition from the Logic to the Philosophy of Nature reveals the mystery of Creation in speculative terms. Hegel, as I mentioned before, did not maintain the theory, expressed in the draft of 1801, that Creation and Fall coincided. He turned, rather, to the more orthodox conception of Creation as the deliberate and free act of the will of God. It is hard to understand how the dialectic can admit this act, or how it can be comprehended as the will of the Logos; but we should not forget that Hegel also accepted the words of the Gospel: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

God is a dynamic Being; he is at once Thought and Will, Concept and Life, Reason and Spirit. But his nature is not yet explicitly revealed "in the beginning"; it is, in fact, not manifest until the whole systematic self-movement is consummated. To speak again in terms of Christian dogma: God in the beginning is Logos; at the end he is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is Logos in so far as he exists before the creation of nature and man; he is the Holy Trinity after he has passed through nature and man and reveals himself to man. God in the fullness of his existence is present only in the religious and metaphysical consciousness. But this consciousness arises only after Logos returns from self-estrangement in the realm of Nature to itself within the soul and mind of man.

God appears in absolute religion as the loving Father, as the self-sacrificing Son, and as the Holy Spirit. Therefore the third part of the *Encyclopedia*, the philosophy of mind, consummates the whole self-manifestation of Logos. At the end, Logos conceives of itself, or rather Himself, as the Infinite Spirit that is the real subject of philosophy and theology. Swinging full-circle, the *Encyclopedia* returns to its beginning. Its cyclical structure makes the solution of the ultimate problem possible: it confirms the underlying unity and sameness of the all-embracing Being which is also Life, Existence, Nature, Soul, Mind, and God.

These are the outlines of the book. The third edition, published in 1827, when Hegel was in Berlin, was enlarged to 577 paragraphs and it is from this edition that the English translations of the first and third parts were made. The Preface and Introduction to this edition are valuable contributions to the study of the system, and the student should read them carefully before he dares to venture further. Hegel discusses the general position of his system, its relation to other systems, and its principles and method.

The various parts of the *Encyclopedia* are of unequal value. The first part, the "smaller logic," is an epitome of the great *Science of Logic*, improving the larger work in some ways and complementing it in others. The second part, the philosophy of nature, is the only version of this science ever published by the author. The philosophy of mind, the third and final part, comprises what we today would call psychology in all its branches, the theory of knowledge, philosophy of law, moral philosophy, politics, sociology, philosophy of history, aesthetics, philosophy of religion, and the philosophy and history of philosophy.

In the collected works, the *Encyclopedia* is supplied with additional remarks which help to explain many passages and doctrines. Hegel's lectures, published after his death, further expand various sections of the *Encyclopedia* into elaborate treatises, but they must be read with some reservation, since they were edited by Hegel's friends and disciples and do not always give his actual words. Of these lectures, those on the "Philosophy of Art" are remarkable for their comprehensiveness; they reflect the ideas developed by the criticism and theory of art, especially in classical German humanism from Winckelmann to Goethe, Schiller, and the Romantics. The lectures on the "History of Philosophy" represent perhaps the finest treatment of this difficult subject ever made. For Hegel, the procession of figures and schools of philosophy is no longer a record of unrelated facts but the logical development of truth in the medium of time.

THE "PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT"

The *Philosophy of Right* was published in 1821 in Berlin, where Hegel had been appointed professor of philosophy in 1818. Like the *Science of Logic*, it is a special treatment of a part of the *Encyclopedia*—the philosophy of the objective mind. Hegel divides the sphere of the mind into three sections. Mind is first subjective—the mind of the individual, which is not yet real mind, since the real mind is not only individual but universal. The merely individual mind is an abstraction, a "moment" in the totality, that moment which is most akin to man as a natural being. The development of this moment leads from the merely natural "soul" to the consciousness and self-consciousness which approaches the stage on which the universality of man, and thus the objectivity of mind, is reached. This whole movement reminds one of the *Phenomenology*, though the scope here is much smaller, the problem different, and the significance much slighter. Strangely enough, Hegel called one particular chapter of this philosophy of the subjective mind "phenomenology," as if the work with this title could be made a part of this part of the third part of the *Encyclopedia*.

