

THE VALUE OF SOCIABILITY IN ROUSSEAU, HEGEL, AND NIETZSCHE

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ABSTRACT

THE VALUE OF SOCIABILITY IN ROUSSEAU, HEGEL, AND NIETZSCHE

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This thesis investigates the political philosophies of Rousseau, Hegel, and Nietzsche, as regards the relation between sociability and freedom. Firstly, I argue that Rousseau's fundamental view undergoes a drastic shift in that while in the *Second Discourse* he regards the human being as essentially individualistic, in the *Social Contract* he dismisses egoism and argues for the establishment of sociability in the name of general will to materialise human freedom. Secondly, I discuss how Hegel proves the necessity of sociability in the dialectic of master-slave in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel gives this necessity a concrete form by establishing the organic relation between individualism and sociability. I argue that, Hegel's insistence on the reciprocity of these two notions notwithstanding, he tends to favour the latter over the former. Hence, the necessity of looking at Nietzsche's individualistic and elitist political thought arises. I seek to demonstrate that although Nietzsche's view on its own might be too radical and thus

impracticable for the problems of modern society, we are in need of his trenchant criticism of society's detrimental effects on the rich creativity of individualism.

Keywords: Rousseau, Hegel, Nietzsche, sociability, freedom.



ÖZ

ROUSSEAU, HEGEL VE NIETZSCHE’DE TOPLUMSALLIĞIN DEĞERİ

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Bu çalışma Rousseau, Hegel ve Nietzsche’nin siyaset felsefelerini toplumsallık ve özgürlük bağlamında incelemektedir. İlk olarak, Rousseau’nun temel görüşünün keskin bir dönüşüme uğradığını ileri sürüyorum. Bu sava göre, Rousseau *İkinci Söylev*’de insanı özünde bireyci olarak ele alırken, *Toplum Sözleşmesi*’nde egoizmi reddederek insan özgürlüğünün gerçekleşmesi adına ortak irade adı altında toplumsallığın inşası fikrini savunmaktadır. İkinci olarak, Hegel’in *Tinin Fenomenolojisi*’nde yer alan köle-efendi diyalektiği ile toplumsallığın zorunluluğunu nasıl ispat ettiğini tartışıyorum. *Tüze Felsefesi*’nde ise Hegel bu zorunluluğa bireycilik ile toplumsallık arasındaki organik bağı kurarak somut bir hal kazandırmaktadır. Hegel’in burada bu iki kavramın karşılıklı birlikteliğine yaptığı vurguya rağmen toplumsallığı bireyciliğe tercih etme eğiliminde olduğunu ileri sürüyorum. Bu sebeple, Nietzsche’nin bireyci ve elitist politik düşüncesinin araştırılması gerekliliği ortaya çıkmaktadır. Nietzsche’nin görüşünün kendi başına ele alındığında fazlasıyla radikal ve bu sebeple modern toplumun sorunlarını çözmekten uzak olduğunu öne sürüyorum. Buna rağmen, toplumun bireyin

yaratıcılığı üstündeki zararlı etkisini gösterdiği ölçüde onun eleştirisinin gerekliliğini göstermeye çalışıyorum.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rousseau, Hegel, Nietzsche, toplumsallık, özgürlük.





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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It could be stated that, in the field of political philosophy, continental philosophy is beset by an ever-present rift between two main strands: communitarianism and liberalism. Whilst the latter insists on the ultimate value of the individual, the former maintains that the individual acquires and sustains its worth only within the general framework of society. Accordingly, the former regards the state as an organic unity that precedes and undergirds its constituent individuals, whereas the latter considers the individual as a self-reliant atom, which precedes and constitutes the state. Crucially, what correspond to these two standpoints are freedom as having the right to perform political actions and freedom as the lack of restraint, that is, what are famously known as the positive and negative conceptions of freedom, respectively.

Taking this polarity as a background, this thesis aims to problematise this tension in the philosophies of Rousseau, Hegel, and Nietzsche, as regards the issues of sociability and freedom. In Chapter 2, the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* is brought under scrutiny with a view to demonstrating that in his early phase Rousseau adopted an individualistic approach. By way of the narrative of the state of nature, he condemns the formation of society and the establishment of sociability as a curse upon humanity. Thus, he praises the irretrievably forfeited isolated life of the pre-social human. At the end of this chapter, I seek to show that this approach of Rousseau was a fallacious one, given that he had to resort to the enigmatic figure of the legislator, who is tasked with instilling the sense of sociability on the egoistic savage.

In Chapter 3, I seek to demonstrate how the Rousseau of the *Second Discourse* undergoes a dramatic shift in his view as regards the role of society for human freedom. In his later work, the *Social Contract*, Rousseau adopts the opposite

view by asserting that freedom is realisable only through the formation of sociability. To this end, what he calls the general will must be established. It is only through the general will that the egoism of the state of nature, which necessarily leads to unending bloodshed, can be transformed into the rational, sociable and moral will of modern human.

In Chapter 4, Hegel's discussion of the master-slave dialectic, which is treated in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is brought under discussion. The upside of Hegel's approach is that by demonstrating the necessity of sociability for human freedom, he eschews the kind of volte-face we can see in Rousseau. The narrative of master-slave encounter could be seen as Hegel's interpretation of the state of nature. Here, the absence of social institutions regulating the relationship between individuals makes it impossible for both sides to realise genuine freedom. Chapter 5, in which the *Philosophy of Right* is discussed, seeks to give an account of Hegel's understanding of concrete freedom. Here, the lack of mutual recognition in the master-slave dialectic is replaced by its gradual materialisation in the stages of Abstract Right, Morality, and Ethicality. Ethicality, as the ultimate telos of human freedom, is in turn divided into the institutions of the Family, Civil Society, and the State. Hegel states that his mature political work provides us with a conception of human freedom which supports as much individual freedom as substantial freedom. At the end of this chapter, I seek to demonstrate that despite this insistence of Hegel, he at times favours the element of sociability over the rights of individual. Hence, I suggest that although Hegel provides us with a meticulous treatment of rational structure of society and the state, his analysis is in need of a critical perspective of Nietzsche. Without the latter, the individual of Hegelian society seems to lack a genuine sense of individual freedom.

In Chapters 5 and 6, Nietzsche's genealogical account of modern morality is examined. Here I seek to demonstrate that Nietzsche's egoistic and elitist stance is reminiscent of the individualism of the Rousseau of the *Second Discourse*. Nietzsche's assertion that modern humanity is mired in nihilism in the wake of the so-called death of God might be best understood in his analysis of the slave and master moralities. By discussing the main differences between Nietzsche's treatment of the figures of the master and the slave and that of Hegel, I emphasise how the

former points to the crucial role of body, a concept long neglected by the metaphysical tradition. Then, I argue that Nietzsche's narrative of the hypertrophy of memory and responsibility in the institution of punishment and the relationship between the creditor and debtor shows us that he regards sociability as a hindrance to human freedom. At the end of my discussion, I suggest that the radical account of Nietzsche might be utilised within the general framework provided by the *Philosophy of Right*.



CHAPTER 2

ROUSSEAU'S STATE OF NATURE AS AN ANTIDOTE TO THE INEQUALITY OF MODERNITY

2.1. The Historical Background and Interpretative Difficulties

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's thought on the political and social issues of his age is regarded as one of the most well-known criticisms of modernity. He breathed his last (in 1778) before the bloody French Revolution, the (temporary) dethronement of the Bourbon dynasty, the abolition of feudalism and the Ancien Régime, and the coronation of Napoleon. Keeping in mind these tumultuous and bloody events which took place after his death, it could be stated that his outspoken and fierce criticism of modern humanity was not a mere opinion of an eccentric man of letters such as he. Rather, his remarks on and evaluations of the 18th-century France could be seen as being concretised by the subsequent upheavals of the close of the century. What was most conspicuous and seminal for his age were the Enlightenment values; and it was Rousseau who dedicated himself to debunking its almost mythical status as the manifestation of welfare, or the beacon of progress, a view unquestionably shared by many of his contemporaries.

However, cautions Ernst Cassirer, this incessant criticism of the Enlightenment on the part of Rousseau ought not to be interpreted by brushing aside the historical context of his life: "Rousseau is a true son of the Enlightenment, even when he attacks it and triumphs over it."¹ Moreover, there is a broader issue that must be taken into account before discussing his points. Both his non-academic,

¹ Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1979), 273.

high-spirited writing style and unforeseen shifts in his standpoints to the point of contradiction make it difficult for the interpreter to determine what Rousseau definitively maintained on an issue. (As will be discussed in the following, this ambiguity constitutes the starting-point of my thesis.)

A brief look at his life² could explain the whys and wherefores of this restiveness: Rousseau did not engage with philosophy as an academic profession, à la Kant and Hegel; writing essays and composing music were among his daily tasks, in addition to which he worked as a tax collector, tutor, and diplomatic secretary, to name but a few.³ Born and raised in Geneva as a believer of Calvinism, the vicissitudes of his life⁴ lead to his converting to Catholicism,⁵ and back again to Calvinism. For the restless Rousseau, no profession or doctrine, no single path of life was in itself satisfactory; a life brimful of productive contradictions was the only way through which his unceasing curiosity could be satisfied.⁶

To put it in a paradoxical way, this gifted man of the Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*) was nowhere near possessing clarity (*Klarheit*) in his writings.⁷ An examination of his corpus throws this unsystematicity into sharp relief. Apart from

² For a cursory life story of Rousseau, see Christopher Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), 5-16; Nicholas Dent, *Rousseau* (London, New York: Routledge, 2005), 8-20.

³ As an example, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions and Correspondence, Including the Letters to Malesherbes*, trans. Christopher Kelly (Hanover, London: University Press of New England, 1995), 157, where he confesses that without heeding his financial pressure, he left his job in the King's survey. Also see Rousseau, *Confessions*, 319, 338, where he holds that such actions in his life enabled him to lead a free life, immune from the straitjacket of social responsibilities.

⁴ These include passing some nights on the street (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 141); abandoning his children, despite having written a treatise on education (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 299); being issued a warrant of arrest (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 482-492); being burnt of the *Emile* and the *Social Contract* due to the charges of blasphemy (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 494-5); being stoned in his house (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 531-2).

⁵ Rousseau, *Confessions*, 58-9.

⁶ Ernst Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe: Two Essays*, trans. James Gutmann, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall (JR. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 2-3. In the age of the Enlightenment, any contradiction would be generally dismissed as a hindrance to the progress of reason. It was in the subsequent century that the value of contradiction and its irreducible role in human life and nature were appreciated and brought under a serious discussion, especially by Hegel and Nietzsche.

⁷ Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, 59.

the *Émile* and the *Social Contract*, which could be seen as relatively well-orchestrated works, virtually all his works testify to his fervid and strong-willed state of mind.⁸ Given this, an interpretation of Rousseau in a systematic fashion would be an uncalled-for, or even inhibitory, attempt to detect what is worthwhile in his thought.⁹ The subsequent two centuries after his death can be seen as a testimony to this feature of his thought. On the one hand, he was regarded as the champion of the doctrine of popular sovereignty and of liberal state. On the other, his conception of the general will was dismissed as justifying the totalitarian regime of Robespierre, and of the surveillance state.¹⁰

The subjects of Rousseau's writings range from religion, education, and music to botany, autobiography, and political philosophy. Considering the purview of this thesis, we will look at (what are generally called) the three discourses, and the *Social Contract*. As will be extensively worked out in the following, there can be said to be a cleft within these works, around which this thesis centres. In the *First Discourse*,¹¹ or the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts* (1750), Rousseau vehemently argues that, rather than having an edifying effect upon us, the arts and sciences have in fact brought about the degeneration of humankind. These so-called high-brow enterprises of human beings can flourish only in the presence of luxury and self-display.¹² In the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755),¹³ or the so-called *Second Discourse*, we can see a continuation of the critique of the previous work, yet this time from a broader perspective. By increasing inequality between humans, our modern social and political institutions have such disastrous influence on us that we have lost sight of the simple yet happy and healthy lives of (what he

⁸ Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, 3-4.

⁹ Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, 45.

¹⁰ Günther Mensching, "Das Verhältnis des Zweiten Diskurses zu den Schriften Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag und Emile" in *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, ed. Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 181.

¹¹ For the story of its publication from Rousseau himself, see Rousseau, *Confessions*, 294-5, 298-9, 304-5, 307. For a brief account on this work, see Dent, *Rousseau*, 50-7.

¹² Dent, *Rousseau*, 21.

¹³ For the story of its publication, see Rousseau, *Confessions*, 326, 329. For a brief account, see Dent, *Rousseau*, 57-74.

calls) the savage human of the earlier times. Vanity, pomposity, and the endless desire to have mastery over others are the characteristic features of the modern human of the age of the Enlightenment.¹⁴

Taken generally, these two works of Rousseau might be considered internally related to each other in that both zero in on what constitutes the negative side of modernity. The critical project initiated by the first work is further problematised in a more detailed way in the second one. On the other hand, the other two works, i.e. the *Third Discourse*, entitled the *Discourse on Political Economy* (1755; 1758),¹⁵ and the *Social Contract* (1762),¹⁶ might be seen as the constructive works of Rousseau. The foundation of modern society on a rightful, legitimate basis is the subject matter of these two works. Again, in the latter this discussion is carried out in a more thoroughgoing manner. The participation of all the citizens of the state with a view to establishing a lawful social order, which overcomes the problem of restricting individual freedom, is the thorny issue addresses in this second group of works.¹⁷ As explicated above, such a fundamental shift of view on the part of Rousseau renders interpreting his works rather gruelling. As I will be discussing in the subsequent chapters, Hegel's and Nietzsche's can be said to originate from these two standpoints.

In this chapter, an in-depth analysis of the critical, negative works of Rousseau, namely the *First* and *Second Discourses* will be carried out. As will be seen below, where the discussion of the *Second Discourse* leaves us, the constructive, positive works of the *Social Contract* and the *Third Discourse* take up the issue, which is the topic of Chapter 3.

¹⁴ Dent, *Rousseau*, 21-2.

¹⁵ For a brief discussion, see Dent, *Rousseau*, 74-8.

¹⁶ For the general framework of the work, see Dent, *Rousseau*, 124-58.

¹⁷ Dent, *Rousseau*, 22-3.

2.2. Rousseau's Method

At the start of the *Social Contract* Rousseau presents the modern condition of human being in a succinct and forthright manner: “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.”¹⁸ This well-known phrase, which was a source of inspiration principally for the left-wing movements of the subsequent centuries, is in point of fact treated as a stepping stone in this work. Although it is located at the opening of the *Social Contract*, the substantial treatment of this phrase is undertaken in the *Second Discourse*. The essay question posed by the Academy of Dijon, ‘What is the origin of inequality among men, and is it authorised by natural law?’, led Rousseau to compose the essay in question.¹⁹ Even though he could not win the prize of the competition, his work has always remained a seminal work in political philosophy for posterity.

Prima facie, the formula under discussion makes two assumptions about the state of humanity: i) A newborn who is not moulded by the rules of society is a free living being; ii) the ensuing process of socialisation dooms one to the loss of freedom. What the *Second Discourse* portrays is this drastic change from i) to ii) – though not on the level of an individual, as the formula strongly suggests, but on that of humanity in the main. One could therefore reword the statement as follows: ‘Humanity was in a state of freedom, yet now it is deprived of liberty.’

As a strategic device, Rousseau conceives of a hypothetical period of time in human history, namely the state of nature, to shed light on the present unequal condition of humanity. The notion of the state of nature is in no way an invention of Rousseau. Before him, it was employed by his predecessors, such as Thomas

¹⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 141. Put differently, Christopher Bertram’s formulation that “man is good by *nature* but corrupted by *society*” could be the central question Rousseau’s political thought is at pains to address (Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 19, emphasis added.) For a similar formulation, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile or On Education*, trans Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 222.

¹⁹ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 25; Dent, *Rousseau*, 57-8.

Hobbes, John Locke, and Montesquieu. Despite this commonality, the conclusions Rousseau draws starkly differ from those of others.

Before delving into the particularities of this notion, he cautions against confounding this conjectural period of time in human history with an actual, historically demonstrable one.²⁰ In other words, the state of nature in Rousseau's work refers neither to a historical description of the facts of human history, nor to an idealised state of humanity, to which we must be striving.²¹ Accordingly, we should envisage the life of savage human in the state of nature not for the sake of itself, but to mirror the present unequal state of humanity. In other words, the transformation of the pre-social human to a civilised, sociable one is not an empirical issue, to be tackled by historians, but a deliberately constructed narrative which might serve as a reference point in order for the political philosopher to examine and criticise modern humanity and society.²² As will be discussed in the following chapters, although such a method was not plausible and legitimate for Hegel, Nietzsche's account in the *Genealogy of Morals* heavily relies on these Rousseauian premises, taking his already subversive assertions to an even greater radicality.

In a sense availing himself of a substance-accident model, Rousseau (claims to) divest the modern human of its artificial, inessential, and even detrimental features. What he calls the physical or savage human constitutes the original, essential human being, which functions as the criterion of a critique of the modern human.²³ In brief, "[e]verything that comes from *nature* will be true²⁴; there will be

²⁰ Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, 38, 59.

²¹ Blaise Bachofen, "Der erste Naturzustand als wahrer Naturzustand. Die Tragweite einer anthropologischen Untersuchung" in *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, ed. Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 104, 105-6.

²² Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1974), 173.

