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**From Hegel
to Nietzsche**

the revolution in nineteenth-century thought

Translated from the German by David E. Green



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writes to Hegel himself: "I keep my mind as open as possible to the gifts of the philosopher, and rejoice each time I can appropriate something which has been discovered by an ability nature was not willing to grant me."¹¹ Thus during the entire course of his life Goethe felt himself at once attracted to and repelled by Hegel's philosophy,¹² and yet basically he was sure that they agreed in spirit. This is beautifully expressed in his last letter to Zelter: "Fortunately, the nature of your talent is focused on the single note—that is, the moment. Now, since a sequence of consecutive moments itself is always a kind of eternity, it has been granted you always to remain constant in the midst of flux, thus fully satisfying both me and the spirit of Hegel, to the extent I understand him."¹³

1 Goethe's Idea of Primary Phenomena and Hegel's Comprehension of the Absolute

a *The Unity of Principle*

What appealed to Goethe about Hegel was nothing less than the principle of his spiritual activity: mediation between self-being (*Selbstsein*) and being other (*Anderssein*). In Goethe's idiom, Hegel placed himself in the middle, between subject and object, while Schelling emphasized the breadth of nature, and Fichte, the height of subjectivity.¹⁴ "Where object and subject meet, there is life; when Hegel places himself between object and subject by means of his philosophy of identity and lays claim to this position, we must do him honor."¹⁵ Similarly, Hegel had to see Goethe's subjectivity, the universal content of his self-being. Goethe's diagnosis of the "universal sickness of the age" corresponds exactly to his fierce criticism of the shallow subjectivity of the romantics: they are incapable of divesting themselves productively of their subjectivity and venturing into the world of objects.¹⁶ To discover and establish the mid-point between subject and object, between being *pro se* and being *per se*, between the internal and the external, was the motivating force behind Hegel's entire philosophy of mediation, from his first systematic fragment to the *Logik* and *Encyklopädie*.

Through this philosophy, substance was to become subject, and the subject substantial. Similarly, Goethe's naïve philosophizing centers upon the problem of harmony between the self and the world.¹⁷ The contradiction between them and its neutralization—under the terms subjective "idea" and objective "experience," what is "apprehended" by the senses and what is "conceived"—are discussed not only in the famous exchange of letters with Schiller,¹⁸ but also in four special essays: *Der Versuch als Vermittler von Objekt und Subjekt* ("Experiment as Mediator between Object and Subject"), *Einwirkung der neueren Philosophie* ("The Influence of Recent Philosophy"), *Anschauende Urteilskraft* ("Intuitive Judgment"), and *Bedenken und Ergebung* ("Reflection and Resignation").

Goethe says that, in the process of viewing the universe, man cannot fail to venture ideas and construct concepts with the aid of which he attempts to understand the essence of God or of nature. "Here we come face to face with our real difficulty, . . . that between the idea and the experience there seems to be a certain gulf fixed; we exert all our strength to cross it, in vain. In spite of this, we strive constantly to overcome this gap by means of reason, understanding, imagination, faith, feeling, madness, and, if nothing else will serve, with absurdity. Finally, after constant strenuous effort, we discover that the philosopher might indeed be right who states that no idea is fully congruent with experience, but admits that idea and experience can, indeed must, be analogous."¹⁹ The philosopher mentioned here is Kant, and the work in which he forges a unity out of conceptualizing reason and sense perception is the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, on the other hand, Goethe remarks that it lies completely outside his field. Only one thing in it seems to him worthy of attention, that it renews the "ancient primary question": "How much of our spiritual existence is derived from our own self, and how much from the external world?" He himself, he continues, had never separated the one from the other; whenever he philosophized in his own way, he had done so with unconscious naïveté, believing that his ideas really were "before his eyes."²⁰ Both as poet and as scientist, he, like nature, had always proceeded both analytically and synthetically. "The systole and diastole of the human spirit was to me like a second respiration, never apart, always pulsing." Yet for all of this he had no words, not to mention phrases. He had been kept from penetrating into the labyrinth of Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, at times by his

poetic gift, at times by his human understanding, although he believed he understood a few chapters and had gained much from them for his personal use.

This relationship to Kant underwent a change with the appearance of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790), which he had to thank for an "extremely light-hearted period." Quite in line with his own work and thought, it taught him to view as a unity the products both of nature and of the human spirit (i.e., art), so that aesthetic and theological judgment illuminated each other. "I rejoiced that the art of poetry and comparative natural science are related so closely to each other, both being subject to the same faculty of judgment."²¹ But at the same time Goethe had a critical awareness that his use of Kant's study went beyond the limits drawn by Kant. His mind did not want to be restricted to a purely discursive power of judgment; he claimed for himself that intuitive understanding which was, for Kant, an *intellectus archetypus*, that is, an idea, which is not a property of human nature. "Indeed the author seems here to have in mind a divine understanding, but only when we bring ourselves to a higher level of morality through faith in God, virtue, and immortality, and approach the primal being (first principle). It might also happen the same way in the intellectual realm: through perception of nature, eternally creating, we might make ourselves worthy of spiritual participation in its products. Although at first, unconsciously and compelled by an inner drive, I pressed indefatigably toward that original, typical entity, even succeeding in constructing a representation in conformity with nature, nothing now could keep me from encountering courageously the 'adventure of reason,' as the old man of Königsberg himself calls it."²² This was also the point at which Hegel began in his treatise on faith and knowledge (1802), only to draw from Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* the conclusions which put an end to subjective idealism and brought "understanding" to "reason." Both interpret the power of judgment as the productive midpoint mediating between the concept of nature and that of freedom, bringing to light a "region of identity." Kant's reflections on "reason in its reality," as beauty standing objectively before the eyes (in art) and as organization (in nature), already defined formally the true concept of reason, although he was unaware that with his idea of intuitive understanding he was in the realm of speculation. In fact, with the notion of an archetypal understanding, he already had in his hands the key to unlock the riddle of the relationship between nature and freedom.

Hegel and Goethe—and Schelling too—took this latter idea from Kant and used it as a point of departure. Both attempted the "adventure of reason" by placing themselves—disregarding discursive understanding—in the middle between personal existence and the existence of the world. The difference between their ways of mediation resides in the fact that Goethe sees the unity from the point of view of nature as it is perceived, but Hegel from the point of view of the *historical spirit*. This corresponds to the fact that Hegel recognizes a "cunning of reason," and Goethe a cunning of nature. In each case, it lies in the fact that the affairs of men are subordinated to the service of a whole.

b The Difference in Exposition

However much their differing views of the absolute—as "nature" or as "spirit"—characterize the relationship between Hegel and Goethe, no contrast in principle is indicated, only a difference in the manner of its exposition. When Goethe speaks of nature, trusting that it also speaks through him, he means the reason behind everything that lives, just as the primary phenomena are themselves a kind of reason, more or less permeating all created things.²³ When Hegel speaks of spirit, confident that it also speaks through him, he understands thereby nature as the otherness of the idea, while the spirit is a "second nature." As a consequence of this difference and agreement, Goethe, with benevolent irony, could recommend his "primary phenomena" for friendly reception by the "Absolute" on an occasion of a gift-giving. Nevertheless, it did not seem to him proper to speak of the absolute "in the theoretical sense," precisely because he always kept it before his eyes, seeing it in its manifestations.²⁴

After a visit from Hegel, Goethe wrote to Knebel that the conversation had aroused in him the desire to be together with Hegel at more length, "for what in the printed communications of such a man appears to us abstruse and unclear, because we cannot utilize it immediately for our own needs, immediately becomes our own in the course of live conversation, because we perceive that we are in agreement with him in basic thoughts and ideas, and mutual development and elucidation of them could probably lead to rapprochement and agreement." At the same time, Goethe was conscious of Hegel's approval: "Your gracious approval of the major trends of my thoughts confirms me all the more in the same; and I believe that I

have made notable progress in many areas, if not in terms of the whole, then for me and my soul. May all that I am yet capable of achieving always be built upon what you have established and continue to develop."²⁵ This could just as easily have been written by Hegel to Goethe, for in fact the work of the one built upon that of the other. However great the difference in the type and range of their personalities, however rich and active Goethe's life was in comparison to Hegel's prosaic existence, they were at one in the basis of their work, through their recognition of "what exists." For this reason they denied the pretensions of individuality, which is only destructive, never philosophically constructive, because it has a conception of freedom which is only negative.²⁶

However much Goethe's free flexibility within the fixed framework of pursuit of his goal differed from Hegel's constructive violence, the breadth of their mighty spirits exalted them both equally high above the everyday view of the world. They did not seek to know how things are in relation to us, but rather to perceive and to recognize what they are in and of themselves. When, in his essay on experiment, Goethe says that, like an indifferent and yet divine being, one must seek and study "what is" and not "what pleases," it is quite in line with what Hegel says about pure thought in the preface to his *Logik* and *Encyklopädie*. Both valued *theoria*, in the original sense of "pure vision," as the highest form of activity.

Observation of objects at the same time revealed to both their own nature, for which reason they rejected merely reflective self-knowledge as untrue and unfruitful. "I hereby confess that the great duty 'know thyself,' which sounds so important, has always seemed to me to be suspect, like a trick of priests in secret conspiracy who would like to confuse man through unfulfillable demands and lead him away from his proper activity in the external world to a false interior contemplation. A man knows himself insofar as he knows the world, which he perceives only within himself, and himself only within it. Every new object, properly examined, reveals a new organ within us."²⁷ On the same grounds Hegel, too, rejects "the complacent devotion of the individual to his own beloved individuality," that is, that which differentiates him as a particular individual being from the universal being of the spirit and the world.²⁸ Their conception of growth and existence is directed at an existence which emerges from itself, objectifies itself, within the world. This concern about questions of phenomena of an objective world, undistorted by machines, also characterizes Goethe's relationship with Hegel in

matters pertaining to the theory of color. From the very beginning this was the actual concrete point of contact between them, although it was within this area, natural philosophy, that recognition and following were denied them. The way they reached an understanding of the problem of light and color shows most clearly the divergence in their method of procedure and in the manner in which they looked at their own work.²⁹

In the foreground of their correspondence one is aware of a feeling of mutual assistance, approval, and corroboration, especially on the part of Goethe, who calls Hegel an "amazingly accurate and acute man" whose words on the theory of color are ingeniously clear and penetrating, although not equally accessible to everyone. Hegel, he states, has penetrated so deeply into his work on optical phenomena that he himself has only now understood it clearly.³⁰ The divergence in attitude which lurks in the background appears only in the form of a polite irony, by means of which each asserts the individuality of his own method before the other. Goethe expresses this ironic distance in a well-considered choice of words in his letter of October 7, 1820, in which he insists upon the obvious nature of his "idea," carefully differentiating his method of communication from an opinion which must prevail. We see it also in the previously mentioned dedication of the drinking glass, which conciliatorily preserves the distance between the "absolute" and the "primary phenomenon." He expresses his reservations more directly in a conversation on dialectics preserved by Eckermann: Goethe distrusts the dialectic method because it might be misused in order to turn falsehood into truth. One who is "dialectically sick," however, can be healed once more by honest study of nature; for nature is always and eternally true, and will not let such sickness prevail.³¹

Hegel expresses his irony in his stubborn designation of Goethe's primary phenomenon, based on observation, as a philosophical "abstraction," because it isolates from something which is empirically complex something pure and simple, and stresses it. "Your Excellency may call your procedure in the pursuit of natural phenomena a naïve method; I believe I may yield sufficiently to my faculty as to see and admire therein the abstraction by means of which you have held fast to the simple, basic truth, only inquiring after conditions, discovering them, and throwing them into relief."³² Goethe has discovered thereby something which is primarily merely visible, a transitory certainty of the senses, a "simple observational relationship"; he has "elevated it to the level of thought," and made it

sensibly through its sensuousness."³⁵ For Hegel, then, Goethe's primary phenomena do not assume the status of an idea, but rather an entity intermediate between the intellectual and the sensual, mediating between pure essential concepts and the accidental appearances of the sensual world. Hegel is even clearer in the next sentences, where he no longer masks his disagreement with Goethe, but openly declares it: "Now when I discover that Your Excellency shifts the realm of the unsearchable and incomprehensible into the region where we dwell, . . . from which we seek to justify your view and primary phenomena, to understand them—one might say prove, deduce, construe them, etc.—I know at the same time that Your Excellency, even though you may not be grateful to us for this, even though in fact your own views might attack the taunt of 'natural philosophy,' will at least be so tolerant as to allow us to conduct ourselves with what is yours in our own innocent manner. In spite of everything, this is not the worst that has befallen you, and I can rely on the fact that Your Excellency understands the ways of human nature, how, whenever someone has done anything worthwhile, others come running, wanting to see something of their own accomplished in the process. In spite of all this, we philosophers have one enemy in common with Your Excellency, namely, metaphysics."

Thus finally the common element seems reduced to defense against a common foe, the negation of that "damned bad metaphysics" of the physical scientists (Newton), who do not push on to a concrete notion, but subordinate abstract rules to empirical facts. With all Goethe's receptiveness toward the "significant agreement" of such an "important man," the reservation in Hegel's recognition of his goals and accomplishments could not simply escape his notice. His reply merely hints at this through a reference to Hegel's "friendly attitude" toward the primary phenomena.

In two letters of earlier date their methodological difference seems to be an unbridgeable gulf. In 1807, Hegel writes to Schelling about Goethe's theory of color: "I have seen a portion of the same; out of hatred for the cogitation with which others have ruined the matter, he restricts himself completely to the empirical, rather than progressing beyond it to the other side, to the notion, which will succeed, at most, in becoming dimly visible."³⁶ What Hegel here calls a mere dim visibility of the notion means for Goethe a genuine self-revelation of the phenomena, in contrast to which Hegel's proofs of God seem to him "out of date,"³⁷ and his dialectical con-

structions an abuse. In 1812, referring to a passage in Hegel's preface to *Phänomenologie* in which Hegel describes the phases of plant development—from the bud to the flower and the fruit—as a kind of dialectic progress, he writes: "It is probably impossible to say anything more monstrous. To seek to destroy the eternal reality of nature through a bad sophistical joke seems to me completely unworthy of a rational man. If an empiricist, his mind chained to the earth, remains blind to ideas, one will pity him and allow him to go his way, will indeed derive much profit from his efforts. But when an outstanding thinker, who penetrates within an idea and knows quite well what it is worth, in and of itself, and what higher value it contains, in describing an immense process of nature, makes a joke of it, distorting it sophistically, denying and destroying it by means of words and phrases which artificially contradict each other, one simply does not know what to say."³⁸

The illusion of perspective from Goethe's point of view, which affected his relationship with Hegel, rests in the fact that the "idea" as understood by Hegel was not intended to describe a process of nature but a process of the spirit. By it Hegel did not mean the reason of nature—which to him was powerless, while it was all-powerful to Goethe—but the reason of history; and Hegel viewed the spirit of Christianity as the absolute in the history of the spirit. The actual disagreement between Goethe and Hegel thus becomes comprehensible in their attitudes toward Christianity and toward history.³⁹

2 Rose and Cross

a Goethe's Rejection of Hegel's Association of Reason With the Cross

In 1830, for his sixtieth birthday, Hegel received from his pupils a medal, displaying on the face his portrait, and on the reverse an allegorical representation: left, a male figure, seated, reads from a book; behind him is a pillar upon which an owl crouches; at the right stands the figure of a woman holding fast to a cross which towers above her; between the two, turned toward the seated figure, is a naked genius whose raised arm points to the cross on the other

in its harshness and crudity it stands opposed to the "human" and the "reasonable," which are indispensable.⁴² A week after receiving the Hegel medal, and referring to his design for the Zelter medal, he writes: "An airy, decorative cross is always a cheerful object; the loathsome wood of the martyrs, the most repugnant object under the sun, no man in his right mind should be concerned to excavate and erect." Yet when one is eighty-two years old one must allow "the dear, accursed world to continue in its fool's life, as it has for millennia, in the name of God."⁴³ Goethe's interest at that time in the device for Zelter, together with the temporal proximity of this remark to his ill humor regarding the Hegel medal, render it probable that the Zelter medal, too, has some relationship to that cross which, contrary to everything rational, stands upon the Hegel medal, receiving through a genius its mediation with philosophy. Goethe rebelled against such an introduction of Christianity into philosophy. In a conversation with Eckermann on February 4, 1829, he says with regard to the philosopher Schubarth: "Just like Hegel, he, too, drags the Christian religion into philosophy, although it has no business there. The Christian religion is a mighty entity in itself, by means of which a sunken and miserable mankind from time to time has worked its way once more to the surface. When this effect is accorded it, it is exalted above all philosophy, and needs no support from it. Similarly, the philosopher does not need the approval of religion to demonstrate certain theories such as eternal existence." The same view is evidenced once more in a conversation with Kanzler Müller, occasioned by the confession of faith of a "rational believer."⁴⁴ But it is characteristic of Hegelian philosophy, which includes everything in its dualities, that it is a philosophy of the spirit based on the Christian logos, a philosophical theology. We have a metaphor for this amalgamation of the reason of philosophy with the theology of the cross in a famous passage from the preface to *Rechtsphilosophie*, where Hegel calls reason a "rose within the cross of the present."⁴⁵ Of course, this image is not connected with the allegorical representation upon Hegel's medal, which has a cross but not a rose; but it illustrates Hegel's conception of the unity of philosophical reason and the Christian cross.

Lasson has given an exhaustive interpretation of Hegel's statement, reducing the theological significance of the cross until it disappears in a universal "dichotomy" which is reconciled by reason. Nevertheless, he himself points out the connection between Hegel's metaphor and the sect of the Rosicrucians,⁴⁶ as well as with Luther's

coat of arms, with Hegel's own Lutheranism, and with the third centenary of the Reformation (1817). But if the cross means only dissociation between self-conscious spirit and presently existing reality, why then—one must ask in disagreement with Lasson's interpretation—does Hegel, in such a conspicuous place, label this estrangement with the basic Christian concept of the cross? Obviously because he understands both the estrangement and reconciliation to exist, from the very beginning, in the realm of the history of the spirit, having in mind Christ's death upon the cross, though understanding the "spirit" of Christianity philosophically. Reason is a rose within the cross of the present, not because every estrangement strives by its very nature for reunion, but because the agony of the estrangement and reconciliation have already taken place within history in the suffering God.⁴⁷ But Goethe's objection to Hegel's "contignation" is the more significant in that Goethe himself, in "Die Geheimnisse," used the metaphor of a cross garlanded with roses as a symbol of his idea of the "purely human."

b Goethe's Association of Humanity With the Cross

The content of the poem is briefly as follows: A young monk loses his way in the mountains, finally arriving at a monastery above whose door there is the symbol of a cross garlanded with roses. Within the monastery twelve knightly monks are assembled, who had formerly been scattered in secular life. Their spiritual leader is a mysterious unknown man who bears the name "Humanus." In contrast to this personification of pure and universal humanity, each of the twelve others represents a particular nation or religion, with his own way of thinking and seeing. Through their life together under the leadership of Humanus, they have been granted the one, inclusive spirit which is his. He now wishes to leave them. There is no longer any need for his presence, after he has had his effect upon them all.

Thus the religion of humanity is not a particular religion among others, nor does it consist in the mere common beliefs of various religions, as in Lessing's parable; it means "the eternal duration of an elevated human condition." Despite this, Goethe's own statement refers the cross with the roses to the Christian events of Holy Week. To this faith of "half a world" Goethe gives "a completely new significance" by mitigating the theological rigor of the Christian

ceptual development and consummation of Luther's principle of assurance of justification by faith.⁴⁹ He practically identifies the perceptions of reason with faith. "This perception has been called faith. It is not historical (externally objective) faith. As Lutherans—I am one and will remain so—we have only that original faith."⁵⁰ In this rational faith which knows that man's destiny of freedom rests on his immediate relationship with God, Hegel viewed himself as a Protestant. In this way he reconciled the absolute dichotomy between faith and reason which Luther himself so radically established. Ultimately, to Hegel, Protestantism is identical with the "universal insight and education" which it effected. "Our universities and our schools are our churches." Therein rests the essential contrast with Catholicism.

Like Hegel, Goethe esteemed the Reformation as liberation from the "shackles of intellectual narrow-mindedness," while for Luther it was the restoration of true Christianity. "Once more we have courage," we read in a conversation about the Reformation from the last year of Goethe's life, "to stand with our feet firmly planted upon God's earth, conscious of ourselves in our God-given human nature."⁵¹ Neither Goethe nor Hegel had any qualms about how little a Christianity whose meaning resides in a man's ability "to feel, as a man, great and free" might have in common with its original meaning. Goethe said, "We shall all grow gradually from a Christianity of word and faith to a Christianity of disposition and deed." This statement marks the beginning of the road which led from Hegel to Feuerbach, and further into radical crises. The contrasting attempts of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, once more to force the decision between paganism and Christianity, are determined reactions to that amorphous Christianity represented by Hegel and Goethe.

*e Goethe's Christian Paganism
and Hegel's Philosophical Christianity*

Goethe's statements regarding Christ and Christianity oscillate between a remarkable pro and con; this derives not from any vague vacillation, but from a defiant irony which shuns the either-or. "To me, Christ remains a highly significant but problematic entity"⁵²—a remark which in the mouth of anyone else would be the symptom of a trivial education; coming from Goethe, it comprehends a world of contrasting lines of thought, which his extraordinary moderation held in balance.

Goethe once described himself as a "decided non-Christian," to whom the discovery of the earth's movement about the sun meant more than the entire Bible, and another time as perhaps the only true Christian, as Christ would have him be⁵³—a contradiction—beside which stand the comments (in the same conversation): the pederasty of the Greek is as old as mankind, it is rooted in the nature of man even though contrary to nature; and, the sanctity of Christian marriage is of inestimable value, although marriage itself is unnatural!

The ambiguous tension of Goethe's statements about Christianity extends through sixty years. The *Prometheus* fragment of 1773 is already not only a rebellion against the gods, but—as Jacobi and Lessing at once understood⁵⁴—an attack upon the Christian faith in God. It was followed in 1774 by *Der Ewige Jude*, an attack upon the Church and clergy. A year later Goethe sends a reply to Herder apropos the latter's *Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament*, thanking him for a "stimulating heap of rubbish." If only the whole doctrine of Christ were not so illusory as to be an insult to his human intelligence, he would be immensely pleased by the subject itself, as well as Herder's treatment of it.

In 1781, upon receipt of Lavater's published letters, he writes: "I have never looked so gladly upon your Christ and admired him as much as I have done through these letters." It exalts the soul and furnishes occasion for the most wonderful meditations to see Lavater grasp with ardor this "crystal vessel," fill it to the very brim with his own bright red draught, and drink it down. "I grant you this pleasure gladly, for without it you must needs be miserable. With your wish and desire to derive everything possible from an individual, and with the impossibility that an individual can ever satisfy you, it is glorious that an image has been left to us from ancient times, into which you can pour your All, and, seeing yourself reflected in it, worship yourself. But I can only call it unjust, an act of robbery not befitting your good name, that you should pluck from the thousands of fowls of the air their priceless feathers as though they had been usurped in order to embellish your own bird of paradise with them, an action which must appear to us grievous and unendurable, we who devote ourselves to the study of all wisdom revealed through men and Man, as sons of God worshiping him within ourselves and within all his children. I quite understand that you can do nothing to change this, and that you are justified in your own eyes. But, since you repeatedly preach your own faith and doctrine, I also find

as the divine revelation of the highest principle of morality. If I am asked whether it accords with my nature to worship the sun, then I say once again, 'Completely!' For it, likewise, is a revelation of the most high, and in fact the mightiest which has ever been granted us mortals to perceive. I worship in it the light and creative power of God, whereby alone we live and move and have our being, and all plants and animals together with us."⁵⁶

Thus Goethe was able to call himself an adamant non-Christian and at the same time avoid being taken for a pagan. What he worshiped as divine was the productive power of the entire world, against which war, plague, water, and flame can have no effect.⁵⁷ To this Dionysian world of self-destruction and rebirth Christ, also, belongs, whose teaching extended the realm of what is to be revered until it included even what is most repugnant. When, in the last month of his life, Goethe writes (speaking of the *Bacchae* of Euripides), seemingly in a strange anticipation of Nietzsche's idea of a crucified Dionysus: the piece provides a most fruitful comparison of a modern dramatic presentation of the suffering divinity in Christ with the ancient presentation of a similar suffering, thence to issue all the more powerfully in Dionysus.⁵⁸

The internal consistency of this statement can be measured by the fact that in the *Ewige Jude*, a *Sturm und Drang* Christ, who has had his fill of crosses, utters the unchristian words: "O world full of wondrous complexity, full of the spirit of order, of casual wandering, thou endless chain of ecstasy and misery, thou mother who borest me even to the grave! Whom I, though present at creation, do not particularly understand."

Goethe's free and careless attitude toward Christianity, based upon the fact that he "had such true emotions,"⁵⁹ became a superficial and pale commonplace of the intelligentsia of the nineteenth century, who thought that they could claim Goethe as their leader because they thought their indifference reconciled differences. A typical expression of the *juste milieu* of this bourgeois-Christian cultural class, even during the First World War, was the popular formula "Homer and the Bible," both of which were carried in the rucksack. Until very recently, this humanism tinged with Christianity left its stamp upon the more or less freethinking speeches of Protestant school directors and pastors. Some biblical text would be discussed, illustrated with statements by von Humboldt, Schiller, and Goethe. Overbeck characterized this state of affairs perfectly: "It is the fashion for contemporary Christianity to give itself to the

world in its own way, in the world of today no man of importance can behave in anti-Christian fashion without being claimed by Christianity with special preference. Among the Christians of modern observance, Goethe and Schiller, Feuerbach, Schopenhauer, Wagner, Nietzsche, and, naturally, their successors, must be content with this. . . . In actuality, we will soon be at the point with Christianity that all those great men will be much more familiar to us as devout Christians than as apostates from Christianity. If nothing more were needed for evidence of such an estimation than to pluck out of their writings the raisins of 'warm' tones, approving of Christianity, who would hesitate long before joining himself wholeheartedly to modern Christianity?"⁶⁰

Hegel never viewed his "understanding" of Christianity as a negation, but as a justification of the intellectual content of the absolute religion. In his mind, the Christian doctrine of suffering and redemption was also determinative for speculative thought. A search through his works and letters for ironic invectives against Christianity would be in vain; when he writes polemic, it is directed solely against inappropriate conceptual forms, barren of ideas, as found in particular theological movements. In his old age particularly he made the express claim that his was a Christian philosophy.⁶¹ His biographer could describe Hegel's philosophy justly as a "perennial definition of God": so greatly was it a philosophy grounded on the historical basis of the Christian religion.

However unambiguous to Hegel was his mediation between philosophy and Christianity, it perforce became ambiguous to an equal degree when this mediation became a point of attack. The critical component which was already present in Hegel's justification became free and independent as soon as the mediation disintegrated. Because the ambiguity present in Hegel's conceptual *Aufhebung* (exaltation or nullification) of religion could be interpreted in two ways, criticism, too, could take Hegel's justification as its point of departure. On the grounds of Hegel's mediation between philosophy and Christianity, it pressed for their differentiation and for a decision. The consequence of this process can be seen in the criticism of religion which passes from Strauss through Feuerbach to Bruno Bauer and Kierkegaard.⁶² Along the way is revealed, together with the crisis of Hegelian philosophy, a crisis of Christianity.

Hegel did not see a crisis coming in the history of Christianity, while Goethe, in 1830, saw it plainly before him. For one must either hold fast to the traditional faith without allowing room for

Müller gives an account of a conversation with Goethe in which the latter said that he could reconcile himself to the new crisis only because he saw in it "the greatest opportunity for intellectual exercise" which could come to him at the close of his life.⁶⁷ A few months later, Goethe writes to Zelter that he finds it remarkable that after forty years the old frenzy should begin all over again. The strategy for such powers as remained should be to make the individual paroxysms harmless. "If we survive, there will be calm again for a while. More I cannot say."⁶⁸ More out of place than ever, there seemed to be present in this revolution an "unmitigated striving for absolutism—in this thoroughly conditional world."⁶⁹ He preserved his sanity through the study of nature, which remains constant in the midst of all change. When Eckermann came to bring him the first reports of the revolution, Goethe said to him excitedly: "Well, what do you think of this great event? The volcano has erupted, all is in flames, and it is no longer a transaction behind closed doors." But to Eckermann's amazement, by "this event" he did not mean the political news, but a discussion in the Paris Academy concerning the methodology of natural science.⁷⁰

Goethe recognized clearly that the world began to undergo a drastic change about 1830, as a result of democratic leveling and industrialization. On October 23, 1828, he said to Eckermann on the subject of mankind: "I see a time coming when God will no longer have any pleasure in it; he will once more have to destroy everything to make room for a renewed creation." The basis of bourgeois society and its social life seemed to him to be destroyed, and he viewed the writings of St. Simon as the ingenious outline for a radical abolition of the existing order. What came to him from France in the way of modern literature he viewed as a "literature of despair," forcing upon the reader the very opposite of what men should be told for their own well-being.⁷¹ "It is their satanic business to exaggerate to the utmost limit everything odious, everything loathsome, everything horrible, everything unworthy, along with the whole pack of the depraved." Everything is now "ultra" and "transcendent," in thought as well as in action. "No one knows himself any more, no one understands the element in which he lives and moves, no one understands the material which he shapes. There can be no talk of pure simplicity, but of simple nonsense there is plenty." Modern man transcends himself and overeducates himself only to remain fixed in mediocrity; he becomes more extreme and

more common.⁷² The last document revealing his insight into the currents of the age is a letter to W. von Humboldt, in which he justifies the seal of secrecy he put upon the second part of *Faust*: "Without question it would give me infinite pleasure to dedicate these very serious jests to my esteemed friends, widely dispersed, whom I gratefully acknowledge, while they are yet alive—to let them see them and to hear their replies. But the day is really so absurd and confused that I am convinced that the honest efforts with which I have labored so long on this strange edifice would be ill repaid; they would be driven upon the shore, lie there like a shattered hulk, only to be covered over by the drifting sands of time. Confusing theories for confused actions hold sway over the earth; I have nothing better to do than, where possible, to augment what is my own and has been left to me, to distill and redistill my own individuality, just as you, also, my esteemed friend, are doing in your castle." With these words, full of astounding firmness and resignation, Goethe's correspondence ends, five days before his death.

Hegel was irritated by the July Revolution no less than Goethe. With rage and horror he saw the onset of new dissensions against which he now defended the existing order as a genuine source of stability. In his last political writing, written in 1831 criticizing the English Reform Bill, he called the desire for reform a "disobedience" born of "courage from below." Accused of servility toward Church and State, he wrote to Goeschel on December 13, 1830: "At present the enormous interest of politics has swallowed up all others—a crisis in which everything previously dependable seems to become problematic. So little can philosophy stand up to the uncertainty, violence, and evil passions of this great unrest, I hardly think that it can penetrate into those circles which rest so easily; it must realize that—even for the purpose of bringing calm—it is only for the few." At the close of the preface to the second edition of the *Logik*, he expresses the fear that in a period politically so agitated there might be no room at all for the "passionless calm of purely thinking knowledge." A few days after finishing the preface he fell ill with cholera and died.

