

AN INTRODUCTION TO
MODERN PHILOSOPHY

IN SEVEN PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS

BY

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in all other cases be assumed, as a fundamental postulate, to the suspicion of capricious dealing with man only."

- (a) What would expose nature thus?
 - (b) Why must the wisdom of her arrangements be assumed, in all other cases, as a fundamental postulate?
 - (c) What is the wisdom of her arrangements?
 - (d) Do you imagine that Kant would criticize the design argument in natural theology?
5. Where, do you suppose, Kant finds out that the arrangement noted in Proposition the Third is the will of nature? What does such an expression mean, if not the will of God? Can nature be said to have a will?
 6. What *appears* mysterious, but *is* necessary, if we once assume what?
 7. What is the means which nature employs to bring about the development of the tendencies she has laid in man?
 8. "No farther, however, than to that point." What point?
 9. "Man wishes for concord; but nature knows better, and she ordains discord." Why?
 10. What is the highest problem for the human species?
 11. "This problem is at the same time the most difficult of all." Elucidate.
 12. "This problem depends upon a system of international relations adjusted to law." Elucidate.
 13. "The human race will linger in this delusive condition until it shall have toiled upwards in the way I have mentioned." What delusive condition? What way?
 14. "The history of the human species may be regarded as the unraveling of a hidden plan of nature." Namely?
 15. Of what value is such a history?
 16. "I have no wish to discourage, under the idea of a universal history, which is to a certain degree *a priori*, the cultivation of empirical history." Explain.

3. AN IDEALISTIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY —FROM G. W. F. HEGEL

From Kant to Hegel. Kant's views on history were published in 1784. They did not command much attention at that time. Hegel's views, however, have been much more widely read and influential. These were set forth in his *Philosophy of History*, delivered as lectures in the University at Berlin for some years prior to his death, and published posthumously in 1837.

Between Kant and Hegel the two great historical events were the

French Revolution and the career of Napoleon. These made a difference, for persons who lived on into the period of reaction under Metternich, in the interpretation of history. The French Revolution, which began as a demand for liberty, seemed to culminate in a demand for licence; and its licence, in turn, seemed to have invoked the heavy-handed regime of Napoleon. The result, in the sphere of practical politics, was a period of illiberalism, of distrust of revolutionary politics, and of fear of the tyranny which they seem to generate. From 1815 to 1830 this distrust was at its height. Hegel's philosophy of history is the attempt to restate the appeal to reason, such as one meets in Kant's pamphlet, by an appeal to reason somewhat disillusioned and chastened by the events which fell between him and Kant. Three things at least Hegel had to do: save the great concept of freedom, by means of the distinction between law and licence; provide recognition of the fact that the argument of history includes a place for the great man, or hero, e.g., Napoleon, whom Hegel referred to as the world-spirit on horseback; and justify the attempt of the reaction to save Europe from licence and tyranny in the name of "rational freedom" or freedom under law.

Biographical Note. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was born in 1770 and died in 1831 at the age of sixty-one. He wrote many volumes elucidating the general thesis that reality is spirit manifesting itself in nature, in man, and in their combination which is history. These books are difficult reading, partly because the thought they contain is unfamiliar and elusive, partly because the words they contain are obscure and technical. Early in life, Hegel arrived at the conclusion that the totality of things is an objectification or manifestation of "Geist" or spirit. This Spirit is manifested *as* nature and is present *in* man. With his reasons for this conclusion we are not here concerned. His writings are directed, for the most part, toward elaborating his central thesis, not proving it. In his *Phenomenology of Spirit* he offered an account of nature, of man, of society, of morality, of art, of religion, of philosophy, as so many "fields" in which the nature of "Geist" is disclosed. His *Philosophy of Right* was a treatise on the state and law in which these are analyzed and described to show wherein they disclose the nature of "Geist," spirit. After his death, his disciples published his lectures in a series of volumes, *Philosophy of History*, *Philosophy of Art*, *Philosophy of Religion*, in which similarly motivated analyses and descriptions are carried out.

The external facts of Hegel's life are few and unimportant. He was trained for the church. He early became an academic. Outwardly at least, he never ceased to be one. He taught at several universities before

he was called to occupy the chair of philosophy in the University at Berlin. He died, at the height of his fame, from an attack of cholera which had broken out in Berlin. His writings provided the great synthesis of European thought between the age of Newton and Kant before him, and Darwin and Marx after him.

