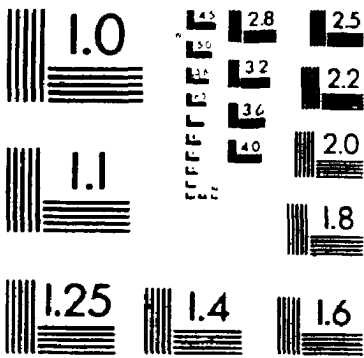


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Outline of The Principles of Political Science: An  
Introduction to Hegel's Science of Wisdom

by

Stephen Anderson, B.A.

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of

(Master of Arts)

Department of Political Science

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

April 21, 1987

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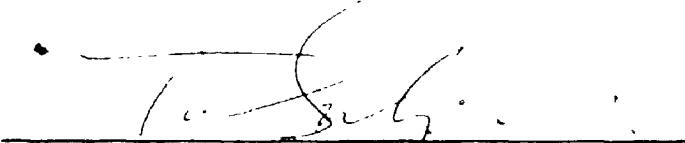
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ISBN 0-315-39433-1

The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
and Research acceptance of the thesis  
"OUTLINE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE:  
AN INTRODUCTION TO HEGEL'S SCIENCE OF WISDOM"  
submitted by Stephen Anderson, Hons. B.A.  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts

  
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April 28, 1987

## Thesis Abstract

The paper begins with an analysis of the logical and phenomenological grounds of Hegel's twin claim to be standing at the end of history and to have achieved absolute knowing. The logical demonstration proceeds through an analysis of Hegel's concept of infinity and its relation to determinate being; the phenomenological, through an attempt to disengage the structural components (time and space, Spirit and nature) of Hegel's science of finite experience. The systemic principles or principles of rational systems as such that emerge are then used to develop a theory of the state and of technology. In the former case, the emphasis is placed upon Hegel's concept of a diffuse or de-centered political sovereignty and on the internally cycling differentiation of the state's constitution. In the latter the idea of a post-historical technology is evoked through reflections on mutual recognition and the reciprocity of means and ends.

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## Preface

Despite the recent efforts of a number of schools and individuals to establish new directions and new points of departure for philosophic and political discourse, all roads, more than ever, lead to Hegel. He dominates our intellectual horizon in a way that is unparalleled, even by the divine status accorded to Plato at certain points in our history. The reason for this gradually becomes more and more clear. In Hegel's system we have both the realization of absolute or complete discursive knowledge and the establishment of a criterion of circularity by which the philosopher can know that this knowledge is complete. But this wondrous alchemy has less to do with Hegel's genius, which, of course, is considerable, than with the equally incredible fact that he wrote from the vantage of the end of history. As Hegel repeatedly tells us, the long sought rational certification of absolute or complete speech is nothing other and nothing less than the whole of history which, in conceptual and representational forms, is nothing other and nothing more than the entirety of the system.

It is not the intention of this thesis to examine the various challenges to Hegel's thought that have arisen since his death. I am convinced that such challenges are intelligible only as fragments of the system and as such, the burden of demonstrating anterior claims to intelligibility must rest with them. What we intend, rather, is a study of



the system itself, a concerted attempt to work through its several circularities and to set forth, as systematic conceptual/historical results, the principles of absolute speaking knowing. To this end we have divided our discussion into four chapters, or better, into four cycles each of which is simultaneously the whole system, a part of the system and a reflection of each of the other cycles in a differential mode. For heuristic purposes, these cycles have been presented in the order that they appear in the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences (i.e., from the point of view of the Idea), but strictly speaking none has ultimate priority over any other -- they are related as mutually specifying elements of a single ordered whole. The first of these is the logical cycle in which we establish certain broad systemic and conceptual themes which will guide the discussions of the following chapters. Here we seek to analyze Hegel's concept of "infinity," its relation to finitude and the ground of their reciprocating emergence in the notion of self-conscious reflection. The second cycle is the phenomenological -- the temporal and experiential foundation of the system of logic. Here our concern will be to describe the components of a science of experience which would permit the ultimate disclosure of self-consciousness and an end of history. In the third chapter we take up the political cycle which, in its aspect of collective conflict in history, forms the substantive

"constitutional" embodiment and empowering of Spirit's phenomenology in time. Here our attention will focus specifically on Hegel's internal differentiation of the principle of the state, on his concept of a de-centered or diffuse political sovereignty and on the types of collective relation which produce ethical life. The final cycle -- a cycle which does not find a distinct place in the system as Hegel prepared it a century and a half ago -- is the technological. This cycle, unlike the others, must be accounted something of an experiment -- and yet, at the same time, it could hardly be more certain. Assuming that technology has now become a phenomenon worthy of philosophic investigation (that, indeed, it is increasingly the only political fact worth investigating), what is proposed is that it be established on a speculative basis -- that we articulate the science of technology that is a reflection of the science of wisdom. Accordingly, after a brief attempt at situating the technical problematic in the work of a number of recent authors, this cycle focuses on the instrumental dialectic of master and slave (the phenomeno-logic of means and ends) to explore the nature of our historical or abstract uses of techne. This will prepare the way for the idea of a post-historical technology internally organized around the recursive strategies of the Hegelian Concept.

Chapter One

Hegel's Logic: System and the Apotheosis of Finitude

## Introduction

The argument of this first chapter is both the inspiration and justification of everything that must follow. What it purports to be, in general terms, is a logically coherent description of the One, or Whole, or absolute first reasoned into existence by the ancients. Its precise strategy depends upon making the absolute speak discursively and completely of itself by radically illuminating its conceptual and systemic depth. For the boldness of this "undertaking," I am entirely indebted to Hegel whose singular insight into the nature of human rationality has brought the classical philosophical endeavour to a definitive (if unexpected) close. To bring a problem to a resolution, however, one must deal with and incorporate all previous efforts at its solution -- make them part of the ultimate solution. Hence, though Hegel's explicit references to the history of philosophy have been mostly deleted in this accounting, a careful reading will, nevertheless, spot the various "aporiai" of traditional thought as they arise and recognize the nature of the tactic by which they are surmounted.

As mentioned in the preface, we are concerned in this first chapter with the logical cycle or with the system in its absolute or conceptual form. Nevertheless, since there are more than a thousand pages of logical teaching in Hegel, we must take recourse to a cycle within the cycle or to a basic theme on which the rest of logic can develop and vary at leisure. For our purposes, this inner cycle can focus

quite admirably on the category of "infinity" and on the dialectic of the finite and infinite as developed in the first book of the Logic.<sup>1</sup> Here our account of the whole can proceed in a relatively simple and abstract manner, only gradually to be complicated by the categories of explicit depth and recursion developed in the Logic's later doctrines.

The chapter as a whole, then, will proceed through three stages: first, a brief note on the finite and infinite forms of thought, or more precisely, on the forms of thinking which take the finite and infinite as their respective objects. This will be followed by the substantive core of the chapter; a more lengthy account of the finite and its relation to the infinite as presented in the first book of the Logic -- the "Doctrine of Being." Finally, in briefer fashion again, we shall take up our theme as it is further developed in the subsequent sections of the Logic; namely, the relation of finite and infinite considered first as essential and then as explicated in its full truth under the form of the Concept.

#### A). The Finite and Infinite Forms of Thought

In the "zusätze" to section 28 of the Logic, Hegel identifies a thinking which is finite with the abstracting power of the understanding. This understanding, as we subsequently learn in section 79, is, in fact, a necessary moment or stage of infinite thought; but taken on its own account it is thinking which "sticks to fixity of characters and their distinctness from one another; [treating] every

such limited abstract as having a subsistence and being of its own."<sup>2</sup> Brought to the fullest exercise by the philosophers and deists of the Enlightenment period, understanding operates by investing the concrete subject-matter of immediate perception and sense "with the form of universality."<sup>3</sup> This is an abstracting process or, as Hegel puts it in another context, a process of reflection, by which a concrete immediate is removed from the total context or manifold of relations which renders it determinate. The abstract universal arrived at in this way is then only casually related to the particulars; it subsumes them as cases collected under a common head. A similar situation applies to the relations that obtain between abstract universals, thought determinations or the objects of pure reason. Again the understanding maintains them within strict bounds "cut off from their necessary connection" and solidarity.<sup>4</sup> The objects of pure reason of which Kant spoke, for instance, though supposedly infinite in nature, are characterized by understanding in an entirely external, attributive and propositional fashion--God is infinite and eternal and omnipotent etc.; He is also, therefore, not finite and not temporal etc.. Such "objective thoughts"<sup>5</sup> are not permitted to arrive at their own "concrete" characterization through their own inner necessity and movement, and so their thought determinations are not permitted to take their place as ordered moments in an organized whole. The object before the

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understanding, therefore, whatever its origin, ever stands forth as discrete, limited by another and undeveloping; every term is only positive, every situation patently either/or, the "thing" itself in immediate and simple self-equivalence excluding and indifferent to everything else. But, as we shall come to see, such a finite thinking, seeking only the clarity and precision of distinct entities can never rise above what, for the speculative reason, is the externally conditioned object, nor get beyond what we should call the "false infinite" which is either merely abstract (as in theological dualism) or a tedious and endless repetition of finitudes (as in materialism and mechanism).

As the understanding first appears in the history of philosophy, it has as yet no sense of the "contradiction in thought or of the hostility of thought against itself."<sup>6</sup>

As in the case of the Eleatics, the negative is made out an utter nullity and so can offer no challenge to the positivity of their notions. But even when forced beyond naive "metaphysical dogmatism" to consider the "dialectical principle," understanding clings to its canon of simple identity. Shown that every determinate entity and thought necessarily evokes an other which is opposed to it and into which it must pass as constituting its limit and determination, understanding either treats the entire demonstration as a joke or sophistical trick, or if genuinely moved by the

spirit of truth, is forced to embrace an absolute skepticism about the power of thought to achieve any enduring and invariable knowledge. Here the understanding sees contradiction and the result that ensues from it as a complete negation, as issuing in nothing at all.<sup>7</sup> True to its principle, the negative is maintained in strict isolation from the positive, an immeasurable distance thought to lie between assertion and refutation.

Infinite thought, or as it is more commonly called, the "speculative" or "positive reason," is the thinking which directly apprehends the unity of positive and negative, of assertion and refutation which the understanding previously abandoned as irreconcilable. Infinite or speculative thought realizes that "the result of Dialectic [or contradiction] is [in fact], positive, because it has a definite content; its result is not empty and abstract nothing, but the negation of certain specific propositions which are contained in the result."<sup>8</sup> Negation is always, for the speculative sense, a "determinate negation" by which we grasp our original finitude no longer in its oneness and particularity, but as suspended, taken up and completed in its other. Hence, the negation of the understanding's pure or abstract negative reveals a concrete (or synthetic) affirmative which, to the extent that it now contains its other, is limitless, no longer externally conditioned, and so infinite. For the speculative sense, the positive is, so to speak "at home" in



the negative; for, taken from the viewpoint of their mutual sublation the one is simply the re-presentation of the other, though in a form of difference not always immediately recognized and even in union never completely effaced.<sup>9</sup> About the speculative infinite and the thought form which corresponds to it we shall have more to say anon. We move now, however, to a discussion of the finite--infinite dialectic as it first emerges in the doctrine of Being.

B) The Finite and Infinite as Presented in the Doctrine of Being

Our starting point proper in this section will be the notion of Dasein, or "determinate being." Nevertheless, about the triad of concepts (Being, Nothing, Becoming) which precede Dasein and from which determinacy as such takes its rise, a few important points should be made. As Hegel puts it in section 89 of the Encyclopaedia: "In becoming, Being [i.e., wholly abstract, indeterminate Being], as one with Nothingness, and Nothingness as one with Being, are only disappearing [terms]; in virtue of its contradiction within itself, Becoming collapses into the unity in which both are sublated; hence its result is Being-there [or determinate]..."<sup>10</sup> About this transition not a few commentators have been puzzled and in order to discover even what it means for Hegel we are required to look up the corresponding passages in the Science of Logic. There he explicitly introduces the concepts of a "coming-to-be" (origin) and a "ceasing-to-be"

(demise) as constituting the two opposing moments of becoming.<sup>11</sup> Ceasing-to-be represents the necessary logical movement of pure, abstract Being into Nothingness; coming-to-be the reverse and parallel movement of Nothing back into Being. Together they constitute that unresolved and unrelenting oscillation between Being and Nothing with which the Logic begins. But while both movements are the same becoming "and although they differ so in direction, they [nevertheless] interpenetrate and paralyse each other." In their opposing motion, "unstable unrest settles into a stable result;" an equilibrium point is established in which coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be are united.<sup>12</sup> Their unity is, of course, self-contradictory and so must destroy and sublimate Being and Nothing as such. The result, however, is still being, but a being now no longer thought "as a determination on its own, but as a determination of the whole;" a being which is the one-sided immediacy of becoming and so determinate.<sup>13</sup> It would seem to be in the nature of things, then, that we can have no idea, no representation, no word of Being which is not already negatively implicated both in a becoming and in a being, determinate.<sup>14</sup> This is the point we must keep clear in mind as we come to discuss the categories of Dasein; that, in itself or implicitly, it already includes a prior negativity or contradiction; and so it should not surprise us when, in the further course of the Logic, it emerges again in

various forms.

Hegel writes in section 90 of the Logic that:

Determinate Being is Being with a character or mode--which simply is; and such unmediated character is Quality. And as reflected into itself [or as in simple unity with] this its character or mode, Determinate Being is a somewhat, as existence.<sup>15</sup>

As Hegel suggests in the zusatze to this section, "Quality is completely a category only of the finite," or more precisely of what has being alone. What a somewhat is, or that it is at all is so in virtue solely of its qualitative determination. Accordingly, quality has application only to what resides in immediate self-identity; it permits of no explicit mediation of being with itself, no differentiation of quality and somewhat, for so mediated it would cease to be finite. To infinite objects like Spirit or even life, the category of quality is inappropriate. These do mediate or negate their determinate characters, lose their self-identity and so immediately cease to be, but this is only their rebirth as essential or even developmental being. A man's character, to use Hegel's example, can not be treated as his mode of being per se, because character as outward or existent quality is only the "appearance" of the soul; hence we must move beyond mere being to the categories of "essence;" and again, the character, as the soul's "existence" or "actuality," develops itself, articulates the content or moments of the soul, and so must move even further from immediacy toward the "Concept" itself.

In the next step of the argument Hegel tells us that "Quality, as determinateness which is, as contrasted with the Negation which is involved in it, but distinguished from it, is Reality."<sup>16</sup> Here, we see the initial simplicity of finite qualitative being beginning to break down; "Becoming expressly put in the form of one of its elements, Viz. Being," must now face its other. The Reality of anything is its being there and then, but from the point of view of finite thinking this "reality" is wholly positive; it is what "is assumed to survive when all negation has been thought away."<sup>17</sup> But to think away all negation is to think away all determinateness and so to undermine the whatness of reality itself. As such reality must contain the negative though at first "wrapped up" in itself; and it must contain this negative, furthermore, not as pure, "abstract nothing, but posited here... as affirmatively present."<sup>18</sup> As a coming-to-be or mediation of the "positive," the negative is equally a form of qualified being, but now as Otherness. Since Reality has Otherness in it, then, "quality is both Being-for-another-- an expanse (Breite) of being-there, of something;"<sup>19</sup> and, as "contrasted with this reference to somewhat else, Being-by or in -self."<sup>20</sup> In the category of being-for-another, then, we have the notion of a something which is over against an "ambient background"<sup>21</sup> from which its own determination is lacking, and so are prepared for the introduction of the concept of "limit."

As Hegel writes in section 92 of the Logic:

In Being-there the determinacy is one with Being and, at the same time, posited as negation; this determinacy is limit (Grenze), restriction (Schranke). Thus Being-otherwise is not something-indifferent (ein Gleichgültiges) outside it, but its own moment.<sup>22</sup>

The qualitative determination which secures reality against purely abstract Being, and which, by the same token, is the negativity which excludes something-other from something determinate, is its limit. But the limit or boundary in virtue of which something is, is not to be taken here in the sense of an obvious and abrupt cutoff point located at the margin of a being. This would be the idea of a quantitative limit, external or indifferent to quality as such. Limit in this context, like quality itself, must permeate the entirety of a being's existence. Taken in this signification, however, limit always presents a double aspect to the extent that it is an interface or "point" of mediation shared by a somewhat and its other.<sup>23</sup> Logically we cannot rest with the notion of determinate or limited quality. For to be conceptually determinate can only mean that something, far from being everything, excludes something else. This other something likewise, however, must exclude (the original) something. Each something, then, can only define its limit (or quality) in terms not of itself, but of the other. Each is forced to pass beyond itself into what it is not, into negativity or not-being in order to declare what it is.<sup>24</sup> And in this way we discover the logical grounds for the unavoidable

alterability and finitude of Dasein.

About this transition from qualitative limit to qualitative alteration or change even sympathetic commentators have been critical.<sup>25</sup> Their complaint is that to be determinate implies no more than "qualitative contrast" and so negation only in a weak or passive sense. A something as contrasted with an other, or one quality as contrasted with any other, while it can not be such and such a quality without that other, nevertheless does not itself contain the possibility of change or alteration simply by reason of the contrast.<sup>26</sup> For it to do so demands the further supposition, unwarranted by the argument itself, that qualitative contrast also implies "interactive influence" or "causal pressure,"<sup>27</sup> such that something is what it is "only by asserting itself against the denying otherness of the environment."<sup>28</sup> This would imply, of course, that a something could fail in its bid to maintain itself and so alter its quality by submitting and passing over into the other. About this problem Findlay simply concludes that Hegel has lost his way through the influence of theosophists like Jakob Boehme who see qualities as somehow "alive." Taylor, however, pushes the argument farther trying to show that it vitiates the entirety of the subsequent development of the Logic<sup>29</sup> and that the error is in fact a function of Hegel's introducing key notions from his metaphysics where they are not logically warranted.

To my own mind, Hegel's argument concerning the alteration of the finite and Findlay-Taylor's criticism of it both appear cogent, intelligible and correct. They can not, therefore, be talking about the same thing. It seems plain that Findlay and Taylor have unfairly shifted the ground of the argument and have thereby avoided grappling with Hegel head on. What Findlay implicitly and Taylor explicitly are referring to in the idea of qualitative contrast is the operation of perception with respect to instantiated determinacies like colours. Red, therefore, remains red despite its contrast to blue; the movement of perception from the one to the other leaving each in its initial undisturbed positivity. What Hegel is talking about, however, is the logical movement of concepts in thought. And at this level it would seem to be the case that contrast amounts to negation and transition. In the thought of the something we must immediately move to the notion of its other, for, as we have seen, the something, to have limit, must posit an other which it excludes. To be at all, then, it must refer itself to what it is not, to its own not-being, and so issue, in its attempt to define itself, in negative self-relation and contradiction.<sup>30</sup> "Finitude arises in [precisely] those determinations which entail non-being as their being."<sup>31</sup> Qualitative alteration is the consequent conflict and opposition of these two; the passage in thought of Ansichsein with its consequent "annihilation" into Sein-für-Anderes. The

criticism that such alteration or determinate becoming can not take place without the further supposition of causal pressures is shown, then, to be unfounded. Hegel's argument no doubt can be seen to contain the germs of a theory of change through causal interaction, but such an idea is not integral to the argument at this point and is properly left until it can be effectively developed as a category of "essence."

From the idea of the finite as that which must of its very nature pass beyond its limit, Hegel, in section 93, proceeds to an alteration or surpassing of bounds which is endless in its repetition. Something, he writes, "becomes an other, and so on ad infinitum."<sup>32</sup> This, for Hegel, is the formula of the "bad or negative" infinite; the infinite as a progress in which every negation of a finite something (or crossing of bounds) results merely in the reassertion of another finitude (another set of bounds). As the infinite of the abstract understanding, this formula translates into an absolute which is the simple aggregate of all possible existents or the mere succession of all possible events in time.<sup>33</sup> And as Hegel notes, far from feeling the tedium of such an advance, an advance which of itself can never be complete and final, the understanding really takes it to be something quite grand.<sup>34</sup> The problem here, as always with the understanding, is that negation is taken abstractly; it is isolated in its result from its original or opposed



determination. Hence, where the negation of the finite should have produced the non or not finite, we have only an equally finite other from which to begin the process again. As Hegel sums it up in section 94 of the Logic, the infinite, as endless progression, "never gets further than the statement of the contradiction involved in the finite, viz. that it is somewhat as well as somewhat else."<sup>35</sup> To anticipate ourselves only a little, there is as yet no sublation of the contradiction, no "essential" negation by which the finite can be raised out of itself and into the infinite.

Before we may proceed to the-infinite in its true form, however, there is a variation upon the "bad infinite," a kind of intermediate stage beyond mere progression, yet still not truly speculative in orientation, which should be mentioned briefly. This is the "abstract infinite" of metaphysical dualism and Theism. At work here is the positing of "an insuperable opposition between finite [the here and now] and the infinite [the transcendental beyond], which fails to note...that the infinite is thereby only one of two, and is reduced to a particular, to which the finite forms the other particular."<sup>36</sup> The finite and infinite on such an understanding are "co-terminous," the one forming a boundary or limit to the other, with the consequent implication that "an equal dignity of permanence and independence is ascribed" to both. The finite, as it were, steals the glory of the

infinite to the extent that the infinite is only an other, what the finite is not. It subsists, therefore, in complete abstraction, the finite's negative self-reference, and continues only so long as the finite stands against it. In the Science of Logic this form of the "ought-to-be" infinite is defined as the "negation of the negation," or sublation of the contradiction of somewhat and other which, in the affirmative, self-reconciled result, retains negativity or contradiction only implicitly and so returns to a condition of Being pure and simple (i.e., Kant's realm of the noumena). But negativity or determination, as still latent within it becomes, in thought, its other, the finite over against it by which it is known (Kant's realm of the phenomena).<sup>37</sup>

Hence, while we have reached a higher principle of negation in the opposition of infinite and finite, because abstractness still pertains, we really have not gone forward at all.

To grasp the nature of Hegel's true infinite, having got this far, is now only a matter of a shift of emphasis. As Hegel writes in section 95, what we seem to have before us:

is that something becomes [an] other, and the other becomes [an] other quite generally. In its relationship to an other something is already an other itself vis-à-vis the latter; and therefore, since what it passes into is entirely the same as what passes into it, - neither having any further determination than this identical one of being an other, - in its passing into [an] other, something only comes together with itself; and this relation to itself in the passing and in the other, is genuine infinity.<sup>38</sup>

With the spurious infinite of endless regress, it was the case that negation could only be seen as one-sided and immediate. The passage from somewhat to other and from other to its other was seen as the complete annihilation of what preceded. And since each entity determinately excluded the rest, one finitude resulted after another. In the case of the true infinite, however, negation, to speak proleptically, is "bent back" on itself to give a more intrinsically coherent and positive result. The negation of the other is seen now not as negation outright, but as the "negation of the negation" in which the negatively determined other, repairs to the original somewhat. The double negation of the somewhat gives rise not to a series of mere others, but to "the other of the other" of the somewhat which, of course, is itself. As such, it becomes apparent that the other only presents, in the form of transition and externality, what was somehow there in the somewhat all along. Unlike the case of the abstract infinite of Theism, however, we must not permit the result of this self-relating negativity to "fall back" into immediacy. Our result, the speculative reconciliation of somewhat and other, is Being, but Being that now explicitly contains "difference." This Hegel calls "Being-for-itself."\*

\* To make this point as clear as possible, it might be useful to restate the argument without restricting ourselves to the doctrine of Being's language of externality. The somewhat is qualitatively determined by the other or by the totality of what it is not. This other is likewise determined, limited, conditioned by the original somewhat. Each, therefore, implies

As Hegel develops the concept of Being-for-itself, what we have come to understand about the true infinite only becomes more explicit. As self-relating negativity, being-for-itself contains two moments by which we may conceive it either as a one or as a many. As self-reconciled Dasein returned to pure and simple immediacy, it is one, quality which is complete; but as containing determinate negation it is a one or whole "differentiating itself into and [existing] as many" ones.<sup>39</sup> The many, as moments of the all-inclusive infinite's own "self-othering," are for the one, are themselves the specific content of the one which as such can not ultimately be determinate apart from them. In the notion of Being-for-itself, then, we begin to see the first glimmerings of a teleological holism, a holism which has been secretly propelling the dialectic from the first. In the thought of the one of many there is the implication of a "ground," of a comprehensive "principle" of organization which develops and relates the many in some "logically" or structurally determinate way. The one is not comprised simply of random "atoms in the void." It is a principle of coherent self-relation for

the other, each is the re-presentation of the other in a differential mode. Now, while the somewhat is re-presented in the totality of which it is a portion, the other has itself again in the somewhat as one of its determinate moments. Both together constitute Being in the sense of absolute fullness. But Being now contains mediation and consequently has articulated itself into an all of somewhats or ones which presuppose a finite whole or latent principle of structural coherency. This should make the following remarks about Hegel's "one" and "many ones" intelligible enough.

which the model is the "I" or self-conscious mind.<sup>40</sup> We arrive, then, at the last category of our present discussion--the notion of "ideality."

As Hegel defines it in the Science of Logic "ideal being is the finite as it is [sub specie] the true infinite--as a determination, a content, which is distinct but is not an independent, self-subsistent being, but only a moment."<sup>41</sup> In other words, ideality is reality but taken in its truth or "essence," it is being now for itself or, put more explicitly, the finite raised to self-conception, not yet by its own means (for we are still within the doctrine of Being) but by a subject who, in reflection, calls forth only what it is. Ideality, as the finite in its true determination, is a revelation of thought, but as such the finite has brought itself to meet the form of thought which is not more closely depicted than in the idea of the ordered or self-constituting whole.

The true infinite, for Hegel, is this ordered whole which as such possesses no limit or boundary external to itself. Every negation produces determinateness which is only, at the level of being, a re-presentation in the modality of otherness. It can fairly be said of such an orderly whole, then, that it is completely self-conditioned and so unconditioned or "infinite." The necessary relation of finite to infinite should also be clear at this point. The double negation by which we arrive at self-containedness does not neutralize the finite, for the infinite has being only through the somewhat

and its other. It is the case, rather, that "the infinite overreaches and includes the finite."<sup>42</sup> For infinity is the process not of annihilating, but of "sublating" finitude, of preserving it in and through negation. As such, the evocation of any particular finitude must reverberate through the totality of Being, summoning, through its negative implication, everything that can possibly be.

