



The Philosophy of Fichte

Alfred Weber

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was born at Stuttgart, 1770, and died as a professor in the University of Berlin, 1831. Like his friend Schelling, he attended the theological seminary at Tübingen. Jena, where he renewed and then dissolved the friendship with his fellow-countryman, who was five years his junior, Nuremberg, where he had charge of the Gymnasium, Heidelberg, and the Prussian capital, mark the different stages in his academic career. We mention the following works: (1) *Phänomenologie des Geistes*² (1807); (2) *Wissenschaft der Logik*,³ in three volumes (1812-1816); (3) *Encyclopedie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*⁴ (1817); (4) *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*⁵ (1821); also, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*,⁶ *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*,⁷ *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*,⁸ *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*,⁹ published after his death.

According to Fichte, the thing-in-itself (the absolute) is the ego itself, which produces the phenomenal world by an unconscious and involuntary creation, and then overcomes it by a free and conscious effort. According to Schelling, the absolute is neither the ego nor the non-ego, but their common root, in which the opposition between a thinking subject and a thought object disappears in a perfect indifference; it is the neutral principle, anterior and superior to all contrasts, the identity of contraries. Fichte's absolute is one of the terms of the opposition, that of Schelling is the transcendent, mysterious, impenetrable source of the same. Fichte's conception errs in reducing the absolute to what is but one of its aspects: the absolute of Fichte is the ego limited by a theoretically inexplicable non-ego; it is a prisoner, it is not really the absolute. Schelling's absolute is a transcendent entity, which does not explain anything, since we do not know either how or why to deduce from it the oppositions constituting the real world. The absolute indifference, far from being the highest and most concrete reality, is, at bottom, nothing but an abstraction.

According to Hegel, the common source of the ego and of nature does not transcend reality; it is immanent in it. Mind and nature are not aspects of the absolute, or a kind of screen, behind which an indifferent and lifeless God lies concealed, but its successive modes. The absolute is not immovable, but active; it is not the principle of nature and of mind, but is itself successively nature and mind. This succession, this process, this perpetual generation of things, is the absolute itself. In Schelling, things proceed from the absolute, which, for that very reason, remains outside of them. In Hegel, the absolute is the process itself; it does not produce movement and life, it is movement and life. It does not exceed the things, but is wholly in them; nor does it, in any way, exceed the intellectual capacity of man. If we mean by God the being transcending human reason, then Hegel is the most atheistic of philosophers, since no one is more emphatic in affirming the immanency and perfect knowableness of the absolute. Spinoza himself, the philosopher of immanency, does not seem to go so far; for, although he concedes that the intellect has an adequate idea of God, he assumes that the Substance has infinite attributes.

While modifying the Schellingian idea of the absolute, Hegel at the same time subjects the extravagant imagination of his friend to a merciless intellectual discipline. In order to arrive at

a knowledge of the principle and logical connection of things, we must, of course, think, but we must think logically and methodically. Only on that condition will the result tally with that of infinite thought in nature and history. The absolute, let us say, is movement, process, evolution. This movement has its law and its goal. Its law and its goal are not imposed upon the absolute from without; they are immanent in it, they are the absolute itself. Now the law which governs both human thought and unconscious nature is reason; the end at which things aim is, likewise, reason, but self-conscious reason. Hence the terms absolute and reason are synonymous. The absolute is reason, which becomes personified in man, after passing through the successive stages of inorganic and living nature.

But reason is not, as Kant conceives it, the human understanding, a faculty of the soul, a combination of principles, forms, or rules according to which we think things. It is the law according to which being is produced, constituted, or unfolded; or rather, it is both a subjective faculty and an objective reality: it is in me as the essence and norm of my thought, and it is in the things as the essence and law of their evolution. It follows that its categories have a much greater significance than Kantianism supposed. They are not only modes of thinking things; they are the modes of being of the things themselves. They are not empty frames, which receive their contents from without; they are substantial forms, as the Middle Ages used to say; they give themselves their own content; they are creative acts of divine and human reason. They are both the forms which mould my thought and the stages of eternal creation.¹⁰

Hence it is of essential importance to metaphysics that we make a more thorough study of the categories, their nature and, above all, their connection. Kant had already observed that the categories are not separate from and indifferent to each other, ranged alongside of each other in our intelligence like drawers in a piece of furniture, but intimately connected with each other. They are, in short, nothing but transformations of one and the same fundamental category, the idea of being. Hence it will not suffice to discuss them at random; we must consider them in their connection, surprise them, as it were, in the very act of their mutual production. Kant saw the importance of such an a priori deduction of the categories, and attempted it, but his deduction is, in reality, a merely empirical enumeration (incomplete at that) of pure concepts. We must return to Kant's notion, but we must substitute for his table of categories a real deduction, a true genealogical table.

This is the most exalted and withal the most arduous task of metaphysics. In order to succeed in it, we must eradicate our prejudices, all our sensible ideas, and trust to reason alone; we must let it unfold its own contents, and do nothing ourselves but follow it in its development (*nachdenken*), or record its oracles, as it were, at the very time of their production. To leave thought to itself, to abandon it to its spontaneous self-activity (*Selbstbewegung des Begriffs*): that is the true philosophical method, the immanent or dialectical method.

The science which does all this is logic, i.e., in the sense of Hegel, the genealogy of pure concepts. But since, in the panlogistic hypothesis the object of logic, is both the principle which thinks the things in us, and the objective cause which produces them, or the thing-in-itself; the genealogy of its concepts is at the same time the genealogy of the things, the explanation of the universe, or metaphysics. Hegel's speculative logic is both what the school calls logic (*Denklehre*) and what it calls metaphysics or ontology (*Seinslehre*). It is called speculative, in order to distinguish it from the former and to include the latter. It is metaphysical, for it speaks of mechanical, chemical, and organic processes, and likewise embraces ethics, since it treats of the good. In this it is consistent with its panlogistic premises: if reason not only conceives, but produces being, if it is the creator of things, if it is everything; the science of reason must be the universal science, which includes all the particular sciences.

It is an inconsistency¹¹ in Hegel, as we have shown elsewhere,¹² to have his Logic followed by a Philosophy of Nature and a Philosophy of Mind. Logic treats of reason in abstracto, the philosophy of nature and of mind reveals it to us as it realizes itself in the universe and in history.

I. Logic, or Genealogy of Pure Concepts

1. Quality, Quantity, Measure¹³

The common root of the categories or pure concepts is the notion of being, the emptiest and at the same time the most comprehensive, the most abstract and the most real, the most elementary and the most exalted notion. It is the identical substance, and the material of all our notions, the fundamental theme which runs through them all. Indeed, quality is a mode of being, quantity, a mode of being, proportion, phenomenon, action, modes of being. All our concepts express modes of being, and hence are merely transformations of the idea of being.

But how shall we explain these transformations? How does being, which is everything, become anything else? In virtue of what principle or inner force is it modified? The contradiction which it contains is this principle or force. Being is the most universal notion, and for that very reason, also the poorest and emptiest. To be white, to be black, to be extended, to be good, is to be something: being without any determination is non-being. Hence, being pure and simple is equal to non-being. It is both itself and its opposite. If it were only itself, it would remain immovable and barren; if it were only nothing, it would be equal to zero, and, in this case, perfectly powerless and fruitless. Because it is both it becomes something, a different thing, everything. The contradiction contained in being is resolved in the notion of becoming, or development. Becoming is both being and non-being (that which will be). The two contraries which engender it, being and nothing, are contained and reconciled in it. A new contradiction results, which is resolved by a new synthesis, and so on, until we reach the absolute idea.