²³ The latter is not articulated by Rousseau as strongly and openly as stated here, the cogency of it will be discussed in the following.

²⁴ Another formulation of this view could be found in the *Emile*, where Rousseau says that "[T]he first movements of nature are always right. There is no original perversity in the human heart" (Rousseau, *Emile*, 92).

nothing false except what I have unintentionally added.”²⁵ This method of Rousseau bears a striking similarity with the methodological scepticism of Descartes: while the latter seeks to divest the epistemological subject of its all redundant features, the former carries this out on a moral, political, and existential level.²⁶

To interpret this statement, we should heed the contextual framework of the 17th-century political philosophy. Ernst Cassirer explains that this reliance on nature is an embodiment of the attempt to establish political science on a (so-called) strict scientific ground. Similar to Descartes, who was in need of an Archimedean point of certainty to derive an unshakeable principle for his epistemology, such 17th-century political thinkers as T. Hobbes and H. Grotius were seeking an indubitable ground for politics. Just as the indubitable axioms of the Euclidean geometry, political philosophy at that time was in search for a self-evident starting point. In the wake of the eradication of the notion of God from politics, these new-found principles were supposed to play the same role. The emergence and development of the social contract theory, underlines Cassirer, was also connected with a revival of Stoicism in this century. This neo-Stoicism would stipulate that irrespective of the particular, historical, and empirical conditions of the human being, reason could furnish anyone with a universally binding philosophical ground.²⁷ As stated earlier, with respect to this issue, the social contract theorist Rousseau, rightly dubbed as an anti-Enlightenment thinker, was dependent on an Enlightenment way of thinking to the core – a fact showing us the importance of a context-oriented, historical hermeneutics.

That the state of civilisation is rife with inequality does not imply that the state of nature was completely free from it. Rather, what Rousseau holds is that the excessive, life-impoverishing one can arise, maintain itself, and increase only in the

²⁵ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 39, emphasis added. As I will be discussing in Chapters 6 and 7, Nietzsche’s (so-called) genealogical method operates from a similar standpoint. Even though he does not openly admit this feature of his work, this Rousseauian element too can be claimed to be detected in his work.

²⁶ Bachofen, “Der erste Naturzustand als wahrer Naturzustand. Die Tragweite einer anthropologischen Untersuchung,” 115.

²⁷ Cassirer, *Myth of the State*, 165-173.

former. His distinction between “moral or political inequality”²⁸ and “natural or physical”²⁹ inequality is meant to recognise this vital difference. The natural inequality refers to the fact that each person has different capabilities and weaknesses, owing to the difference of age, bodily and intellectual strength, and so on. For Rousseau, this sort of inequality is not perilous for the society, since its possibility of hypertrophy does not exist. On the other hand, the moral or political inequality, which refers to the institutionalised inequality embedded in our modern society, knows no boundaries. As stated earlier, for Rousseau, what comes from nature will be held as normal and desirable; so that, the political inequality is dismissed out of hand, since it is human-made. In it, the insatiable desire of dominating other fellow human beings, the ineradicable dependence of one upon another for its survival and retaining self-worth are among the most conspicuous characteristics.

In the following, we will examine Rousseau’s description of the physical human in its most primitive state, its conjectural living conditions and psychological constitution. Thereafter, a gradual metamorphosis from this ‘innocent’ condition to our contemporary one will be explicated, according to Rousseau’s narrative of gradual evolution.

2.3. The Innocent Times of Savagery

Rousseau’s narrative starts off by depicting the savage, or physical, human in its earliest possible state. Even though this figure is to be purely hypothetical, his discussion seems to suggest that he has in mind the pre-Neolithic, nomadic humans living in small communities preceded by the onset of first civilisations. Rousseau’s inspiration must have come from the writers of the so-called Age of Discovery, who had encountered in the (for them) unknown parts of the world people living in similar conditions Rousseau talks about.

In its most primitive, ‘original’ state, the physical human used to have no permanent abode, instead, s/he was living in forests, within the most natural milieu

²⁸ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 38.

²⁹ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 37.

one could have. The most important characteristic of such a life was its stability and permanence, lack of change, a circle of life repeating itself to the last. Therefore, the notion of progress, or the struggle for a 'better' life was something unheard-of for these simple people. Its absence was no doubt connected with the non-existence of such modern institutions as family, schooling, and the state. To grasp this sort of life, to understand its downsides and upsides in comparison with ours, we should keep in mind that the lack of all these elements is not to be regarded as a *deficiency* on their side.³⁰ The Rousseau of the *Second Discourse* is almost invariably of the view that we modern human beings stand on the deficient pole in this comparison.³¹ For instance, the savage human was prone to only few number of passions; secondly, since s/he was leading a solitary, and (almost) self-sufficient life, the modern necessity of living dependently on others was a foreign notion for him/her.³²

Working day and night for livelihood was not to be found at these early times, for the savage human could nourish itself whenever it pleases by means of the trees it was living under. Though devoid of the explosive passions of the modern human, this pre-civilisation, pre-social human was sturdy and dexterous with regard to its body. Endowed with this invaluable feature, for the savage human any kind of sophisticated thinking or abstract language was redundant. Instead of technological inventions, its tool was its own body with all its capabilities; in lieu of a hypertrophied modern mind, its acute senses were a sure guide in its hunting. What would constitute the sole concern of the savage was not a modern sense of unceasing development and expansion for its own sake, but self-preservation, the need to repeat its (from a modern perspective) insipid circle of life.³³

To evaluate Rousseau's approbatory narrative of the savage we should situate it in a philosophical context. The most conspicuous element here is that by taking human being's 'original' condition as isolated, non-sociable, and nomadic, he runs

³⁰ For instance, Rousseau is of the view that "A savage has a healthier judgment [...] than a philosopher does" (Rousseau, *Emile*, 243).

³¹ In the *Emile* Rousseau pronounces the principal task of his type of education as inculcating the manner of living of animals in his pupil (Rousseau, *Emile*, 55).

³² Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 57.

³³ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 40-44.

counter to the natural law tradition. The most well-known and seminal figure of this tradition is Aristotle.³⁴ According to him, it is incontestable that “a social instinct is implanted in all men by *nature*.”³⁵ From this standpoint, not only human being’s sociability, but also the political and social institutions of human society are the given facts of our lives. This is such a deep-rooted, ineffaceable facet of human nature that anyone leading a life outside a social and political environment is unfathomable.³⁶ As regards the natural condition of human being, we find Rousseau in an almost diametrically opposite position. For him, at the ‘beginning’, any emotional bond between humans did not exist, and in its stead there was a virtually all-pervasive indifference to each other.³⁷

Among Rousseau’s contemporary thinkers, most notably the Encyclopaedists, a similar view akin to natural law tradition had gained currency in the 18th century. Accordingly, a naïve belief in the value of society was the order of the day. It was held that in order for humanity to flourish culturally and morally, the urban atmosphere was required as a fecund milieu.³⁸ To be more specific, making public of the latest developments in literature, arts, and even science in the literary salons of Paris³⁹ was seen as a sure way of disseminating the values of the Enlightenment, as the *philosophes* Diderot, d’Alembert, and Voltaire⁴⁰ would have us believe. Contrary

³⁴ As we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, Hegel was a committed proponent of Aristotelian natural law tradition, and endeavoured to combine this stance with the specific demands of modernity.

³⁵ Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. B. Jowett, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), I.2 1253a27-1253a31, emphasis added.

³⁶ Aristotle, *Politics*, I.2 1253a3-1253a5. One should of course never neglect the historical difference. When Aristotle speaks of the inevitability of a political structure, this refers to the necessity and natural givenness of the Hellenic polis. The equivalent of this claim for a modern context would be to state the vitality of the state with its institutions coping with the issues of family, economy, and education.

³⁷ Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 259.

³⁸ Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 266, 268-70.

³⁹ For Rousseau’s aversion to it, cf. Rousseau, *Confessions*, 96.

⁴⁰ Even though he broke off with him due to a misunderstanding on the part of Rousseau, the *Confessions* is the best testimony to Rousseau’s long-lasting friendship with Diderot (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 382-6). Yet, with Voltaire he was not in such a good relationship (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 360-1).

to them, Rousseau emphatically stated that “[i]t is man’s weakness which makes him sociable [...] A truly happy being is a solitary being.”⁴¹ Contrary to the literary salons of Paris, he recommends the simple yet healthy way of living in a countryside.⁴² Also, he considered the prioritization of bookishness over concrete experience a dangerous feature of modernity.⁴³

Although it was stated above that Rousseau’s conception of the state of nature deviates from the Aristotelian tradition, his real opponents must be these French writers, the so-called *philosophes*. Contrary to his Parisian contemporaries, he questioned their appreciation of human sociability by revealing the dishonesty and deceitfulness of society. According to him, the advancement of the arts and sciences, held in high esteem by pro-Enlightenment thinkers, lies behind, and also leads to, the corruption of society.⁴⁴ Despite our boasting about all these so-called progressive inventions and discoveries, what we must be really after is “the simplicity of the earliest times.”⁴⁵ He ardently maintains that the Enlightenment’s notion of progress “has added nothing to our genuine felicity [but] has corrupted our mores [and in turn] the purity of [our] taste.”⁴⁶ The Enlightenment might have produced a good number of accomplished writers, inspirational poets, and quick-witted rhetoricians, perceptively observes Rousseau, yet what we are in need of, and lack severely, are upright citizens living with integrity.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Rousseau, *Emile*, 221.

⁴² Rousseau, *Confessions*, 11, 127, 337.

⁴³ Rousseau, *Emile*, 207, 251.

⁴⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 3-4.

⁴⁵ Rousseau, *Discourse on the Sciences*, 14.

⁴⁶ Rousseau, *Discourse on the Sciences*, 19.

⁴⁷ Rousseau, *Discourse on the Sciences*, 17; 21.

2.4. The Gradual Fall from the Bliss

The fateful and irrevocable transition from the solitary physical human to the modern, sociable one takes place in five gradual stages, as the latter part of the *Second Discourse* narrates. According to this “pseudochronology,”⁴⁸ the savage in the first stage refers to the one discussed in the previous section.

The second stage comes about the moment the savage begins to live in a (relatively) fixed dwelling, leaving his/her woodland in favour of a cave. This seemingly trivial change should have led to the formation of a family association and proprietary right to the things, albeit in a primitive sense.⁴⁹ As a result, an unprecedented hypertrophy in the intensity of human emotions⁵⁰ and the strengthening of sociability ensue, which in its turn give way to the division of labour based on the sexes. Furthermore, due to the increase in emollient emotions, a kind of love between spouses and family members must have originated. Once people began to cooperate, the need for *physical* labour must have diminished.

In brief, the second stage heralds a radical change from an anthropological standpoint: the strengthening of abstract values, such as love, communality and sociability with a concomitant weakening of physical aspects of life for one's survival. However, the downside of this ever-increasing collaboration was the irretrievable loss of self-sustenance.⁵¹ The development in the branches of metallurgy and agriculture, which can be undertaken only by cooperation, could be given as an example of this vital shift.⁵²

⁴⁸ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 36-7.

⁴⁹ As an aside, from an archaeological and historical point of view, this transition Rousseau narrates more or less corresponds to the Neolithic Revolution, a term coined by the archaeologist V. Gordon Childe. Despite Rousseau's own caution, his narrative seems to have many parallels with the actual state of matters in history.

⁵⁰ Elsewhere Rousseau holds that “[i]t is our passions that make us weak, because to satisfy them we would need more strength than nature gives us” (Rousseau, *Emile*, 165).

⁵¹ In the *Emile* Rousseau likens the loss of independence as being reduced from adulthood to childhood, insofar as the latter cannot live without the help of the former (Rousseau, *Emile*, 85).

⁵² Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 62-5.

The growth of population on an unprecedented scale could be the driving force behind this relocation of the physical human to a more permanent dwelling. Also, despite the commencement of cooperation, in this stage, a genuine sense of togetherness was not present. Getting together for a common benefit was merely a temporary undertaking, which would be followed by the dispersion of participant people. In other words, this inchoate approach to each other in a physical sense was still a perfidious one, excluding any sense of genuine loyalty.⁵³

Rousseau sees the third stage as a kind of golden age, since it is a halfway house between the blissful state of nature and the troubled state of civilisation. What should have taken place in this period is a consolidation of the emergent life of communality, which necessarily leads to the rise of one's comparing him/herself with another to feel its status in society. This feeling is famously called by Rousseau *amour propre* (which will be discussed in the following). Yet, the *amour propre* of this stage is only in a rudimentary and thus innocuous state.⁵⁴

The downfall of the semi-social, semi-savage human reaches **its** most dreadful (and penultimate) stage when these inchoate institutions and psychological elements turn into genuinely developed ones: from a temporary right to acquire things to a permanent right to them (i.e. private property in modern sense), from the rudimentary stages of cohabitation to the family in our sense. Once fully dependent on these, the savage people must have excessively developed their capacities of thinking, language, and technology, since without them their existence cannot be ensured in these novel conditions of society. The establishment of an order of society, implemented and secured by a quasi-state apparatus with its laws, army, and so on, must have taken place in the wake of these events. What Rousseau calls the natural inequality between human beings is supposed to have a deciding role in this deterioration: those who are physically strong, mentally acute, and clever by nature must have found a way of living at the expense of the powerless, indigent, and dim-witted. Put differently, the moral or political inequality must have been bred by the unavoidable existence of natural inequality in a society with private property.⁵⁵

⁵³ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 37.

⁵⁴ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 37.

⁵⁵ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 65-8.

The stage immediately preceding the state of civilisation is marked by its sanctification of private property, which Rousseau famously describes:

The first person who, having enclosed a plot of land, took it into his head to say *this is mine* and found people simple enough to believe him, was the true founder of civil society. What crimes, wars, murders, what miseries and horrors would the human race have been spared, had someone pulled up the stakes or filled in the ditch and cried out to his fellow men: ‘Do not listen to this impostor. You are lost if you forget that the fruits of the earth belong to all and the earth to no one!’⁵⁶

In the wake of this fateful turn of events, the social segregation between the rich and the poor, between those who are filled with “the pleasure of domination”⁵⁷ and those who are supposed to serve the former arises. This last stage of the state of nature must have been a constant state of war, or better, a Hobbesian *bellum omnium contra omnes*. Hence, this view of Rousseau should also be taken as his response to Hobbes’ account of the state of nature. Accordingly, for Rousseau, Hobbes was wrong to assume the existence of this dreadful state from the very beginning. Instead, it must have been preceded by a period of time in which solitary human beings were living in peace and quiet. What Hobbes sees in human beings at work all the time, namely animosity towards others for one’s own interest, is considered by Rousseau as residing in us *in potentia*, materialised by the forces of sociability, which inescapably entails excessive (political) inequality under the name of the right to property. In other words, in the absence of the institution of private property (whose existence is based on the establishment of sociability, as we will see in Hegel in Chapter 5) such a bloodstained period in human history would be inexistent.⁵⁸

The state of the war of all against all comes to an end by a contrivance of those who end up the strong party in the wake of these events. This constitutes the subject matter of the next chapter, since it is treated in the *Social Contract* in a much more sophisticated fashion than in the *Second Discourse*. Before proceeding to this

⁵⁶ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 60. This famous phrase of Rousseau is in fact his argument against Hobbes’ as well as Locke’s attempt to legitimise the institution of private property. For Rousseau, the appropriation of land, which belongs to no one, amounts to usurpation (Philip Stewart, “Der Zweite Naturzustand des ‘goldenen Zeitalters’” in *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Die beiden Diskurse zur Zivilisationskritik*, ed. Johannes Rohbeck and Lieselotte Steinbrügge (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 128).

⁵⁷ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 68.

⁵⁸ Bachofen, “Der erste Naturzustand als wahrer Naturzustand. Die Tragweite einer anthropologischen Untersuchung,” 113.

topic, it is fitting now to have a look at Rousseau's anthropology, which enables us to see the logic behind the transitions in his conjectural history.

2.5. Rousseau's Conception of Human Nature

Considering the narrative of the *Second Discourse* as a whole, it can be seen that no extrinsic element is inserted into the picture – at least, this is what Rousseau claims to achieve. This facet of his work refers to the fact that the deterioration of the originally savage, isolated human of the state of nature was an ineluctable process. For this reason, there cannot be any so-called liberatory return from the decadent, other-dependent, unhealthy human of the state of civilisation to the original one. In order to comprehend how this narrative is supposed to be plausible and inherent, a look at Rousseau's understanding of human being is in order – since his moral psychology provides the basis for historical events discussed above.

There are two divisions Rousseau introduces: the first is the one between the animal and the human being; the second, between the savage human and the modern, civilised human. According to the first distinction, whereas all animals are under the unchangeable, necessary sway of their instincts, which regulate their lives without the help of any conscious faculty, the human being is in possession of one more capability that differentiates it from the former extensively: the power of willing. It is through using its faculty of willing that human beings can exercise their freedom, a feature shared by all humans to the exclusion of the rest of living beings. This hallmark of humanity, which lies in its capacity to withstand and even manipulate the workings of instincts, can be also considered the spirituality of its soul. What strikes one as outstanding here is Rousseau's contention that the differential element between the human and the animal is not the lack of an intellectual faculty on the part of the latter, for "in this regard man differs from an animal only in degree."⁵⁹ To the contrary, he dismisses the reason or understanding as the force behind the (moral) corruption of society.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 44-5.