C) The Finite and Infinite as Developed in the Subsequent Course of the Logic

1) The Doctrine of Essence

The dialectic of finite and infinite as presented in the doctrine of Being took the form of external transition between independent entities. When somewhat became another, the somewhat vanished; the reference of the one term to the other remaining only implicit or for us.<sup>43</sup> Here everything remained on the surface, largely opaque to our probing, the immediateness of being still sluggish and unresponsive to the power of the negative. With the transition into the doctrine of Essence, however, Being is, as it were, lit up through an inner source. In Essence one category no longer simply passes into another, but is reflected into it. There is no longer any question of a real other or of rigid difference because the other is now, through internal mediation, an expression of the diversity of essential self-reference. The one and the other come together in such a way that they now no longer mean anything outside of their mutual relation; the one, as Hegel

puts it, is only as "postulated or hypothetized" by the other<sup>44</sup> whether we take the case of categories like identity and difference, or like existence and ground.

As we contemplate true infinity at the level of Essence; it becomes apparent that it now takes on an explicit character of bi-polarity, of relativity and so of greater internality. The true infinite or principle of the ordered whole must henceforth be thought in reflex categories in which infinity is grasped first as the more essential of the two terms, but subsequently as the reflected ground of their difference. Throughout the doctrine of Essence there is an initial propensity to see the relation of finite and infinite in terms of what is superordinate and subordinate, through such concepts as form and content, inner and outer, substance and accidents, cause and effect. The finite, accordingly, is subsequent to the infinite, is its show, appearance or manifestation, is determined with respect to it as passive receptor of its bounty.<sup>45</sup> While this may be the case for abstract reflection and is certainly a necessary grade in understanding their relation, the course of the entire dialectic seeks to demonstrate that each term in a correlate pair is necessarily both essential and inessential, that each in turn is equally form and content, cause and effect, whole and part. True infinity, as the ground of their difference, must ultimately be understood, then, as "reciprocity;" the ordered whole as the mutual and unprejudiced interaction of everything that is

structurally relevant.

To be relevant at the level of action and reaction, however, is also to be "necessary." In the movement of "cause" to "effect," for instance, in which we realize that to be a cause at all must be to express or issue forth as effect and that as such causing an effect is only to cause itself,<sup>46</sup> we glimpse once again the principle of negative self-relation by which, in this case, "substance" is grasped as a fullness in which the various categories of immanent conditioning are seen ultimately as self-conditioning. As a category of the self-differentiated whole, necessity is substance, or as Hegel also puts it, the "identity" which is the self-subsistence of everything actual.<sup>47</sup> Necessity is the latent rationality at work in meaningful structure; the over-determination of the parts or moments by the whole; and as that which comes to be as a totality of sufficient conditions, it is what simply is.<sup>48</sup> But in the recognition "that the members, linked to one another, are not really foreign to each other, but only elements of one whole, each of them, in its connection with the other, being, as it were, at home, and combining with itself," necessity can also be seen as a concrete and positive freedom; for within the regimen of the whole any particular member can be seen as determined only by itself.<sup>49</sup>

## 2) The Doctrine of the Concept

With the idea of freedom we have entered the doctrine of the Concept proper and are finally permitted an unreserved



statement both of the central point of the Logic and of the character of the true infinite. True infinity or the Concept, Hegel writes, "as the substantial might being for itself is what is free; and since each of its moments is the whole that it is, and is posited as inseparable unity with it, the concept is totality; thus in its identity with itself it is what is in-and-for-itself determinate."<sup>50</sup> In the notion of the Concept, then, the motivating subjectivity latent in the initial doctrines now becomes explicit, itself a category of discussion. For what alone permits the ordered whole to be both itself and the complete "articulation" and "recollection" of its moments is its ultimate possession of the attributes of mind. Only in the concept of self-conscious Spirit (the Idea) do the structures of subjectivity fully "awaken" those underlying the object such that the one may be home to the other.<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, the mode of advance by which the one now has itself in mind in the other is no longer "an other and transition into an other, [nor a] showing or reflection in the opposite,"<sup>52</sup> but "development," or the gradual presentation of an implicit or potential content through a successive alteration of finite forms:<sup>53</sup> As such, nothing can emerge that in some sense was not already there; each form being necessary to further development, and, as part of what is self-contained, exhibiting itself, furthermore in the modality of free play.

Before concluding entirely with the idea of infinity, I would like to take up a number of specific topics within the doctrine of the Concept which will expand decisively upon these statements. The nature of the material, however, will demand somewhat more time than was allowed the categories of Essence. The doctrine of Essence is important for the science of reflection, traditional metaphysics and positivist science, but it is the categories of the Concept which are central to the interpretation of the Logic as a whole, as well as to the remainder of the Encyclopaedia and to Hegel's social and political thought. The first of these concerns will begin with a reassessment of the Concept's logical genealogy.

i) The Infinite as Ego

Following the idea of infinity in its course through the modalities of Being (externality) and Essence (reflection), we arrive at a point where infinity, now as the unity of these modes, takes on the dimensions of the Concept or logical totality. About the meaning of this most architectonic of all sublations Hegel reveals the following:

The Concept is defined as Essence reverted to the simple immediacy of Being -- the shining or show of Essence thereby having actuality, and its actuality being at the same time a free shining or show in itself. In this manner the Concept has being as its simple self relation, or as the immediacy of its immanent unity.<sup>54</sup>

The unity of the Concept, then, is the cognitive unity of

embodied reflection. As the passage quoted indicates, the Concept, of its very nature, reverts to or reestablishes an earlier form (the immediacy of Being) which is nevertheless penetrated through by the structures of reflection such that its new immediate actuality is also its own inward appearance and self-presentation. The Concept, for Hegel then, is the conscious ego or Cartesian-Kantian "I think" which exists (as simple self relation) and yet knows this existence only as "free shining in itself." Similarly, Hegel's Concept is this same Kantian notion in the sense that it is the "I" or immanent unity of the Concept (Essence reverted into Being), which is the objective condition of all conscious experience and knowledge. But beyond this point the similarity stops. For, while the knowledge, of which the subject is capable, is always a re-presentation of the synthetic or categorical structure of the Concept in the conceptually adequate forms of objectivity, this, according to Hegel, is sufficient for the revelation of both object and self.

The synthetic structure of the Concept and its implications for the problem of knowledge has not been understood by a significant number of commentators. In these interpreters Hegel's position is usually confused with the idealisms of Fichte and Kant and declaimed as a mere subjectivism.<sup>55</sup> The assertion of a conceptual priority to all reality is taken to mean that the realm of nature or discrete objects is either

unreal except as a shadow self of conscious ego (Fichte) or that its objectivity can only be validated and experienced as an epistemological fact (Kant). The reversion of the Concept to the immediate unity of Being, however, would seem to indicate that, for Hegel, the validity and experience of objectivity is also ontological. In agreement with Kant, Hegel declares the conceptual structure of subjectivity (Kant's transcendental unity of apperception) to be the condition of all determinate knowing.<sup>56</sup> As such the original transcendental unity differentiates itself into subsidiary concepts or principles of synthesis to which the emergent object of apperception is made to conform as a part of a total organized structure. But what makes this synthetic project valid beyond the more phenomenological fact is the existence of a subjective identity which has itself arisen from and remained a part of the material processes of nature. The phenomenological intuition and synthetic apperception of an objective reality, then, is simply that reality's own positing of itself as a noetic dimension. Nature or Being, taken on its own, has independent reality, but only as "in-itself." To be "for-itself" or to shine forth as explicitly synthesized order it must become "for another" -- an other which, in thinking Being, announces its truth as conceived. Hence, the thinking internalization of Being is nothing foreign or external to its nature. It is Being itself as it must appear through the evolutionary and noetic processes it has

itself initiated. This is why, then, Hegel begins the Logic with Being (externality) rather than Essence (reflection) and why the Concept, as both the logical source and result of that development, must revert to an existing consciousness or embody itself as human organism. The unity of Being (object) and Essence (subject) in the Concept, then, is no one-sided subjectivism. There is real difference between the in-itself and the for-itself,<sup>57</sup> but it is precisely this difference, or better this difference-in-evolutionary-identity which permits the emergence of a teleological finality in the systemic reflections of a natural intelligence.

ii) The Infinite as System

As Hegel himself well knew, the demonstration of the unitary structure of conceptual knowledge in Logic is not possible outside of the termination of the process of category formation in Phenomenology. But it is precisely the demonstration of the synthetic structure of conceptual knowledge which proves phenomenological formation complete. There is, therefore, a peculiar circularity at work in the system which, while it is concealed from consciousness over the duration of its historical period, nevertheless establishes the possibility of an absolute knowing.<sup>58</sup> By a knowing which is absolute Hegel means a knowing which is complete in the specific sense that it is self-conditioned, or in the sense that no further logical categories/phenomenological shapes are required to render the object of knowledge,

in its truth as self-projection, wholly transparent to the subject. What this amounts to is no more, but certainly no less, than the self-conscious comprehension of thinking itself which, as the medium through which reality declares its own rationality, is the central fact that the whole of Hegelian wisdom hangs upon.

The thinking comprehension of thinking on which absolute knowing rests is precisely the systemic rationality alluded to above -- the rationality which reveals an internally organized or recursive whole. Hegel was the first to consistently recognize that the structure and intention of human reflexivity is coherently systematic and that the "in-itself" it reflects upon as "for another" likewise portends increasingly complex qualities of systemic organization. The exposition of the nature of system, of what makes it rational, has been the alterior thrust of this entire chapter. System is the Hegelian Concept, is the true infinite. At this point we may content ourselves with a brief enumeration of systemic qualities.

For Hegel, system is necessary, self-contained totality. As such a) it is a principle of differentiating, ultimately recursive organization; a sovereign power which posits the effective dimension of relationality or retroaction by which a whole becomes intelligible as a progressive self-specification of parts. b) The parts of a system, as actual, have their moment of relative autonomy, the freedom of

differentiated, even idiosyncratic existence. They are, however, through the principle of articulate order embodied in them, related to one another in a complex, dialectical way: first, as transition, reflection or development into otherness; second, as opposition and annihilation in and through their difference; and third, as higher unity or identity-in-difference which further specifies systemic universality. Each part or moment, then, as determinate, is a necessary determination of every other and while this determination is predicated on otherness, it is an otherness which repairs to unity in the ground of self-conscious reflection. This process of the cognitive organization of otherness implies these further characteristics.

1) No system (a true infinite) is ever immediately there as though posited by a single act. Whether overtly physical or cognitive, systems appear in space and time and so must be run off or set forth gradually. Hence, a system, as an organization of difference, does not possess the totality of its varied differentiations until it has traversed the entirety of its dialectical course and integrated these forms through an emergent self-consciousness. Only at the end of a determinate process of formation, then, does a system "in-itself" become truly complete, circular and so a system "for itself." But in another sense no system is ever complete. Systems, whether overtly physical or cognitive, must continually reenergize and recapitulate

themselves if they are not to fall back into entropic immediacy. Each generation of systemic emergents must be brought, by degrees culminating in its highest forms, to a recollection of its origins or of the principles of formation by which systemic recursivity is sustained. It is the case, then, that within the system as a whole, and as a function of the partial perspectives of its recurring developmental phases, there will always seem to be repressed and inhibited areas/elements as well as unattainable and unrealized possibilities. Conflict and apparent contradiction are never missing. As the creative impulse within structure they are the essential element in systemic self-maintenance.

2) It follows, therefore, that all systemic destabilization or disruption of recursive linkages, all reversion into finitude, (or, if we prefer a somewhat more colourful language, all longing, sin, error, ideology and madness) is a function of abstraction -- the unwarranted fixation on the part in its inertness and isolation from the relational context.

3) Hence, combining points 1) and 2) or the idea that there must be difference (contradiction) with the idea that difference is never absolute, we are made aware of why "the specification of recursive totality cannot take the form of mere addition or collection of similar units."<sup>59</sup> Such a quantitative process would culminate not in system and



systemic circularity, but in linear and infinite regression in which opposition is absolute or purely abstract.

4) A true or systemic notion of difference is a notion of difference in-and-through-identity -- a notion in which the attempt to define limits forces contradictory elements to pass over into one another losing, in the process, their previous determination, while preserving determinateness as such in the mutually transformative result.

5) The range of these results is to be understood as a successively more adequate deployment of the metasytem's own principle. As such, each of these results ranks as a subsystem in a hierarchy of such subsystems specifying the ultimate system that is Hegel's Concept. Value is determined, then, by the level of systemic coherency achieved; i.e., by the level of recursivity, circular integration or explicit completeness of a system. Hence, each component or subsystem of the human social metasytem will determine its higher worth with reference to what preceded it as aufgehoben. And if the new or emergent system is not itself of absolute value, then it too will be transformed, by its own inherent processes, into what is valued more.

6) Only the metasytem or human Concept, then, is of absolute value, both as the underlying consciousness of system and as the result of all previous attempts at systemic organization. Accordingly, the forms of historical organization, while necessary, command only a relative right which

the concept of complete organization must mediate. And of lesser value still, though remaining an unexpungable moment of totality, are thoroughly natural systems where the cognitive or systemic element is submerged and must reach explicit self-reference through the positing of its own radical transformation.

### iii) The Concept as Method

The remaining categories of the doctrine of the Concept, though of intrinsic value, simply repeat and explicate the notional/systemic characterization of infinity developed above. In the section entitled "Subjective Concept," however, the analysis of recursive structures takes one step further which must be noted. It begins with Hegel's presentation of the "functional moments" of formal conception which, in subsequent paragraphs, become the rudiments of a methodology of the real. As Hegel writes:

The Concept [as Subjective] Concept contains the three following functional parts. 1) The first is Universality--meaning that it is in free equality with itself in its specific character. 2) The second is Particularity--that is, the specific character, in which the universal continues serenely equal to itself. 3) The third is Individuality--meaning the reflection-into-self of the specific characters of universality and particularity; which negative self-unity has complete and original determinateness, without any loss to its self-identity or universality.<sup>60</sup>

Of importance in this connection is Hegel's argument that the negative activity, through which the division of the Subjective Concept proceeds (Universal, Particular,

individual), is precisely the finite induction of "judgement"<sup>61</sup> which then, through the ultimate disclosure of its hidden ground, transforms itself into "syllogism."<sup>62</sup> In the paradigmatic form of the judgement--the judgement of aesthetic or moral value<sup>63</sup> -- the individual artistic production or moral act is evaluated in relation to a universal category or standard (this sonata by Brahms (I) is beautiful (U)). But the ground of this judgement, the specification of the character of the universal, must await the expansion of the copula into an explicit middle term (this sonata (I) is so and so (P); beauty (U) is defined by the quality of being so and so (P); therefore, this sonata (I) is beautiful (U)). We raise this point of traditional logic only to make one last connection. We have argued above that the Hegelian Concept is system. We are warranted, therefore, in saying now that system is also judgement and syllogism or that the study of systemic/categorical structure can and must proceed through these terms. In the judgement, systems/concepts self-analyze into constituent individualities, gaining concrete functions and diverse qualities without, however, grasping the ground of specification in explicit totality. In the syllogism, systemic constituents resynthesize in the absolute reflection (mediating middle term) of the universal which shows itself to be the limiting and effective principle. The integrity and power of such a methodological approach we shall demonstrate later through the economic and political

syllogisms of the Philosophy of Right. For the moment, it suffices to assert that the very idea of system involves a notion of correct method which, far from imposing upon the real, is an intrinsic development of it.<sup>64</sup>

### Conclusion

The concern of this chapter has been to display something of the range of increasingly adequate definitions of infinitude that the Logic provides. It began with the qualitative alteration of determinate being and demonstrated, through the very character of that alteration, a process of negation of negation in which otherness was reconciled to itself as the positing of the many ones of being-for-self. In this the idea of infinity as self-contained, self-conditioning totality first emerged, though, as yet, in a form of "mechanical" externality barely adequate to the burden of its content. In the doctrine of Essence, somewhat, other and the somewhat of the other became the relational categories of identity, difference and ground -- the definition of infinitude now gaining the clarity and mediating internality of a proto-noetic dimension. The categories of immanent conditioning through which the idea of substance circulated led us on to the understanding of "necessity" as "infinite negative self-relation," and of organized totality likewise as "pure self-reciprocation."<sup>65</sup> In the doctrine of the Concept, "infinite self-relation" became the freedom of the embodied ego which, in turn, grasped the nature of its developing concept through

the reflexive structures of the syllogism. The crowning reformulation of infinitude, however, was found in the notion of system which, while never itself a category of the Logic, was, nevertheless, the meaning of logic and proved in the end to be an intelligible accounting of both rationality and value.

The notion of infinity before us, then, is a notion which arises from the nature and limitations of finitude itself. Finitude was the point of departure of logic and so it is the destination in the reversion of the Concept or in the explicit positing of a living intelligence which dies in time. Determinate being is the original phenomenological fact. In logic we established the ground of that determinacy in subjectivity and self-conscious reflection. It is this reflexivity, actual and concrete, yet self-determined and necessary, which comprehends its own negation as in order with the ordered whole and which reaches, through this negation, to the universality and permanence of its own nature in the infinite community of human spirits in time. But likewise it is this reflexivity which comprehends the infinite as the principle of the whole or as the human Concept which must reach into itself and attain actuality through the finitudes in which it issues. The circularity of the relationship is absolute and the consequence, to state it once again, is an absolute notion of both the intelligible and the real which lies within the limits of reason alone. For the infinite, in the last

analysis, is human reason, though reason properly understood and distinguished from all of its historical manifestations.

It is a curiosity now that generations of interpreters, despite explicit warnings, have repeatedly confounded the import of Hegel's logical doctrine with his representational discourse. Hence, what was intended as heuristic picture thinking for the unwise, as the analysis of an archaic form, or as the locus in tradition for the philosopher's concepts becomes, from the right Hegelians on down, an admission of Deity working both within and without the system in a way that is ultimately, and in respect of the system, nonsense. There may be a God (= zone of silence), in the transcendental or acosmic sense of the finite understanding, but that possibility is certainly unimportant.\* And perhaps it is not more unimportant than for the framing of a political constitution. For such a task we require more than the bare will and "onto-poetic" invocations. We require an understanding of the connection between reason and value which, far from renouncing the discursive element, finds in discursion sustenance and justification enough.<sup>66</sup>

\*The idea of God here can be equated historically and logically with all forms of thinking that ultimately terminate in silence; i.e., with all forms of thinking that cannot account for themselves. Hence, this would include traditional theologies as well as open-ended historicisms, positivism and certainly nihilism. For in nihilism, transcendent deity simply becomes what it is - the "ding-an-sich" or nothing or silence.

In this chapter we have hoped to provide the logical basis of a renewed social and political vision. Its emphasis, like the Concept it is built upon, is radically non-transcendental, developmental, wholistic, and, for better or worse, limited to the circle of possibilities that is intelligibly human. Whatever we choose to make of this circle (and there are several possibilities, some nastier than others) it is the world as Hegelian wisdom has prepared it for us and for the contemporary feat of understanding.

NotesKey to Editions Used.

- MA Aboulafia, Mitchell, The Self-Winding Circle: A Study of Hegel's System: Warren H. Green Inc., St. Louis, 1982.
- Findlay Findlay, J.N., Hegel: A Re-examination: Humanities Press, New York, 1970.
- Harris Harris, Errol E., An Interpretation of the Logic of Hegel: University Press of America, Lanham, 1983.
- Logic Hegel, G.W.F., Hegel's Logic: translated by William Wallace; Oxford University Press, 1982. First part of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences.
- S of L Hegel, G.W.F., Hegel's Science of Logic: translated by A.V. Miller; Humanities Press, New York, 1969.
- Taylor Taylor, Charles, Hegel: Cambridge University Press, New York, 1975.

- 1 Compare MA, first two chapters, a useful account of the finite and infinite as presented in the Science of Logic.
- 2 Logic, p. 113, S. 80.
- 3 Ibid, zusatze.
- 4 Ibid, p. 48, S. 28.
- 5 Ibid, p. 45, S. 25.
- 6 Ibid, p. 47, S. 26.
- 7 Ibid, p. 116, S. 81.
- 8 Ibid, p. 119, S. 82.
- 9 As we shall see, the one may be the re-presentation of the other either through the transitions of qualitative contrast; through reflection of the one into its other as ground; or through the conception of a structured whole internally differentiated through its others.
- 10 Theodore F. Geraets translation. Ibid, p. 133. As yet unpublished.



- 11        S of L, pp.105-6.
- 12        Ibid, p. 106
- 13        Ibid. Compare Logic, S.89, additions.
- 14        As such, Being and Nothing, as Hegel points out, are not really concepts, but shadow or proto-concepts which thinking struggles in vain to grasp. In a sense, then, the Logic begins not with principles, but with a fiction or intuition which the rest of Logic must justify or make articulate.
- 15        Logic, p. 134.
- 16        Ibid, p. 135, S.91.
- 17        S of L, p. 112.
- 18        Ibid, p. 115.
- 19        Geraets translation, Logic, p. 135, S.91.
- 20        Ibid, Wallace translation.
- 21        Findlay, p. 160.
- 22        Geraets translation; Logic, p. 136.
- 23        S of L, p. 127.
- 24        Ibid, pp. 127-8.
- 25        I have in mind both Taylor and Findlay.
- 26        Taylor, p. 234.
- 27        Harris, p. 106.
- 28        Findlay, p. 160. Compare Taylor, p. 234.
- 29        Because without such alteration or negation of the finite, there can be no approach to the infinite.
- 30        Compare S of L, p. 129.
- 31        MA, p. 22.
- 32        Geraets translation, Logic, p. 137.
- 33        Harris, p. 108.

- 34 Both Harris and Hegel refer to Kant at this point adding the criticism that he attempts to reach a qualitative goal through quantitative means. V. Harris p. 137; Logic, p. 138.
- 35 Logic, p. 137.
- 36 Ibid, p. 139, S.95.
- 37 S of L, pp.138-9.
- 38 Geraets translation, Logic, pp.138-9.
- 39 Harris, p. 115.
- 40 Logic, p. 141, S.96, zusätze.
- 41 S of L, pp.149-50.
- 42 Logic, p. 279, S.215.
- 43 Ibid, p. 161, S.111, zusätze.
- 44 Ibid, p. 162, S.112.
- 45 As Hegel writes in Logic, S.119, finitude will lie, then, in the want of correspondence between immediate being (show) and what is essential, in the fact that in Essence there still persists on opposition of mediated and immediate elements.
- 46 Ibid, pp. 215-6, S.153.
- 47 Ibid, p. 219, S. 157.
- 48 Harris, p. 200.
- 49 Logic, p. 220, S. 158, zusätze.
- 50 Geraets translation, Logic, p. 223, S.160.
- 51 Ibid, p. 261, S.194, zusätze; p. 274, S.212, zusätze.
- 52 Ibid, p. 295, S.240.
- 53 Ibid, p. 224, S.161 and zusätze.
- 54 Ibid, p. 221, S.159.
- 55 See, for instance, Taylor, p. 297 and Harris" criticism p. 217.

56 S of L, p. 584 and Harris p. 215.

57 This is unquestionably the foundation of our experience of otherness.

58 It is this circularity of the system which so disturbs thinkers who have not as yet freed themselves from the operations of abstract understanding, from liberal ideology, from technology as mastery etc.. Habermas, for instance, is completely baffled by the idea that an argument can be valid prior to its having been made. In one superlative display of hide-and-seek logic he complains:

If it is phenomenology that first produces the standpoint of absolute knowledge, and if this standpoint coincides with the position of authentic scientific knowledge, then the construction of knowledge in its manifestations cannot itself claim the status of scientific knowledge. The apparent dilemma (Aporie) of knowing before knowledge, with which Hegel reproached epistemology, now returns in Hegel's thought as an actual dilemma: namely, that phenomenology must in fact be valid prior to every possible mode of scientific knowledge. (Knowledge and Human Interests (Beacon Press, Boston, 1971), p. 21.)

The point that Habermas seems to have missed entirely is that there are no authoritative origins, no absolute points of departure, indeed, no principles in the ordinary sense for Hegel. There are only results or the necessities of determinate facts which, in having become determinate, demonstrate (post factum) a teleological inevitability. Habermas would hang his own theory of cognition in thin air. In refusing to see the emancipation thresholds of phenomenological development as elements implicated in a gradually, but ultimately self-revealed transcendental (i.e., noetic) totality, Habermas, despite his best intentions, must declare all forms of organized structure impossible. If "new transcendental frameworks for the appearance of possible objects" (perspectives) can be produced ad infinitum as a function of "contingent circumstances," then nothing is truly determinate - everything can be anything and nothing makes any difference. No accounting for the structural relations of these frameworks is possible - they are essentially, and for all time, unrelated. The fact remains, however, that a

determinate structure of organized matter (human beings) came to a consciousness of the existent (including the transcendental frameworks of social history) as an infinitely recursive integration of mutually implicated moments. Totality (real determinateness), then, must have been there from the outset, even in the least and most primitive of forms, guiding phenomenology long before it ever became wisdom.

59 Harris, p. 225.

60 Logic, p. 226, S.163.

61 Ibid, p. 230, S.165.

62 Ibid, p. 244, S.180.

63 Ibid, p. 243, S.178.

64 Ibid, p. 25, S.29 and many others. Hegel's full-blown account of method does not occur until the very end of Logic as a kind of ultimate self-reflection on the entire system (S. 226-31 and 238-42). Nevertheless, the prefiguring of method in Subjective Concept is too obvious to pass unnoticed.

65 Ibid, p. 219, S. 157.

66 Compare Stanley Rosen's Nihilism: A Philosophical Essay (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1969), preface.