This, then, is the moving principle in the Hegelian logic, a contradiction is reconciled in a unity, reappears in a new form, only to disappear and reappear again, until it is resolved in the final unity. By repudiating the principle of contradiction of Aristotle and Leibniz, according to which a thing cannot both be and not be, it takes sides with the Sophists, without, however, falling into their scepticism. The contradiction does not, according to Hegel, exist in thought alone, but also in the things themselves; existence itself is contradictory. When, with the realistic and dualistic systems, we separate thought from its object and concede to each an independent existence, the antinomies of thought necessarily become a source of discouragement and scepticism. However, when we regard nature as the self-development of thought, and thought as nature becoming conscious of itself, when we recognize that the world, being thought objectified, contains nothing but thought; the contradiction in which the philosopher is involved ceases to be an obstacle to the understanding of things, and appears to him as their very essence reflecting itself in the antinomies of his thought.

Now that we know the moving principle and the unchanging form of the Hegelian dialectics, we need not follow out the unvarying and monotonous mechanism of its deductions. It will be sufficient to emphasize the most salient points of his metaphysics as set forth in the Logic.

The contradiction found in the idea of being is resolved in the notion of becoming. Being becomes, i.e., determines itself, limits itself, defines itself. But determinate or finite being continues ad infinitum; the finite is infinite; nothing compels thought to assign limits to it. Here we have a new contradiction, which is resolved in the notion of individuality (being-for-self, *Fürsichsein*). The individual is the unity of the finite and the infinite. To consider these two terms as excluding each other is to forget that the infinite, excluded by the finite, would be limited by the finite, or would be finite itself. If the infinite begins where the finite ends, and if the finite begins where the infinite ends, so that the infinite is beyond the finite, or the finite on this side of the infinite, it would not really be the infinite. The infinite is the essence of the finite, and the finite is the manifestation of the infinite, the infinite existing. Infinity determines itself, limits itself, sets boundaries to itself; in a word, it becomes the finite by the very fact that it gives itself existence. Existence is possible only under certain conditions, in certain modes, or within certain limits. Existence is self-limitation. Existence is finite being.¹⁴ Finite being, the individual, the atom, is infinity existing in a certain manner, limited infinity: quality becomes quantity.

Quantity is extensive quantity (number) or intensive quantity (degree). Number, which is quantity broken up, so to speak, and degree, which is concentrated quantity, are reconciled in the notion of measure and proportion.

Measure is being becoming essence (Wesen).

2. Essence and Appearance. Substantiality and Causality. Reciprocity ¹⁵

Essence is being, unfolded or expanded so that its aspects reflect each other. Hence the categories which follow come in pairs: essence and appearance, force and expression, matter and form, substance and accident, cause and effect, ground and consequence, action and reaction. This reflection-into-itself (Reflexion in ihm selbst), or if we prefer, this reflex, is the phenomenon. Essence and phenomenon (appearance) are inseparable indeed, the phenomenon is the very essence of essence or, in other terms, it is as essential to essence to appear, to life to manifest itself, to the principle to produce its consequences, as it is essential to the phenomenon to imply an essence. Phenomenon without essence is mere show, or mere appearance.

The essential is opposed by the accidental or contingent, which in turn becomes essential in the sense that the idea of the essential needs it in order to be produced. No category, we see, is independent of its neighbors. Although excluding each other, the categories need and mutually engender each other.

Essence expresses itself in a series of phenomena, and constitutes the thing or object, which is a totality of characteristics connected by one and the same essence. Considered in their relation to the object, these characteristics or phenomena are called properties. Just as there is no essence without a phenomenon, there is no thing apart from its properties. A thing is what its properties are; nothing else. Separate the thing from its essential properties, and nothing is left; its qualities are the thing itself.

As the generative principle of the phenomenon, the essence is the force or agent of which the phenomenon is the act or expression. Since a force is nothing but a totality of phenomena considered in their identity, and its expression merely the acting force itself, in so far as it exerts itself, it is a mere tautology to explain an act by an agent (*cur opium facit dormire?* - quia, etc.). As the matter, so its form; as the agent, so the act; as the character, so its manifestations; as the tree, so its fruits.

The dualism: essence and phenomenon, ground and consequence, force and expression, agent and act, matter and form, is resolved in the notion of activity, the synthesis and summary of the preceding notions. This logical category corresponds to what is called nature in metaphysics.¹⁶ In short, nature is action, production, creation. All the treasures lying in her fruitful lap, she manifests, produces, and then takes back, only to reproduce and take back again, and reproduce eternally.

Activity is synonymous with reality (Wirklichkeit). Nothing is active except what is real, and nothing is real except what is active.¹⁷ Absolute rest does not exist. Reality, compared with mere possibility, becomes necessity, What is real is necessarily active. Activity, reality, and necessity are synonymous. A being exists in so far as it acts, and acts in so far as it exists.

Essence or reality, considered as a necessary principle of activity, becomes substance. Substance is not a substratum in the proper sense of the word, but the sum of its modes. Hence we must abandon: in theology, the idea of a God existing outside of the universe; in psychology, the idea of a soul existing independently of the phenomena constituting the ego; in physics, the assumption of a kind of mysterious substratum of phenomena, of an unqualified and unqualifiable something, I-know-not-what, without extension, without color, without form, and yet supposed to be, something real. A substance so constituted as to escape scientific observation would be a pure chimera. It was owing to an illusion peculiar to dualism that the poet could say: "No mere created mind e'er penetrates the heart of nature."¹⁸ Nature has no heart or inner part; the outside of matter is matter itself; it belongs to its essence to unfold itself, to have no inner life (*das Wesen der Natur ist die Aeusserlichkeit*).

Substance is the totality of its modes. But it is not, on that account, as Spinozism conceives

it, a purely mechanical aggregate, a mere sum; it is a living totality, united with its modes by an organic tie: it is the cause of its modes, and its modes are the effects of the substance. These notions are not indifferent to each other; they are correlative pairs. The cause is inseparable from its effect; the effect indissolubly connected with its efficient cause. The latter is immanent in the former, as the soul in the body. Modes are unfolded, revealed, expressed substance; the effect is the cause effected, explicated, manifested. There is nothing in the effect which is not also in the cause; nor is there anything in the cause that does not effect, assert, or realize itself. The idea of the effect cannot be separated from the idea of the cause; nay, every effect is, in turn, a cause, and every cause, the effect of a preceding cause. In any series of causes and effects, A, B, C, D . . . , the effect B is nothing but the cause A asserting itself as a cause, and becoming in B the cause of C, in C the cause of D, and so on.

The causal series is not, as formal logic maintains, an indefinite series, a progressus in infinitum, in which each effect produces a new effect without reacting upon the cause that produced it. The truth is, the effect B is not only the cause of C, but also the cause of A. In short, A would not be a cause unless it effected B ; hence it is owing to B, or because of B, that A is a cause; hence B is not only the effect, but also the cause of the cause A. By a necessary reaction, every effect is the cause of its cause, and every cause the effect of its effect. Rain, for example, is a cause of moisture, and moisture, in turn, a cause of rain; or again: The character of a people depends on their form of government, but the form of their government also depends on the character of the people. Hence, since the effect is not fatally pre-determined by its cause, but reacts on it, the causal series in nature is not a straight line prolonged to infinity, but a curved line which returns to its starting-point, i.e., a circle. The notion of a rectilinear series is a vague and indefinite conception; the idea of the circle is exact and clearly defined, a finished whole (absolutum).