In their common opposition to "transcendence," Goethe and Hegel were still able to construct a world in which man can live with himself; but even their immediate pupils no longer found themselves at home in it, and misunderstood the equilibrium of their masters as the product of mere harmonization.⁷³ In Marx and Kierke-

The Origin of the Spiritual Development of the Age in Hegel's Philosophy of the History of the Spirit

I The Eschatological Meaning of Hegel's Consummation of the History of the World and the Spirit

1 The Eschatological Design of World History

For Hegel, the history of philosophy is not a process parallel to or outside of the world, but "the heart of world history." What dominates both equally is the Absolute in the form of "world spirit," the essence of which is movement, and hence history.¹ Not only does Hegel's work include a philosophy of history and a history of philosophy, but his entire system is historically oriented to an extent which is true of no previous philosophy. His philosophizing begins with historicotheological discussions of the spirit of Christianity vastly transcending the historical sense of Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon. There follow historicopolitical writings and the first ethical systems, in which the unconditioned power of history is presented as "time which conquers all" and "primal destiny."² Here we read for the first time of the "world spirit," which has "knowledge of itself in every form, either crude or highly developed, but in any case absolute." In every nation it gives expression to a "totality of life."³ Then follows phenomenology, as the history of the unfolding of the spirit and of the cultural stages of knowledge; here the sys-

tematic stages of thought and historical relationships are even more inseparable, since they have no empirically determined relationship, but rather interpenetrate.

The goal of this elaborate dialectical movement of the spirit, which lives in the element of history, is "absolute knowledge." It is attained through "recollection" of all spirits which have ever existed. This pathway of the eternally present spirit through the previous nature of history is not a detour to be avoided, but the only practicable way to the consummation of knowledge. The absolute, or spirit, not only has its external history, as a man has clothing, but is, in its deepest nature, as a movement of self-development, an entity which exists only by becoming. As a spirit which continuously surrenders and recollects, it is *per se* historical, even though the dialectic of becoming does not proceed in a straight line toward infinity, but rather goes in a circle, so that the end is the consummation of the beginning. When upon this path of progress the spirit ultimately achieves its full being and knowledge, or its self-consciousness, the history of the spirit is completed. Hegel completes the history of the spirit in the sense of its ultimate fulfillment, in which everything which has taken place hitherto or has been conceived is comprehended in a unity; but he completes it also in the sense of an eschatological end, in which the history of the spirit is finally realized. And because the essence of the spirit is the freedom of existing with itself, complete freedom is achieved with the completion of its history.

On the principle of the freedom of the spirit Hegel also constructs the history of the world, with a view toward a fulfilled end. In his philosophy of history, the most important stages in the self-liberation of the spirit are the beginning in the East and the conclusion in the West. The world process begins with the great oriental kingdoms of China, India, and Persia. After the decisive victory of the Greeks over the Persians, it continues in the Greek and Roman political edifices on the Mediterranean. It concludes with the Christian-Germanic kingdoms in the western part of the North. "Europe is identical with the West," and "represents the consummation of world history, just as Asia is the East and the beginning."⁴ The sun, which rises in the East and sets in the West, is the universal spirit of the world. During this process, bitter struggles educate the spirit to freedom. "The Orient knew and knows only that *one* man is free, the Greek and Roman world that *some* are free, the Germanic world knows that *all* are free." The

freedom peculiar to the Christian-Germanic world is no longer the arbitrary will of an individual despot, nor is it the freedom of free-born Greeks and Romans, which depended upon slavery; it is the freedom of every Christian person. The history of the Orient is the childhood of the world process, that of the Greeks and Romans its youth and manhood, while Hegel himself—standing at the conclusion of the Christian-Germanic world—produces his philosophy "in the old age of the spirit."

In the Orient the substance of the spirit remains massive and uniform; the peculiar characteristic of the Greek world is the individual liberation of the spirit. A few important individuals produce a wealth of plastic forms; here we feel at home immediately, because we are upon the ground of the spirit, which independently claims for itself everything alien. The life of Greece is a true "act of youth": Achilles, the youth of poetry, opened it; and Alexander, the true youth, brought it to a close. In both we see individuality at its most beautiful and free, an individuality developed further in the struggle against Troy and Asia. Politically and spiritually, Greece is an anti-Asiatic power, and thus the beginning of Europe. This is reinforced by the nature of the land, which is not a uniform continental block, but lies scattered on many isles and peninsulas along the coasts of the sea. Here we do not find the physical bulk of the Orient; there is no single river linking everything, like the Ganges and Indus, the Euphrates and Tigris. Instead we have a complex land, dispersed here and there, well in accord with the nature of the Greek city-states and the agitation of their spirit.⁵

Because it lacked unity, this gifted land of individual persons was subjected to the political power of Rome, which was the first creation of an independent state or "political generality," and, in turn, of private individuals with specific rights in relationship to the state.⁶ With its power to organize everything on an equal footing, the Roman Empire laid the groundwork for the Europe which was to come, penetrating politically and culturally the entire contemporary world. Upon the Roman roads the Greek cultural milieu moved everywhere; without them Christianity would never have been able to grow into a world religion.

The internal limitation of both the Greek and Roman world consists in the blind fate which, in antiquity, still remained beside the spirit, so that ultimate decisions were determined from without. In all "decisive" questions of life, the Greeks and Romans did not consult their own conscience, the "point of decision," but oracles

and signs. Before Christ, man was not yet a fully independent and infinitely free personality; at this stage of history, man's spirit was not yet free to itself, for self-existence.⁷

The ultimate liberation of the spirit results from the irruption of Christianity into the heathen world. "With the coming of the Christian principle, the earth belongs to the spirit; the earth is circumnavigated, and, for Europeans, a sphere." The Christian world is a "world of consummation," for "the principle is fulfilled, and thus the end of days is complete."⁸ Only the Christian God is truly man and "spirit" at once. The spiritual substance becomes the subject in an individual historical person. Thereby the unity of the divine and the human is finally brought to consciousness; reconciliation is given to man as the image of God. "This principle forms the axis of the world, upon which it revolves. The course of history leads up to this point and flows from it."⁹ Thus for Hegel the European way of reckoning time has not only temporary and conditional significance, but absolute historical meaning. In one decisive moment the European world became Christian forever.

The spread of faith in Christ necessarily has political consequences: the Greek state was already a state of (democratic) freedom, but only for "good fortune and genius." With Christianity the principle of absolute (monarchic) freedom appears, in which man knows himself to be identical with the power to which he relates himself. The freedom of the Greeks depended upon slaves; Christian freedom is infinite and unconditional.

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The history of Christianity is the unfolding of the "infinite power of free decision"; in Christianity it attains its full stature.¹⁰ It extends from the acceptance of the Christian faith by the Germanic peoples, through the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church, to the Protestant Reformation, which reconciles church and state, conscience and law. Luther was the first to bring to fruition the idea that man is intended to be free through his own agency.¹¹ Further consequences of the Reformation are the Enlightenment and, finally, the French Revolution. The liberation of the individual conscience from the universal authority of the Pope created the necessary condition for the human will to decide to construct a rational state, the principle of which would be the Christian idea of freedom and equality. For Luther, the content of the Christian faith was determined by revelation; through Rousseau's mediation, in the French Revolution the European spirit determined for itself the content of its goal.

In this last stage of the history of the European spirit, "pure free will" is finally produced, which itself both wills and knows what it wills. For the first time man stands "upon his head": the process of the world becomes identical with the intellectual process of philosophy. With this event we reach the conclusion of the philosophy of history, whose principle is "progress in consciousness of freedom." Thus for Hegel the so-called secularization of original Christianity—its spirit and its freedom—by no means signifies a reprehensible apostasy from its original meaning. On the contrary: it signifies the true explication of this origin through positive realization.¹² Just as the history of the Christian world is a progressive movement transcending antiquity, so it is also the true fulfillment of the "yearning" of the ancient world. The Greco-Roman world is *aufgehoben* (both "elevated" and "abolished") in the Christian-Germanic world. Hegel's basic ontological concept is thus doubly defined: as Greek and as Christian logos. On the other hand, it was completely foreign to his concrete sense of history to restore once more the connection between the ancient world and Christianity, seeking to return once more to an abstract origin, "either" in Hellenism "or" in Christianity.¹³

The ultimate basis of Hegel's eschatological system lies in his absolute evaluation of Christianity, according to which the eschatological end and fullness of time occurred with the appearance of Christ. But because Hegel displaces the Christian expectation of the end of the world of time into the course of the world process, and the absolute of faith into the rational realm of history, it is only logical for him to understand the last great event in the history of the world and the spirit as the consummation of the beginning. In fact, the history of the "idea" comes to an end with Hegel; in recollection, he understands all history "up to this time and from this time" as fulfillment of all ages. This is not contradicted by the fact that the empirical process, without principle, and therefore also without epochs, goes on infinitely, without beginning or end.

This historical consciousness of Hegelian philosophy entered into the education not only of his pupils and successors, but also of his opponents. Even Burckhardt continued to contain his thinking within the circumference of Hegel's view of history, consciously restricting it to the ancient and Christian worlds, although he recognized that the spirit of the ancient world is no longer our own, and that the modern struggle for power and profit is moving toward an interpretation of life which is independent of Christianity. In spite

Dante or Shakespeare, can appear in our time: "What has been sung so well, what has been so freely proclaimed, is proclaimed. These are materials, ways of looking at things and comprehending them, which have been sung through. Only the present is vital; everything else is pale and faded."¹⁷

Not only have particular subjects of art lost their interest, but the form of art in general has ceased to be the highest need of the spirit. For us, it is no longer the supreme way for truth to come into existence.¹⁸ It is no use to yearn once more to appropriate world views of the past, to become Catholics, for example, like many of the romanticists, who want to "settle" themselves in order externally to fix their uncertain dispositions. "The artist must not even need to achieve purity in his own disposition, having to watch for the good of his own soul; from the very beginning, his great, free soul . . . must know and possess its goal, be sure of it, and rely upon itself." Today especially, the spirit of the artist needs a liberating education in which all "superstition and belief restricted to particular forms of viewing and representation are reduced to the status of mere aspect and instance, over which the free spirit has made itself master by refusing to see in them any per se sacrosanct conditions for artistic creation. Instead, it accords them value through the superior content which it finds appropriate and puts into them in an act of renewed creation."¹⁹ Thus transcending itself, art is equally a return of man to himself, whereby it puts aside all concrete limitations to particular contents, to achieve its ultimate goal. It is in this sense of perfection that Hegel interprets the humor in the poetry of Jean Paul, and Goethe's universal humanity: his unbounded freedom with respect to the varying content of his particular activities, and the creedal nature of his literary output, whose saint is simply *Humanus*. "Here the artist receives his content from himself; he is the true spirit of man, determining his own destiny, observing the infinite variety of his own feelings and situations, contemplating and expressing them. To him, nothing is alien which can come to life in the heart of man."²⁰ Everything in which man can feel at home to any degree is a potential subject of this art which has become perfectly free.

In conclusion, we also have the form of religion. It is true that the form of its internal consciousness towers above the sensuous consciousness of art; but it, too, is no longer the supreme way for the spirit to dwell on earth. At the close of the tenth lecture on the philosophy of religion,²¹ Hegel posed the question of the empirical

condition of the Christian religion at the present time, and interpreted the "signs of the time." For it "might occur to us" to compare our age with the end of the Roman world, where reason took refuge in the form of private well-being and private justice because a universal religious and political life no longer existed. In such periods, the individual lets the world be just as it is in order to look after his own well-being. What is left is the moral view of the world, the desires and ideas of the individual without objective content. Then the time was fulfilled; this could be the case once more, now, when there is need for the justification of faith because the religious forms which have hitherto been valid no longer hold. "How much," one might ask, "of this content of the Christian faith will still be considered true?" The clergy, whose duty should be to uphold religion, has itself fallen prey to rationalization: it propounds Christian doctrine on the basis of ethical motifs and external history. But when the truth of Christianity is described solely in subjective and historical terms, "then it is all over" with it. "The salt has lost its savor"; what is left is merely skeptical "elucidation" and the arrogant barrenness of the educated classes, who cannot be teachers to the people, since such reflection is of no use to them. Thus Christianity seems to be passing—but this would be to close with a "false note."

Hegel comes to terms with this consciousness of the historical condition of Christianity by claiming that the passing is an "accidental event," concerning only the external aspect of the world, from which he excludes the essential reconciliation. What is to become of the "historical present" must be left to the present to decide. The false note is without significance to philosophy, for its task is to establish an eternal kingdom of God; the Holy Spirit lives on in the congregation of philosophy, which now takes over the office of the priestly class in administering truth.

Just as critical reflection broke into art, so it has broken into religion. It is a mode of thought which cannot be halted and must be carried through to its conclusion, because it is the "absolute judge" before which the truth of religion must prove itself. Just as art now becomes "the study of art," so now also religion becomes "philosophy of religion," the thinking spirit having passed the stage of immediate faith and mere enlightened understanding.²² The subsumption of religion into philosophy of religion is also a way of taking refuge: religion takes refuge in philosophy. Rational thought, which furnishes religious feelings and conceptions with a comprehended pattern of existence, must be recognized as the purest form

der Philosophie is not an arbitrary "we have arrived at this point," but rather a "we are at the goal"; it is an "outcome." Like Proclus, Hegel unified the world of the Christian logos into the absolute totality of the concretely organized idea, bringing to an end all three epochs. With reference to Proclus, he states that such a unification of all systems in a comprehensive, total system is no mere eclecticism, but a "deeper understanding of the idea," such as must occur "from time to time," that is, epochally.²⁷ With Proclus, Hegel continues, the world spirit stands at a great "turning point" before the absolute break, that is, the irruption of Christianity into the pagan world. For Proclus, the divine nature of reality was still an abstract ideal, before it became earthly reality in the particular individuality of the God-man Christ. Only then was the longing of the ancient world fulfilled. From that point on, the task of the world (to be reconciled with the world spirit) was transferred to the Christian-Germanic world. In a letter to Creuzer,²⁸ Hegel writes in a similar vein of the "enormous stride" which was principally due to Proclus, and formed the true turning point in the transition from ancient philosophy to Christianity. "Now once more" it is time to take such a stride. Thus it seems to him that nothing is more significant for the age than Creuzer's new edition of Proclus.²⁹

But what is the result of all this for Hegel's consummation of Christian philosophy? Obviously this: it is a final step before a great turning and break with Christianity. If this is so, Hegel's consummation of ancient and Christian philosophy is the same thing as was Proclus' philosophy: a "destroying reconciliation." Its culmination is contemporary with the onset of a decline, a time when "everything is in the throes of dissolution and struggling toward something new."³⁰ Similarly, Alexandrian philosophy was the final flowering of the foundering Roman Empire; nor were the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the close of the second epoch, any different, during which the Germanic life of the Middle Ages achieved a new form. "Philosophy begins with the annihilation of a real world; when it appears, painting its black picture, the freshness of youth, of vitality, has already gone. Reconciliation is a reconciliation *not in reality, but in the ideal world*. In Greece, the philosophers withdrew from the affairs of state; they were idlers, as the people called them, and fled into the realm of ideas. This is an important observation; it is verified by the history of philosophy itself."³¹ Even Hegel's philosophy of the state paints this black picture. It does not seek to rejuvenate a world which has become "ripe"; its only desire is to con-

tinue to know. As such knowledge, it is an acknowledgment of and a reconciliation with "that which is." Thought is now completely alone within itself; and yet, at the same time, as organized idea, it comprehends the universe as a world which has become "intelligible," sensible, and transparent. All extant "objectivity" has become one with its "self-begetting." "It seems that the world spirit has succeeded in discarding all alien, objective existence; it finally comprehends itself as absolute spirit, begetting of itself everything which for it becomes objective, calmly keeping it within its power."³² In this unity of objectivity and self-directed activity we find the conclusion of the fulfillment-consummation of the "modern" epoch. Only from this eschatological point of view can Hegel's conclusion of the *Geschichte der Philosophie* be understood in its full pathos and gravity: "The world spirit has now arrived at this point. The final philosophy is the result of all that have gone before; nothing is lost, all principles are retained. This concrete idea is the result of the struggles of the spirit through almost 2500 years (Thales was born 640 B.C.), of its most serious effort to become objective in respect to itself, to know itself: *Tantae molis erat se ipsam cognoscere mentem*." The ambiguity of Hegel's "consummation," meaning both fulfillment and conclusion, is proclaimed by the transformation of Vergil's "Romanam condere gentem"³³ into "*se ipsam cognoscere mentem*." This transformation says: the laying of the foundations of the Roman Empire then demanded the same effort as is now demanded for the laying of foundations in the domain of the spirit. With the "courage born of knowledge," Hegel writes an end to two and a half millennia, thus opening a new era. In fact, he pronounces the end of the history of the Christian logos. He himself says of art that it loses absolute interest as soon as "everything has been brought out"; its successors are compelled to rebel against the entire past. The same is true of philosophy, which is brought to an end in him, as a result of his consummation: with Hegel's history of the spirit an entire world of language, ideas, and culture comes to an end. Starting from this end point we have our own true *Geistes-Geschichte* (Spirit-History)—like a *lucus a non lucendo*.

Hegel did not express directly the eschatological meaning of the consummation wrought by him, but he did so indirectly. He proclaims it by thinking retrospectively, in the "old age of the spirit," on what has passed, and also by looking ahead to a possible new realm of the spirit, although in the process he expressly denies any

the world with horror and awe. Kantians will appear who want nothing to do with mercy even in the phenomenal world; they will plough up without pity the very soil of our European life with sword and axe, in order to eradicate every last root of the past. Armed Fichtians will arise, whose fanaticism of will can be restrained neither through fear nor through self-interest, . . . indeed, in the case of a social upheaval, such transcendental idealists would be even more inflexible than the early Christians, since the latter bore martyrdom on earth to attain heavenly bliss, while the transcendentalist considers martyrdom itself to be mere appearance: he is unassailable behind the trenchwork of his own thought. More terrible than all would be the natural philosophers, who would participate actively in any German revolution, identifying themselves with the very work of destruction. If the hand of the Kantian strikes swift and sure because his heart is not moved by any traditional reverence; if the Fichtian courageously defies all danger because for him it does not exist at all in reality; so the natural philosopher will be terrible, for he has allied himself to the primal forces of nature. He can conjure up the demonic powers of ancient German pantheism. That lust for battle will flame within him which we find among the ancient Germans; it does not fight in order to destroy, or in order to win, but merely to fight. Christianity—and this is its greatest accomplishment—moderated somewhat that brutal Germanic lust for battle; but it could not destroy it, and if ever that restraining talisman, the cross, is shattered, there shall arise once more . . . that mindless madman's rage of which the Nordic poets sing so much. That talisman is decaying; the day will come when it collapses miserably. . . . I warn you, Frenchmen, keep then quite still, and for God's sake do not applaud! We could easily misconstrue such an action, and, in our crude way, set you at rest somewhat brusquely. . . . I have good intentions toward you, and therefore I tell you the bitter truth. You have more to fear from Germany liberated than from the entire Holy Alliance, with all its Croats and Cossacks. . . . What you are actually charged with I never have been able to understand. Once, in a beer-cellar in Göttingen, a young old-German declared that revenge must be taken upon the French for Konradin von Stauffen, whom they had beheaded at Naples. Surely you have forgotten that long ago. But we forget nothing. You see, if it ever amuses us to pick a quarrel with you, we shall have no lack of cogent reasons. In any case, therefore, I advise you to be on your guard. No matter what hap-

the left. Among the "Pseudo-Hegelians" he counts Fichte, K. Fischer, Weisse, and Braniss. It is today very difficult to imagine the liveliness of the controversies on the question of the divine-human nature, the personality of God, and the immortality of the soul,⁵ so familiar are we with the destructive outcome of the criticism of religion accomplished by Hegel's pupils. The debate, concerned with these theological questions, was no less significant for Hegel's continuing influence than that which stemmed from his theory of the state, as developed by Ruge, Marx, and Lassalle.

The majority of the editors of Hegel's works were Old Hegelians in the original sense of the school founded by Hegel, von Henning, Hotho, Förster, Marheineke, as well as Hinrichs, C. Daub, Conradi, and Schaller. They preserved Hegel's philosophy literally, continuing it in individual historical studies, but they did not reproduce it in a uniform manner beyond the period of Hegel's personal influence. For the historical movement of the nineteenth century they are without significance. In contrast with these Old Hegelians, the designation "Young Hegelians," or "Neo-Hegelians," arose.⁶ To avoid any confusion, in the following pages the term "Neo-Hegelians" will be applied exclusively to those who have rejuvenated Hegelianism in our own period, "Young Hegelians" to the radical left among Hegel's pupils and successors, and "Old Hegelians" to those who preserved his historical way of thinking beyond the period of the revolution, through the entire century, each in his own free way. They can be called Old Hegelians because they were not inclined toward radical innovation. Seen from this point of view, Rosenkranz particularly, but also Haym, Erdmann, and K. Fischer were the real preservers of Hegelian philosophy in the period between Hegel and Nietzsche.

K. Rosenkranz (1805-1879), rightly called by Ruge the "most liberal of all the Old Hegelians," made an accurate evaluation of the historical state of philosophy after Hegel in his two unsurpassed monographs on Hegel.⁷ We men of today, he says in his first account, written in 1844, seem to be merely "the gravediggers and monument builders" for the philosophers produced by the second half of the eighteenth century, who died in the first half of the nineteenth: "Are we equally capable of providing for the second half of our century a company of philosophic saints? Are there among our young men those whose Platonic enthusiasm and Aristotelian devotion to labor arouse them to unflagging efforts for the cause of speculative thought? Do our young men perhaps dream of

other crowns, . . . do they see perhaps the gleam of the higher goal of action, as doers, is it their idea to bring about the ideals of those philosophers?⁸ Or should they allow themselves to sink into indifference toward science and life, and, not seldom having prematurely boasted themselves the victors of the day, find themselves without sufficient strength for the future? Strangely enough, the talents of our own day do not seem capable of enduring. They quickly wear themselves out; after a few promising blossoms they become unproductive, they begin to copy and repeat themselves at the very point where, once the more inhibited and imperfect, one-sided and violent experiments of youth have been overcome, a period of powerful sustained effort should follow." And, with a side thrust at those Young Hegelians such as Feuerbach, Marx, and Ruge, who claimed to "realize" Hegel's philosophy, he speaks of those who, in "self-fabricated pre-eminence of an ephemeral journalistic appointment to leadership," improvise reforms and revolutions in philosophy, of which they will never have any experience in their course through history. "These cavaliers of impromptu speculation, stumbling about in the maze of their hypotheses, confuse the babble of their beer-hall adventure with the serious discussion of legislative assemblies, and the uproar of a critical brawl with the tragic thunder of battle." In spite of all this, Rosenkranz had no reservations about the dialectical progress of philosophy. Its emergence from its previous "alienation from the world" undeniably has extended and transformed its "relationship with reality." But even in this it was Hegel who not only had asserted but also preserved the unity of theory and practice, namely in the identity of notion with reality, and through the explication of being in phenomenal existence. In contrast, post-Hegelian philosophy "once more" is falling into the "one-sidedness" of abstract ontology (Braniss) and abstract empiricism (Trendelenburg). Both tendencies of disintegration are combined in the existential philosophy of Schelling. The reflex of this abstract theory is the abstract practice of Feuerbach, which makes palpability the criterion of reality: "Feuerbach is the most determined, the most brilliant opponent of Schelling, but he agrees with him in avoiding the development . . . of his science into a system."⁹ He persists in asserting embryonic generalities; and thus he cannot exert upon the further development of philosophy the influence which one might expect in view of the energy of the criticism with which he made his appearance. Like Schelling today, he does not venture further into the study of nature or the state. He begins at

once with man as he lives and breathes; he has a mortal terror of all theories of being, potential being, and necessary being, of eternal being and imaginary being, etc., as though they were antediluvian phantoms. He therefore appears more accessible, more particular, more human, more domesticated than Schelling, who derives real pleasure from inventing processes within the *status absconditus* of the Godhead, and knows how to captivate people with the mysterious air of one who is initiated into primordial events."¹⁰ All four parties, it is true, move in an aura of deceptive self-confidence in their victory; but they have not attained Hegel's concretely organized idea, in which all dichotomies (reason and reality, theory and practice, ideality and reality, thought and being, subject and object, idea and history) are already overcome in principle, and hence in reality. They all remain "abstract theologians," who merely draw upon concrete reality for examples,¹¹ disdaining to know and comprehend it. These extremes provoked by Hegel's philosophy must once more be submerged within it. This philosophy is now entering its second epoch, more permanent and free of the egoism of the schools. The task before us now is to execute its method throughout the particular realms of knowledge.¹² In this process, without special preference for one thing or another, the universe must be gone through with equitable justice.

But at this very moment Marx and Kierkegaard were directing their impassioned attacks against this tolerance inherent to all-inclusive knowledge. They fought against Hegel's all-sidedness within the one-sided element of thought, with the most dogmatic one-sidedness and intolerance based on "interest" in "real" (economic and ethical) existence.¹³ Rosenkranz could account for the "immeasurable sympathy" which this faction of Hegelianism found among the younger generation only on the grounds that it was "immeasurably comfortable": "Everything that has happened up to now is nothing; we dismiss it. What we shall do next, we do not yet know. But all that will work itself out, once everything in existence has been leveled to make room for our creations. Young Hegelianism casts suspicion upon Old Hegelianism with the simple innuendo that the latter was seized with fear when confronted with the real consequences of the system, while the former, with its rare sincerity, was prepared to accept them. This makes the younger generation uncommonly happy. A show of courage looks good."¹⁴ Rosenkranz appraises *Die heilige Familie* of Marx and Engels as merely a "clever book." And yet it was a precursor of *Deutsche*

folding crisis."¹⁷ A bit less confidently, he writes two years later after a survey of the "philosophical catchwords of the present": "At the moment, our philosophy seems to have vanished, but it has merely become latent to the extent that it has to adjust the truth of its principles to the immense wealth of new discoveries, which continue to mount at such an enormous rate." A process of dissolution has set in, in which the epigones continue to battle each other. But they deceive themselves when they speak as though the only question to be decided is whether Hegel or Schelling, Herbart or Schopenhauer, will gain the upper hand. Neither will one of the old systems arise once more, nor will a completely new one appear, until the process of dissolution is completed. "Everything has its time, and when this has taken place, there may once more be a decisive step forward of knowledge. This step forward will probably be connected with a further transformation of the entire contemporary religious world view."¹⁸ Rosenkranz did not realize that the decisive step against knowledge and against Christendom had already been taken in 1840. He himself, with indefatigable effort, preserved that readiness to accept all true scientific progress which he ascribed to Hegel's mode of thought. Even technology and the first world exhibitions, which Burckhardt found so appalling, were included by Rosenkranz in the progress of "mankind"—as he now translates "spirit"—conscious of freedom. Far removed from pessimistic perspectives, he saw in the universal spread of international commerce, the book trade, and the press, an elevation of mankind to the level of universality and "progress in the uniformity of our civilization."¹⁹ The sequestered life of bounded consciousness must now subject itself to the "rationalism of the thinking spirit and its leveling process." To de Tocqueville, Taine, and Burckhardt, to Donoso Cortes and Kierkegaard, this leveling was simply the evil of the age; to this cultured disciple of Hegel it signified a reduction of the remaining "particularities" to the general level of a spirit already seen from a humanitarian point of view. He attached positive value to this leveling. In themselves, steam engines, railroads, and telegraphs are admittedly no guarantee of increasing cultural advance and freedom; nevertheless, they must ultimately serve for the "humanization of mankind," because universal laws, which have been discovered by science and broadcast by the press so that they are common property, are working irresistibly toward that goal.²⁰ Just as the press and world travel strengthen, from day to day, the self-consciousness of mankind, making a reality of the declaration of human rights, so

also the new geographical discoveries and subsequent commerce have engendered a true cosmopolitan spirit. In oceanic trade we see the truth of "the ocean of the spirit!"²¹ In this way, with undeniable consistency, Rosenkranz put the events of the nineteenth century into philosophical order, according to the Hegelian principle.

A further preservation of Hegelian philosophy beyond the period of the revolution was also effected by the critical-historical study of Hegel made by R. Haym.²² More radical than Rosenkranz, he turned resolutely against Hegel's system, drawing even more far-reaching conclusions from the historical change. Unlike Rosenkranz, he did not intend to reform Hegel's philosophy,²³ but merely to elucidate it historically. To Rosenkranz, Haym's historical criticism seemed an "unfortunate error" and a product of "bad temper." In place of political action, he wrote his book, "which happened to be about Hegel, and was thus doomed to be diseased." By this "disease" he meant the liberal tendencies of the time, to which Hegel appeared a reactionary. But in spite of this, the unusual bitterness of Rosenkranz' quarrel with Haym is not based upon their completely divergent positions, but upon repulsion of an all too close contact. The divergence in their attitudes toward Hegel's metaphysics, which Rosenkranz modified while Haym abstracted from it, reduces itself to the different way in which each brought Hegel's theory of the spirit into agreement with the changing times: Rosenkranz through cautious humanization, Haym through ruthless historicization. The language used by Rosenkranz goes back beyond Hegel and Goethe to the culture of the eighteenth century; the political passion and deliberately commercial form of expression used by Haym is already completely at home in the new century. On good terms with his time, he narrates not without pleasure the fall from pre-eminence of Hegel's system. He recalls the period when one was considered either an Hegelian or a barbarian, a contemptible empiricist: one must recall this period if one is to know what is really involved in the recognized domination of a philosophical system. That passion and assurance must be brought to mind with which the Hegelians of 1830 in absolute, deadly seriousness debated the question of what was to be the future content of world history, now that in Hegelian philosophy the world spirit had reached its goal, knowledge of itself. One must recall this, and then compare it with the modesty with which our Hegelians of today, even the strictest school, those most true to the system, allow themselves the thought that Hegel was "really not unproductive" for the

development of philosophy. In contrast to the epigones of Hegelian philosophy, Haym confirms not only the decline of this one system, but the exhaustion of philosophy in general: "This one great house has fallen into bankruptcy only because this whole line of business has collapsed. . . . At the moment, we find ourselves in a tremendous and almost universal shipwreck of the spirit, and of belief in the spirit in general." An unprecedented revolution has taken place in the first half of the nineteenth century. "It is no longer an age of systems, no longer an age of poetry or of philosophy. Instead, it is an age in which, thanks to the great technological discoveries of the century, material seems to have come to life. The deepest foundations of our physical as well as our spiritual life are being torn up and remodeled through these triumphs of technology. The existence of the individual as well as of nations is set upon a new basis, forced into new relationships."²⁴

The philosophy of idealism has not stood the test of time. "Interests" and "needs"—two concepts which characterized the polemic of Feuerbach, Marx, and Kierkegaard—have brought it down. It is more than refuted: it is condemned, by the real, objective course of the world and the law of "living history," which even Hegel himself recognized as the court before which the world is judged, even though it contradicts the absolute claim of his system.²⁵ Therefore, the task of the present can be only to comprehend the historical position of Hegelian philosophy, not to determine a new system in "an unready age," clearly incapable of "metaphysical legislation." The positive side of this reduction of Hegelian philosophy to its historical elements is the referral of philosophical truth once more to its human origin, the "sense of truth," the "conscience and temper of man." Therefore the study of history, as "an intellectually stimulating discussion of human events" is the only legitimate heir of Hegelian philosophy. But to the extent that Haym subjects Hegel's philosophy to objective criticism, he carries out only an academic modification of those motifs of attack upon Hegel which had already been brought out radically by Feuerbach, Ruge, and Marx. That which Haym was the first to declare unhesitatingly, and to make the guiding principle of his presentation, was also the concern of Erdmann, Fischer, and Dilthey, whose criticism of "historical reason" stands at the end of the development which grew out of Hegel's metaphysics.²⁶

In 1834, J. E. Erdmann began his monumental work on the history of philosophy from Descartes to Hegel, and finished it in 1853.