Chapter Two

Phenomenology: The Metaphysics of Experience

And the End of History

## Introduction

In one very important sense this second chapter was actually the first. And it is precisely as the first that it can now, as a part of a total discourse, come second. What I mean by this can be made clear in fairly short order through a reference to the Syllogism of syllogisms with which the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences concludes. From the point of view of the Idea or realized Concept, the concerns of basic ontology, which detained us in chapter one, logically precede the philosophies of nature (externality) and Spirit (reflection) of which phenomenology is the first part. Temporally speaking, however, nature has priority generating in its time the reflexive structure of the organism by which it (nature) is internalized and ultimately revealed as logical Idea. But in the final or absolute form of the syllogism, it is Spirit which takes precedence for two related reasons.<sup>1</sup> First, from the vantage point of the end of "development," there is the recognition that both nature and the Idea, as fully intelligible entities/terms, have "being," "existence," "actuality" or the determination of whatever word we may choose, precisely because they are conceptions (contents) of the human mind. Without this conceiving power of Spirit, both "nature" and the "Idea" are mute, non-communicable and therefore indistinguishable from "nothing." Second, or from within the phenomenological cycle itself, it is the case that

both nature and the Idea, in so far as they are anything at all, are something only as appearances of the historical dialectic of human desire -- a dialectic which articulates, however partially, the possibility of both a past (nature) and future (Idea) as the dimensions of its process. Nature, as the given (past), constitutes the material of Spirit's worldly process (the resources of being which it locates or brings to light in externalizing itself), while the Idea, as the ideal (essence or future) is the implicit ground and sought after goal of that same process. As such, neither are ultimately real (or determinate for thought, language and action) except as they are found in the unstable temporal unity of Spirit's phenomenological errors and in the collective historical attempt to annul those errors.

What, then, to return to the initial question, is the relation, in Hegel's thought, between phenomenology and logic? Except for the chronological fact that Hegel wrote the Phenomenology before the Science of Logic and then integrated both later in the Encyclopaedia, the textual arguments about Hegel's understanding of their relation are singularly unhelpful, if not outright contradictory?<sup>2</sup> It may well be the case that the modern student can understand the Logic without being acquainted with the Phenomenology; it may even have been possible

(after the fact) for Hegel to have written the Phenomenology and Logic in the opposite order that he did. But that Hegel could write anything at all on the problems that he did, is only the case because an actual phenomenological process had, in principle, completed itself during the time he was alive. For better or worse, the human being, at some point in its developmental course, stepped out of the undifferentiated compactness of mythic consciousness and speech; he thereby became explicit subject, individual or ego and found himself opposed to a world of determinate others. To conceive his ongoing relation to the other, however, the human subject had to act, had to bring the ramifications of difference to explicit appearance where, as realities negated, they became contents of memory and conception. But to conceive this relation fully, or again, to comprehend, in logical form, the structures behind the experiences of consciousness and behind the ultimate reconciliation of otherness, human beings had, in some sense, to have actually experienced the end of otherness. Action, Hegel argues, precedes conception; the experience of our acts (Phenomenology) precedes the logical articulation of their meaning (Logic).<sup>3</sup> Complete logical speech about experience is possible, then, only when no radically new phenomenological shapes can appear; and we know this to be the case only when we



have arrived at a systematically organized conception of the circularity of our collective historical experience.<sup>4</sup> About this matter we shall have more to say toward the close of the chapter. For the moment, however, we have said enough to get our inquiry under way.

In what is to follow our concern will be not so much with phenomenology taken as the historical catalogue of the actual shapes of consciousness,<sup>5</sup> as with phenomenology taken as the science of what makes experience possible. What we are interested in is principles rather than cases; the components, as opposed to the panorama, of phenomenological development. The guiding light for this inquiry, to some extent, has been Kojève's interpretation of Hegel, and like his own accounting, is, on the surface, intentionally naive. But being naive, it gains tremendously in lucidity. The necessarily more technical discussions, therefore, have been relegated to the notes and appendices. The main body of the text begins with an attempt to generate the metaphysical components of phenomenology and to clarify their ground in logic or basic ontology. These components we shall identify as time, space, nature, spirit, development and history, or as the major categories of the second and third parts of the Encyclopaedia. We begin with the notion of development and proceed, on the basis of the definition-

al criteria it establishes, to a differentiation of the concepts of nature and Spirit. We then elaborate a concept of history as Spiritual time and conclude with some psychological reflections on the course and circularity of historical experience. In the conclusion to the chapter we return to the end of history thesis to suggest its connection to Kojève's universal and homogeneous world state. This will form the transition to chapter three and the concerns of the political cycle.

#### A) The Ground of Metaphysical Dualism

In coming to an understanding of Hegel's metaphysical ideas there is always the barrier of the texts. Particularly in the case of the Phenomenology, Hegel's discourse bristles with ambiguity, and this for at least two reasons. First, there is Hegel's preference for presenting his arguments in sequences of rapid perspectival shifts. Now he is speaking from the point of view of the philosopher at the end of history, now from within the confines of a particular phase of mind's development, now critically looking back on that phase from the one immediately succeeding. This is compounded by the fact that at any point of mind's development an account can be rendered in terms either of the subject's relation to the object, or the object's relation to the self. Finally, one is continually deceived by the dialectics -- for while each stage seems to have neatly complet-

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ed itself in the synthesis of discordant parts, Hegel always manages to transform this into the necessarily one-sided thesis of a new stage. The second source of confusion is the fact that Hegel's philosophy, like all systematic philosophy, operates at three superimposed levels -- the phenomenological, metaphysical and ontological.<sup>6</sup> Each level is, in its own way, a valid description of the real, each in turn revealing a higher level of abstraction and more universal propositions. But where one author might labour to keep these levels distinct, Hegel moves freely between them. An essential problem of both reading and interpreting Hegel, then, is to know on what level the argument is proceeding and to be able to follow it on its own peculiar terms.

Of these three levels the most basic for Hegel, from the point of view of man or of consciousness, is the phenomenological. For Hegel, the world is always a revealed world, a world in which man knows and relates the essence (the "for self"), rather than the existence (the "in-it-self"), of being in his thinking and discourse. Hence, what is real for man, what alone the philosopher has access to, is but the "show" of objective being, its "forth-shining" in appearance or, stated from the subjective side, its reflection in perception and thought.<sup>7</sup> Here, then, all philosophy necessarily begins its work. But from a phenomenology or simple description

of what appears to consciousness one may then ask about and imaginatively reconstruct what the objective real would have to be in order that it appear as it actually does.<sup>8</sup> Here, at the level of metaphysics, Hegel seeks a description of the world itself, of time and space, nature and history. Finally, at the level of ontology Hegel asks himself what Being itself would have to be in order to realize itself or exist as such a world of being and time. This level, the most universal of all, we have dealt with already as Logic, or the philosophy of the Idea. Throughout the subsequent argument of this chapter we shall have to keep these three levels distinctly in view. Each has something to contribute to the understanding of our human world. We begin, however, with what these three levels of discourse share -- namely, an underlying developmental structure according to which the real is truly grasped only as an interplay of radically different and opposed elements. We are brought, then, to the question of dualism in Hegel's philosophy -- its nature and necessity.

That actuality is a function of a dialectical interplay of opposites is not for Hegel a proposition which can be demonstrated "a priori." This is the substance of the warning against prefaces that Hegel repeats in the preface to each of his books -- that science, as a reflection of reality, generates its principles only in the process of disclosing its peculiar content, and so makes

axiomatic presentation of itself, before it has been gone right through, un compelling, if not impossible. For Hegel, when we go to this peculiar actual, we see that it is always in motion; that it appears to consciousness as being in time as well as space; and so, is at every moment a temporal result -- a present which is only because some indeterminate future overcame a determinate past. Given such a description of the world, however, existence, as well as Being, must be two-fold; and in the first part of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences Hegel explains why. The reason is that "Becoming," that process by which radically new possibilities are realized, is unthinkable except as "the unity of Being and Nothingness."<sup>9</sup> In the history of philosophy Heraclitus very early came to this conclusion when he pronounced the "all to be flowing" or, as is written in another fragment, to be an "ever-living fire, with measures of it kindling, and measures going out."<sup>10</sup> By these elemental images Heraclitus hoped to capture the difficult truth that in existence "we step and do not step into the same river; we are and are not"<sup>11</sup> -- a saying which, for Hegel, expresses "the negativity of Being, and its identity with not-Being" as the source of all concrete process.<sup>12</sup> Being, Hegel tells us, then, can no more be than not-Being -- that any form of monism is

impossible.<sup>13</sup> For Being, taken in itself or on its own, has no predicates; as what is, it is implicit, inarticulate, completely undetermined, and so is nothing in particular. Likewise with not-Being, for as pure nothingness it is something immediate, universal and wholly abstract. Hence, Being and Nothingness must oppose one another in order to become specific (or real). For it is only as the negation of something that Nothingness becomes a "determinate negation" and only as negated that Being presents its content. For existence to appear to us as dynamic and determinate, then, the Being which issues in that existence can not be anything "fixed or ultimate;" it must "yield to dialectic and sink into its opposite, which, also taken immediately [or in itself], is nothingness."<sup>14</sup>

But for Hegel, the description of Being as twofold and as issuing in a real dialectic is not in itself complete. Being is also static, unitary, self-identical; that which only comes to duality at some determinate point. In its truth, it is a "one" which becomes "two" (or a multiplicity) so that, through separation and self-annulment, it may become a "one" again.<sup>15</sup> Dialectic, then, does not exist from and for all eternity (although it embraces the entirety of the existence of speaking man). In the third edition of the Lectures on the Philosophy of

History we find an account of the initial sundering of the "One" related in the form of a theological creation myth.

The Idea [Being] has within itself the determination [the definite possibility] of its self-consciousness [i.e., of negating its self-identity and so of taking up a posture with respect to itself], of [dialectical] activity. Thus it is God's own eternal life, as it was, so to speak, before the creation of the world, (the) logical connection (of all things). It still lacks at this point [however] the form of being which is actuality. It still is the universal, the immanent, the [unrevealed]. The second stage begins when the Idea satisfies the contrast which originally is only ideally in it and posits the difference between itself in its free universal mode, in which it remains within itself [identity or objectivity], and itself as purely abstract reflection in itself [negativity or subjectivity]. In thus stepping over to one side (in order to be object of reflection) the Idea sets the other side as formal actuality, as formal freedom, as abstract unity of self-consciousness, as infinite reflection in itself, and as infinite negativity (antithesis). Thus it becomes Ego, which, as an atom (indivisible), opposes itself to all content and thus is the most complete antithesis -- the antithesis, namely, of the whole plenitude of the Idea. The absolute Idea is thus, on the one hand, substantial fullness of content [Being as object] and, on the other hand, abstract free volition [Being as subject]. God and universe have separated, and set each other as opposites. 16

From this it seems clear that we can and must approach the duality of being not only from what appears, but from the point of view of Being itself. For only in this way do we grasp its full range and nature. Being, the logical connection of all things in pure thought, the ideal essence of what exists as a world of time and space,

is at first "absolute indifference," the "I=I," "something utterly abstract and characterless." Nevertheless, "it is the very nature of Being that it [should] characterize itself."<sup>17</sup> For there is in Being a rational desire to satisfy the contrast implicit within it between its ideality (essence) and actuality (existence) -- a desire which, as the presence of nothingness in Being, impells it from its simple state.<sup>18</sup> The instrument through which this desire is realized, through which the implicitly real becomes explicitly so, is "reflection."<sup>19</sup> Hegel's use of this word is in no sense unusual. We have the main point when we consider that "a ray of light [travelling] in a straight line [and] impinging upon the surface of a mirror, is thrown back from it." And when further we consider that "in this phenomenon we [really] have two things, -- first an immediate fact which is, and secondly the deputed, derivated, or transmitted phase of the same."<sup>20</sup> In the type of philosophical reflection under consideration here, however, Being (the Idea) is mirrored not in some externality, but in itself (taken as Ego); it is thrown back on itself from itself and so becomes its own object. As such, Being has taken up a posture with respect to itself. It has set itself objectively (i.e., actually) to one side initiating, thereby, a self-revealing process.

In this way we may now summarize. From the point



of view of appearances, we have learned that Being (taken as the ground of what exists) must be two-fold -- an opposition of being (realized as space-nature) and nothingness (realized as negating time) which issues in determinate process. But from the standpoint of the Logic, we have learned that this is but the "derivated" or actual stage of Being. For ideal Being (Being in itself) is the simply self-identity of the Idea which only after a process of inner reflection becomes subject or itself (nothingness), object or itself as beheld (being) and their mutual revelation through real opposition.<sup>21</sup> With this clear in our minds we are in position to take up our original question of the purpose and path of the process which realizes Being and the actual.

#### B) The Concept of Development

In the Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Hegel writes that to comprehend the notion of development we must be prepared to distinguish two states. The first is the condition of capacity or power, what Hegel calls "being-in-itself" (the Scholastic "potentia" or Aristotle's "dynamis"). The second is that of "being-for-itself," actuality (the Latin "actus" and Greek "energeia").<sup>22</sup> In the first we speak of that which is gathered, in its fullness, within itself and so, is in a state of simple preparedness to work effects. In the

second, we speak of an actual being-at-work, of a self-empowering which projects a content into existence and so presents it actually to itself. The engine of development, that which impells the first state into the second and then maintains the second in its dynamism, is always, for Hegel, the desire to overcome contradiction.<sup>23</sup> Contradiction, at first, is there only implicitly as the contradiction that is potentiality itself. Subsequently it is there as a difference brought into being which drives the dialectic of appearances. The contradiction, as it exists, obtains between a real subject and its ideal content<sup>24</sup> -- a content of which the subject throughout the course of its development has only partial possession. For the real content, like the subject, is in actual time or history and so can only return and present itself to self a little at a time. The means through which the content is established in time and for the self is work. To this extent, then, development must be seen as a self-immersion or probing of one's own depths which at the same time is a willing, a working, an extending beyond oneself. Only in the range and embrace of the outward compass achieved through work does one truly come to the measure of the intensiveness of the soul.<sup>25</sup> But in the slow working out and coming to possession of one's soul, there can be nothing fortuitous, nothing truly unforeseen. To enter into existence is certainly

to undergo change, but potentiality so far governs the process that to constitute its content (i.e., to become an other for self) is essentially to remain or rather to return to the same.<sup>26</sup> The only possible goal, the "entelecheia" of development, then, is the very position from which it began. Only now, what was concealed in the opacity of immediate ideality is fully revealed in the transparency of complete self-consciousness.

When we come finally to study the development of the world as it is and appears in phenomenology, we are forced, in direct parallel to the Logic or ontology, to distinguish two interdependent, though opposed, principles. The first is "nature," the Idea (necessity) outside-of-itself or made real as the content of physical space-time.<sup>27</sup> The second is "Spirit," self or wilful intelligence, -- the Idea for itself or making itself real as the time of history.<sup>28</sup> Nature, for Hegel, precedes Spirit, is that from which mind first takes its rise;<sup>29</sup> and so, while the Idea posits its limit in nature (Idealism), Spirit simply apprehends this limit as already given (Realism).<sup>30</sup> But in order to emerge from the sheer unreflected torpor of nature, Spirit, which at first is nothing but nature, must turn nature back on itself, must itself oppose and negate the immediate, merely given, character of its own external nature. Hence, in the distance that Spirit has moved from nature we have the measure of its freedom and the breadth

of vision it has given itself in world history. For world history, the world and the history which are ours, make sense, appear to us at all, only as the dialectical interplay of nature and self (being and nothingness). It is essential, therefore, that we understand the character of both these elements.

### C) The Concept of Nature

Because of the uncertain nature of the texts, the subject of nature in Hegel is not one that can be dealt with either quickly or simply.<sup>31</sup> According to Kojève, in the second part of the Encyclopaedia, Hegel presents an account of nature "in which Nature is a [fully] dialectical reality having the same three-fold structure" as both the logical Idea and human history.<sup>32</sup> In the earlier Phenomenology and later Philosophy of History, however, Hegel seems to reject this position in favour of a nature which, as it is experienced by consciousness, is solely the re-presentation of the immediate self-identity of the Idea.<sup>33</sup> In writing the Encyclopaedia, then, Hegel seems not to have adequately dealt with the fact that "total Being or [the life of] the Idea [must] present on the one hand a dialectical aspect [Spirit], which transmits its dialectical character to the totality of Being, but which is itself action [negativity] and not Being, and on the other a fundamentally non-dialectical aspect, which is static given-Being or natural Being."<sup>34</sup>

In Hegel's defense, however, it might be argued that while nature in-itself, or better, as it appears during the historical period, is non-dialectical in accord with an ontology of identity, nature, as a concept, or as it is grasped in science, certainly is dialectical. The dialectical element, however, is what is imparted to nature by mind. Nature, then, would be explicitly dialectical only at the end of history or phenomenology when complete science or the Syllogism of syllogisms has been formulated. But to the extent that phenomenological development must re-enact itself with every generation in order to maintain wisdom, nature (or the given) must continually present at least one aspect of pure mechanism, of determinate entities technically manipulable in space. The implications of all this could fill a volume. For our present purposes, however, and in line with our limited interest in nature as a presupposition of finite experience, we shall adopt the description of the Phenomenology and later Lectures.<sup>35</sup>

Nature, then, is the given, the unmediated, the material already present which resists.<sup>36</sup> And it is "lifeless," in the sense of being non-dialectical, because it is not self-moved," does not [itself] bring about distinction within its essential nature; does not [thereby] attain to essential opposition or unlikeness; and hence involves no transition of one opposite element

into its other, no qualitative, immanent movement."<sup>37</sup>

As such, "organic nature has no history; it drops from its universal, -- life, -- immediately into the [phenomenal] individuation of existence without any true self-referring process; and the moments of simple determinateness [discrete stages of growth] and individual living activity [surpassment] which are united in this realization, bring about the process of change merely as a contingent [dependent or conditioned] movement, wherein each plays its own part and the whole is preserved. But the energy thus exerted is restricted, so far as itself is concerned, merely to its own fixed center, because the whole is not present in it; and the whole is not there because the whole is not as such here for itself [i.e., self-consciously]."<sup>38</sup>

Nature in itself, then, has no phenomenology. And it has no phenomenology because it is already completely self-possessed whether or not, for instance, the germ has actually become a sprout, tree, fruit etc..<sup>39</sup> And this is the case because there is no conscious self in nature to whom the actual phases of its growth need be presented as integral parts of its self-recollection and self-building ("Bildung"). Nature is always complete, and so, has no history because its very Being is mere potentiality and utter necessity. It erupts ("drops")

into the world without thereby being defined in any essential way by that self-eruption (the determinism of genetic "pre-formation") and it then responds automatically to changing conditions through the mechanism of natural selection (the determinism of biological evolution). In either case, there is never a question of essential or self-constituting change, of alternatives and of choices made for articulate reasons.

Instead of presenting itself as history, then, nature, for Hegel, must present a cosmos of organized space<sup>40</sup> where things not only stay essentially what they are but maintain determinate relations with all other things -- relations of the inert, indifferent, mutually exclusive sort such as characterize numbers in a mathematical series.<sup>41</sup> Within this ordered whole and with respect to the stages of growth through which any living thing is forced, here too the relations of quantity or externality apply. For mere life, far from opposing, struggling with and taking up its preceding embodiments shows only an unhindered succession by which previous shapes are simply outgrown and discarded.<sup>42</sup> (A man, for example, through the faculties of memory and imagination, carries with him, in their fullness, the youth, the boy, the infant in the womb, but an oak tree can never be an oak tree and an acorn simultaneously. As acorn, it surpasses itself to form an oak and as oak it must physi-

cally double itself, extrude from itself another acorn in order to have itself again.) Hence while there is no dialectic of self and other, no essential "re-collection" of previous forms and so no history in nature, there is, at the very least, motion. And where there is motion there is time. The time of nature, or of simple succession, however, can not be the time of spiritual possibilities. For, unlike history, it takes its rise entirely in the past (necessity), emerges to an already formulated present, and without engendering a future, returns once more to its source. This, for Hegel, is time in the eternal round, the time of the perpetually self-repeating cycle, and it is precisely through this tedium of time that nature, even in its highest forms, can be said to stay forever what it is.<sup>43</sup>

The life of nature, considered "in itself" is, as so often depicted in mythic conception, an unthinking recurrence of essentially the same. But nature conceals a second aspect -- the aspect of "being-for-another;" for at some point nature actually brings forth a human consciousness which transforms nature into an object of thought. It is as object, rather than as simple Being, that nature arrives both at a selfhood and at real temporality; as object that it enters the dialectic of revealed existence or "experience."<sup>44</sup> But experience, while it always demands an object, is directly the possess-



ion only of an other, of an other who perceives. Nature's self, then, is outside of itself, is opposed to itself and as outside or opposed, its stance is immediately negative. It is this immediately negative entity, this "not-being" or "no-thing-ness" which Hegel calls Spirit -- the second phenomenological principle to which we must now turn.<sup>45</sup>

#### D) The Concept of Spirit

In a significant passage from the Lectures, Hegel characterizes Spirit "as that which [unlike matter] has its center in itself."<sup>46</sup> By this Hegel means that Spirit is self-constituting existence; that it refers to, is dependent upon, itself alone, and that as such it is free. But a free existence is always a self-conscious existence. To perceive only, to have knowledge of an externality or of self through an externality, is not free independence, but the condition of animal or slavish consciousness still immersed in what is given to it. Free existence must know and see only itself and in this, says Hegel, it will find a complete satisfaction.<sup>47</sup> But to have knowledge of self, involves more than a simple appreciation or recalling of one's nature.<sup>48</sup> There must also be an active energy enabling the self to exhibit itself; a will to make actual, and so real for cognition, what is only potentially its nature. Spirit's center is within itself, but as such it is not immediately in the world and so long as it is thus self-contained, it can not be a

property of mind.

To be present for itself in the form of a world, Spirit or intelligence is driven to the act. This is the first of the great powers by which Spirit is distinguished from what is merely natural.<sup>49</sup> For in acting there is radical transformation-- the production of what is strange and opposed which breeches the boundaries of merely cyclical change. Spirit, in itself, is the negative essence, the absence in a center, or the being which is not. By this Hegel means that Spirit is desire. But in contrast to any natural appetite for what is already there, Spirit is desire for what it has made; a desire, that is, for recognition or for the objective confirmation of its subjective idea.<sup>50</sup> In action such confirmation is given; for the idea, delivered over to the object, is retained by the self in concrete perception. Acts of this character are, of course, not those of simple consumption. As they appear in history, they take the form first of fighting (for glory) and then of language and work. Of all possible actions only these are strictly Spiritual, for only these both oppose and sublate what is given in the world (particular being) and what is there in the self (universal nothingness). Nevertheless, to act is not sufficient for Spiritual progress. For fighting, work and speech go beyond themselves; are in the transitory element; for the incompetent, ill-attain their

aim; are subject to the negating acts and interpretations of others; and therefore give rise to a profound ambiguity. It is this ambiguity, the resistance and semblance of the real, which is overcome and illumined in self-conscious reflection -- the second great power of Spirit.<sup>51</sup>

Before we may proceed on this point, however, a source of confusion should be allayed. We have already defined reflection generically as "re-presentation" or as the action of giving an entity back to itself in a state that has been mediated through consciousness. This being the case, however, two kinds of reflection are possible. The first is the reflection of the deductive understanding or of analysis in which an ideal totality is differentiated for knowledge into explicitly existing parts.<sup>52</sup> The reflection of which Spirit is initially capable, however, is the reflection of "thinking" or conceiving -- the reflection that extracts the essence from a sensuously complex existent.<sup>53</sup> With respect to Spiritual development, then, to reflect, as also to enact, is to annul a specific or particular empirical reality. But where action (taken objectively) merely replaces or reutilizes existing structures (i.e., negates them totally and indiscriminately), conception raises them to the dignity and universality of a notion.<sup>54</sup> Here, in the form of "determinate simplicity," shorn of the historically

adventitious and idiosyncratic, they are organized in Spirit's own proper element and stored for Spirit's self-recollection.<sup>55</sup> In the notions of ~~thought~~, then, the enactments of time do not perish essentially or for knowledge. But while, in this way, the contents of our historical acts are raised to abstraction, they do not, thereby, achieve a splendid isolation from the world. To the extent that they bring new substance to the idea of self (the idea which Spirit strives to embrace in explicit self-knowledge), they are obliged again and again to re-enter the show of time in the form of higher and more encompassing projects of self-presentation. As goals or projects, however, they once more relinquish their status as past, and as projected into the indefiniteness of a new future lose their clarity and truth as philosophic reflections.<sup>56</sup>

The definite rhythm of historical or Spiritual progress, then, is clear. Action results in self-knowledge which results in renewed action at a higher level.<sup>57</sup> Or re-stated in the subjective terms which Hegel prefers,

history is the process of becoming in terms of knowledge [in which] Spirit [through its nature transforming acts, is] externalized and emptied into Time. [As such Spirit's self-development] presents a slow procession and succession of spiritual shapes, a gallery of [self-drawn] portraits, each of which moves so slowly just for the reason that the self [in conceiving or re-collecting itself], has to permeate and assimilate

all this wealth of its [enacted empirical] substance. In thus concentrating itself on itself [conceiving the meaning of its acts], Spirit is engulfed in the night of its own self-consciousness; its vanished [empirical] existence is, however, conserved therein [in memory]; and this superseded existence -- the previous state, but born anew from the womb of knowledge [born from the newly expanded idea of self] -- is the new state of existence, a new world, and a new embodiment or mode of Spirit. [As such] Spirit begins ...again its formative development starting [as always] solely from itself, [but from itself taken] at a higher level.<sup>58</sup>

As in the case of the movement of nature, this pattern of Spiritual motion can be presented in terms of a distinct structure of time. For Hegel, time is simply that which differentiates space, or stated more precisely, time is the structural design of space.<sup>59</sup> If nothing existed there would be no time, or rather, time would be equivalent to mere space in as far as it would present itself without distinctions or all at once.<sup>60</sup> Given, however, that there is something rather than nothing, the question hinges upon the special properties of the being in space; for space is capable of being organized in an infinite number of ways, each organization giving rise in turn to a corresponding structure and dimensional primacy of time. Where there are things alone, things which exist in view of their simple spatial presence, only the now of temporal succession is articulated.<sup>61</sup> Where, on the other hand, we have living things, or at least individuals as yet predetermined by the "entelecheia" of

a species, the now or present of being at all and the past of the genetic (or cultural) memory are established giving us a round of time which oscillates perpetually between necessity and new embodiments.<sup>62</sup> Finally, as in the case of Spiritual things, there is the existence or rather the real or present nothingness of rational desire which posits the further dimension of a free and fortuitous future.<sup>63</sup> As with merely living things, the properties of Spirit articulate a past, but the past here is altogether fuller and freer to the extent that Spiritual memory, as a property of both individuals and the collective, is self-conscious and so directly additive and alterable. The order of succession of the several dimensions of Spiritual time is future (implicit unity or self-identity), past (real difference or negativity), present (explicit synthesis or totality). Or, more fully spelled out, action, taking its rise entirely in the future, in the desire for what is only a possibility, for what is not yet existent and so purely implicit, nihilates, on the basis of the totality of its past efforts, its immediately preceding present (sends it into the past) in order to realize its future as a new present. But this present, which is always a present about to become a past, contains the seeds or idea of a new future -- a future which is the essence of that present as conceived in Spiritual reflection.<sup>64</sup>

From what has been said about Spiritual development, it is plain, that, while nature needs only itself -- has and will always undertake its process in complete indifference to Spirit and its works -- Spirit's "life and activity [demands] a material already present [a given being to which it may oppose itself and] on which it [may] act."<sup>65</sup> As such, what is "self-contained" about Spiritual existence, what it provides solely out of itself once in the world, is not the content of time or time as it actually appears, -- that terrible and fleeting "spectacle of 'wrecks confusedly hurled'" -- but time taken as a determinate structure revealing a determinate goal.<sup>66</sup> About the goal of Spiritual development we have said something already in connection with the logical Idea. There it was established that a process which seeks to actualize a latent content, or which takes a definite nature through all the conceivable conditions of its concrete existence while recollecting them, must inevitably end in itself or at that point from which it began (though in a condition now of conceptual or explicit "re-presentation").<sup>67</sup> The development of Spirit or rational self-consciousness, then, is not a "straight line drawn out into vague infinity, but the circle of a finite process returning within itself."<sup>68</sup> It is the precise character and conditions of this return, the point of Spirit's long development that actually seals and completes the circle that we have still to establish. And

in order to do this we must first provide a description of the noetic condition of Spirit's point of departure.