This reaction of the effect upon the cause (reciprocal action, Wechselwirkung) enhances the importance of the effect, and gives it the character of freedom, which it lacks in the system of Spinoza. According to this philosopher, the effect necessarily depends upon the pre-existing cause; in reality, however, it is an effect only in a certain measure, and is but relatively determined. There is neither in the beginning, nor in the middle, nor in the end of the causal series, a cause distinct from all the rest, and absolute with reference to the others. The absolute is not to be found in any particular part of the causal chain; it resides in the sum-total of the particular and relative causes. The latter are not so many slaves following the triumphal chariot of a first cause which excludes all other causality, and with regard to which the relative causes are as nothing; but each cause takes part in the absolute. Each is relatively absolute, none is absolutely absolute. No one has an exclusive claim to omnipotence; the sum of individual energies, or, to express it still more clearly, everything that exists through causal power, constitutes all existing power.

In reciprocal action, the two spheres into which being is divided when it becomes essence and phenomenon, are reunited and thus become logical totality.

3. The Notion, or Subjective, Objective, and Absolute Totality¹⁹

Outside of totality, none of the ideas thus far evolved has reality. A quality, a quantity, a force, or a cause, is nothing apart from the whole in which it is produced. Nothing in nature exists in isolation; nor can anything in the domain of thought lay claim to autonomy. This belongs only to the categories taken in their totality. Liberty is found in the whole alone. Hence in logical totality or the notion (Begriff)²⁰ being and essence return into themselves.

The idea of totality is divided into subjective totality (the notion proper) and objective totality.

The essential elements of the idea of life: essence, phenomenon, and reciprocal action, reappear in the concept of subjective totality or notion, as universality, particularity, and individuality. In the judgment, which is thought or the subject in action, universality and individuality, generality and particularity, have the appearance of being distinct and separate,

while in reality the judgment is merely the affirmation of their identity. When I say that man is mortal, or that Paul is mortal, I affirm that the characteristic common to all created beings, mortality, belongs to the particular being (man), and that the individual Paul, in turn, as a mortal being, is identical with the universality of creatures. In so far as the judgment affirms the identity of the universal and the individual, of the general and the particular, it is contradictory. The solution of the contradiction is found in reasoning, or the syllogism. The universal or general notion is unfolded in the major premise, the individual notion in the conclusion; and the minor premise, which is the connecting link between the major premise and the conclusion, expresses their identity.

The subjective notion is a form without matter, a container without a content. It exists, in principle, as a goal or final cause, but does not exist in reality. Hence its tendency to objectify itself; it is the eternal source of life in nature and of progress in history. The objectified notion is the universe, the objective whole, or objects. The general, the particular, and the individual are successively objectified in mechanism (simple external juxtaposition of objects), in chemism (mutual penetration of objects), and in organism (totality-unity).

However, a notion which is no longer a notion, thought which has become body, is again contradictory. Just as thought is not, made to remain empty, but to be filled with all objective content; so, too, the world, or the whole of things, is not made to remain a stranger to consciousness, but to be thought or understood. The subjective notion is a container with a content; the universe which is unconscious of itself is a content without a container. The latter contradiction is abolished by the interpenetration of the two spheres in the absolute Idea, which, from the theoretical standpoint, is called Truth, and from the practical standpoint, the Good: this is the highest category and the last term in the development of being.

To sum up : Being is becoming, development. The contradiction inherent in being is the principle or impulsive force of development. Being, self-expansion (self-unfolding), and self-concentration (the understanding of self), constitute the unchanging stages in the process. Quality, quantity, measure; essence and phenomenon, substantiality and causality, reciprocal action; subjectivity, objectivity, absolute: these are the serial stages of being.

Knowing this principle, this process, and these stages, we know a priori the order followed in the creations of nature (expanded reason) and of mind (concentrated and comprehended reason).

II. Philosophy of Nature²¹

1. The Inorganic World

Creative thought, like the reproductive thought of man, begins with the most abstract, the most vague, and the most intangible: with space and matter. After passing through a long line of development it culminates in the most concrete, the most perfect, the most accomplished: the human organism.

Like being, the first notion in logic, space exists and does not exist; matter is something and nothing. This contradiction is the very principle of physical evolution, the spring which sets it in motion; it is reconciled in movement, which divides matter into separate unities (Fürsichsein) and forms the heavenly system of them. The formation of heavenly bodies is, as it were, the first step taken by nature on the path of individuation. The individualizing tendency, which runs through nature like a mighty desire, manifests itself as attraction. Universal gravitation is the ideal unity whence all things spring and whither they tend, affirming itself in the midst of their separation. It is the individuality, the soul, the cement of the world; it makes an organism, a living unity (universum) of the world.

Primitive and formless matter, the common source of the heavenly bodies, corresponds to what logic calls indeterminate being. The distribution of this matter, its organization into a sidereal world, corresponds to the categories of quantity. Gravitation, at last, realizes the idea

of proportion.

The astronomical cosmos is an elementary society which anticipates human society. But the laws which govern it are, as yet, merely mechanical laws; the relations which the stars sustain to each other are summed up in the law of attraction. Hence the science which considers this primary phase of being, astronomy, deals with the dimensions of the stars, their distances, their external relations, rather than with their essential qualities, their composition, and their physiology.

2. Chemism

A second evolution leads to the qualitative differentiation of matter. The original state of indifference is followed by a variety of agencies (light, electricity, heat), by the reciprocal action of elements, by the inner process of opposition and reconciliation, separation and combination, polarity and union, which form the subject-matter of physics and chemistry.

Sidereal motion affects only the surface of bodies; chemism is an inner transformation, a change not only of place, but of essence, a prelude to that ultimate transformation of "substance" into "subject," of matter into mind, of being into consciousness, of necessity into freedom, which is the final goal of creation.

Nothing in the original flow of things resembles individuality; nothing is stable, fixed, or concentrated. But nature soon returns into itself. Just as in logic pure thought returns into itself and forms a circle or totality (Begriff), so in nature, the realization of logic, the chemical process returns into itself at a certain point and forms those centralized wholes which we call organisms, living beings.

3. The Organic World

The appearance of life is wholly spontaneous, and needs no deus ex machina to explain it. It is the effect of the same higher and immanent power which, as attraction and affinity, separated the stellar groups and the elements of chemism. Surely, mechanism alone cannot produce it; and if matter were nothing but matter, the course of its transformations would forever be in the straight line and centrifugal. But beneath the physical process the evolution of the Idea takes place, which is the final goal of things, only because it is also their creative principle.

The earth itself is a kind of organism, a crude outline of the masterpiece which nature tends to realize. In this sense, Schelling and his school have a right to speak of the soul of the celestial bodies, of the life of the earth. This life has its vicissitudes, its revolutions, and its history, the subject-matter of geology, and though it gradually diminishes, it does so merely to become the inexhaustible source of new, truly organic and individual life.