Better than any other, it preserves the penetrating power of Hegel's historical sense. The inauspiciousness of the time for a new edition, and the simultaneous appearance of Fischer's popular history of philosophy, led in 1866 to his publishing the two-volume *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, the second edition of which appeared in 1870. In the excellent supplement (which he says took more work than the body of the text, because of lack of preparatory work), he discusses the period from Hegel's death to 1870 under the headings "Dissolution of the Hegelian School" and "Attempts at the Reconstruction of Philosophy." At the conclusion of his work, in which he calls himself the "last of the Mohicans" of Hegel's school, he asks whether this preponderance of the historical viewpoint over the systematic may not be in general a symptom of the decrepitude of philosophy. It is an undeniable fact that what little interest is shown in the study of philosophy no longer consists in philosophizing on one's own account, but in studying how philosophy has been conducted by others—like the preponderance of literary history over poetry, and of biographies over great men. In the case of Hegel, the historical viewpoint was itself systematic; but it has become typical of the philosophers following him that their systematic studies should be almost completely ignored, while their critical-historical works retain lasting importance, as in the case of Sigwart, Ritter, Prantl, K. Fischer, and Trendelenburg. Even within the systematic branch of philosophy the predominance of the historical element has become apparent. It could be stated as a general rule that the historical-critical portion of these works comprises more than half their bulk. Yet the comforting remark can be added that the history of philosophy is not far removed from philosophizing, and a philosophical presentation of the history of philosophy is itself philosophical. The matter of philosophy is basically indifferent, whether it be nature, the state, or dogma: "then why not, now, the history of philosophy?" "Thus in answer to the plaint that philosophers have become historians, I would make clear that the historians of philosophy themselves carry on philosophy. Here, too, perhaps, the lance which wounds can bring healing." The historical significance of this argument can be measured by the fact that even today, seventy years later, we clearly cannot do without it.²⁷

While Rosenkranz still had a systematic basis which allowed him to "annul" the claims of the younger generation, Erdmann, with his historical point of view, had to content himself with depicting

the process of dissolution of the Hegelian school as an historical datum. All the events after 1830 proved to him that "everything which seems so superbly joined together can be put asunder." From the historical point of view, he called Hegel the philosopher of the "restoration,"²⁸ in conjunction with the political restoration after the fall of Napoleon, and in contrast to Kant and Fichte, whose systems corresponded to the various phases of the French Revolution. Hegel restored what Kant and those after him had destroyed: the old metaphysics, the dogmas of the church, and the substantial content of the moral powers. But there is no more danger of Hegel's reconciliation between reason and reality putting the movement of history to rest than the reverse, that their dissolution be final. On the contrary, awareness of a job well done will give the spirit of mankind strength for new deeds: "But when there are to be deeds of great significance in the history of the world, the philosopher to comprehend them will not be lacking, nor the spirit which is to beget them."²⁹ With this "historical" perspective which looks beyond the period of dissolution, Erdman refers the "impatience of the present" to future ages. Our lustra are not equal to the centuries between the few, but truly decisive events in the history of the spirit, and Hegel still awaits his . . . Fichte!³⁰

The actual mediator in the renewal of Hegelianism in the twentieth century is K. Fischer, whose *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie* began to appear in 1852, at a time when Hegel was as good as forgotten in Germany. As a friend of D. F. Strauss, as well as through his relationship with F. Th. Vischer, Ruge, and Feuerbach,³¹ and his criticism of Stirner,³² he was well acquainted with the circle of Young Hegelians, and at the same time distant enough from their impassioned disagreement with Hegel that he could view Hegel's accomplishment with the neutrality of the historical chronicler. In contrast to Erdmann and his thesis of restoration, Fischer interpreted Hegel as a philosopher of "evolution," and declared him to be the leading thinker of the nineteenth century, which he thought to be characterized by biological theories of evolution (Lamarck, Darwin) and historical criticism based on the evolutionary view of history (F. A. Wolf, K. Lachmann, Niebuhr, Mommsen, F. Bopp, K. Ritter, E. Zeller). From 1818 to 1831, Hegel dominates his age through personal influence, and then until 1848 through his pupils who made critical use of his philosophy, and finally through the appropriation of his historical viewpoint on the part of academic history. The idea of development inspired by him

characterizes not only the historical criticism of the Bible of the Tübingen school (F. Ch. Baur, Strauss),³³ but also the historical criticism of economics in Marx's *Kapital* (1868) and Lassalle's *System der erworbenen Rechte* (1861). Hegel also dominates the nineteenth century in the antitheses of A. Comte and E. Dühring, Schopenhauer and E. v. Hartmann.

In detail, it is true, much of Hegel's system may be untenable and deficient, but the essential fact remains that he was the first and only philosopher of importance to see history in the light of "infinite" progress. By this, Fischer no longer meant Hegel's notion, but the simple infinity of an endless continuum. The spirit is to raise itself "to infinity" through constant multiplication of the duties of mankind. Hegel's conclusion of the *Geschichte der Philosophie*, according to which the final philosophy is the result of all that have gone before, means nothing more to Fischer than that Hegel's philosophy, by virtue of its historical inclusiveness, is temporarily the ultimate philosophy, but at the same time the first in which the development of the "world problem" is now taken over by the history of philosophy.

Thus the preservation of Hegelian philosophy comes about through an historicization of all philosophy, making it into a history of philosophy. Corresponding to this retreat into known history, there is a withdrawal from the events of the day, which were accepted more or less resignedly after 1850. Trusting in the reason of history, Rosenkranz expected a "new stride" of the world spirit; Haym, greatly disillusioned by the "triumphant misery of reaction," subjected himself to the "judgment of the age"; and Erdmann, in defiance of the age, with careless irony set about the accomplishment of his historical task, while Fischer left the solution of the problems to "evolution." The historicism which developed out of Hegel's metaphysics of the history of the spirit³⁴ became the "ultimate religion" of the intelligentsia who still believed in education and knowledge.

The great accomplishment of the "historical school" and the historical studies of the spirit cannot blind us to the philosophical weakness of a philosophy reduced to its own history. What was meant by the "spiritual-historical world," from Haym and Dilthey on, is as far from Hegel's philosophical theology as was the mode of thought of the contributors to the *Hallesche Jahrbücher*. The concept of *Geistesgeschichte* (spiritual or intellectual history), which has come into vogue since 1850, has not much more than the

bare words in common with Hegel's notion of "spirit" and "history." For Hegel, the spirit as substance and subject of history was the absolute and basic concept of his theory of being. Thus natural philosophy is just as much a spiritual discipline as are the philosophies of the state, art, religion, and history. This absolute spirit (absolute because identical with the absolute religion of Christianity) exists by knowing itself; it is an historical spirit to the extent that it has as its course the recollection of previous forms of the spirit. "Its perseverance in the direction of free existence, appearing in the form of chance, is history; but in the direction of its comprehended organization, it is the science of phenomenal knowledge; both together, comprehended history, comprise the memorial and Golgotha of the absolute spirit, the reality, truth, and certainty of its dominion, without which it would be solitary and lifeless." A great gulf separates the idea of an infinitely progressing "spiritual history" from the spirit-filled infinity. Hegel accorded to the human spirit the strength to open the sealed nature of the universe, revealing its riches and its depth;³⁵ but from Haym to Dilthey it was the more or less avowed conviction that the human spirit is essentially powerless vis-à-vis the political and natural world, because it is itself only a finite "expression" of "sociohistorical" reality. For them, the spirit is no longer the "power of an age," in itself timeless because it is eternal present; it is merely an exponent and mirror of the age. Thus philosophy becomes a "world view" and "interpretation of life," the ultimate consequence of which is the self-assertion of "particular, individual" historicity in Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*.³⁶

From a constructive point of view, F. A. Lange has evaluated impartially the scope of the post-Hegelian reaction, and presented it as a limitation to the "materialism" of the nineteenth century.³⁷ In the July Revolution he sees the end of the age of idealism and the beginning of a turn to "realism," by which he means the influence of material interests upon spiritual life. The conflicts between church and state, the sudden flowering of industries based upon scientific discoveries ("coal and iron" became the catchword of the age), the founding of polytechnic institutions, the rapid growth of transportation systems (the first railroad was put into operation in 1835), the sociopolitical creation of the customs union and the tradesmen's unions, but also the writings of the "Young Germany" opposition (Heine, Börne, Gutzkow), the biblical criticism of the Tübingen school, and the immense popularity of Strauss's *Leben Jesu*—all this together resulting in new audience for, and new importance given

to those philosophical writings whose content lagged far behind their revolutionary impulse. In association with these events, "a theological and political crisis of Hegelian philosophy which for violence, scope, and significance has never been equalled in the course of history"³⁸ resulted.

On the dividing line between Old and Young Hegelians stood Michelet, active in many fields, the publisher of Hegel's *Geschichte der Philosophie* and the *Jenenser Abhandlungen*. His long life (1801-1893) connects original Hegelianism with the beginnings of modern Neo-Hegelianism, to which he himself was related through the person of A. Lasson (1832-1917).³⁹ In his eyes, also, the "pinnacle" and also the "test" of Hegel's system was the philosophy of history.⁴⁰ Yet he does not historicize Hegel's system radically, but leaves it grounded upon the absolute of the spirit. "The question of the century,"⁴¹ which was the problem of bourgeois society, seemed to him soluble within the framework of the philosophy of the spirit. He wanted to introduce "science" into "life," in order to realize Hegel's thesis of the reality of the rational.⁴² For what "is left" after Hegel is this: to elevate to reality the reconciliation in thought between the human and the divine, to allow Hegel's principle to permeate all areas of life. "And thus thought ceases to be merely the end result of a particular stage in the unfolding of the world spirit; as befits the discretion of old age, it also becomes the first principle, consciously serviceable for the achievement of a higher stage."⁴³ Philosophy, he writes five years later, in the style of the Young Hegelians, is not only the "owl of Minerva" which begins its flight at dusk, but also the "cockcrow" which proclaims the dawn.⁴⁴ With this twofold metaphor Michelet takes his place between Hegel and Marx, who likewise took over Hegel's symbol, but instead of supplementing it, turned it into its opposite.⁴⁵

2 The Overthrow of Hegelian Philosophy by the Young Hegelians

"There is nothing more illogical than absolute logic: it gives rise to unnatural phenomena, which finally collapse."⁴⁶

GOETHE

Through Rosenkranz and Haym, Erdmann and Fischer, Hegel's accumulated empire was historically preserved. The Young Hegel-

Writing of Feuerbach, F. A. Lange somewhere remarks that he worked his way up out of the abysses of Hegelian philosophy to a kind of superficiality, possessed of more character than spirit, but without quite losing the traces of Hegelian melancholy. In spite of its numerous "consequently's," his system hovers in a mystic darkness which is not made more transparent by his emphasis on "sensibility" and "perceptibility." This characteristic is true not only of Feuerbach, but of all the Young Hegelians. Their writings are manifestos, programs, and theses, but never anything whole, important in itself. In their hands, their scientific demonstrations became sensational proclamations with which they turn to the masses or the individual. Whoever studies their writings will discover that, in spite of their inflammatory tone, they leave an impression of insipidity. They make immoderate demands with insufficient means, and dilate Hegel's abstract dialectics to a piece of rhetoric. The contrasting reflective style in which they generally write is monotonous without being simple, and brilliant without being polished. Burckhardt's conclusion, that after 1830 the world began to grow "commoner," is borne out not least by the language which now becomes current, which amuses itself with massive polemic, emotional bombast, and stark imagery. F. List is also an example. Their critical activism knows no bounds; what they seek to bring about is in every case and at any price "change."⁴⁹ And yet, for the most part, they were desperately honorable men, who devoted their effective existences to what they wanted to see realized. As ideologues of growth and movement, they establish themselves upon Hegel's principle of dialectical negativity, and upon the conflict which moves the world.

It is typical of their mutual relationships that each tries to outdo the other in a process of mutual cannibalism. They take the problem presented to them by the age and develop it to the extreme; they are deadly logical. United only against a common foe, they can dissolve their personal and literary ties with infinite ease, separate, and then, according to the measure of their radicalism, revile each other as "bourgeois" and "reactionary." Feuerbach and Ruge, Ruge and Marx, Marx and Bauer, Bauer and Stirner—they comprise pairs of hostile brothers, only chance determining the moment each will look upon the other merely as an enemy. They are "cultured men run wild," frustrated existences who, under the pressure of social conditions, translate their scholarly knowledge into journalese. Their real occupation is "free" pamphleteering, perpetually dependent upon patrons and publishers, readers and censors. The world of letters, as

hegel with reference to Lessing's criticism of the opponents of orthodoxy. He says that he was only an "interimistic" defender of Hegel against an unphilosophic attack, and that it would be most premature to think that whoever writes against the opponents of something is himself unconditionally in favor of what is being attacked. Rather he had the *Antihegel* within himself, "but because he was as yet only half a man, I commanded him to remain silent."⁶⁸

Feuerbach's own opposition appeared in the open only in 1839, with the publication, in Ruge's *Jahrbücher*, of an article: "On the Criticism of Hegelian Philosophy." In all important points this criticism is in complete agreement with the previously demolished criticism by Bachmann. Feuerbach, too, now negates absolutely the dialectical identity of philosophy and theology, of notion and reality, thought and being. What he had previously defended against Bachmann as Hegel's most exalted idea seems to him now "the nonsense of the Absolute." The absolute spirit is "nothing else than" the departed spirit of theology, wandering about like a ghost in Hegel's philosophy.

In 1840, Feuerbach once more took account of his relationship with Hegel. He calls Hegel the only man who ever caused him to learn what a teacher is. But what we have been as pupils never vanishes from our being, even though it may from our consciousness. Not only had he studied Hegel, he also taught others, convinced that it was the duty of a young lecturer to acquaint the students, not with his own opinions, but with the teachings of recognized philosophers. "I taught Hegelian philosophy . . . at first as a man who identifies himself with his subject . . . because he does not know anything different and better; later, as a man who differentiates and separates himself from his subject, giving it its historical due, but all the more anxious to grasp it properly." Thus he was never an absolute Hegelian, holding rather to the essence of Hegelianism, subjecting even the absolute system to the "law of universal finitude." "As a budding author, I took the point of view of speculative philosophy in general, and of Hegelian philosophy in particular, but only insofar as it is the final, most comprehensive expression of speculative philosophy."⁶⁹

Twenty years later—in 1860—Feuerbach summarized his position in regard to Hegel for the last time. In contrast to the "heroes of the spirit," he calls himself a last philosopher, relegated to the uttermost limit of the realm of philosophy, beyond the intellectual exaltation of system. In a style that reminds us of Kierkegaard's

polemic, he calls Hegel the paragon of the self-sufficient professional thinker, whose real existence is looked after by the state and therefore is meaningless to his philosophy. He put an historical halo upon the lecture platform: "The absolute spirit is nothing more than the absolute professor."⁷⁰

But of what does the transformation, proclaimed by Feuerbach, of the philosophy perfected by Hegel consist? A memorandum from 1842-43 on "The Necessity of a Transformation" gives the most important points. Philosophy is no longer within the epoch which included the development from Kant to Hegel; in fact, it no longer falls primarily within the domain of history of philosophy, but rather the immediate course of world events. Therefore a "decision" must be made, either to continue along the old track or to open a new epoch. But a radical transformation is necessary; it is a "demand of the age," more precisely, of the age that is coming into the present from the future. "The period of breakdown of an historical world view is necessarily filled with conflicting demands: some think it necessary to preserve the old and banish the new, others think it necessary to realize the new. Which party recognizes the true need? The one which sees the need of the future—the anticipated future—the one which shares in forward progress. The need for preservation is something artificial, something itself evoked—reaction. Hegelian philosophy was the arbitrary unification of various existing systems, superficialities, with no positive strength, because it contained no absolute negativity. Only he who has the courage to be absolutely negative has the strength to create something new."⁷¹ To race forward into an anticipated future was also the intention of Ruge, Stirner, Bauer, and Marx, because they all saw in the present only something temporary, not, like Hegel, something eternal. One and all, up to Nietzsche and Heidegger, they are "preparatory" philosophers.⁷²

The initial impulse was given to this overthrow of Hegel's philosophy of recollection by Feuerbach's *Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie* and *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft*. The dwelling place of the spirit, we read in a letter written about this time, has collapsed; we must make up our minds to "emigrate"—an image which we shall meet again in Marx—taking with us only our private possessions. "The carriage of history is a confined carriage; just as it is impossible to get inside if the right moment is allowed to slip by, . . . so likewise if one wishes to go along, one may take along only what is absolutely necessary, what is one's own, but not

ing else than theology broken up and transformed into philosophy." "The contradiction inherent in modern philosophy, . . . that it is a negation of theology based upon theology, or a negation of theology which is itself a theology: this contradiction is particularly characteristic of Hegelian philosophy." "Whoever does not surrender Hegelian philosophy does not surrender theology. The Hegelian doctrine that reality is determined by the idea is only the rationalistic expression of the theological doctrine that nature . . . was created by God." On the other hand, "Hegelian philosophy is the last refuge, the last rationalistic support of theology." "Just as once the Catholic theologians became *de facto* Aristotelians in order to combat Protestantism, so now the Protestant theologians must become *de jure* Hegelians in order to combat atheism." "Thus in the highest principle of Hegelian philosophy we have the principle and result of his philosophy of religion, that philosophy does not invalidate the dogmas of theology, but rather establishes them through the negation of rationalism. . . . Hegelian philosophy is the last ambitious attempt to re-establish lost, defeated Christianity by means of philosophy, by following the universal modern procedure and identifying the negation of Christianity with Christianity itself. The much-lauded speculative identity of spirit and material, infinite and finite, divine and human, is nothing more than the accursed paradox of the modern age: the identity of belief and unbelief, theology and philosophy, religion and atheism, Christianity and paganism, at the very summit, the summit of metaphysics. Hegel conceals this contradiction by making of atheism, the negation, an objective component of God—God as a process, and atheism as one component of this process."⁷⁷

But the infinite of religion and philosophy is and was never anything else than something finite, and therefore definite, but mystified—something finite with the predicate of being not finite, that is, *in*-finite. Speculative philosophy made the same mistake as did theology: it made predicates of the infinite out of predicates of finite reality simply through negating the definite predicate through which they are what they are. A philosophy like Hegel's, which derives the finite from the infinite, the definite from the indefinite, will never arrive at a true placing of the finite and definite. "The finite is derived from the infinite, that is, the *in*-finite, the indefinite, is defined, negated; it is admitted that the infinite is nothing without definition, that is, without finitude. Thus the finite is set up as the reality of the infinite. But the negative non-entity of the absolute

remains in the background; the postulated finitude is thus always abrogated. The finite is the negation of the infinite, and the infinite the negation of the finite. The philosophy of the absolute is a contradiction." The beginning of a truly positive philosophy cannot be God or the absolute, nor "being" in itself without anything which is to be, but only what is finite, definite, and real. But, above all, mortal man is a finite reality for whom death is affirmative.

"This new . . . philosophy is the negation of all academic philosophy, although it contains within itself whatever truth there is in the latter, . . . it has . . . no language of its own, . . . no principle of its own; it is thinking man himself—the man who is and knows himself. . . ." But if this name of the new philosophy is translated back into that of "self-consciousness," the new philosophy is being interpreted in the sense of the old, is being set once more upon the old foundations. But the self-consciousness of the old philosophy is an abstraction without reality, for only the individual human being "is" self-consciousness.⁷⁸ To construct an "anthropological" philosophy, one determined by man, means for Feuerbach in the first place: take care for the sensuous basis of one's own thought, the mode of which is definite, sensuous observation which fills thought with meaning. In the second place: have regard for one's fellow man who confirms one's own way of thought, who is the epistemological partner in intellectual dialogue. Attention given to both aspects will take thought which moves independently, which is restricted to deductive logic, will open it to the world and set it right.

The first aspect, sensuousness, is never merely the essence of human senses, but also of nature and corporeal existence in general. Fischer has remarked⁷⁹ that, for Feuerbach, the senses were the third estate, hitherto scorned, which he elevates to total significance. Hegel, on the contrary, extols thought as having no need of sight and hearing. The true concept of "existence" derives only from sensuousness, for the real existence of a thing is proven by the fact that it encounters us palpably, that it cannot be thought of, imagined, and merely conceived.⁸⁰ This "sensualism" of Feuerbach is most readily apparent in his criticism of the Hegelian dialectic of soul and body.⁸¹ In opposition to it, Hegel asserts that this, like all Hegelian "identities," is in actual fact only an "absolute oneness." Hegel sees nothing in the ideas of those who think that man should not have a body, because the body demands care for the satisfaction of its physical needs, thus diverting man from his spiritual life and making him incapable of real freedom. "Philosophy must

us not forget the other side; let us not forget that, however the spirit consciously determines the body, it was itself unconsciously so determined by the body. For example, as a thinker I determine my body according to my purpose because constitutive nature, allied with destructive time, have organized me into a thinker; I am thus a thinker by *fate*. How and as what the body is determined, so the spirit is determined. . . ." Cause becomes effect, and vice versa. Thus Hegel's recognition of sensuous-natural corporeality is only true under the hypothesis of a philosophy of the spirit which builds upon itself. The idealistic notion of self-consciousness no more recognizes the independent reality of other men than it recognizes the reality of sensuous-natural corporeality.⁸²

For Feuerbach, the fundamental exponent of sensuous-natural corporeality is that organ which is not mentioned by name in proper society, although by nature it has great significance in the history of the world, and exerts a power which dominates the world: the natural sexuality of man. The true "I" is not "a neuter 'it'" but, "a priori," either a feminine or masculine existence; thus, *eo ipso* fated to be a social being. Philosophy could abstract from the difference between the sexes only if it were limited to the sexual organs. But it permeates the *whole* man, including his specifically feminine or masculine perception and thought. Conscious of myself as a man, I recognize thereby the existence of a being different from me, a being which belongs to me and contributes to the determination of my own existence. Thus before I understand myself, I am grounded in the existence of others by nature. My thinking only makes me conscious of what I am already: a being, not ungrounded, but grounded upon another existence. Not "I," but "I and Thou" is the true principle of life and thought.

The most real relationship between I and Thou is love. "The love of another tells you what you are." "The truth speaks to us, not from within our own preoccupied self, but from another. Only through communication, only through the conversation of man with man, do ideas arise. Two human beings are necessary for the begetting of another human being, spiritually as well as physically. The unity of man with man is the first and last principle of philosophy, truth, and universality. For the essence of man is contained only in the unity of one man with another, a unity which is based upon the real difference between I and Thou. Even in thought and as a philosopher I am a man among others."

With this appeal to the love which unites mankind, Feuerbach, the critic of Hegel, comes remarkably close to the young Hegel, whose concept of the spirit had as its point of departure the suspension of differences within the "living relationship" of love. Later, however, Hegel was to use the entire strength of his thought to differentiate philosophically-concretely his concept of the spirit into its various attributes: "sensual," "perceptual," and "rational" consciousness; "desiring" and "reflecting," "servile" and "masterful," "spiritual" and "reasonable" self-consciousness. In contrast, Feuerbach's "love" remains a sentimental cliché without any definite attributes, although it is the unified dual principle of his philosophy, of "sensuousness" and the "Thou."

A further consequence of Feuerbach's radical transformation is the changed attitude of philosophy toward politics and toward religion. Philosophy is itself to become religion, and also politics, a kind of political world view which replaces the religion of the past. "For we must once more become religious; politics must become our religion, but it can only do this if we have something ultimate in outlook, something which will make politics into a religion."⁸³ But the ultimate for man is man. The thesis that philosophy comes to occupy the place of religion leads of necessity to the further thesis that politics becomes a religion; when the man, poor in earthly goods, replaces the Christian, the fellowship of work must replace the fellowship of prayer. With complete logic, Kierkegaard explains the resurgence of politics out of the disappearance of the Christian faith;⁸⁴ with equal logic, Feuerbach deduces the necessity of man's becoming political from his faith in man as such. "Religion in the usual sense is so far from being the bond of the state that it is rather the dissolution of the same." If God is Lord, man must rely upon him and not upon men. If, on the other hand, men form a state, they deny thereby *in praxi* faith in God. "Faith in God did not found the states, but despair over God." Subjectively, the origin of the state is explained by "faith in man as the god of man."⁸⁵ Apart from the Christian religion, the secular state naturally becomes the "essence of all realities," the "universal entity," and the "providence of man." The state is "man writ large," the state in relation to itself is "absolute man"; it becomes at once the reality and practical refutation of faith. "Thus practical atheism is the bond of the state," and "men now throw themselves into politics because they recognize that Christianity is a religion that robs man of politi-

b A. Ruge (1802-1880)

More completely than Feuerbach, Ruge based the new philosophy of the new age upon the statement that "everything depends upon history"; "it goes without saying," he adds as a good Hegelian, "philosophical history."⁹⁰ But history is philosophical not only as history of philosophy, but also, and primarily, as mere course of events and consciousness of history. "True reality" is "nothing else" than "consciousness of historical time," which is the "truly positive, ultimate outcome of history."⁹¹ The "historical idea of an age" or the "genuine spirit of an age" is "absolute master"; the only thing valid in history is "that which is the power of the age." The absolute nature of the spirit is real only within the process of history, which is determined in freedom by the "political entity," man.⁹²

In contrast, the spheres of the absolute in Hegel's system are mere attempts to absolutize history which is in itself absolute. "We attain the absolute only in history, but in history it is attained at all points, before and after Christ. Man is everywhere in God, but the final historical form is also, as form, the ultimate; the future is the limit set to everything historical. The form of religion is not perfected in Christ, that of poetry in Goethe, that of philosophy in Hegel; they are all so far from being the culmination of the spirit that their greatest glory lies in being the beginning of a new development."⁹³ Everything falls within history; therefore, whatever is the "newest" philosophy is "truly positive," containing within itself the future as its own living negation. "The historical spirit" or the "self-consciousness of the age" corrects itself in the course of history, which must also be the end of Hegel's system.⁹⁴

Thus a title such as *Our System, or the Wisdom and Movement of the World in Our Time*⁹⁵ has more than incidental reference to the time. This "system" is itself a philosophy of time, of the age, just as the wisdom and movement of the world are one. Thus the fourth volume of Ruge's *Aus früherer Zeit* addresses the Germans first of all by speaking of the "spirit of our time." In this work, following the pattern of Hegel's history of philosophy, he gives an excellent popular history of the development of philosophy from Plato to Hegel, concluding with the "critical development of philosophy and the spirit of the age." Here, also, he thinks of philosophic thought as a partner of the age, for the general spirit of the age, together with its particular philosophy, forms one and the same

movement of the spirit. And in actual fact, no age has been so permeated with philosophy in all realms, including journalism, belles lettres, and politics, as was this epoch, through the influence of the Young Hegelians. It is an a priori of their philosophy that the spirit of the age—which Ruge occasionally equates with “public opinion”—always and necessarily “keeps pace” with the philosophical spirit of the age. “This conscious unity of the world spirit and the philosophical spirit” is characteristic of our age.⁹⁶ But Ruge was firmly convinced that the spirit of the age, by its very nature, was progressive, just as he was convinced that the course of time cannot be turned back. No reaction can defraud the spirit of the age of its power and logical conclusion. Referring to the *Jahrbücher* he published, he says, “The ultimate victory is victory in the spirit. Thus when we speak of a position taken by the *Jahrbücher* toward history, and thereby (!) of its future course, particulars are furnished by the public spirit; or, more accurately, the spirit which, though present, is kept from being truly public. For it is an open secret that the ostensible spirit of paid and guarded newspapers is not the real spirit, nor the disinterested spirit of ancient learned academies, nor the spirit capable of life.”⁹⁷ Thus the truly present spirit of the age is under certain circumstances a public secret; but under all circumstances it is this spirit which drives history forward to victory. The “reason of the age” is easy to recognize; anyone can know it if he so desires.

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For all the Young Hegelians, the actual discoverer of the unity between philosophy and time was none other than Hegel. To justify their radical historicization of the spirit, they appealed to Hegel's preface to his *Rechtsphilosophie*, which says, “As concerns the individual, each is a son of his time; and philosophy is their time comprehended in thought. It is just as foolish to imagine that some philosophy transcends its present world as to imagine that an individual can transcend his time.”⁹⁸ Hegel drew a reactionary conclusion from the circumstance that no theory can transcend its own time, opposing and rejecting any imagined “imperative,” and refused to construct a world upon the “yielding element” of “purpose,” a world which is not but should be. His pupils, on the other hand, on the basis of the same identity between spirit and time but with their eyes to the future, insisted upon what *should* be. They sought to place philosophy at the service of the revolution, following the progress of time. In spite of this contrast in orientation, which in the one case looked to the past, in the other to the future, both held to

the thesis of the necessary unanimity of philosophical consciousness and historical fact.⁹⁹ For Hegel, the history of the spirit was the heart of world history. Similarly, the Young Hegelians took the “true” course of events as the criterion for the movement of the spirit; they took the measure of the very reason of history with an historical measuring rod.

As a result of the basic connection made between history and the spirit, Hegel's system was also used for reflection upon the age in which it was developed. In the case of Ruge, the conclusion is twofold: Hegelian philosophy is “contemporary” with the French Revolution, which exalted the free individual as the purpose of the state. Hegel does the same by showing that the absolute is the thinking spirit, and its reality the thinking individual. As a political program, the spirit of freedom lives in the Enlightenment and Revolution, as metaphysics, in German philosophy.¹⁰⁰ In Hegel, human rights attained philosophical self-consciousness; there can be no further development than their realization. The same philosophy which gained for the human spirit the highest dignity of absolute freedom is a contemporary of the “counterattack of the spirit of the past” against freedom in thought and political purpose. Thus Hegel was related to both the progressive and reactionary spirit of the age; insofar as he was the latter, he was untrue to his own principle, progress in consciousness of freedom. Therefore it is the task of the progressive spirit of the age to free Hegel's philosophy from itself by means of the dialectic method. According to Hegel's statement that “the present is uppermost,”¹⁰¹ it is the absolute right of the age which has superseded him to defend his system critically against himself, in order to accomplish the principle of unfolding and freedom. Through negation, history unfolds the truth contained in Hegel's system. It does this by removing the still present contrast between “notion” and “existence” through theoretical criticism and practical revolution. The German revolution of 1848 is the practical aspect of this theoretical correction.¹⁰²

The *Hallesche Jahrbücher für deutsche Wissenschaft und Kunst* (1838–1843)¹⁰³ were the literary organs for the theoretical groundwork of the practical revolution. After their forced removal from Prussia to Saxony, they were renamed the *Deutsche Jahrbücher*. Among their contributors were Strauss, Feuerbach, Bauer, F. Th. Vischer, E. Zeller, Droysen, Lachmann, J. Grimm, and W. Grimm. Ruge's assertion in the foreword to the fourth series is no overstatement: no other German scholarly periodical ever experienced such

satisfaction, seeing its discussions become events which went far beyond the circle of theoreticians, becoming involved in all of life. To the present day, German philosophy has nothing comparable to this journal which could equal it in critical forcefulness, effectiveness, and influence upon political theory.