⁶⁰ This critique of Rousseau is a forerunner of Nietzsche's analysis of the role of consciousness and intellectual capacities in human life. As we will see in Chapters 6 and 7, in contrast to moral concerns

Endowed with the faculty of willing, and thus of freedom, the human being has another unique feature that is related to it: perfectibility.⁶¹ By dint of its daily contact with other human beings, living beings, and the inorganic world, the human is capable of developing itself by acquiring new skills, and inventing new techniques. Contrary to the human, the animal world is exempt from such a notion of improvement in a positive or negative sense. According to Rousseau, development and progress, these highly prized notions of the Enlightenment, are as a matter of fact the real woes of humanity. This boundless capacity of the human “is the source of all man’s misfortunes; [and] that this is what, by dint of time, draws him out of that original condition.”⁶² The most conspicuous example of this is that our capacity to adapt to luxury and comfort signify in fact our downfall and decay.⁶³ (In this respect, Rousseau anticipates Nietzsche’s critique of modernity as steeped in nihilism.) Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that in its proper sense, the perfectibility of humanity does not refer only to progress, but to the mouldability of human beings and its society in all senses. Hence, the downfall of human condition in the last stages of the state of nature is connected with the notion of perfectibility as well.⁶⁴ In the *Emile* Rousseau states that compared with animals, “[m]an alone has superfluous faculties. Is it not very strange that this superfluity should be the instrument of his unhappiness?”⁶⁵

The second division is made between the physical or savage human and the civilised human of modernity. Connected with it is Rousseau’s conception of human desires, and of *amour propre*. In the first place, he draws a distinction between human desires relating to our physical environment and those to other people in society. This view can be contrasted with the Hobbesian and Humean notion of

of his predecessor, Nietzsche’s almost entire focus is on the level of physiology, or the material aspect of human life.

⁶¹ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 24.

⁶² Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 45.

⁶³ Stewart, “Der Zweite Naturzustand des ‘goldenen Zeitalters’,” 135.

⁶⁴ Bachofen, “Der erste Naturzustand als wahrer Naturzustand. Die Tragweite einer anthropologischen Untersuchung,” 117.

⁶⁵ Rousseau, *Emile*, 81.

human desires. According to them, our desires are to be taken as standing in the same camp, since we cannot question whether there exist healthy or unhealthy, natural or artificial sorts of them.⁶⁶

As an objection to them, Rousseau claims that as regards our society-related desires, a dangerous situation is in the making, which points to the second prong of the issue, namely his pair of concepts, *amour de soi* and *amour propre*. According to Rousseau, the most basic drive of the human is self-preservation, and this fundamental drive is called by him the “love of oneself” or “self-love” (*amour de soi*). Self-care is a natural characteristic through and through. Owing to the perfectibility of the human, this “benign passion leading us to care for our physical well-being”⁶⁷ irrevocably transmutes into an excessive egocentrism, which he terms *amour propre*. For Rousseau, this emergent desire is completely corrosive and artificial, which was bred in the corrupt society of modernity.⁶⁸ In nuce, the distinction between the natural *amour de soi* and the unnatural *amour propre* constitutes the backbone of Rousseau’s metaphysics of human being. The immunity of the animal to the latter marks its difference from the human being.⁶⁹

In addition to *amour de soi*, being in possession of *pitié* is another characteristic of the human, which means “the capacity to identify sympathetically with the pain and suffering of others.”⁷⁰ According to Rousseau, we possess *pitié* in common with animals. Thanks to this non-reflective, inborn quality, a peaceful coexistence in a society becomes possible.⁷¹ Also, such communal virtues as friendship, compassion, and generosity can be said to be originating from this sentiment. Contrary to *pitié*, which provides us with a social bond, *amour propre* operates in the opposite direction. Fostered by the self-centred reason, it leads to the

⁶⁶ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 18-9.

⁶⁷ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 22.

⁶⁸ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 106.

⁶⁹ Cf. Rousseau, *Emile*, 212-5, for a similar account in another work of Rousseau.

⁷⁰ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 23.

⁷¹ Keith Ansell-Pearson, *Nietzsche Contra Rousseau: A Study of Nietzsche’s Moral and Political Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 65.

fracture of communality. Despite that, Rousseau is of the view that even the most rapacious egotism of a society is not capable of eliminating this deep-rooted sentiment of humanity.⁷²

To connect this moral psychology with the conjectural history discussed above, it is important to see that, living under the unconscious forces of *amour de soi* and *pitié*, the pre-modern human was not susceptible to hypertrophied, corruptive desires of the civilised human. In such a condition, such modern institutions as property and law were redundant, and even detrimental to the simplicity of those times, because people were not dependent on each other to the extent seen in modern condition. This lawlessness was far from a chaotic social life steeped in bloodshed; the tender feeling of *pitié* would provide a much more peaceful condition for the savage than reasoned justice.⁷³

2.6. The Actuality of the *Second Discourse*

Taken generally, evaluating the *Second Discourse* from the standpoint of today might be said to be beset with two main drawbacks. In the first place, the tone of Rousseau's prose, the conclusions he draws vis-à-vis the modern human strongly imply that there can be only one interpretation as to the modern condition of humanity: we are the product of a cataclysmic, irreversible, and irremediable 'fall'⁷⁴ from the original blissful state of nature. What is most alarming here is that there is no chance of going back to this original condition.⁷⁵ In other words, we are doomed to the excessive inequality and injustices of modern society.

⁷² Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 53-55.

⁷³ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 55.

⁷⁴ Throughout the chapter, I deliberately made use of this word, which is of course strongly redolent of the biblical understanding of human history. No matter how one interprets the narrative of the *Second Discourse*, it cannot be denied that his trajectory bears resemblance with the story of the Fall of Adam and Eve from heaven. Another possible influence might have been Hesiod's *Theogony*, which is characterised by a pessimistic understanding of history. I believe that, considering he was writing in the 18th century, namely not in a considerably secularised age, this resemblance and influence is to be viewed as acceptable. Here, to my mind, our concern lies in not so much as faulting him on this surreptitious inspiration as extracting a relevant meaning for our age.

⁷⁵ Mensching, "Das Verhältnis des Zweiten Diskurses zu den Schriften Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag und Emile," 179-180.

In the second place, despite his insistence that the state of nature he narrates is by no means an actual one, in many places his text seems to be describing an empirically attested history of humanity. This is acknowledged by E. Cassirer, who states that “it is never entirely clear to what extent his notion of a state of nature is ‘ideal’ and to what extent it is ‘empirical’. He is always shifting from a factual to a purely ideal interpretation.”⁷⁶ In other words, to render Rousseau’s work plausible the reader should bear in mind that a constant, yet unvoiced, switch from a conjectural to authentic history is always at work.

If this is supposed to be the endpoint, that is, if the entire trajectory of humankind is nothing but gloom and doom, all our efforts to comprehend his meaning would be to no avail. Instead of getting bogged down in such a pessimistic conclusion, what I would like to suggest is that we read the text from a constructive, life-affirming standpoint. Accordingly, the value of the state of nature might be re-evaluated on a new basis. Instead of seeing it as the irretrievably lost paradise of humanity, it could be considered the ultimate telos of human history.⁷⁷ Whether it could be entirely achieved or not is not relevant here; because the vital point here is to see the inescapable, and perhaps forgotten, value of the simple yet healthy and robust human of savagery. I think that once we see the positive, constructive value of the savage human from this perspective, it might function as serving a reliable reference point for guiding our lives in modern society with its elements of all-pervading *amour propre* and tenuous *pitié*.⁷⁸

Laying aside this novel reading of the *Second Discourse*, Rousseau’s oeuvre provides us with a much stronger, less speculative, clue in interpreting his work. After the publication of the *Second Discourse* in 1755 (penned one year earlier), the Rousseau of the *Social Contract* seems to undergo a drastic change in his thoughts as regards the relation between the individual and society. Given that the latter work was published in 1762, namely less than a decade later, this shift is surely rapid and unforeseen. Rousseau’s critique in his earlier work that the process leading to the

⁷⁶ Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, 24.

⁷⁷ Cf. Rousseau, *Emile*, 205, 255.

⁷⁸ For a discussion of the attempt to interpret Rousseau’s savage man along these lines in the modern German philosophy starting with Kant, see Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, 20.

(increasing) sociability of the nomadic and isolated human is a deplorable and miserable phenomenon, is consigned to oblivion in his later work: “[T]he social order is a sacred right which serves as a foundation for all other rights.”⁷⁹

In the next Chapter, after bringing Rousseau’s mature work under scrutiny, I will be trying to demonstrate how the interpretation of the earlier work suggested above hangs together given the conclusions drawn from the later work. So that, we will be able to see the genuine, organic connection between the destructive work of the *Second Discourse* and the constructive work of the *Social Contract*, despite the apparent incompatibility between them.



⁷⁹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141. Considering the general framework of this work, one can suggest that within such a short span of time the “Nietzschean” critic of society, i.e. the Rousseau of the *Second Discourse*, turns into a “Hegelian” champion of modern state.

CHAPTER 3

ROUSSEAUIAN STATE OF CIVILISATION

Together with Hobbes' *Leviathan* and Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*, Rousseau's *Social Contract* (*Du Contrat Social*, published in 1762) is generally taken to be the most important work on the social contract theory. However, as we have seen in the previous chapter, before delving into this theory Rousseau was entertaining the idea that human beings, good by birth and nature, end up being irreversibly depraved by the pernicious forces of society.⁸⁰ Leaving aside for now the question whether he ultimately and unreservedly discarded the mindset of the *Second Discourse*, we will see in this chapter how he devises the formation of a civilised, modern society, which aims at paradoxically securing maximum personal freedom and communality at once. To understand this we should firstly look at his conception of three-tiered freedom, or liberty,⁸¹ which serves as a bedrock for the entirety of the *Social Contract*.

3.1. Two Conceptions of Liberty

One of the foundations of Rousseau's contract theory is that by giving their consent for entering modern society, the savage human of the state of nature leaves behind its "natural liberty" once and for all. Rousseau stresses that unless any violation takes place on the part of the so-called contractor, one is to live by having "conventional

⁸⁰ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 19.

⁸¹ Given that these two notions are of vital importance in Rousseau's political philosophy, I would like to emphasise that although they have their own nuances (liberty, stemming from Latin *liber* and *libertas*, is used to denote freedom on *public* level; freedom, however, has a *personal, individualistic* signification) I will be using them mostly interchangeably – due to the fact that the word choice of the translation of Rousseau's work does not allow one to draw such a tidy and neat distinction.

liberty” under the new condition.⁸² The importance of this distinction and the transformation from the former to the latter lies in that in civil society one is bound to live under the limitations of the general will,⁸³ not under the instable dependence on one’s own physical power as used to be the case in the state of nature.⁸⁴

In contemporary parlance, what Rousseau means by natural and conventional liberty is designated by the terms, negative and positive freedom, respectively. The former, referring to the freedom to do what one pleases, has the seemingly advantageous element of “uninterfered-with non-accountable discretion.”⁸⁵ Nevertheless, this apparent self-sufficiency is beset by the much more substantial problem that unless one has an appropriate environment or context conducive to this sort of freedom one cannot realise it. In other words, in the absence of a society rendering human flourishing and freedom realisable, one cannot materialise it at one’s own discretion. This is the reason why Rousseau is at pains to demonstrate that we must see the necessity of building a civil society by means of a social contract in order to render personal freedom possible. Even though it *volens volens* entails the acceptance of living by the restrictions of society, the positive or conventional freedom is for Rousseau the sole possibility of the realisation of human freedom. (As will be worked out in Chapters 4 and 5, this insight of Rousseau is shared by Hegel’s conception of society, constituting the bedrock of his social and political philosophy.)

In addition, Rousseau attaches the right to private property to the civil liberty as a concomitant⁸⁶ right to it. Given the framework of this thesis, I will not be going into this extensively. However, suffice it to say that, considering his political works

⁸² Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 148.

⁸³ The elucidation of this notion will be carried out in the following. For now, it is important to bear in mind that the (complete) sway of general will in a society means the prevalence of common wealth in the undertakings of the state.

⁸⁴ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 151.

⁸⁵ Dent, *Rousseau*, 146.

⁸⁶ It must be pointed out that in the *Third Discourse* the right to property takes on a higher value, which becomes, rather than a mere by-product, the foundation of the social contract (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Political Economy*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 132).

in generally, Rousseau's view on the topic of property is far from clear. On the one hand, in the *Second Discourse*, he inveighs against it owing to its anti-natural character; yet, on the other, the Rousseau of the *Third Discourse* and the *Social Contract* considers it as a prerequisite for a stable social order.⁸⁷

Within the framework discussed above, it seems that in a Rousseauian society communality takes precedence over individuality. That is to say, the individual, the constituent of the larger whole of society, is unfathomable outside its general context, or social milieu. As we have seen in Chapter 2, this precedence was quite the opposite in the *Second Discourse*, where the humanity, living unto itself blissfully, fell back on forming an association only to put an end to unceasing conflicts and battles between themselves. It is also worth noting that in the subsequent chapters dealing with Hegel and Nietzsche, the question whether the individual or the community is more crucial will be one of the main points of discussion. We will see that the discussion of this irresolvable question will get more complicated in their philosophies.

What Rousseau terms conventional liberty is also called by him "civil liberty," and the latter is associated with a third kind, "moral liberty."⁸⁸ What he understands by it is the self-sufficiency of a human being, because that person is said to hold sway over its desires and lives by subscribing to the law which it has legislated for itself.⁸⁹

In brief, for Rousseau, the philosopher of liberty, who sees its disavowal as against the dignity of a human being,⁹⁰ what one is to achieve within a civil society is conventional or civil liberty, which are naturally accompanied by propriety ownership and moral liberty. Once equipped with them by taking cognisance of their

⁸⁷ Cf. Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 60; *Social Contract*, 151; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Political Economy*, in *Basic Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 127, 132.

⁸⁸ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 151.

⁸⁹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 151. As an aside, it must be underlined that this conception of Rousseau anticipates to a considerable extent the Kantian understanding of autonomy as the linchpin of morality.

⁹⁰ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 144.

inherent and vital value for human life, the disposal of natural liberty cannot be regarded as a loss, but as casting aside an impediment to a worthwhile life.

3.2. The Re-evaluation of the Social Contract

As stated in Section 2.4, the termination of the state of nature takes place by means of a contrivance of the rich and powerful, who ended up so in the endless struggles of *omnes contra omnes*. This invention has a double-edged significance in Rousseau's political vocabulary. In his earlier work, the *Second Discourse*, it is not worked out extensively, and has a negative character through and through: in order to put an end to this chaos and bloodshed in the last stage of state of nature, the powerful comes up with the idea of 'signing' a social contract. As a result of it, a stable social order can be established, which also protects the right to property. Nevertheless, this seemingly peaceful solution was a gross deception, perceptively adds Rousseau, because what the (initial) social contract achieved was nothing more than rendering permanent and inviolable the excessively unequal circumstances of the last stage of natural condition.⁹¹ In brief, for the earlier Rousseau, the coming into existence of society and its institutions, hence the element of sociability, is based on a swindle.⁹² This negative interpretation of social contract is undergirded by Rousseau's espousal of natural liberty, according to which the laws of a communal life could be nothing more than an infringement of personal freedom. In other words, what is worked out as a *pactum societatis* is nothing other than a *pactum subjectionis*.⁹³ Such an infringement results only in conceitedness and contempt on the part of the strong, shame and envy on that of the weak.⁹⁴ In the *Emile* Rousseau describes the unfreedom of sociable human being emphatically:

⁹¹ Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, 69-70.

⁹² Stewart, "Der Zweite Naturzustand des 'goldenen Zeitalters,'" 129.

⁹³ Paul Bastid, "Die Theorie der Regierungsformen" in *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag oder Prinzipien des Staatsrechts*, ed. Reinhard Brandt and Karlfriedrich Herb (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2012), 153.

⁹⁴ Stewart, "Der Zweite Naturzustand des 'goldenen Zeitalters,'" 137.

All our wisdom consists in servile prejudices. All our practices are only subjection, impediment, and constraint. Civil man is born, lives, and dies in slavery. At his birth he is sewed in swaddling clothes: at his death he is nailed in a coffin. So long as he keeps his human shape, he is enchained by our institutions.⁹⁵

On the other hand, the Rousseau of the *Social Contract* is of the view that, once having got bogged down in the interminable conflicts (described in Chapter 2), the savage human of the state of nature cannot help but see that the point of no return has been reached. (As G. Mensching states, the view that the origin of culture and history is to be seen as a result of hardship and necessity was a widespread theme in the 18th century.⁹⁶) Accordingly, the only way out lies in acting in concert, that is, instead of vying for an ultimate ascendancy over others, the individual forces ought to be united and directed at a common goal.⁹⁷ According to Rousseau, this commonality can be attained only by dint of a social contract, which sanctions the alienation⁹⁸ of the natural, or negative, freedom (of the earlier times of the state of nature) with a view to creating an harmonious society in which “each one, while uniting with all, nevertheless obeys only himself and remains as free as before.”⁹⁹ A sound reading of this statement should prevent us from thinking that in the state of civilisation one is literally ‘as free as before.’ Rather, what is indicated by this phrase is that by substituting one’s natural liberty for a civil and moral one, in the state of civilisation one’s life cannot be said to be suppressed more. On the contrary, emphasises Rousseau, the natural inequality is never a deciding factor in civil society, whatever one’s physical or intellectual capacity is, they are to be treated equal according to the

⁹⁵ Rousseau, *Emile*, 42-3. For a similar passage, cf. Rousseau, *Emile*, 37.