The Argument of the Citations. After defending the notion of a philosophy of history against the charge of forcing facts to fit theories, Hegel proposes that history be construed as the realm of mind, in contrast to nature as the realm of matter. In history, mind, or spirit, is engaged in working out the form and substance of freedom. Freedom is the capacity to act. It presupposes rules. Rules which permit the exercise and growth of the capacity to act are rules which define freedom under law, which is true freedom, in contrast to false freedom or licence. The career of spirit has been marked by violence and conflict. This breeds pessimism and cynicism only in little men. Hegel's claim is that they (violence and conflict) are the necessary conditions under which freedom comes into being. The process is blind, in the sense that the successive steps are not marked out in advance. But it is also beneficent in the sense that each step forward, no matter what the cost in individual misery, marks an increase in the conditions which make freedom possible. The pain and sorrow which characterize the history of humanity, the conflicts within states and between states are blind stumblings toward that form of organized living in which spirit will achieve a maximum of realization in the freedom of individuals. This is a kind of long-range optimism; but in the short range it is harsh and blood-thirsty.

The world-spirit makes use of certain individuals to initiate new and difficult turns in the history of civilization. These are the great men, or heroes, of history. They serve a power and an end which transcends them. The goal of history is the evolution of the state, that is, a union of rational wills making possible the continuous exercise and development of freedom. This is the march of God on earth. The state is the organization of the nation. Since there are many nations, war is a necessary ingredient in history. Such conflict purifies and strengthens the national state. There is no judge of the nations, beyond their survival in the strenuous march of God on earth. The world's history is the world's tribunal. Let us make a beginning:

The most general definition that can be given of the philosophical treatment of history is contained in the word *rational*. The *philosophy of history* means the "rationale of history." The only thought which philosophy brings

to the contemplation of history is the simple conception of reason; that reason is the sovereign of the world; that the history of the world, therefore, presents us with a "rational" process. This conviction and intuition are an hypothesis in the domain of history as such.

Before elaborating this view of history, Hegel turns to consider a possible objection. May this not lead a man to set up a plan and then force the facts to fit it?

This presupposition that history has an essential and actual goal or end is called a *a priori* view of it. Philosophy is reproached with "*a priori* history-writing." On this point we must go into further detail. This seems to be the legitimate demand that the historian should proceed with impartiality; there should be no prepossession in favor of an idea or opinion, just as a judge should have no special sympathy for one of the contending parties.

Now, in the case of the judge it is admitted that he would administer his office ill and foolishly if he had no interest in justice; indeed, if he did not have an exclusive interest in justice. That is assumed to be his one sole aim. This requirement, which we make of a judge, may be called partiality for justice.

But, in speaking of the impartiality required from an historian, this self-satisfied, insipid, chatter lets the distinction between legitimate, responsible partiality and mere subjective partiality, disappear. It demands that the historian shall bring with him no definite aim, no definite conception by which he may sort out, describe, evaluate events. It demands that he shall narrate them exactly in the casual mode he finds them, in all their incoherent and unintelligent particularity. A history must have an object, e.g., Rome and its fortunes, or the greatness and decline of Rome. This lies at the basis of the events themselves, and therefore at the basis of the critical examination into their comparative importance. A history without some such criticism would be only an imbecile mental digression—not so good as a fairy tale, for even children expect a motif in their stories, at least dimly surmisable, with which events and actions are put in relation.

To presuppose such a theme is blameworthy only when the assumed conception is arbitrarily adopted, and when a determined attempt is made to force events and actions to conform to this conception. For this kind of *a priori* handling of history, however, those are chiefly to blame who profess to be "purely historical," who raise their voice against any attempt to deal philosophically with history. Philosophy is to them a troublesome neighbor; for she is the enemy of all arbitrariness and hasty suggestion.

So much, then, for an objection to his view. He asks of history what a scientist asks of nature, namely, that it be reasonable, that the use of

reason on the details of history shall not *ipso facto* mislead a man. This granted, much may be expected. However, this rationality of history is not to be confused with a pious belief in a superintending providence:

The time must come for understanding that rich product of active Reason which world history offers to us. It was for a while the fashion to profess admiration for the wisdom of God as displayed in animals, plants, and isolated occurrences. But, if it be allowed that Providence exhibits itself in such objects and forms of existence, why not also in the world history? Is this too great a matter to be thus regarded? But divine wisdom, that is, reason, is one and the same in the great as well as in the little.