The criticism undertaken in the *Jahrbücher* is primarily concerned with religion and politics. Rosenkranz censured the brusque, "atheistic-republican" tone of Ruge's writings. To him the German atheists seemed awkward and childish in comparison to the well-mannered and well-educated followers of Holbach.¹⁰⁴ But compared to Bauer's radical overhauling of Strauss's and Feuerbach's criticism of religion, Ruge is extremely moderate, and Rosenkranz' last studies show that in this matter he was not far removed from Ruge: in his case, too, the unfolding of the spirit had been tacitly changed to the progress of mankind.

More decisive than Ruge's abolition of the Christian religion in a "humanized world of liberated men" is his criticism of the state and of politics. In an article in the *Jahrbücher* entitled "Politics and Philosophy," he differentiates the Young and Old Hegelians. The latter accommodate Hegel's philosophy to what exists, while the former translate the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of right into a "negating and postulating activism." Therefore the Young Hegelians are compelled to protest, on the one hand against Hegel's "modesty," which transfers political reality from the obvious present course of events to a state of affairs in ancient England which was no longer true even in his own time;¹⁰⁵ on the other hand, they protest against the "arrogance" of absolute philosophy, which seeks to be a "present-day apocalypse" through recollection of what has been, whereas philosophy actually merely begins the future through its criticism in the present. Instead of constructing an absolute state by means of the categories of logic, the present existence of the state must be criticized historically with reference to the immediate future. For only the spirit of the age, as it realizes itself, is truly comprehended reality, as Hegel himself teaches "in a hundred passages," although he avoided everything that might give offense to the church and the state.

Ruge's fundamental criticism of Hegel's philosophy of the state is contained already in his review of the second edition of the *Rechtsphilosophie*.¹⁰⁶ Its greatest merit he sees in the fact that Hegel made self-determining will the basis of his theory of the state, so that the state is the substantial will which knows itself and fulfills its

knowledge, while at the same time it has its mediate existence in the free will and knowledge of the individual.¹⁰⁷ The great defect in the execution of this principle is that "Hegel does not expressly include history, with the effect of its entire content, in his philosophy of right, but rather puts it at the end"—in contrast to his aesthetics, the systematic development of which is thoroughly historical.

The precondition of developed history is of course the existing state, for all history is the history of states; but the state is already in itself an historical movement toward freedom, which is never present absolutely, but only as the act of liberation. Hegel exhibits only the static concept of the state, but not the idea of the state in movement, the motive force of which is history. The absolute system of freedom must now be followed by the historical system, the presentation of freedom both real and to be realized. "In place of the system of abstract and theoretically absolute development, we have the system of concrete development, which everywhere grasps the spirit in its history and places at the end of every history the demand of its future." Hegel's speculative contemplation must be awakened once more by Fichte's energy,¹⁰⁸ for his polemic against what "should" be leads to "forms of existence without concept" and thus to recognition of that which merely exists, without being in agreement with its true concept. For example, in Hegel's system the royal and governmental power, the national assembly and the bicameral system, are such forms of existence contradicting the spirit of history. Hegel has no faith in the majority, and hates all forms of election. But for Ruge, not to have faith in this means not to have faith in the spirit (of the age)! It is a stupid objection that the masses are dumb, and "respectable only in riots."¹⁰⁹ "In whose name then do they riot, and how does it happen that they conquer only in the name of the spirit of world history? How does it happen that the rioting of the masses turned out to be purposeless neither in 1789 nor in 1813, and the majority by no means to be wrong? To hold to the statement, *philosophia paucis contenta est iudicibus*, represents a total failure to understand the spirit and its process. On the contrary, truth subjects the world en masse. . . . Those who are wise in their wisdom will never leave the majority for long, and when the prophets of a new spirit are in the minority to start with and . . . perish, then the acclamation, the exaggeration even, of their merits is all the more assured them among posterity. . . . The truth of the majority is not absolute, but on the whole it is the assurance of the spirit of the age, political or historical truth. And if only one individual in a National

this existence, the constitution of the spirit and the state in various ages is of scientific interest. The circumstances of its formation are no longer indifferent examples, but stages in this process. The peculiarity of these historical existences is important for knowledge of them; the matter of concern is this existence as such."¹¹² Therefore, just as dogmatic theology was criticized by Strauss, Hegel's absolute metaphysics of the state must be historically criticized. This criticism is also the only objective criticism, because it judges according to the course of actual events. The historical change from universal essence to individual historical existence is not yet present in Hegel's philosophy of right, which, therefore, has the same impalpable character as his phenomenology. "The Hegelian state . . . is no more real than the Platonic, nor will it ever become more real; for although it refers to the present-day state in the same way the Platonic did to the Greek, even calling it by name, it does not draw its conclusion from the historical process, and therefore has no direct effect upon the development of political life and consciousness. Here the French are far in advance of us: they are historical at all points. Among them the spirit is vital, and forms the world according to its own design."¹¹³ In order to prevent historical criticism from appearing, Hegel makes metaphysical essences of historical existences, for example, giving a speculative demonstration of hereditary kingship.¹¹⁴ But the true connection of the concept with reality is not the apotheosis of existence into concept, but the realization of the concept in actual existence. Even freedom never exists absolutely, but always relative to specific external circumstances of existence from which man liberates himself. Hegel remains on the side of the purely theoretical spirit and purely theoretical freedom, although he himself stated in the opening paragraphs of his philosophy of right that will is only the other side of thought, that theory is itself practice, and the difference between the two is merely whether the spirit turns inward or outward.¹¹⁵ German philosophy discovered theoretically this practical side of theory, but practically it hid it. True science does not go back to logic, but out into the real world of history; "logic itself is drawn into history" and must allow itself to be comprehended as existence, because it belongs to the structure of this particular philosophy and the only truth is in fact historical. Even truth is always in motion, it is self-differentiation and self-criticism.¹¹⁶

Similarly, the theoretical one-sidedness of Hegel's philosophy of right can only be comprehended historically, and only historically justified. "Hegel's age was not very favorable for politics; it had no

political journalism or public life whatever."¹¹⁷ The spirit retreated into theory and renounced practice. But Hegel had learned too much from the Greeks and had lived through the great Revolution with too clear a consciousness to avoid seeing that the extant, dynastic state of bourgeois society, with police and civil service, by no means corresponded to the idea of a public community, a "polis." Thus his rejection of imperative demands grows out of a lack of logic, the roots of which lie deep in the Prussian-German situation in which Hegel lived. The systems of Kant and Hegel are systems of reason and freedom in the midst of irrationality and subjugation; but they were constructed in such a way that they both hid this incongruity.

Kant made the famous statement to Mendelssohn: "Of course I think many things with absolute conviction which I would never have the courage to say; but I shall never say anything that I do not think."¹¹⁸ This divergence between public pronouncement and private thought rests upon the fact that, "as a thinker," Kant was as different from himself "as a subject" as was the public life of his time from the private, and the general morality from the conscience of the individual. A subject was not allowed to be a philosopher; therefore, he becomes a diplomat, but without losing his "self-respect." His limited viewpoint is historically the viewpoint of "Protestant narrow-mindedness," which knows freedom only as a question of conscience, because it separates private from public virtue.¹¹⁹

The case of Hegel is even more dubious, because his philosophy elevates the Kantian viewpoint on morality and moral responsibility to a universal and political code of ethics. Now, as a philosopher, Hegel did not have any similar conflict with the Prussian State; on the contrary, it confirmed him in his philosophy, and thus he could declare himself to be on the side of thought, on good terms with the state. But his agreement is only apparent; it could only last as long as the absolutism of the Prussian State was reasonable enough to recognize the reason in Hegel's system, while Hegel, for his part, merely had an interest in securing his absolute system of knowledge and making it a force within the life of the state. Although Hegel originally was no enemy of political activism and criticism of the state, he later restricted himself to the development of his theory as such. In his inaugural speech at Heidelberg, he declared his conviction that philosophy should not engage in political reality, in which the enormous interest during the period of the wars of libera-

tion displaced all interest in knowledge.¹²⁰ To this, Ruge asks indignantly, "What is this supposed to mean?" and answers, "Nothing less than: 'Let us continue, gentlemen, from where we were before the revolution and the war, namely, in the furtherance of inner freedom, the freedom of the Protestant spirit or abstract theory, of which philosophy is the ultimate perfection.' Hegel perfected this form of freedom, bringing it to a climax; now it can only retreat."¹²¹

This restriction to the notion as such was bound to lead to conflict with reality; for, when a clear view of the essence of the state has been achieved, it is driven to confront reality as criticism. Theoretical freedom, in its private existence, was bound to discover, through censorship, that it is practically without value, because it is not itself public property. But the "practical passion" of true knowledge cannot be restrained. The conflict from which Hegel was preserved was reserved for his pupils, "and so it becomes clear that the age, or the attitude of consciousness toward the world, was radically altered." "The development is no longer abstract; the age has become political, albeit there is still much lacking before it is sufficiently political."¹²² Nineteenth-century man, Ruge writes apropos of a criticism of the "aesthetic" period of German civilization, cannot do without "ethical and political passion."¹²³

Transition from philosophical criticism to political activism and from narrow-minded conscience to broad-minded party loyalty typify Ruge's development.¹²⁴ Typical also is his forced retreat to the kind of historicism which no longer consciously makes history, but only writes history. Besides the publication of his own collected works, the last piece of work he performed in exile was a translation of Buckle's *History of Civilization in England*. The task of theoretical criticism and practical revolution against the existing order, which he introduced, was taken up and continued with absolute consistency by Marx.

c K. Marx (1818-1883)

When Ruge went to Paris after the banning of the *Deutsche Jahrbücher* and there founded the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, it was Marx who provided most of the assistance with this journal. In it appeared in 1844 Marx's discussion of the Jewish question, the introduction to the criticism of the Hegelian philosophy of right, and an exchange of correspondence between Marx, Ruge, Bakunin, and Feuerbach. Soon afterward, Marx broke with

the so-called décomposition products of Greek philosophy became the archetypes of the Roman spirit, the independent and intensive individuality of which is beyond doubt. And even if this was the end of classical philosophy, the death of a hero does not resemble the "bursting of a frog that has puffed himself up," but rather the setting of the sun, which promises a new day. "Furthermore, is it not a remarkable phenomenon that new systems appear after the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophers who made philosophy all-inclusive, systems which do not depend upon these previous ample intellectual forms, but rather, reaching further back, turn to the simplest schools: in physics, to the natural philosophers; in ethics, to the Socratic school?" Is, therefore, the need at this time, after the departure of classical German philosophy, for a similar concentration and simplification of philosophy, such as went from Athens to Rome? But how, after Hegel, can we achieve any point of view which neither copies him nor yet is completely arbitrary? Only through a radical disengagement from Hegel's all-inclusive philosophy, through a "suspension" of it which will also "realize" it. Philosophy is always at such a "nodal point" when its abstract principle has become totally concrete, as in the case of Aristotle and Hegel. Then the possibility of continued development in a straight line is interrupted; a full circle has been described. Two totalities now stand confronting each other: an all-inclusive philosophy, and, opposite it, the actual world of complete nonphilosophy. For Hegel's reconciliation with reality was not within reality, but only with it, in the element of comprehension. Now philosophy must itself "turn outward" and engage the world. As a philosophy of the state, it becomes a philosophical politics. Then philosophy, which in Hegel was conterminous with the intelligent world, turns directly to the really existing world, and against philosophy. This two-edged behavior is the consequence of the division of the entire world of theory and practice into two mutually exclusive totalities. Because it is two totalities which confront each other, the disunion of the newly developing philosophy is itself total. The objective universality of a perfected philosophy breaks down first into the merely subjective forms of consciousness of an individual philosophy which grows out of it. This tempest, in which everything wavers, follows upon such nodal points of all-inclusive philosophy with historical necessity. Whoever does not see this necessity would have to deny, as a logical consequence, that man can continue his spiritual life after such a philosophy. Only this theory makes comprehensible

the appearance after Aristotle of Zeno, Epicurus, and Sextus Empiricus, and after Hegel of "the usually baseless, impoverished experiments of recent philosophy."¹²⁷

In contrast to the other Young Hegelians, who only wanted to effect a partial reformation of Hegel, Marx gained from history the insight that philosophy itself was at stake. "The halfhearted ones"—meaning philosophers like Ruge—"at such times hold to a view contrary to that of all generals. They think they can repair the damage by a reduction in forces, by dissipation, by a peace pact with the real demands. When Athens"—that is, philosophy—"was threatened by devastation, Themistocles"—that is, Marx—"urged the Athenians to desert it completely, and to found upon the sea, upon a different element"—that is, upon the element of political and economic practice, which must now be understood as "what is"—"a new Athens"—that is, a completely new kind of philosophy, which is not even a philosophy, according to the old definitions. It should also not be forgotten that the age following such catastrophes is an age of iron, "fortunate if characterized by the clash of titans, miserable if like the centuries which limp along after great artistic epochs; these latter busy themselves with copying in plaster and copper what sprang from Carrara marble. But these are times of titans, these times which followed an all-inclusive philosophy and its forms of subjective development, for gigantic is the dichotomy which is their unity. Thus Rome followed upon Stoic, skeptical, and Epicurean philosophy. They are wretched times and inflexible, for their gods have died, and the new goddess has the dark shape of fate, of pure light or pure darkness. The colors of daylight are still missing. But the heart of the misery is that the soul of the age . . . satisfied with itself . . . cannot give recognition to any reality which has come into existence without its aid. The fortune in such misery is, therefore, the subjective form . . . in which philosophy, as subjective consciousness, relates itself to reality. Thus, for example, Epicurean and Stoic philosophy were the positive results of their time. Thus the nocturnal moth, when the universal sun has set, seeks out the lamp light of the individual."¹²⁸ The statement that the new goddess has the dark form of an uncertain fate, either of pure light or of pure darkness, refers back to Hegel's image of philosophy being carried on in the grey twilight of a world which has been completed. For Marx, this says: now, after the dissolution of the philosophy completed in Hegel, we cannot yet see with certainty whether this twilight is the evening twilight before the onset of a

dark night, or the twilight of dawn before the awakening of a new day.¹²⁹ For Hegel, the senescence of the real world is concomitant with a final rejuvenation of philosophy. For Marx, who anticipates the future, a philosophy brought to completion is concomitant with the rejuvenation of the real world in opposition to the old philosophy. Through the realization of reason in the real world, philosophy as such is suspended, enters into the practice of existing nonphilosophy. Philosophy has become Marxism, an immediately practical theory.

In Hegel, the world was given philosophical form; in Marx, philosophy must become completely worldly. Hegel's system is seen as a single abstract totality, having as its other side a total irrationality. Its inner polish and self-sufficiency is broken; the "inner light" in Hegel's philosophy becomes a "devouring flame," reaching out; the liberation of the world from nonphilosophy is at the same time the liberation of nonphilosophy from philosophy. From the theoretical point of view, this new kind of philosophy does not yet transcend Hegel's system, but is included within it. Therefore, the new way of philosophizing is aware of itself only in contrast to the complete system; it does not yet understand that its own dissolution of Hegelian philosophy is the most appropriate realization of the latter. For Hegel's principle is also Marx's principle: the unity of reason and reality, and reality itself as a union of essence and existence. Therefore, Marx is forced to attack in two directions: against the real world, and against existing philosophy. This is so because he seeks to unite both in an all-inclusive totality of theory and practice. His theory can become practical as criticism of what exists, as a critical differentiation between reality and idea, between essence and existence. In the form of such criticism, his theory prepares the way for practical changes. On the other hand, one can argue backwards from the nature of the "revolution" to the historical character of Hegelian philosophy. "Here we see the *curriculum vitae* of a philosophy narrowed down to its subjective point, just as the death of a hero can be made to tell the story of his life."

Marx had such a radical understanding of the new situation that he could develop from a critic of the Hegelian philosophy of right to the author of *Das Kapital*. For this reason, he could better understand Hegel's "accommodation" to political reality than could Ruge. "It is conceivable that some accommodation or other could lead a philosopher to some inconsistency or other; he may even be aware of this himself. But he is not aware of the fact that the possibility of

this apparent accommodation has its deepest roots in an inadequacy or an inadequate formulation of his principle itself. If a philosopher really accommodated himself in this way, his pupils must explain on the basis of his essential, inner consciousness what he himself saw in the form of exoteric consciousness."¹³⁰ Because Hegel's philosophy does not include the world of theory *and* of practice, essence *and* existence, it must necessarily compare itself with what exists and accommodate itself. The entire concrete content of what is to be comprehended is always predetermined for it by what—in the sense of that which exists—"is."

The dialectic of theory and practice forms the basis not only of Marx's criticism of the idealistic philosophy of the spirit, but also of his criticism of Feuerbach's materialistic philosophy. In the eleven theses on Feuerbach (1845), Marx designates the major defect of earlier materialism: it apprehended sensuous reality only under the form of "observation" (*theoria*), and therefore as an already present "object," but not as the product of the activity and practice of sentient human beings.¹³¹ On the other hand, idealism, taking the subject as its point of departure, gave full weight to the latter's productive activity, but only in the abstract, as a spiritual framework. Neither spiritualism nor materialism understand "revolutionary," i.e., practical-critical, activity, which contributes most to the creation of the human world. The historical reason for Feuerbach's limitation to a materialism of mere observation lies in the barriers erected by late bourgeois society, a society of mere consumers who do not know that everything they consume is the historical product of common human activity, that even an apple is the result of trade and world commerce, and is not at all just suddenly "there."¹³² It was Feuerbach's great merit within this limitation to dissolve the religious world into its secular basis, but without calling the latter into question either theoretically or practically. Feuerbach, too, "interpreted" this world alienated from man differently, namely, humanly; but according to him the primary task was to "transform" it through theoretical criticism and practical revolution.¹³³ With Marx, the will to change the world does not mean direct action alone, but at the same time a criticism of previous interpretations of the world, a transformation of being and consciousness; for example, the "political economy" is to be transformed both as actual economic system and as economic theory, for the latter is the consciousness of the former.¹³⁴

Using Engels' procedure,¹³⁵ popular Marxism simplified the dialectical relationship between theory and practice by freezing it upon an abstract-material "basis," the relationship of which to the theoretical "superstructure" can be inverted with equal ease, as M. Weber showed.¹³⁶ If, on the contrary, Marx's original insight is adhered to, then even Hegel's "theory" can be seen as practical. For the deeper reason why Hegel allows the content of his comprehension to be advanced without seeking to alter it through "criticism" lies not only in what it "interprets," but in what it strives for as a practical goal. Hegel's comprehension sought to make its peace with reality. But Hegel could reconcile himself to the contradictions in the empirical world because, as the last Christian philosopher, he was in the world as though he were not of it. On the other hand, Marx's criticism of the existing order is not motivated by mere "desire for change." It has its roots in a Promethean rebellion against the Christian order of creation. Only the atheism of man with faith in himself must also see to the creation of the world. This atheistic motif of Marx's "materialism" is expressed in the theme of his dissertation on two classical atheists and materialists. For him, Epicurus is the greatest representative of the Greek enlightenment. He was the first among mortal men to dare to defy the gods of heaven. The philosophy of human "self-consciousness" acknowledges Prometheus as the most honored martyr in the philosophic calendar, against all the gods of heaven and earth.¹³⁷ The destruction of the Christian religion is the prerequisite for the construction of a world in which man is his own master.

Therefore, Marx's criticism of the Prussian State and Hegelian philosophy of the state begins with the statement that criticism of religion—the "prerequisite for all criticism" of the world—is essentially concluded. "It is therefore the duty of history, the beyond of truth having vanished, to establish the truth of this world. Philosophy is in the service of history. Its primary duty, once the sacred image of human self-estrangement has been unmasked, is to unmask self-estrangement in all its unholy forms. Criticism of heaven is transformed thereby into criticism of earth, criticism of religion into criticism of right, criticism of theology into criticism of politics."¹³⁸ Together with philosophy, economic criticism stands in the service of history. This is the starting point for an understanding of Marx's peculiarly "historical" materialism. His historical studies of the class struggles in France, the French Civil War, the Eighteenth of Bru-

naire, and the German bourgeoisie are not a mere by-product of his politico-economic analyses; they are an essential component of his basic conception of the entire human world as being historical.

In spite of his presupposition that philosophic theory stands in the service of historical practice, Marx's criticism is not directed, as one would expect, at immediate political reality, but rather at the Hegelian philosophy of the state: instead of at the "original," at a "copy." The reason for this apparently "idealistic" turn lies within historical reality. The German political situation in the forties is an "anachronism" within the modern European world, dating from the French Revolution. German history has not even caught up with what has taken place in France since 1789. "We have shared in the Restoration of the modern nations without sharing in their revolutions. We were restored; first, because other nations dared a revolution, and second, because other nations suffered a counterrevolution, the one time because our rulers were afraid, the other time because our rulers were unafraid. We, with our pastors in the lead, found ourselves in the company of freedom on the day of its burial."¹³⁹ Germany has experienced only one radical act of liberation, the Peasants' War,¹⁴⁰ and it came to grief in the Reformation, in which Germany's revolutionary past manifested itself "theoretically," i.e., religiously. But today, "when theology itself has come to grief, the greatest bondage of German history, our status quo, will come to grief in philosophy," that is, in Marx's historical practice of philosophic theory. Intellectually, the Germans have already anticipated their future history in Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie*, the principle of which transcends the present state of affairs in Germany. "We are philosophical contemporaries of the present, without being its historical contemporaries. German philosophy is the ideal extension of German history. . . . Among the progressive nations, there is a practical dissociation from the modern conditions of the state. In Germany, where these conditions do not even exist, there is critical dissociation from the philosophical reflection of these conditions. German philosophy of right and the state is the only part of German history that stands on a par with the official modern present. The German people must therefore include this dream history in its attitude toward existing conditions; not only these conditions, but also their abstract extension must be subjected to criticism. The future of the German nation cannot restrict itself to an immediate denial of its real political and legal conditions, nor to an immediate execution of ideal conditions. In its ideal conditions, it possesses the im-

But they have neither the time nor the inclination to listen to philosophers quarrel over the concept of time and space, nor to interest themselves in the skill with which these same philosophers make the transition from idea to nature. And the governments? The standing armies are their philosophic schools, which have agreed for the present to instruct the nations in the only system appropriate to the age: peace and order. At the universities, they only put up with the teachers of the old metaphysics as one puts up with an old ruin beside a new establishment as long as pressing needs do not demand its demolition." "And Europe is right. It is only expressing what German criticism had stated and begun to carry out ten years earlier. If Europe has turned away from metaphysics forever, this same metaphysics has been destroyed forever by criticism. There will never again be a metaphysical system set up, that is, none which will claim a place in the history of civilization."¹⁶⁴

70th:
Marx:

Instead, imperialistic dictatorships will dominate Europe, through which the question "Russia or Europe?" will be decided. "The illusion of the March Revolution that the time has come in which the members of the family of nations, protected by the new principle of equal rights against previous influences in their self-determination, will constitute themselves independently and work together in peace (an illusion which has been expressed in the . . . experiments of individual governments, as well as in the idea of a Congress of Nations and in the deliberations of the peace congresses), this illusion, as all the others which determine the era of a new freedom since the downfall of previous barriers of personal activity, must be dissolved in the recognition of a power more rigorously applied. They will all suffer the same fate as the illusion which sees a complete solution in individualism, the result of the last sixty years of revolution, but is forced daily to discover that this individualism is only a temporary arrangement; it comprises only *one* aspect, and is bound by an iron law to its opposite, imperialism and dictatorship."¹⁶⁵ The destruction of the old alliances and classes has robbed the individual of his personal importance as a member of particular bodies, and subjected him to an "expanded system of centralization and the absolute power of the whole." "Work has been freed; but its liberation has resulted in a more powerful centralization which grasps with an iron arm all the individual existences which felt happy and protected in their previous seclusion, compelling them to submit or perish." Once again there will be a law over mankind, just as in the old "military-theological world" before

Feuerbach, Strauss, and Ruge, who all desired to be positive and were therefore forced to be one-sided, while Bauer analyzes the various nonentities with stoical equanimity. The basic theme of his historical criticism was the French Revolution as the beginning of a universal destruction. But his own peculiar critical accomplishment consisted in the "discovery" of the Christianity both represented and at the same time attacked by Kierkegaard. His critical nihilism, limited only by his faith in history, did not have an extended influence in his own day, but more than a century later came to life once more in a new "party of the future." Political writers of the circle of the "Resistance" took up Bauer's ideas and applied them to the present.¹⁶⁹

f S. Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

If Kierkegaard is not taken as a mere "exception," but as an outstanding phenomenon within the historical movement of his age, it becomes clear that his "individuality" was not at all individual, but a widespread reaction to the contemporary condition of the world. A contemporary of Bauer and Stirner, of Marx and Feuerbach, he was above all else a critic of the events of his time, and his *Either-Or*, in matters of Christianity, was also determined by the social and political movement. "In times like these everything is politics," begins the foreword to his two observations on the "individual" (1847), which concludes with the statement that what the time demands, namely social reforms, is the opposite of what it needs, namely something absolutely firm. It is the misfortune of the present to have become mere "time," wanting nothing more to do with eternity. In the work which Kierkegaard in 1851 commended to the present for "self-examination," we read in the discourse on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that today hardly anyone can be found who does not believe in the "spirit of the age," no matter how much he may otherwise be blessed with mediocrity and stand under the curse of paltry regard. "Even he believes, firmly and obstinately, in the spirit of the age." He considers the spirit of the age something higher than himself, although it cannot be higher than the age, over which it hangs suspended like marsh gas. Or he believes in the "world spirit" and the "human spirit" of the entire species, in order in this manner to be able to believe in something spiritual. And yet no one believes in the Holy Spirit, who would have to be conceived definitely; but in the light of the Holy Spirit

all those other spirits are evil. In an age of dissolution a man is unstable; he therefore prefers to rely on something unsteady, the spirit of the age, in order with a clear conscience to be able to yield to every breath of the age.¹⁷⁰

By seeing himself as a "corrective against the age," Kierkegaard viewed himself historically, and oriented his task according to the character of the age. The individuality of the existence which decides for itself for or against Christianity has a precise relationship to the universality of the anonymous public course of world history. The individual is to make known "that the author . . . knows how to express absolutely decisively with a single word the fact that he understands his age and himself in relationship to it," that he has comprehended the fact that it is a "time of dissolution," as Kierkegaard doubly emphasizes.¹⁷¹ It is a conscious reference to the "development of the world," namely leveling of all decisive differences, which led Kierkegaard to emphasize the isolated individual, while the same historical circumstances, in the case of Bauer, produced the critical position of "self-being"; in the case of Stirner, the nihilistic position of the "individual"; and in the case of Marx, the socialistic position of the "member of a class."

This attitude toward his own age and toward time in general also determines Kierkegaard's relationship to Hegel's philosophy. He saw it as representative of the leveling of the individual existence in the universality of the historical world, of the "dispersion" of man in the "world process." Similarly, his attack upon Hegel's "system" is directed not only against systematic philosophy, but also against the system of the entire existing world, as the ultimate wisdom of which he saw Hegel's philosophy of history. His criticism of Hegel and the age begins with the concept of irony (1841),¹⁷² the "absolute negativity" of which he propounds as the truth of subjectivity against Hegel's systematic and historical interpretations. In *Philosophical Fragments* he explicitly denies Hegel's "system of existence," for there could only be a system of existence if from it can be abstracted that which its very essence implies, the ethical existence of the individual. In this divergence of the system from the world resides the truth of individual existence, for which the history of the world is merely concurrent and accidental. But Hegel's speculative way of thinking has ruined the nineteenth century for this seriousness of existence. "It is perhaps for this reason that our age is displeased when it must act, because it has been spoiled by speculation; . . . thence . . . the many fruitless experiments

by which man attempts to become more than he is, men joining themselves together in social groups in the hope of influencing the spirit of history. Spoiled by continuous converse with the historical, man seeks solely that which is significant, man concerns himself solely for what is accidental, the historical issue, rather than what is essential, what is innermost, freedom, morality.¹⁷³ In comparison to ethical existence, the "quantitative dialectics" of history is mere trimming. But the Hegelian refuses to be content with the subjectivity of existing. With a kind of magnificent unselfishness, he sees in every age a moral substance and an idea, as though his own existence were metaphysical speculation and the individual were the generation. He commands a view of entire forests by taking no notice of the individual trees.¹⁷⁴

In the natural world, the single individual stands in immediate relationship to his species; whoever improves a breed of sheep affects all the individuals of the species. But when the individual is a spiritually defined human being, it would be foolish to suppose that, for example, Christian parents automatically beget Christian children. The development of the spirit is an act of the individual himself, and therefore it does not suffice to be born in the nineteenth century, for a man cannot achieve his full stature with the aid of history and his generation. "The more the idea of the generation, even in ordinary thought, gains the upper hand, the more terrible is the transition to being an individual existing man, instead of belonging to the species and saying, 'We, our age, the nineteenth century.' I cannot deny that this is extremely difficult, and therefore great sacrifice is required not to reject it. What is an individual existing man? Yes, our age knows only too well how little he is; but this is the peculiar immorality of the age. Every age has its own; ours consists perhaps not in pleasure and enjoyment, . . . but in an . . . extravagant disregard for the individual. In the midst of all the jubilation over our age and the nineteenth century is heard the note of a secret disregard for human life: in the midst of the importance of the generation, there reigns a despair over human life. Everything, everything seeks to be included, everyone seeks to deceive himself historically in totality, no one wants to be an individual existing man. Thence possibly also the many attempts to hold fast to Hegel, even on the part of people who have seen the difficulties in his philosophy. There is a fear that if anyone becomes an individual existing man he will vanish without a trace, so that not even the daily papers, . . . much less historical philosophers, will take

any notice of him. . . . And it cannot be denied: without ethical or religious enthusiasm, a man must despair upon finding himself an individual man—but not otherwise."¹⁷⁵ The apparent courage of the generation hides the real cowardice of the individuals, who dare to live only in great mass activities, in order to be something. The individual confuses himself with the age, the century, the generation, the public, the mass of mankind.

Since Hegel omits the individual, his talk of progressive "becoming" is mere illusion. In fact, he understands world history as the conclusion of a "being" which has already come to be, excluding any real "becoming," to which belong action and decision.¹⁷⁶ Just as irrelevant to the individual existence as Hegel's recollection of the past is the prophecy of his pupils about the possible progress of the world. In all seriousness, it can mean nothing more than an amusement such as skittles or cards, says Kierkegaard at the conclusion of his criticism of the age.

He was able to confront his age with a decision only because he, too, participated in its events, even though negatively. He himself expresses the manner of his individual participation in a metaphor: his age appears to him like a ship under way, upon which he finds himself, together with other passengers, but having a cabin alone for himself. The bourgeois reality of this being alone was an isolated private life, which, however, does not prevent him from following the public events of the world.