This point Hegel calls "sense-experience" -- that pristine state where the content of mind is still the object of simple perception. About this content, Hegel makes two points: first, that it is a "knowledge of the immediate [or] of what is" -- knowledge of the multiplicity of sensuous detail; second, that it is such knowledge because, as simple object, it is transferred to the life of self unconditioned by any power of-mind.<sup>69</sup> The content that the self possesses in this way, then, "has [necessarily] the same [quality] of uncomprehended [and] passive indifference which existence has."<sup>70</sup> Self, accordingly, is noetically indistinguishable from the other, enjoys a complete harmony with it. The point which Hegel wishes to make about sense perception, then, is that in committing itself to the existent (or other) for knowledge, it, nevertheless, retains itself in the certitude of what is directly its own. The difference which is to characterize the entirety of Spiritual development beyond this point, the difference between being and thought, object and subject, presentation and "re-presentation," does not as yet exist for mind because mind, as sense-consciousness, does not as yet exist for itself.

To return to this stage of sense-experience, to



the certainty and security of immediate self-unity in the knowledge of the other, is the goal of all subsequent Spiritual development.<sup>71</sup> There can, however, be a return to such naive simplicity only in a formal sense. Once difference has broken out, it alters forever the element in which self can know and embrace itself. As self-consciously opposed to the given, mind finds its relations to the world and to itself now of a mediated, rather than immediate, nature.<sup>72</sup> To return, then, is simply to go on "enriching the share self-consciousness has in consciousness,"<sup>73</sup> raising the contents of sensuous apprehension to intellectual comprehension until its own and external "being is entirely mediated, is a conceptual content that is...directly in possession of the ego, has the character of [true] self, is notion."<sup>74</sup> Where the immediate identity of sense-consciousness was possible because all was essentially being, the identity of absolute knowledge becomes possible when all is essentially self -- the unity of an empty power of perception presenting the fullness of what is given, re-creates itself in the undivided simplicity of self-reflection in which all is an ecology of thought.

### Conclusion

The actual knowledge of the immanent conceptual organization of being and self, which the experience of history aims to disclose, simultaneously constitutes and

satisfies the speculative rationality or criterion of circularity by which we judge absolute knowing. History, as Hegel demonstrates, is a kaleidoscopic process in which a mere possibility of free self-conscious personality explores the full implications of its nature through the givenness of its external world. History is over, then, when everything non-human (i.e., nature as well as initial human nature) has been transformed through the act and brought to a determinate conception. The knowledge of all such concepts, systematically organized as a reflection of the process of category formation itself, is the Concept of concepts or the totality of what (in principle) can be known.<sup>75</sup> The link between categorical knowledge and history, then, is absolute in the double sense that while knowledge is impotent, if not impossible, without action in history (the material process of finite self-othering), history is meaningless and so not a process at all without categories (the return of the other to self). Hence, while there might be empirical indications that our acts in the world are now no longer essentially transformative and while this might lead to a feeling of absolute finality or of the future drowned in the cup of the past, this, of itself, is not sufficient to proclaim the termination of history. For the end of history cannot be actual unless it is also rational. And it is only rational, in the strict sense,<sup>76</sup> when we have

come, through history, to a comprehension of the syllogistic or circular structure of both knowledge and selfhood. What is fundamental to our accurate assessment of a termination of historical process, then, is not any sense of the futility of our acts, any frustration over their incalculable consequences or any apparent weariness for rolling the die of conquest and empire yet again. What is essential is the processional series of self-reflections which, freed from the semblance and contingency of the historical landscape, self-organize into systematic conceptual knowledge. The coherency, circularity or explicit unity of this knowledge, as the infinite ideality of all finitudes, is what constitutes our unimpeachable criterion. And it is only when we are satisfied on this account that we are safe in looking to the actual world for its necessary and, indeed, temporally prior political, religious and aesthetic correlatives.

In whatever substantive ways these correlative forms ultimately appear, in the most general sense, they will have to be indicative both of the gradual disappearance of the historical forms of mastery and other-centered consciousness, and of the gradual onset of the post-historical forms of relationality that are recursive, reciprocal and infinitely self-implicating. And again, the context for their appearance will have ultimately to

be the planet taken as global or ecumenical state. About this state, first as conceived in the Philosophy of Right and then as actually constituting itself in the contemporary world, we shall speak in the following two chapters. In particular, and as it comes up for analysis in the second of these, the theory of the state will become increasingly indistinguishable from the theory of technology. History too will take on a fundamentally new meaning as a reflection of technical radicalization. For the moment, however, it is sufficient to point out that the transition to politics and the state is already implicit in the connection between history and wisdom articulated above. The state, for Hegel, is the physical protagonist of history, the cultural and territorial locus of the dialectic of master and slave. Again, it is from the state that history, as rational process, first takes its rise, for only in the form of social organization that is the state do we find the operations of a non-arbitrary or universal political will. The conflict of state principles in history, then, both informs and parallels the equally agonistic phenomenological road to self-knowledge. As such, when that knowledge freely announces itself to be complete, we should expect its possessor to be standing not only at the end of history, but on the brink of enfranchisement as a citizen of the universal world state.

Appendix A

As Hegel develops the problem in the Philosophy of Nature, space and time are related as two forms of nature's "self-externality," the one being "positive," the other "negative" (S. 253).

The first or immediate determination of Nature is Space: the abstract universality of Nature's self-externality, self-externality's mediationless indifference. It is a wholly ideal side-by-sideness because it is self-externality; and it is absolutely continuous, because this asunderness is still quite abstract, and contains no specific difference within itself. (S. 254)

As with the initial "determinations" or proto-concepts of the Logic (Being and Nothing), the Philosophy of Nature begins with the most abstract of all possible categories -- categories taken now, however, not as logical determinations, but as immediate existents. Space, for Hegel, is this initial pure externality and as such it is merely abstract continuity which does not, as yet, harbour the structural determinations of its explicit negation. Space, it is true, "as in-itself the Concept," contains the differences of the Concept (S. 255); but the negation of space, confined merely within space, produces only the "indifferent asunderness" of spatial dimensions (height, length, breadth) and geometrical figurations (point, line, plane) which again and again lose their apartness in the absolute referencelessness of the continuity of parts of space. Space, then, for all its efforts, is as yet only a latent possibility of discrete

or relative place. It is only the introduction of time which turns the in-itself negativity of space into the self-relating negativity of succession by which determinations are permitted to stand apart.

Time, as the negative unity of self-externality, is similarly an out-and-out abstract, ideal being. It is that being which, inasmuch as it is, is not, and inasmuch as it is not, is: it is Becoming, directly intuited; this means that differences, which admittedly are purely momentary, i.e., directly self-sublating, are determined as external, i.e., as external to themselves. (S. 258)

Time is still a form of abstract externality, for as what is (present), it continues to be only by extruding (externalizing) itself as what is not (future or past). But it is also a form of negative self-relation to the extent that time returns to itself through the externality (futurity) of what it is not (yet). In the movement of what is into what is not and of what is not into what is, we have the becoming of time as such. And in the immediate resolution of these two movements (in their interpenetration and paralysis), becoming is posited as the determinate unity or equilibrium point of the temporal Now (S. 259). The Now, according to our intention, is exclusive of all other moments (past nows, future nows); but it is also, and at the same time, inextricably wed to the succession of all other moments, and having no other determination than the nowness of every other Now, it too loses itself once more in

"side-by-side" indifference.

Both time and space, then, taken simply in themselves and apart, are abstractions which only ought to be determinate. As such, their differences are for thought alone and melt into nothingness. But while space is transformed into time (negative self-relation) through the positing of an explicit other (determinate difference) and time, in spite of itself, returns to spatial continuity through the collocation of ultimately indistinguishable nows, it is in and as their relational unity that the implicitly negative content of space (the point) is posited, through the further negation of succession, as determinate place (S. 260). The original positivity (indifferent continuity) of space, then, is broken up as the negation of the negation or return to equality-with-self that takes place when abstract temporal succession gains the stability of spatial reference. The resultant unity of time and space, of Here and Now, combines and further specifies the unique qualities of both. First, as the immediate identity and concrete existence of space-time, place is matter; and second, as their ongoing transition into one another, place is motion or the capacity to become other place through temporal self-reference.

Time, then, is indistinguishable from space until it is grasped as space's own negative self-reference.

Both time and space self-analyse into moments of continuity and discreteness; but while the continuity of space consists in the undisturbed positivity of endless expanse, the continuity of time is the onrushing negativity of indeterminate nows passing to and from non-being. Time, as we have demonstrated, introduces into space an explicit negation and from this follows the limit and otherness of determinate place or of matter in motion. Time, then, is most perspicuously beheld as space demarcated and zoned, or as space determinately organized.

Having said this, however, we should not forget that time, despite poetic misrepresentations, is real only as a determination of finite being. Finitude has priority over temporality in the sense that its own process engenders or brings time upon itself (S. 258). The question, then, is that of how finitude gives rise to time, or of how its intrinsic properties/limits specifically organize the temporality of the spatial continuum. A complete answer to this would amount to a natural and philosophical science of time, the species of which could well be inexhaustible. In any case, while space is the prior or unspoken condition of all determinacy, time is the determinacy of space as such, whether as a result of overtly physical or noetic structures. (Strictly speaking, then, both Kojève and



Koyré are wrong in asserting that Hegel's system is primarily a philosophy of time. It is a philosophy of finitude and externality; one of the determinations of which happens to be time.)

#### Appendix B

While this is certainly the structure of historical time or the time of the project which realizes radically new possibilities, it is not the only time of human experience or definitive of that experience as such. Human time consciousness is, in fact, three-fold -- the time of phenomenology forming the discursive bridge that links and articulates the other times. The structure of Hegel's Concept, as well as the investigations of modern ethnology and anthropology, indicate the existence of a pre-historical time consciousness or a time of myth. Here the future (essence) of historical time does not emerge. Man dwells immediately in the being of both nature and custom and so is at every moment reliving and celebrating the past of his mythic origins. But with the objectification of myth in the alienated language of script, man enters the time of organized states, of philosophical discourse, of differentiated egos and historical projects. This time, however, is not final time either. As the time of Essence (futura), it has still to reconcile itself with the time of Being (myth) and this it does at the end of history in the time.

of the Concept (eternal present). The time of the Concept is the "reenchantment" of the world, the "re-mythologizing" of language and time so far as this is possible after millenia of history and nihilistic discourse. What it entails is the thinking of the world, language and time in relation to the infinity or recursive ideality of the system. Here, in the circularity of complete conception, every being, utterance and moment necessarily implies or can be negatively developed into every other. As such every determination has an infinite self-reference, an infinite power of suggestion which reaches both beyond and within itself to the totality of the divinely human.

While the whole of Hegel's work is an analysis of the historical phase of human development, one source of material on pre-historical time consciousness can still be found in his Lectures on the Philosophy of History (Introduction). Other sources rich in suggestion for the three-fold structure thesis are Ernst Cassirer on language, myth and science and Eric Voegelin on the order of history. The most explicit statement of this thesis outside of Hegel, however, remains the work of Raimundo Panikkar. See his articles "The End of History: The Threefold Structure of Human Time-Consciousness" in T.M. King and J.F. Salmon (eds.), Teilhard and the Unity of Knowledge, Paulist Press, New York, 1983 and "Colligite

Fragmenta: For an Integration of Reality" in F.A. Eigo (ed.), From Alienation to At-Oneness, Villanova University Press, 1977.

### Notes

#### Key to Editions Used

- Logic Hegel, G.W.F., Hegel's Logic: translated by Wm Wallace; Oxford University Press, 1982. First part of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences.
- PN Hegel, G.W.F., Hegel's Philosophy of Nature: translated by A.V. Miller; Oxford University Press, 1970. Second part of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences.
- HP Hegel, G.W.F., Lectures on the History of Philosophy reprinted in On Art, Religion, Philosophy: edited by J. Glenn Gray, Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1970.
- PM Hegel, G.W.F., The Phenomenology of Mind: translated by J.B. Baillie; Harper Colophon Books, New York, 1967.
- PH Hegel, G.W.F., The Philosophy of History: translated by J. Sibree; Dover Books, New York, 1956.
- PR Hegel, G.W.F., The Philosophy of Right: translated by T.M. Knox; Oxford University Press, 1971.
- RH Hegel, G.W.F., Reason in History: translated by R.S. Hartman; Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis, 1976.
- Kojeve Kojève, Alexander, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: translated by James H. Nichols, Jr.; Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1980.

- 1 Philosophy of Mind, translated by Wm Wallace and A.V. Miller (Oxford University Press, London, 1970), S. 575-6-7.
- 2 These are the arguments about Hegel's later attempts to reformulate the role of the Phenomenology in light of the Encyclopaedia or system as a whole. One might simply ask, however, what becomes of any introduction to a system once we move beyond the level of introduction to embrace the system itself. The introduction remains, so to speak, the exit from the cave, and while it is the necessary training ground for those already sojourning in the light of absolute knowing, once there, it ceases to perform for them any necessary function and is even, perhaps, something of an embarrassment. Nevertheless, if we must return to the cave for educative and political purposes, the value of the Phenomenology, as a handbook to the entire range of pneumo-pathologies, is inestimable.
- 3 This, of course, does not deny that the act is preceded by the intuition or in-itselfness of the logical whole.
- 4 Besides Hegel's system as a whole, two good, yet very different, statements of the logical dependence of Hegel's epistemological claims on the end of history can be found in Kojeve, chapter 4 and in Raymond Plant, Hegel An Introduction (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1983), chapter x.
- 5 A good short account of these can be found in Stanley Rosen, G.W.F. Hegel (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1974). The long account, with frequent references to Hegel's German precursors, is J. Hyppolite, Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit (Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1974).
- 6 Kojeve, pp. 213-15.
- 7 It should be born in mind here that the "show" or "appearance" of being, its "for self" or "reflection" involves at least three levels of unconscious mediation before it is ever explicitly conceived in thought. The "true object" is constituted as appearance through

the perceptual optics of the species, through the world view of a cultural group and through the experiential framework of the individual. About this we need not worry unduely, however, for truth (reality), as Hegel says, is exactly what we have, seeing that we can have no other. PM, pp. 142-3.

- 8 Although we have stated the problem from the objective side, what we mean by the "objective real" both here and in what is to follow is the unity in consciousness of subject and object, or the interdependence of the in-itself and for-itself by which a transcendental framework for the appearance of objects is made possible.
- 9 Logic, S. 88, p. 132.
- 10 John Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy (The Macmillan Company, London, 1930), pp. 132-41, fragments 42 and 20.
- 11 Ibid, fragment 81.
- 12 Logic, S. 88, p. 131.
- 13 Cp. Kojeve, p. 150.
- 14 Unless, of course, we take the position of Parmenides in which 1) Being simply is, fixed and ultimate, and 2) our presentation of it through the senses, as in motion, is discounted as a lie. But this position taken alone is absurd. For Being obviously includes man who is not only conscious of motion, but speaks of Being discursively or in time. How this arises in a static cosmos is quite unexplainable. Cp. Kojeve, p. 213.
- 15 PM, pp. 80-1.
- 16 RH, p. 32.
- 17 Logic, S. 84 and 107, p. 157. Being's complete characterization is reached in "Measure" -- i.e., in the system of limits and duties it dispenses for itself in and as time and space. One of the most illuminating

accounts of this process is given in Cornford's study of early Greek myth and religion. There he speaks of a wholly impersonal "Moirai" (cp. the predicates of Hegel's Being) setting the "Damos" (provinces and functions) of the gods and thereby establishing "Dike" (cp. Hegel's Measure). For the myth of the "Diakosmesis" see From Religion to Philosophy (Humanities Press, Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1980), chapter 1, especially S. 4-15.

- 18 Kojeve, pp. 134ff.
- 19 For the Idea, unlike Spirit, the only action or doing or realizing of self that can be undertaken, given that it is pure thought, is reflection.
- 20 Logic, S. 112, p. 163.
- 21 In this it becomes apparent why the Phenomenology must be written before the Logic or an ontology. Only the first stage or intuition of the Logic, the stage of ideal self-identity, can be said properly to precede actual existence through which the logical Idea then attains its further stages. Kojeve, pp. 163-4.
- 22 HP, p. 228.
- 23 Ibid, pp. 230, 232.
- 24 That is, the real other it desires to overcome.
- 25 HP, p. 235.
- 26 Ibid, p. 229.
- 27 Logic, S. 99, p. 147.
- 28 PH, pp. 55, 17 and RH, pp. xxiff.
- 29 RH, p. 20; PM, pp. 91, 233, 799; PH, p. 80.
- 30 Hence, Hegel is an idealist just so that he can be a realist, and being a realist, he is necessarily an idealist. Or again, any phenomenology is necessarily realist and any logic idealist -- Hegel's position is what

brings the two together.

31 Kojeve provides a summary of the problem,  
pp. 216-18, 146.

32 Ibid, p. 217. Cp. Logic, S. 194 (2), p. 261.

33 PM, pp. 103, 233, 326, 807; PH, pp. 54-5, 73,  
80; HP, p. 239; RH, p. 21.

34 Kojeve, p. 217.

35 Kojeve's views on this difficult matter  
are worth studying at length. See especially  
pp. 213-14.

36 Or, as Hegel describes it in the Philosophy  
of Nature, nature is complete externality,  
not only with respect to Spirit, but with  
respect to itself; for externality (uncon-  
sciousness) is the very medium in which it  
exists (S. 247).

37 PM, p. 103.

38 Ibid, pp. 326, 327.

39 HP, pp. 229-30.

40 Kojeve, pp. 157-58; PM, p. 807.

41 PM, pp. 103, 107; Logic, S. 99, pp. 146-47;  
PH, pp. 17, 79.

42 PH, p. 54.

43 PH, pp. 54-5, 73; HP, p. 239. It is interesting  
to note that Hegel's account of nature in-  
cludes the essential characteristics of both  
mythic and scientific representation. Myth  
excludes the idea of quantitative relations and  
science ignores the significance of the  
eternal round.

44 PM, pp. 142-3.

45 For the sake of clarity: nature = identity,  
self = negativity, Spirit = totality or self  
in the world. Spirit also = man or self in  
a body which is human nature whether in the  
sense of the individual or collective body.  
Spirit therefore is both the human individual  
and the spirit of a people or age.

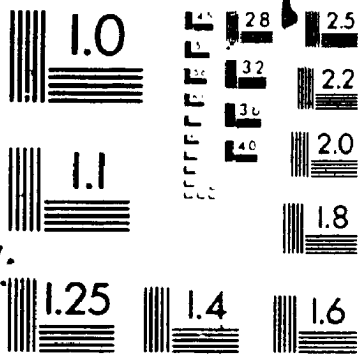
- 46 PH, p. 17.
- 47 PM, pp. 242-43, 138.
- 48 Cp. Plato's "doctrine of reminiscence" in Phaedo.
- 49 PM, p. 793.
- 50 To have objective confirmation of self, however, always involves a risk -- the risk of being outside oneself in a foreign element, the risk of commitment to explicit existence.
- 51 PM, pp. 340-41, 350, 411, 426-27.
- 52 Ibid, pp. 92-3.
- 53 Spirit, of course, is also able to understand, but it can not do so until a conception has first come to light. For Hegel, Spirit carries no preconceived universals when it enters the world which can then be subject to analytic reflection. Rather these universals must first be established through negation in time.
- 54 To negate a reality, whether through action or conception, demands that that reality be, not only particular, but a finite particular. An infinite or universal particular (eg. Jesus Christ, a tribal totem, a functional series) can not be conceived because every aspect of its sensuous presentation is already essential. Perception alone would be the truth in such a case. To have conceptual knowledge of reality, then, is impossible without time. Indeed, conceptual knowledge is time (PM, p. 104). Hence, not only must a reality have the possibility of being destroyed in time, but, for Hegel, there can be no knowledge of it, no truly accurate or complete knowledge, until it has actually been destroyed. Otherwise further development is always possible. This is why the eternal Idea, while it can understand or analyse itself, nevertheless, needs nature and history in order to think itself. Kojeve, pp. 140-43; PR, pp. 12-13; HP, pp. 210-11.



- 55 PM, pp. 242-3.
- 56 PM, p.807.
- 57 Kojeve, p. 164.
- 58 PM, pp. 807-8.
- 59 Cp. RH, p. xxiii.
- 60 See Appendix A.
- 61 "In Nature where time is a Now, being does not reach the existence of the difference of these dimensions [past and future] ; they are of necessity, only in subjective imagination, in rememberance and fear or hope. But the past and future of time as being in Nature, are space, for space is negated time; just as sublated space is immediately the point, which developed for itself is time." PN, S. 259, remark. Kojève seems to have been unaware of this passage and, as a consequence, is led to make a number of incorrect claims about Hegel. The worst of these is that Hegel did not differentiate structures of time, that all time is historical and that, as a result, no form of time can exist apart from speaking man. Kojeve, p. 133. On this last point cp. PN, S. 258 and MA, p. 43.
- 62 Organic necessity establishes a past, unlike the laws of physics, because things do not die or essentially go out of existence (i.e., return to the past). Matter may be transformed into energy. But this is simply itself again. Further, there is no necessity for such a transformation, only the possibility.
- 63 Cp. Kojeve, pp. 133-34.
- 64 See Appendix B.
- 65 HP, pp. 211-12.
- 66 Or put in the Aristotelean frame of reference, which Hegel sometimes used, Spirit (reason) is the formal and final cause of history. And in so far as Spirit is energy it is also the efficient. PH, pp. 12-15.

- 67 If we posit a determinate nature, whatever emerges from it through its acts in the process of time is intrinsically its own, or is self-descriptive, despite any claim to other or better intentions, or complaints about ill luck or inadequate means: "There is nothing for individuality which is not obtained through it: there is no reality which is not its nature and its action, and no action nor inherent substance of individuality which is not real." PM, p. 425.
- 68 HP, p. 234. Cp. PM, p. 289.
- 69 Ibid, pp. 149-50.
- 70 Ibid, p. 91.
- 71 Ibid, p. 806.
- 72 Ibid, pp. 98f; Kojeve, pp. 188-89.
- 73 PM, p. 800.
- 74 Ibid, p. 97.
- 75 That is, the knowledge of the principle of complete circularity beyond which there can only be new manifestations or cycles, but no essentially new principles or categories.
- 76 The end of history would be non-rational or representational as religious apocalypse. Because representations have a peculiar quality of reaching far beyond their immediate context of use, or better, because symbols can potentially reveal truth at any point in history (although in representational form), there can be, in the nature of the case, no religious or poetic criterion for an actual end of history, for there is no way to distinguish, in symbolic expression, prophecy and revelation from fulfillment and incarnation.

# 2



Chapter Three

The Empirically Existing Absolute: Hegel's Theory of the  
State and the Idea of Constitutional Sovereignty

## Introduction

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~In the present chapter our attention turns from logic and metaphysics to Hegel's political thought proper. Here our approach is again somewhat unusual and requires a brief comment. Unlike those who have read Hegel through Kojève and Nietzsche and who concentrate on the radical or existential side of his political ideas, I have chosen, in this chapter, to read Hegel on his social and institutional side and to see his chief contribution to contemporary politics and culture in terms of his theory of the state.<sup>1</sup> One of the consequences of this is to shift attention from earlier writings, like the Phenomenology, to the Philosophy of Right which now becomes the central political text. There are, of course, difficulties attendant upon such a shift. The Philosophy of Right has earned a certain neglect because it is too conservative, too overlaid by the compromises of an ageing philosopher with the political regime that for years supported him and his work. And yet, I believe the esoteric message of the text is sufficiently clear to permit us to read through the compromises and to recognize in them Hegel's attempt to present fundamentally critical principles in a form which would, nevertheless, soothe and ingratiate the vulgar. Again, unlike those who do read the Philosophy of Right, but only to place it within the tradition of political writing on traditional political questions, our approach

interprets the Philosophy of Right through the system as a whole and considers it unintelligible outside of this framework. Hence, argumentation will be found in this chapter which directly parallels portions of the first and second. But what is particularly unorthodox about our approach is the fact that we have chosen to take the Philosophy of Right seriously as a post-historical document. It is meant to be a description of what all historical states could be, but what none of them can be until the end of time as transformative history. This proposition is, I believe, built into the very structure of the Philosophy of Right and will be brought out in due course.