⁹⁶ Mensching, “Das Verhältnis des Zweiten Diskurses zu den Schriften Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag und Emile,” 183-4. Apart from that, Mensching points to the commonalities between the *Second Discourse* and the Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, such as Adam Ferguson and John Millar, as well as Voltaire’s political treatises, and Condorcet’s conception of the idea of progress (Mensching, “Das Verhältnis des Zweiten Diskurses zu den Schriften Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag und Emile,” 185).

⁹⁷ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 147.

⁹⁸ Rousseau’s use of the word alienation here is unconventional. In the *Social Contract* it refers to giving up one’s rights or freedom to somebody else or to an impersonal entity, i.e. the State. Yet, normally, as a term of law, to alienate means to transfer ownership of property rights to another person or group.

⁹⁹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 148.

terms of the social contract.¹⁰⁰ (Despite this shift in Rousseau's view in the *Social Contract*, in the *Emile*, which was published in the same year with the former work, he still insists that whereas there is a *de facto*, genuine equality in the state of nature, in the state of civilisation there is only a *de jure*, prescriptive equality, which is far from being realised.¹⁰¹)

The novel condition stipulates that, in order to enter and benefit from the civil society, each member of community must alienate their all rights to the entire community.¹⁰² (As we will see in Chapter 5, this demand on the part of Rousseau is wrongly and habitually claimed to have been in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, although a sound reading of the text would demonstrate that it was Hegel's utmost concern, unlike Rousseau, not to fall into this trap.) In addition, this process must be carried out without any reservation. Since this absolute obligation holds for everyone in the society, all participants are on equal terms.¹⁰³ What is more vital is that the alienation is made not to someone else (as is the case with Hobbes' *Leviathan*, where the subjects surrender their rights to the whims of a king), but to the entirety of community, that is, to an impersonal entity composed of persons but in no way bound by the dictates of one individual, or a faction.¹⁰⁴

3.3. Convention versus Force and Nature

The approbation of the social contract by the mature Rousseau is inextricably linked with the shift in his conceptualisation of human freedom. As a social contract

¹⁰⁰ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 153.

¹⁰¹ Rousseau, *Emile*, 236.

¹⁰² To the modern reader of 21st century, nothing but this condition paved the way for the chaos and bloodshed of 20th century. However, we must not forget that, as a contemporary of 18th century, Rousseau must have in his mind the ancient ideal of Hellenic polis, or the Roman Republic. As will be seen in the following, this ideal of Rousseau too was shared by Hegel.

¹⁰³ Even so, Rousseau elsewhere states that "each person alienates, by the social compact, only that portion of his power, his goods, and liberty whose use is of consequence to the community" (Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 157). Given that such a statement considerably does not fit with the general purpose of the work, I would like to pass this passage over. Even if it were to be adopted into the account, the question how to choose those required elements would remain unclear.

¹⁰⁴ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 148.

theorist, he goes to great lengths to demonstrate that a worthy human life is possible only within a community where the rapacious relationship between human beings (of the savage times) cannot reign. All our rights, such as the right to live safely, property, and so on, depend on the existence of a social, communal order.¹⁰⁵

According to Rousseau, only the social contract theory can successfully give an account for this desired condition. He states that there are other theories which attempt to legitimise state authority, i.e. the right of the state to make binding demands from its citizens without menacing their freedom. In general, these rival theories either rely on the argument that might is right, or derive from their understanding of human nature that communality is a natural, or innate, quality of us.¹⁰⁶

He dismisses the former as insufficient for a long-standing civil order, because “so long as a people is constrained to obey and does obey, it does well. As soon as it can shake off the yoke and does shake it off, it does even better. For by recovering its liberty by means of the same right that stole it [i.e., through force], either the populace is justified in getting it back or else those who took it away were not justified in their actions.”¹⁰⁷ In other words, since obeying a more powerful agent is “an act of necessity, not of will,”¹⁰⁸ such a situation cannot constitute a ground for justifying the power structure in question. In brief, what is required for the political philosopher is a legitimised, accounted-for power, not a brute physical force which has no claim to stability.¹⁰⁹

Rousseau’s second rival theory, which purports to justify the transformation of “force into right and obedience into duty”¹¹⁰ is the view, generally associated with Aristotle, that some human beings are slave by nature, and some are born to rule.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141.

¹⁰⁶ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141.

¹⁰⁷ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141.

¹⁰⁸ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 143.

¹⁰⁹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 144.

¹¹⁰ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 143.

¹¹¹ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 59.

For the philosopher of human liberty, this standpoint is preposterous, because the fact that there are, and have been, slaves is a consequence of forceful subjugation, not of some inborn feature of human beings. Accordingly, he faults Aristotle on his fallacy of confusing the effect and the cause of this phenomenon.¹¹² This tactic is nothing more than establishing a legal ground by relying on a (illegitimate) fact. In the rest of his discussion, he pillories Grotius and Hobbes owing to their conviction that human beings en masse are nothing more than an impotent, obtuse aggregate, invariably in need of a ruler (e.g. a father, or a king).¹¹³

Upon his rejection of two rival conceptions of state authority, he leaps to the conclusion that the social contract theory, or the legitimisation of power on agreement, is the sole candidate that can give an account for the state monopoly.¹¹⁴ What is problematic here is his rejection of the possibility of another candidate, and his fallacious reasoning that since the rivals are proved to be false, his own stance must necessarily hold true. In the following, by examining Rousseau's self-proclaimed solution to the issue in question, we will look at whether the elements of his theory hang together and could achieve what it aims to do.

3.4. The Sovereignty of the People

As discussed above, in the *Social Contract*, a positive re-evaluation of the contract theory is undertaken by Rousseau (Section 3.2), which hinges on the constructive role of civil and moral liberty (Section 3.1), and repudiates the 'might is right' and natural slavery doctrines (Section 3.3). In his blueprint for civil society, all members are supposed to transfer their rights once and for all to the entirety of community, which he formulates as the absolute reign of (what he calls) the *general will* (*volonté général*):

Each of us places his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the *general will*; and as one we receive each member as the indivisible part of the whole. At once, in place of the individual person of each contracting party, this act of

¹¹² Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 142-3.

¹¹³ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 58.

¹¹⁴ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 144.

association produces a moral and collective body composed of as many members as there are voices in the assembly, which receives from this same act its unity, its common self, its life and its will.¹¹⁵

Here, in one of the most vital passages of the *Social Contract*, Rousseau maintains that to establish the general will, all members should leave their private wills behind in favour of a novel sort of will that is moulded by the common needs, goals, and limitations of one's society.¹¹⁶ It is beyond dispute that while the former seeks to achieve what it sees as desirable for its personal life, the latter aims at an equitable social order.¹¹⁷

In the second place, Rousseau's choice of the word 'association' is not a coincidence, because he carefully distinguishes between an aggregation and an association. To his mind, hordes of people bereft of a common, communal goal can constitute nothing more than an aggregation, whose optimal way of rule would be a subjugation by a ruler equipped with an absolute right over his subjects. What differentiates the association from the aggregation is that only it is able to form a general will with a view to attaining the communal good without injuring the personal freedom of its members.¹¹⁸ As stated in Section 3.2, if this alienation is carried out to a ruler, it would be a master-slave relationship no matter what the power of the ruler is – because however intelligent, well disposed, or powerful that ruler might be, it necessarily acts and lives according to its private will.¹¹⁹

Although it is of capital significance for his political thinking, Rousseau's conception of general will has a notorious place in the *Social Contract* due to its

¹¹⁵ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 148, emphasis added.

¹¹⁶ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 150. It could be said that the principal aim of the education in the *Emile* is the same, when Rousseau says that not letting the idea of mastery and servitude born in the mind of the pupil constitutes the cornerstone of his programme (Rousseau, *Emile*, 66, 89, 91, 121). For a personal evaluation of the master – servant relationship, cf. Rousseau, *Confessions*, 17.

¹¹⁷ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 153-4; Ansell-Pearson, *Nietzsche Contra Rousseau: A Study of Nietzsche's Moral and Political Thought*, 54.

¹¹⁸ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 147.

¹¹⁹ The distinction in question can be traced in the Latin roots of the terms. Aggregate, stemming from *aggregātus*, the passive perfect of the verb *aggregō*, comes from the noun *grex*, which means a flock, a pack, or a swarm to designate groups of animals. On the other hand, association stems from *socius*, which has a common origin with *societas*, meaning society.

insufficient formulation in the work. As N. Dent puts it, any attempt to ascertain its meaning is so elusive that among Rousseau scholars its interpretation can be said to be the most controversial issue.¹²⁰ Rousseau couches it in this quasi-mathematical analogy: “[R]emove from these same wills [i.e. the private wills of each individual] the pluses and minuses that cancel each other out, and what remains as the sum of the differences is the general will.”¹²¹ Roughly speaking, what he seems to mean here is that to attain the general will the conflicting private wills should be curbed in such a way that a harmony could reign between all constituent parts. Even if the exact meaning of the general will were to be this, the exact *modus operandi* of this process remains unclear given the text of the *Social Contract*.

Nevertheless, the only concrete, incontestable feature of the general will as expounded by Rousseau is what it could never be: the will of all (*volonté de tous*). It is a simple aggregate of all private wills of the members of a community, which does not take into account its disunity.¹²² In brief, whilst the general will is indissociably connected with the common or general interest, and under the sway of no private will(s), the will of all is doomed to be mired in the everlasting dissension within society due to its lack of a social harmony.

‘Republic’ or ‘body politic’ is the name given by Rousseau to this communal body, which is composed of the entirety of its inhabitants. If it is in an inactive state it is called a ‘state’, but if and when it is active the republic is to be called a ‘sovereign’. Similarly, the people of the republic is to be designated as “citizens, insofar as [they are] participants in the sovereign authority, and subjects, insofar as they are subjected to the laws of the state.”¹²³ In another formulation, Rousseau maintains that “every state ruled by laws”¹²⁴ is necessarily a republic, because the people who are supposed to obey these laws are at the same time those who legislated them according to the common good stipulated by the general will. Thus,

¹²⁰ Dent, *Rousseau*, 135.

¹²¹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 155-6.

¹²² Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 155.

¹²³ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 148-9.

¹²⁴ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 162.

in Rousseau's terminology, a republican state might either be a monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy. As long as the principle of the general will is established in them, the form of administration does not detract from its freedom-enhancing feature and rationality.¹²⁵

After providing us with this general framework, Rousseau sets forth the qualifications that must be held in order for the general will, or the sovereignty of people, to operate successfully in a republican society. i) Sovereignty is inalienable: Throughout the *Social Contract* Rousseau endlessly reiterates that a society enabling freedom can be achieved only under the condition that the common good is established and targeted by *all* of its members. It is due to this condition that he envisages the general will to be formed by the entirety of the members of society. Accordingly, no act of transferring one's rights to another is to be allowed in a truly republican society, for the will of a private person cannot be transmitted. In other words, for Rousseau, "the sovereign, which is only a collective being, cannot be represented by anything but itself."¹²⁶ Rousseau's concern here is the possibility of degenerating into a master-slave relationship, which is based on the idea of representation of one's will by the will of another person.¹²⁷ In such a condition, cautions he, not the laws of a sovereign public but the decrees of a private person would be ruling the society; and, consequently, sovereignty would give way to magistracy.¹²⁸

ii) Sovereignty is indivisible: For the very reason that it cannot be alienated, the common power of body politic does not admit of any splitting. Deducting even one person from this commonality would result in the eradication of lawfulness of

¹²⁵ Bastid, "Die Theorie der Regierungsformen," 158.

¹²⁶ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 153. Incidentally, the absence of any representation of a person's will allows no room for any kind of representative democracy of our era. Thus, the blueprint for a society of freedom Rousseau had in mind remains an abstract ideal to our age.

¹²⁷ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 154. This argument might be read as directed primarily against Hobbes, who suggests in the *Leviathan* that "I can, in practice, cede to someone else the right to decide the basic direction of my life while continuing to be held responsible for each decision" (Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 101).

¹²⁸ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 161-2. Note that the term magistracy derives from the Latin noun, *magister*, which means a master. However, this absolute repudiation of any need for a master on the part of Rousseau will be given a further, somewhat paradoxical, twist when he introduces the figure of the legislator, as we will see in the following section.

the state, since even such an aggregate cannot constitute a proper association. In brief, either the general will belongs to, and issues from, the whole, or it cannot be called a general will. To flesh out his point Rousseau adds that the generality of the will does not entail any unanimity, but factoring in all voting of the people.¹²⁹

iii) Sovereignty cannot make mistakes: Since the general will is completely untainted by the corrosive elements of private wills and hence aims at the common good, the members of body politic cannot question its omnitemporal rightfulness. It is true that the decisions taken by populace as a whole might not prove to be well-advised all the time, but this does not detract from the fact that the general will cannot err.¹³⁰ Elsewhere he states that the decisions of the general will cannot revolve around issues that are of no consequence for the common good. The state of civilisation, which is constituted according to the laws of reason, invariably safeguards against the instable, erosive forces of private wills, which could reign only under the lawless state of nature.¹³¹

Prima facie, such a view does not have the ring of truth, given the emphasis Rousseau lays on the indispensable role of freedom for a worthwhile human life. To recognise its logic, we should remember that in exchange for the acquisition of civil and moral freedom, all members of the society had to give up their natural freedom with a view to forming a solid communal will that maintains the stability of civil society. Once having ‘signed’ this social contract, a majority vote becomes binding on *all* of its citizens, for “when a law is proposed in the people’s assembly, what is asked of them is not precisely whether they approve or reject, but whether or not it conforms to the general will that is theirs.”¹³²

¹²⁹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 154. One should bear in mind that the indivisibility of the general will necessarily excludes the separation of powers. As is well known, its most popular example was developed by Montesquieu, who envisages separate bodies for legislation, execution, and judiciary. For Rousseau, such a tripartite system is a fatuous idea.

¹³⁰ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 155.

¹³¹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 157.

¹³² Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 206. The most conspicuous instance of it is depicted in the *Crito*, where Socrates rejects the helping hand lent by his fellow citizens, who are eager to provide his escape from the prison. Quite tellingly, Socrates would rather die by drinking the poison than reciprocate the injustice of his polis with another of his own. Also, the Socrates of the *Crito* might be said to represent the ideal citizen for Rousseau, since the former never lets his private will prevail over the general will of his community.

Contrary to the usual practice today, in his contract theory, Rousseau makes no concessions for schisms or factions in society. Each member must deliberate on the issues of its society under its own steam, because only in this way, he emphasises, can the possibility of one party's excessive ascendancy over the rest of populace be prevented.¹³³ Even though the will of a (political) party is "general in relation to its members, [it is] particular in relation to the state."¹³⁴

iv) Sovereignty "must derive from all in order to be applied to all."¹³⁵ In other words, the general will cannot specify its content vis-à-vis its object of application, namely the specific names of (the groups of) citizens. By stipulating this last condition, Rousseau wants to ensure that there is no sphere in public life devoid of laws. If there were to be some privileged persons or classes who are treated dissimilarly either in a positive or negative manner from the rest of the community, this would result in the absolute applicability of the general will, and thus the will of people would not be properly general.¹³⁶

Since there is to be no particular object of the general will, we could call it oblivious to the specific individuals. Furthermore, this obliviousness pertains not only to the object of application, but also to those who compose and maintain it: "it is no longer necessary to ask who is to make the laws, since they are the acts of the general will."¹³⁷ In brief, according to Rousseau, an absolute anonymity should be retained as for both the author and object of the laws of civil order. Nevertheless, considering Rousseau's text, the question how the laypersons of a society can tackle with the difficult task of making laws, which necessarily requires the presence of experts on this field, remains unanswered.

After looking at the basic requirements of the public order Rousseau's contract theory establishes in his society, in the following we will be investigating

¹³³ The political landscape of Europe in the 20th century attests to the sagacity of this insight of Rousseau. As its most dramatic example, the obliteration of the Weimar Republic by the NSDAP was carried out in conformity with this anti-Rousseauian principle.

¹³⁴ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 156.

¹³⁵ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 157.

¹³⁶ Bertram, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, 112.

¹³⁷ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 161.

how these undertakings are to be achieved by a mass of individuals who have just sprang from a lawless state of nature.

3.5. The Legislator: a *Deus ex Machina*?

The *Social Contract* does not directly reference the earlier work, the *Second Discourse*, and hence might give one the impression that these two are to be interpreted as completely distinct works. Even so, upon closer examination of the later work, one could discern the traces of the earlier one.¹³⁸ Accordingly, the task of an interpreter of Rousseau lies in combining these two works, which are at odds with each other given their standpoints. This issue will be dealt with in the following section. Yet, as an aspect of this problem, what concerns us now is the (so-called) transformation of the savage human of the state of nature into a civilised one in the novel conditions discussed above.

I would like to qualify this metamorphosis as “so-called,” because the text of the *Social Contract* suggests that here we are on a notional, philosophical level which is unbounded by historical concerns. However, the opening remarks of the work states the contrary. In his contract theory, Rousseau claims to take “men as they are and laws as they might be.”¹³⁹ That is to say, his blueprint is not an utopia, but a realist account of a realisable goal which takes into account both justice and utility. To my mind, just as the *Second Discourse* commences with such an intent and fails to achieve it (as we have seen in Chapter 2), the *Social Contract* seems to suffer from the same defect. Leaving aside the applicability of the kind of social order Rousseau wants to establish, at times even his own words could be used as a testimony of what I suggest. For instance, after stating that all humans become equal as a result of the establishment of the general will, he adds that “[i]n *actuality*, laws are *always* useful to those who have possessions and harmful to those who have nothing.”¹⁴⁰ It is

¹³⁸ Cf. Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 143, 145, 147, 203.