From the ashes of the terrestrial organism arises the vegetable kingdom. But the plant itself is, as yet, merely an imperfect organism, a kind of association or federation, the members of which are more or less autonomous individuals. Individuality proper is realized only in the animal kingdom. The animal is, decidedly, an indivisible whole, whose parts are really members, i.e., servants of the central unity. It asserts its individuality by constant assimilation, respiration, and locomotion. It is endowed with sensibility, nay, even with inner heat and voice in its most perfect representatives. However, there are insensible transitions here. As the inorganic kingdom is connected with the vegetable kingdom by astral individualities and crystallizations; so the vegetable kingdom passes into the animal kingdom in the zoöphyte. Animals are developed by degrees. The same idea, the same fundamental plan, more and more perfectly executed, runs through crustaceans, mollusks, insects, fishes, reptiles, and mammals. Finally, in the human organism, the most perfect animal form, the creative idea is reflected in all its fulness. Here it stops. In the material realm it produces nothing more perfect. We say, in the material realm, for instead of being exhausted in the creation of man, the creative idea saves its most precious treasures until it reaches the sphere of mind, i.e., humanity.

III. Philosophy of Mind

1. The Subjective Mind, or the Individual

Man is essentially mind, i.e., consciousness and freedom. But on emerging from the hands of nature he is so only in principle. The mind, like nature, is subject to the law of development. Consciousness and freedom do not exist at the dawn of individual or generic life; they are the products of the evolution called history.

The individual in the state of nature is governed by blind instinct, by brutal passions, and by that egoism which characterizes animal life. But as reason develops, he recognizes others as his equals; he becomes persuaded that reason, freedom, spirituality — these terms are synonymous — are not his exclusive property, but the common possession of all; he henceforth ceases to claim them as his exclusive privilege. The freedom of his fellow-creatures becomes the law, the bridle, the limit, of his own freedom. By giving way to this power, which is higher than the individual, the subjective mind yields to —

2. The Objective Mind, or Society²²

The blind forces manifested in the state of nature, e.g., the instinct for the propagation of species and the instinct for revenge, continue, but change their form. Henceforth they become marriage and legal punishment: regulated, disciplined instincts, ennobled by the law.

The objective mind first manifests itself in the form of right, which is freedom conceded and guaranteed to all. The individual who is recognized as free is a person. The personality realizes and asserts itself through property. Each legal person has, by virtue of his free activity, the right to possess, and, consequently, also the right to transfer his property. This transference takes place in the form of a contract. The contract is the State in embryo.

Right appears in the fulness of its power, only when individual caprice opposes the general or legal will (the objective mind).

The conflict between the individual will and the legal will gives rise to wrong (i.e., the un-right, Unrecht, the negation of right). But though denied by the individual, right remains right, the will of all. Temporarily defeated, it triumphs in the form of penalty. Injustice, wrongdoing, and crime thus merely serve to bring out the power of justice, and to prove that reason and right are superior to individual caprice. Punishment inflicted by law is not a chastisement or correction, but a just retribution; it is not a means, but an end. Right rights itself, justice justifies itself, and the penitent is the involuntary instrument of its glorification. Capital punishment is no more than just, and should be maintained. But is it not absurd to attempt to correct an evildoer by killing him? This objection, which is too common in our times, rests, as Hegel holds, upon a false notion of legal punishment, the object of which is not the reform of the individual but the solemn affirmation of the violated principle.²³

There is truth in the objection that the juridical view is one-sided and extreme. The jurist considers only the law and its fulfilment, without regard to the inner motive of the legal act. Now the individual may, in all respects, conform to the prescriptions of the law, he may be perfectly honorable in his outer life, and yet the general will may not be his will and the true motive of his acts. Hence, in spite of the semblance of conformity, we find a hidden but quite real antagonism between the subjective mind and the objective mind.

This antagonism must disappear, this impersonal will, which is called right, justice, must become the personal will of the individual, the inner law of his acts; legality must become morality; or, rather, to use a Hegelian phrase, the objective mind must become a subject.

Morality is the legality of the heart, the law which is identified with the will of the individual. In the moral sphere the code becomes moral law, conscience, the idea of the good. Morality inquires not only into the act as such, but into the spirit which dictates it. The legal sphere regulates the material interests of life, without reaching the conscience; it fashions the will according to a certain type; material interest is its highest goal. Morality aims higher: it

subordinates the useful to the good.

Morality is realized in a number of institutions, which aim to unite the individual wills in the common service of the idea.

The fundamental moral institution, the basis of all the rest, is marriage, the family. On this institution rest civil society and the State. Since the State cannot exist without the family, it follows that marriage is a sacred duty and should be primarily and chiefly based on the consciousness of duty, or reason. It is a moral act, only in case it is contracted with a view to society and the State. Otherwise it is almost equivalent to concubinage. From this standpoint also we must consider the question of divorce. Divorce would be justifiable, only in case matrimony were merely a matter of sentiment. Rational morality condemns it in principle, and cannot tolerate it in practice except in exceptional cases provided for by the law. The holiness of marriage and the honor of corporations constitute the indispensable basis of society and the State, and the source of a people's prosperity; prostitution and individual egoism are an infallible cause of decadence.

Civil society, grounded on the family, is not yet the State. Its aim is the protection of individual interests. Hence the particularism which prevails in smaller countries where civil society and the State are identical, and which disappears with the formation of great united States. The State differs from civil society in that it no longer solely pursues the good of the individuals, but aims at the realization of the idea, for which it does not hesitate to sacrifice private interests. The egoism and particularism which prevail in the community are here counterbalanced and corrected. The State is the kingdom of the idea, of the universal, of the objective mind, the goal, of which the family and civil society are merely the means.

The republic is not, according to Hegel, the most perfect form of government. Ultimately resting upon the confusion of civil society and the State, it exaggerates the importance and the role of the individual. The republics of antiquity were superseded by dictatorships, because they sacrificed the idea to the individual, the family, and the caste. In the Greek Tyranny and Roman Cæsarism sovereign reason itself condemns the radical vice of the republican, democratic, and aristocratic forms of government.

The monarchy is the normal political form. In the free and sovereign action of a unipersonal ruler the national idea finds its adequate expression. The State is, nothing but an abstraction unless personified in a monarch, — the depositary of its power, its political traditions, and the idea which it is called upon to realize. The prince is the State made man, impersonal reason become conscious reason, the general will become personal will. That is, according to our philosopher, the true meaning of the motto of Louis XIV.: *l'État c'est moi*.

Though Hegel condemns political liberalism, he favors national liberalism and the principle of nationality. From the Utilitarian standpoint of civil society, there may be, at best, a union or confederation of heterogeneous elements. Switzerland is an example of such a federation. But State means nationality, and nationality means unity of language, religion, customs, and ideas. The State which incorporates a people absolutely different from its own, and, against their will, fastens upon them an odious yoke, commits a crime against nature. In such a case, and only then, is opposition, or even rebellion, legitimate. A political community is impossible without a communion of ideas.

Here, however, a distinction must be made. Annexation is not a crime that justifies rebellion unless the annexed nation represents an idea which is as great, fruitful, and viable as the idea represented by the conquering people. There are nationalities which represent no idea and have lost their *raison d'être*. Such nations are to be condemned. The Bretons in France and the Basques in France and Spain belong to this class.

In spite of appearances to the contrary, the most vigorous people, the State representing the most viable idea, always succeeds in gaining the mastery. History is merely an incessant struggle between States of the past and those of the future. The idea of the State is gradually realized by means of such defeats and victories. The historical States are the temporary forms in which it appears, and which it discards when time has worn them out, only to assume new forms. Since the absolute is not restricted to a particular existence, but is always found in

the whole, we cannot say that the ideal State is anywhere. The ideal State is everywhere and nowhere: everywhere, because it tends to realize itself in historical States; nowhere, for as an ideal, it is a problem to be solved by the future. History is the progressive solution of the political problem. Every nation adds its stone to the building of the ideal State, but each people also has its original sin, which brings it into opposition with the idea, and sooner or later compasses its ruin. Each State represents the ideal from a certain side; none realizes it in its fulness; none, therefore, is immortal. Like the logical notions, which are absorbed by a more powerful rival, and by virtue of the same law, the nations, one after another, succumb to each other, and transmit to their successors, in a more developed and enlarged form, the political idea of which they have been the depositaries, the civilization of which they have been the guardians.