The obverse side of this same proposition is, of course, the principle of dialectical holism or systemic rationality developed in the preceding chapters. It is this that explains the title we have given to this chapter. The state, in Hegel's system, is the empirically existing absolute and, as such, it has an unrelenting theoretical, as well as practical, self-reference to the multitude of acts, aims, speeches and institutions which make up political life. The assertion of absoluteness should not, however, be confused with the pretensions of post 1789 totalitarianisms. While monstrous political arrangements are always real possibilities through ideological abstraction from the system as a whole, it is precisely in Hegel's non-reductionist approach that we come to understand the principle of the modern state as total

rather than totalitarian.<sup>2</sup>

In the third part of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences the theory of the state constitutes the crowning sublation of the section entitled "Objective Mind." For Hegel, the state is an embodiment of reason -- logically, because it is an internally differentiated whole self-conscious of its identity in and through its divisions; phenomenologically, because it is the institutional context of the collective will of finite, reasoning minds in time. As such, the state, through its various offices, is the sole locus of law which is truly universal -- law no longer the assertion of self-will, but objective in codes, procedures and institutions.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, it is the sole place of reasonable judgement where the classification of the particular case is both authoritative in accordance with the law and effective through the collective will.

The state is the actuality of the ethical Idea. It is ethical mind qua the substantial [universal] will manifest and revealed to itself, knowing and thinking itself, accomplishing what it knows and in so far as it knows it. As such the state exists immediately in custom, mediately in individual self-consciousness, knowledge, and activity.<sup>4</sup>

Hegel's treatment of the state in the Philosophy of Right is divided into three main sections which correspond to the three logical moments of the Concept (Universality, Particularity, Individuality). As such, the Idea of the state:

a) has immediate actuality and is the individual state as self-dependent organism -- [here the Idea is actual as the existing] constitution or constitutional law [as the abstract universal sanction of the ordered arrangements of the state];

b) passes over into the relation of one state to other states -- International Law [the dialectic of the particular national minds -- the content of the philosophy of history];

c) is the universal Idea as a genus and as an absolute power over individual states -- the mind which gives itself its actuality in the process of world history [the process by which the state, now as world mind and (in principle) ecumenical state, returns to the first moment a) by fully realizing its implicit potential (the principle of constitutional order)].<sup>5</sup>

In moment a) the state is posited both as an existing totality and as a principle of order. It is to be considered first on its internal side or in abstraction from the necessary developmental condition of interstate conflict (part b)). As such, Hegel's interest in a) is not with questions of historical variety, but with the essential or enduring components of the state which make it recognizable as such despite the distortions of particular arrangements. Hegel's paragraphs dealing with the constitution of the state, then, have to be read both as an abstract analysis of the finite historical state (in the sense that it presents its concealed rational or dialectical possibilities) and as a concrete description in principle of the infinite or post-historical state. This is the case precisely because Hegel has already worked his way conceptually through all the moments of part b) (i.e., in the Philosophy of History). And having arrived at



c) (the moment of universal singularity) he is in a position to recall the totality of those moments and declare philosophic discourse about the state complete. (Once again, we note the ultimate circularity and collapsing back of the categorical structure of the Concept, of how it lends to the division of a subject matter a linear, as well as a recursive dimension.)

The subsequent paragraphs of the Philosophy of Right reflect this immanent division in a quantitative as well as in a qualitative sense. The vast bulk of material sets forth the inner divisions and concrete internal relations of the principle of the state. A relatively tiny number of paragraphs then deal with this principle on its external side -- with the nature of relations between states and with the conflict of states in world history. Finally, in the last two paragraphs, self-consciousness formally achieves "the actuality of its substantive knowing and willing" and stands precariously on the brink of a movement forward into the realm of absolute Spirit. Nevertheless, about the state, or the substantive context of the absolute, everything has already been said. The final two sections of the Philosophy of Right are strictly pro forma.

#### A) The State and Ethical Life

Before we take up the necessary internal order of the state, however, a word must be said about the different levels at which Hegel employs the concept. In the sense that

it has been used so far, Hegel's state refers to something not unlike the modern concept of political culture.<sup>6</sup> This, the most encompassing sense of the term, refers to the complete range of a society's conduct, values, ideals and institutions as unified and informed by some central cultural principle or insight (for Montesquieu, the "national genius"). Here the state signifies the totality of human life in so far as it is the life of spiritual beings within a politically organized community. At the other extreme is Hegel's use of the term to designate "the strictly political state and its constitution."<sup>7</sup> Here the state refers to the objective political arrangements -- the division of powers and functions, the assignment of offices, the structure of representation, the role of public opinion -- or to everything that directly impinges on the daily administration of the community's affairs. Finally, between these two, encompassing the latter, while in continuous, intimate self-reflection in the former, is Hegel's notion of the state as "ethical substance" or "Sittlichkeit."

The use of the term "substance" to describe the ethical nature of life in the state has led a number of commentators to point out what they believe is a lack of logical fitness in Hegel's argument. Given that the Philosophy of Right is consciously structured so as to reflect the three doctrines of the Logic and that "ethical life" is the third and

culminating principle of that work, we should expect its analysis to proceed through the determinations of the doctrine of the Concept. Why, then, this constant lapse into substance-- a category of the doctrine of Essence? The explanation for this becomes apparent in the way we have already sought to present Hegel's different senses of the term "state." As we move from Hegel's notion of the state as a cultural totality to that of an ethical community to that finally of the objective constitutional arrangements, we discern a corresponding decrease in the scope of the principle such that the idea of the state becomes an increasingly less adequate expression of the nature of mind. In the fully developed idea of political culture we have the state in the form of a pure thought in the sense of a freely manifested principle of order. To contemplate the state at this level, then, is to provide the spectacle of thought essentially engaged with itself as its own content. In the strictly political state, by contrast, we reach the pole of materiality and so have an idea of the state largely intractable and unresponsive to mind. State institutions and the human bodies that man them stand in the natural world of spatial relations and are thus, to this extent, most amenable to analysis in terms of the categories of Being. With the state understood as ethical community we stand, as it were, between political culture and the political constitution in a position of mediation and reflection. Here we are concerned

with the substantial basis of institutions in the citizen's subjective affirmation of objective rights and duties. We are concerned, therefore, with correlative notions, with notions that do not explicitly achieve the absolute reflection of pure thoughts because they have not as yet organized themselves into a total coherent picture. At the level of the ethical order a community's aesthetic, religious and philosophical traditions do not as yet form an explicit part of its understanding and as such its reflections maintain an element of externality.

Though there are grounds to justify Hegel's use of the category substance in connection with ethical life, in what remains of our analysis we shall follow the usual "Conceptual" division of the subject. It is often remarked that Hegel's concept of the state as "Sittlichkeit" derives from his study of the principle of Greek culture, particularly as it was formulated in the works of Plato. In the Philosophy of Right, however, we find a more complex idea at work -- one which brings together both ancient and modern principles. To understand the meaning of Hegel's "Sittlichkeit," then, we must first briefly account for the principles of which it is composed -- principles which it also essentially transforms.

The introduction, or better transition, to ethical life is made through the category of "morality." This is the principle of "subjective individuality;" the driving

force of western civilization since the fracturing of the compactness of Greek political consciousness in universal empire and revealed religion. At work here is the self-directed particularity of the will, moral determinations (resolves, imperatives, acts) arrived at through inner conviction or the "intuitions of the heart." As Hegel points out, however, these determinations are inadequate to their author's intent in two senses. First, there is no absolute (i.e., concrete intersubjective) ground to make them authoritative; and second, since they are purely internal in origin, they inevitably falter (as resolves) or go astray (as acts) before the intractability of the external world, remaining in a condition of what only "ought to be." The importance of the modern principle remains, however, the undeniable right of subjective consciousness to reflect upon what is given as authoritative and so to posit it in (give it the form of) the personal will.

The other of the two principles from which ethical life develops first appears, in the Philosophy of Right, in the form of "abstract right;" abstract because still lacking an explicit social context in which it can be generally recognized. Following the speculative analysis of the will as a mere infinity of possibilities<sup>8</sup> which must particularize or posit limits to itself in order to be at all,<sup>9</sup> Hegel sets forth the content of abstract right as follows:

a) because, having is a necessary precondition of being (or again because the self or will is present only as an organization of material space), the will (as determinate) devolves an absolute right of possession. Immediately, this is the right to the exclusive use of one's body, the right not to be enslaved or violently manipulated. Mediatly, or with reference to objects that are relatively external to the body and its attributes, this is the right of appropriation and private property. Together these two rights, as conditions for the ongoing resistance of the will to its inherent nothingness, constitute human personality (in the abstract "legal" sense of the person).

b) Because material nature is pure and simple externality, it is never subject to the unconditional reduction and appropriation of the will. Some part of it always remains beyond self-reflection and as such is subject to the contingencies of the common world. The right of appropriation and of private property, accordingly, remains unconditional, but not the right to any particular property. The will must express itself if it is to know itself, but there is no necessity that it do so through this specific thing rather than that. From this develops the possibility of the loss or transfer of property, and when this is set upon a basis of mutual agreement, the right of contract.<sup>10</sup>

c) Given the infinite freedom of the will and the

absolute right of appropriation,<sup>11</sup> there follows the possibility that contracts may not be kept. This, the unifying tertiary moment, yields the inherently unstable principle of the right to commit wrong. But this "right," as self-contradictory, has no ultimate reality. It disappears in the transition to "morality" which is now made possible through the awakening subject's awareness of the distance from right the transgression has put him. Reflection enters the picture and what before was a right in the abstract now becomes a matter of moral conviction.

Hegel's assertion that abstract right acts as an authoritative standard for subjective opinion may seem odd in view of the fact that its content appears to consist entirely of material drawn from the arrangements of "civil" or market society. What the tradition prepares us to expect at this point is some onto-theological fact -- usually a theory of natural law. What Hegel gives us instead is a notion derived from an analysis of man himself -- man, however, taken abstractly qua man or in his universal species' condition of finite will.<sup>12</sup> This procedure yields a phenomenologically accurate description of the rational content (or inner determinations) of subjectivity -- a content summarized above as abstract right. But as abstract or as having no explicit social context, subjectivity itself can come to know this content only after it has been educated through the various stages of social organization

which ultimately culminate in concrete right or ethical life.

Ethical life, as the outcome of the preceding development, unites the universality (content) of abstract right with the particularity (form) of subjective morality. Depending on the point of view, the resulting concrete totality can be approached from either of its two sides. On the one hand, "ethical life is a subjective disposition, but one imbued with what is inherently right."<sup>13</sup> On the other, it is an objective ethical order of laws and institutions made internally coherent by the infinite form (conceptual unity) of subjectivity.<sup>14</sup> In the consciousness of the citizen the ethical order both knows itself and is an object of knowledge. In one sense, its laws and powers stand over against the citizen lending him the quality of an accident within its circle of necessity.<sup>15</sup> From his own finite point of view these powers possess an absolute authority and "in the highest sense of self-subsistent being, simply are."<sup>16</sup> But in another sense, there is nothing alien or ultimately intractable about ethical order. As an embodiment of a concept of right derived from the rational, phenomenologically revealed, structure of the human will, it is related to all finite individuals as their true ground. In it they have themselves again, but in such a way that they discover their second nature as free, infinite, ethical beings.<sup>17</sup>

The freedom of ethical life is to be understood in both a negative and a positive sense. In the negative sense of an



absence of external constraints upon the will, ethical life is freedom from dependence on unmediated natural impulse.<sup>18</sup> The educative processes of the ethical order bestow choices and a power of decision upon the individual by placing a cultural barrier between man and nature. This barrier acts to slow the influx of impulse, to restructure it, to permit quiet reflection upon it, and to offer a choice of socially acceptable channels for its expression. Likewise, ethical life is a means of release from the "indeterminate subjectivity" of the individual moral will.<sup>19</sup> The ethical community posits, for the individual, specific moral obligations to which he conforms as a part of a previously established, ongoing concern. His moral will need not languish, then, in a condition of never having had objective confirmation (social recognition) and so of never having been made actual.

In the positive sense of freedom, to which we have already made the transition, the idea is of freedom or capacity for something. In the context of Sittlichkeit this means the freedom to exercise one's capacity for "virtue."<sup>20</sup> This capacity, as already noted, is not explicitly there in the human being from the outset. It is a function of social discipline and cultural training (*bildung*) in the course of which self-will and private conscience align themselves, in the determination of their conduct, with the universal will (established norms and uses) of the collective.<sup>21</sup> When

this universal will is determined and accepted as rational through self-conscious reflection, we have the virtue of the mature and cultured individual.<sup>22</sup> When this will is made palpable to consciousness through the habitual observation and exercise of the duties and functions of one's social position, we have the virtue of custom ("Sitte").<sup>23</sup> Duty, for Hegel, is total in that it defines our social (and so essentially human) nature, but it is never totalitarian. In the citizen's moral obligations and public responsibilities he should expect to find particular satisfaction both in the creative social transformation of instinctual drives<sup>25</sup> and in the right of subjectivity to authorize what is necessary in the existing arrangements by making it a matter of personal conviction.

## B) The Stages of Ethical Life

### i) The Family

The individual's progress toward an ethical existence is mediated by three forms of social organization,<sup>26</sup> none of which may be omitted in the developmental sequence, if the individual's awareness of the ultimate reciprocity of rights and duties, of satisfaction and service, is to be achieved.<sup>27</sup> The first of these forms, phenomenologically, is the family. As the moment of "particular altruism,"<sup>28</sup> it is the initial, and possibly most decisive, training ground of the state sentiment. While the historical state is ultimately born of the family and never entirely loses some affinity to it,<sup>29</sup> the

family only continues to exercise its ethical function within quantitatively determinate and biologically specific limitations. Nevertheless, though lacking the universality, and hence the explicit rationality of the state, the family still shares the ethical imperative of sacrifice and service to something other and larger than the particular ego.

The family, as the immediate substantiality of [ethical] mind, is specifically characterized by love [or] mind's feeling of its own unity. Hence in a family, one's frame of mind is to have [the] self-consciousness of one's individuality [as determined by] this unity, as the absolute essence of oneself, with the result that one is in it not as an independent person but as a member.<sup>30</sup>

The "implicit reason" or love bond of the family demands, from the marriage partners and from their offspring, the gradual renunciation of natural and individual personality.<sup>31</sup> In one sense this is a self-restriction, but again the responsibilities this incurs are also a liberation and the way to the attainment of "substantive self-consciousness." The analysis of the self-renunciation of the love bond is of great importance, but because it largely parallels the development of "being-for-self" in the first part of the Logic we can limit ourselves to a summary statement. In love and the family, the individual gives or loses himself to a totality to which he is subservient and without which he would be deficient or incomplete. In turn, however, this totality posits the individual,<sup>32</sup> determines his limits and establishes his identity (function) in contrast to other identities.<sup>33</sup> As such, the

family is the initial realm of recognition, the initial psychological posing of the other in the reflection of which the self becomes determinately for itself. Nevertheless, the self-consciousness born of the family is ultimately deficient, precisely because it is conditioned by feelings which are finite in scope and natural in origin. The self-consciousness that arises from love is that of the part in its feeling of dependency. The fully unique and autonomous individual must await the next stage of social development.<sup>34</sup>

#### ii) Civil Society

While the family persists in time and space as a collective socio-biological structure, logically (conceptually) and phenomenologically (or with reference to the experiences of individual consciousness), it is only a relative end and must be surpassed. Children (the stage of spiritual immediacy) grow up (achieve varying degrees of discursive or reflexive intelligence) and leave the family to enter the larger totality of social relations. This more encompassing totality is "civil society" or the self-consciousness-of difference which produces the "appearance" of ethical life.<sup>35</sup>

Hegel's treatment of the relations of civil society reflects, to a large degree, the analysis of the human condition we find in Hobbes' Leviathan.<sup>36</sup> Both are descriptions of the newly emergent market society characterized by the instrumental reason of unrepentent egoism.<sup>37</sup> Defined in its

most abstract form, civil society is the arena where the individual acts as a private person who is himself the source and object of every aim and activity.<sup>38</sup> To speak of a form of social organization, then, that would somehow faithfully reflect the antagonistic relations of a totality of such ego-centric wills is ultimately impossible. For the principle of particular egoism, if given free rein (Hobbes' state of nature), is destructive not only of all human sociability, but even of itself (the logical consequence of the war of all against all which must ultimately produce the solitary animal).<sup>39</sup> For Hegel and Hobbes, however, the pathology of self will is regulated by two principles in which the abstracted ego of the state of nature is brought back to its implicit substructure in the ethical absolute. The first of these is the principle of reciprocal limitation/delimitation; the second, that of the concrete interdependence of the system of needs.

As with Hobbes so with Hegel, there is an absolute right of appropriation which proceeds from the finite structure of human will. But the subjective will as particular desires is always already limited in its appropriating activity by the particular desires and embodiments of the other. In being forced to reflect on the intransigence of the other, however, the subject realizes that its own subjectivity (will) has determinate individuality, place and

direction precisely because it is opposed. Opposition, then, is the very condition of its appearing as anything at all. But in a reciprocal fashion, this subject is also the limit set against the self-embodying activity of the other which in opposing or limiting the original subject limits or constitutes itself. From the abstract right of appropriation, then, we arrive at the concrete social or intersubjective right (necessity) of self-determination which includes, as a part of its own intrinsic structure, the recognition of the right (necessity) of determination of the other. This is the absolute obligation of Hobbes' precept of reason that "a man lay down his right to all things; and be contented with so much liberty against other men, as he would allow other men, against himself," raised to speculative clarity.<sup>40</sup>

At the level of civil society, then, the continuance and growth of human sociability depend on the practical limitation of particular will.<sup>41</sup> Only to the extent that each recognizes the right of determinate being of others (i.e., renounces his own right of absolute appropriation), do all have a determinate social or intersubjective existence. The second of our two principles is simply a more rigorously concrete formulation of this same proposition. The recognition of the mutual limitation of self will in civil society becomes the recognition of the dependence of each will on every other will for its personal satisfaction. The, as yet, unobserved

side of desire is need, and when a plurality of such mutually limiting desires is posited, there arises a corresponding system of interrelated needs. While such a system, in more or less inchoate form, always exists, it is only in the realm of self-conscious difference (modern market society) and under the pressure of the analytic refinements of the understanding (modern technique) that needs, and the means to their satisfaction, become sufficiently differentiated to allow individuals to pursue only a few, if not a single, productive function. In the infinite division of needs and labour, subsistence becomes surplus allowing every individual, in principle, to be satisfied. But it is precisely Hegel's point that the pursuit of particular, even narrowly egoistic, satisfaction becomes, in the "infinitely complex, criss-cross movements of reciprocal production and exchange, a contribution to the satisfaction of the needs of everyone else. Each man in earning, producing and enjoying on his own account is eo ipso producing and earning for the enjoyment of everyone else. Through a dialectical advance [then] subjective self-seeking turns into the mediation of the particular through the universal;<sup>42</sup> and in the educating of the individual to an understanding of this fact, the movement can be made to ethical life and the form of the state.

The actual transition to the political state and its constitution is achieved in the Philosophy of Right through

the educative function of the corporation. Just as the family was the first, so the corporation is the second ethical root of the state, the one planted in civil society.<sup>43</sup> Civil society takes its strength as a principle from the dismemberment of the family and from the reduction of true sentiment to an abstract regard for market values and productive functions. Nevertheless, through the sub-conscious workings of the system of needs, order, and ultimately collective order, are reinstated. The solitary individual finds himself a helpless, often insignificant, dependent on the contingencies of commodity production and exchange. Hence, on the one hand, the increasing organization of the system itself, and on the other, the individual's concern for his own immediate welfare, compel all individuals to sacrifice autonomy for the relative security of corporate membership. For Hegel, such membership may take on any number of forms -- the business enterprise, professional guild, special interest group, etc.--nevertheless, the function common to all forms is the pursuit of the well-being of each member through the promotion of the goals of the whole. Corporate membership, then, re-members the initial solidarity of the family, but at a level of infinite social differentiation and as a function of articulate reasoning. Nevertheless, the educative function of the corporation is mostly automatic. In simply finding oneself with a determinate function and status within an associated body the mediation of particular



will is already achieved. Further reflection on this fact acts to prepare the officers of the body (presumably those with maturity of insight) for participation in the organs of the state.

C) The State and the Principle of Constitutional Sovereignty

The details of the actual organization of the state which Hegel presents in paragraphs 273-319 of the Philosophy of Right, strike us today as somewhat dated, if not altogether unoriginal. He speaks of a limited, hereditary monarchy; an executive of ministerial advisors and civil servants constituting a separate "universal class;" a bi-cameral legislative body based on representation from traditional estates (upper house) and corporations (lower house); and a system of "public communication" performing something of a watchdog function. The reasons advanced for these arrangements are not entirely implausible; nevertheless, as arguments over details, they reach beyond what the Concept can strictly authorize and are properly left to the sciences of contingency. What really concerns us here are the principles of organization which Hegel believes these arrangements express. We have noted already that the background of every logically adequate notion is the reflexivity of the syllogism. Its self-generating structure will continue to guide us as we turn now to the convergence of the principles of state order in Hegel's concept of constitutional sovereignty.

The idea of sovereignty, as it comes down from Bodin and Hobbes, defines the ultimate power in the state to make and unmake law. As such, the traditional pre-occupation with the concept was always with locating its source or radiant centre in the state and with providing for its constitutional limits. For Hegel, however, sovereignty has no single source -- its center is everywhere, its periphery or limit nowhere. Recasting the traditional definition only slightly, Hegel tells us that sovereignty is a totality's (state's) inner power of self-determination.<sup>44</sup> He therefore renders more explicit the dialectical elements of intentionality, judgement and reflection which Bodin and Hobbes only implied. The point, however, is that the self-determination of a totality through its sovereign decisions and acts presupposes, in one degree or another, the ideality (sublation of the reality or exclusiveness) of all finitudes within it. For without this sublation, the state does not secure its actual infinity or the reflection of the welfare of all in the aims and activities of each part.<sup>45</sup>

The idealism which constitutes sovereignty is the same characteristic as that in accordance with which the so-called 'parts' of an animal organism are not parts but members, moments in an organic whole, whose isolation and independence spell disease. The principle here is the same as that which came before us in the abstract concept of the will as self-related negativity....Hence, sovereignty brings [it about that] the particular spheres and functions of the state are not something independent, self-subsistent in their aims and modes of working, something immersed solely in themselves, but that instead, even in these aims

and modes of working, each is determined by and dependent on the aim of the whole.<sup>46</sup>

Sovereignty, for Hegel, then, is descriptive of the essential unity and unifying power of the state. But as always with Hegel, there is never unity without at least implied difference. The prodigious strength of the sovereignty of the modern state (as indeed of any thoroughly rational system) is realized in direct proportion to the degree of internal ~~division~~ permitted.<sup>47</sup> The whole, in any case, has power only through the parts. But once the will has achieved a differentiated structure, the maximum harmony and effectiveness of a political system is achieved only to the extent that the autonomous subjectivity of individuals comes to affirm collective ends as none other than the ground or self-conscious reflection of private ends. This, no doubt, sets limits on particularity, but the limits are essentially self-determined. In any case, it is the diffuseness of the sovereign principle in the affirmations and sacrifices of the manifold of individuals which is the essential measure of its rationality and depth.<sup>48</sup>

All of the implications of this notion may not be entirely clear. The diffuseness or lack of an absolute center of sovereignty might lead us to make the claim with Rousseau that sovereignty lies ultimately "with the people." This, of course, is true, but not with the people taken as a mere aggregate of atoms or as an abstract universal substance (the

people as an electoral mass); rather it lies with the people taken as a manifold of differentiated and determinate spheres organized in accord with some immanent structural principle. This is precisely a concrete, as opposed to an abstract, idea of sovereignty. For the people at large always come to a determinate position and exert an influence on governance not as isolated and homogeneous atoms, but as members of larger wholes within larger wholes from which they derive diverse roles and functions. Only through these can they have a stake in, and a growing self-reference to, the order of the ultimate whole.<sup>49</sup>

On a similar basis, we can establish the extent of the individual's participation in the activities of the state. In one sense, or with reference to the state as a whole, participation is direct and universal (corresponding to the direct and universal embodiment of the sovereign principle in the totality of members). Every individual, whether in obeying the laws, in participating in symbolic gestures of public trust, or in limiting private interest through the recognition and acceptance of social responsibilities, makes a direct contribution to the continuance and well-being of the whole. In another sense, however, or with reference to the state as politically constituted, participation is indirect or mediated through more universal organs. This is the case simply because it is impossible for every individual to perform every function unless every function could somehow be

reduced to a common level with every other. But if all can not directly function in the roles of government, then who, in particular, should? Hegel's basis for this discrimination is again his criterion of universality. No particular individual is barred from public office, or, for that matter, from consideration in the election of deputies and officers of strictly social and economic bodies. But every individual who does attain public office should be a deputy or officer of a socially articulated body with a proven record of public service. Hegel's reason for this is that only in attending to responsibilities broader in scope than one's own immediate concerns can one come to recognize the common cause of all society and thus qualify for a direct role in the operations of the political state. One would speculate, then, that recruitment for the state's legislative and executive offices would proceed on the basis of some fluid empirical grid establishing the relative universality of different strata of association and of offices within each strata. Advancement to a higher level would then be a function either of conspicuous merit or of spontaneous election from a peer group.