In those to whom such a conception is not familiar, I may at least presume the existence of a belief in reason, a desire, a thirst, for an understanding of it. Indeed, it is the wish for rational insight, not the ambition to amass a mere heap of facts, that should be presupposed in the mind of every learner. If the clear idea of reason, of pervading rationality, is not already in our minds, in beginning the study of history, we should at least have the firm faith that it does exist there, that the scene of intelligence and conscious volition—human history—is not abandoned to chance. . . . To him who looks upon the world rationally, the world in its turn presents a rational aspect. The relation is mutual.

This conviction involves much more than the mere belief in a "superintending Providence." Pious folk are encouraged to see in particular circumstances, something more than mere chance; to acknowledge the "guiding hand" of God when help has unexpectedly come to an individual in great perplexity and need. But these instances of "providential design" are of a limited kind. They concern the accomplishment of nothing more than the desires of the individual in question. But in world history the "individuals" we have to deal with are whole peoples, e.g., the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans. We cannot, therefore, be satisfied with what we may call this "trifling" view of Providence.

But *reason*, whose presence in the world and sovereignty over the world has been maintained, is as vague and indefinite a term as *Providence*. Unless we can characterize it distinctly, unless we can show wherein it consists, we cannot decide whether a thing is rational or irrational. An adequate definition of *reason* is therefore the first desideratum to an inquiry into "reason in history." Without such a definition we can get no further than mere words.

To begin with, it must be observed that world history belongs to the realm of spirit, not to the realm of matter. The term *world*, indeed, includes both physical and psychical. But our concern is not with nature at large. On the stage of world history spirit displays itself in its most concrete reality. The development of spirit is our central theme.

The nature of spirit may be understood by a glance at its direct opposite—matter. As the essence of matter is gravity, so the essence of spirit is free-

dom. It involves an appreciation of its own nature, a power to know itself as also an energy enabling it to realize itself, to make itself actually that which it is potentially. Accordingly it may be said of world history that it is the exhibition of spirit in the process of working out that which it is potentially.

The spirit which thinks in world history, stripping off the limitations of its several national manifestations and temporal restrictions, lays hold of its actual transcendence and universality, rises to apprehend itself for what it essentially is, while the necessity of nature and the necessity of history but minister to its revelation and are vessels of its honor.

It is the spirit which not merely broods over history as over the waters, but lives in it and is alone its principle of movement. And in the path of that spirit, liberty is the guiding principle and its development the final aim. Such a doctrine—reason in history—will be partly a plausible faith, partly a philosophical insight.

If the essence of spirit is freedom, then the history of the world, if it is the history of spirit, is none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom.

The [ancient] Orientals had not attained the knowledge that spirit, man as such, is free. And because they did not know this, they lived in bondage. They knew only the freedom of one among the many. That one was therefore only a despot, a tyrant, not a free man. The freedom of that one was only caprice; ferocity, brutal recklessness of passion; or, equally an accident of nature, mildness and tameness of desire.

The consciousness of freedom first arose among the Greeks. And therefore they were free. But they, and the Romans likewise, knew only that some are free, not man as such. They therefore had slaves. Their whole life, and the maintenance of their splendid liberty, was implicated with the institution of slavery. Liberty, among them, was therefore only an accidental, a transient, a limited growth; and this very fact constituted it a rigorous thralldom of our common human nature.

The Germanic peoples, under the influence of Christianity, were the first to realize that man, as man, is free; that it is freedom which constitutes the essence of spirit. To introduce this realization into the various relations of the actual world was a large problem, whose solution required a severe and lengthened process of culture. Slavery did not cease immediately upon the reception of Christianity. Liberty did not all at once predominate in states. Governments and constitutions did not all at once adopt a rational organization, or recognize freedom as their basis. The application of the principle to political relations, the thorough molding and interpenetration of society by it, has been identical with history itself. But the history of the world has been none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom.

In the process before us, world history, the essential nature of freedom is displayed as coming to a consciousness of itself, as realizing itself. This is the

result at which the process of world history has been aiming. To this end have the sacrifices that have ever and anon been laid on the vast altar of the earth, through long lapse of ages, been offered. This is the only aim that sees itself realized and fulfilled; the only pole of repose amid the ceaseless change of events and conditions; the sole efficient principle that pervades the whole. Translating this into the language of religion, we may say that this realization by spirit of the nature and conditions of freedom is God's final aim and purpose with the world.