He saw in his little Denmark, as in "a complete preparation," the downfall of the European "constitution," in the face of which he considered the "individual"—who happens to be the basis of Christendom—as the sole salvation of the age. The progress of the world toward complete leveling and the Christian imperative to exist before God as oneself both seemed to him to coincide like a fortunate accident. "Everything fits into my theory [of the individual] completely; people will soon see how *I* am the one who understood the age," Kierkegaard notes, with the pride of the exception which understands the rule precisely because it is the exception.¹⁷⁷ He signaled the "catastrophe" of 1848, and thought he could predict that, unlike the Reformation, this time the political movement would turn into a religious movement. Driven faster and faster by growing passion, all of Europe has wandered into problems which cannot be answered in the medium of the world, but only in the presence of eternity. How long the state of mere convulsion will remain cannot be guessed, but it is certain that eternity will once again be con-

sidered, when the race has become fully exhausted through suffering and loss of blood. "To obtain eternity once more, blood is necessary, but blood of a different sort, not that of a thousand slain sacrifices; no, the valuable blood of individuals, of martyrs, the mighty dead, who can accomplish what no living man who has sacrifices slain by the thousands can accomplish, what these mighty dead themselves were unable to accomplish alive, but only dead: to force a raging mob into obedience, precisely because this raging mob was able to slay the martyrs in their disobedience."¹⁷⁸ In this decisive moment of "sudden change," only martyrs will be able to rule the world, but not as ordinary earthly rulers. What will be needed then are sacred ministers, not soldiers and diplomats: "Ministers who can separate 'the crowd' and make it into individuals; ministers who would not make too great claims on studying, and would desire nothing less than to rule; ministers who, when possible, though powerfully persuasive, would be no less powerful in silence and patient suffering; ministers who, when possible, though trained to know the human heart, would be no less trained in withholding judgment and condemnation; ministers who would know how to use authority to make sacrifices with the help of art; ministers who would be prepared, trained, and educated to obey and to suffer, that they might relieve, caution, edify, calm, but also compel—not by force, by no means, no, compel through their own obedience—and above all, suffer patiently all the rudeness of the sick without being disturbed. . . . For the human race is sick, and, speaking spiritually, sick unto death."¹⁷⁹

Thus in spite of his polemic against Hegel's process, the force of the age led even Kierkegaard to historical speculation and, against Marx, to an anticommunist manifesto. He went so far as to predict the danger which would come when the catastrophe broke: false prophets of Christianity will then arise, inventors of a new religion, who, infected with demons, will arrogantly declare themselves apostles, like thieves in the costume of police. Thanks to their promises, they will receive terrible support from the age, until it finally becomes clear that the age stands in need of the absolute, and of a truth which is equally valid for all ages. With this view toward a restoration of Christendom through martyr-witnesses who allow themselves to be slain for the truth, Kierkegaard is the contemporary antithesis to Marx's propaganda of a proletarian world revolution. As the actual strength of Communism, Kierkegaard saw the "ingredient" of Christian religiosity which it still contained.¹⁸⁰

g Schelling's Connection
With the Young Hegelians

The many-pronged attack made by the Young Hegelians upon Hegel's system was promoted by Schelling in his last years, as he lectured on philosophy in 1841 in Berlin. Among his listeners were such varied contemporaries as Kierkegaard, Bakunin, F. Engels, and Burckhardt.¹⁸¹ The polemic with which Schelling opened his "positive" philosophy was directed against Hegel's ontology as being merely "negative," comprehending merely potential being but not real being as it comes to the attention of thought. With this last event in the history of classic German philosophy begins the "philosophy of existence" which Marx and Kierkegaard developed in opposition to Hegel, the one externally, the other internally.

The term *existentia* was originally a scholastic concept, the opposite of *essentia*. In the Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages, everything created by God shared in this dichotomy, but not God himself. Of him, it is true to say that his being exists essentially, because his essence is characterized by perfection, which is itself characterized by existence. Only in God do essence and existence occur together or as one. The demonstration of this was the purpose of the "ontological" proof of God of Anselm of Canterbury, and the same line of argument was taken by Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Wolff. The first criticism to attempt a radical refutation was Kant's, on the grounds that the "existence" of a "concept" cannot be separated from the concept itself. In concept, one hundred real dollars and one hundred potential dollars are indifferentiable; what differentiates them—the positive quality of "existence"—lies outside their "whatness," their essence. This critical distinction between *what* something is and the fact *that* it is was once more suspended by Hegel. His logic defines the "real" as the "immediate unity of essence and existence, or the inward and the outward." Therefore what, according to the older view, characterizes only the being of God, Hegel applies to everything which is, everything that is "truly" or in the "emphatic" sense a reality. For it is "trivial" to contrast essence as something solely inward to reality as something solely outward. Rather, essential being, that which is real and has effect, is the "idea" or the "notion." In contrast to this equation of essence and existence, Schelling insisted once more upon the contrast between a "positive" and "negative" philosophy, but not in order to return to Kant, but to go beyond Hegel.¹⁸²

Schelling's philosophical turning against Hegel's "rational" philosophy to a philosophy centered on existence had been expressed long before his philosophy of mythology and revelation in the preface to a work by Cousin¹⁸³ (1834) and in his Munich lectures on the history of modern philosophy,¹⁸⁴ but it was publicly discussed in numerous writings only after the Berlin lectures.¹⁸⁵ We meet all the motifs of his criticism also in Feuerbach and Ruge, Marx and Kierkegaard, as well as in Trendelenburg, to whose criticism of Hegel, Kierkegaard frequently refers.¹⁸⁶

In Hegel's logical ontology, Schelling misses the justification for dialectical progress and the transition from idea to nature. Pure thought cannot result in true movement or in any vital perception of the world, because there is no empirical basis for the deliberate lack of preconditions in its immanent movement. The synthesis of "becoming" out of pure being and nothingness is an illusion. An "abstraction of an abstraction," such as pure and vacuous being, can never proceed from itself, go toward something, and return to itself, or even give itself up to nature. This can be done only by something that really is, something positive.¹⁸⁷ The further definition of being in the dialectical progress of becoming is possible for Hegel only because a more substantial being already exists and because the thinking spirit itself is already such. What unknowingly guides the progress of Hegelian logic is its *terminus ad quem*: the real world, in which science makes its appearance, the perception of which is already presupposed.¹⁸⁸ Without its interpolation, Hegelian being would remain unfulfilled as what it is, namely, nothing.¹⁸⁹ Primary, highest being is itself a particular being, even if only as the thought of an existing subject that thinks.¹⁹⁰ But Hegel's philosophy of reason seeks being without anything which is to be, its idealism is "absolute" to the extent that he does not even discuss the question of positive existence. Hegel completely removed all these a priori empirical data, which were thus accidental,¹⁹¹ by substituting the logical notion for that which lives and is real. He hypostasizes this notion by the strange expedient of ascribing to it a self-movement which it does not possess. As soon as his system takes the serious step from the negative aspect of existence, that is, the merely logical, into reality,¹⁹² the thread of dialectical movement is broken completely, and there remains a "wide, ugly ditch" between "whatness" and "thatness" (*Was-sein* and *Dass-sein*). "A second hypothesis becomes necessary: for some reason, apparently to interrupt the boredom of mere logical being, it occurs to the idea to disintegrate into its components, thereby giving rise to nature."¹⁹³

Philosophy claims to have no presuppositions;¹⁹⁴ but its first presupposition is that the purely logical notion tends by its very nature to overthrow itself only to fall back upon itself. Thus something is *said* concerning the notion which can only be *conceived* of something living. The second fiction is the breaking off of the idea from itself in order to be determined upon nature, whereby the empirical data which were previously rejected return through the back door of the idea's unfaithfulness to itself. What Hegel factually proves is only that the purely rational part of reality is insufficient. His theory of being comprehends only the negative-universal aspect of being, the "non-inconceivable" and "non-preconceivable" portion without which nothing exists; but it does not include that whereby something exists, truly positive existence which contains the negative within itself.¹⁹⁵ In order to raise philosophy to this positive level, it is necessary to will what has being, "what is or exists." Instead, Hegel takes that which merely has being—the culmination of all logical notions—and makes of it pure being, which in fact is "nothing," just as whiteness does not exist without a white object.¹⁹⁶ Through this differentiation of the negative being of essence and the positive "having being" of existence, philosophy is confronted with one great final transformation. On the one hand, it will give a positive explanation of reality, without, on the other hand, depriving reason of its priority of being in possession of the absolute *prius* "even of the godhead."¹⁹⁷

Hegel's notion of God, on the contrary, is one and the same with the creative force of the notion, the purely rational nature of which he denied.¹⁹⁸ As a result, the popularization of his ideas inevitably lead to the pantheistic-atheistic conclusions of his pupils. For if the absolute is not conceived as historical existence but as a process immanent to the notion, then the knowledge which man has of God becomes the only knowledge which God has of himself.¹⁹⁹ Thus the "deepest note of popularity" for this system is reached; it is astonishing only that it did not gain a following in the "mass of the public," even though it is probable that Hegel himself would not have been pleased by this dilution of his thought. All this derives from the single blunder of treating logical circumstances as though they were real.²⁰⁰

In the introduction to his Berlin lectures, Schelling formulated his starting with "existence" even more radically. Positive philosophy, unlike negative-rational philosophy, proceeds not from thought to being, but from "immediate being" to thought. Its thought is free because it is intentional thought, and its system is

"a priori empiricism," whose point of departure is that which "blindly has being" or "immediately exists." The true path of man as a philosopher, and even of God, is to liberate the self from blindly encountered being, the "ecstatic," to "break away" from what blindly exists to true independence. What blindly exists "cannot help" existing; it is "accidentally necessary." "The entire world is this suspended, immemorial blind existence."²⁰¹ From the Hegelian point of view, Marheineke could just remark that Schelling actually confirms Feuerbach's theology, since he is content with "such trivial categories" as "literal" and "figurative."

In Schelling, the problem of being in the anti-Hegelian movement arrived at the point where Heidegger once more took it up. For who could deny that the "facticity" of *Dasein*, which lies in the brute fact of *Dass-Sein*,²⁰² that *Geworfenheit* and *Entwurf* correspond to "immediate existence" and "breaking away" from this necessary accident? The difference with Schelling lies in the fact that Heidegger erects upon Kierkegaard's basis a "system of existence" (*Dasein*) which lacks Schelling's tension between the negative and positive philosophy of "reason" and "existence." For him, the general "essence" (*Wesen*) of *Dasein* resides only and immediately in the "existence" (*Existenz*) of the individual,²⁰³ which remains unaware of its origin and goal and has simply "to be" by accepting the innocence of *Dasein*—the "cannot help it"—as "guilt." For Schelling, the Hegelian "being" was a mere "potentiality for being," in the sense of a possibility, and stood in contrast to reality. For Heidegger, this potentiality for being becomes an ontological predicate, precisely of real existence (*Existenz*).²⁰⁴

Schelling was not alone in his opinion that Hegel's ontology lacked immediate reference to real existence and observation; the Young Hegelians agreed with him. His statement that Hegel only "affects" the real and transforms it into a "wasteland of being" agrees with the criticisms of Feuerbach, Marx, and Kierkegaard; the latter defends Schelling against Hegel because he, at least, made an attempt at putting a halt to the reflection of thought upon itself.²⁰⁵ Therefore Schelling was justified in stating that it was superfluous to come to the defense of the Hegelian philosophy against him. Even those who took Hegel's part and opposed him "did so partially at least not in order to oppose positive philosophy; on the contrary, they themselves also wanted something of the sort. Only they were of the opinion that this positive philosophy would have to be erected on the basis of the Hegelian system and could not be erected upon any other; further, the Hegelian system lacked

nothing more than their effort to continue it in a positive direction. This, they thought, could come about in a continuous progress, without interruption and without any turning back."²⁰⁶ Contrary to this attempt, by 1832, Schelling had already become convinced that Hegel's philosophy could not be extended; it would have to be interrupted in order once more to return to the "course of true progress."²⁰⁷ Ten years later, when he gave his lectures in Berlin, he could pride himself on having most of the Hegelians in his audience, after they had shown him every respect in public and in private: "The tension is unbelievable, and already . . . all precautions have been taken to see that the enormous pressure to get into the largest lecture room, itself relatively small, does not cause any difficulties."²⁰⁸ But his assurance of victory was bitterly disappointed, while the revolutionary impulse of the Young Hegelians reached a high point in its polemic against Schelling's "latest attempt at reaction."²⁰⁹ But a decade later, reaction had overpowered even the Young Hegelians and brought their "progress" to an end. The political and ecclesiastical reaction of the fifties pulled the historical rug out from under their philosophy, which was obligated to the spirit of the age, while Schopenhauer's view of the world achieved enormous, though delayed, effect, traceable less to its positive content than to its attitude of alienation from politics and history.²¹⁰

"Pessimism" and "optimism" became the catchwords of the hour,²¹¹ because they corresponded to the prevalent resignation and discontent, as well as to a desire for better times. In the process, it does not make any basic difference whether the "philosophy of misery" had its start in the misery of economic (Proudhon), universally human (Schopenhauer), or spiritual (in the Christian sense [Kierkegaard]), existence; whether the philosophy of misery or the "misery of philosophy" (Marx) was emphasized; whether the valuelessness (Bahnsen) or the "value of life" (Dühring) was asserted; or whether, further, its value was considered estimable (E. v. Hartmann) or "inestimable" (Nietzsche). All these phenomena have in common that existence itself was called into question. Schopenhauer in particular became the philosopher of the hour, "sitting like a speculative Job upon the ash heap of finiteness," thereby gaining the regard of Kierkegaard.²¹² This world of suffering is produced by blind "will," and "idea" can give no better counsel than to cease to will.

The history of German philosophy has not recognized the full significance of this reaction, nor the preceding and basic revolution in spiritual and political life. For this reason, it has never achieved a

true understanding of the history of the nineteenth century. In contrast to the antirevolutionary philosophers of the French Revolution, who came from the noble classes, the German philosophers of the age of the bourgeois reaction are without breadth of vision and without a fixed spiritual position. In the sixties, the opinion was prevalent that Hegel and his pupils had been passed by the return to Kant prepared by Schopenhauer, without awareness that this revitalization of Kant was connected with an inability to deal with those questions which had evolved from the dialogue with Hegel in the forties.

The customary "appendices" to the history of philosophy since Hegel indicate, by their external form, that "exhaustion" of the spirit, with reference to idealism, was considered as its disintegration, while the destructive force of the movement remained unrecognized. In his two-volume work on Hegel, K. Fischer disposes of Hegel in two lines; and, as late as the fifth edition (1916), Friedrich Überweg's *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie* devotes only two pages to Engels and Marx. Even F. A. Lange's history of materialism does not mention Marx at all in the text, and in the list of sources only as the foremost scholar in the field of national economics. In spite of the review of his dissertation in the *Hallesche Jahrbücher*, Kierkegaard remained unknown, and the critical-historical dissolution of Christianity was left to a theology the dogmatics of which, analogously to systematic philosophy, had itself already degenerated into history of dogma and church history, comparative religion, and psychology of religion. The danger and importance of the radical philosophical and theological movement, of which the original Hegelians were well aware, was forgotten. It could appear that nothing significant had taken place between Hegel's death and the revitalization of Kant. Seen in the context of the real total course of the century, however, this apparently so unmotivated return to Kant can be explained: the bourgeois intelligentsia had ceased in practice to be an historically oriented class, thereby losing the initiative and impact of their thought. The philosophical movement of the forties comes to an end, together with the end of the political revolutionary movement. The return to Kant, in the way it took place, shows a retreat behind the limit of questioning which the Young Hegelians had reached in religious, social, and political matters.²¹³ In the history of Neo-Kantianism, the bourgeois-Christian world, the very foundations of which had been attacked,

experiences an apparent revitalization, and only in the crisis of Neo-Kantianism did there arise the attempt to refurbish Hegel.

3 The Refurbishing of Hegelian Philosophy by the Neo-Hegelians

The principle of the refurbishment of Hegel was first and most clearly determined by B. Croce, through the distinction between a "dead" and a "living" portion of Hegelian philosophy.²¹⁴ The dead portion consists primarily of the natural philosophy, but also the logic and philosophy of religion; the living, the theory of the objective spirit, to the extent that its absolute systematic claim can be reduced to an historical claim. This division, which denies Hegel's system as a whole, is also true of the German revival of Hegel. But while in Italy the tradition of Hegelian philosophy continued uninterrupted because the questions contained in it were never made oversubtle, in Germany a deliberate revival was necessary, in the face of the general disapproval into which Hegel had fallen. Schopenhauer's prophecy²¹⁵ that the period of Hegel's fame would be a permanent blot on the escutcheon of the nation and an object of ridicule of the century was destroyed by Neo-Hegelianism: Schopenhauer's memory was preserved only through the mediation of Nietzsche, and, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Hegel, contrary to all expectations, seemed to be resurrected. Having gone for eighty years without a new printing, the *Logik* appeared in two new complete editions; Hegel's posthumous works were published, together with a commentary on his early works, a Hegel lexicon, and a literature on Hegel which already passed counting.²¹⁶ The new Hegelianism itself has become historically self-conscious and reflects its changes.²¹⁷ A Hegel Society and Hegel Congresses demonstrate the study of Hegel. But the matter in question is not the outward fact of this revitalization, but whether and how the present time answers the question, posed by the original Hegelians, of history and of time in general.

Dilthey above all understood historical consciousness as a problem of philosophy and of the spirit. In the process, his treatment of Hegel's philosophy of the historical spirit is of decisive importance. This is true both for his *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften* (1883), which sought to be a criticism of "historical" reason, and

gap between modern scientific consciousness and Hegel's speculative "science," forgetting that Hegel called the sciences the "edifice of an understanding deserted by reason," whose unhindered expansion is inadmissible.²²⁴ But if Hegelian philosophy is the only true "science," it is necessarily different from Dilthey's *Weltanschauung* doctrine, which undertakes merely to be the "expression" of metaphysical "needs." As a result of this radical difference in their criticism and evaluation of science and reality, Dilthey finds Hegel's effort to comprehend the totality of the spiritual world, historical "of itself," to contradict the explanatory principle of the absolute spirit. Hegel subordinates to the "real" historical world of the human spirit an "ideal" realm of logical predicates which, being timeless, are incapable of explaining a real development in space and in time. In the nineteenth century, Hegel's philosophy came to grief on this interweaving of a "chimerical" notion of a development not temporally conditioned with what is real in time. Similarly, the attempt to accomplish the wrongly conceived task by means of dialectics is completely useless and must be discarded.²²⁵ To conceive this task aright and enable it to be accomplished, Dilthey reduces Hegel's speculative "comprehension" of the notion of reality to an analytic "understanding" of its most universal structures. Thus the "logos" of what has being is transformed into a relative "meaning," and Hegel's ontology into an empirical analysis of reality.²²⁶ All that remains as the permanent portion of Hegelian metaphysics is the "historical intentions" with their metaphysical-theological foundation removed, which is precisely the final portion of the system. Hegel's lasting significance rests in his theory that the nature of every phenomenon of life is to be understood historically.²²⁷

Besides logic and natural philosophy, Dilthey also considers that the philosophy of religion has succumbed to the course of history: the thesis of the absolute status of the Christian religion, which is as central to Hegel's historical systematization of the spirit as is the central place of the earth in the universe to his natural philosophy. "What is imperishable in him" is rather the recognition of the historical relativity of all truths, even religious and ethical. "Everything is relative, absolute is only the nature of the spirit itself, manifesting itself in all this. Nor is there an end to the knowledge of this nature of the spirit, no final formulation, each is relative, each has done enough if it has sufficed for its age. The relativity of the notion of property logically led to the revolution of the social order; this great doctrine also led logically to the relativity of the doctrine of

Christ."²²⁸ But with this transformation of the absolute into history, which—because it makes everything else relative—itself acquires the nature of the absolute, Dilthey does not refurbish Hegel, but rather the Hegelianism peculiar to Ruge and Haym, whose criticism anticipates all the motifs of his occupation with Hegel. But in contrast to the radicalism of the Young Hegelians, Dilthey's historicization of Hegel's metaphysics has no revolutionary purpose. What he sought to put forward was ultimately only a philosophical "attitude" which had grown out of his "reflection upon the logic of historical consciousness." In him, the metaphysical passion of Hegel's spirit, revealing the depths of the universe, is reduced to a "reflection" which knows that the reigning "anarchy in all the deeper persuasions"²²⁹ is to be removed neither through the refurbishing of an old metaphysics nor through the construction of a new one. Hegel's world, dominated by spirit, becomes "sociohistorical reality," in itself neither rational nor irrational, but in an indefinite way "significant." But the significance of the world is no longer based upon the world itself, but is the product of our attitude toward the world and our understanding of it. "We" do not import meaning into life from the world, but rather the contrary: "we are open to the possibility that meaning and significance only come into being in man and his history." The great "objective forces of human history"—the objective spirit of Hegelian philosophy—constitute the substance to which the individual must cling if he is to understand human life on the basis of himself, without dogmatic theology or metaphysics. That this answer to the problem of history is not really a philosophical answer, that in fact Dilthey's lifelong efforts to construct a philosophy on the basis of historical consciousness per se were brought to nought by the honesty of his knowledge, cannot hide the fact that he was the only productive refurbisher of the Hegelian position, precisely because he surrendered it.

The "revival of Hegelianism" was officially proclaimed by Windelband²³⁰ in a speech in 1910. Today, its formulation can only produce a kind of amazement at the impoverishment of the spirit. Without any original reference to Hegel, this official revival takes place by means of a detour via a revived Kant. "If post-Kantian philosophy was forced to direct its conceptual work toward the development of the system of reason, it was in fact a necessary step forward which led from Kant, via Fichte and Schelling, to Hegel. The repetition of this process in the progress of the most recent philosophy from Neo-Kantianism to Neo-Hegelianism is not acci-

dental, but is an objective necessity."²³¹ Like Kant before him, Hegel is now experiencing "in the alternation of generations the alternation of recognition." This progress in the return to Hegel means that Kant's critique of reason demands an historical basis, his critique of natural science must be expanded to the domain of "cultural science," the latter having developed so enormously in the historical sciences of the spirit. But in order to make an abstract study of the copious development of "rational values," Hegelian philosophy is necessary; it is best able to illuminate the principles of the spiritual world. "It is a hunger for a world view that has seized our younger generation; it seeks to be filled in Hegel." But Windelband avoids the question of what changes in the spiritual environment have begotten this attitude: "it suffices that it is present, exploding with elemental force!" The younger generation yearns to return from metaphysical desolation to "a spiritual basis for life"; this need is particularly well met by Hegel's universal philosophy of the historical spirit, which demonstrates a "total meaning of reality." In addition, there is the "evolutionary optimism" of his theory, whereby he gains the victory over Schopenhauer's pessimism and Nietzsche's boundless individualism. In this sense, the return to Hegel means a step forward. But Neo-Hegelianism must keep itself free from the "strange external trappings" and "metaphysical rashness" of the older Hegelianism; the dead husk must be discarded and the living kernel retained. But this fruitful kernel which remains is the insight that we participate in the reason of the world as a "species undergoing development." Today it is impossible not to see that this program is nothing but husk, and its concepts the clichés which an optimistic bourgeois class borrowed from Hegel, clichés which by no means display any "elemental" force of the spirit.

In basically the same way, but with emphasis on the Prussian element and the Protestant consciousness of freedom in Hegelian philosophy, G. Lasson²³² understood the task of Hegelianism to be a result of Kantianism. In his twofold capacity as Prussian Hegelian and pastor, he undertook the meritorious new treatment of Hegel's works. The weakness of the repeated path from Kant to Hegel is shown by J. Ebbinghaus.²³³ Soon after his enrollment in the party of Hegel's "absolute" idealism, he went back once more to Kant, only to end up finally with Wolff.

Only R. Kroner seriously undertook Windelband's program, in his work *Von Kant bis Hegel* and in a *Kulturphilosophie*²³⁴ organized along Hegelian lines. Kroner says: "To understand Hegel

means to see that he simply cannot be transcended." That he nevertheless could intend to refurbish Hegel for the present has its basis in his equation of the immediate task with that accomplished by Hegel.²³⁵ The presuppositions of philosophy have altered in the meantime; but to master this upheaval the reclamation of the classical tradition is necessary, such as we see most perfectly incarnate in Hegel. Above all, Hegel attained the reconciliation of the secular and religious consciousness, overcame the antithesis between antiquity and Christianity, and forged a bond uniting the Greek with the German spirit.

During the war, Hegel's dialectical identity of the ideal with reality was patriotically simplified: "German idealism and German sense of reality," according to Lasson,²³⁶ have revealed themselves overwhelmingly as a "miraculous unity" in Hegel's philosophy and in the world war. According to Kroner,²³⁷ reality and the ideal pursue and accompany each other step for step in the German state. In this period the actual historical meaning of the academic refurbishment of Hegel revealed itself as the self-assertion of the Christian-Germanic, or more precisely the Prussian-Protestant self-consciousness, disseminated in battlefield editions of philosophy.

If this Hegelianism had really understood, as it proclaimed, that the presuppositions of our life and thought have basically altered, and Hegel's world is no longer our own, had it taken seriously its parenthetical insight that Hegel's destiny was Feuerbach,²³⁸ it would have had to recognize the apparent contradiction between the absolute and historical sense of Hegelian philosophy as being a contradiction only because we no longer believe in the absolute status of Christianity and the spirit founded upon it. Hegel's eschatological system can be comprehended only on the basis of this hypothesis, but the idea of an infinite progress of spiritual history a priori sets aside the Christian consciousness of time, even as secularized by Hegel.

Therefore the actual inconsistency in Kroner's Hegelianism resides in his affirmation of the Christian nature of the Hegelian spirit while denying the conclusion of the history of the spirit which follows from it. He does not want to admit that Hegel's philosophy is in fact the consummation of the principle of Christianity, and that his mediation between antiquity and Christianity is not an "inheritance," but was already called into question a century before.

In order to resolve the contradiction between "system" and "history,"²³⁹ Kroner reads into Hegel a contradiction which is much too modern to be characteristic of Hegel, namely the contradiction

between historical limitation and unlimited "validity." Hegel suffered this contradiction with "magnificent unconcern." On the one hand, he stated that every philosophy is its age grasped by thought, and on the other the eternal absoluteness of the spirit. Kroner first seeks to explain the unity of these two statements on the formal dialectical level. Hegel's considered insight unites both because history is itself a work of the spirit. "History is not merely history, it is also the productive spirit of mankind, it is the house . . . in which it . . . resides, and which it continually constructs and reconstructs."²⁴⁰ Kroner sees his further development of Hegel in this light, and hence misunderstands the conclusion which he represents. He himself remarks that Hegel's philosophy contemplates the past like no other, conscious of an historical completion, and the subsequent course of events seems to confirm this view all too well.²⁴¹ But instead of elucidating the supposed contradiction between system and history in the light of this historical question, Kroner asks: what right had Hegel to claim "absolute validity" for his system "in spite of" this historical resignation? Hegel equated the truth of his system with truth per se, at the same time thinking more in historical terms than anyone before him, while on the other hand his history of philosophy belongs to the system. He resolved this contradiction by making a systematic aspect of the historical in order to escape the danger of historical relativism.

But historical relativism is a very modern problem (and now no longer even modern); it did not exist at all for Hegel. His peculiar accomplishment is not the transformation of the historical aspect into a systematic one—Dilthey was the first to undertake this—but rather the reverse: the joining of the systematic to the historical. It is no accident that only after Hegel do we have an historical aspect of the systems of philosophy, a so-called history of ideas and problems. But in his case the historicization of philosophical truth is equally far removed from both historicism and validity. The modern claim for validity per se derives historically from pre-Hegelian philosophy, and is a postulate of Neo-Kantianism. And only when confronted with a postulated truth per se does its historicity collapse into an historicism which relativizes validity. As a consequence, the contrast of system and history is not resolved, as Kroner would like, through "metahistorical" history and the formalistic argument that the thesis of the historicity of the spirit is itself metahistorical because it seeks to "be true" for all epochs. If Hegel causes the eternal to be manifest in the temporal, this is not the result of any formal

accent is on the entire "thus far now," that is, "finally," the world spirit has come; and this entirety is deliberate goal. Hegel left an open question as to what might proceed from it in the future; but because three epochs have now been concluded, and not because the present cannot be studied historically, did Hegel consider history, taken abstractly, to be ended. He, more than anyone else, encounters the present in an historical context based on the recollected past. It is no accident that his immediate successors carried their philosophy into an anticipated future, only to view their own period from that point of view as "historical" in the opposite sense of the word. While Hegel brought into the present what had been and had come to be in the past, the criticism of the existing order by the Young Hegelians brought into the present, from the opposite direction, the task of the future. In contrast, Neo-Hegelianism silences both the past and the future because it misunderstands the historical significance of the break with Hegel, and does not recognize that our own *Geistesgeschichte* (spiritual history) begins with the collapse of the Hegelian spirit.

Scholz, too, undertook to explain the supposed contradiction between the absolute and transitory significance of Hegel's system.²⁴⁸ From the formal point of view there is an inconsistency which cannot be completely removed; but the absolute claim can be explained from the fact that Hegel lived in the consciousness of having grasped the absolute for the first time as it should be grasped if it is to have any influence on reality, namely, as "constantly relativizing itself." The absoluteness of his system would then consist in an absolute relativism, because Hegel—in contrast to Kant—represents the absolute as an ever-present spirit, immanent in reality.²⁴⁹

In the realm of natural philosophy, Scholz considers that this attempt failed completely; in the realm of the historical spirit it met with partial success, namely: if the proof of the meaningfulness of all events is interpreted as a hypothetical procedure, designed to overcome the difficulties which stand in the way of a belief in the meaning of history, even in Hegel's own consciousness. In any case, a basic evaluation of Hegel's meaning for the present has to proceed from the fact that he was the first to make philosophy aware of itself as the thought of time; this thesis affects the entire relationship of philosophy to the historical reality of our lives. This joining of the temporal character of philosophy to its substantial content guarantees the permanent importance of Hegel. Every philosophy is the self-consciousness of its age; but this does not mean that it is a mere

sponds to the complete fulfillment of the spirit which has returned to itself. But for an evaluation of Hegel's significance, the decisive question is whether this boundary of his historical meaning is not completely borne out by the history of the German spirit subsequent to him. In this case, the actual significance of his metaphysics of the historical spirit lies in the fact that it brought to an end the epoch of "Germanic" philosophy as "Christian" philosophy.