#### D) The State and Civil Society

A final problem area which emerges from these considerations has to do with the precise status of the state's lesser associations and particularly with the relation of the state to civil society. On the one hand, it has been argued

in the critical literature, that the state's sovereignty (or its sublation of the reality of all finitudes in accord with its universal principle) leads to a situation of insufficient differentiation or to the politizing of the entire social domain.<sup>50</sup> On the other, Hegel's desire to maintain the autonomy of family and civil society has been recognized, but criticized precisely because this autonomy works against the state's integrative function, subjecting the totality to lesser, more abstract, and ultimately deficient principles of social organization.<sup>51</sup> The key to clarifying the problem would seem to begin with an adequate understanding of the distinction between the noetic and noematic sides of the dialectic.

For Hegel, the state is both a concept and a shape of experience -- a content of mind and a materially existing actuality. The dimension of the conceptual state is time where its moments are annihilated totally in the sense that their reality is raised to a conceptual essence and stored in the suspended animation of memory. The dimension of the actually existing state, however, includes the further component of space or articulated externality. Here the main point is the ongoing, irreducible existence of a multitude of horizontally articulated associations and powers. Hence, while it is the case that the state sublates/annihilates all other forms of association in thought, as actually existing, its systematic rationality depends on the fullest possible

differentiation of lesser associations to mediate between its pure ethical universality and the component individual.

In response to the first of the criticisms above, then, each of the types of association authorized by the structure of the Concept remains distinct, autonomous and true to its principle in accord with the demands of a systemic rationality. For the goal of sovereign power is unity rather than identity; the decentralized integration of dialectically related/opposed elements rather than their reduction to a homogeneous substance. The state, as the most inclusive categorical level, acts to establish the substantive ethical limits of the lesser social spheres, but it does not, in any sense, render their principles unnecessary or redundant.<sup>52</sup> The state, as totality, overreaches particular associations in that it self-consciously poses their ethical ground (the good of all) and through this posing permits them to function within the definite limits of their own principles. Hence, the integration of lesser associations into greater ones does not, in a properly systemic thinking, lead to totalitarian indifference, but to an infinitely recursive posing and counterposing of part and whole.<sup>53</sup>

If the first criticism of Hegel's treatment of state and society stems from concern for the mindless totalitarianisms of our century, the second questions whether that same approach can adequately deal with the reductionist particularity of a state made over to the market place. Hegel

understood, in advance of Marx, that the principle of civil society in general, and the operations of its embodiment in capital in particular, would, if left unchecked, lead to an unstable division of society into extremes of poverty and wealth, of disproportionate influence and utter disenfranchisement. The determination of the well-being of the whole, then, would be usurped by the part with the consequent destructuring of the recursive link. But while Marx proposed to resolve the problem through the outright abolition of civil society, Hegel recognized the essential role it had to play in any rationally constituted state of affairs. The problem as one commentator has developed it is as follows.

[The analysis of the inherent tendencies of civil society] leads Hegel to call for the intervention of the state. The situation, he believes, can be brought into harmony only by means of the state which has power over it. Yet, Hegel's program of state intervention is fraught with internal difficulties for it is clear that Hegel sees it necessary, from the theoretical premisses of his system, to preserve the autonomy of civil society. Therefore he limits his advocacy of state interference to external control only, and avoids the conclusion that the state should simply take over economic activity. And when he calls for more direct initiative, he himself quickly realizes that it will be no more than a palliative so long as the whole system is not overhauled. Hegel's dilemma is acute: if he leaves the state out of economic activity, an entire group of civil society members is going to be left outside it; but if he brings in the state in a way that would solve the problem, his distinction between civil society and the state would disappear, and the whole system of mediation and dialectical progress towards integration through differentiation would collapse.<sup>54</sup>

If Hegel was previously too dialectical, now it would seem he is not being dialectical enough; where the autonomy



of civil society had previously vanished before the power of the state, now it would seem to stand as an unassailable positivity and a law unto itself. There are, however, no absolute antinomies in Hegel's thought and this one too does not stand up to systemic scrutiny. In the first place, there is an assumption here that civil society, taken as the totality of needs and means, somehow, in Hegel's thought, possesses an inalienable or absolute right. This right, one would speculate, is that which legitimately accrues to the moment of difference or subjective conviction and satisfaction, for it is certainly not the right of the state or of the good of the whole which defines the state. What the above criticism seems to be assuming, then, is something like the right of an economically homogeneous "all" or the good of the abstract aggregation of individuals in their relations of particular self-interest. For Hegel, however, there is no right of the all. The right being attributed here to the abstraction of productive, consumptive and exchange relations (or to the entire organization of means) really belongs to concrete and unique individuals -- individuals who have had their particular right usurped by a system supposedly established for their own satisfaction. The autonomy of civil society, then, is a false hypothesis. It is the autonomy of subjective conviction and the right of individual satisfaction which is the issue and where this autonomy and right are violated by the building up of arbitrary and unjust productive relations, the state has an



absolute right to reconstitutive action. In response to the preceding criticism, then, the reconstruction of civil arrangements would not in any sense endanger the state's own principle; indeed a more systemic reordering of economic life is now imperative on behalf of the state if the individual is not to be lost completely.

This conclusion is confirmed, in a more explicitly logical fashion, by an exemplary syllogism developed in the Encyclopaedia Logica.<sup>55</sup> Every syllogism defines the organizational structure of a determinate whole; this one, in particular, analyzes the interrelations of the strictly social or legal whole composed of civil society and the state. In its first figure (I,P,U), the individual, with his particular physical and mental needs is brought to a recognition of the general social welfare embodied in the state (U), through the mediation of his productive efforts within civil society (the totality of means both economic and legal). This is simply the developmental structure of the Philosophy of Right as we have traced it above. What it amounts to is the self-justifying assertion, that without a system of needs and satisfactions (or an organized structure of desiring individuals) there could be neither a state nor the individual properly so called. If such were not the case we would have to suppose a condition of entirely self-sufficient beings constituting, in the aggregate, nothing more of a society than indeterminate atoms and so possessing no inherent need for

a collective principle of moral determination. In the second figure (U,I,P), this conclusion is stated explicitly. Here the needs and efforts of the individual mediate between the state and civil society showing that neither can afford to neglect or suppress diverse individual satisfactions without endangering their own logical and social ground. In the third figure (P,U,I), it is the state, or principle of systemic rationality which guarantees, and so mediates between, the economic process and the fulfilment of the individual person. In this figure, our argument against the rational impossibility of state intervention is explicitly confirmed. There must be an economic process if the syllogism is not to fall back into conceptual immediacy (i.e., if we are to avoid regression to a state of severely crippled or even primitive social interaction and consciousness). Nevertheless, the substantive nature and structure of this process can not be absolutely self-determining. Or put another way, civil society can not produce from its own activity alone a sufficiently coherent standard for evaluating the impact of that activity on the well-being of individuals. Only the state, the sovereign principle of total structure which grounds or contextualizes this activity, can make such a determination.

#### E) Value and Critique

The preceding restatement of the principles of the Philosophy of Right should have demonstrated the thoroughness

and transparency of Hegel's understanding of the modern state. But to the degree that his account is illuminating, it is also critical. No state, past or present, has completely satisfied the demands of his systemic rationality. Nevertheless, every state, past and present, has embodied this rationality in principle to one extent or another. It was a commonplace of Greek ethical thought that the education of the young in virtuous conduct was almost impossible unless one made them citizens of a state with good laws. The question was implicitly posed, then, of the criteria for the discrimination of good from bad laws, or more generally, of good from bad states. In the following paragraphs we shall attempt to set forth a set of such criteria as they have emerged from the principles of right discussed above. As a practical knowledge, these criteria will constitute a formal characterization of the state itself. For criteria of value are never external to the object under evaluation. They are the object itself in its fully realized condition. The following enumeration will also acquit itself a thorough going correction of all ideology.

To begin, the state must be recognized as a system; indeed, as the system in the form of objective social existence. As such, 1) the state is a differentiated totality organized around a principle of right ultimately to be derived from the ethical structure of subjectivity itself.<sup>56</sup> This principle both determines and integrates the multitude of particulars by which it, in turn, is both known and made actual. And it does this precisely through the matrix of relations it posits

between its specifications. Accordingly, 2) each element of the state (family, abstract individuality, civil society, corporation, political state), though categorically distinct, must also be recognized as implying, indeed as hinging upon, every other element. Each demands the rest both to complete itself and, through the process of reflection, opposition, and ultimate sublation, to make its own distinct contribution to the whole. This developmental process (which takes place historically as the process of social category formation and which continues to take place post-historically (or in the eternal round) given the conditions of finite generation) implies these further criteria/characteristics.

A) As totality existing in and through the recursive enumeration of its parts, the state can never be posited, as it were, all at once or by a single act. Likewise with the individual and collective virtue which is the essence and aim of the state. For to make men virtuous by a single deed (the naive judgement of revolutionary ideology) is to reduce them through terror and so to pre-empt the subjectively willed virtue which is the rational emergent of political development in the existing whole.

B) There must, then, be difference--the enduring necessity of any conceived process. But the differences must be specified in terms of one another or recognize the ultimate identity which alone permits their original emergence. In this, Hegel

suggests, naive constitutional notions of a separation of powers, or worse of government as an impartial broker of discrete interests, find their correction.

C) Difference, furthermore, must not be taken in such a way that the state's universality is exhausted in the mere addition or collection of abstractly identical units. Likewise, the determination of the common good is not to be exhausted in the mere addition of abstractly identical self-interests. Real difference implies having taken up into self what is essential in the other whilst transforming both self and other through some qualitatively new emergent dimension. On this point the political thought of Rousseau, the utilitarians and the political economists proves utterly inadequate.<sup>57</sup>

D) The truly different moments which constitute the state, then, must be understood in the dialectical sense of successively more adequate social deployments of the state's own principle. Furthermore the same moments can be seen differentiating the state both as its process of historical self-generation and in its post-historical condition of fully realized self-containment.

E) As such, each of these moments ranks as a category in a hierarchy of such categories specifying the ultimate social category that is the state. Value (= adequacy to truth) is determined, then, by the level of explicit universality achieved. Each component or stage of the human social enterprise determines its higher worth with reference to what

preceded it as sublated. If the new component or stage is not itself of absolute value, then it too will be transformed by its own inherent processes into what is valued more. For this emergent other is what it ought to have been all along. (In this we find a reply to all forms of reaction and naive conservation).

F) Only the state, then, is of absolute value, both as the essence and result of human historical endeavours. Lesser forms of social life, while necessary, command only a relative right which the whole must mediate. And least of all, in one sense, is the finite individual doomed in his utter particularity to the bad infinity of biological succession. Nevertheless, as the immediate living embodiment of self-conscious Spirit, individuality also becomes an absolute value. For the universality of the state is in essence no more than the collective reflection of a fully realized idea of self-conscious personality. As such, the mature, socially conscious individual finds in the fully realized state a perfect embodiment of private will. Lesser forms of individuality, like the lesser forms of social life from which they arise, have again only a relative (relational) right and value.

#### F) The Syllogism of Ethical Life

We may now take up a final syllogism in which the functions and relations of the specific articulations of the state can be set forth within a matrix of explicit value. In the first figure, it is the principle of civil society which mediates

between the family and the state, forming, as it were, the bridge between conditional and unconditional virtue. Existentially this figure represents the economic foundation of social life or the distinctly human dimension of work. Psychologically, it is the appearance of self-interest and abstract individuality. And noetically, it is the preserve of the analytic discursions of finite or scientific understanding. In all of its aspects, then, it is the dimension of externality and transition, and of its very nature mediates between its parameters only as a relative ground.

In the second figure, the family is posited as mediating between civil society and the state, constituting, as it were, the immediate a priori of human conviviality. Existentially this figure presents the biological foundation of social life or the common organic dimension of labour. Psychologically, it is the indifferent solidarity (unemergent ego) of feeling and impulsive sacrifice. And noetically, it is the realm of the dim inarticulate conceptions of immediate intuition. In its various aspects, then, the family is the dimension of internality and substance and of its very nature mediates between its parameters only as a silent ground.

In the third figure, it is the state which mediates between the family and civil society establishing, as their mutual result, the abiding context of political order and collective meaning. Existentially this figure presents the



political and cultural foundations of social life or the autonomous, self-constituting dimensions of human action and play.<sup>58</sup> Here through the reflection of the universal (family) in the particular (civil society) a fully integrated individuality and rationality is achieved. The unlimited value of the totality is explicitly posited and the state's mediation of its parameters is seen to constitute their absolute ground.

### Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, a final clarifying note is in order respecting Hegel's idea of sovereignty and the end of history. The self-determination or sovereignty of a state is equivalent to its determinate structure. There are, however, varying degrees of self-determination corresponding to varying degrees of internal social and political articulateness. Historically the oriental, Greek and Roman states all exhibited the quality of being sovereign, but inadequate internal differentiation of social elements (reflected in the inadequate differentiation of the individual will) made sovereignty less a self-determination (or universalized reflection) of these elements than the external imposition of a hierarchy of command. In the immanent possibility of post-historical arrangements, however, political self-determination will have achieved the absolute reflection of an infinitely recursive organization of particular structures now self-conscious of themselves as determined by and as determining the whole. At such a point, sovereignty ceases to be a

politically active principle (since there is no longer anything outside it to be mastered) and simply attends to its principle ordering and evaluating, but never diminishing variety. The locating of sovereign power, then, becomes an historical curiosity. It is as ubiquitous as the structural limits of the system itself -- limits which, of historical necessity, we must now reconsider in the light of the dilemma of modern techniques.

Appendix A

Two further elements of Hegel's discussion of the family are worth parenthetical mention. The first is Hegel's assertion (directed against Kant) that marriage (and by extension the family) is not primarily a contractual relation (S. 75). Though it begins with a contract, it is essentially a relation based on natural sentiment and the compulsions of mutual love. When the legal dimension of the family surfaces, it is a clear indication that it has failed either to fulfill its function of mutual service or that for reasons of death or the leave-taking of children it is about to dissolve (S. 159). In any case, the importance of this point lies in the critical vista it opens on our own time. Legal relations are a universalized reflection of the necessarily appropriative behaviour of the finite will. At present we have come to a point where these relations and the modes of behaviour they are predicated on penetrate every facet of family life. In such a condition, the principle of the family can not function; the necessary initial immediateness of ethical mind (the substantial training in service) is dirempted before it is ever established with social and psychological consequences of horrific proportion. But the fault here is not to be placed at the feet of "legal relations." The principle of the family (as that of the state) has been progressively dissolved by the self-will that is the principle of civil or market society. The legal dimension of that same sphere

then must step in, however inappropriately, to control the damage. Nevertheless, to the extent that the principle of the family remains unregenerate, contemporary societies will persist in a condition of arrested ethical development.

The other point is critical as well, but this time directed at Hegel. In paragraphs 166 and 167 of the Philosophy of Right Hegel argues, on the basis of the determinations of the Concept, that the institution of marriage is essentially monogamous and the family patriarchal. I do not see the persisting logical or phenomenological grounds for this assertion, although the historical ones are clear. The process of "self-othering," through which ethical personality emerges, does not preclude more than one other as a source of self determination; nor does it require the differentiation of self and other on the basis of an abstract attribution of sexual qualities which in fact are common, in one degree or another, to all individuals as part of the species whole. We have seen in the doctrine of Being, the category of "many ones" established as integral to the ultimate full disclosure of the "for itself" of finite beings; and in the doctrine of Essence, the emphasis was always on multiple relations, interchangeable roles and complex reciprocal interaction. Despite the best guidance of the Concept, Hegel, on this occasion, seems to have gone beyond what, in principle, can be authoritatively asserted about ethical immediacy. The family must embody and give expression to the particular altruism of

feeling; but the actual form that it might best take in achieving this end is contingent upon conditions moving in time, and is therefore a question for empirical sociology.

#### Appendix B

Surprisingly enough, there still seems to be a great deal of confusion on this issue. Two authors, as recently as 1984, have given us an interpretation of Hegel which emphasizes the role of the monarch "as a sovereign, as a power and indeed as the highest and all-inclusive [power]." See K. Hartmann, "Towards a New Systematic Reading of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," p. 129 in Pelczynski. Compare K. H. Ilting, "Hegel's Concept of the State and Marx's Early Critique." Sovereignty for Hegel, then, should be regarded as centralized, exclusive and as working against any idea of popular government. The basis of this interpretation is a peculiarity in the text of the Philosophy of Right itself. After delineating the powers of the political state in accord with the divisions of the Concept (S. 273), Hegel then proceeds to discuss them in reverse order. Hence, where the standard dialectical procedure would have been to start with the legislature or moment of universality, Hegel begins with the monarchy or moment of concrete individuality. This has the effect, so Hartmann claims, of making the monarch the source or ground of sovereignty rather than its merely functional and representational embodiment. A deep misunderstanding, however, seems to be at work in this argument. The

reversal of the natural order of things is undertaken by Hegel not because he wants to set up a variation on enlightened despotism, but because he wishes to avoid the consequences of Rousseau's political theory. He refuses to make the legislature the explicit ground of sovereignty precisely because its abstract universality would place sovereign power in the people as a "formless mass." In presenting the monarch (the symbolic representation or public focus of the state's self-determining will) as the ground instead, Hegel simply wishes to indicate that sovereignty as such belongs to the totality as internally articulated into its distinct, self-mediating spheres (S. 279). This is born out by Hegel's repeated insistence that the monarch is only a figure head and in a well-constituted state has no more to do than "dot the i" (S. 280). The notion of the monarchy, then, in its function of embodying the personality of the state is only a form of picture-thinking for the unwise.

NotesKey to Editions Used

- Avineri            Avineri, Shlomo, Hegel's Theory of The Modern State: Cambridge University Press, New York, 1980.
- Logic              Hegel, G.W.F., Hegel's Logic: translated by Wm Wallace; Oxford University Press, 1982. First part of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences.
- PR                  Hegel, G.W.F., The Philosophy of Right: translated by T.M. Knox; Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Pelczynski        Pelczynski, Z.A. (ed.), The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy: Cambridge University Press, New York, 1984.

- 1                    This, I think, is justified for obvious reasons. A political reflection which does not ultimately end in a discussion of the nature and necessity of the state is pure childishness. For better or worse, the state, as the organized social locus of historical transformation, has made us what we are and will certainly continue to exercise a considerable influence for the foreseeable future.
- 2                    It is really no longer necessary to defend Hegel from the sorts of charges that writers like Karl Popper have made careers out of. Nevertheless, it is still amusing to read the rather fumbling attempts of sympathetic commentators like S. Avineri to explain away or at least mitigate Hegelian statements like "Es ist der Gang Gottes in der Welt, dass der Staat ist." V. Avineri, pp. 176-77.
- 3                    This is one of the substantive claims of the Philosophy of History. This work, which is one of the great classics of world literature, is also, I am convinced, one of the most important and most overlooked of political treatises on the state and would have been used here to complement the Philosophy of Right had time permitted.

- 4 PR, S. 257.
- 5 Ibid, S. 259. Cp. S. 33.
- 6 Pelczynski does not see this broadest sense  
of political culture at work in the  
Philosophy of Right, but see S. 3 and 261.  
V. Pelczynski, PP. 56-7 for further references.
- 7 PR, S. 267.
- 8 Ibid, S. 5.
- 9 Ibid, S. 6.
- 10 Contract, then, is a reflection of the  
determinate sociability of man as well as  
a consequence of the particularity or finitude  
of his will.
- 11 Ibid, S. 44.
- 12 This is roughly Hobbes' project; but unlike  
Hegel's, his notion of abstract right  
prevents any explicit synthesis of right and  
subjectivity (as morality). Nevertheless,  
Hobbes comes amazingly close, which constitutes  
his great superiority over Locke.
- 13 Ibid, S. 141.
- 14 Ibid, S. 144.
- 15 Ibid, S. 145-46.
- 16 Ibid, S. 146.
- 17 Ibid, S. 147.
- 18 Ibid, S. 149.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid, S. 150.
- 21 Ibid, S. 152. Historically these norms and  
uses are relative to time and place and so  
are binding only on those residing within a  
particular collective. Post-historically,  
or with reference to the planetary ecumenic,  
these norms are absolute (i.e., no longer  
relative to space since they are universal and  
no longer relative to time since they are post-  
historical).



- 22 A virtue partially captured by Collingwood's phrase "practical social consciousness."
- 23 Ibid, S. 150-51. Customary virtue, following medieval tradition, Hegel calls "rectitude."
- 24 Ibid, S. 154.
- 25 That is, in public festivals, civil rites, in the forms of marriage and the family, civil society and the corporation etc..
- 26 Ibid, S. 157.
- 27 Ibid, S. 155.
- 28 The nomenclature is borrowed from Avineri, p. 134. In this regard "altruism" is to be taken in its purely etymological sense of a relation to "the other" -- Latin "alter." All further moralizing assumptions are suspended.
- 29 See the lectures on the Philosophy of History which discuss the oriental state.
- 30 PR, S. 158.
- 31 Ibid, S. 162.
- 32 The logical is once again corroborated by the anthropological, the evidence of which indicates that the individual is historically a very recent development.
- 33 Ibid, S. 158, addition.
- 34 See Appendix A.
- 35 Ibid, S. 181.
- 36 The difference between them, of course, is that Hobbes has nothing to say about the family or the state as an ethical and cultural totality. He can not, therefore, see civil society in an explicitly developmental context. The result is that Hobbes is forced to view civil society and its legal administration of contracts as constituting the entire social universe. And this in turn leads him (despite occasional speculative insight) to the abstract understanding's notion of the state as pure external compulsion.

37

While it is the case that the qualities of the market place have always existed to one extent or another: (even in the oriental empires), it is only in the modern world (Hobbes and Locke), and in connection with the post-historical state (Hegel), that civil society reaches its fullest development operating under constitutional protection as a constitutional principle. But while civil society is the constitution for Hobbes and Locke, for Hegel it is only one element of a larger constitutional complex.

38

Ibid, S. 187.

39

Ibid, S. 185.

40

Leviathan, M. Oakeshott (ed.) (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1960), p. 85.

41

This does not deny, however, that the family and other early social forms are responsible for nurturing and developing the particular ego.

42

PR, S. 201, 199.

43

Ibid, S. 255.

44

Ibid, S. 278-79.

45

Ibid, S. 323.

46

Ibid, S. 278, addition.

47

Ibid, S. 260.

48

This principle of differentiation applies, of course, to both the constitutional (in the legal sense) and extra-constitutional makeup of the state. Indeed, for Hegel, the one must be a reflection of the other. Hence, in Hegel's arrangements, subjective individuality finds expression in the monarchy, the principle of the family in the estates of the upper house, civil society in the corporations which constitute the lower house etc.. The principle also refers to the differentiated individual will and its reflection in the diverse organs, functions, associations of the state. Hence, the diffuseness of the sovereign principle has reference not simply to the many individuals that are politically constituted,

but to the larger societal groupings which make these individuals determinate as such.

- 49 See Appendix B.
- 50 K. Hartmann, "Towards a New Systematic Reading of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" in Pelczynski, pp. 125-26, 135.
- 51 Avineri, pp: 151, 98ff.
- 52 Of course, it is always possible that a particular state might choose to make war on the family, civil society, individuality or its own constitutional organs, but such a situation would entail a return to a condition of abstract orientalism which is neither efficient nor rational and hardly what Hegel meant.
- 53 While the actual differentiation and organization of ethical life is guaranteed (made ontogenetically necessary) by the developmental structure of human subjectivity itself, the day to day regulation of relations between the different forms of ethical association and between individuals remains the administrative prerogative of the political state.
- 54 Avineri, p. 151.
- 55 Logic, S. 198.
- 56 Hence, we have seen states historically organized around principles of immediate substantiality (the patriarchy of the oriental empires), mediated substantiality (the Greek states), immediate, abstract and atomic subjectivity (the Roman Empire, the feudal world, modern market societies since the Renaissance) and concrete subjectivity (the contemporary ecumenical state). These principles, in turn, reflect the stages of human ethical or social development (family, civil society, state), the stages of logical and phenomenological development (Being, Essence, Concept; consciousness, self-consciousness, reason) as well as the structure of the syllogism (Universality (immediacy, identity), Particularity (mediacy, difference), Individuality (totality, identity-in-difference)). And all of them derive directly from the structure of finitude and externality

analysed in chapter one. In this connection, it is worth noting that all states, whatever their substantive principle of organization, have always, in one degree or another, recognized the abstract rights of property and contract (the logical outcome of the "pre-social" dialectic of appropriative self-othering).

- 57 While Rousseau was certainly reaching toward a notion very similar to Hegel's, his "general will" remains, nevertheless, an aggregative abstraction simply because he refuses to recognize the qualitatively different elements which must coalesce to produce this will. In legislating against the family and property a la Plato, Rousseau thought he was providing a barrier against narrow self-interest. What he achieved was a legislative mass utterly incapable of organizing itself except through the fiat of the Legislator (Leviathan).
- 58 There is a double dimensionality here because of the two senses of "state" being employed -- i.e., the state as cultural totality and as real constitutional arrangements. Indeed, we might distinguish three dimensions in accord with the tripartite division presented at the outset of the chapter.

Chapter Four

Toward the Idea of Technology

## Introduction

In this final chapter I want to use the same insights and methods that proved effective in elaborating a theory of the state to probe a related, but as yet somewhat unusual phenomenon for philosophic inquiry. This is the phenomenon of contemporary technology -- the totality of apparatus, techniques and organization that more and more must be counted the single most influential determinate of modern life. The question we shall be posing here is that of how we are to understand the technological complex from a distinctly Hegelian perspective. Does such a perspective reveal anything new about techniques? Can it organize and unify the contradictory conclusions of existing discussion and analysis? Can it be brought to articulate some form of critical standard which might set broad parameters for future theory and use? In an essay, the primary concern of which is to elaborate logical and phenomenological grounds of a new political science, any attempt to answer these questions must be wholly tentative -- at best a test of the theory's power of application. We do not wish, therefore, to encounter the phenomenon of modern technology in the bad infinity of its innumerable devices, processes, relations and effects, nor to deal with the many levels of theory which this bad infinity provokes. We must be highly selective, settling for a seminal, if skeletal introduction to the problem.