¹³⁹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141.

¹⁴⁰ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 153, emphasis added.

therefore important to bear in mind that one should evaluate what he calls “a remarkable change in man”¹⁴¹ by heeding this feature of the *Social Contract*.

According to this qualitative change in the nature of human being, the deeds and actions of the (former) savage take on a moral and communal character. The absolute hegemony of instinctual life gives way to a rational one, which is inextricably linked with the mores of society. Having recognised that its natural liberty is in point of fact a restriction on its life, this novel human unhesitatingly consents to live in conformity with the laws of community. The simple, healthy, and happy savage of the *Second Discourse* becomes a dim-witted, incapacitated animal in the *Social Contract*, who is to undergo this transformation to become an intelligent human being.¹⁴² As a result of this (hypothetical) process, “natural independence is exchanged for [true] liberty; the power to harm others is exchanged for their own security; and their force which others could overcome, for a right which the social union renders invincible.”¹⁴³

Although this transformation is presented by Rousseau as an impersonal one, taking place by itself without any intervention, the figure of the legislator, which he discusses elsewhere in the work, is supposed to be the agent which initiates it. For the masses of human beings, who have just left the state of nature behind, there is no possibility of establishing such a thought-out system as the one Rousseau’s contract theory prescribes. Hence, his reasoning concludes, a so-called initiator under the name of legislator must exist at this juncture:

Discovering the rules of society best suited to nations would require a superior intelligence that beheld all the passions of men without feeling any of them; who had no affinity with our nature, yet knew it through and through; whose happiness was independent of us, yet who nevertheless was willing to concern itself with ours; finally, who, in the passage of time, procures for himself a distant glory, being able to labour in one age and find enjoyment in another.¹⁴⁴

To this quasi-sibylline being falls the gruelling task of materialising the remarkable change discussed above, i.e. denaturing the former savage, and instilling into it a

¹⁴¹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 150.

¹⁴² Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 150-1.

¹⁴³ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 158.

¹⁴⁴ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 162-3.

moral and communal feeling. Above all, Rousseau emphasises that the legislator should be bringing about this change without any intention of gaining dominion over them.¹⁴⁵ In the second place, since the general will stems from the entirety of a people, this external figure cannot have a say in the making of laws.¹⁴⁶

The charitable legislator cannot use reason or force to realise its task – the former because the lawless masses of people are devoid of it, the latter thanks to the goodwill of the legislator. Therefore, the only trick that it can resort to could be “compel[ling] without violence and persuad[ing] without convincing.”¹⁴⁷ It is unquestionable that Rousseau is aware of this well-intentioned ploy, likening it to the tricks of religious institutions, which operate by relating stories of heaven and gods. Yet, in order to prevent a relapse into the chaotic and bloody times of savagery once and for all, he should have seen him justified. He sees no other way to imbue these solipsistic, self-centred humans with communal and moral feelings, who could thus comprehend that without the aid of society they do not stand a chance on their own.¹⁴⁸

Undoubtedly, the conception of the legislator causes discomfiture in the reader. Among Rousseau scholars a harmonious integration of it into the text is still a thorny issue. Although he does not utilise this concept elsewhere in his corpus, having recourse to omitting this element from the work would end up in failure, because it has a vital role in Rousseau’s account.¹⁴⁹ It should also be pointed out that not in the *Social Contract* but in the *Emile* Rousseau remarks that this desirable process of denaturalisation of human is to be brought about through “good institutions.”¹⁵⁰ Yet, this view in our context does not serve us, not only because he does not flesh this view out in the *Emile*, but, more importantly, those institutions could be established only after the denaturalisation.

¹⁴⁵ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 163.

¹⁴⁶ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 164.

¹⁴⁷ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 164.

¹⁴⁸ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 163.

¹⁴⁹ Dent, *Rousseau*, 140.

¹⁵⁰ Rousseau, *Emile*, 40.

I think that the reason Rousseau falls back on such a *deus ex machina* lies in his fallacious starting point. Having asserted (in the *Second Discourse*) that human beings are fundamentally instinctual beings devoid of communal instincts, he has no other way than to rely on an external element to engender the required transformation of them into rational and communal ones. In the *Social Contract* it is even not clear how the last stage of bloody wars ceases, because it would entail that these savage people see the futility of endless battles, an impossible insight for them given their savagery. In brief, according to Rousseau, instituting a civil order to put an end to chaos would require a rational deliberation, yet, according to his narrative, this rationality is to emerge only after this process. Hence, in order for the parts of his narrative to hang together systematically, the desired effect should also become the cause, and Rousseau himself admits this gap in his account.¹⁵¹ In the following chapters we will see that this deadlock can be avoided either by following Hegel, who repudiates contract theory altogether, or Nietzsche, who relies on the justification of social order by force.

3.6. The Feasibility of the *Social Contract*

At the beginning of the *Social Contract* Rousseau draws attention to the fact that his laying out of the civil order is a down-to-earth enterprise.¹⁵² Considering the discussion of the basic tenets of his work, this assertion of Rousseau seems questionable. Since political philosophy is related to the practical side of human life, it is of utmost importance here to ascertain whether one is to take his contract theory as an unrealisable, utopian goal, or a viable, realistic one. To my mind, the possibility of the latter far outweighs the former, for the reasons discussed in the previous section. Furthermore, one could even go as far as to claim that Rousseau's blueprint for establishing civil order and liberty is not germane to our contemporary discussions on the same issues. The dissimilarities abound almost in all important

¹⁵¹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 164. Though, the manner he states this seems to downplay the vitality of this gap.

¹⁵² Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141.

topics: the lack of a representative model of democracy, the prohibition of the separation of powers, and that of political parties, and, lastly, the so-called necessity of such an enigmatic figure as the legislator. They stand out as the elements which would seriously inconvenience an interpreter who would like to ‘apply’ the work to the actual state of affairs. It is common view in Rousseau scholarship that his idea of rational state based on the general will could be materialised only in the small states, such as the Swiss cantons.¹⁵³

Brushing aside these (seemingly) impracticable elements of the *Social Contract*, I think that Rousseau’s understanding of human liberty can still be seen as relevant to contemporary discussions of political philosophy. The individualistic, atomist understanding of human being, who is not in need of a community for living and realising its freedom, gives way to the later view that one’s society is the foundation and the whole without which the individual, as a part of this whole, cannot materialise its freedom. As we will see in the subsequent chapters, unlike Rousseau who in a sense inorganically underwent this drastic shift in the conception of freedom from an individualistic to a communal one, Hegel (Chapters 4 and 5) and Nietzsche (Chapters 6 and 7) steadfastly cling to either poles in this discussion. One could therefore see their political and social philosophies in a sense as the further problematisations of this ambivalent stance of Rousseau.

¹⁵³ Mensching, “Das Verhältnis des Zweiten Diskurses zu den Schriften Vom Gesellschaftsvertrag und Emile,” 190; Bastid, “Die Theorie der Regierungsformen,” 156, 158.

CHAPTER 4

HEGEL'S READING OF THE STATE OF NATURE

4.1. The Actuality of Hegelian Philosophy

It is an undeniable fact that as of the 1960s a steady increase in the studies of Hegel has been taking place.¹⁵⁴ Although this interest might have developed at the outset as Marxism gained widespread currency in the Cold War era, the fall of the *Berliner Mauer* could not put an end to this process. As a thinker of the late 18th- and the early 19th-century Europe, the purview of topics Hegel dealt with was immense: from metaphysics and epistemology to aesthetics and political philosophy. This multifacetedness is probably the reason why such diverse schools of thought as Neo-Kantianism, Marxism, existentialism, and hermeneutics, faced up to the fact that they had to either react against it or concede the Hegelian element in their thought as they developed their own thinking.¹⁵⁵

This upside notwithstanding, for many Hegel's philosophy is beset by two insurmountable difficulties: i) At the hands of the Swabian philosopher, the already cumbersome German language turns into an unfathomable one.¹⁵⁶ (The most important exception to this is his work on the philosophy of history, which was composed largely based on the student notes.) ii) His metaphysical system which purports to have reached 'absolute' knowledge. In our secular age, which is entirely at one with

¹⁵⁴ Frederick C. Beiser, "Introduction: The Puzzling Hegel Renaissance," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

¹⁵⁵ Frederick C. Beiser, "Introduction: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel and Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1; Beiser, "Introduction: The Puzzling Hegel Renaissance," 14.

¹⁵⁶ Robert Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit* (London: Routledge, 2002), xii.

Nietzsche's declaration that 'God is dead,'¹⁵⁷ Hegel's express (cultural) religiosity,¹⁵⁸ and also his claim to know what is infinite in the wake of Kantian restrictions on the pretensions of reason, strike someone as outdated and irrelevant to our secular age.

Starting from the 1970s, in the Anglophone world, the so-called non-metaphysical reading of Hegel has emerged as a response to the above-mentioned stumbling block.¹⁵⁹ The chief proponents of this sort of interpretation include Robert Pippin, Robert Brandom, and Terry Pinkard, to name but a few. What unites them in their reading is that, given the irrelevance of many themes of Hegelian system, we should ascertain 'what is living and what is dead of the philosophy of Hegel.'¹⁶⁰ For instance, T. Pinkard holds that we should read Hegel's *Science of Logic* as a study of categorial analysis, not as a comprehensive ontology as Hegel claims. R. Pippin chooses to interpret Hegel thorough the lens of Kantian critical philosophy.¹⁶¹ R. Brandom focuses on the concept of mutual recognition, which is said to be implicitly present in all normative dimensions of social life.¹⁶²

At this juncture, we are confronted by a classical dilemma in interpreting a philosopher not belonging to our own era: either remaining loyal to the word of the text, yet losing its desired relevance to our age (antiquarianism), or narrowing one's interest down only to the pertinent topics at the cost of distorting the general framework constructed by the philosopher (anachronism).¹⁶³ It seems that the champions of non-metaphysical reading cling to the latter, since they are of the view

¹⁵⁷ As an aside, this phrase was popularised by Nietzsche, but not, as is commonly believed, coined by him. Its usage goes as far back as the 17th-century dramatist Johann von Rist. In several works of Hegel it can be found as well.

¹⁵⁸ See G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie I* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), 94, where he clearly states that he is a Lutheran and would like to remain so.

¹⁵⁹ Beiser, "Introduction: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics," 2.

¹⁶⁰ An allusion to the book of Benedetto Croce. Apart from him, Klaus Hartmann from Germany too undertook a similar enterprise. It could be said that the Anglophone tendency to divest Hegel of metaphysical elements has predecessors in the Continent.

¹⁶¹ Stephen Houlgate, "Hegel's Logic" in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel and Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 117-8.

¹⁶² Beiser, "Introduction: The Puzzling Hegel Renaissance," 4.

¹⁶³ Beiser, "Introduction: The Puzzling Hegel Renaissance," 6-7.

that Hegel's system is not germane to the philosophical questions of our century. Nevertheless, as I hope to demonstrate in Chapters 4 and 5, despite some of its outmoded elements, the entirety of Hegelian philosophy still appeals to the reader of 21st century.

To begin with, one should bear in mind that the most important socio-political event of Hegel's generation was the French Revolution of 1789, which ended in a frustrating bloodshed.¹⁶⁴ Together with this, the view that the Enlightenment ideas were leading to scepticism, and excessive individualism, was widespread among the German philosophers of the age.¹⁶⁵ Not only Hegel and his contemporaries, but also their predecessors, known as the Early Romantics of the 1790s, waged war on the divisions (*Entzweiungen*) of modern life.

Accordingly, the ideal of unity with oneself was under constant threat by the division of labour, which rendered impossible the holistic development of one's bodily and mental capacities. Secondly, against the ideal of unity with others, humanity was confronted with the ever-increasing forces of atomistic individualism, which sees one's community and state as inherently hostile to its personal life and development.¹⁶⁶ Lastly, human beings' sense of unity with nature was being weakened by modern technology, according to which nature was likened to a controllable machine in service to human needs only. Also, the overgrowth of reflection in human life as opposed to our more original, biological needs lead to the emergence of a so-called second nature in us, which is in constant war against the latter.¹⁶⁷ Against them, Hegel and his generation posited the so-called ideal of the unity of life (*Einheit des Lebens*), which is bereft of the alienations (*Entfremdungen*) of modern life.¹⁶⁸ (As we will see in Chapters 6 and 7, Nietzsche would agree with

¹⁶⁴ Rüdiger Bubner, *The Innovations of Idealism*, trans. Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 156.

¹⁶⁵ Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 14.

¹⁶⁶ Marina F Bykova, "Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*" in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), 283.

¹⁶⁷ Bubner, *The Innovations of Idealism*, 87, 150.

¹⁶⁸ Frederick Beiser, *Hegel* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 36-49. The early Romantics and Hegel believed that the Hellenic life of polis was nothing other than an embodiment of this ideal.

the first and third points of Hegel, yet the consequences he would draw from them were almost poles apart.)

Hegel maintained that underlying these divisions of modern life was the habit of oppositional and dualistic thinking embedded in philosophy. According to him, dichotomies in modern thinking are so deep-rooted that all branches of philosophy from metaphysics, epistemology to ethics and political thinking are as a matter of fact mired in an intellectual cul-de-sac. For instance, in epistemology, the opposition between rationalism and empiricism results from the universal character of thought and the individual character of intuition. In morality, the universality of altruism and the individuality of egoism constitute an unbridgeable gap. In political philosophy, one is supposed to choose between the universalist communitarianism and individualist liberalism. In addition, the statist defend the universal laws against the anarchists, who champion the inalienable freedom of the individual.¹⁶⁹

Hegel asserts that these perennial problems of philosophy have its source in how we conceive the relation between the categories of universal and individual: “Considered in the abstract, rationality consists in general in the unity and interpenetration of universality and individuality.”¹⁷⁰ In other words, genuine philosophical thinking in Hegelian sense stipulates that a concept’s significance can be comprehended only through establishing its relation with other concepts. In other words, identity is established solely through interrelationality.¹⁷¹

In history of philosophy the prime examples of one-sided, oppositional, dualistic thinking are the Cartesian distinction between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*,

Whether this interpretation is historically accurate is highly questionable. Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), generally considered as the founder of modern archaeology and art history in Germany, might be said to be the originator of this idealistic reading of Greco-Roman world. In the 21st-century no classical philologist would subscribe to such a reading. Nevertheless, what is pertinent here is not their speculative construal of polis, but their insightful pinning down of the problems of modernity.

¹⁶⁹ Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 19-20.

¹⁷⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), §258.

¹⁷¹ Houlgate, “Hegel’s Logic,” 132.

as well as the Kantian one between the phenomena and the noumena.¹⁷² This either-or thinking results from, says Hegel, the understanding (*Verstand*), which operates by clinging to its own distinctions.¹⁷³ He asserts that only the reason (*Vernunft*) can comprehend the life as a whole by treating the particular elements of it as interdependent.¹⁷⁴ The encyclopaedic system of Hegel is the working out of the reason in the Logic, the Philosophy of Nature, and of Spirit (the last two constituting the *Realphilosophie*).¹⁷⁵ Therefore, the entirety of Hegelian philosophy might be said to be a criticism of the lifeless thinking of understanding,¹⁷⁶ and the conceptual elaboration of a holistic philosophy:

What man seeks in this situation, ensnared here as he is in finitude on every side, is the region of a higher, more substantial, truth, in which all oppositions and contradictions in the finite can find their final resolution, and freedom its full satisfaction. This is the region of absolute, not finite, truth. The highest truth, truth as such, is the resolution of the highest opposition and contradiction. In it validity and power are swept away from the opposition between freedom and necessity, between spirit and nature, between knowledge and its object, between law and impulse, from opposition and contradiction as such, whatever forms they may take. Their validity and power as opposition and contradiction is gone. Absolute truth proves that neither freedom by itself, as subjective, sundered from necessity, is absolutely a true thing nor, by parity of reasoning, is truthfulness to be ascribed to necessity isolated and taken by itself. The ordinary consciousness [i.e. the understanding], on the other hand, cannot extricate itself from this opposition and either remains despairingly in contradiction or else casts it aside and helps itself in some other way. But philosophy enters into the heart of the self-contradictory characteristics, knows them in their essential nature, i.e. as in their one-sidedness not absolute but self-dissolving, and it sets them in the harmony and unity which is truth. To grasp this Concept of truth is the task of philosophy.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² For Hegel's criticism of Kantian critical philosophy, see Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Criticism of Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 112-8.

¹⁷³ John W. Burbidge, "Hegel's Conception of Logic" in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 91.

¹⁷⁴ Bubner, *The Innovations of Idealism*, 150-152.

¹⁷⁵ Bykova, "Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," 270.

¹⁷⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), §53.

¹⁷⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art, Volume 1*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 99-100.

In the following, we will consider the backbone of Hegelian ‘speculative philosophy,’¹⁷⁸ namely the conception of organicism, and the thesis of the subject and object identity. Thus, we will recognise that Hegel’s philosophy aims to overcome the divisions of modernity, and the underlying dualistic thinking, by a novel understanding of metaphysics.