This passing of the civilization of one people to another constitutes the dialectics of history: an expression which is not taken figuratively by Hegel. Logic or dialectics is the evolution of reason in individual thought; the dialectics of history is the development of the same reason on the world's stage. One and the same principle is unfolded in different environments, but according to an identical law. In pure logic, abstract ideas succeeded each other on the stage of thought and then disappeared, only to be followed by more comprehensive and concrete ideas. In the logic of nature, objectified ideas, material organisms, succeeded each other and formed an ascending scale, thereby realizing, with increasing perfection, the ideal type of physical creations. In the logic of history, ideas, again, become incarnated in nature, and invisibly weave the web of human destinies. Whether these ideas unfold themselves beneath the spiritual gaze of the philosopher, or whether they succeed each other in the form of bodies, or become incorporated in historical nations, they are always the same, and their order of succession is invariable. Reason is the innermost substance of history, which is a logic in action. In the eyes of the superficial historian, empires rise, flourish, and decline, peoples struggle, and armies destroy each other. But behind these nations and their armies are the principles they represent; behind the ramparts and the batteries ideas antagonize each other.

War, like the death penalty, has changed in aspect. With the advance of military art and civilization its cruelties are lessened. But in a tempered and modified form, it will continue as one of the indispensable means of political progress. It is the boast of our times that we see it in its true light, and no longer regard it as the passing satisfaction of the caprice of a sovereign, but as an inevitable crisis in the development of the idea. True, legitimate, necessary war is the war for ideas, war in the service of reason, as the nineteenth century has learned to wage it. Not that antiquity and the Middle Ages did not battle for ideas; but they were not yet conscious of the moral essence of war. The ideas formerly collided with each other, like blind forces; the modern world is conscious of the cause for which it is shedding its blood. Formerly the conflict was one between passions; now it is a battle for principle.

The victorious State is truer, nearer to the ideal State, better, in a word, than the vanquished State. The very fact that it has triumphed proves this: its triumph is the condemnation of the principle represented by the vanquished; it is the judgment of God. Thus interpreted, history resembles a series of divine reprisals directed against everything that is finite, one-sided, and incomplete; it is an eternal *dies irae*, which nothing earthly can escape.

There is, in every epoch, a people in whom mind is more completely incarnated than in the rest, and who march in the front rank of universal civilization. That is, the God of history has successively "chosen" the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Greeks, the Romans, and the French. The national minds are grouped around the infinite Mind of which history is the temple, and, one after another, become its privileged organs. So the archangels surround the throne of the Eternal.

The three phases of every evolution: being, expansion, and concentration, recur in the three great epochs of history.

In the Oriental monarchies, the State personified in the sovereign dominates the individual to the extent of annihilating him. What does the Ocean care for the waves playing on its surface?

In the States of Greece, Asiatic sluggishness is followed by political life and its fruitful

conflicts; the absolute monarchy is superseded by the republic, Here individuals are no longer mere modes with which the substance of the State has nothing to do, but integral parts of a whole, which exists only through them; as such they have a feeling of their importance, and appreciate that the State needs their cooperation. The classical republics last as long as the individual elements and the State remain in equilibrium. They are imperilled as soon as the demagogue's régime substitutes for the national interest the selfish interests of individual ambition. The Cæsarean reaction forces the rebellious individual into obedience; the habitable world is conquered; the most diverse nations are thrown into one and the same mould and reduced to an inert and powerless mass.

The equilibrium between the State and the individual is restored in the Christian and parliamentary monarchy, as the best example of which Hegel regards the English constitution.

24

3. The Absolute Mind²⁵

However perfect the moral edifice called the State may be, it is not the highest goal whither the evolution of the Idea tends; and political life, though full of passion and intelligence, is not the climax of spiritual activity. Freedom is the essence of mind; independence is its life. Now, in spite of the contrary assertions of political liberalism, even the most perfect State cannot realize this. Whether it be a republic, a constitutional or an absolute monarchy, an aristocracy or a democracy, it does not cease to be a State, an external, armed, armored power, a kind of prison in which what is essentially infinite is deprived of its vital element. Mind cannot unconditionally subject itself to anything but mind. Not finding in political life the Supreme satisfaction which it seeks, it rises beyond it into the free realms of art, religion, and science.

Does that mean that the mind in order to realize its destiny, shall destroy the ladder by which it rose; shall it overturn the State, society, and the family? Far from it. Indeed, the creations of art, the religious institutions, the works of science, are possible only under the auspices of a strong State and under the protection of a firmly established government. The artist, the Christian, and the philosopher can no more do without society and the State than the vegetable and animal can exist without the mineral kingdom. So, too, the Idea, whether it operates in the form of nature or of mind, never destroys its creations; it develops and perfects them, and even though their preservation may seem useless to us, it keeps the first-fruits of its labors intact. Nature, in which everything appears to be in a state of endless destruction and revolution, is eminently preservative: the mineral kingdom continues to exist alongside of the vegetable kingdom; the vegetable kingdom, alongside of the animal kingdom; and in the animal kingdom the most elementary and most unfinished types exist alongside of the most perfect types: nature preserves them and uses them as a kind of pedestal for her masterpiece. Moreover, the higher creations are possible only because those which precede them endure. The mineral kingdom gives life to the vegetable kingdom; the animal lives on the vegetable or on the animal inferior to it; finally, plants and animals nourish man, who cannot live without them. The same is true of the creations of the mind: from the depths of the soul arises the demand for liberty; from the fact that liberty is claimed by all, grow right, property, and the penal law; upon the solid foundation of right the moral institutions, the family, society, and the State, are established. All these developments are closely connected with each other, and each exists only through the instrumentality of the others. Take away one of the foundation-stones, and the entire universal edifice crumbles to pieces. The higher stories of this structure presuppose the perfect stability of the lower ones.

Man was, first of all, an individual (subjective mind) shut up in his native egoism; then, emerging from himself and recognizing himself in other men, he formed a community, society, and State (objective mind); finally, returning into himself, he finds at the bottom of his being the ideal of art or the beautiful, the religious ideal or God, the philosophical ideal or truth, and in the realization of this threefold ideal, the supreme independence to which he aspires: he becomes absolute mind.

In art, the mind enjoys by anticipation the victory over the external world which science reserves for it. The thought of the artist and his object, the human soul and the infinite, become identified; heaven descends into the soul, and the soul is carried heavenward. Genius is the breath of God, *afflatus divinus*.

Religion reacts against the pantheism anticipated by art, and shows us in God the transcendent Being, whom the genius of man cannot reach. By proclaiming the dualism of the infinite and the finite, religion is, in appearance, a relapse, a kind of return of the mind to the external yoke; in reality, however, it is a necessary crisis of the mind, which develops its forces and brings it nearer to God, in struggling beneath the yoke. That it is an evolution may be seen from the fact that Christianity itself, its most perfect form, proclaims the unity of the finite and the infinite in Jesus Christ, and thus anticipates the highest development of the mind: philosophy.