But why technology? Why something so commonplace for a test which might proceed equally well through other phenomena which touch upon political themes? Why especially technology when Hegel wrote so little about it, and indeed never considered treating it as an independent topic on its own account?<sup>1</sup> Like the question, the answer has two parts. First, the traditional notions of technology that view it, regardless of size or complexity, as a mere tool-in-hand or as mere means to ends rationally selected by human agents, have become increasingly problematic in our time. Until quite recently it was understood that technologies fit into larger human contexts. They met existing social and cultural constraints which forced them to work their transforming effects within certain accepted natural limits. Today, however, it is more and more the case that other human activities must fit the technological context. The range of possibilities open to the human being, the human potentials to be actualized, the ways of life to be encouraged are now ever more a function of the existing technical ensemble and of its own requirements for survival and growth. In such a case, the question of politics, of speeches and acts which address the ends of collective life becomes more and more the problem of collectively answering to the means. Politics becomes a subset of techniques and with this the focus of political inquiry must change. If the principles of Hegelian

science are to be worth adopting at all, then, they must shed more than a little light on this most significant of contemporary themes.

But again, why the choice of Hegel as a major source for a philosophical inquiry into modern techniques? In a sense the whole of the three preceding chapters has been an attempt to show why this is unavoidable. Hegel is the only philosopher to date to have rendered a complete and coherent conceptual account of the whole -- an account that is the whole at the same time that it accounts for the whole. If techniques are truly a part of this whole, if they are, as we must believe, a truly human phenomenon, then they too must find their place within wisdom's circle. Again, and more pointedly, Hegel was the first to untangle the phenomenological riddle of means and ends, of how our practice (of which technologies are a subset) acts, through a two-way channel, both to shape and reflect our self-conceptions. It is the key concepts of this analysis, particularly the noematic components of human desire discussed in the second section of the Phenomenology, which form a natural starting point for any serious attempt to confront contemporary techniques. But while this is certainly sufficient, our choice gains even more plausibility when we consider other areas of Hegel's work. Hegel himself did not live to experience the multiple layers of artifice and organization which define our own time, but he was, nevertheless,



well acquainted with the configuration of spiritual gestalten (scientism, nihilism, utilitarianism) that constitutes the immediate background of technological consciousness. Their collective deconstruction in the Phenomenology and consequent appearance as forms of irrationality (abstract understanding) leads, I believe, to the very heart of what is now ambiguous in our use of technique. Finally, it should not go unnoticed that the most ambitious, if somewhat misguided, of contemporary attempts to come to an understanding of the complete ensemble of existing techniques, even where these are only attempts to construct a further layer of technical artifice to control the existing jumble, uniformly, if unconsciously, draw their defining principles from Hegel's science of logic. General systems theory, cybernetics, the work of Beer and Morin owe as much to Hegel as any other source.

The content of this chapter is organized into three parts. We begin with a brief sketch of the results of recent reflection on technical practice. For this purpose I have selected three authors whose work toward a philosophy or theory of technology is widely recognized. Our method shall be exposition, comparison and critique in the hope of coming to some general conclusions about

the current state of technical affairs. In the second part we attempt to develop a distinctly Hegelian perspective on this condition showing indirectly the extent to which it coincides with, explains, unites and contradicts the conclusions of part one. The argument will necessarily proceed on two related fronts. First, the dialectic of desire and the historical modes of mastery and slavery into which it issues will be called up to illumine the phenomenological grounds of the traditional tool use or means-ends relation and to suggest, furthermore, how this relation has gone seriously wrong in recent history. Second, we would like to suggest a standard for how this relation might be viewed in a post-historical context. Here the key is Hegel's concept of a systemic or concrete, as opposed to an abstract, rationalization of means. In the last part of the chapter and as a conclusion to the paper, as a whole, we recoil briefly from standards and principles to offer some reflections on the gulf that, in our time, increasingly separates the actual from the possible. Here a review of Hegel's concept of necessity is in order to prepare us for a questioning of the ultimate irony that is a technical reconciliation of wisdom and power that no longer requires self-consciousness.

#### A) Defining the Technical Problematic

i) We begin our attempt to define the technical

problematic with Heidegger. Here we encounter an altogether different level and kind of analysis of techniques than we are used to. In the words of one recent commentator, Heidegger's merit lies in the fact that "by examining the ontological grounds of technics, [he] has begun to lift technology out of its subjectivistic and merely instrumentalist interpretations and made of it a primary philosophical question."<sup>2</sup> For Heidegger, no significant questions concerning technology can be posed or investigated unless techniques are viewed as a total context. More than the simple aggregate of available means, more even than an implied way of life, "technology is a way of revealing,"<sup>3</sup> an optics destined out of Being by which beings presence as what they are.<sup>4</sup>

One of the primary implications of this view -- one that contradicts our usual notions on the subject -- is that technology, as revelatory optics, logically precedes or grounds science.<sup>5</sup> Science, for Heidegger, arises as the mathematically adequate expression of the already-active essence of technology. It then, through quantification, makes a decisive contribution to the historical acceleration of the technical ordering process. This is not to deny that large scale modern technologies are, in certain ways, very different from earlier techniques that are "ready-to-hand." It simply suggests that they have something in common which, as Heidegger tells us, is

not itself technological. It is this common essence, uniting all artifice, that the scientific grasp of reality as a "calculable coherence of forces"<sup>6</sup> simply systematizes for a certain kind of abstract reflection.<sup>7</sup>

But what exactly is this essence? What kind of a revealing is technological revealing? Here Heidegger is quite specific. Technological revealing is a "challenging revealing" -- a revealing that "sets upon" and "calls up," requisitioning for use.

Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering. Whatever is ordered about in this way has its own standing. We call it the standing-reserve [Bestand]. The name 'standing reserve' assumes the rank of an inclusive rubric. It designates nothing less than the way in which everything presences that is wrought upon by the challenging revealing.<sup>8</sup>

To reveal the real as something, however, is not to name the essence of the producing and presenting of revealing itself. Nor, is it even to grasp the particular bringing forth that results in the technological. To grasp this we must seek the non-technological precondition of technology in a total human stance vis a vis Being. This stance, which rules in western civilization, Heidegger suggestively calls "Ge-stell" or "Enframing." He means by this "the gathering together of that setting-upon which sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering,

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as standing-reserve."<sup>9</sup> A civilization destined to embrace such a mode of ordering sees the real "in the light of Ideas" or abstract essences such as Plato first conceived.<sup>10</sup> It subsequently becomes committed to the notion of time as history (abstract essence = future) and to the subjectivist (nihilist) structures of truth that historical time implies. But in either case, what is problematic about a revealing that enframes is that it relieves the real of its "objectivity" or of the opportunity to presence in its own right. For what is cast in the shadow of a logic of essence loses immediate Being.<sup>11</sup> The danger in ordering all that is as standing reserve, then, is that the fullness of the possibilities of being, of nature and human nature, withdraw. Man ceases to watch and to listen, growing ever more insensible to meanings and occasions that fall outside the issuing of essences into the operational round of unlocking, transforming, storing.<sup>12</sup> And as being is impoverished and reduced so also is man who increasingly finds himself become a part of the available supply.

In contrast to enframing, Heidegger speaks of "poiesis," in the sense of poetic art, as a more ancient revealing that, apart from any challenge, lets what is to presence come forth through its own means and of its own accord.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps what Heidegger is referring to here is the poetic consciousness of myth in which the openness to

manifold, inexplicable transformations and to their ultimate fusing in the deity or symbol still rules. In such an openness the world is revealed under the form of the beautiful and as awe-inspired; it is revealed, moreover, as a complete world, a world whose infinite bounty is immediately accessible in every instant. For the revealed and the unrevealed have as yet no real distinction.

In a revealing that is technological, however, the revealed and the unrevealed separate out; they are, for the first time, posed (though not explicitly) as mutually limiting and conditioning poles of experience. The revealed, the familiar, the known now appear because they stand over and against an unrevealed background. Where the bringing forth of "poiesis" simultaneously revealed and concealed the totality of being in the hypostatic flash of the deity/symbol,<sup>14</sup> a technological revealing imposes upon appearing the configuration of a ratio.<sup>15</sup> Technological revealing demands determinate entities and discrete terms; a power of abstract reflection which can pick out and dismantle in order to fuse anew. But every such fixation upon an entity necessarily conceals other possible entities as well as other possible dimensions of the "entity" itself. Similarly, a technological revealing is a revealing which operates through definite purposes, through the production of specific re-

sults or futures which necessarily pre-empt other futures and foreclose on other pasts. For Heidegger, it is these other futures, these other possible dimensions of the "entity" sent to take up the posture of the unrevealed, which constitute, in their very non-being, the presupposition of all determinate emergence and which materially define the proportionate mix of being to non-being which is responsible for a specific kind of world. Hence, the kind of extreme technological revealing which chooses to remember nothing and to envision nothing but what is ordered for use assumes the bleakest of ratios. For, if nothing stands concealed, then nothing is truly revealed. In the revelation of all as standing reserve the knowledge of difference is lost.

The particular direction in which we have taken Heidegger's thought permits the establishment of one further, if somewhat startling, connection. In the prolongation of the pre-emptions and foreclosures of technological transformation, the unrevealed-revealed ratio as a space reconstitutes itself as a definite structure of time. This time, abstract because directed toward essences (futures), productive because potentially self-possessed, is the time of history. We arrive, then, at a point where Heidegger and Hegel seemingly converge.

For what technology comes to represent for Heidegger, history equally represents for Hegel. They interlock as twin aspects of the same freely variable ratio. For, as technology constitutes its temporality as history, so the distinctly historical form of bringing into being finds its singularly appropriate instrumentality in the challenging revealing of techniques. About this connection we shall think again when we come to review Hegel's dialectic of master and slave. For the moment, I will simply leave open the very strong possibility which Heidegger suggests that the meaning of history is inherently technological because history and technology stand related in their essence.

ii) Of a kindred critical spirit, though differing significantly in method, is Jacques Ellul's theory of autonomous technology. What Ellul adds to the sketch that Heidegger has begun is its phenomenological dimension.<sup>16</sup> Where Heidegger sought for the essence of modern technology in a total stance vis a vis Being hoping, thereby, to develop an onto-logic of techniques (the ratio of revealed and unrevealed), Ellul concentrates on the experience of enframing and on the parallel experiential/ technical forms through which consciousness passes. These forms, like the spiritual gestalten of Hegel's Phenomenology, begin at a relatively simple and



immediate level (machine technology corresponding to mechanism or a mechanical world view) and proceed through increasingly complex stages (the techniques of economics, the sciences of political and social organization) to culminate ultimately in the reflexive technologies of consciousness formation and behaviour control.<sup>17</sup> This final stage makes possible both the breakdown of the last resistance to the technical absorption of society and the achievement, on the part of technologies, of a peculiar power of self-augmenting self-organization.<sup>18</sup> The result is a society which finds itself gripped in a condition of perpetual mobilization and which for all practical purposes must define its limits and possibilities in terms of the abstract criteria of technical efficiency.

There is, for Ellul, then, a profoundly troubling duplicity at the very core of technological growth. The phenomenology of techniques, our experience of their quantitative proliferation, of their increasing sophistication and precision in use, of their expanding ranges of application and of their periodic reconstitution on the basis of higher principles of organization seems to entail an inverse phenomenology of spirit in which we experience the progressive impoverishment of human culture and human selves. And this would seem to be the case despite our being, in a technical sense, the best trained and best educated society in history. The duplicity that Ellul

sees at work in techniques forms a variation on the danger of which Heidegger speaks. But for Ellul, the possibility that in our ordering for use, we might forget that there are other ways of being in the world is now an accomplished fact from which there is no saving grace. A second nature, supported by the sheer mass of modern techniques, has supplanted the first and in the process profoundly upset traditional continuities from which fresh sources of insight might spring.<sup>19</sup> The problem for Ellul, as for Heidegger, is the sheer unrepentant reductionism of modern techniques, their inability to accomodate even a modicum of human diversity. The processes through which the standing reserve is made to appear, not only forestall all other forms of bringing forth, but even determine and restrict the ends to which the reserve itself is put. Techniques can't even be made to provide the majority of mankind with the basic material components of commodious life, while those who have a share of the technically generated wealth are in no way free to accept or utilize it on any but technically dictated terms.

In seeking to explain this disturbing situation, Ellul undertakes a multi-faceted characterological analysis of technique. The almost living qualities of self-augmentation, autonomy, appropriative expansion and internal division which he uncovers, lead Ellul to conclude that modern technologies, far from being "a kind of

neutral matter," which can be appropriated for good or ill, conceal an "intrinsic finality" which "refracts in its own specific sense the wills which make use of it and the ends proposed for it."<sup>20</sup> This refraction, as Ellul tells us at another point, has to do with the "reduction of facts, forces, phenomena, means and instruments to [a] schema of [abstract or mathematizing] logic."<sup>21</sup> About this logic Ellul is somewhat unclear since he chooses to confine the discussion to the phenomenological level. But what is apparent is that it is a logic which seeks "the one best way" and that this one way is to be determined in accordance with the prevailing quantitative standards of operating efficiency.<sup>22</sup> The precise nature of the technical refraction of phenomena, then, has to do with the socially routinized reduction of qualities to magnitudes, or to that which is determinate simply in view of the fact that it can be increased or decreased.<sup>23</sup> Qualities, as Ellul indicates, are the real presupposition of quantitative determination, but in the processes of technical self-elaboration, quality is suppressed in favour of an ontology of limitless indifference.<sup>24</sup> What this yields is both the meagerest and least resistant of all possible realities -- an abstract, homogeneous substance which is simply there, a bad infinity of numerical manipulation to which each of us daily contributes through the manifest imperatives to

systematize, streamline, network and divide.

Like Heidegger, then, Ellul believes that modern technology must now be understood not within a particular civilizational context, but rather as a civilizational context. It is a totality of means arrived at by a totalizing rationality which suppresses everything but the technical ensemble itself.<sup>25</sup> In contrast to Heidegger, however, (and in large part because he chooses to maintain a phenomenological perspective) Ellul does not see technology as fundamentally characteristic of all of western civilization or the problem of contemporary technical totalization as having roots deep in western history and thought.<sup>26</sup> For Ellul, it is only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and with the production of certain novel social conditions that technology first becomes problematic.<sup>27</sup> Prior to this period, "technique belonged to a civilization and was merely a single element among a host of non-technical activities."<sup>28</sup> When certain social conditions do occur, however, something very peculiar happens. Technique begins to expand at an exponential rate and in the course of this purely quantitative expansion there is triggered an irreducibly qualitative transformation. For Ellul, this transformation does not efface all common ground between techniques over time. In at least two senses (i.e., with respect to its intrinsic rationality (its dependence on

discourse and abstract schema) and artificiality (its power to transform and bring forth)) technique remains essentially the same.<sup>29</sup> But in its relational aspect or as it appears within and to the social environment, it is changed utterly. And the paramount casualty of this change is the loss of any sense of human measure. Ellul refers to the principle of qualitative change through quantitative increase as "Engels' law." It is interesting to note, however, that the same principle forms the transition of pure quantity to quantity-quality in the first part of Hegel's Logic. There the unification of quantity and quality is called measure. Hegel's point is that continuous quantitative change will eventually exceed the measure of a thing or relation and bring forth a fundamentally new quality or relation, again with its own measure. But this new measure is a fundamental negation of any previous measure and in a very real sense produces an entirely new world.

The most peculiar outcome of this changed nature and world is the seeming appropriation by technology of man's self-conscious agency. It is on this point, the self-augmenting autonomy of modern technology, that Ellul is most frequently criticized with charges of overstatement, if not a crude Frankenstein reification. Ellul's point, however, is only that technology, while it is certainly not a self-conscious entity willing its own fate, might as well be

for all the conscious human control that is presently being exercised.<sup>30</sup> It is true that technology cannot function without human beings making decisions and undertaking to act in certain ways. But things have got to the point, says Ellul, where technology so structures the social context of choice and action that only those avenues are open which in the end favour continued growth of large-scale systems. This phenomenon, "reverse adaptation," presents, in the words of one recent writer on Ellul and technological politics, the ambiguous spectacle of the technological slave now dictating the conditions of the human master's mastery.<sup>31</sup>

iii) One final voice of dissent is that of Jürgen Habermas. Like Heidegger and Ellul, Habermas is highly critical of contemporary uses of technical rationality. He notes that the gradual extension of rational purposive systems into the realm of symbolic social interaction and authority has not been accompanied in modern societies by increased public scrutiny and communication about values.<sup>32</sup> That, in fact, technological development has acted so far to render value systems and emancipatory ideals irrelevant to the world of productive effort.<sup>33</sup> Means, accordingly, have gone out of touch with ends, science out of touch with society.<sup>34</sup> But for Habermas, this is not an inevitable feature of the expansion of rational purposive systems. The idea that technical

potentialities command their own practical realization is, for Habermas, an obfuscation concealing the real social interests and pre-existing decisions of privileged social groups.<sup>35</sup> These interests, sedimented so deeply into the technological infra-structure of society, are simply beyond discussion. And to the extent that they remain conflated as technical necessities beyond public critique and control, technical progress will continue to take place as a form of unconscious or "natural history."<sup>36</sup> What is required to humanize technical history, says Habermas, is the establishment of a dialectic of open communication -- a dialectic in which the dimly perceived values and needs of a practical historical situation are first crystallized through their translation into scientific discourse. Innovative strategies and models for meeting historical needs, the technical solutions, once formulated, would then be translated back to the life world where their consequences could be publicly evaluated. The loop is then completed when the evaluation of technical solutions leads to a modification of needs and values, to new practical problems and to a further round of scientific and technical elaboration.<sup>37</sup>

We introduce Habermas as our third author for purposes of negative dialectic. His account, in light of

what Heidegger and Ellul have said, is problematic on at least two counts and in pointing to these trouble areas now I hope to provide both a summary and conclusion to this section. First, Habermas is not unique in pointing out the specifically bourgeois commitment which seems to lie at the foundation of large scale modern techniques. Ellul too notes that at the beginning of the nineteenth century there existed, among certain social groups, "a clear technical intention"<sup>38</sup> to restructure socio-economic processes and relations on the basis of standards of rationality, efficiency and utility (especially as these could be attained through hard work, a spirit of acquisitiveness and a rejection of all otherwordly values).<sup>39</sup> But this technical intention, far from essentially defining the direction of technical growth, far even from taking a given direction of growth and adapting it to specific projects of class venality, simply rendered service to it. Accordingly, Habermas' rather easy assertion that "the pace and direction of technical development today" can be traced to specific interests (in defence and space), his rather summary rejection of a theory of technical autonomy as conservative resentiment, and his rather simple idea that a democratic form of public communication can somehow search out these interests and evaluate them, seems



somewhat out of touch with current realities. To think, as does Habermas, would assume that technology is some kind of neutral tool-in-hand, that it can instantly accomodate alternative normative frameworks, and that specific social values and technical solutions can be correlated without essential loss of quality to the one or the other. Repeated studies, however, of specific technologies, organizations and events point to the contrary.<sup>40</sup> To replace the current decision makers with others committed to a fundamentally different (or non-technical or ecological or decentralized) picture of the world is not to move our huge complex of instruments toward utopian or emancipatory consequences, but simply to make our decision makers impossible technicians. The immediate results in terms of employment, fiscal stability, productivity, availability of consumables (energy and food) would be catastrophic and demand, beyond any question we are now able to ask, a return to technical imperatives. As Heidegger and Ellul both agree, technology is a definite way of seeing and of ordering. Habermas' problem is that his commitment to a rational society is posed strictly in terms of a technical synthetic a priori while at the same time holding that a dialectic of democratic symbolic communication can somehow transcend the very conditions of its

purely instrumental (rational purposive) emergence.

B) Reconsidering Techniques: An Hegelian Perspective

We have undertaken this chapter in the belief that the technical phenomenon, broadly understood, constitutes a cycle -- that it forms a circular system within and impinging upon the circular system that is Hegel's science of wisdom. As such, techniques must be understood both as a fragment implicated in an intelligible or discursively assessable whole and as an intelligible whole in their own right, reflecting, in microcosmic fashion, the structural peculiarities of the total system. What this means, as method, is that technology should be amenable to the speculative or recursive strategies of analysis developed in chapters one and two and applied in chapter three. In particular, this would mean that there is both a phenomenology and a logic of techniques and that we can internally articulate the technical modality on the grandest of scales into what we have called pre-historical, historical and post-historical phases.<sup>41</sup> Such an approach will necessarily conflate the phenomenon of techniques with its essence or presuppositional grounds, but we are not here interested in scratching ~~the~~ surface -- the stakes are too high. Our approach, then, will be circular and self-sealing, but, for the purposes of the immediate exposition, seem to have two thrusts. First, we are interested in technology as a distinctly historical

modality or as a generative source of difference (the difference of techne), which is implicated in the various deficient or non-recursive types of historical relation and control. Here we shall have to return to some of the material in chapter two concerning the dialectic of human desire. Second, we shall consider, as a direct extension of this first thrust, the logical possibility of a post-historical technology which, beyond the forms of alienated technical expression and consciousness, would both reflect and contribute to a non-imperial globalization of man.

i) To begin, however, we need to ask about the precise nature of the technological cycle. What exactly is it? The answer seems clear. As the bringing forth through artifice of intrinsically non-natural results, it is a part of, or is thoroughly implicated in, the cycle of human means and ends. Indeed, if we consider the obvious teleological quality of all technical bringing forth, I think we may even conflate the technological with means-ends rationality as such. But again, how are we to understand the cycle of human means and ends? What function does it perform? For Hegel, the answer would seem to be that it binds, mediates, interprets nature to Spirit and Spirit to nature in precisely that way which issues in the distinctly historical undertaking that is man's search for freedom and responsibility. Technology,

then, in the broadest sense of bringing forth in accordance with predetermined forms, is fundamentally implicated in the distinctly human rationality that cycles as means and ends which, in turn, is grounded in the specifically historical relation of man to man, of man to self and of man to world.

But having said this a number of new questions immediately confront us, for with this characterization we have only shifted the burden of explanation from technology to other equally ambiguous concepts. What is the rationality that cycles as means and ends? What is the specifically historical relation of man to man, to self and to world? Is the connection between technology and history absolute? Could there be any other type of means than technical means (i.e., means that are essentially transformative, or given to the teleological ordering of the natural or given) that would serve the end of human history? To begin to answer these questions we shall have to rethink the notion of desire to which we pointed briefly in chapter two.

For Hegel, desire indicates the presence of a nothingness at the very core of being. To desire, then, is momentarily to surrender being to nothingness and through the emergence of a determinate negativity to establish an existence not only extended in space, but deferred in time. But we get ahead of ourselves. As

Kojève points out in his Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, we can distinguish at least two types of desire. The first (one that Hegel will resurrect in a higher form as the impasse that is pure mastery) is the desire of the animal, or the merely appetitive desire. Here the sensation of want or deficiency erupts upon a being without process of intermediation.<sup>42</sup> It is immediate reactivity, a predetermined appropriative response to a given or naturally existing object. The problem with this form of desire, however, is that it has no cultural or spiritual consequences. As a desire for and negation of what is merely given it does no more than sustain original nature in its appetitive constitution. Nothing, then, is decentered, nothing essentially transformed -- the appetitive other and the spontaneous relation desire assumes toward it, importing no substantially new possibilities into being. Accordingly, when the appetitive desire is satisfied, when its merely given other has been appropriated, the animal must fall back into unreflected torpor.

In contrast to this, however, is distinctly human desire which, far from being a desire for the given, is a desire for what desire has itself integrally shaped. To avoid the torpor of a desire that works no effect on desire, that offers no reflexive determination to its nothingness, the human animal must somehow be brought to desire what is

unnatural. For only by internalizing what is radically other can desire's given nature break its bounds. Hence, the human animal must be brought to desire its own nothingness, which is to say that it must desire, risk everything for, desire. Now, it is here, in the transition from the animal to the human, or in the movement from desire gripped in the eternal round of a natural cycle to desire which breaks this cycle by desiring only itself, that the essence of the technological first emerges. To desire desire, to want the nothingness of a nothingness, is to want somehow to possess that non-given otherness by which one's own desire is now delimited and in possessing this other to attain, as the newly emergent other of this non-given other, an objective human certitude. The nothingness of animal desire desired, then, takes on a positive signification; it brings forth the radically other both as determinate negativity and as a reflection of self-positing human will (the two faces of a single mediated desire). But from the posture of its new found decentered being both nature and human animal nature are broken. Henceforth these symmetries can be approached only as objects, only as the material to hand of transformative acts by which otherness (reflection) maintains and more deeply implicates itself in being. Desire for desire, at bottom, reveals desire as both finite and opposed. It is the human desire to overcome this

finitude that orders the given in accord with transcendental or consciously posited ends.

The proto-technological intention at work in the dialectic of desire is developed more fully in the intersubjective context of Hegel's confrontation of master and slave. Since this part of the Phenomenology is perhaps the most familiar of all Hegel's writings, our account can be brief and uncluttered by the usual critical apparatus. When two potentially human desires collide, it is never strictly over an object that they contest. The object is merely a token of the desire of each claimant to have his desire (i.e., his potentially human autonomy) recognized. Now, where two desires claim the same object only one desire can be satisfied, and this satisfaction, furthermore, can only be truly satisfying if both desires are committed to risking their very existences for the thing. If they share the object or if one simply allows the other to take it because he lacks any real interest in the thing, then neither desire will be humanly satisfied, neither will be able to transcend its purely animal sentiment of self. But if, as we say, both are committed to the struggle, if each will risk life for the other's recognition, then an amazing transformation is effected. That will which is predisposed to winning the object of recognition at any cost becomes the will of the

master; the master who, in sacrificing life, dissolves the merely animal desire to preserve the given and establishes, in the reflected autonomy of the other's recognition, a truly human identity. On the other hand, that will which was not disposed, when the time came, to make the ultimate sacrifice becomes a slavish will subservient both to its given nature and to the master. It is at this very point, however, that there emerges, from this newly constituted relationship, a subversive ambiguity. The master, who had risked life to become an independent free will finds his merely subjective idea of autonomy objectively confirmed in an other who is beneath notice. His free will is dependent on, is essentially determined and articulated through, an unfree will. As a result, the master's consciousness of self never gets beyond the initial fight for recognition which the emergence of the slave establishes as an uncircumnavigable barrier. The master's consciousness, accordingly, is always a finite consciousness; a consciousness which, in merely fighting other masters and in consuming the product of his slaves, propels a bad infinity in which every other gives way to yet another other without fundamental phenomenological consequences.