J. Plenge was acutely aware of the epochal boundary which separates us from Hegel. It caused him to pose once more the question of Hegel's attitude toward history and to draw Marx into the study of Hegel.²⁵¹ His study once more opened the doors to the questions which had been asked a hundred years before by the Young Hegelians, particularly Bauer. It begins with the statement that it would be unworthy of Hegel merely to repeat philosophically what he had already said better. In his eyes, this would be the very death of the spirit, which lives only in overcoming new dichotomies. "He would ask us, was I not followed by a new antithesis, coming from without and within? Formally, as the empirical knowledge of a scientism broken up into separate disciplines. Materially, as the socialism of Karl Marx, which grew out of my own school, drew its sustenance from my dialectics, and developed into the irresistible course of the social adventure. You want to return to me as to the vehicle of a victorious universal affirmation; but you are too weak to reach me beyond these antitheses, instead of being brought to a halt by them—as though my period had been older and more finished than even I was willing to construe it."²⁵² Hegel and Marx both recognized the fundamental historical nature of all human life; it is our duty to make use of their design, without giving uncritical support to either.²⁵³

The way in which Hegel, and even Marx, viewed the system of our world was limited; only in the course of the nineteenth century did "eruption of energy" set in, which ultimately led to the World War and the upheavals following in its wake; Hegel could not foresee this at all, and Marx only insofar as it pertained to capitalism. The inventions of the nineteenth century, together with the organization of economic, social, and military structures which they made possible, opened for the first time a "world" which now included in actual fact all the historical nations of the earth. With reference to this new world, Plenge attempts to restructure the previous history of Europe and to determine Hegel's historical place from the standpoint of the present. The Christian Middle Ages, the

modern era, and the nineteenth century, with which once more a new epoch begins, are the three subsidiary periods of an historical era preceding the newly arrived "world-system" which begins with the World War. In contrast, Hegel's conclusion of world history with the Christian-Germanic world was still based upon a Europe not yet aware of the historical significance of America and Russia, nor the new dialogue with the East. "Between us and Hegel there lies a period of history for which we do not have a generally recognized descriptive name. The 'Age of Capitalism' refers only to the . . . continuing process of economic reform, . . . 'Bourgeois Society,' without the connotations . . . so illogically attached to the word 'bourgeois,' is really too pleasant-sounding for such an explosive event, and the future misunderstandings could easily be even more dangerous, because a socialistic work-army would need at least as much discipline and order as does the middle class. One solution is to take the famous phrase applied by Goldberger to America at the turn of the century . . . and extend it to the entire nineteenth century: 'the century of unlimited possibilities'! This phrase well describes the reaching out of mankind toward greater and greater technical achievements, and the whirl of personal success for the fortunate exploiters and profiteers in this rising market. But probably the best name for the demonic power of this evolutionary process, which transcends anything that has ever existed previously, is 'eruption of energy.' All the forces of the earth are unleashed; the effect is to overwhelm mankind, to force our society into an incalculable transformation, beyond the control of any insight or of any will, which finally . . . through the fault of everyone, if there is fault, ends in world war and world revolution. In the process, the picture of reality is extended by the results of science to immeasurable and yet calculated cosmic distances, . . . with the result that everywhere the eternal equilibrium of unchangeable laws is lost. . . . 'Development' becomes untamed erupting energy which pays us no regard. Human society is torn loose from all universal systems regulating its behavior, both orderly systems and systems assumed for the sake of order; any consistent view of all reality is lost. There is no longer such a thing as a world view. There are only sciences! Specialized sciences fitted into no comprehensive order of a total system. . . . The only principle in the background is an absolute faith in science as a method which reaches a sure knowledge even of the last things, leading to the tendency to conceive these last things as an absolute force which man may use in his maintenance of society,

but whose product he is. Material . . . as energy! Friedrich List and Karl Marx both put their faith in force. This is the world of the real nineteenth century, of which Hegel had no idea, although it was coming into being under his very eyes."²⁵⁴

Through all the struggles of races and nations, peoples and classes, the overcoming of time and space, through the technification of the world, everywhere pushes forward to a consciously organized world system and to a "history of world organization," although it is impossible to know whether this tower of Babel, with its confusion of tongues, can be made a lasting creation. Hegel, in contrast, wanted to explain the absolute completely in the midst of the structure of his own world. In spite of the breadth and assurance of his gaze, his view of the world was still completely restricted to the Christian-humanistic historical entity, although even during his life the study of history began to transform the traditional picture, revising it in the light of newly discovered historical sources from the Orient.²⁵⁵ This restriction to a central portion of the European domestic world has an even deeper basis in Hegel's philosophical position, namely, in his idea of the state and of religion. For Hegel, the French Revolution was *the* great event; but he intentionally overlooked the possibilities arising from it, even though in his own period it was obvious that the Age of Revolutions was just beginning. "He had no premonition of the bewildering influences which were to come upon Europe from all over the world. This is the fault of his method itself, for what dialectics has once dealt with indeed remains alive within it as a suspended component, but it never has a basically new effect in its own right." The ultimate basis for this closed character of Hegel's system lies in his attitude toward Christianity. "For Hegel, Christ is the revolutionary of his synthesis, unifying once and for all the world which stands at the point of utmost antithesis. Hegel viewed Christ without reverence or emotion . . . with deep scientific tension as the problem of problems, because in him the infinite becomes finite, because he, as 'one of these,' in his very human life, includes within himself the All, demonstrating conclusively the essential union of man with God."²⁵⁶ In this, abstract logical process loses all its original, human power; actually, the Protestant State suffices for this historical purpose of the Hegelian world. On the basis of this total spiritualization and secularization of the Christian supernatural world, the transition from the period of actual Christianity to the modern era has no particular significance for Hegel; the modern era loses the impetus of historical

progress which, in the stormy course of the nineteenth century, finally drives it to the First World War. The modern era becomes simply a fulfilled Christianity, completely aware of itself. "Hegel overlooks the transformation of the picture of reality into an entirely new dimensional structure and the incipient unification of all the civilizations of the earth into one single theater, which distinguishes the modern era, no matter how much it remains a subsidiary period in the course of Europe's decline, from all the human past and thereby from the beginning of the West European period with the age of 'Christendom.' Of course it remains true that the assurance of being superior to the world which typifies the modern era at its peak is built upon this same assurance of Christendom, subjected to God; this then grows into the frenzy of scientific superiority of the nineteenth century, enslaved to its own products!"²⁵⁷ In contrast to the demands of his method, Hegel's historical system only apparently concludes with a complete reconciliation and systematization of the experienced antitheses. In reality, its political conclusion is a radical hostility between warring national states; its religious conclusion is a Protestantism split up into sects, itself still an irreconcilable opponent of Catholicism.

Hegel's achievement in the study of history, magnificent in spite of these limitations, was only corrected in the nineteenth century by F. List and Marx, both of whom, in contrast to the bourgeois historians, sought with a quick grasp to shape their assumptions concerning the meaning for the world of the new technical and socio-economic advances. "Without overmuch concern for Hegel, List viewed the national state as the vehicle of history and provided it with the economic weapons with which to secure its equal rights with other nations, upon which the world system was to grow. Marx, the spiritual heir of Hegel, like List, considered economics and science to be the real job and basis for existence of mankind; just for this reason he saw them as the seedbed of class conflict and of class wars, which he considered would have to be undergone until the final world system of work was achieved. We take them both only as examples of the way the facts of the age shoved Hegel's system aside, showing more simple ways for thought. Simultaneously, there have been attempts to answer questions which Hegel had answered wrongly or not at all, or had not even seen—incomplete answers, in their one-sidedness lacking the scope for which Hegel strove."²⁵⁸ It remains to be asked whether the basic concepts of Hegel's philosophy of history can be applied to the phenomena of

the period of the world just beginning, e.g., the dialogue of the various cultures and the leveling process going on beyond this dialogue.²⁵⁹ Against this possibility one would surely have to say that only as corrected by Marx can Hegel be used for a real understanding of the nineteenth century. "Above all, with a proper view of the basic truth discovered by Marx, one can see in the utilization and subjugation of all the forces of the earth and the reaction upon society of the instruments forged for this purpose an enormously powerful effect of the productive power of our human spirit, of which we are able to see only the immediate consequences. . . . But these, one and all, are other paths than Hegel took."²⁶⁰

In contrast to this sociological appropriation of Hegel, formulated in such a way that it might frighten off the casual reader, the academic Neo-Hegelianism of the twentieth century, totally derivative, shut its eyes to the historical insights of Marx and Sorel. It failed to understand the philosophical problem of the nineteenth century. The German intelligentsia became aware of so-called Marxism only through the political propaganda of National Socialism and its polemic staging.

In Germany, original Hegelianism was forgotten; the revival of Hegel came about through Neo-Kantianism. But in Russia the Hegelianism of the forties, in the form of nihilism, Marxism, and Leninism, underwent continuous development down to the present, and made history. In 1931, there were three congresses on the occasion of the centenary of Hegel's death: one in Moscow, and two others in Rome and Berlin. In spite of their mutual antipathy, they belonged together as had the Hegelian right and left of the previous century. As then, the greater degree of culture belonged to the epigones, the historical power to those who wanted progress and interpreted Hegel by means of Marx. But over one thing the idealistic and materialistic dialectics of both parties were agreed: the notion that they were able by a simple operation to separate the "dead" from the "living" portion of Hegel's philosophy and to use either the spiritual "content" or the dialectical "method" in isolation.²⁶¹ But the real sundering of what Hegel's mediation had joined together had already been accomplished, in opposite directions, by Marx and Kierkegaard. That these two dogmatic and mutually opposed critics of Hegel were both under the spell of his concepts demonstrates the power of the spirit which could produce such extremes.

III The Dissolution of Hegel's Mediations in the Exclusive Choices of Marx and Kierkegaard

1 The General Criticism of Hegel's Notion of Reality

The attack of Marx and Kierkegaard separates precisely what Hegel had unified; both overturn his reconciliation between reason and reality. Marx takes Hegel's political philosophy as the object of his criticism; Kierkegaard's attack is directed against his philosophical Christianity. The result is not only a dissolution of Hegel's system, but at the same time of the entire system of the bourgeois-Christian world. The philosophical basis of this radical criticism of the existing order is their quarrel with Hegel's notion of "reality" as "unity of essence with existence."¹ The attack is directed primarily against a single statement from the preface to the *Rechtsphilosophie*: "Whatever is rational is real; and whatever is real is rational."

It is difficult today to conceive of the serious struggle and enormous excitement which this sentence produced even during Hegel's lifetime. As heirs of the nineteenth century, we think of "reality" as "facts" and "data," of a realism which could arise only after the breakdown of the Hegelian Real-Idealism.² The immediate cause of this transformation in the notion of reality was none other than

because I see that nothing must be removed from it, that no aspect of it must be criticized. . . ." "Reality! I repeat this word when I arise and when I go to bed, by day and by night, and reality surrounds me, I feel it everywhere and in everything, even within myself, in that new alteration which is noticeable in me from day to day." "Now I daily meet with practical people, and it is no longer hard for me to breathe in their company . . ." "I form my judgments of everyone not according to some preconceived theory, but according to the data given by himself, I know how gradually to enter into the proper relationship with him; therefore all are content with me, and I am content with all. I am beginning in conversation to discover interests in common with people with whom I previously thought I had nothing in common. I demand only what may be demanded of me, and for this reason receive only good and nothing evil. . . ." "Not long ago I discovered a great truth which (until now) had been unknown to me. . . . I recognized that there is no such thing as a fallen man, who has betrayed his calling. I no longer look down upon anyone who has ruined his life through a marriage, who has extinguished his reasoning power and his genius in his occupation; such a man has no guilt. Reality is a monster, armed with iron jaws: it seizes by force anyone who does not surrender himself freely and devours him."²² In this Russian reinterpretation of Hegel's emphatic reality we find the passion peculiar to Belinskij, which caused him to reconcile the highway of reason, not with the "blue sky" of infinity, but with "garden variety" reality.²³ He ceased to be a romantic, and sought to serve Russian reality, up to and including an absolute recognition of Russian absolutism, which estranged him from all his friends and ultimately brought him to a crisis which finally forced him into opposition to Russian reality. Under the influence of Bakunin and Herzen, he went over to the side of the left-wing Hegelians. Two years after the letter just quoted, which he wrote to Bakunin, he cursed his base longing for a reconciliation with miserable reality. The human personality is more than all history, and Heine is more than all the "professional thinkers" who defend reality as it is.²⁴ I have long guessed that Hegel's philosophy is merely one thing among others, perhaps very important, but that the absolute nature of its conclusions is rot, that it is better to die than to accept them willingly. . . . For him, the subject is not an end in itself, but only a means for a momentary expression of the universal; and for him, the universal is a Moloch, for it flaunts itself in the subject and then discards the subject like a

worn-out stocking. I have particular reasons for being angry with Hegel, for I feel that I was basically true to him when I made my peace with Russian reality. . . . All Hegel's chatter about morality is complete nonsense, for in the objective realm of thought there is no morality, just as there is none in objective religion. The destiny of the subject, the individual, the personality, is more important than the destiny of the entire world and more important than the health of the Emperor of China (i.e., Hegelian universality).²⁵ The only true reconciliation with reality seems to him to be that which Ruge preached as the turning of theory into practice.²⁶ He viewed Hegelian philosophy, indeed, as the highest achievement of our culture, but at the same time as the means whereby this culture dissolves itself in transition to a new form which the world will take; to turn away from Hegel means revolt against philosophy in general.

The philosophy of Count A. Cieszkowski (1814-1894)²⁷ is basically no less Slavonic, but in its abstract discipline and the way in which it construes questions, it can scarcely be distinguished from German Hegelianism. In 1832, he studied at the University of Berlin, attending the lectures of Michelet, Hotho, Werder, Gans, Henning, and Erdmann. His impression of the Germans was that they were the most "synthetic" and at the same time "abstract" of peoples. "They have no sense at all of concrete life. In Germany, everything is met with healthy and powerful approval; but all these elements lack organic and harmonizing accord. Everything dissolves into particularities, and thus the total picture is itself something abstract, a chimera, a *caput mortuum*. Knowledge and life, ideality and reality, are separated from each other. There is a constant hither and thither."²⁸ Cieszkowski sought to resolve this mutual "alienation" of theory and practice, of knowledge and life in the Slavonic spirit through a "philosophy of action," based on a "Christianism" which was to bring Hegelian "logism" back to the original Logos of the Christ-word.²⁹ In Hegel's philosophy he saw a final state which could be overcome only by passage from the element of thought to the element of will, because only the will reveals a new future.³⁰ On the other hand, Hegel's consummation also motivates Cieszkowski's return to the origins of philosophy in the original stages of Greek philosophy,³¹ to which Marx, Kierkegaard, and Lassalle also referred in contrast to the end reached by Hegel. His disagreement with Hegel centers on the latter's notion of "universality." The true spirit is not a universal and impersonal "thinking," but the spiritual

activity of the "complete self."³² For the most part, Hegel contrasted the universal to the particular and resolved both in real individuality—but occasionally he also contrasted the universal to the particular and the individual. Cieszkowski explains this terminological confusion thus: that in every case the universal remains dominant for Hegel, so that in spite of his protestations of arriving at the concrete "one," the individual is surrendered to universality and the subject to substance. According to Cieszkowski, the third way in which a resolution may be achieved between individuality and universality is through the perfect individuation of the spirit in the divine person. Only there does substance actually become subject.³³ In other words, Cieszkowski wishes to reach the Christian position within the framework of German philosophy of the spirit, a position which Kierkegaard developed in a paradoxical manner against the thinking of the universal. His goal is a philosophy of life in activity, which has God as the self, perfect in itself, freely creating from itself.³⁴

From this standpoint there develops a far-reaching correction of Hegel's philosophy of history, which Cieszkowski expanded in his *Prolegomena zur Historiosophie*.³⁵ In contrast to Hegel's division of history into the Oriental world, the Greco-Roman world, and the Christian-Germanic world, he sets forth the following threefold division: Ancient world to Christ, Christian-Germanic world to Hegel, and, as the third, the future, which is a component of all historicity, not only in the case of prophets but in every case, because history is not a deterministic process, but a free and responsible activity. We stand at the beginning of future history; it will bring the synthesis of the pre-Christian and Christian forms of the world. In his writings he discusses the concrete question of the future world as the reform of Christianity and of political society.³⁶

2 The Critical Distinctions of Marx and Kierkegaard³⁷

a Marx

In his criticism of the Hegelian philosophy of right, Marx does not quarrel with Hegel's principle, but only with the concrete working out of what he, too, asserted: the unity between reason and reality, and between universal essence and individual existence. The essence of political existence is the *polis*-nature of the social

organism, the "political universality." Hegel is not to be blamed for depicting "the nature of the modern state, . . . but for holding 'that which is' to be the essence of the state."³⁸ He mystifies *empeiria*, thereby turning the content of his idealistic exposition into "the crassest materialism," justifying philosophically that which merely happens to exist. His mediation between bourgeois society and the state does not really remove the contradiction between private-egoistic and public-communal existence; in fact, this very mediation points up this contradiction as being unresolved. "Hegel's greater insight lies in the fact that he perceives the separation between bourgeois society and political society as a contradiction. But his error lies in being content with the appearance of a resolution."³⁹ In reality, the "real man" of bourgeois society is the private individual of the existing constitution, because the abstraction of the state as such and that of private life are in themselves a contradiction.⁴⁰ "Therefore if a man would act as a real citizen, would achieve political importance and effectiveness, he must step out of his bourgeois reality, abstract from it, withdraw from this entire organization into his individuality; for the only existence which he will find for his status as a citizen is his pure, unmixed individuality. Without him, the existence of the state as an administration is impossible; and without the state his existence in bourgeois society is impossible. Only in contrast to these solely present social units, only as an individual, can he be a citizen of the state. His existence as a citizen of the state is an existence which lies outside of his social forms of existence, and is therefore purely individual."⁴¹

As a citizen of the state, the bourgeois is necessarily a stranger, someone external, foreign to himself—just as foreign and external as his private life remains to the state. His state is an "abstract" state because it is a bureaucratic administrative power which abstracts from the real, that is, private, life of its citizens, just as they as individual human beings abstract from it. The choice of a man to be a member of a state remains necessarily an abstract choice so long as the real situation of life presupposes a separation between public and private realms.⁴² As a private individual, separated from the public universality of life, he is himself privately determined. In communistic society, the reverse is true: there, the individuals as individuals participate in the state as their *res publica*. Communism, as Marx, the Hegelian, understood it, is the true resolution of conditions of existence which have no essence, the social identity of essential reason with the real existence of human beings existing as a

social organism. Hegel achieved this reconciliation only in the realm of thought; in reality, he took as the content of his description the historically conditioned contradiction between private-individual and public-communal existence.

This modern contradiction existed neither in antiquity nor in the Middle Ages. For the actual private individual of antiquity was the slave who had no share in the social organism, and who, therefore, was not a "human being" in the full sense of the word.⁴³ In the Middle Ages, every sphere of private life was at the same time public and corporate; the life of the people and the life of the state were identical, even though the individual man was not free. Only the French Revolution produced the abstraction of private life, together with the merely political state, conceiving the freedom of the bourgeois as a negative freedom from the state. But true freedom is a freedom of the highest social nature, in a "society of free men." And yet the sense for freedom left the world with the Greeks, and the sense for equality vanished with Christianity into the blue of heaven. Only a radical revolution of the existing conditions can produce a *polis* extended to become a cosmopolis, the "true democracy" of a classless society, realizing Hegel's philosophy of the state in the element of modern society. Only in the *polis* of the future can the world in fact become our own, the isomorphic "otherness" of our selves; in contrast, the bourgeois, private individual necessarily remains alien in his public world.

In complete contrast to this philosophic communism, Kierkegaard treated the private individual radically, as an "individual," opposing the inwardness of self-being to the outwardness of wholesale relationships. For him, the two unique prototypes of individual existence are Socrates in the Athenian *polis* and Christ against the entire world, consisting of both Jews and Gentiles.

b Kierkegaard

In the last pages of his *Concept of Irony*, Kierkegaard indicated that it was the "task of the age to translate the results of scientific knowledge"—meaning Hegelianism—"into personal life," to "appropriate" them personally. For it would be ridiculous for someone to teach throughout his whole life that "reality" has absolute significance and then to die without any further evidence of this validity than having proclaimed this wisdom. The negativity of irony is

useful as a means of verifying reality; it teaches us "to make reality real" by giving it the appropriate emphasis.⁴⁴ After finishing his dissertation, Kierkegaard undertook the trip to Berlin in order to hear Schelling, expecting of the latter's positive philosophy an elucidation of reality which he did not find in Hegel. We read in one entry of the journal: "It makes me happy to have heard Schelling's second lectures—indescribably so. Long enough have I sighed, and my thoughts sighed within me. He spoke of the relationship between philosophy and reality; and, when he spoke the word 'reality,' my thoughts leapt for joy within me as did the child in Elisabeth's womb. I remember almost every word which he said from that moment forth. At this point, perhaps, clarity is possible. This one single word, which reminded me of all my philosophical torment and agony."⁴⁵ This expectation immediately gave way to disappointment: "My age does not allow me to assimilate drop by drop what I would scarcely open my mouth to swallow all at once. I am too old to listen to lectures, just as Schelling is too old to give them. His whole theory of 'potencies' betrays complete impotence."⁴⁶ An epigram in *Either-Or* reflects his disappointment with both Hegel and Schelling: "Listening to philosophers discourse upon reality is often just as misleading as seeing in the window of a secondhand store a sign which says: Pressing Done. If you bring your washing to have it pressed, you have been taken in. The sign hanging there is only there to be sold."⁴⁷ From this time on, there runs through Kierkegaard's works a more or less explicit polemic against philosophy's claim to comprehend reality through reason.

Unlike Marx, Kierkegaard sees Hegel's failure to come to grips with reality not in a failure to follow through with his principles, but in Hegel's deliberate equation of essence with existence. This prevents him from ever describing a "real" existence, but rather only an ideal "abstract existence." For the *essentia* of something, *what* it is, concerns its universal nature; *existentia*, *that* something is, concerns its particular individuality, the particular existence of you and me, for whom it is a matter of concern whether it is or not.⁴⁸ Kierkegaard's criticism of Hegel goes back to Kant's criticism of the ontological proof of God, in order to justify his differentiation between essence and existence as the "only honest way to think of existence."⁴⁹ But Hegel could not see that existence "spatiates" the analysis of being, because he did his thinking not as a man, but as one possessed of a particular talent, a professional thinker. He under-

stood only the notion of being, but not its reality, which is always individual.⁵⁰ But the category of individuality is not one category among others, but the definition of all reality par excellence; for, according to Aristotle, the only thing which really exists is "this particular something," the individual thing which is present here and now.⁵¹ Hegel's theory of the notion admittedly postulates individuality as the only thing that is real, but in indifferent mediation between the particular and the universal.⁵² For him, individual reality is self-reflected particularity of the universal; thus the individual man is a particular instance of universal humanity, the essence of which is the spirit. Kierkegaard did not deny this universality of humanity, this common property of all mankind; but he considered it realizable only in the individual, in contrast to whom the universality of the spirit (Hegel) or of mankind (Marx) seemed to him without existential meaning.

Basically, Kierkegaard's polemic against Hegel's notion of reality only consists of variations of the one central idea that no "system" of existence can come to grips with reality and that a "paragraph" discussing reality within the system is an absolute protest against the system.⁵³ "If the last section of the logic is given the heading 'Reality,' the advantage is gained of giving the appearance that we have arrived in the logic at the highest point—or, if you will, at the lowest. But meanwhile we see the disadvantage: neither the logic nor reality is done any service—not reality, for the logic cannot make room for contingency, which is an essential part of reality—not logic, for when it has thought of reality it has taken into itself something which it cannot assimilate; it has anticipated what it is intended merely to predispose. The penalty shows up clearly: all investigation into what reality is becomes difficult, perhaps impossible for a time, because the word must be granted time to reflect upon itself, time to forget its mistake."⁵⁴

The "contingent" or even "miraculous"⁵⁵ which Hegel excludes from the notion of reality consists precisely in the fact that anything whatsoever exists and that I exist at all.⁵⁶ It is this mere "existence" which comprises absolute "interest" in reality, while Hegelian abstraction demands that the philosopher, in fact, be disinterested.⁵⁷ The "interest" of metaphysics is the downfall of the immanence of the system,⁵⁸ within which being and nothingness are indifferent possibilities of pure thought. For, for the man who himself exists, existence is in itself a matter of greatest interest; "reality is his in-

volved interest in existence." "What reality is cannot be expressed in the language of abstraction. Reality is an 'inter-esse' in the midst of the hypothetical abstract unity of thought and being."⁵⁹

Thus Kierkegaard elevates the brute fact of existence to the status of decisive reality, transforming the universal problem of being into an inquiry into human existence; the actual problem is not *what* it is but *that* it exists at all. Similarly, the existential philosophy which derives from Kierkegaard no longer inquires into *essentia* apart from *existentia*; instead, existence per se seems to be solely essential.

Kierkegaard shares this grounding of reality in "interest" with Feuerbach, Ruge, and Marx, albeit the interest in the case of Feuerbach is sensuous, of Ruge ethico-political, and of Marx practical and social. Kierkegaard calls this interest "passion" or "ardor," and contrasts it to speculative reason.⁶⁰ The essence of passion is that, in contrast to the conclusive "termination" of Hegel's system, it compels a de-termination⁶¹ which decides "either" one way "or" another. A decision par excellence is the *leap*, this "decisive protest against the inverse methodological process," namely, dialectical reflection.⁶² The determined passion of a decision ready for this leap determines an immediate beginning, while the beginning of Hegelian logic truly starts not with the "immediate," but with the product of an extreme reflection: pure being in general, abstracted from all real existence.⁶³ With this definition of existence, Kierkegaard reduces the self-knowing realm of rational reality to the "only reality of which an existing person has more than mere knowledge," namely, the reality "that he truly is."⁶⁴ To thought, which is oriented historically, this may seem to be "acosmism"; but, it is nevertheless the only way to take the encyclopedic, fragmented knowledge of the age and guide it back to its origin, once again to receive a primary impression of existence.⁶⁵ But it would be a mistake to conclude that the existing person does not think at all but seizes knowledge like a Neapolitan beggar. Rather the thinker refers everything to himself because of his interest in an existence which understands itself, which participates in ideas but does not itself exist as an idea.⁶⁶ The task put before Greece was to attain the abstraction of "being"; now, the situation is reversed—the difficulty lies in arriving once more at existence upon the height of Hegelian abstraction. To understand oneself as one actually is was the Greek principle, and to an even greater degree the Christian principle; but

ever since the victory of the "system," a man no longer loves, believes, and acts himself—he only wants to know what all this is.

Kierkegaard's polemical notion of real existence is directed not only against Hegel, but also as a corrective against the demands of the age. Individual existence, limited to itself, is (1) the only reality par excellence in contrast to the system; the latter includes everything on an equal footing, leveling differences (between being and nothingness, between thought and being, between universality and individuality) down to the even plane of indifferent being. It is (2) the reality of the individual in contrast to the historical universal (world history and the generation, the crowd, the public, and the age), which has no concern for the individual as such. It is (3) the inward existence of the individual in contrast to the external superficiality of circumstances. It is (4) a Christian existence before God, in contrast to Christianity made superficial in the spread of historical Christendom. And it is (5) above all, with all these characteristics, an existence which decides either for or against life as a Christian. As an existence which decides one way or another, it is the antithesis of "discretion" and of Hegel's comprehension, which have no place for an Either-Or.⁶⁷

Shortly before the revolution of 1848, Marx and Kierkegaard gave to the demand for decision a language whose words even now press their claim: Marx in the *Communist Manifesto* (1847) and Kierkegaard in a "Literary Announcement" (1846). The one manifesto ends, "Proletarians of all lands, unite!"—the other ends with the demand that each work out his own salvation, otherwise any prophecy as to the future course of the world is bearable, at most, as a joke. But viewed historically, this contrast merely represents two aspects of a common destruction of the bourgeois-Christian world. Marx based his revolution of the bourgeois-capitalistic world upon the mass of the proletariat, while Kierkegaard, in his struggle against the bourgeois-Christian world, depends completely upon the individual. This corresponds to Marx's view of bourgeois society as a society of "separate individuals," in which every man is alienated from his "species," and to Kierkegaard's view of Christianity as a Christendom extended en masse, in which no one is a follower of Christ. But Hegel mediated these contrasts of existence, making of them one essence: bourgeois society and the state, the state and Christendom. Therefore, the selective decisions of Marx and of Kierkegaard are intended to emphasize the differences and the con-

traditions within that mediation. Marx's target is the alienation of man from himself produced by capitalism, Kierkegaard's is the alienation of the Christian from himself produced by Christianity.

3 Criticism of the Capitalistic World and Secularized Christianity

a Marx

Marx analyzed the alienation of man in the realm of the state, society, and economy. The political expression of this alienation is the contradiction between bourgeois society and the state, its immediate social expression is the existence of the proletariat, and its economic expression is the existence of our commodities as merchandise. Capitalism, private economy with private ownership, is the antithesis of communism, communal economy with communal ownership. But even the criticism of "political economy" is and remains oriented toward the totality of the historical world and the related form of human existence.⁶⁸ The inhabitant of the capitalistic world is alienated from himself because capital, merchandise, and paid labor are the objective expression of circumstances under which man as producer and consumer is not (in the Hegelian sense) "at one" or "free."

The difference between Hegel's "system of wants" and Marx's "criticism of political economy" is shown by the fact that Marx attacks as an alienation of man from himself what Hegel views as a positive component of all human activity: self-renunciation. The spirit—that universal essence of man—is an interpretation of itself within the world, and at the same time "self-recollection," that is, a return from renunciation to itself. The result of this movement of the spirit is a mediation at every stage between its own being and all other being, "a tendency to become proportionate to itself in the otherness of its own being," starting from this universal structure of the spirit, which "ex-ists"⁶⁹ and renounces itself productively, generating the world, Hegel viewed the particular relationship between man and "object" as "property," which he describes in more detail as "possession," "use," and "renunciation."⁷⁰ An object fulfills its purpose by being utilized by others. This use is not external or foreign to the object itself; for it exists to be used, its entire existence is existence-for-a-purpose. The complete use of an object is the object

itself, just as a field realizes its own peculiar being through its yield. Thus the substance of an object is its "externality," which is realized through use. When I have full use of it, I have it as "property." Just as in my relationship to an object, the totality of my personal self-manifestation and the total use of my human powers is identical with the self-manifesting life of the personality.⁷¹ There follows, for Hegel, the following view of the renunciation of human activity: "Out of my particular physical and spiritual abilities and possibilities for activity, I can surrender individual productions and a temporary use to another individual, because, by this limitation, they acquire an external relationship to my totality and universality. Through the renunciation of *all* my time, made concrete through labor, and the totality of my production, I would make its very substance, my universal activity and reality, my personality, the property of another."⁷² Hegel illustrates this difference between partial and total renunciation by the difference between the slave of antiquity and the modern domestic. "As a rule the Athenian slave may have had easier tasks and more intellectual work than our servants, but he was nevertheless a slave, because the entire scope of his activities was surrendered to his master." In contrast, Marx concludes from the system of production that really exists that even a "particular" activity can surrender the entire man, even though he be legally his own master since nobody compels him to sell his labor. Nevertheless the real existence of the "free" wage earner is less free than that of the slave of antiquity. Even though he is the owner of his own labor and has equal rights with the owner of the means of production, and surrenders only a particular kind of work for a particular length of time, he nevertheless becomes completely the slave of the labor market because his salable labor is the only thing which he in fact possesses and must surrender if he is to exist at all.⁷³ For Marx, the wage earner incorporates the universal problem of bourgeois society, the economic nature of which consists in the production of a de-personalized world of merchandise. The mercantile nature of all our commodities and the corresponding use made of human beings is not restricted to the sphere of economics; it defines every manifestation of human life, its mode of production, as a surrender, a sale. Even intellectual and spiritual production becomes merchandise, a book becomes an item in the book market.⁷⁴ "There is one great fact which is characteristic of the nineteenth century, and which no party can deny. On the one hand, industrial and scientific forces have been brought to life such as no previous era of history could

dream of. On the other, signs of deterioration are evident, a deterioration which places the famous horrors of the last days of the Roman Empire in the shade. In our time everything seems pregnant with its opposite. Machines are endowed with the wonderful power of reducing human labor and making it more productive: we see how they lead to hunger and overwork. The newly released powers of wealth, by a strange quirk of fate, become sources of poverty. The triumphs of art seem to be bought at the price of character. Mankind becomes lord over nature, but man becomes slave of man or slave of his own base nature. . . . The outcome of all our inventions and all our progress seems to be that material forces acquire spiritual life, and human existence becomes a dumb, material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science on the one hand, modern misery and decay on the other; this contrast between the productive forces and the social conditions of our epoch is a fact, a palpable, overwhelming, and indisputable fact. Many parties may lament this fact; others may yearn to be rid of our modern capabilities in order thereby to be rid of our modern conflicts. Or they may imagine that such obvious progress in economics demands an equally obvious step backwards in politics for its consummation. For our own part, we do not mistake the crafty spirit which continues vigorously to produce all these conflicts. We know that the new powers of society, if they are to accomplish good work, demand *new men*. . . .⁷⁵

A phenomenological analysis of this universal problem is given in the first portion of *Das Kapital*, in which Marx exhibits the mercantile character of everything we produce. In merchandise he sees revealed the basic ontological structure of our entire physical world, its "mercantile form." It characterizes both the alienation of man from himself and the alienation of the world of things from him.⁷⁶ The sociocritical and also human point of this economic analysis, however, appears in *Das Kapital* only in passing remarks and footnotes. On the other hand, it lies at the very surface of the report on the debates *in re* the law dealing with theft of wood, published in 1842.⁷⁷ This contains the first, exemplary disclosure of that basic inversion of "means" and "end," or of "object" and "man," which leads to the alienation of man from himself. To be related to oneself as to something other, something alien, this extreme "externality" is what Marx in his dissertation called "materialism," describing himself as an "idealist" seeking to abolish this alienation. Parting with an object is self-alienation, because man does not exist for the object,

mean a cessation of the division of labor into mental and physical alone, but also an abolition of the opposition between city and country, which is merely "the crassest expression of the subsumption of the individual under the division of labor."⁸⁰ But it can be abolished completely only in a society which transforms human nature as well as the institution of property.