Philosophy realizes what art and the Christian dogma foreshadow. Art and religious faith spring from feeling and imagination; science is the triumph of pure reason, the apotheosis of mind. By understanding the world, the mind frees itself from it. Nature and its forces, the State and its institutions, which but lately seemed like a pitiless Fate, change in appearance so soon as the mind recognizes in nature the works of reason, i.e., its own works, and regards social and political institutions as the reflection of the moral authority dwelling in itself. If nature, law, right, State, represent different forms of mind (objective mind), all these barriers fall away; if everything that is real is found to be rational, reason has no other law except itself. On this summit of universal life, the ego and the world are forever united.

In conclusion, we shall summarize Hegel's philosophy of art, religion, and philosophy, especially the first, which has not been surpassed.

1. Art is the anticipated triumph of mind over matter; it is the idea penetrating matter and transforming it after its image. But the matter which the idea employs to incorporate itself is a more or less docile or rebellious servant; hence the different forms of art, the fine arts.

In architecture, the elementary stage of art, idea and form are quite distinct; the idea cannot as yet wholly conquer the matter which it employs, and the matter remains rebellious. Architecture is merely a symbolic art, in which the form suggests the idea without directly expressing it. The pyramid, the pagoda, the Greek temple, the Christian cathedral, are admirable symbols, but the distance between these edifices and the idea which they symbolize is as great "as that between heaven and earth." Moreover, the materials of architecture are the most material in the physical world. This art is to sculpture, painting, and music, what minerals are to vegetables and animals. Resembling the astronomical universe in its gigantic proportions and overwhelming majesty, it expresses solemnity, austerity, mute grandeur, the unalterable repose of force, the immovable *statu quo* of the infinite; but it is incapable of expressing the thousand shades of life, the infinitely varied beauties of reality.

The dualism of form and idea, which characterizes architecture, tends to disappear in sculpture. The art of the sculptor has this in common with architecture: like its elder sister, it employs gross matter, marble, brass; but it is much more capable of transforming and spiritualizing them. In the purely symbolical work of the architect, there are details and accessories which in no wise assist in expressing the idea; in the statue, nothing is indifferent, everything is in the service of the idea of which it is the direct expression, the immediate revelation. But the statue is incapable of representing the soul itself as revealed in the eye. This advance is made in painting.

The matter employed by painting is somewhat less material than that of sculpture and architecture; it is no longer the three-dimensional body, but the plane surface. Depth is reduced to a mere appearance, produced by perspective, spiritualized. However, painting can express only a moment of life, a moment which it is obliged to stereotype and consequently to materialize; the idea is still bound to matter and extension. Owing to this common characteristic, architecture, sculpture, and painting, together form objective art. Hence, they are inseparable; they are combined in a thousand different ways. These first three external, visible, material forms of art are superseded by subjective, invisible, immaterial art, or music.

Music is a spiritualistic art, the art which can, with thrilling truth, reproduce the innermost

essence of the human soul, the infinite shades of feeling. The direct opposite of architecture, sculpture, and painting, it, too, is an incomplete art. There can be nothing extreme in perfect art; it is the synthesis of all contraries, the harmonious union of the world of music and the world of objective art. This art of arts is poetry.

Poetry is art endowed with speech, the art which can say everything, express everything, and create everything anew, the universal art. Sculpture, like architecture, employs matter in its grossest form, but it spiritualizes marble; it gives life and intelligence to this block of which architecture can merely make a more or less eloquent symbol. So, too, poetry and music both employ sound, but in music this is vague and indefinite like the feeling which expresses it. In the service of the poet it becomes articulate and definite sound, a word, language. Music makes a symbol of sound, - a piece of music, like an edifice, is susceptible of the most diverse interpretations, - poetry wholly subordinates it to the idea. Architecture contents itself with suggesting the Divinity who reigns beyond the stars; sculpture brings him down upon the earth. Music localizes the infinite in feeling; poetry assigns to it the boundless realm which of right belongs to it: nature and history. It is all-powerful and inexhaustible, like the God who inspires the poet.

Sculpture and poetry, on the one hand, architecture and music, on the other, are to art what pantheism and theism are to religious thought. Architecture and music show the traces of the theistic idea; sculpture and poetry, which make the ideal descend into the real, are pantheistic arts. Hence it comes that architecture and music are the faithful followers of religion; while sculpture, painting, and poetry, which are also enrolled in the service of religious faith, do not serve it so submissively. Sculpture is pagan; and it was owing to its pantheism that images of God were condemned by Mosaism. and rigorous Protestantism. Poetry, on the other hand, celebrated its great triumphs outside of the domain of religion. Shakespeare, Molière, Goethe, and Byron are no more Christians than Sophocles, Pindar, and Euripides. Modern religious poetry seems to be afflicted with barrenness. It is because great poetry is so intimate a union of divine and human elements that the dogma of divine transcendency is actually cancelled by it.

The epitome and quintessence of all the arts, poetry constructs, sculptures, designs, paints, sings; it is architecture, sculpture, painting, and music, and these diverse forms which it can successively assume are again found in what we call its genres (*Gattungsunterschiede*).

Corresponding to objective art, represented by architecture, sculpture, and painting, we have epic poetry, which is to poetry what the pyramid is to art. The epic represents the childhood of poetry. It is garrulous, ornate, full of the marvellous, like the imagination of the child, indefinitely long, like the first years of life.

Lyric poetry corresponds to music. The epic, like the objective arts, loves to paint nature and its wonders, history and its glories; lyric poetry falls back upon the invisible world, no less vast than the other, called the human soul. It is, therefore, an extreme and incomplete class.

The perfect genre, which reconciles the two worlds, the poetry of poetry, is dramatic poetry. The drama, which flourishes only among the most civilized peoples, reproduces history, nature, and the human soul with its passions, emotions, and conflicts.

Art has not only its different forms, it has also, like each of its forms, its historical development in three epochs.

Oriental art is essentially symbolical. It delights in allegory and parables. Unlike the Greek masterpieces, which are self-explanatory, its products must be interpreted, and may be interpreted differently. It is still powerless to overcome matter, and the feeling of this weakness reveals itself in all its works. Despising form, finish, and detail, it is fond of caricature, exaggerations, and the colossal, and, in all its creations, betrays its predilection for the infinite and incommensurable.

In Greek art, symbolism is superseded by direct expression; the whole idea descends into the form. But even the sublime and almost superhuman perfection of this art is extreme and imperfect. The idea so completely penetrates the matter as to be, ultimately, indistinguishable from it; it is sacrificed to outward form and physical beauty,

This defect, which is no less signal than the formless spiritualism of Asiatic art, is corrected

in Christian art. Christianity recalls art from the visible world, in which it had lost itself, to the ideal sphere, its true home. Under the influence of the Gospel, the idea of the beautiful is spiritualized, the adoration of physical beauty makes way for the worship of moral beauty, purity, and holiness; the worship of the Virgin follows the cultus of Venus. Christian or romantic art does not exclude physical beauty, but subordinates it to transcendent beauty.

Now, the material form is inadequate to the moral ideal. The most finished masterpieces cannot satisfy the Christian artist. The Virgin of whom he dreams, the eternal dwelling-places which his spiritual eye perceives, the heavenly music whose harmonies his soul enjoys, the divine life which he desires to portray, his ideal, in a word, is still more beautiful; so beautiful, indeed, that neither burin, nor brush, nor bow, nor pen, nor anything material can express it. Hence Christian art, despairing of its powers, finally relapses into that contempt for form and that excessive spiritualism which is both the characteristic feature and the failing of romanticism.