The slave likewise finds himself in an unexpected predicament. In the fight for recognition his will had been the one to falter. He had chosen to forego a



supremely human satisfaction to obey instead the instincts of biological continuance. But in submitting to the master to save himself, the slave had "felt the fear of death" and in that experience had "trembled throughout his every fibre." The slave too, then, finds his original nature thoroughly transformed, but unlike the master this new or slavish self is nothing determinate, and nothing bound. It is a fluid substance which the master calls forth to bear the stamp of his will. The first lesson of the slave, then, is the discipline of the master, the discipline that forestalls and internalizes all immediate satisfaction. But precisely because the slavish nature has quaked and because it both serves and discovers its own ideal in the discipline of the master, the slave is an open vista on the future. The slave must work to satisfy the master. But this very act of disciplined production conceals emancipatory consequences for both the slave and the world. The slave's work negates the given actuality of things by making them a material reflection of a human purpose. The things of the world are thereby brought to themselves, their relational determinations now explicitly established through their non-thing-like extension into the mediums of human representation. Similarly, the slave is transformed. The image of the world that he creates for the master becomes his own self-image, the other which is not a fantasy or dreamscape, but

real and capable, at least potentially, of establishing for the slave a politically determinate concept of self.

But what of the master? Do the structures of otherness and redemptive re-cognition not apply here too? Apparently not. The slave's sense of otherness or alienation has to do with the fact that the product of his labours is delivered over to the master. The slave's alienated consciousness, then, is of the fallen or mediated type, the type that sets itself forth in the world and then, through contingent factors, loses sight of itself. The master's alienation, in contrast, results from the fact that he simply consumes the product of the slave's work. His relation to the product is wholly immediate or fundamentally unimplicated in its being actual and in its actual becoming. Hence, the world appears to the master as not being essentially his own, not because he has somehow lost himself in it, but because he must passively accept what the slave's work makes of it. The master's other, accordingly, is an immovable other and the alienation of the master complete and absolute. But the slave, because his alienation is mediated through his labour, necessarily implicates his being in the process from which novel possibilities and redemptive futures arise. In these, or in the movement of historical time which is here established, there is at least the chance that his alienation can be

overcome. And this chance, the risk that is historical or productive existence itself, is seized when the slave finally deposes the useless master and claims the planet as his own.

But what are we to make of this? How have we come to understand the problem of means and ends? What reason have we discovered for thinking history and technology inextricably wed? An answer will emerge if we can review the data from a proper distance. What we have in the narrative of master and slave is the first conceivable emergence of an other-centered consciousness, of a consciousness that, far from any animal sentiment of self, is conscious solely as the determinate affect of another consciousness. Now consciousness, as such, constitutes its cultural or intersubjective medium only through the relating of two particular types of human animal who necessarily define their relation as master and slave. Why this is the case we have said above. Unless the meeting of animal sentiments results in this form of relation nothing of any human consequence can happen. This being the case, however, the intersubjective context which constitutes the distinctly human issues immediately and necessarily in a relation of means and ends. For the master, the consciousness which affirmed its own autonomy, is clearly an end for the slave, while the slave, who quailed, is clearly a means, a manipulable resource, for the master.

In the very constitution of human or other-centered consciousness, then, we can discern a technological intention. Consciousness, in order to have consciousness beyond a reactivity to what is simply given, must appropriate the nothingness or desire for desire of the other. But in forcing the other's recognition, without in turn recognizing that other, consciousness has posited a thing. This thing and its thingishness, as Heidegger correctly argues, has been challenged forth; it is the homogeneous substance of the other's dissolved being which now, instead of being, has standing in the world through the master's will. The slave, then, is the master's palpable standing to the extent that he is both a thing to be used and shaped in itself and a thing to be used to order other things for determinate use. Slavery, accordingly, is the technology of mastery, or precisely the means as such as they come into being through the master's need to establish himself through the prerequisites of cultural life. Slavery, then, is not simply a technique (eg., human power as opposed to animal power), but the generic type of technical production as such. And to the extent that all consciousness remains implicated in the reactivity of the slave, consciousness itself is technological, or descriptive of a being which speaks of its being through the humanly meaningful relation of means and ends.

Mastery, as we have seen, is an impasse. All

consciousness that is constituted through the relation of master and slave is ultimately slavish consciousness because it is a consciousness determined by difference and loss. The master's consciousness, as we saw, is experienced as alien because he experiences the world through the product of the slave -- a product he commands only in an indirect or abstract sense. The slave's consciousness is alienated because he cannot enjoy the product that is his making). But to the extent that the slave directly calls the commodities of culture into being through his labour, he has the potentially less ambiguous claim to mastery. For the slave, unlike the master, is not confined within the relation of master and slave, but relates as well to the world of nature. The relation of the slave to the world is, in many respects, a repetition of the master's technological employment of the slave. The world of nature is a simple substance (object) to be appropriated and shaped according to the slave's technical mediation of the master's cultural ends. It is implicated, as a result, in a means-ends rationality; the type that, as we have seen, reveals the world through categories of otherness or abstract essences (through causes and effects, substances and their attributes, procedural wholes and their functional parts -- i.e., through conceptual analogues for the relational otherness that is mastery-slavery itself). But the slave's

disciplined, if also despairing, appropriation of nature has specific consequences to which the master, so long as he remains a master, is largely indifferent. For it is the slave's imperative, "Thou shalt work," or again slavery's very emergence as the technology of "master" culture which establishes, at the heart of human temporality, a distinctly historical type of generation. History, as a particular distribution and structure of time, does not simply find its manifest instrumentality in the technical relation of slave to master and of slave to world (though this is certainly true). History is also, and even more primarily, the uniquely technological (or means-ends) deployment of space as such. As we pointed out in the first appendix to chapter two, finitude or determinancy, precedes and provokes temporality. Time is the peculiar structural organization and necessity of a determinate space. Accordingly, the generation of a determinate consciousness through the relation of master and slave, issuing in a working relationship to the world, orders space into time as history. The structure of this time we have discussed in chapter two. The ends of the master, the deferred satisfaction of the slave, the appropriative stance to the world, all establish the project, determinate nothingness or the future as the primary dimension of historically ordered time. But this being the

case, we must also assert that the alienation of consciousness, of slave from master and of slave from world, as well as the possibility of an emancipatory reconciliation, which are bound up with time as history, must also and even more fundamentally be bound up with the generative potentialities of technology.

It is somewhat odd that we display surprise, even dismay, when we are told today that technology is out of control. For technology, in one sense, has never been under control -- no more so than human history. In the narrative of master and slave neither has any prior knowledge of nor any subsequent control over the transformations of nature, the distortions of self or the realignments of social relations which proceed from the slave's labour. The distinctly technological reconstitution of the body's reactivity to stimulus as a subjugating stance vis a vis an other, or the recasting of the experience of emergence as the cycle of means (work) and ends (futures), demands that consciousness be opened to the risk and uncertainty of individual existence in a contingent world. For, in ordering the world as means, or with a view to satisfying a determinate center of desire or impulse, one must de-center a totality of potential non-selves whose very otherness, in mediating or deflecting the act of realization, must, in turn, de-center the initial central impulse. Hence, while a technological or other-

centered ordering continually thrusts the technical agent into externalities as the very possibility of his being anything, there is never any guarantee that these externalities will lead the agent back to himself. The slave (mankind) could work forever and never know who he was or why he worked. The world that history made through his effectiveness might always remain inhumanly mysterious and oppressive. Nevertheless, to the extent that this other-determined, historically de-centered self emerges through a technological relationship, and more specifically through the technologies of institutionalized power (slavery, religion, the state), it is in technology that it must seek its new possibilities if it cannot be satisfied with the present.

ii) The technological as such cannot be extricated from the phenomeno-logic of otherness by which being is constituted as relationality and appearance. During the historical phase, however, this techno-logic is abstract and issues in a necessarily one-sided, tedious and seemingly endless pattern of emergence and reconcealment. This pattern we have met before as Being's bad infinity. The argument we have been making asserts that technology -- the technology that has dominated our consciousness historically and which continues to be operative today -- works essentially on this principle. There is no need



to repeat the earlier analysis at this point. We have seen that the historical type of technical relation, the relation of master and slave, of means and ends, is strategically predicated upon a univocal negativity, or on a transformative logic of alienation which is incapable of integrating, through its acts, either the original positivity of its opposition or the new determinacy in which it issues. The sense of dialectical complexity and completion still evades it so that its stance-- the stance of diffidence -- is always reduction rather than recognition. The consequence clearly enough is a consciousness (the consciousness of the slave) which sets up an infinite regress of transformative acts and partial conquests in which otherness gives rise to otherness in an unending search for the immovable center of domination. But if this is even a remotely accurate depiction of how it stands historically with our techniques, then it is the case (logically at least) that our uses of technology could be turned back upon themselves to reveal a ground in the conceptual circularity that is the negation of the negation.

Technology is the particularly human modality of negative power by which a world in the technical image, is articulated. The principle of this technology, as Ellul tells us, is efficiency; or rather, technique structures, instrumentalizes and manifests the efficient cause (essential energeia, negating/negativity) of historical emergence.

Now, what could possibly be meant by a technology that conformed to the recursive strategies of Hegel's Concept, or again, that was essentially post-historical? While we can imagine such a possibility, it clearly remains unrealized except for dim and distorted glimmerings in the forms of cybernetic thought and practise. But a possibility, to the extent that it is implicated in a structural necessity, can always be developed into a principle. And this principle, while it must remain that which historically held sway, can also, at a certain point, be conceived in connection with a philosophy of the concrete. What we want to distinguish, then, are two forms of efficiency, predicated on two different, though ultimately related, kinds of reason and accounts of the whole.

Ellul defines efficiency in terms of the one best way; the modern efficiency expert similarly in terms of the minimum, least costly, least complicated number of inputs to achieve the maximum predetermined output. What is efficient is what "gets the job done." The normal uses of efficiency, then, suppose (as the German word tüchtigkeit spells out explicitly) an idea of means somehow befitting the end, an idea of what is appropriate in a given situation. Historically, what was appropriate was the slave's shaping of nature (the given in the largest sense) to the uses of culture. But to the extent

that historical cultures do not grasp, but leave to history, the articulation of their essential character, the uses of nature remain abstract. Historical epochs, in the very nature of the case, have no knowledge of history as a whole. They can, therefore, but dimly perceive the necessity that underlies the totality of their relations. Otherness, alienation, externality condition the very possibility of historical being. And a being in the world of this sort means a labouring that wills, appropriates, dominates -- a labouring which seeks to get beyond otherness and yet can do nothing but posit new others or new historical possibilities. What is historically efficient or appropriate, then, when taken to its logical extreme, is a transformative use of technique which denies otherness or which seeks to negate absolutely on the basis of an abstract, incomplete or unself-conscious subjectivity.<sup>43</sup> Historical efficiency, then, has to do with the kind of producing that prepares everything as a reflection of a pure or undifferentiated willing will.

Now, by definition, maximum or absolute efficiency is attained only at the end of history. There are two reasons for this. First, only when Spirit has realized all of its phenomenological possibilities, or again, only when everything immediately given has been rendered cultural, are the linear forms of historical resistance made

pliant to the system's polyseamous circularity. Since nothing that intrinsically pertains to it stands outside or against it, the expenditure of forces is limited to simple maintenance and control. Human bodies and minds are no longer wasted in the processes of appropriative politics. Second, within the circle itself each element will have taken its proper place giving the whole both a particular life and a comprehensive articulation through the network of reciprocal interactions. The multitude of particulars becomes, thereby, an organized system in which every element now makes its proper sacrifice and receives its proper due. The whole itself, no longer abstract or only partially generated, maintains its potentialities in a kinetic form through the parts, the diversity of which its sovereign principle must uphold as the ground of its own richness. Hence, to subtract any element, to make it labour against its proper nature or outside the totality of immediate relations that make it what it determinately is, to suppress diversity or to permit any element to dominate rather than condition and be conditioned by the rest, all this would be inappropriate or again inefficient. A concrete notion of efficiency, then, has only a passing or developmental relation to the abstract efficiencies of historical or reductive bringing forth. For once the entire circle has been run through the greatest possible release of energies for renewed creation is achieved only

in recognizing the reciprocity of all being related. As we said in an earlier chapter, after history, the strength of a sovereign principle must be determined, not with respect to the level of identification that can be posited amongst disparate parts, but with respect to the level of differentiation that is possible within a determinate whole.

A technology that was efficient in this post-historical or systemic sense, then, would have to transcend the original humanizing relation of master and slave. And this, in turn, would entail an overcoming of the kind of rationality that posits the abstract opposition of means and ends. Such a technology would never cease to be technology; it could not, for instance, cease to be transformative, a process of positing objective others or a power of spiritual mediation and hegemony. But it could be made to recognize, through the awareness of those who put it to use, that means, far from being indifferent or at a remote distance, are fundamentally constitutive of ends; that, from the vantage of the Concept or the infinity that loops back on itself, the means are the ends and the ends are the means. Nature, through evolutionary and technical processes, gives rise to Spirit, and Spirit, through its historical trials, conveys to Nature its essence as an ordered whole. Beyond any question of a simple minded resource management (which would only permit the indefinite

playing out of mastery's bad infinity) our use of means must become responsive to the idea of the self-winding circle. Not circular in the contemporary sense of an input-output-feedback loop, but in a sense which grants to everything, not its original immediacy, but its unique privilege and prerogative as a part of a humanly intelligible whole. In this way we do not lose the sense of a human world, for the world has irreversibly been made anew. But neither do we lose the sense or negative intuition of a world that was made for and gave rise to the human. The post-historical recognition that we each embody and recollect the totality of our history, that every otherness is yet ourselves again and that each contributes to an ecology of infinite self-reflection, should give rise to a little tolerance, a little kindness and to the ultimate phenomenological possibility of self-control. A technology based on such self-control, or on a profound sense of the intrinsic limits that reciprocal relations establish, would only remotely resemble the large scale systems presently in place. But exactly how a technology bent back on itself and cycling so as to reflect a measured co-ordination of nomadic spheres, would work is, at this point, impossible to say -- though we are always at liberty to say that it is possible.

Conclusion: The Necessity of Wisdom and the Wisdom of Necessity

In Hegel's science of wisdom the attempt to define the ground of the sorts of intelligibility that have preoccupied philosophy since Plato, comes to fruition. To be unable or unwilling to grasp Hegelian philosophy, then, is simply to forego any comprehension of why and how we have become what we are as beings who desire and as beings who speak of that desire in time. Even when we speak of deviant forms, or of challenges to intelligibility, these have meaning or can be expressed at all, only because they are situated in a phenomenological accounting of experience which necessarily throws up the forms of counter-intelligibility as part of its recurring discursive cycle. Hence, the recent attempts to get beyond the system, to get beyond its monopoly on meaning and so beyond our collective past must appear to us as misguided, ultimately doomed expressions of intolerance, bad faith and resentiment. For, as a matter of principle, they can no more transcend the structural necessities that a determinate history creates than a man can give up his body. Every new approach, then, must, at some point, initiate yet another logic of difference and another cycling of the whole. Even Heidegger, whose alternative draws on the marginalized sources of western mysticism, cannot escape this fate. For the unspoken is conditioned by the spoken; we are aware of an intuition or of immediacy only because

it can and does become determinate as an idea.

But one serious problem remains. While the world, as it has come to be, is intelligible only through Hegelian wisdom, this wisdom, nevertheless, remains, in some palpable sense, unrealized. That one can make such a statement given the temporal priority of action over conception or of the real over the ideal, establishes the veracity of a teleological truth. Hegelian wisdom, to be wisdom, must be actual; and yet, it remains unrealized. We can only conclude that it exists in germ, in principle, and that this implicit rationality of the real has a kind of logical priority.<sup>44</sup> But the problem remains. If Hegelian wisdom is the rational in the actual, then how have we stalled? Why does it remain an implicit determination? Why is freedom still only a principle, and a recursive infinitude still only a logical possibility? The answer to this problem would seem to lie in the nature of finitude itself. To realize a potentiality, a determination must be made; but to become determinate is to open a thing to contingency. Every determination is a negation, indeed, multiple negations, which give rise to the multitude of others who touch each other in manifold, indeterminate ways. The movement from potentiality to actuality, then, is through a manifold externality where there is always the risk that one will lose the way. For Hegel, necessity is no more than the qualitative determina-



tion of a thing or the pattern of relations which happen to obtain between substances and their respective, mutually conditioning attributes. As such, what is necessary is only what has come to be and how this being structures, forecloses upon and further illuminates possibility. There might, just as well, then, have been nothing rather something; there might have been dead matter rather than life; and there might have been life alone unilluminated by the reflections of Spirit. But to the extent that each of these possibilities was realized, they become, post factum, necessary, even from the outset.

Our question, however, remains unanswered. Hegelian science has been conceived and to that extent it constitutes a conceptual necessity (or fact). But what of the world in which the Concept must dwell? For Hegel, necessity never eliminates the contingent, even when we are faced with the most blatant of fait accompli. Rather, a conceptual necessity when translated into a contingent world articulates an order of possibility -- an order determined in its broadest outlines by the measure of the necessity itself. Hegelian wisdom, then, more than our necessity, is the contingent circle of possibility on which we more or less freely predicate our worlds. But an order of possibilities is only an order through negative implication. The world, accordingly, can and must appear

variously, partially and inadequately. For, while wisdom is a termination and final word, it is also and necessarily a recycling or renewing of the knowledge of possibilities. The world, as it presently exists, then, is necessary, but it is only one of our possibilities and, as such, only a partial or a contingent expression of that necessity. We certainly understand this world, the finite, self-articulating ring in which it is implicated, and the contingency of our expression. The trick, however, is to enjoy it. And this would seem to depend, in last analysis, upon a realization of necessity that embodied, without suppression, the totality of our human historical possibilities.

Despairing of ever bridging the gulf that seemed inevitably to divide philosophy from tyranny (or political rule), Plato, in the Laws prepared a constitution that aimed to eliminate both. This constitution, to be revered as of legendary origin, and embodying the principles of a divine reflection, set over the people immutable laws as the sole repository of both wisdom and authority. Plato, as Hegel after him, understood that between the philosopher and the tyrant there is only the semblance of a difference. For the philosopher is simply a tyrant who would have a determinate idea of the good before seeking the means through which it might rule; and the tyrant is simply a philosopher who would have the means to rule

already in hand to insure the realization of the good once it is revealed. The problem, of course, is that no man lives long enough to become both. The preoccupation of political philosophy, accordingly, becomes the attempt to embody the wisdom of the philosopher and the power of the tyrant in something that transcends both. For Hegel, this too is a constitution, but one very different from that envisioned by Plato. It expresses not an abstract principle, but the principle of abstraction (negation) as such, the sovereignty of a universal spirit that has come to a complete appraisal of its possibilities in and as the particular spirits that have lived and died in time. The principle of Hegel's constitution, then, is the constitutional necessity of the whole, which is nothing if taken apart from the self-organizing totality of human historical relations.

What remains deeply problematic, then, is not whether Hegelian wisdom has been realized, but whether its present manifestation as a planetary cybernetics can be made to recollect the fullness of the wisdom that it presently conceals. And this making re-collect can only become our necessity when we have succeeded in illuminating the recesses of the technological which Spirit has constituted as its final earthly dwelling place.

NotesKey to Editions Used

- Ellul            Ellul, Jacques, The Technological Society: translated by John Wilkinson; Vintage Books, New York, 1964.
- Habermas        Habermas, Jurgen, Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics: translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro; Beacon Press, Boston, 1971.
- Heidegger       Heidegger, Martin, The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays: translated by William Lovitt; Harper Colophon Books, New York, 1977.
- Ihde            Ihde, Don, Technics and Praxis: D. Reidel Publishing Company, Boston, 1979.
- Winner         Winner, Langdon, Autonomous Technology: Technics-Out-of-Control as a Theme in Political Thought: M.I.T. Press, Cambridge Mass., 1977.

1            Hegel had read Stuart, Smith and knew English political economy, on the whole, quite well. He also in his Jena Realphilosophie addressed the issues of the effects of industrialization on society, particularly with respect to the creation of a disenfranchized urban working-class. Again, some of this material finds its way into the Philosophy of Right in the paragraphs on civil society. See Avineri, chapter 5. Nevertheless, technology had not yet become sufficiently problematic in Hegel's time to warrant disconnection from the larger milieu of social and political economy. It does not, therefore, find separate space in the Encyclopaedia. Had Hegel been writing today, however, this probably would not have been the case.

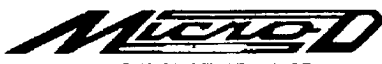
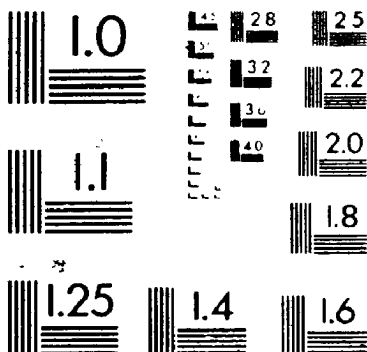
2            Ihde, p.103.

3            Heidegger, p.12.

4            Ibid, pp. 24-5.

5            Ibid, p. 22.

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- 6     Ibid, p.21.
- 7     Heidegger is well aware that large scale modern technology historically "gets under way only when it is supported by exact physical science." (Ibid, p. 22.) The point that the present paragraph seeks to make, however, is that science comes into existence only through the prior technological determination of the world into objects which can be scrutinized and utilized by autonomous subjects. This situation of difference and subjective authorization is implicit even in the earliest artifice which leads inevitably to some measure of technical control over what must increasingly appear as an external environment. In the course of time, this merely implicit condition emerges as a technological imperative or as an explicit drive for increasing mastery and control. Thus, "technology, so understood, is in no sense an instrument of man's making or in his control. It is rather that phenomenon, ruled from out of Being itself, that is centrally determining in all of Western History." (Ibid, p. xxix.)
- 8     Ibid, p. 17.
- 9     Ibid, p. 20.
- 10    Ibid, p. 18.
- 11    Heidegger's thought on technology at this point necessarily suffers from the ambiguities that afflict his other work. The situation that Being somehow escapes conceptual formulation while at the same time making it possible, through its grant or destining, for beings to formulate concepts would seem to have the effect of confining our understanding of the foundations of the technological either to the bad infinite of abstract reason or to the silent night of naked intuition. In the first case, the elusiveness of Being causes beings to forget the grant and gives rise to the subjective pretention that there is nothing possible outside of the abstract ordering and reducing for use. In the second, this same elusiveness leads beings to forget what is

actually bestowed in the grant, resulting both in the socially useless activity of the mystic and in the socially dangerous activity of the madman who no longer sees limits or warrant for anything. As serious as these problems are, however, there are still many points of Heidegger's analysis which may be taken over with little reservation. First, the fact that technology can, and ultimately must, be seen in the context of a fundamental ontological relation of the revealed to the unrevealed. This, I believe, constitutes the formal principle of any adequate theory of technology understood as a distinctly human phenomenon. It means once again that technology is a way of making the world appear; that more than a mere emergent, it constitutes the conditions of emergence per se.

12 Ibid, p. 27.

13 Ibid, pp. 34-5.

14 That is, reveals totality through representation, but conceals totality for conception.

15 Ihde, p. 105.

16 Cp. Ellul, "Translator's Introduction," p.xiii.

17 Ibid, p. 22.

18 Some have argued that this ultimate self-organizing stage in the development of techniques would be a science of the information flows which integrate a society's total capacity for production (economy), distribution (politics) and consumption (art, religion, play). Ellul's point, however, is that all technique rather than adapting to situations in any but the most trivial of ways, actually modifies its environment in accord with abstract principles of peak operating efficiency. A cybernetics or "science of control and communication" could only work, then, by fundamentally restructuring communication and this effort would ultimately rest on the techniques of

consciousness modification. Without doubt the human spirit is the last and most challenging of all possible technical environments.

- 19 Ibid, p. 79.
- 20 Ibid, p. 141.
- 21 Ibid, p. 79.
- 22 Ibid, p. 21.
- 23 Ibid, p. 43.
- 24 Ibid, p. 51.
- 25 Ibid, pp. xxv, 128.
- 26 Ibid, p. 42. This seems to be the point of the entirety of chapter 1, part 2.
- 27 Ibid, p. 47. For Ellul, technology is problematic in its essence. But this essence only becomes a concern of thought when technology has expanded sufficiently to reconstitute its usual dependent relation to the social. (Ibid, pp. 62-3.)
- 28 Ibid, p. 128.
- 29 Ibid, pp. 78-9.
- 30 Ibid, p. 85 and many others.
- 31 Winner, pp. 187-90.
- 32 Habermas, pp. 96-8.
- 33 Ibid, pp. 55-6.
- 34 Ibid, p. 58.
- 35 Ibid, p. 59.
- 36 Ibid, p. 60.
- 37 Ibid, pp. 71-4.
- 38 Ellul, p. 157.



- 39 Ibid, p. 220.
- 40 Winner's book is a good presentation and evaluation of some of these studies. In particular see chapter 7.
- 41 That is, bringing forth as poiesis (identity or immediacy), as transformation and mastery (difference), and as self-control and infinite circularity (totality).
- 42 This mediation, for man, is always technical.
- 43 Hence, the oriental world utilized its technical (productive, organizational) capacities as a reflection of a principle of ethical substance or family, Greek society as a reflection of a sensuous aesthetic ideal, Christian society as a reflection of pure or abstract selfhood, bourgeois society as a reflection of atomic egoism. In each case, however, technical potentials are never brought to bear on or seen to be conditioned by the plenitude of historical possibilities.
- 44 Of course, there is nothing transcendental, in the traditional sense, about this priority. It comes into being in and through time. But as a determinate event in time it establishes certain structural necessities which for all practical purposes might as well have been foreordained.

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