Thus *Das Kapital* also is more than merely a criticism of political economy; it is also a criticism of the human member of bourgeois society guided by capitalistic economy, the "economic cell" of which is the mercantile form assumed by all products of labor. What was originally produced for *use* is not immediately exchanged, as needed, to be utilized; instead it comes onto the market as an independent mercantile value, taking this detour from the hand of the seller, for whom it has merely exchange value, to the hand of the user as purchaser. This independent existence of an object intended for use in the form of merchandise exemplifies once more the universal fact that in the bourgeois-capitalistic world the product dominates man. To discover the process which led to this perversion, Marx undertook his analysis of the "objective appearance" of the modern social conditions of labor in the "fetish nature" of merchandise. As merchandise, an ordinary table is a thing both tangible and supertangible. What is tangible is only what it is, not as merchandise, but as an object intended for use. On the other hand, what it is as merchandise which costs money—because it costs labor and time—is on the surface an intangible social relationship. In this manner, it "not only stands with its legs upon the floor, but in comparison to all other merchandise stands upon its head, and from its wooden head develops worries, more miraculously than had its individual parts begun to dance." "Thus the mysterious nature of the mercantile form consists in one simple fact: it reflects back to men the social character of their own labor as an objective character of the products of this labor, as natural social characteristics of these things. Thus it also shows that the social relationship of the producer to the total labor is a social relationship of objects which exists independently. Through this *quid pro quo*, the products of labor become merchandise, tangible-intangible or social things. . . . It is only the particular social relationship of men among themselves which presumes to see here the phantasmagorical form of a relationship between things. Thus if we are to find an analogy, we must escape into the mists of the religious world. Here the products of the human brain seem endowed with a life of their own; they seem self-

gins with an ironic exegesis of Plato's thesis that philosophers should rule the state. "Somewhere in his *Republic*, as you know, Plato says, 'One can hope for justice only when those men come to power who have no desire to. . . .' This statement is also true for other situations where something (meaning Christianity) is intended to be taken seriously." The true politician and the true Christian can have no desire to rule because they know on the one hand what the state is, and on the other, what Christendom is. But in the so-called Christian State, the human becomes the "patron" of the divine. "How in the world," asks Kierkegaard, with an allusion to Hegel, "did such an absurdity ever occur to such a reasonable entity as the state"—to become "patron" of the divine? "Well, that is a long story; primarily, it is bound up with the fact that in the course of time Christianity has been accorded its true character—as the divine—less and less. Think of a statesman about the time of the appearance of Christianity in the world, and ask him, 'Quid tibi videtur? Don't you think that would be a good religion for the state?' Presumably he would think you were mad and not deign to give you an answer. But when people adhere to Christianity out of cowardly fear of what others will think, out of mediocrity, out of opportunism, the matter appears in a different light. In such a case it could truly seem that Christendom (having become a miserable creature . . . through its treatment at the hands of its adherents) should be very thankful for its protection through the state, since in this manner it still continues to be respected."⁹⁰ Man cannot become the patron of God, for true Christianity is nothing more nor less than following Christ, an absolute renunciation of the entire world. But the world exists for man primarily in the form of the state, and so the "moment" is aimed at the acknowledged lie in the apparent understanding between Christendom and the state. "Let us assume that the state employed one thousand officials who earned a living for themselves and their families . . . by opposing Christianity; that would indeed be an attempt, if possible, to make Christianity impossible. And yet this attempt . . . would be in fact far less perilous than what actually happens: the state employs one thousand officials who, as 'heralds of Christianity,' have . . . a pecuniary interest first in having people *call* themselves Christians . . . and second in having things remain as they are, so that these people do not get to know what in truth Christianity is. . . . And the effectiveness of this state of affairs is not described as opposing Christianity and for this purpose employing one thousand officials, fur-

nishing them and their families with a living; no, they 'proclaim' Christianity, they 'extend Christianity,' they 'work for Christianity'! . . . Is not this practically the most perilous thing conceivable for the purpose of making Christianity impossible?"⁹¹ This Christianity of the State Church, or even of the people (as represented in Denmark by Grundtvig⁹²), is the opposite of the truth proclaimed by the New Testament. The extension of modern Christendom has done away with Christianity. Hegel's reconciliation between church and state turned into the religious revolt of Kierkegaard and the social revolt of Marx.

In *18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte*,⁹³ Marx describes the era of the bourgeois revolution by stating that its passions were without truth and its truths without passion. Its world, completely prosaic, continues to produce only by borrowing; its development is a constant repetition of the same cycle of tension and relaxation; its contrasts grow more and more violent, only to be reduced and resolved; its history is without event, its heroes without heroic deeds. Its "supreme law" is "indecision." In his criticism of the present under the heading of "leveling,"⁹⁴ Kierkegaard uses almost these same words to describe this world barren of passion or decision; to the leveling of significant differences he opposed their accentuation. As concrete instances of this leveling, he analyzes that which reduces speech and silence to irresponsible chatter, that which reduces private and public to private-public publicity, that which reduces form and content to a formlessness without content, that which reduces concealment and revelation to representation, that which reduces love and debauchery to passionless flirtation, that which reduces objective knowledge and subjective conviction to an unconvincing argument. To the bankruptcy of this "world grown old," Marx opposed the proletariat; Kierkegaard, solitary existence before God. The economic disturbances seemed to him to have merely symptomatic significance: "They indicate that the European constitution . . . has undergone a total change. In the future we shall have inward disturbances—*secessio in montem sacrum*."⁹⁵ Even more decisive than the economic, social, and political bankruptcy toward which Europe is moving is its spiritual decline, its "confusion of tongues" brought about by the high-speed press. The best solution would be to silence the chimes of time for an hour; since this would presumably not succeed, he would address his contemporaries in the words of the financial experts: "Economy, energetic and vigorous economy measures!"⁹⁶ that is, reduction of human existence to the ele-

mentary questions, to the bare question of existence as such; this was for Kierkegaard the other side of what Marx called the "secular question as to the value of life." Thus both criticisms are based on the same hostility toward the existing order: to Marx's secular criticism of the bourgeois-capitalistic world there corresponds Kierkegaard's equally radical criticism of the bourgeois-Christian world, which is as far removed from primitive Christianity as the bourgeois state is from the *polis*. Marx confronts the external, existential situation of the masses with a decision, and Kierkegaard the internal,⁹⁷ existential relationship of the individual to himself; Marx philosophizes without God and Kierkegaard before God—but these obvious contrasts have a common presupposition in their dissociation from God and the world. Both no longer look upon existence as Hegel did: as pure "ex-istere," as the appearance of an internal essence in the appropriate form of existence.⁹⁸ For Kierkegaard, it is a retreat to individual existence which makes decisions according to conscience; for Marx, it is an advance to a political decision of circumstances considered en masse. Because of an identical hostility toward Hegel's rational world, they separate once more what he had put together. Marx decides for a humanitarian, "human" world, and Kierkegaard for an otherworldly Christianity which, "humanly speaking," is "superhuman."

When intellectual history between Hegel and Nietzsche is understood in its systematic and historical logic, it becomes evident that Marx's economic analysis and Kierkegaard's experimental psychology belong together both conceptually and historically: they comprise *one* antithesis to Hegel. They comprehend "what is" as a world determined by merchandise and money, and as an existence shot through with irony and the "drudgery" of boredom. The "realm of spirits" of Hegel's philosophy becomes a phantom in a world of *labor* and *despair*. For Marx, a "German ideology" perverts Hegel's self-existent "idea," and for Kierkegaard, a "sickness unto death" perverts the self-satisfaction of the absolute spirit. For both, Hegel's consummation of history becomes the terminus of a prehistory leading up to an extensive revolution and an intensive reformation. His concrete mediations are converted to abstract decisions for the ancient Christian God and a new earthly world. In place of Hegel's active spirit, Marx substituted a theory of social practice, and Kierkegaard a reflection of inner activity; thus both consciously and deliberately deny *theoria* as the title of highest human activity. Far apart as they are, they are closely related to each

other in their common attack upon the existing order,⁹⁹ and in escaping from Hegel. Whatever separates them also confirms their unity in the same fixation upon that total estrangement between the earthly and the divine which, at the turn of the nineteenth century, Hegel had taken as the point of departure for his reinstatement of the absolute as the highest form of union between opposites.

4 Estrangement as the Source of Hegel's Reconciliation

Hegel's reconciliation with "what is" itself developed out of the same thing which it gave rise to: a fundamental estrangement from the existing order. Hegel lived through this crisis together with Hölderlin; his tacit dissociation from the friend of his youth marks the beginning of his reconciliation with the world as it is. Hegel turned away from his "youth," whose essence is individuality and a merely idealistic generality. In the last sentence of the first version of his system, dated precisely September 14, 1800, Hegel decided in favor of a bold "agreement with the age," in order not to remain estranged from himself and from the world. But *if* such an agreement were "ignoble and base," Hegel confesses at this decisive turning-point in his life, the only thing left would be the "absolute One" of isolation and fixation, either upon the bare subjectivity of internal existence, or the strict objectivity of the external world. The ultimate and absolute would then be the self-estrangement of life, one and entire, into "absolute finitude against absolute infinity." For the estrangement *per se*, it makes no difference whether man considers himself absolutely independent or absolutely dependent upon a distant God, whether he views himself as an isolated individual or as an existence *en masse*, whether he is turned totally outward or totally inward; for each of these extremes already implies the other, and "the more independent and separate the internal becomes, so likewise the more independent and separate the external becomes."

Shortly after finishing the first draft of his system, Hegel writes to Schelling¹⁰⁰ that the "ideal of his youth" has become a "system," and he would like to obtain a university lectureship in order to exert some influence once more upon human life. By accepting an ordinary position he placed himself within the system of the existing world. But even during his early period in Frankfurt he still vacillated between the painful pleasure of estrangement and the power

of reconciliation; not only did he not yet want to enter into an "alliance with the world," he even wanted to prevent it.¹⁰¹ And even at the age of forty he claimed his bride as the "agent of reconciliation" between his "true inward self and the way I behave—too frequently—towards reality."¹⁰² But in principle, as early as the turn of the nineteenth century, Hegel had already decided for the reality of the world as the "objective element."¹⁰³ From that point on he became implacably opposed, to the point of wrath and derision, to all those souls fragmented by romanticism, overcome by the "vertigo of the spirit," estranged from themselves and the world, glorious in their misery. From the fate of Hölderlin and then of the romantics he became convinced that it was more than personal misfortune not to "find oneself" and feel "at home" in any world: it was "untruth" and the cruelest "fate of being without a fate."

But nevertheless this estrangement remains as a "presupposition" of philosophy.¹⁰⁴ The other presupposition is unity as the predetermined goal. During his stay at Bern and at Frankfurt, Hegel experienced this twofold presupposition of the absolute as the primary "source of the need for philosophy." At the time he left Frankfurt, he explicated it in the context of the general condition of the world; and in the first Jena essays, he interpreted it abstractly as the "identity between identity and nonidentity."¹⁰⁵

Hegel's crisis is not documented in reflection upon himself, but in his analysis of the "world crisis" in an epoch of transition.¹⁰⁶ The tendency, already decisive, to reach an agreement with the age is expressed first in a criticism of the existing order, because this criticism is the prerequisite for any agreement with "what is." In this description of the contemporary world crisis, which for a time remained unpublished, Hegel anticipated many features of that criticism which Marx later developed fully. On the other hand, the antitheses which Marx believed he discovered in Hegel's mediations are just those which Hegel reconciled. The mediating analyses of the philosophy of right proceeded from a criticism of the existing order which itself discovered the antitheses to be mediated. This made possible Marx's critical attack upon Hegel's justification of the existing order. Without the possibility of knowing anything of Hegel's criticism,¹⁰⁷ the young Marx in 1841 referred back from the Hegel of 1821 to the young Hegel of 1798—just as Feuerbach's religion of love and Bauer's criticism of Christianity actually go back to Hegel's early theological writings. The criticism of the Young Hegelians repeated the crisis which Hegel had gone through

himself before overcoming it in his system. It is therefore no mere coincidence that Marx often describes the crisis of bourgeois society in the same way Hegel had already described it, before discovering how to "overcome" the "lost extremes" of morality in a state modeled after Plato and Rousseau, empirically the Prussian State.

As Hegel characterized the world crisis, all the phenomena of the age indicate that satisfaction is no longer to be found in the old life. But in order to "abolish what is negative in the existing world, in order to find one's place within it, in order to live," a transition must be found from "idea" to "life," from reason to reality. Particularly in the German Empire, the "ruling totality" has vanished as the source of all justice; it has isolated itself and made of itself something particular, rather than universal. Even the individual citizen is no longer a whole person when, as in the existing tension between church and state, he is "shattered" into two "fragments," into "one person for the state, another for the church."¹⁰⁸ Universality of life occurs only as an idea. What public opinion¹⁰⁹ has already decided upon, through loss of confidence, does not take much effort to be brought to the attention of everyone. (It was Marx's concern to bring this to the attention of the proletariat as a class.) The vanished "totality" of the whole must be restored. And in the philosophy of right, Hegel sought to demonstrate that the idea of this universal totality is also present as a reality. First, he discovered the contradictions. He sees such a contradiction in a man's restricting himself to a small, subservient world of personal possessions, in which mere "objects" become absolute—the world of the "philistine"¹¹⁰ and of "merchandise"—and, corresponding to it, a transcendence in thought of this narrow world "reaching toward heaven"—in Marx's terminology, its "solemn completion" through the spirit of material conditions. In addition, he sees the correlated antithesis of poverty and luxury,¹¹¹ a constant theme of Marx. A better man rightly disdains this life, which is restricted on all sides, as is "offered" and "permitted" to him; but it does not suffice only to "imagine" true nature and make the content of the imagination one's constant companion, as did Hölderlin in "Hyperion." Man "must also experience what is imagined as something living," through the real resolution of existing contradictions. But this can come about only after things have come to a head, "when life as it presently exists has lost its power and all its dignity." According to Hegel, as according to Marx, the existing order is attacked and defeated not through external and internal violence

directed against itself or the world, but through its "own truth." This truth, hidden within the present order and digging its grave, is the sought-for universal basis of right. For the sake of its own existence, even that restricted life must base itself on this, although it has disintegrated into abstract particularities, until a better life denies it the living right to make this claim. And time has already brought a hint of such a life. "The age is moving irresistibly toward the actions of great individuals, toward the movements of entire peoples, toward the way poets have represented nature and destiny. Through metaphysics, the restrictions are given their boundaries and their necessity in the context of the whole."¹¹²

In his essay upon conditions in Württemberg, Hegel, with the revolutionary passion of righteousness, concludes the necessity for change. The alienation which is conscious of itself is a consequence of the fact that it is possible to imagine and describe, to hope for and to bring about, other, better times, in contrast to "what is." Thus in times of alienation, "what is" is not an "eternal present," but a transitory form of existence, something which merely happens to be without true reality. Then to "comprehend" it means what it also meant to Marx: not a mere understanding, but criticism and transformation. "Universal and deep is the feeling that the structure of the state, as it now exists, is untenable; universal is the anxiety that it will collapse and injure everyone in its fall. With this conviction in one's heart, is this fear to become so powerful that it will be left entirely to luck what will be overthrown, what preserved, what will stand, or what will fall? Should one not himself desire to desert what is untenable? Calmly discover what must be termed untenable? In this evaluation, righteousness is the only criterion; the courage to practice righteousness is the only power that can eliminate completely what is insecure, with honor and glory, and bring forth an assured state of affairs. How blind are those who would like to believe in the continued endurance of institutions, constitutions, laws which no longer agree with the customs, the needs, the opinions of mankind, from which the spirit has fled; who would like to believe that forms with which understanding and feeling no longer are concerned are mighty enough to continue to comprise the bond of a people! All attempts to reawaken confidence in situations, parts of a constitution, in which people no longer believe, all attempts to gloss over the gravediggers with fine words not only cover their clever inventors with disgrace, but prepare the way for a much more terrible explosion, in which the demand for improvement is joined to

revenge, and the deceived, oppressed masses take vengeance for this dishonesty. . . . But if an alteration is to take place, something must be altered. It is necessary to state such an obvious truth because the anxiety which must, differs from the courage which will. The men who are driven by the former feel and admit the necessity for change; but when it comes time to make a beginning, they exhibit the weakness of wanting to retain all that they happen to be in possession of, like a spendthrift who is under the necessity of limiting his expenses, but finds indispensable all of his wants which he is advised to cut out, is unwilling to give up anything, until finally his necessities, as well as his luxuries, are taken from him. A people, the German people, must not display such a weakness. Objectively convinced that a transformation is necessary, they must not be afraid to conduct an investigation in detail. Whoever suffers injustice must demand the removal of the injustice; whoever possesses undeserved goods must surrender them willingly."¹¹³

This breakdown of unity between the internal and the external, between private and public life, has the result that the whole is "without spirit," or, as Marx says (from Feuerbach's point of view), "inhuman." Thus for Hegel, as for Marx, the positive goal of the criticism of the existing order is the restoration of a spirit-filled (or human) unity in the whole of real life.

In spite of this summons to effect a transformation, Hegel's criticism is no Marxist manifesto. As a political writer, he seeks to comprehend "what is." Such a comprehension is the express goal of his next critical discussion apropos the German Constitution; it is permeated with melancholy resignation. Despite biting criticism, it seeks only to come to a better understanding of the present state of affairs, and even promote a "moderate toleration." Hegel disguises the ambiguity of this transition from criticism to understanding by eliminating the difference between the ideal and reality in the notion of the idea; he removes the contrast between what should be and what is, as "destiny," necessary being.¹¹⁴ He explicates the proposition concerning understanding as follows: "The thoughts contained in this work can have no other purpose or effect in their public expression than the understanding of what is, and thus the promotion of a more tranquil view of the same, together with a moderate toleration in actual contact and in words. For it is not what is that makes us vehement and causes us suffering; it is what is not as it should be. But if we recognize that it is as it must be,

that is, it is not arbitrary or accidental, we also recognize that it should be so."¹¹⁵ But how does Hegel recognize what must be, and hence also what is as it should be? By claiming to understand what the purpose of the "world spirit" is.¹¹⁶

But the boldness with which Hegel bases his insight into what must be on the self-conscious spirit of history must be corrected by his own evaluation of the Germans, in the context of the previous quotation and with reference to the supposed necessities of politics. He says of the Germans that "on account of their notion," in other words precisely because they are so philosophical, they appear so dishonest as to admit the true nature of nothing. "Caught in an eternal contradiction between what they demand and what does not take place as they demand, they appear not only censorious, but, when they speak merely of their notions, insincere and dishonest. They include the idea of necessity in their notions of right and duty, but nothing comes of this necessity. They are themselves so accustomed to the fact that, on the one hand, their words always contradict their deeds, and on the other they attempt to make of the facts something quite different from what they really are, and to reinterpret them in the light of certain notions. But it would be completely misleading to try to learn about what usually happens in Germany from the notions of what should happen, namely, according to the laws of the state. For the dissolution of the state is most easily recognized when everything goes contrary to law. It would be equally misleading if the form derived from these laws were to be taken in truth for the basis and purpose of the same. For just on account of their notions the Germans appear so dishonest as to admit nothing as it really is, nor to present a thing to be either more or less than it really amounts to. They remain true . . . to their notions, but as a rule the facts do not agree; and thus whichever side would reap an advantage seeks to bring both together through words, by force of notions."

But Hegel's reconciliation itself contains the same dishonesty as is present in the censoriousness of which he accuses his fellow countrymen. It is not accidental that his criticism closes with a problematic accommodation. Both the challenge to the existing order and the accommodation to it are disguised by the ambiguity in comprehending "what is"; this can include that which merely happens to exist as well as what is truly real. Using as a bridge this fundamental ambiguity in the notion of reality¹¹⁷ as "what is,"

offered sacrifice, whose blessing they implored upon all their business, under whose banner alone their armies were victorious, to whom they gave thanks for their victories, to whom their happiness dedicated their songs and their seriousness, their prayers, whose altars, riches, temples, and statues were the pride of the peoples, the glory of their art, whose worship and festivals were merely the occasion for general rejoicing; how could belief in these gods, woven into the web of human life with a thousand threads, be torn loose from its context? . . . How strong must be the counterforce which can overcome that force!"¹²³

The answer which Hegel, as a young man, gave to this question coincides with that given later by Bauer and Nietzsche: the penetration of Christianity can be explained only on the basis of the decadence of the Roman world.¹²⁴ Only when the freedom of public life and its virtues collapsed and the Romans led merely private lives¹²⁵ could a religion gain a foothold which had no use for political self-sufficiency and freedom, because it came itself from a people of "the utmost depravity." "The doctrine of the depravity of human nature was conceived of necessity within the womb of this depraved fragment of mankind, who were even compelled to despise themselves from the moral point of view, although in other respects they considered themselves the favorites of God. On the one hand, it agreed with their experience; on the other, it satisfied their pride by removing their guilt and finding a ground for pride even in the feeling of misery. It made an honor of disgrace, it sanctified and made eternal their incapacity by making a sin of the very possibility of any strength."¹²⁶ To Romans fallen from power, who had saved themselves from death through flight, bribery, and mayhem, who had lost all self-respect, a religious attitude must have been welcome which, under the name of passive obedience, converted impotence and dishonor into honor and the highest of virtues—"through which operation these men could look with happy wonder upon the contempt of others and their own feeling of disgrace and see it transformed into pride and glory." "And thus we see St. Ambrose or St. Anthony, together with a crowd of people whose city is being approached by a herd of barbarians, not hastening to defend it upon the walls, but kneeling in the churches and the streets imploring the divinity to turn aside their terrible misfortune. And why should they have been willing to die fighting?"¹²⁷ Thus we read; it is a theory which coincides with Bauer's and Nietzsche's thesis of the origin of Christianity from the resentment of a slave morality.

Through this "reversal of nature," the divinity gained a "positivity" or "objectivity" which stands irreconcilably opposed to any living relationship with it. "In this manner, through its objective God, this spirit was revealed. Men began to know such an astonishing amount about God, as though many secrets of his nature, in so many formulas, had not been whispered, like other secrets, by one man into the ear of his neighbor, but shouted out to all the world, and children learned them by heart. The spirit of the age was revealed in the objectivity of its god, as he was placed, not in infinity, according to his measure, but into an alien world, in which we have no share, where we cannot settle by our own doing, but can at best beg or charm our way in, as man himself became a not-I and his divinity another not-I. It was revealed most clearly in the multitude of miracles it produced, which took the place of man's own reason in the realm of decisions and convictions. Worst of all, men fought, murdered, defamed, burned, stole, lied, and deceived, all in the name of this god. In such a period, the divinity must completely have ceased to be something subjective, being transformed completely into an object. The perversion of the maxims of morality follows easily and logically from this theory."¹²⁸ The capacity for such objective belief presupposes the loss of freedom and self-determination. Hegel views the legal spirit of Judaism as an extreme case of such a loss,¹²⁹ a spirit which Jesus sought to conquer with his religion of love. But even this battle against "positivity" did not achieve a complete "sense of wholeness," however much the living relationship of love had reduced the separation between the "spirit" and the "real." A further development was still necessary in order to achieve a "mating" between the divine and the human, to guarantee satisfaction to the yearning for this mating, and to make of religion a complete life. For, all the historical forms of the Christian religion have retained the basic principle of contrast and opposition. Both the union of the mystic with God and the connection of the Catholic and Protestant Churches with the course of the secular world have been unable to bring real life and worship into agreement: "between these extremes, found in the contrasting of God and the world, the divine and life, the Christian Church has described the circle backwards and forwards; but it is against its essential nature to find peace in an impersonal living beauty. It is its destiny that church and state, worship and life, piety and virtue, religious and secular activity can never be joined together."¹³⁰ It is

just this unification which Hegel later considered he had effected in his philosophy of the spirit, whose truth is the "whole."¹³¹

After Hegel had turned away from Hölderlin's yearning after the Greek situation of a beautiful harmony between religious and political life, he undertook to build the "kingdom of God"¹³² philosophically within the existing order of reality and to elevate dogmatic Christianity to the level of philosophical existence, in order to guarantee to the human spirit that sense of belonging in the historical world which he considered the peculiar characteristic of Hellenism. Even in his early writings he considered that the task reserved for "our days" was a vindication of the treasures which had been squandered on heaven as the property of mankind—"at least in theory." But at that time he was still in doubt what age could possibly possess the strength to assert this right and claim possession of these treasures.¹³³ This doubt, more than justified, fell silent from the moment that Hegel decided upon an understanding with the age, so that "what should be" surrendered its claim under the rigor of reality. By thus coming to terms with the existing world, even at points where he disagreed with it, Hegel found a way out of the revolutionary criticism of his youth. From this time forward, speculative mediation became the standard of his criticism. And just as he could never have shared Marx's revolutionary determination for a radical transformation, so he would also have rejected Kierkegaard's demand for an "existing thinker"; for him, this was no problem. He once called thought in an existential context merely "having life and opinions," in the old-fashioned manner. He distinguished three types: "A few men have life and no opinions; others only opinions and no life; finally, there are some who have both, life and opinions. The last are rarer than the first; as usual, the most common are those in the middle."¹³⁴ Having life and opinions in equal measure, Hegel was assured of his superiority both to the extremes and to mediocrity; in contrast, Marx and Kierkegaard went to the utmost extremes in their total alienation from the existing order.

But such an alienation between subject and object cannot seek to remain as it is, according to Hegel. By its very nature it is an alienation between what was originally one and seeks to become one again. Man must be able to act as a native in what is other and strange, in order not to be a stranger to himself in the otherness of the world outside. Hegel saw the Greek way of life as the great prototype of such "existential indigenoussness"—even when his bold acknowledgment of "what is" forbade all yearning for the past.¹³⁵

What makes the educated European feel at home among the Greeks is the fact that they made the world their homeland; they did not seek to go "above and beyond." They manipulated, transformed, and converted the substantial alien beginnings of their religious and social culture to such an extent that it became essentially their own. And this is just what philosophy is: "to be at home with oneself—that man be at home with his spirit, be no stranger to himself."

For Marx and Kierkegaard, the world in which Hegel felt "at home" had become alien. They were "above and beyond" it, or it was "absurd" and "transcendental," as Goethe had called the spirit of the coming century. Nietzsche especially was no longer at home anywhere; all was "transition" and "destruction." Even in the Greek way of life he could no longer recognize existential indigenoussness and plastic meaning, but only tragic pathos and the spirit of the music inspired in him through Wagner's modernism.

of the affinity of their spirits and dispositions. "Hegel's mode of thought is not far distant from Goethe's (cf. Goethe on Spinoza): The will to divinize the universe and life, in order to find peace and happiness in observing and investigating them. Hegel seeks reason everywhere, before reason one may submit and be content. In Goethe, a kind of fatalism, almost joyful and confident, a fatalism which does not rebel, which does not weary, which seeks to form from itself a totality in the belief that deliverance comes only in the totality, where all seems justified and good."⁵ To him, Hegel and Goethe, together with Napoleon, constitute a meaningful event for all Europe and an attempt to overcome the eighteenth century.⁶

The first image which Nietzsche had of Goethe was not without critical reservations; these, however, retreated more and more into the background. In the third *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung*, after a description of the nineteenth century, he puts the question: in such a time of downfall and explosions, who will preserve the "image of man"? Three images have determined humanity in the modern era: the man of Rousseau, the man of Goethe, and the man of Schopenhauer; Nietzsche interprets himself in the "heroic life" of the last. From Rousseau there emerged a popular strength which led to revolutions; Goethe represents a power which is not so menacing, he observes and organizes, but does not lead to revolutionary overthrow. He hates everything violent, all discontinuity—that is, every action. And thus Faust the liberator of the world becomes a mere world traveler. All domains of life and nature, all past history, arts, mythologies, all realms of knowledge see the insatiable observer fly past, the deepest craving awakes and is appeased, even Helen cannot bring him to a halt—and now the moment must come for which his scornful companion has been lying in wait. At some random spot upon earth the flight ends, the whirl ceases, Mephistopheles is at hand. When the German ceases to be Faust, there is no greater danger than that he become a philistine and fall prey to the devil—only the powers of heaven can save him. The man of Goethe is . . . the theoretical man at his highest. He keeps alive upon the earth only by assembling for his nourishment everything great and notable . . . and living upon it, even though it is only a life from one appetite to the next. He is not the active man: rather, whenever at some point he becomes a part of the existing order of active men there is one thing certain, that no good will result, . . . in particular, no 'order' will be overthrown. The man of Goethe is a preserving and conciliatory force, . . . just as the man of Rousseau can easily become a Catilinarian."⁷ Similarly, he says in his remarks about Wag-

mote what he himself despised and to be an advocate of the whole of life, its illusory truth and its true illusion. "In the midst of an age undisposed to realism, Goethe was a convinced realist: he said yes to everything that was congenial to him; he had no greater experience than that *ens realissimum* called Napoleon. Goethe conceived a man: strong, well-educated, physically skillful, self-possessed, respectful of himself. This man may dare to permit himself the entire scope and wealth of nature; he is strong enough for this freedom. He is a man of tolerance, not out of weakness, but out of strength, because he knows how to turn to his own advantage what would be the ruin of the average person's nature. A man to whom nothing is forbidden, except perhaps weakness, whether it be called vice or virtue. Such a free spirit stands in the midst of everything with a joyful and confident fatalism, firm in the belief that only the particular is reprehensible, that, in the context of the whole, everything is redeemed and affirmed—he no longer says no."¹⁴ But, at the same time, this is the formula for Nietzsche's "Dionysian attitude toward existence"; and, in fact, the last aphorism of the *Wille zur Macht* seems to come from the same spirit as Goethe's *Fragment über die Natur*.