Freedom, the capacity to act, is the essence of spirit. Spirit is both manifested *as* nature and our bodies, and present *in* us. This "present-in-us" part is latent. We can potentially do many things that we cannot do actually; e.g., "I cannot, actually, play bridge; but, potentially, I can; that is, I can develop that freedom." Now, Hegel asks: By what means does the spirit present *in* humanity develop its freedoms?

If, as we have argued, the history of the world is the history of the further and further realization of freedom, we are moved to pose a question: By what means does freedom develop? By what means is it brought to further and further realization?

A first glance at history convinces us that the actions of men proceed from their needs, their passions, their characters, their abilities. A first glance impresses us, too, with the belief that these needs, passions, private interests, are the sole springs of human action. Here and there may be found, perhaps, some aims of a liberal kind; benevolence, maybe; or noble patriotism. But such aims and virtues are insignificant on the broad canvas of history. They bear only a trifling proportion to the mass of the human race, and their influence is limited accordingly.

Passions, private aims, the satisfaction of selfish desires, are the most effective springs of human action. Let no illusions be cherished on this point. Their power lies in the fact that they respect none of the limitations which justice and morality would impose on them. These natural impulses have a more direct influence over men than the artificial and tedious discipline which tends to order and self-restraint, law and morality.

If I am to exert myself for any object, principle, aim, design, it must in some way or other be mine. In its realization I must find my satisfaction; although the purpose for which I exert myself includes a complication of results, many of which have no interest for me. This is the absolute right of personal existence—to find itself satisfied in its activity and labor. If men are to interest themselves in anything, they must find their individuality gratified by its attainment. Nothing therefore happens, nothing is accomplished, unless individuals seek their own satisfaction in the issue.

We assert, then, that nothing has been accomplished without interest on the part of those who brought it about. If *interest* be called *passion*, where the whole individuality is concentrating all its desires and powers to the neglect or exclusion of all other actual or possible interests or claims, we may affirm without qualification that nothing great has been accomplished in the world without passion.

Two elements, therefore, enter into our investigation: first, the aim, principle, destiny, namely the realization of freedom; second, the complex of human passions. The one the warp, the other the woof, of the vast arras web of world history.

The spirit which is both manifested as and present in humanity must come out, must gain freedom, must achieve the capacity to act. It must learn and master the conditions of its freedom. Now, Hegel has it, the medium in which this spirit works is the totality of blind drives that compose an unenlightened and undisciplined humanity. The spirit must achieve its freedom through and in these drives, or not at all. In themselves these drives are neither good nor bad. They are, it happens, necessary to that freedom which spirit is seeking in the history of humanity.

Passion is by many regarded as a thing of sinister aspect, more or less immoral. Man is required to have no passions. We need only repeat, to silence such pallid moralizing, that nothing great has been accomplished without passion, without the concentration of energy and will upon some private interests—self-seeking, if you will—to the exclusion of all things else.

World history is controlled by a general aim—the realization of the essence of spirit, which is freedom. In the beginning this is only implicit—a profoundly hidden, unconscious instinct. The whole process of history is directed to rendering this unconscious impulse a conscious one. At the very dawn of world history, physical craving, animal instinct, private interest, selfish passion, prejudiced opinion, spontaneously present themselves. This vast congeries of *wills, interests, and activities* constitute the instruments, the means, the media, of the world spirit for attaining its object.

At this point Hegel introduces a line of thought which is not easy to grasp. But it is central to his philosophy of history. We may approach it by way of what he has already said: The story of humanity is the story of the conquest by the spirit present in humanity of the conditions of its freedom, its power to act. The spirit which is present in man encounters no difficulty in acting, in exerting its will, in the realm of the natural order. And the reason is that “nature” is the realm of law and order. Nature is calculable. She “obeys” rules. When these are known

they provide a basis for action. A law in nature is a possible basis for action by men. If there were no law, no order, no pattern, in nature, we could not act. We would be reduced to sheer guesswork; even lower, since if there were no law or order, we could not even guess. When we turn from nature to society, we turn from the realm of law to the realm of freedom. If man is to act in the "medium" of private wills, there must be something corresponding to laws as they are in nature. To this end man needs the state. The *state* may be defined as "society organized to make law possible." Some laws are left without the pressure of the state immediately behind them. Such laws are moral. Law and morality then, between them, are self-imposed limitations for which the justification is that they make it possible to act. They extend the realm of freedom, from the natural into the social order.

The concrete union of the two elements which we find in history—that freedom which is the essence of spirit, and those individual needs and desires which supply the driving power—is liberty under the conditions of law and morality in the state.