2. Though man may, in his inspired moments, regard himself as identical with the God who inspires him, he very soon discovers his insignificance when it comes to giving his ideal a material form. Thus religion springs from art. Primitive art is essentially religious; natural religion, essentially artistic. Idolatry is the connecting link between religion and art.

Religion becomes conscious of itself, and emancipates itself from art by abolishing idols. This advance is made in Mosaism. The Bible condemns idolatry because it recognizes man's inability to express the infinite by means of matter; it forbids stone images because the idea has no adequate form except itself. But though it prohibits us from picturing the invisible, it does not hinder us from picturing it to ourselves; it forbids the outward image, but it does not forbid the imagination itself and the ideas with which it peoples the mind. Far from it. The fact is, religion is essentially representation (*Vorstellung*). Art represents the infinite; religion represents it to itself as a personal and extra-mundane being. Anthropomorphism is its characteristic feature. In religious thought, the finite and the infinite, earth and heaven, which are united in the feeling of the beautiful, are again disjoined. Man is down below, God is up above, so high and so far that he needs the ministry of angels in order to communicate with the world. Religion is dualistic, but there is nothing final in its dualism. It separates heaven and earth, only to unite them; it separates God and humanity, only to reconcile them.

The essential elements of the religious idea: infinite God, mortal man, and their relation, successively prevail in the history of religion.

In the religions of the Orient the idea of infinity predominates. Their salient feature is pantheism; an ultra-religious pantheism, however, which is synonymous with acosmism and may be summed up in these words: God is everything, man is nothing. Brahmanism is the most complete expression of Asiatic pantheism. Mosaic monotheism, though otherwise differing from Indian religions, shows the same characteristics. The God of the Orient bears the same relation to man as the princes of the Orient bear to their subjects. He is the Creator, and men are his creatures; hence he can dispose of them, he can make them live and die, exalt them and debase them, just as he pleases. Man is to God what the earthen vase is to the potter; no more, no less. Human liberty and spontaneity are out of the question. Not only the act, but also the will comes from God; he enlightens and hardens the hearts; he predestines everything, be it for good or for evil. Since omnipotence belongs to God, there is nothing left for man but total impotence and mournful resignation. The infinite as such cannot tolerate an independent existence by its side; Siva, Moloch, and Saturn devour their own children, and where this does not happen, the latter, knowing that their existence is displeasing to God, destroy themselves, or suffer a slow martyrdom, or absolutely relinquish their personality.

Greece is as fond of finitude and form, nature and the things of the earth, as Asia is religious. Its religion is as serene as its skies, as radiant and transparent as the atmosphere surrounding it; the clouds which elsewhere hide God from the eye of man, vanish at the first effort of the mind; the divine and the human are blended and united; religion is identified with art, and art with the worship of humanity. The riddle of the Sphinx is the riddle of Hellenic polytheism. Man is the solution of the riddle. The God whom the Greek adores under the form of Zeus, Apollo, Athene, Aphrodite, is man and his power, intelligence, and beauty. His divinities are relative beings.

Nay, this mythological heaven, radiant with eternal youth, is in reality subject to Fate, the mysterious power which rules over gods and mortals alike. This Destiny, the supreme power of which the poets eagerly strive to exalt, is like a conscience which antiquity cannot silence; it is the infinite of the Oriental religions, which, like a Shakespearean ghost, haunts the sensuous environment of the polytheistic cultus.

The Orient professes the religion of the infinite and abstract ; Greece worships at the shrine of the finite. These two extremes of religion are reconciled in Christianity, in which the spirit of the Orient and the Greek genius are united. For the Hindoo, God is everything, man nothing; for the Greek, God is nothing or very little, man, everything; for the Christian, the important thing is neither God considered in the abstract, the Father, nor man in the abstract, but the concrete unity of the divine and the human as realized in Jesus Christ. The God whom Jesus reveals to us is the same as the God who reveals him; he is neither an infinite being like the God of Oriental religions, nor a finite one, like the pagan divinities, but a Being who is both God and man, the God-Man. The distance between the Christian heaven and the earth, between the God of the Gospel and humanity, is not insuperable; nay, this God comes down from his throne, enters the sphere of finity, lives our life, suffers and dies like us, then rises from the dead and enters into his glory. Christianity is to the preceding religions what poetry is to the fine arts; it embraces them and at the same time purifies and completes them. It is the synthesis of all religions, the absolute religion.

3. The Christian dogma is truth in the form of representation (*Vorstellung*). The three stages in the evolution of immanent reason, idea, nature, and mind, become three persons. The union of the infinite and finite in human consciousness, i.e., a process embracing the whole of universal history, is regarded as an event that happened once for all times in Palestine, eighteen hundred years ago. In this form the dogma is an inadequate expression of the truth which it contains. Moreover, it is imposed as an external authority, whereas the mind, which is free in essence, can only be realized as free. In order to reach the climax of its evolution, it has simply to divest the religious doctrine of its representative form, and to give it the rational form. This advance is made by philosophy. The Gospel and true philosophy have the same content. But the container is not the same; with the Christian it is the imagination, with the philosopher, reason. Philosophical truth is religious truth in the form of a concept; it is comprehended truth. The absolute idea becomes absolute mind, absolute self-consciousness.

The history of philosophy, like all history, is a regular development, reproducing the entire series of categories: Eleatism is the philosophy of being; Heraclitus is the philosopher of becoming; Democritus and atomism correspond to the idea of individuality (*Fürsichsein*), and so on.²⁶ It attains to its fullest expansion in absolute idealism, i.e., in the system which we have just outlined.

What truth is there in this final claim? How much of it is illusory?

Hegelianism is, without doubt, the most comprehensive and complete synthesis ever attempted by the human mind, — a veritable encyclopædia, animated by a central idea, and supported by a method that has implicit confidence in itself. Hence, if philosophy is what our opening paragraph defined it to be, we must give Hegel the credit of having come nearer to the ideal of science than any of his predecessors. Furthermore, no one, after Kant, gave to modern thought so powerful an impetus, — no one more completely dominated and fascinated it. Jurisprudence, politics, ethics, theology, and æsthetics, — all have suffered his influence. Nor is that all. By demonstrating that being is becoming, logical development, history, that history is not only a science among others, but the science of sciences, he ably seconded, if he did not create, the historical movement of the nineteenth century, and impressed upon it the stamp of impartial objectivity which characterizes it, and which was foreign to the eighteenth century. David Strauss and his *Leben Jesu*, Baur, the celebrated historian of primitive Christianity and the founder of the historical school of Tübingen, Michelet, Rosenkranz, Erdmann, Prantl, Zeller, Kuno Fischer, the brilliant interpreters of ancient and modern thought, come from Hegel.²⁷ The conception that philosophies and religions are different stages of one and the same development; the hypothesis that an unconscious reason creates and transforms languages; the

ideas of, and even the expressions, genesis, evolution, process, the logic of history, and many others, which have become common-places in the political, religious, and scientific press, are products of the Hegelian movement.