Nevertheless, Nietzsche's will to power is as different from Goethe's nature as the extreme from the moderate, seething power from ordered cosmos, desire from ability, and the destructive violence of attack from well-meaning irony.¹⁵ This difference is especially clear in their attitudes toward Christianity. Once, it is true, Nietzsche remarks that the "cross" should be seen as Goethe saw it.¹⁶ But he himself saw it quite differently: he wanted to teach men laughter instead of suffering, and called his laughter holy. Zarathustra mocks Christ's crown of thorns by crowning himself with a crown of roses.¹⁷ These roses have no human or rational relationship to the cross; Zarathustra's "rose-wreath crown" is purely a polemic contrast to that of the crucified. This perversion is the final end of the symbol of the cross with roses, which derives from Luther! Goethe was not an anti-Christian, and was therefore the more genuine pagan; his "god" had no need to oppose any other, because by his very positive nature he was disinclined to any such denial. But that his consummation of freedom had no influence upon German civilization is as fatal as it is understandable. "The . . . Germans think they only have spirit when they are paradoxical, that is, unrighteous."¹⁸ They may indeed believe in ideas, but they do not observe the phenomena;¹⁹ therefore, their *Weltanschauung* is an

without metaphysics. But the Fascist revolution which emerged in Italy and Germany after the First World War led to a revitalization of the activist historicism of the forties. Those who were historically educated felt it at first to be only negative, an "antihistoricism."⁴⁸ But already in Nietzsche it was revealed as a will to the future, and only for this reason was it so critical of "historical" culture. As was the case a century previously, the desire is to be consciously "historical," to engage in more than "antiquarian" retrospection. What leading statesmen do and preach today is done with the desire and awareness of being a priori "historic"! Men think in terms of centuries and millennia. Not a week passes without someone delivering an "historic" speech, that is, a speech which—in contrast to a commemorative speech—commemorates the future, because it is assumed that only the centuries to come will appreciate what we do today. The future is trusted to give historical right and historical justification to the actions and events of the present; man is convinced that history is the last judgment. Even in this perverted use of the word "historic" can be heard the solemnity given it by Hegel. When man engages in extravagant historicism, it makes no real difference whether he is retrospective or expectant, tired of the past or greedy for the future.

However extravagant Hegel's systematization of history as "progress in consciousness of freedom" appears in light of its immediate, empirical aspect, the reason it could become so popular lies in its own kernel, from which the Christian theological hull can be stripped off.

The outline of the Hegelian system consists in its measuring the course of history according to temporal progress; that is, on the basis of the final stage, it argues backwards to those preceding as necessarily leading to it. This orientation toward an historical sequence presupposes that the only valid aspect of world history is that which has many consequences, that the sequence of world events should be evaluated according to the rational principle of its success. But success is not only the highest court of appeal for Hegel's historical theory; it is also a constant measure of everyday life, where the assumption is likewise made that the success of something proves its superior right to that which is unsuccessful. Thus the popular kernel of Hegel's speculation lies in the universal conviction that only what is successful is proven right. Through Darwin's theory of evolution, in the nineteenth century this belief also received an apparent support in the realm of nature. Under the

influence of economic competition, Darwin discovered the law of "natural selection," according to which the higher species of animals arise through the survival, in the "struggle for existence," of the fittest over the less fit. Hegel's philosophy of history and Darwin's biological theory⁴⁹ both started from what is empirically successful, and argued backwards to the supposed necessity and inner right of its appearance. Their admiration of historical and biological forces led to an idolization of whatever force happened to be victorious.⁵⁰ Whatever, on the other hand, vanished from the memory of history because it was destroyed or remained unsuccessful, was, according to Hegel's formula, an "unjustified existence."⁵¹

"Success," says a German proverb, "crowns the master." "Success," says Nietzsche, with equal right, "has always been the greatest of liars."⁵² Success is in fact an indispensable criterion of human life, but it proves everything and nothing: everything, because in world history as in everyday life only that which is successful remains, and nothing, because even the greatest popular success proves nothing of the inner worth and true "historical greatness" of what has actually been successful.⁵³ Things wretched and stupid, baseness and madness, have often had the greatest success. It is quite remarkable when a victorious power proclaims the fame and honor of those it has conquered and not merely the ostensible right of its own successful power. Never has an historical power come to be without violence, injustices, and offenses; but for good or ill, offended mankind accustoms itself to every change, while world history "gathers great treasures at our expense."⁵⁴

Whoever has really experienced a slice of world history, rather than merely knowing it through hearsay, speeches, books, and newspapers, will have to come to the conclusion that Hegel's philosophy of history⁵⁵ is a pseudotheological schematization of history arranged according to the idea of progress toward an eschatological fulfillment at the end of time; it does not correspond at all to visible reality. The true "passion" of world history does not reside only in the sonorous and imposing "quantities" with which it deals, but also in the silent suffering it brings upon men. If there is anything in world history to be admired, it is the power, the patience, and stubbornness with which it continues to re-create mankind after all losses, destructions, and injuries.

The way in which Goethe looked at history is far removed from Hegel's schematization, not because Goethe was a "poet," and Hegel a "thinker," but rather because Goethe's pure human disposi-

the return of Christ. As such, it had an "unambiguous antipathy" toward all scientific knowledge; this antagonism between faith and knowledge cannot be reconciled after the manner of Hegel, it is "absolutely irreconcilable." "Thus all theological activity, to the extent that it brings faith and knowledge into contact, is irreligious; no theology can ever arise unless there are other interests present besides the religious."¹⁴⁵ The destiny of Christianity certainly gives no occasion to conceive any more conciliatory relationship between faith and knowledge. A religion which lived in expectation of the *Parousia*, so long as it remained true to itself, could not seek to develop a systematic theology and a church. The fact that this took place so rapidly is based not in Christianity itself, but in its emergence into the world of pagan culture, which it was unable to destroy and in which it therefore sought support, although until the time of the Reformation it never lost sight of its enmity toward the world and the state.

The battle between faith and knowledge was fought in the very infancy of Christianity, when Gnosticism destroyed all the assumptions of the infant faith, and transformed it into a metaphysics. But the defeat of Gnosticism meant only a new covenant with the worldly wisdom represented most powerfully by Alexandrianism. "The simple faith in redemption through Christ might have withdrawn within itself all the more energetically; instead, a Christian theology was set up as true Gnosis beside the Gnosis . . . which had been declared false. In this theology, particularly through the newly determined Christian Canon, at least a certain portion of the Christian tradition was protected by faith against the attacks of knowledge; but it was considered imperative to rise from the level of faith to that of knowledge. A sure proof of the antagonism between knowledge and the purely religious interests of faith is the fact that even in this moderate form scientific knowledge gained a foothold in the Church only by force. It secured its position only under the keenest scrutiny, and was always in danger of coming under accusation each time heresy reared its head. In fact, it remained the hotbed of unceasing conflicts with the faith of the community. The very beginning is typical of the whole course of development, as represented at the turn of the third century first by Clement of Alexandria and then by Origen."¹⁴⁶ The original contrast between the Christian faith and theological knowledge later became clear with the vanishing of the illusion that dominated the Middle Ages, that theology is the positive apologetic aspect of the

Christian faith. From the moment that Protestant theology borrowed the methods of historical and philosophical criticism from the secular sciences, theology was doomed to become the grave digger of Christianity. Whoever engages in theology for any purpose beyond that of theology itself must recognize that it is "part and parcel of the secularization of Christianity, a luxury which it allows itself but which, like all luxuries, can be had only for a price."¹⁴⁷ The only real task of theology is to make Christianity problematical as a religion, whether the theology is critical or apologetic and liberal. Critical and historical study can indeed destroy religion, but not reconstruct it. Nothing was further from Overbeck's mind than Hegel's "exaltation" of the Christian religion to the level of conceptual existence. His basic distinction between the history of the "origin" of Christianity and the history of its "decay" means that, with reference to the "development" of Christianity, Overbeck is unalterably opposed to Hegel's progressive and optimistic schema. To him, as to Lagarde, Protestantism does not mean the consummation of Christianity, but the beginning of its dissolution. The productivity of the Christian church comes to an end with the Reformation, which has in itself no religious meaning, but is defined totally in terms of protest against the Catholic Church. It is an "absurd" consequence of disdain for the otherworldly nature of Christianity to conclude that the first fifteen hundred years of the Christian faith are a disguising of its real nature.¹⁴⁸ But this is precisely the conclusion of Hegel's schema, which sees Christianity as engaged in a progressive "realization," that is, secularization. In Overbeck's opinion, Pascal was the last real Christian in the modern world; he assigns Luther to the same category as Nietzsche and Denifle.

Overbeck's attitude toward those like Vinet, Lagarde, and Kierkegaard, who turn against the existing order in the name of Christianity, is as negative as his attitude toward Hegel. By denying theology the right to speak for Christianity, he denied himself the same right. "Thus I confront the situation quite differently than, for example, does Kierkegaard, who attacked Christianity although he spoke for it. I refuse to attack it even though I myself stand aside and speak as a theologian, even though that is just what I would rather not be. Kierkegaard speaks under the paradoxical pretense of being a reformer of Christianity; I would not consider doing so, but neither would I consider reforming theology, which I claim as my vocation. I acknowledge its worthlessness in itself, and am not inclined to deny its present state of dilapidation; I am opposed to its

basic principles. For the moment, I would have no reservations about letting Christianity completely alone."¹⁴⁹ He recognized the "vulnerable spot" in Kierkegaard's attitude toward Christianity: "The manner of his attack is insincere, rhetorical, and paradoxical"; "he merely affects the disguise of an assailant." "It appears as though Kierkegaard were relying solely on himself and letting fly his attack upon Christianity, but he does so only after he has taken up a firm position within Christianity. He has no excuse for attacking Christianity; in a sense, even less excuse than those whom he attacks. An inferior representative of Christianity is always better qualified to criticize it than one who is irrefragable, even if only in his own eyes."¹⁵⁰

Overbeck's attitude toward B. Bauer can be seen in his review of Bauer's *Christus und die Cäsaren*.¹⁵¹ In four long sections he analyzes the "incredible" theories which Bauer has once more, after thirty-five years, laid before the public without the slightest qualification. This represents a steadfastness which would be impressive if total lack of scientific support did not make it untenable. He concludes by stating that despite all criticism of Bauer's thesis that Christianity and Stoicism derived from one and the same source, Bauer's position is "not far from the truth." The total failure of his work is therefore all the more regrettable. The extent to which Greco-Roman paganism contributed to the growth of the Church has been greatly underestimated; "a goodly number of paradoxes" are necessary to untangle the early history of the Church. These paradoxes must be put forward; but they must be given a form which makes it possible gradually to reach the point of well-founded conviction, instead of remaining at the stage of mere extravagance. Apart from these reservations, theologians should not be "dissuaded" from reading the book. It is an arbitrary assemblage of material that Bauer has given us, but it is nevertheless material which should give us frequent occasion for fruitful reflection. The parallelism between Stoicism and Christianity can be pursued a thousand times more productively, more sensitively, and more profoundly than Bauer has done. This would give rise to observations and problems of which Bauer had not the slightest hint.

When these critical remarks are compared with Overbeck's own thoughts on the relationship between Christianity and the ancient world, more weight is given to the basically favorable conclusion of this criticism, so severe in detail. Overbeck himself never ceased to stress the "classical" nature of Christianity, denying that it was

an absolute "innovation." He contrasted both the ancient world and Christianity to the modern world.¹⁵² He asserted indirectly the "family relationship" between Christianity and the ancient world through the thesis that our understanding of Christianity has diminished proportionately as the ancient world has vanished from our lives.¹⁵³ In *Die Christlichkeit der Theologie*, he states that Christianity is the form in which the ancient world has been embalmed for preservation down to our own time. Because Christianity is itself a part of the ancient world, a "modern" Christianity is a contradiction in terms. The ties connecting Overbeck's theological position with Bauer's are even closer than he himself realized. It was Bauer who had anticipated Overbeck's discovery of the necessary "Jesuitism" of the "theological mind,"¹⁵⁴ the antithesis between the Bible and contemporary culture.

Overbeck several times defended the critical theology of Strauss against the presumptions and illusions of apologetic and liberal theology. Strauss's declaration that secular culture and Christianity are irreconcilable is irrefutable. It does not depend on the apparent cosmopolitanism and actual parochialism of the culture which Strauss in his old age supported as the "new faith." Strauss was also right in his recognition of the fateful significance inherent in the idea of a "life of Jesus." But it is erroneous to suppose that a truly critical theology must lead to a negation of Christianity. Without supporting Christianity, such a theology can protect it "against all the theologies which think they are supporting it by accommodating it to the world. Indifferent to its peculiar point of view, they turn it into a dead, desiccated orthodoxy which removes it from the world, or reduce it to the secular level, where it vanishes. Critical theology can prevent such theologies from peddling an unreal thing to the world under the name of Christianity, a thing from which the very soul has been removed: the negation of the world."¹⁵⁵ Strauss fails to recognize the excessive humanity of Christianity. He seeks to put Christianity completely out of mind; with all his talk of "human feeling," "national feeling," and "littleness," he forgets "that we are human!"¹⁵⁶ If we compare what Strauss has to say about the state and about war, about penal authority and about the working class, with the appropriate Christian parallels, for example, from Augustine, there is no doubt that we shall find the latter incomparably more profound and at the same time more human, and therefore more true. Christianity has dealt conclusively with the kind of culture represented by Strauss. If Christianity is to be overcome, it must

be by a culture higher, not lower, than that which Christianity overcame. In a few sober sentences, this criticism of Strauss's *Bekanntnis* says everything that Nietzsche in his *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung* said with the exuberance of youth, and without a fair assessment of Strauss's historical achievement.

Through his early work, Strauss did the science of theology a considerable service. But it is wrong to suppose that Christianity consists of a series of dogmas and myths which must be either accepted or rejected, in whole or in part. Its heart and soul is faith in Christ and his return, and the end of the world as it now exists. "As is true of the apologetic and liberal theologians whom we have studied in this respect, Strauss thinks that he has finished with Christianity when he has destroyed critically a series of its basic dogmas, particularly the Church's conception of its early history. But he skims over the ascetic outlook of Christianity with two or three disparaging and very marginal remarks."¹⁵⁷ Christianity is by nature eschatological, and therefore ascetic. Only the man who is well aware of this can achieve a proper standpoint from which to evaluate the "way of life" which Strauss suggests after Christianity has been done away with.

Overbeck took issue with Lagarde's work as soon as it was published. Both possess the same disinterested scholarly attitude. That of Lagarde is permeated by a desire for rhetorical effect, while Overbeck is characterized by a calm sobriety that is almost superhuman. He neither wanted to nor could educate the Germans; but he wanted to be clear in his own mind with reference to theology and Christianity.

Overbeck discusses Lagarde's suggestion that the existing theological faculties be reduced to denominational seminaries, and be replaced at the universities by a theology whose task is to teach the history of religion in order to prepare the way for a German religion. Overbeck objects that such a purely historical view of the history of religions is not a theology at all, and should therefore fall within the discipline of philosophy. If Lagarde wants his new theology to occupy an independent position, he can support it only on the basis of its practical task, which it shares with denominational theology. "But this is just what is dubious: whether a task of this kind can really be found for Lagarde's theology. He himself points to one by saying that the new theology should be the 'guide leading to a German religion.' But theologies have always followed after their religions; and they have been further behind, the more ener-

getic and undisputed were the original forces behind these religions. It is unexampled that they should precede a religion, and hardly to be expected that something of the sort might yet take place."¹⁵⁸ In reality, Lagarde's theology will not prepare the way for a new religion. The hopelessness of its ultimate goal and the overwhelming power of history in all scholarly pursuits of the present will cause it very rapidly to lose sight of its goal and immerse itself in the historical material—a prediction which has proven true for all denominational theology wherever the content of what has been called "dogmatics" has in fact been only comparative religion with a Protestant flavor.

Thirty years after writing *Die Christlichkeit der Theologie*, in the preface to the second edition, Overbeck discusses his relationship to Nietzsche. He says there that Nietzsche's influence was the most powerful he had encountered in the course of his life. Nietzsche himself is an "extraordinary man, extraordinary even in bearing misfortune." There is no better proof of Nietzsche's extraordinary quality than the friendship of so circumspect and reserved a man as Overbeck. Overbeck states that he cannot actually say that even in Basel he learned "wisdom" from Nietzsche; neither can he say that he, who was seven years older, followed him unconditionally on his "voyage of exploration," letting himself be deflected from his own course. But his friendship toward Nietzsche was very much present when he penned his "abdication from the fraternity of theologians." This parallels Nietzsche's dedication of his first *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung* to Overbeck. Even in later years, Overbeck followed Nietzsche's voyage of exploration to the end with loyal attentiveness, unperturbed by the aspects of it that must have been terrifying and even repugnant to him. His posthumous notes and his correspondence with Nietzsche bear witness to the fact that, if he did not join in Nietzsche's attack upon Christianity, he at least went along with it in his own way, by furnishing his friend with occasional scholarly references for the criticism of Christianity. Nietzsche's attempt to "overcome God and nihilism" failed; but Overbeck never recognized this fact as an argument against the attempt. Despair had seized Nietzsche on his journey, so that he deserted his ship. This happened long before his madness erupted. "No one has ever arrived at the goal of voyage that I have in mind; Nietzsche's failure was no greater than that of all the rest. What forsook him was fortune, which has smiled more favorably upon others I know, who have been more fortunate. He failed; but his failure was such that he is

no better and no worse an argument against the voyage he undertook than are castaways against sailing the sea. A man who has reached his haven will be the last to deny his shipwrecked precursor the name of an equal. With reference to Nietzsche, the same is true of the more fortunate seafarers, who at least have managed to stay afloat in their craft on their aimless journey."¹⁵⁹

The question Overbeck asked with reference to Christianity did not concern Christian "morality." Unlike Nietzsche, he saw its ascetic character as a superior form of human life. His question concerned the relationship between primitive Christianity, which renounced the world, and the history of the world. The most interesting aspect of Christianity is its impotence, "the fact that it cannot rule the world" because the wisdom of its life is a "wisdom of death."¹⁶⁰ If a serious historical study is made of Christianity, the only conclusion can be that it has undergone a "decline" from its "nonhistorical" origin, although the decline is inextricably entangled with "progress" throughout the course of history. Like transitoriness, permanence is a basic concept of all historiography; similarly, all historical manifestation of life must be either old or young. In spite of Kierkegaard's demand for "contemporaneity," two thousand years of Christianity cannot simply be erased, least of all by a theology which is itself completely penetrated by the historical mode of thought. "Christianity has had a long life. It can no longer occupy the same position it occupied at the beginning, after all the events that then lay before it, and now lie behind it!"¹⁶¹ Christianity existed originally as Gospel, denying all history and presupposing an "hyperhistorical" world—"neither Christ himself nor the faith which he founded have had historical existence under the name of Christianity"¹⁶²—but this "prehistoric embryo" has lived its life in the history of a church, which is bound to the world. The world would not be convinced that God loves man.¹⁶³ "When it lost its faith in the *Parousia*, primitive Christianity lost its faith in its own youth." This contrast between the eschatology of primitive Christianity and the future-oriented mood of the present is fundamental. "It is, perhaps, the basic reason behind the gulf separating Christianity from the present." Our present age works to prepare the future; nothing is further removed from it than belief in an imminent end of the world. Now that Christianity has grown old in the sense of becoming decrepit, its age is no longer an argument for its permanence, but only its most dubious aspect.¹⁶⁴ The "eternal" existence of Christianity can be defended only *sub specie aeternitatis*, that is,

from a point of view which has no concept of historical time. The eternity of Christianity can never be guaranteed by history. Purely historically, all we have is proof that Christianity is worn out.¹⁶⁵ To the serious historical viewpoint, its age is a "deadly" argument. Christianity cannot control the course of history, which everywhere reaches out to its limits. Therefore history is an "abyss in which Christianity has been catapulted quite against its will."¹⁶⁶ Before the time of Constantine, it seemed "as though Christianity would outlast civilization; today the converse is true." "Prometheus seems to have been proven right; the fire that he stole from heaven is not what he was supposed to have been given."¹⁶⁷

The final conclusion of Overbeck's historical viewpoint is his contesting of the Christian chronology. His denial of its significance puts him in opposition to Hegel, who was the last person to maintain it seriously. But it does not place him on the side of Nietzsche, whose *Ecce Homo* claimed to begin the "first day of the year One" with September 30, 1888, "according to the false chronology."¹⁶⁸ According to Overbeck, the Christian chronology would have been justified only if Christianity had introduced a "new" age. But this is not the case; "for originally it spoke of a new age only under circumstances that never took place: the existing world must perish and yield to the new. For a moment, this was seriously expected; this expectation has continued to make its appearance, but only fleetingly. It has never become a permanent historical fact. This alone would have been able to furnish the real basis for a significant chronology, corresponding to the facts of reality. It is the world that has prevailed, not the Christian expectation."¹⁶⁹ The possibility of conceiving this moment as a turning point grew out of the earlier existence of an eschatological expectation of the end. This alone gives the Christian chronology a claim to be taken seriously. But in actual fact the old has not passed away, the new has not arrived; it remains one of the major problems of the history of Christianity how it came to terms with this disappointment of its original expectation. Overbeck attempts to answer this question by transforming the primitive Christian expectation of the return of Christ into an "ascetic theory and practice of life," "which is in fact a metamorphosis of the primitive Christian faith in the return of Christ. It is based upon the continued expectation of this return, and therefore continues to view the world as ripe for destruction. It moves the faithful to withdraw from the world in order to be ready for the appearance of Christ, which threatens to come at any moment. The

expectation of Christ's return became untenable in its primitive form. . . . It was transformed into the idea of death, which as early as Irenaeus, is said always to accompany the Christian. It became the *memento mori*, the Carthusian formula which gives a more profound summation of the ultimate wisdom of Christianity than does the modern formula, 'let nothing intrude between man and his primary source.' This seems to contain a hackneyed expression . . . of negation, until one remembers that, in the eyes of Christianity, it is the world itself which 'intrudes.'¹⁷⁰

When Christianity was granted official recognition by the state, the ideal of martyrdom was lost. It was replaced by the *martyrium quotidianum* of monasticism. From the fourth century to the Reformation, everything great and vital in the Church proceeded from the cloister. But Catholic theology long ago lost the pureness of vision necessary for a proper evaluation of the significance of monasticism; Protestant theology never had it.

The inner nucleus of Overbeck's own theological existence is a conduct of life and wisdom of death which are ascetic in a broader sense. The ultimate purpose of his theology was to demonstrate scientifically that modern Christianity was the "finis Christianismi."¹⁷¹ For him, too, the wisdom of death replaced the expectation of the future. For us men, death is the most vexing of riddles, but far from being the key to its own solution. "Precisely because death makes the riddles of the world most vexing to us, it should be the last thing in the world to serve to make life difficult for us. Let us rather respect death as the most unambiguous symbol of our community, in the silence which he inescapably imposes upon us all as our common lot."¹⁷² To the Christian view of death he preferred that of Montaigne and Spinoza, because it is less affected. A *memento mori* can easily be conceived which would benefit life by the light of day by its ability to banish deception and disperse the shadows which lie upon life and distort it. But death, chosen by one's own free will, seemed to him to lie at the limit of "what can be discussed rationally among men." Overbeck did not reject it. His reflections may sound un-Christian, but when he was concerned with having the proper attitude in thinking about death, the first thing that occurred to him was a reference to the resignation of the Thirty-ninth Psalm.

Overbeck did not decide against Christianity or in favor of secular education or "culture."¹⁷³ Any man who esteems the Either-Or for its own sake, confusing what is radical with what is extreme,

will achieve only uncertainty in his attitude toward the world and toward Christianity. And within this apparent external ambiguity there lies hidden a more unequivocal radicalism than in Nietzsche's dogmatic attack. Nietzsche's antagonism can be reversed, just as Dionysus can become the Crucified. Overbeck was fully aware that religious problems must be placed upon a completely new foundation, "even at the cost of what has up to now been called religion."¹⁷⁴ "The religious development of man down to the present day represents a disastrous aberration; it must be brought to an end" — "at least so long as the solution to the religious confusion of our time is sought in the area of the Bible and the theological conflict which rages about the Bible, and we do not make up our minds to find that solution completely apart from the Bible! This will not happen until we humans recognize that we go forward only by losing our foothold from time to time; we live our lives under conditions which do not permit us to evade this experiment. Furthermore, the Bible itself should help us to see this. Its own narrative provides us with the supreme example of this phenomenon. The transition from the Old Testament to the New does not differ from such a loss of foothold. Its success was complete, but correspondingly slow and laborious."¹⁷⁵ This loss of foothold Overbeck took as his own position between culture and Christianity. To perform his function he lacked the necessary criticism of theology and Christianity, "the spur of a genuine hatred for Christians or religion"; but he also lacked the absolute affirmation of the secular world which makes the atheism of Strauss, Feuerbach, and Bauer so superficial. This twofold lack is Overbeck's human and scholarly advantage; it distinguishes him from all the other assailants and apologists, like Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. His "caution" with regard to Christianity consisted in avoiding the "twofold danger" of a sterile routine relationship or an unconsidered battle of extermination. "Either course must be avoided. Christianity must be given an end more worthy and less pernicious."¹⁷⁶ He numbered himself among the unbelievers by subordinating theology to philosophy and disputing its right to be called Christian. But he was conscious that the courage and tenacity to do so grow best out of a view of life such as that of Christianity, which increased the demand for honesty "probably at least as much as it reduced its actual appearance among men."¹⁷⁷ Even in his early writings he rejected the overhasty ruthlessness with which Strauss broke the fetters of the old faith, the more so because the present gave no cause to think poorly of the Christian

view of life or to consider itself superior. It is rather of inestimable value "that at least the name of 'Christian' hover over this whole calamitous period as a kind of categorical imperative, condemning it."¹⁷⁸

And so it is comprehensible that Overbeck's judgment upon Christianity, particularly German Christianity,¹⁷⁹ which condemned it to death, expressed neither satisfaction nor regret; it simply described the process as a matter of record.¹⁸⁰ His historical position is based on the fact that without Christianity, European civilization would not be what it is, nor would Christianity, without its connection with that civilization.¹⁸¹ Overbeck belongs more, not less, to the history of their union and conflict than do those who think to solve the problem of Christianity by means of a simple "decision." The truly decisive contrast to their mere decisiveness is a critical analysis which gives neither a simple "yes" nor a simple "no." "The unique and significant aspect of Overbeck's elucidation of the relationship between Christianity and culture is the fact that it does not give any solution. All solutions would come into conflict with his basic axiom. Overbeck's merit consists in having demonstrated the impossibility of any solution, at least of any solution which man as he is today could contrive by his own efforts."¹⁸² Even his admiration for Nietzsche was not based on the latter's apodictic statements, but on the way in which he preserved his "courage to face the problem," an attitude inconceivable apart from the "skepticism" which goes hand in hand with historical knowledge.¹⁸³ On the other hand, Nietzsche prized Overbeck's "gentle firmness" and balance.

Whoever will take the trouble to pursue Overbeck's train of thought will perceive in the labyrinth of his sentences, so full of reservations, the straight and daring line of an absolutely honest mind. He elucidated the problem which Christianity presents for us. In the typical figures of the nineteenth century, he made clear the abyss separating us from Christianity.¹⁸⁴ Since Hegel, and particularly through the work of Marx and Kierkegaard, the Christianity of this bourgeois-Christian world has come to an end. This does not mean that a faith which once conquered the world perishes with its last secular manifestations. For how should the Christian pilgrimage *in hoc saeculo* ever become homeless in the land where it has never been at home?

- 113 *Aus früherer Zeit*, IV, 575; cf. Hegel, IX, 439, and XV, 552 f.; Marx, I/1, pp. 608 ff.
- 114 For the contrary view, see Rosenkranz, *Hegel als deutscher Nationalphilosoph*, pp. 148 ff. The progressive character of Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie* is demonstrated with reference to contemporary conditions in Germany.
- 115 *Rechtsphilosophie*, Sections 4-7.
- 116 *Aus früherer Zeit*, IV, 581 f.
- 117 *Ibid.*, pp. 550 ff.
- 118 *Ibid.*, pp. 559 ff. See also Dilthey, *Ges. Schr.*, IV, 285 ff.
- 119 Cf. also Marx's criticism in V, 175 ff.
- 120 See Hegel's inaugural addresses at Heidelberg and Berlin.
- 121 *Deutsche Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Kunst*, V (1843), 6.
- 122 *Aus früherer Zeit*, IV, 570.
- 123 *Die Akademie*, p. 125.
- 124 See the article on "Kritik und Partei," *Deutsche Jahrbücher*, V (1842), 1177 ff.
- 125 Ruge, *Br.*, I, 343 f.; cf. Feuerbach, *Br.*, I, 358, 362.
- 126 I/1, p. 13.
- 127 I/1, p. 132.
- 128 I/1, pp. 132 ff.; cf. Hegel, XII, 224.
- 129 Like Marx, Immermann also used the image of "twilight" to describe the crisis: "It is still twilight, and the boundaries of the forms of knowledge are critically indistinct. When illumined by the light of day they will show their distinct shapes, each in its own place" (*Memorabilien, Die Jugend vor 25 Jahren: Lehre und Literatur*). But as early as 1815, in his *Ahnung und Gegenwart*, Eichendorff used the image of an uncertain twilight to describe his age: "Our age seems to me to resemble a vast, uncertain twilight. Light and shadow assume strange shapes and battle each other violently. The outcome is uncertain. Dark clouds interpose ominously, uncertain whether they bring death or grace. Below them the world lies spread in silent expectation. Comets and strange signs in the heavens are seen once more. Spirits wander once more through our nights. Fabulous sirens, as before a thunderstorm, appear again above the surface of the sea and sing. Our children take no pleasure in careless, easy play, in happy relaxation, as did our fathers; the seriousness of life has gripped us early."
- 130 I/1, pp. 63 ff.; cf. III, 164.
- 131 V, 533 (first thesis on Feuerbach).
- 132 V, 31 ff.
- 133 For Marx's evaluation of Feuerbach, cf. III, 151 ff. From Feuerbach's point of view, the difference between Marx and Feuerbach consists in Marx's reassertion of Hegel's doctrine of the objective spirit against Feuerbach's anthropology. He repudiates Feuerbach because the latter took as the basis of his philosophy an abstract man, that is, man apart from his world. Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie* brought to light this world of political and economic conditions. Feuerbach's only uncontested merit lies in his reduction of the absolute spirit to human terms. But Feuerbach's concrete definition of human nature, as a naturalistic generic entity, indicates to Marx that he "pushed Hegel aside" without "overcoming him critically." Feuerbach constructed a "man" whose reality reflects only the life of the bourgeois private individual.