A state is well constituted and internally powerful when the private interests of its citizens are one with the common interest of the state, when the one finds its gratification and realization in the other. The epoch during which a state attains this harmonious condition marks the period of its bloom, its vigor, its virtue and prosperity.

I will endeavor to make my point more vivid by means of an example. The building of a house is, on the one hand, a subjective aim and design. On the other hand we have, as means, the several substances required for the undertaking—iron, wood, stone, etc. The elements are used to work up this material—fire to melt the iron, wind to blow the fire, water to drive the wheels to cut the wood, and so on. The result is that the wind which has helped to build the house is shut out by the house. So also are the rains and floods which supplied the water to drive the wheels; and the destructive power of fire, so far as the house is fireproof. The stones and beams obey their law of gravity—press downwards—and so high walls are carried up.

Thus the elements are used according to their natures, and yet cooperate for a product by which their operation is limited. Thus, in the building of a state, where freedom is realized under conditions of law and order, the passions of men are gratified; they develop themselves and their aims in accordance with their natural tendencies, and build up the edifice of human society; thus fortifying a position for law and order against themselves.

Lest anyone should feel that Hegel is growing optimistic, viewing humanity and the state through rosy spectacles, he turns aside to note

that the price of freedom is not merely eternal vigilance; it is eternal strife and violence.

When we contemplate this display of passions, and the consequences of their violence, the unreason which is associated with them; when we see the evil, the vice, the ruin that has befallen the most flourishing kingdom which the mind of man ever created, we can scarce avoid being filled with sorrow at this universal taint and corruption. Since, moreover, this perversion and decay are not the work of mere nature, but the work of human will, we are liable to a moral bitterness, a revolt of the good will, as a result of our reflections.

Without rhetorical exaggeration, a simple truthful account of the miseries that have overwhelmed the noblest of nations and the finest exemplars of private virtue, provides a picture of most fearful aspect, excites emotions of the profoundest and most hopeless sadness, counterbalanced by no consolatory results. History appears as the slaughter bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of states, and the virtue of individuals have been victimized.

In beholding it we endure a mental torture allowing no defense or escape save the consideration that what has happened could not have been otherwise; that it has been a fatality which no intervention could alter. We draw back at last in disgust. We turn from these intolerable sorrows, from these blackened pages of humanity's history, to the more agreeable environment of our own individual life.

The philosophy of history which Hegel has been marking out threatens to end in a kind of pessimism. Spirit is the capacity to act. It is therefore freedom. It is manifested as nature. It is present in humanity. It requires a social order comprising a moral and political order. These orders are the battleground of private passions and private wills controlled by private passions. The spirit must work out its destiny in terms of these factors, or not at all. They are the matter to which it will give the form, the form of freedom. This entails tension and conflict. We turn from it, as from a slaughter bench. But where to? To our own private selves. Only by withdrawing from humanity do we see any prospect of relief from the price which it continuously pays. But we withdraw from the human scene in the name of precisely those human values and ideals which the human scene alone makes possible, and toward which it is the endless struggle. Are we caught here in a vicious circle? The "great man" as hero is Hegel's partial answer. The "great man" is he who "breaks ground" for spirit's further advance.

But whither do we thus retreat? Into the present, formed by our own private aims and interests! In short, we retreat into the selfishness that stands on the quiet shore, enjoying thence in safety the distant spectacle of wreckage and confusion.

To what final aim have these enormous sacrifices been offered? To what paradox, moreover, have we come? We point to the gloomy facts presented by history—but we point to them as the very field which we regard as exhibiting the means for realizing what we have described as the essential destiny, the final aim, of world-history. In what terms can this paradox be resolved? We pick up our analysis again. The steps to which it will lead us will also evolve the conditions required for answering the question suggested by the panorama of sin and suffering that history unfolds.

Those manifestations of vitality on the part of individuals and nations, in which they seek and satisfy their own purposes, are at the same time the means and instruments of a higher and broader purpose of which they know nothing, which they realize unconsciously. This has been questioned, denied, condemned, as mere dreaming and "philosophy." So be it. On this point I announced my view at the very outset: Reason governs the world, and has consequently governed history. All else is subordinate to it, subservient to it, and the means for its development.

In the sphere of world history we see momentous collisions between established, acknowledged duties, laws, rights on the one hand and forces adverse to this fixed system on the other. These forces realize themselves in history. They involve principles different from those on which depend the permanence of a people or a state. They are an essential phase in the creative advance of the world spirit. Great historical men—world figures—are those in whose aims such principles are present.