What discredited Hegelianism and philosophy itself — for there was a time when the two terms were employed synonymously — was the material errors which necessarily followed from its exclusively a-prioristic method; was the authoritative tone which it assumed towards the leaders of modern science, Copernicus, Newton, and Lavoisier; was its presumptuous attempt to withdraw the hypotheses of metaphysics from the supreme jurisdiction of facts. If the philosophical mind (die spekulative Vernunft) perceives truth by an immediate and instinctive intuition, whereas experience discovers it step by step only, then its oracles, precisely because they are immediate, i.e., unproved, and wholly unaccounted for, need the counter-signature of experience in order to have the force of laws in the scientific sphere. The immediate and spontaneous, as Hegel himself declares, is never definitive, but the starting-point of an evolution. Hence, a priori speculation, as he conceives and pursues it, cannot be the final form of science, but should, at the very least, be verified by experience, and, in case of need, be corrected by criticism. Moreover, the defects of the Hegelian method and the errors of fact following from it are due to the rationalistic prejudice of which the system is the classical expression. According to Hegel, the absolute is idea, thought, reason, and nothing but that; whence he concludes that the idea, or, as the School says, the form, is also the content, the matter, of things. When he assumes that the ideal world of science can be deduced from reason alone, it is because, according to him, the real world, the world of beings, is derived from reason and reason alone. Now the absolute, or at least — since the absolute is unknowable as such — the primary phenomenon (das Urphänomen) is not thought, intelligence, reason, but will.²⁸ Thought is a mode of the creative activity of things; it is not their principle. It follows that the knowledge of things does not come from pure thought, but from thought supported and governed by experience.

NOTES

1. Complete works, 19 vols. and supplement, containing Hegel's biography by K. Rosenkranz, Berlin, 1832-44. The most important works of Hegel have been translated into French by A. Véra, professor at Naples, who has also written an *Introduction à la philosophie de Hegel*, 2d ed., Paris, 1864. Consult also: [K. Rosenkranz, *Kritische Erläuterungen des hegelischen Systems*, Königsberg, 1840; H. Ulrici, *Princip und Methode der hegelischen Philosophie*, Berlin, 1843; R. Haym, *Hegel, und seine Zeit*, Berlin, 1857]; P. Janet, *Études sur la dialectique dans Platon et dans Hegel*, Paris, 1860; [Foucher de Careil, *Hegel et Schopenhauer*, Paris, 1862]; E. Schérer, *Hegel et l'hégélianisme* (in his *Mélanges d'histoire religieuse*, 2d ed., Paris, 1865); J. H. Stirling, *The Secret of Hegel. The Hegelian System in Origin, Principle, Form, and Matter*, 2 vols., London, 1865; [K. Köstlin, *Hegel*, Tübingen, 1870; E. Caird, *Hegel (Blackwood's Phil. Classics)*, London, 1883; J. S. Kedney, *Hegel's Aesthetics (Griggs's Series)*, Chicago, 1885; G. S. Morris, *Hegel's Philosophy of the State and of History (id.)*, 1887; W. T. Harris, *Hegel's Logic (id.)*, 1890; A. Seth, *Hegelianism and Personality*, 2d ed., Edinburgh and London, 1893; W. Wallace, *Prolegomena to the Study of Hegel's Philosophy and especially of his Logic.*, 2d ed., Clarendon Press, 1894. See also the works on Post-Kantian philosophy, p. 434, note 1. - TR.]

2. [Translation of chs. 1, 2, and 3 in *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, vol. II. - TR.]

3. [Vol. II., tr. by W. T. Harris. See also Stirling, cited p. 496, note 3.]

4. [W. Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*. Translated from the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, 2d ed., Oxford, 1892; same translator, *Philosophy of Mind, id.*, 1894. - TR.]

5. [Selections from this work translated by J. M. Sterrett, under the title, *The Ethics of Hegel (in the Ethical Series)*, Boston, 1893. - TR.]

6. [*Philosophy of History*, tr. by J. Sibree, Bohn's Library, 1860. -TR.]

7. [Introduction to the *Philosophy of Art*, tr. by B. Bosanquet, London, 1886; *Phil. of Art*,

abridged tr. by W. Hastie; tr. of second part by W. Bryant in *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, V.-VII., XI-XIII. - TR.]

8. [Part. tr. in *Journal of Spec. Phil.*, vols. XV.-XXI. - TR.]

9. [*History of Philosophy*, tr. by E. S. Haldane, 3 vols., London, 1892 ff.; parts tr. in *Journal of Spec. Phil.*, vols. IV., V., XIII., XX. - TR.]

10. *Logic*, vol. I., Introduction; *Encyclopedie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, Introduction.

11. The philosophy of nature and the philosophy of mind are already implicitly contained, the former in the first and second, the latter in the third, part of the logic.

12. *Introduction historique à la philosophie hégélienne*, Paris and Strasburg, 1866, p. 16.

13. *Logic*, vol. I.; *Encyclopedia*, §§ 84 ff.

14. Cf. § 50.

15. *Logic*, vol. II.; *Encycl.*, §§ 112 ff.

16. It must not be forgotten that Hegel identifies logic and metaphysics

17. Since “reason alone is real,” Hegel concludes that *what is real is rational* (p. 524)

18. [Ins Innere der Natur dringt kein erschaffener Geist: Zu glücklich, wenn sie noch die äussere Schale weist. Haller, *Die menschlichen Tugenden*. - TR.]

19. *Logic*, vol. III.; *Encycl.*, §§ 160 ff.

20. Hegel regards *Begriff* as synonymous with *Inbegriff*, whole, totality.

21. *Encyclopedia*, §§ 245 ff. - We shall consider, in the following *résumé* of the *Philosophy of Nature*, the changes (which were not very important) to which it was subjected by the school.

22. *Encyclopedia*, §§ 482 ff.

23. It was as a consistent Hegelian that the late M. Véra, in his capacity as a *député*, defended capital punishment.

24. We ought to add that what influenced Hegel’s judgment was not the parliamentarism, but the conservatism of the English constitution.

25. *Encyclopedia*, §§ 553 ff. See also Hegel’s lectures on *Aesthetics*, the *Philosophy of Religion*, and the *History of Philosophy*.

26. *History of Philosophy*, I. 43.

27. For the literature, see § 3. - Outside of Germany and the Northern countries, where it was taught by Monrad and Lyng at Christiania, and by Borelius at Lund (Sweden), the Hegelian philosophy was especially popular in Italy, where Véra, professor at Naples, acted as its chief interpreter. In France it influenced the sociological theories of Proudhon and Pierre Leroux, the first phase (*manière*) of V. Cousin (§ 71), and, above all, the idealism of Vacherot (*La métaphysique et la science*, Paris, 1852; 2d ed., 1862; *La science et la conscience*, Paris, 1872, etc.). Vacherot, who in some respects resembles the eclectics (§ 71), wholly differs from them in that he absolutely denies the personality of God. According to Vacherot, God is the *ideal* to which things aspire, and exists only in so far as he is thought, while the world is the *real* infinity. “Eliminate man,” he adds, “and God no longer exists; no humanity, no thought, no ideal, no God, since God exists only for the thinking being.” *La métaphysique et la science*, 2d ed., vol. HL, Conclusion. [Representatives of the Hegelian movement in England: J. H. Stirling (see p. 496, note 3), T. H. Green (*Works*, 3 vols., London and New York, 1885-88; *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 1883), F. H. Bradley (*Ethical Studies*, 1876; *Principles of Logic*, 1883; *Appearance and Reality*, 1894), J. Caird (*Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, 1880), E. Caird (see p. 434, n. 2), B. Bosanquet (*Logic*, 2 vols., 1888), W. Wallace (see p. 497, n. 3), etc.; in America, W. T. Harris, Editor of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, founded 1867. - TR.]

28. See §§ 68 and 71.

Alfred Weber. *History of Philosophy*. Trans. Frank Thilly. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1908.

© SophiaOmni, 2005. The specific electronic form of this text is copyright. Permission is granted to print out copies for educational purposes and for personal use only. No permission is granted for commercial use.