4.2. *In Nuce*: The Identity of Identity and Non-Identity

It is a convention in Hegel scholarship to designate his philosophy as ‘Absolute Idealism.’ Although Hegel himself would generally eschew employing such simplistic formulations, this phrase rightly captures his thinking in general. In fact, it was Hegel’s one-time friend F. Schelling, who used it frequently to characterise his own philosophy.¹⁷⁹ To get to know this phrase, we should first look at what they meant by the term ‘absolute.’

For Schelling and Hegel, the absolute is what is *causa sui*, that is, that whose essence and existence are not in need of anything else. This conception is in fact adopted from Spinoza’s definition of substance in the *Ethics*. They held that to the question what can satisfy this definition, there can be only one answer: the universe as a whole. In other words, for Hegel only the whole can be true (“*Das Wahre ist das Ganze*”¹⁸⁰). Given that what is whole does not lack anything which is other than itself, it turns out to be self-dependent. Most importantly, it would be a grave mistake to hypostatise the absolute in the form of God, or of any suprasensible being.¹⁸¹ For Hegel, the absolute is by no means an entity; rather, it is the (organic) totality of its constituent elements.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ See Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §§37, 56, where Hegel calls his own thinking by these terms. The reason for this designation will be explained in the discussion of the three-fold movement of thought according to the Logic.

¹⁷⁹ Beiser, *Hegel*, 57-8.

¹⁸⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §20; Hegel, G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989), 24.

¹⁸¹ Beiser, “Introduction: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics,” 4-5.

¹⁸² Houlgate, “Hegel’s Logic,” 133. However, it should be conceded that Hegel, to express it in a popular fashion, at times treats the absolute and God as if they were one and the same, especially in

Considering the (Spinozist) substance as the subject matter of philosophy goes back to the Aristotelian tradition, according to which substance, or being *qua* being, is the first object of philosophy. What differentiates Hegel from Aristotle at this point is that whilst the latter sees what is *causa sui* as the starting point for philosophy, the former as the achieved result.¹⁸³

Another affinity with Aristotle can be found in Hegel's conception of absolute idealism. In his 1830 *Encyclopaedia Logic*, Hegel states that according to absolute idealism things are appearances of the universal Idea.¹⁸⁴ *Prima facie*, this formulation seems to smack of Platonism, yet it should be emphasised that Hegel's understanding of the Idea is Aristotelian through and through. In the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, he venerates Aristotle's metaphysics for its "speculative depth,"¹⁸⁵ since he recognised the primacy of concrete universals over and above abstract universals.¹⁸⁶ Accordingly, universals first and foremost exist in particular things (*en re*); hence, the Platonic archetypes, or the Ideas, have only secondary value as abstractions from the real life. In Hegelian terminology, the concrete universal, or the inherent form of a thing, is called the Concept (*Begriff*).¹⁸⁷

Hegel regards comprehending the Concept and its inherent form of development as the alpha and omega of speculative philosophy.¹⁸⁸ Couched in Aristotelian terms, the *Begriff* refers to the formal and final cause of a thing. As is

his work dealing with the philosophy of religion. I believe that this rather unfortunate situation is explainable by the relatively oppressive Prussian State of the time. For a relevant anecdote reported by Heine, see Robert C. Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 583. One of the most obvious proofs of Hegel's atheism is his denial of the so-called immortality of the soul, conceptualised in Western Christianity by St. Augustine (Joseph McCarney, *Hegel on History* (London: Routledge, 2000), 203-7).

¹⁸³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §§3, 20.

¹⁸⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse 1830: Erster Teil, Die Wissenschaft der Logik Mit den mündlichen Zusätzen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), 123.

¹⁸⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §71.

¹⁸⁶ Hegel, *au fait* with ancient Greek language and philosophy, saw Aristotle as the only philosopher "who has anything important to say on the being and activity of spirit." (Alfredo Ferrarin, "Hegel's Aristotle: Philosophy and Its Time," in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), 433.)

¹⁸⁷ Beiser, *Hegel*, 66-7.

¹⁸⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §6.

well known, this conception of an organism rests on a teleological notion, asserting that the telos is both the result of the process of development, and the propelling force materialising the inherent form of the organism.¹⁸⁹ Hence, the word ‘end’ (*Ende*) in organic development should be construed as the co-existence of cessation, or coming to an end, and fulfilment, or coming into existence.¹⁹⁰

Contrary to what its title literally suggests, the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is in point of fact an exposition of the philosophical system of Hegel. Here, he is at great pains to emphasise the teleological nature of his organic doctrine: “Reason is *purposive activity*. [...] The actual is the same as its Notion [*Begriff*] only because the immediate, as purpose, contains the self or pure actuality within itself.”¹⁹¹ He stresses the one-sidedness of understanding by citing the example of growth in nature: in order for a fruit to come into existence, the bud must transform into the blossom, which in turn is capable of generating the fruit. In such an example, the understanding would posit an irresolvable contradiction between these three elements, yet the reason as purposive activity considers them as constituting the “moments of an organic unity in which they not only do not conflict, but in which each is as necessary as the other; and this mutual necessity alone constitutes the life of the whole.”¹⁹²

One common misunderstanding about the teleological nature of organism is zeroing in on the result to the detriment of the process. “The aim by itself is a lifeless [i.e. inorganic] universal,” cautions Hegel, because only “the result together with the process through which it [i.e. the final stage] came about”¹⁹³ is to be the subject matter of speculative philosophy.

In order to comprehend the teleological development of organism, thought must be proceeding in a systematic manner: “Knowledge [...] can only be expounded

¹⁸⁹ Jonathan Lear, *Aristotle: the Desire to Understand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 28-42.

¹⁹⁰ McCarney, *Hegel on History*, 172-3.

¹⁹¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §22.

¹⁹² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §2.

¹⁹³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §3.

as Science.”¹⁹⁴ Here, we should be careful to distinguish what Hegel means by science (*Wissenschaft*), or scientific philosophy, and the meaning of science today. The current meaning of science as empirical or natural sciences is expressed in German by the term *Naturwissenschaft*; on the other hand, by using the terms *Wissenschaft*, or *wissenschaftlich*, Hegel emphasises the need for a systematic body of thought, in which all parts of the whole are interdependent, and function as sustaining the unity of the whole. Accordingly, the process of organic development together with its consummation in its telos can be comprehended only in the three-fold movement of thought, whose stages are as follows, as discussed in the *Encyclopaedia Logic*.¹⁹⁵

i) The moment of the understanding as one-sided abstraction: The understanding posits something as having unconditioned value; it sticks to the distinctions of its own making as self-sufficient. By its own very nature, the understanding cannot recognise that its operations are solely abstractions derived from a complex system of interdependence. This absolute fixation of meaning is problematic, since it makes sense only for a part of the whole (i.e. the realm of finitude), but not, contrary to what it claims, for knowing the entire reality (i.e. the realm of infinitude).

ii) The moment of dialectic, or negative reason: The absolute standpoint of understanding ends up with a conflict with the contrary thesis that the element under question is in fact conditioned and dependent. The restriction on this absolute stand is the sceptical phase of thought in that the former stance is questioned, and then its veracity is dissolved. When Hegel states that the result without the process is vacuous, he emphasises the ineradicable value and necessity of the negative. To be more precise, the negative in question here is not the indeterminate negation, which does not lead thinking to the positive, the speculative moment of speculative reason, rather it is the determinate negation, paving the way for a positive result.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §24.

¹⁹⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic: Part I of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusätze*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1991), 125-133.

¹⁹⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §§59, 79.

Accordingly, in a sense, the spiral movement of the latter is not to be confused with the spurious infinity of “indefinitely prolonged linear sequence.”¹⁹⁷

If thinking abstains from “the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labour of the negative,”¹⁹⁸ it would get mired in the lifeless, abstract universality, namely the first moment of understanding. According to Hegel, “the tremendous power of the negative”¹⁹⁹ is the *sine qua non* of the speculative thinking, because only in this stage the circumscription of what is posited as absolute can be achieved. This limitation refers to the moment of contextualisation within the system.

Before proceeding to the final stage, it should be pointed out that, contrary to the convention, it is fallacious to designate Hegelian thought as relying on a ‘dialectical method’ for two important reasons. Firstly, the dialectical stage is not the consummation of the movement of thought, which is completed in the speculative stage. Secondly, this immanent process is not to be called as the product of a *method*, which connotes applying an abstract, top-down schema to a dynamic and rich process. In other words, to designate Hegel’s philosophy as dialectical would be to claim that his thinking is invariably mired in irresolvable contradictions, lacking the necessary sublation (*Aufhebung*).²⁰⁰

iii) The moment of speculation, or positive reason: The opposition between the contrary stances are sublated²⁰¹ (*aufgehoben*) on a more comprehensive level, which affirms that both of them are true if thinking operates from the standpoint of the whole. What is self-sufficient and unconditioned is the whole; whereas, the parts of the whole hold true only for their specified range of meaning.²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ McCarney, *Hegel on History*, 128.

¹⁹⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §19.

¹⁹⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §32.

²⁰⁰ Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 21-2.

²⁰¹ The English verb ‘to sublate’ seems to be the best translation of the German verb *aufheben*, given that the former is derived from the past participle of the Latin verb *tollere*, which is synonymous with *heben*. Nevertheless, it should be stated that, unlike *heben*, or *aufheben*, ‘to sublate’ is far from being a commonly used word in English, thus it lacks the commonness of Hegel’s own word.

²⁰² Burbidge, “Hegel’s Conception of Logic,” 91; Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 15-6; Beiser, “Introduction: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics,” 19.

For Hegel, this last stage can be achieved only from an organicist point of view, according to which the whole is not to be equated with the sum of each part.²⁰³ Rather, the whole precedes its parts in that only the former can provide the internal unity of the latter. If the parts were to precede the whole, this would be nothing but an aggregate in which no inherent unity would exist.²⁰⁴ Understood in this way, Hegel's conception of whole-part relation is reminiscent of Rousseau's distinction between the association and the aggregate (See Section 3.4).²⁰⁵ Accordingly, the Rousseauian association would in a way qualify for the Hegelian organic unity, whereas the aggregate would denote the lifeless, non-existent unity. The difference between Hegel and Rousseau in this regard is that for the former this distinction is valid not only in political philosophy, but in all areas of human life.

Even though the whole precedes its parts as their ultimate goal, it is not to be thought as given, but as the product of a dialectical process: "The immediate [i.e. the first moment], the inexperienced, i.e. the abstract [...] becomes alienated from itself [i.e. the second moment] and returns to itself [i.e. the third moment] from this alienation, and is only then revealed for the first time in its actuality and truth."²⁰⁶ In this formulation of organic development, Hegel states that the mediated universal of the speculative reason exists at the beginning only *in potentia*. Hence, the unmediated universal of the understanding is treated before the former. In other words, what is first in the order of existence, that is, the concrete universal, or the telos of the whole, comes last in the order of explanation, whose first unit is the abstract moment.²⁰⁷

What we have seen so far can be recapitulated as follows. For Hegel, "in a *compositum* the parts precede the whole and each has its identity apart from it; in a [...] *totum* the whole precedes the parts and makes each of them possible."²⁰⁸ The

²⁰³ Bykova, "Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," 268.

²⁰⁴ Ferrarin, "Hegel's Aristotle: Philosophy and Its Time," 441.

²⁰⁵ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 147.

²⁰⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §36.

²⁰⁷ Beiser, *Hegel*, 56-7.

²⁰⁸ Beiser, *Hegel*, 96.

absolute idealism maintains that in a *totum*, the whole, or the absolute, is to be conceived as the ultimate telos, for whose development the dialectical contradictions between the parts are ineluctable. To comprehend this development, we are in need of speculative philosophy, which operates in the three stages discussed above. As a result, since all determinations of the understanding have only dependent, finite value within the infinite, the absolute realm of philosophy, all dualisms are to be dismissed as abstractions from the whole. Hence, Hegel believed, not only metaphysical dualisms in modern philosophy, but the alienating divisions of modern life could be overcome by dint of his speculative philosophy.

Hegel states that his novel conception of metaphysics can be understood as the identity of subject and object, thought and being, or subject and substance: “Everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject*.”²⁰⁹ As a matter of fact, the overcoming of distinctions, which purport to have absolute value in philosophy, could be achieved only by adopting an organicist standpoint, which treats all divisions as temporary constructions.

Historically speaking, Hegel adopted and adapted this identity formulation from Schelling, who insisted that against the dualisms of Cartesian, Kantian, and Fichtean philosophy, we should construe the absolute as consisting in subject-object identity.²¹⁰ As is well known, with his distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal world, Kant ended up with an unbridgeable gap between two distinct realms, those of sensibility and understanding, necessity and freedom, scientific knowledge and faith, or morality. As a response to this impasse, Fichte posited the absolute ego as the closing of this cleft. Yet, by giving it a *regulative* status, he could not escape Schelling’s and Hegel’s criticism that only a *constitutive* status of absolute could solve the problem. For them, the mental and the physical, the subjective and the objective, and the ideal and the real, turn out to be different attributes of the whole.²¹¹ Taken in a more broad sense, the identity thesis of Schelling and Hegel in fact goes back to the classical age of Hellenic philosophy:

²⁰⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §17; Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, 100.

²¹⁰ Beiser, *Hegel*, 61.

²¹¹ Beiser, *Hegel*, 64.

both Plato and Aristotle were of the view that the knowledge of being is achievable by dint of the identity of thought and being.²¹² It is also to be noted that by relying on this thesis, Hegel maintained that his *Science of Logic* is both a dialectical survey of philosophical categories²¹³ and a work of metaphysics. Against the non-metaphysical reading, which holds that *Logic* is solely a working out of concepts, Hegel's own aim in this work was to demonstrate how thought reveals the structure of being.²¹⁴ In a passage, where he criticises Kantian philosophy as being subjective due to its insistence on the role of the formal I at the cost of being cut off from the objective realm, he states that "the true objectivity of thinking consists in this: that thoughts are not merely our thoughts, but at the same time the *In-itself* of things and of whatever else is objective."²¹⁵

Despite this intellectual debt to Schelling, Hegel did not mince his words against him. In the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, he likens Schelling's conception of the absolute to "the night in which [...] all cows are black – this is cognition naïvely reduced to vacuity."²¹⁶ For, under the sway of Spinoza, Schelling focused on the absolute to the detriment of its finite modes.²¹⁷ In other words, since Absolute Idealism undertakes to grasp the entirety of life, it must not exclude the non-identity of subject and object to be able to give an account of the identity of them. It is a fact for the natural consciousness that such a division between thought and being, or subject and object, persists.²¹⁸ Hegel's aim here is to show that

²¹² Ferrarin, "Hegel's Aristotle: Philosophy and Its Time," 434, 442.

²¹³ Contrary to the champions of non-metaphysical reading, Hegel's *Logik* is not reducible to categorial analysis. Even if this were the case, Hegel's working out of philosophical concepts operates on a more comprehensive basis than that of Kant. In addition to the Kantian analysis of the validity of categories (i.e. the conditions of possibility of legitimate use), Hegel delves into the problem of the dynamic relation between them. (Burbidge, "Hegel's Conception of Logic," 100; Houlgate, "Hegel's Logic," 115-7.)

²¹⁴ Houlgate, "Hegel's Logic," 118-9, 121-2; Bykova, "Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," 271.

²¹⁵ Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, §41, Addition 2.

²¹⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §16.

²¹⁷ Beiser, "Introduction: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics," 7.

²¹⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §26.

speculative philosophy should be able to assign its proper place within the system, not to do away with it as Schelling's "monochromatic formalism"²¹⁹ attempts to do. Accordingly, although Schelling's doctrine might be regarded as an efficient antidote against dualistic philosophy, it comes short of explaining the diversities, conflicts, and negative moments of life. In this way, it is doomed to be a moment of the absolute, which cannot reach the moment of mediated, concrete universal. *In fine*, at the hands of Hegel, who realises that the negative moment too is part and parcel of truth,²²⁰ the formalistic doctrine of subject-object identity turns into the identity of subject-object identity and subject-object non-identity.²²¹

Against the backdrop of modern philosophy as well as way of living, which are both entangled in alienation and divisions, the identity philosophy aims to make us to be "at home in the world,"²²² which is possible only through comprehending it discursively. Now, one might question, given that Hegel takes great pains to affirm the role of ordinary consciousness in grasping the whole, whether he does equip us with a transition to the standpoint of the whole. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the *locus classicus* for this transition, which will be treated in the following.

4.3. The Project of the *Phenomenology*

Published in 1807, in the tumultuous period of Napoleonic conquests of the Continent, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (*Phänomenologie des Geistes*)²²³ is generally regarded as an extensive survey of the history of philosophy,²²⁴ as well as

²¹⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §15.

²²⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §47.

²²¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, trans. H. S. Harris and Walter Cerf (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977), 156; Beiser, *Hegel*, 61-2.

²²² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §4 Addition.

²²³ The earlier titles of the work was the *Science of the Experience of Consciousness*, and the *Science of the Phenomenology of Spirit*. Originally, this work was meant to be a much shorter book, attached to the *Logic* as an introduction (Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 7).