Caesar belongs to this category. His enemies had the *status quo* and the power conferred by an appearance of justice on their side. Caesar was contending for his own position. But his victory secured for him the conquest of the empire. This realization of his own aim, however, was an independently necessary feature in the history of Rome and of the world. It was not merely his private gain. An unconscious impulse occasioned the accomplishment of that for which the time was ripe.

Such are all great historical men. Their own private aims involve those larger issues which are the will of the world spirit. They derive their purposes from a concealed fount, from that inner spirit still hidden beneath the surface which impinges on the outer world as on a shell and bursts it to pieces; not from the calm, regular course of things sanctioned by the existing order.

Such world figures have no consciousness of the general idea they are unfolding while prosecuting their own private aims. On the contrary, they are practical, political men, but possessed of an insight into the requirements of

the time, an understanding of what was ripe for development. It is theirs to realize this nascent principle; the next step forward which their world is to take. It is theirs to make this their aim and spend their energies promoting it. They are the heroes of an epoch; must be recognized as its clear-sighted ones. Their deeds, their words, are the best of their time.

World historical figures form purposes to satisfy themselves, not others. Whatever they might learn from others would limit their role. It is they who best understand. From them others learn; or with them, they acquiesce. For that spirit which, in their persons, takes a fresh step in history is the inmost soul of all individuals; but in them it is in a state of unconsciousness which great men arouse. Their fellows therefore follow them, for they feel the irresistible power of their own indwelling spirit embodied in them.

If we contemplate the fate of the world historical person, whose destiny is to be the agent of the world spirit, we find it to be no happy one. He attains no calm enjoyment. His whole life is labor and trouble, driven by some master passion. And when his object is attained, he falls off like an empty shell from the kernel. He dies early, like Alexander; he is murdered, like Caesar; he is exiled, like Napoleon. This consolation those may draw from history who stand in need of it, vexed at what is great and transcendent, striving to belittle it because it is beyond them.

The special interests of private passion are thus inseparable from the development of general principles. But the principle is not implicated in the opposition and combat through which it comes into being. It remains in the hinterland, untouched. This may be called the cunning of reason; it sets the passions to work for it, while that which develops through the conflict of passions pays the penalty and suffers the loss.

A world historical figure is not so unwise as to permit many wishes to divide his energies. He is devoted to one aim. He frequently overrides great and sacred interests. Such conduct is indeed morally reprehensible, but so mighty a form must trample down many an innocent flower, and crush to pieces many an object in its path.

What pedagogue has not demonstrated of Alexander the Great, or of Julius Caesar, that they were immoral men? Whence the conclusion follows that he—the pedagogue—is a better man than they, because he is not driven by their passion. For proof of this he can point to the fact that he *does not* conquer Asia, does not vanquish Darius, does not subdue an empire. He enjoys life and lets others enjoy it too.

No man is a hero to his valet. Not because he is no hero, but because his valet is only a valet. World historical figures, waited upon in historical literature by psychological valets, come off poorly. They are brought down to the level—or usually a few degrees below the level—of their biographers, those exquisite discerners of true spirits!

Hegel returns, at this point, to his central thought about the state. It is society organized to make law possible. Under the shadow of political law, we can gradually get moral law. Under the discipline of "legal" law man may rise to "moral" law. Law is the possibility of action. It is therefore the basis of freedom, since freedom is the capacity to act. This Hegelian freedom, with its deification of the state, is sometimes confused with freedom in the sense of "permission" or absence of restraint. He wishes to obviate any such confusion.

In world history, only those people can come under our notice which form a state. For it must be understood that the state is the realization of freedom.

The state exists for its own sake. All the worth which any human being possesses, he possesses only through the state. Thus only is he fully conscious. Thus only is he a partaker of morality—of a just and moral social and political life. The state is the march of God on earth. We have in it the object of history, that in which freedom obtains realization; for only that will which obeys law is free.

In our time various errors are current, respecting the state. We shall mention only one, but one which is the direct contradictory of our principle that the state is the realization of freedom. It is this misconception: that man is free by nature, but that in society, in the state, he must limit this natural freedom. In this sense a "state of nature" is assumed, in which mankind possess their "natural rights," with the unconstrained exercise and enjoyment of their freedom.

This assumption of "natural freedom" and "natural rights" is not, indeed, given the dignity of being an historical fact. It would be difficult to point to any such condition as existing or having existed. Examples of savage social organization can be pointed to; but not in support of this idea, for they are marked by brutal passion and violence, and, however primitive their conditions, they involve social organizations which actually function to restrain freedom.