The *Philosophy of Right*, dealing with objective mind, reaches the point where the third stage, Absolute Mind, concludes the dialectical movement by uniting the subjective, or individual, and the objective, or universal, mind; where soul and will are united and the mind realizes itself in full concreteness, as the spirit of art, religion, and philosophy. The *Philosophy of Right* derives its name from the idea that Right is the commanding concept of the objectivity and universality of mind; that not the individual but his right is the proper subject of this sphere. The objective mind is the right will, and this will is the will that wills the right. The right is therefore the center of all discussions. But the range of the book comprises not only what may be called the philosophy of law but also the system of moral, social, and political philosophy, the

relation between natural law and juridical legislation, and finally the problems of the philosophy of history. All these subjects are treated in the manner of the *Encyclopedia*, i.e., in short paragraphs concisely phrased.

Of all of Hegel's writings, this book is the one most vehemently debated. Some of the heat of the debate rises from the philosophic interest of the work; but much feeling is aroused by the political opinions it expresses. Hegel has been bitterly criticized for his reactionary views, which were allegedly dictated by his position as official teacher of Prussian politics. In particular, Rudolf Haym, the author of a brilliant book on Hegel,⁷⁵ has made this accusation. According to some critics, Hegel's conception of the state was primarily responsible for all the evil deeds of the Prussian kings and their governments, and the brutality and insane cruelty of the Nazis was the logical outcome of the opinions first advocated in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*.

May it suffice to say that the philosophic contents of the work do not substantiate these reproaches and strictures. It is true that Hegel was no longer the revolutionary he had been in his Tübingen years. Enthusiasm for the French Revolution had grown cold. The *Phenomenology* had already characterized in frank and graphic terms the terror into which this great political experiment finally degenerated and had tried to save the values it destroyed. But Hegel never became a Prussian reactionary. He was much too loyal a son of his native Swabia to be converted into an ardent Prussian. He was—and this is the most important point—much too great a metaphysician to become a narrow-minded provincial, even when the province was the kingdom of the Hohenzollern.

Hegel's political philosophy never ceased to be liberal. He never disavowed the ideals of his youth. The ethical system propounded in the *Philosophy of Right* glorifies the idea of moral freedom. Because he is morally free, man is more than a natural being, more than an animal endowed with intellect and self-consciousness. In this respect Hegel remained throughout his life a faithful disciple of Kant. The right will is the morally good will, and the good will is the will that determines itself, while nature and all merely natural phenomena are determined by the necessity which regulates their course. The state as Hegel defines it is the system in which concrete freedom is established and protected. History is the progress of the consciousness of freedom, its growth and eventual victory.

Hegel was admittedly a defender of the sovereignty of the state. His belief in civil liberty was limited by his belief in the superior prerogative of the nation at large. He therefore defines the state as the perfect totality of the nation, organized by laws and civil courts; and the ethical ideal was a community in which the individual is in full agreement with the universal will of the state. In this form the Romantic transfiguration of the Greek ideal has been preserved and maintained in his classical period. It is true that Hegel believed in the historical process as divinely ordained and that this belief deeply influenced his political views. History is shaped by Providence, and Providence is Reason and can therefore be understood by the speculative dialectic of the philosopher. From this conviction a certain quietism resulted, satisfaction with actual conditions, and submissiveness to the universal will—not of the state but of the world. A deeply religious attitude tinges all political and historical aspects of Hegel's philosophy. Not

⁷⁵ *Hegel und seine Zeit* (Berlin, 1857) .

party politics nor class prejudice, but metaphysical fervor determines his views. It cannot be denied that in this acquiescent attitude a danger is involved. What we call "historicism"—exaggerated belief in the absolute determination of the historical process against which the will of man is powerless—is certainly a symptom of weariness and pessimism. Though Hegel was not a historicist in this sense, he opened the door to this unbalanced philosophy.

A presentiment of cultural weariness and decay seems to have haunted Hegel at the height of his maturity, as it haunted Goethe and other contemporaries. In the Preface of the *Philosophy of Right*, a famous passage hints at the coming doom of European civilization: "When philosophy paints its gray in gray, then has a shape of life grown old. By philosophy's gray in gray it cannot be rejuvenated but only understood. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk." This is a melancholy consideration, after a life devoted to the discovery of truth and to the advocacy of freedom and right. We may lament this resignation. But the author of these words may well have had a foreboding of what was in store for Germany and the whole Continent.

Hegel's own speculative vigor had abated when he wrote this passage. In the history of thought, however, the author of *The Spirit of Christianity* and of *The Phenomenology of Mind* will live. No one can read these works without being instructed and enriched. Even if his metaphysics should be abandoned, the memory of his tremendous spiritual struggles and his shining victories will endure. Every epoch will learn from him.