²²⁴ See Houlgate, "Hegel's Logic," 132, for the view that the *Phenomenology* does not need to serve such a function.

the introduction to his philosophical system, namely the philosophy of logic, nature, and spirit, or the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*.²²⁵ By delving into the different configurations of thought in history, he claims to have demonstrated that all of them are the result of one-sided thinking (which is discussed above). Natural, or unspeculative, consciousness clings to its deep-seated conviction that over and against the subject (of knowledge) stands the object (of knowledge).²²⁶ In brief, insofar as thinking does not recognise its congenericity with being, it is doomed to failure in its attempt to know the world.²²⁷

To achieve the standpoint of speculative reason, in which the antithesis of being and knowing constitutes only one moment of truth, Hegel adopts the method of the immanent critique of the forms of consciousness under consideration: “The [...] criterion would lie within ourselves”²²⁸; “Since what consciousness examines is its own self, all that is left for us [i.e., the observers of the development of consciousness] to do is simply to look on.”²²⁹ However, ‘to simply look on’ is not to be equated with full passivity; rather, it requires both the so-called letting-it-be approach, and the active resolution to prevent the interruption of natural consciousness.²³⁰ Adopting this two-tiered method, what remains to be done is to simply question whether a form of consciousness is really what it claims to be.²³¹ If this desired correspondence is lacking, “consciousness must alter its knowledge to

²²⁵ Allegra de Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), 246.

²²⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §26.

²²⁷ Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” 246.

²²⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §83.

²²⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §85; Frederick C. Beiser, “Hegel’s Historicism” in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 284.

²³⁰ John Russon, “The Project of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), 48-50; Houlgate, “Hegel’s Logic,” 127.

²³¹ Russon, “The Project of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” 51.

make it conform to the object. But, in fact, in the alteration of knowledge, the object itself alters for it too.”²³²

According to the narrative of the *Phenomenology*, this transformation leads consciousness from the simple form of sense-certainty through self-consciousness, reason, and spirit to the speculative terminus, i.e. the Absolute Knowing (*Absolute Wissen*). Couched in Aristotelian terms, this transformation is nothing but the actualisation (*Verwirklichung*) of potentiality, a becoming of what is in itself a one-sided configuration of spirit. Like the Aristotelian concept of *entelechia*, the completion of this process is the ultimate telos of spirit.²³³

Absolute Knowing in Hegel’s thought is not to be confused with the claim to know every particular thing. Rather, as its Latin etymology, *ab-solvere*, suggests, it denotes being freed from the restrictions of natural consciousness, which does not recognise that the object and subject of phenomenological experience are one and the same.²³⁴ Up until this stage, either the objectifications of subjectivity or the subjectifications of objectivity were determining the form of consciousness.²³⁵ Yet, only in the last stage the one-sidedness of them becomes manifest, and then is disposed: “Spirit, however, has shown itself to us to be neither merely the withdrawal of self-consciousness into its pure inwardness, nor the mere submergence of self-consciousness into substance.”²³⁶ In other words, this ultimate locale contains both the exteriorisation and objectification of spirit in the form of substance, and the internalisation and subjectification of it as the subject.²³⁷

It should be borne in mind that the transitions from the most naive form of consciousness to the consummate one take place from the standpoint of phenomenological observer, who is capable of recognising the pros and cons of the issue under scrutiny: “This way of looking at the matter is something contributed by

²³² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §85.

²³³ Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” 252, 253, 257-8, 262.

²³⁴ Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” 249.

²³⁵ Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” 255.

²³⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §804.

²³⁷ Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” 258-9; 262.

us.”²³⁸ In the narrative of the *Phenomenology*, there is also the perspective of ordinary consciousness, which undergoes the three-fold transformation of thought (discussed in Section 4.2). For the natural consciousness, the emergence of a new object is experienced without its comprehending the reasons for it, which can be grasped only ‘by us.’²³⁹ As we will see in the following, Hegel avails himself of this perspectivity, switching the narrative from the experience of ordinary consciousness to the phenomenological observer, in order to anticipate the resolution of the conflict, or to explain to us what the philosophical problem at stake is.²⁴⁰ (As we will see in Chapter 6, Nietzsche too adheres to the view that knowledge is perspective. Yet, unlike Hegel, he was of the view that there is no such thing as Absolute Knowing, because all human knowledge involves the element of subjectivity.)

4.4. From the Parochial Self to the All-Encompassing Spirit

Having seen the fundamentals of Hegel’s thinking, in which metaphysics and ontology inform all constituent parts of the system, we are now in a position to understand his conception of freedom as regards the relation between the individual and society, a problem addressed yet not satisfactorily explicated by Rousseau. Following in a sense the footsteps of his predecessor, the social contract theorist Rousseau, Hegel firstly undertakes to interpret the state of nature in the *Phenomenology*, in Chapters IV and IVA, entitled “The Truth of Self-Certainty,”²⁴¹ and “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage,”²⁴² respectively. In the following, we will firstly be discussing the Chapter IV, in which the concept of spirit (*Geist*) is worked out; and, then, we will see the

²³⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §87.

²³⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §87.

²⁴⁰ Robert R Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997), 48; Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 24-5.

²⁴¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §§166-177.

²⁴² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §§178-196.

development of self-consciousness in Chapter IVA. Given that the former is treated from the standpoint of the phenomenological onlookers, or, by us, what is anticipated in it will have to be experienced in the latter from the perspective of ordinary consciousness.

In the dialectical journey of consciousness (of the *Phenomenology*) from its most simple form, sense-certainty, to its most consummate one, ‘Absolute Knowing,’ the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness is designated as certainty’s giving place to truth.²⁴³ The theoretical certainty of consciousness, for which its object is an Other, transforms into the truthful standpoint of self-consciousness, in which the subject and object are one and the same. Hence, Hegel designates the latter as “the native realm of truth,” since in it the “antithesis [between the subject and object] is removed, and the identity of itself with itself becomes explicit for it.”²⁴⁴ In many of his works Hegel is never tired of reiterating that the Socratic injunction, or the Delphic maxim, “Know thyself” is “the intrinsic telos, motive force, and regulative principle of human thinking in general and of philosophy in particular.”²⁴⁵ Thus, the ultimate ground of philosophical thinking is paved as a result of completing the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness.

As we will see in the following, this shift from the dialectic of object to that of subject is nothing other than a shift from theory to praxis,²⁴⁶ that is, from a disinterested engagement with the world to the one in which we ourselves act in it.²⁴⁷ In other words, “from this point on, ‘the true’ will be located not in an isolated object but in a subject-relating-to-an-object that, only as a whole, is self-sufficient.”²⁴⁸ For Hegel, self-consciousness does not constitute only a shift in perspective, but also the development of a more comprehensive outlook: self-consciousness is the ground, or

²⁴³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §166.

²⁴⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §167.

²⁴⁵ Laurentiis, “Absolute Knowing,” 258, emphasis removed.

²⁴⁶ Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 66-69.

²⁴⁷ Note that the word practice comes from the Greek verb *prattein*, which means to do or act.

²⁴⁸ Frederick Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), 37.

truth, of consciousness in that “I am aware of the object as mine (it is my representation), thus in it I am aware of me.”²⁴⁹ (It should be noted that this insight of Hegel stands out in relief given the general tendency of philosophy to prioritise epistemology over practical issues. For him, the philosophy of history and culture has always retained its primacy, in contrast to his colleague Schelling, for whom biology and nature were the backbones of philosophy.²⁵⁰)

However, despite its upsides, at this stage of the *Phenomenology*, self-consciousness as “the return from otherness”²⁵¹ (of consciousness) does not correspond to its Notion, since it is in its abstract form. “What is present in the I = I of immediate self-consciousness is only a difference that *ought to be*, not yet a *posited*, not yet an *actual* difference.”²⁵²

Given the dialectical movement of consciousness, one should bear in mind that, according to the conception of determinate negation, what has a positive value in the mode of consciousness must have been preserved in the next, more comprehensive mode. Accordingly, the object of consciousness, having a sensuous character in contrast to the intellectual subject of theoretical knowing, is the reason why immediate self-consciousness has sensuous character as well – hence Hegel’s assertion that “self-consciousness is *Desire* [*Begierde*] in general.”²⁵³

To begin with, with the introduction of desire, which is the most primitive form of human activity, the theoretical standpoint of consciousness gives way to the practical perspective of self-consciousness.²⁵⁴ The principal characteristic of the self-

²⁴⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. W. Wallace and A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), §424.

²⁵⁰ Beiser, *Hegel*, 110-1.

²⁵¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §167.

²⁵² Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §425 Addition.

²⁵³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §167; Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” 41.

²⁵⁴ Kenneth R Westphal, “Self-Consciousness, Anti-Cartesianism, and Cognitive Semantics in Hegel’s 1807 *Phenomenology*” in *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), 77. From this stage onwards, one can recognise that for Hegel experience (*Erfahrung*) has a much broader range than that of Kant, who, under the influence of empiricists, understands it in mainly epistemological terms (Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 10-14).

conscious subject is its drive of being autonomous, and free in a concrete fashion, not being engaged in any theoretical pursuit.²⁵⁵

At the stage of desire, self-consciousness is restricted to its individuality, for it insists on the nothingness of the other, which emerges with the claim of possessing a self-sufficient life. Fraught with this animal feeling, abstract self-consciousness claims absolute independence of itself by consuming, or destroying, anything other than itself. Only through demonstrating the nullity of the other can it claim its truthfulness.²⁵⁶ Elsewhere, Hegel designates it as “the *immediate* and therefore *natural, individual, exclusive* self-consciousness,”²⁵⁷ or urge (*Trieb*), which is bereft of thinking, and fixated on a worthless object with a view to satisfying itself at all costs. In this regard, desire is the most rudimentary realisation of one’s independence in the external world.²⁵⁸ Immersed in its *Natürlichkeit*, that is, in a pre-reflective, uncultivated particularity, it is in the state of natural egoism and solipsism.²⁵⁹ (We will see in Chapter 6 that, according to Nietzsche, modernity represents the decadence of humanity owing to its loss of the sure guide of unconscious instincts. In a word, what is progress, and *Bildung*, for Hegel is a nihilistic downfall for Nietzsche.)

Desire’s seeing the object as null does not mean that the latter is non-existent at all. Rather, this standpoint of desire signifies an extreme form of individualism, according to which “no law or authority beyond its own immediate desires”²⁶⁰ is recognised, since anything other than itself cannot be considered as a subject, and thus cannot impose any restriction on it. In such a state of natural egoism, self-consciousness dismisses the other, or relationality, as a hindrance to itself; since it regards its parochial, prerational stance as possessing absolute worth.²⁶¹ (In the next

²⁵⁵ Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” 38.

²⁵⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §174.

²⁵⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §426 Addition.

²⁵⁸ Westphal, “Self-Consciousness, Anti-Cartesianism, and Cognitive Semantics in Hegel’s 1807 *Phenomenology*,” 77.

²⁵⁹ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 75.

²⁶⁰ Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” 42-3.

²⁶¹ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 49, 53.

Chapter, we will see that for Hegel human freedom is exactly the curbing of this absolute, excessive stance.)

Following the speculative narrative of the *Phenomenology*, the certainty of desire must be investigated by its own standards, i.e. by questioning whether or not it really has absolute independence over its dependent object. Hegel claims that since the satisfaction of desire is conditioned by its object, this other cannot be of no worth. “In the object, the subject [i.e. desire] beholds its *own lack*, its own one-sidedness, sees in the object something belonging to its own essence and yet missing from it.”²⁶² Accordingly, for the phenomenological onlookers, the ostensibly absolute self-consciousness as desire turns out to be a dependent one, not possessing the complete truth but only a portion of it.

Furthermore, in the *Encyclopaedia* account of desire, its dependence is fleshed out on three levels: i) In the mode of consumption, desire’s relation to the object remains only negative; ii) the satisfaction of desire leads to a egoistic annihilation of the object, not to its refashioning (we will see this mode of relation with the object in the following in the figure of the servile consciousness); iii) desire and its satisfaction are transitory, providing no lasting, ultimate fulfilment for the subject, because each act of satisfaction takes place once, and hence reproduces itself again.²⁶³

Having demonstrated the deficiencies of desire, Hegel reasons that, since the object turns out to be independent, the subject in the form of desire can achieve satisfaction only insofar as the former negates itself, namely by rendering itself at the disposal of the self-sufficient subject. Yet, what is able to negate itself can be nothing other than another self-consciousness: “Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness.”²⁶⁴ This novel stage constitutes a more developed one, because it is not entangled in the deficiencies of animal desire, namely absolute negative relation, destructiveness, and transitoriness.

²⁶² Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §427 Addition.

²⁶³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §428.

²⁶⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §175.

The insight that the development of self-consciousness is inextricably connected with another self-consciousness, is in point of fact one of the formulations of (what Hegel calls) spirit (*Geist*). In the absence of spirit, self-consciousness cannot achieve its desired stage of universality, which amounts to one's "affirmative awareness of oneself in the other self."²⁶⁵ In German, the word *Geist* signifies what is social and public, as well as zestful. Thus, it refers to the dynamic network of relations within, and of, society.²⁶⁶ Technically speaking, spirit refers to the unity-in-difference of a community, "the unity of different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence."²⁶⁷ In other words, in the dynamic process of *Geist* the moments of dissolving separation and re-established unity remain interdependent on each other. For Hegel, a unity without diremption is only an abstract ideal, cut off from the existing world.²⁶⁸

Before proceeding to the main discussion, it must be pointed out that even though Hegel is popularly known as the philosopher of spirit, he is far from being the first thinker to use it. He developed the term under the influence of Montesquieu and Herder. While the former coined the phrase 'the spirit of a nation' to describe the characteristic manner of thinking and acting of a nation, the latter insisted on the crucial role of the history of a people, which enables us to see how the past lives in the present.²⁶⁹

Hegel designates the inchoate form of self-consciousness, i.e. desire, as "simple being-for-self"²⁷⁰ [*Fürsichsein*] which is steeped in absolute negativity, egotism, and extreme individualism. By means of spirit, the immediate sense of being-for-self is sublated to "the intersubjectively mediated and qualified *Fürsichsein*."²⁷¹ The mediated being-for-self designates nothing but one's society,

²⁶⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §436.

²⁶⁶ McCarney, *Hegel on History*, 60.

²⁶⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §177.

²⁶⁸ Bubner, *The Innovations of Idealism*, 85, 86.

²⁶⁹ Beiser, "Hegel's Historicism," 274, 275, 286.

²⁷⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §186.

²⁷¹ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 54.

without which human freedom becomes unfathomable.²⁷² Bearing in mind Hegel's conception of organicism (see Section 4.2), the society and all its members are deemed to be interdependent. He formulates this reciprocity famously as "'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I.'"²⁷³ Accordingly, one's community stands as the unifying principle of its discrete members, for in the absence of the former the latter is doomed to remain in utter fragmentation. On the other hand, the community is not to be considered as existing apart from its members. It might be seen that in this way Hegel seeks to overcome the dichotomy of individual and community.

It should be noted that Hegel's understanding of spirit in a way comes close to Rousseau's conception of the general will, because both of them, put in Rousseau's language, recognise the importance of the formation of an association with a view to achieving the common goals of society (Section 3.4). However, whereas the general will requires that one renounce its individual perspective and completely merge into its community, spirit emphasises the interdependence between the individual and the society. Writing in the post-revolutionary period, Hegel was aware that the freedom of the individual, or the rights of subjectivity, was not to be put on the line for the sake of society. That is the reason why, despite all its merits, Hegel criticised the Hellenic polis for its lack of individual freedom: "the subject's wish to be esteemed in his immediate individuality was completely alien to them. They had their honour *only* in their solid unity with that ethical relationship which is the state [i.e. the polis]."²⁷⁴ I think that, given the lack of individual freedom in it, the criticism of Hegel about the polis holds true also for Rousseau's conception of society.

In brief, in construing spirit one should neither prioritise the individual over the community, nor vice versa. Forgetting this, some readings suggest that spirit, having a cosmic character, stands above and beyond its constituent elements. This misreading confuses the order of explanation, or logical priority, with the order of

²⁷² Russon, "The Project of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," 57.

²⁷³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §177.

²⁷⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §432 Addition, emphasis added. As an aside, although the polis was lacking the element of Spirit on a political level, Hegel's conception of it is traceable to Aristotle's understanding of *energeia*. Not in political philosophy but in ontology Hegel has always remained a true Aristotelian (Ferrarin, "Hegel's Aristotle: Philosophy and Its Time," 437-8.)

existence, or ontological priority.²⁷⁵ Hence, it reifies spirit as if it were a thing in itself apart from its embodiments in culture and history. This misunderstanding might apparently suggest that Hegel's spirit is in fact a transcendent being, who has absolute independence over human beings.²⁷⁶ Another misinterpretation results from seeing spirit as the sum total of its particular elements, which does not heed Hegel's organicism, and hence neglects the primary role of the whole, as the telos of organic whole.²⁷⁷ According to Hegel, human freedom is possible and achievable only on the condition that "individuals and social institutions are *mutually interdependent*," because "[j]ust as an individual self cannot achieve its full self-realisation without manifesting and actualising itself in and through social and communal forms of life, the (self-)development of the universal ('communal') self, which is spirit, is not possible without individuals' participation in concrete historical and social processes."²⁷⁸ Considering that the philosophy of spirit constitutes one third of Hegel's encyclopaedic system, its multifacetedness should never be overlooked. In his attempt to combine the communality of polis and the individuality of modernity, Hegel understands spirit as referring to both.²⁷⁹ (In Chapter 5, this characteristic of spirit will be worked out in a concrete fashion, as we discuss Hegel's understanding of human freedom in the *Philosophy of Right*.)