Freedom does not exist as primitive and natural. On the contrary, freedom must be sought and won, and by an incalculable discipline of intellectual and moral powers. The "state of nature" is a state of injustice and violence, of untamed natural impulse, of inhuman deeds and feelings. Limits are certainly imposed by social organization; but they are limits imposed on emotions and instincts. In more advanced stages, they are limits imposed on self-will, caprice, passion. Limitation of this kind is, in part, the means whereby rational freedom, contrasted with unbridled license, can be obtained.

To the conception of freedom, law and morality are indispensably neces-

sary. They are discovered only by the activity of thought, separating itself from the merely sensuous and developing itself in opposition thereto. They must be introduced and incorporated into the originally desire-controlled will, contrarily to its "natural" inclination. The widespread misapprehension of the true nature of freedom consists in conceiving it to be a constraint imposed upon desire, something pertaining to the individual as such. Thus a limitation of caprice and selfwill is regarded as a limitation of freedom. Instead, we argue, such limitation is the indispensable proviso of freedom. Society and the state, with the law and morality upon which they rest, are the very conditions in which freedom is realized.

The state, its laws and morality, constitute the rights of its members. (Thus wide of the facts is the conception of "natural" rights.) Its natural features, its mountains, its rivers, its forests and fields, are their country, their homeland, their material property. Its history is their history. What their forefathers have produced, belongs to them and lives now in their memory. All is their possession, and they are possessed by it. It constitutes their being. This is the meaning of *patriotism*.

The state, then, is the hero of Hegel's philosophy of history. In it the spirit which is manifested as nature and present in man comes to self-realization. When these unions of wills clash, there is war. This conflict clarifies and strengthens the parties. War, like every other genuine expression of will, has its place in the growth of freedom.

In world history each nation is to be regarded as an individual. For world history is the story of the growth of spirit in its highest forms. The forms which this progress assumes are the characteristic "national spirits" of history; the peculiar tenor of their moral life, their government, their art, religion, science. To realize these successive forms is the boundless impulse of the world spirit, the goal of its irresistible longing. The state is the march of God through the world . . . the world which the spirit has made for itself . . . a great architectonic edifice, a hieroglyph of reason, manifesting itself in reality.

All the worth which any human being possesses, all his "spiritual reality," he possesses only through the state. For his "spiritual reality" consists in this, that his own essential nature—rationality—is objectively present to him. Thus only is he fully conscious. Thus only is he a partaker of morality, of a just and moral social and political life. For truth, in these matters, is the unity of the objective and subjective will; and the objective will is to be found in the state, in its laws and arrangements.

Just as the individual is not a real person unless related to other persons, so the state is not a real state unless it is related to other states.

The relation of one state to another presents, on the largest possible scale, the most shifting play of individual passions, interests, aims, talents, virtues,

power, injustice, vice, and mere external chance. It is a play in which even the independence of the state is exposed to accident.

When the wills of the particular state can come to no agreement, the matter can only be settled by war. What shall be recognized as a violation of treaty, of respect, of honor, must remain indefinite since many and various injuries can accrue from the wide range of interests and complex relations among states. A state may identify its majesty and honor with any one of its aspects. And if a state, as a strong individuality, has experienced an unduly protracted internal rest, it will naturally be more inclined to irritability in order to find an occasion for intense activity.

There is an ethical element in war. It must not be regarded as an absolute ill, or as merely an external calamity accidentally based upon the passions of despotic individuals or nations, upon acts of injustice and what ought not to be.

War has the deep meaning that by it the ethical health of nations is preserved and their finite aims uprooted. And as the winds which sweep over the ocean prevent the decay that would result from its perpetual calm, so war protects a people from the corruption which an everlasting peace would bring on it.

In times of peace, civic life becomes more extended, every sphere is hedged in and grows immobile, and at last men stagnate, their particular nature becoming more and more hardened and ossified. Where the organs become still, there is death. Eternal peace is often demanded as an ideal toward which mankind should move. But nations issue forth invigorated from their wars. Nations torn by internal strife win internal peace as the result of war abroad. War indeed causes insecurity of property, but this is a necessary commotion.

From the pulpits one hears much concerning the insecurity, the vanity, the instability of temporal things. Everyone is touched by the words. Yet, let insecurity really come, in the form of Hussars with flashing sabers, and that edification which foresaw all this and acquiesced, now turns upon the enemy with curses. Wars break out whenever necessity demands them; but the seeds spring up anew, and speech is silenced before the grave repetitions of history.

The principles which control the many national spirits are limited. Each nation is guided by its particular principles. No judge exists to adjust differences, save the universal spirit of which these are but moments. Only as a particular individuality can each national spirit win objectivity and self-realization; but states, in their relation one to another, reveal the dialectic, the claims and counterclaims, which arise out of their finitude. Out of this dialectic of history rises the universal spirit, pronouncing its judgment upon the nations of the worlds. For the world's history is the world's tribunal.

Note on Sources. The above material is quoted, abridged, or paraphrased from Hegel's book, *The Philosophy of History*. Except for a few passages, the material comes from his "Introduction" to that book.

Reading References. Hegel has been much written about, but the result is not encouraging. In English, there is a small volume by G. S. Morris, *Hegel's Philosophy of History*. It is more understandable, perhaps, than Hegel's own volumes, *Philosophy of History* and *Philosophy of Right*. The Hegelian conception of the state, and thus the central theme in his philosophy of history, is adopted with modifications by Bernard Bosanquet in his *Philosophical Theory of the State*. A sharply critical and not altogether satisfactory account of the Hegelian notion of the state as the significance of history may be found in L. T. Hobhouse's *The Metaphysical Theory of the State*. It should be offset by a few chapters from M. B. Foster's small volume, *The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel*. The fact is that Hegel is difficult to read, and that no expositor has succeeded, as yet, in translating him into the language and idiom of ordinary discourse.

The following are some books published since 1940:

Gray, J. G. *Hegel's Hellenic Ideal*.

Marcuse, H. *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*.

Mure, G. R. C. *An Introduction to Hegel*.

———. *A Study of Hegel's Logic*.

Myers, H. *Spinoza-Hegel Paradox*.

READING QUESTIONS

1. What is the *a priori* view of history?
2. On what grounds does Hegel defend himself against any imputation of apriorism?
3. Can you explain his use of the terms *reason, spirit, freedom*?
4. How is he led to introduce questions of private interests and passions?
5. "The one the warp, the other the woof, of the vast arras web of world history." Elucidate.
6. "The concrete union of the two elements is liberty under law and morality." Elucidate.
7. "The state is well constituted and internally powerful when. . . ." Discuss.
8. "I will endeavor to make my point more vivid by means of an example." What is the example?
9. What renders us "liable to a moral bitterness, a revolt of the good will"?
10. What is the role of the great man in history?
11. "No man is a hero to his valet." Why not?

12. "In our time various errors are current respecting the state. We shall mention only one. . . ." Namely?
13. "All the worth which any human being possesses, he possesses only through the state." Elucidate.
14. "There is an ethical element in war." Namely?
15. "The world's history is the world's tribunal." Meaning?

4. AN ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY —FROM FRIEDRICH ENGELS

From Hegel to Marx and Engels. What came to be called the "idealistic" interpretation of history was the claim that in history, as opposed to in nature, spirit was at work. There is spirit. It manifests itself as matter, the order of nature which the natural sciences study. But it goes beyond that. In addition to being *manifested as* matter, spirit is also *present in* man, the order of human nature, and in all his activities. The German word for "spirit" is "Geist." One therefore spoke of "Geisteswissenschaft," the systematic and orderly study of what spirit does, considered apart from its manifestation as nature. This would give you "history and the social sciences." In all of this, the notion of spirit is ultimate. Given the notion of spirit, you knew how to try to think about "nature," the material order. In this way you arrived at the natural sciences. You knew also how to try to think about man. In this way you arrived at the historical sciences, those inquiries in which spirit set forth the story of its own activities, the activities which it is itself present in.

Now, up to a point, this idealistic interpretation of history satisfied those who wished to extend their thinking beyond history into a philosophy of history. It was an attractive alternative for those who were skeptical of the biblical interpretation of history, but whose skepticism did not lead them to go further and reject also the conception of spirit working in nature and history. If you were able and willing to think of matter, the material order, as somehow produced by or derived from spirit, this speculative idealism held out hopes for you. But the friends of matter have never been willing to do this. They have always insisted that matter is fundamental and primary, and that spirit is produced by, a derivative from, matter. In the beginning was matter in motion. As a result, spirit gets produced. This speculative materialism is felt to underlie the natural sciences, and also the historical and social sciences. This gives you the materialist interpretation of history, the philosophy of