As noted earlier, in Chapter IV, the transition from the one-sided desire to comprehensive spirit is carried out from the standpoint of the philosopher. "Self-consciousness which is [...] primarily *desire*, will [...] learn through experience that the object is independent."²⁸⁰ Whereas a sound reasoning suffices for the philosophical viewpoint to overcome the impasse under question, the natural consciousness must go through the dialectical experience, because its sole way of

²⁷⁵ Beiser, "Hegel's Historicism," 291-2.

²⁷⁶ Beiser, "Hegel's Historicism," 290.

²⁷⁷ Beiser, *Hegel*, 56-7. This misreading is reminiscent of Rousseau's warning that the general will should never be understood as the will of all.

²⁷⁸ Bykova, "Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," 285.

²⁷⁹ Bykova, "Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," 266, 273, 274.

²⁸⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §168.

proceeding is that of determinate negation. The Chapter IVA of the *Phenomenology* is Hegel's enactment of this experience, in which the philosophical lesson of Chapter IV, namely the ineluctability of *Geist* for freedom, is recognised and internalised for the natural consciousness.²⁸¹

4.5. Hegel's Interpretation of the State of Nature

In Chapter IVA, Hegel starts off the discussion from the standpoint of animal, one-sided desire, which is “simple being-for-self [*Fürsichsein*], self-equal [*sichselbstgleich*] through the exclusion from itself of everything else.”²⁸² In such a state, the natural consciousness considers another consciousness as nothing but an object, since it tenaciously clings to the so-called certainty of itself.²⁸³ What consciousness in the form of desire does not recognise is that in its encounter with another consciousness the latter too will adhere to the same absolute view. As a result, in this non-reciprocal, pre-social encounter we will end up with “two selves, which subsist in complete rigidity and inflexibility towards each other, each as a reflection-into-itself, absolutely distinct from and impenetrable by the other.”²⁸⁴

Following Hegel's speculative logic, desire corresponds to the moment of understanding, whose uncompromising stance must be shattered by the moment of negative reason, or the dialectic. This transformation takes place in the *Phenomenology* as a “life-and-death struggle [*Kampf auf Leben und Tod*].”²⁸⁵ Following the Hegelian movement of thought, it can be seen that the abstract goal of recognition takes on a concrete configuration for the first time in the narrative.²⁸⁶

Accordingly, in order for desire to demonstrate, and achieve, its self-sufficiency, it must be able to overcome the other, which is (for now) sheer

²⁸¹ Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” 41.

²⁸² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §186; Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 147.

²⁸³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §186.

²⁸⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §430 Addition.

²⁸⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §187.

²⁸⁶ Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” 48.

negativity for itself.²⁸⁷ For both parties in this struggle, this demonstration entails nothing less than risking one's life.²⁸⁸ For, self-sufficiency, or freedom, is regarded as much more vital than mere self-preservation, and also, consciousness can prove its dominion over its biological aspect only in this way.²⁸⁹

According to Hegel, the dialectic of life-and-death struggle constitutes only a transitory moment in the *Phenomenology* as well as in history of humanity. The necessity of this bloodstained encounter lies in the lack of social institutions, which would function as mediating the conflicting parties.²⁹⁰ In this manner, Hegel's enactment of this experience follows the lines of Rousseau's conception of the state of nature (See Chapter 2). In both accounts, the individuals cling to the so-called truth of negative freedom, or extreme individualism, due to the lack of society.

Nevertheless, I would like to emphasise that, despite this ostensible similarity, the reasons they resort to the concept of state of nature are disparate. Whereas (as discussed in Chapter 2) Rousseau attempts to derive society from the individual, Hegel goes to great pains to demonstrate that the two are indissolubly interconnected.²⁹¹ Hence, contrary to Rousseau (and Nietzsche, as we will see in Chapters 6 and 7), in Hegel's philosophy human beings are inherently sociable, which invalidates the attempt to pinpoint the origin of state, or society. It is to be noted that this point is not treated in the *Phenomenology* account of the life-and-death struggle, yet the *Encyclopaedia* account states it clearly as follows:

To prevent possible misunderstandings with regard to the standpoint just outlined, we must here add the remark that the fight for recognition in the extreme form here indicated can only occur in the *state of nature* [*Naturzustande*], where men live only as *individuals*; by contrast it is absent from civil society and the political state because what constitutes the result of this combat, namely recognition, is already present there. For although the state may *arise by force*, it does not rest on force; force, in producing the state, has brought into existence only what is justified in and for itself, the laws, the constitution. What predominates in the state is the spirit of the people, custom, and law. There man is recognized and treated as a *rational* being, as *free*, as a person; and the individual, on his side, makes himself worthy of this recognition by overcoming the naturalness of his self-consciousness and obeying a *universal*, the *will that is in and for*

²⁸⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §180.

²⁸⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §187.

²⁸⁹ Beiser, *Hegel*, 187.

²⁹⁰ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 60.

²⁹¹ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 49.

itself, the law; he thus behaves towards others in a manner that is *universally valid*, recognizing them-as he wishes others to regard him-as free, as persons. In the state, the citizen derives his honour from the post he fills, from the trade he follows, and from his working activity of any other kind [that is, positive freedom]. In this way his honour has a content that is substantial, universal, objective, and no longer dependent on empty subjectivity [in our case, of desire]; honour of this kind is still lacking in the state of nature where individuals, whatever they may be and whatever they may do, want to compel others to recognize them.²⁹²

In brief, what differentiates Hegel's interpretation of the state of nature from that of Rousseau is that while the latter considers it as the moment of perfection and innocence in human history, yet irreversibly forfeited in modernity, for the former the task for modern political philosophy consists in integrating this individualistic element of savagery into the unity of sociable realm. Accordingly, for Hegel the state of nature functions just as a philosophical fiction in the service of rendering the demands of individualism and sociability compatible. Rousseau, to the contrary, falls prey to the naive assumption that only in the (so-called) origins of humanity, which is construed as the "mythical origin of uncontaminated nature,"²⁹³ such a unity was fathomable and present. Equally important is Hegel's criticism that the state of nature operates according to the negative freedom of fleeing from all determination by others, which manifests its incomprehension of the sociable nature of human being.²⁹⁴

Following the narrative, the life-and-death struggle, "this trial by death,"²⁹⁵ culminates either in the death of one, or both, party, or in the victory of one over the other. The former, states Hegel, would be an instantiation of abstract negation. The cessation of the dialectic by death would eventuate in a lifeless endpoint, which provides us no answer to the problem of mutual recognition. Thus, only through the latter can the journey of consciousness proceed. In other words, the bloody encounter

²⁹² Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §432 Addition. In this chapter, we are dealing with the negative side of the point in question, the subject matter of Chapter 5 will be the positive side, namely actualised freedom. Furthermore, the question whether the origin of state, or society, can be ascertained will be dealt with in Chapters 6 and 7, where Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* will be under scrutiny.

²⁹³ Bubner, *The Innovations of Idealism*, 151, 154.

²⁹⁴ Stephen Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel: Freedom, Truth and History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 68.

²⁹⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §188.

of two absolutely parochial consciousnesses for recognition results in a “one-sided negation with an asymmetry: one of the combatants prefers life, maintains himself as individual self-consciousness, but surrenders his chance of recognition, while the other holds fast to his relation to himself and is recognised by the first in his subjugation: the *relationship of mastery and bondage* [*das Verhältnis der Herrschaft und Knechtschaft*].”²⁹⁶

In Hegel’s philosophy, nature and culture are not to be understood as two incompatible realms, yet different degrees of the development of the same substance. Being the more developed stage, culture, or *Geist*, is better appreciated by one party, whereas the defeated one is still in thrall to the biological aspect of life.²⁹⁷ As a result, the absolute stance of desire is superseded into a more developed, yet still one-sided, stage in the figures of (what Hegel calls) the master (*der Herr*) and the slave (*der Knecht*): the former is “the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself,” whereas the latter is “the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another [i.e. for the master].”²⁹⁸

According to Hegel, this novel relationship represents a more developed stage than the solipsistic stance of desire. Whilst in the latter the other is recognised only as an object, bereft of any freedom or agency, in the former the unceasing bloodshed of the state of nature comes to an end, and the victor at least recognises that the other too is a living being like itself.²⁹⁹

In this respect, this termination of the war of all against all is reminiscent of the moment in Rousseau’s narrative, in which the powerful and the rich convince the weak and the poor to put an end to this bloodshed by establishing a society in the name of the state (See Chapter 2). However, whereas the account of the *Second Discourse* considers this to be the actual state of affairs, to Hegel’s mind, it is “only a

²⁹⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §433.

²⁹⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §190.

²⁹⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §189.

²⁹⁹ Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” 46; Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 61; Beiser, *Hegel*, 190-1.

relative sublation,”³⁰⁰ a temporary station on the way of achieving mutual recognition.

The master’s position in this relationship designates the achievement which desire could not have, namely the satisfaction derived from the thing. By interposing the slave between himself and the object, now the master can indulge in the enjoyment of the world, leaving the arduous job of working on the thing with a view to forming new objects to the slave.³⁰¹ Furthermore, it is understandable for the master that he treats the slave merely as “an instrument to satisfy his desires,”³⁰² because it was the slave who, for the sake of survival, abandoned his claim to freedom.

Nevertheless, claims Hegel, the master’s consciousness is mired in a pre-ethical, lawless, and savage freedom; his only preoccupation is in an absolutely passive manner consuming the things formed by the slave.³⁰³ This passivity lies in that the master lives in “the immediacy of particular self-consciousness,”³⁰⁴ i.e. from the standpoint of parochial, egoistic desire.

More importantly, the greatest achievement of the master in the life-and-death struggle was ostensibly the recognition from the other. Yet, according to Hegel, this “outcome is a recognition that is one-sided and unequal,”³⁰⁵ because it issues from a subjugated, unfree consciousness. A recognition that is the result of submission, lacking the elements of free choice and judgment, is not worthy of its name.³⁰⁶ Hence, the temporary relationship of the master and slave is destined to collapse, since it turns out to be not what it claims to be. (As we will see in Chapter 6, Nietzschean political thinking sees the battle between the master and the slave as

³⁰⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §433 Addition.

³⁰¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §190.

³⁰² Beiser, *Hegel*, 188.

³⁰³ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 62, 78.

³⁰⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §433 Addition.

³⁰⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §191.

³⁰⁶ Beiser, *Hegel*, 189.

everlasting. For him the element of unceasing *agon* is an inherent characteristic of life.)

Hegel maintains that the similar twist in the narrative is to take place from the perspective of the servile consciousness as well: “[J]ust as lordship showed that its essential nature is the reverse of what it wants to be, so too servitude in its consummation will really turn into the opposite of what it immediately is; as a consciousness forced back into itself, it will withdraw into itself and be transformed into a truly independent consciousness.”³⁰⁷

He detects two main reasons for this transformation. i) Having preferred mere survival to risking his life for recognition, the servile consciousness “experienced the fear of death”³⁰⁸ in an absolute manner. Accordingly, “the transitoriness of life was brought home to the slave in a way that the master has not come to feel.”³⁰⁹ One might say that this harrowing experience leads to an enrichment of the inner life of the slave, and thus opens up a more comprehensive vantage point by gaining him a renewed consciousness of itself, from which the master is immune.³¹⁰

ii) By dint of labouring on things for the master’s enjoyment, the slave learns to control his biological, unconscious aspect, and thus attains the sublation of his immediacy. For Hegel, such a transformation is required for achieving “universal self-consciousness,”³¹¹ one of the prerequisites for mutual recognition. This transformation might also be described as what Rousseau calls the remarkable change in human being.³¹² Thus, Hegel shares the view of the Rousseau of the *Social Contract* that freedom requires the socialisation of human being. We will see in Chapters 6 and 7 that for Nietzsche this process is nothing more than the sickening of originally healthy human being.

³⁰⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §193.

³⁰⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §194.

³⁰⁹ Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 84.

³¹⁰ Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 70.

³¹¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, 160, 161.

³¹² Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 150.

We should remember that for Hegelian philosophy achieving the identity of subject and object is the ultimate telos of philosophy. At this juncture, one might see how the servile subject establishes a new relationship with the object on a more comprehensive basis. By bridling its desire, the slave learns to mould things external to him out of fear of his master. In the objects produced by itself, the slave leaves a permanent mark on the external world, thus achieving self-consciousness to a certain extent in being conscious of objects.³¹³ This process is nothing other than imprinting one's subjectivity onto the objective realm. The mouldability of material world by the formative activity of the slave paves the way for a more enduring objective world for it to live on. Thus, rather than opposing it, the material realm now begins to reflect the slave's subjectivity.³¹⁴ The master, on the other hand, is deprived of this positive, formative relationship with the world, embroiled in the fleeting desire, which aims at consumption through the agency of a labourer.³¹⁵

Hegel is of the view that the compresence of fear and labour (in the form of service and formative activity) is needed for the transformation of servile consciousness.³¹⁶ The novel, formative relationship of the servile consciousness with the object is unfathomable in the absence of either element. In brief, in the dialectical journey of consciousness, through the negativity of fear and labour, a positive relationship emerges for the once defeated party.

These upsides of the slave notwithstanding, it still stands in need of recognition, just like the master. Even though both parties have partially broken their solipsistic shells by acknowledging the existence of an Other, they are still in need of mutual recognition issuing from an equally worthy human being. Nothing less than achieving one's freedom and rationality depends on this requirement.³¹⁷

As stated before, the Chapter IVA of the *Phenomenology* provides us with only a negative lesson about human beings, that is, the individualistic stance (of the

³¹³ Westphal, "Self-Consciousness, Anti-Cartesianism, and Cognitive Semantics in Hegel's 1807 *Phenomenology*," 79.

³¹⁴ Neuhouser, "Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord," 52-3.

³¹⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §196; Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 84-5.

³¹⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §196.

³¹⁷ Beiser, *Hegel*, 190.

state of nature) is at odds with the inherently sociable nature of human being. The actualisation of freedom and rationality presupposes an already existing social order, which enables mutual recognition and a life worthy of living. (This constitutes the main theme of the next chapter.) Without taking into account the dimensions of society and interpersonality, one is condemned to get stuck in the parochial outlook of desire.³¹⁸ For, “[a] ‘we’ grounds the ‘I’; not only is my freedom possible only by my agency being acknowledged by my community, but the very concept of individuality is a reciprocal concept and can be thought only in relation to another self.”³¹⁹ What is crucial here is Hegel’s insight that this achievement is not a given fact of life, but rather it necessitates the arduous fight discussed in the life-and-death struggle.³²⁰

In the *Social Contract* Rousseau famously states that “[h]e who believes himself the master of others does not escape being more of a slave than they.”³²¹ The *via negativa* of the *Phenomenology* in Chapters IV and IVA might be said to be working out this claim of Rousseau on a more systematic fashion.³²²

³¹⁸ McCarney, *Hegel on History*, 33-4.

³¹⁹ Bykova, “Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” 281.

³²⁰ Russon, “The Project of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” 57.

³²¹ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 141.

³²² Beiser, *Hegel*, 190.

CHAPTER 5

HEGEL'S MAMMUTPROJEKT: COMPRESENCE OF OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE FREEDOM

Hegel's mature work, the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (*Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*) was published in 1821, when he was holding the prestigious chair of philosophy at the University of Berlin since 1818. This work is his most systematic attempt to give an account of human freedom, its actualisation in the social realm, and the answer to the question how mutual recognition underlies all levels of the development of freedom.

Before the composition of the *Philosophy of Right*, he dealt with many of the topics of this work. In his Tübingen and Bern years (1793-96), he was concerned with the problem of the gap between what is rational and what is sensible in the human, and the importance of social institutions in the education of humanity. Later, in the Frankfurt period (1797-99), his famous criticism of the Kantian moral standpoint begins to take shape. This criticism centres around Kant's establishing a dichotomy between the "ought" of morality and the "is" of reality. In his Jena years (1800-06), he is still preoccupied with the deficiencies of modern morality, its problematic severance of reason from human inclinations. To remedy this standpoint, he introduces his famous concept of "Ethicality", based on the Hellenic ideal of harmony between reason and sensibility, as against the abstract conception of Kantian ought. Also, his reading of the Scottish economists, such as A. Smith, A. Ferguson, and J. Steuart, was instrumental in his developing the idea of competing individuals in a marketplace as distinct from the citizens of the political state, which later was to be called "Civil Society." Lastly, during his Nuremberg years (1808-16), he developed the tripartite structure of "Objective Spirit," i.e. "Abstract Right," "Morality," and "Ethicality." From this period on, what Hegel understood by the

Ethicality was not only the Hellenic exemplar, but more importantly a modern Ethicality heeding the demands of subjectivity.³²³ Despite the importance of his working out of these crucial insights as regards the questions of ethics and political philosophy, what makes the *Philosophy of Right* as his paramount and definitive work in this field is its systematicity: it includes all those themes into an organic whole, whose aim is to integrate the seemingly opposing demands of the realms of human life, such as rationality and sensibility, individuality and society, with a view to materialising freedom as the telos of humanity.

5.1. Historical Context

In spite of this declared aim of Hegel, his encyclopaedic system as a whole, and the *Philosophy of Right* in particular, could not escape the defamation of conservatism. In the eyes of the many, Hegel was a downright Prussian apologist, who was granted a professorship in the capital of the Prussia upon the invitation of the minister of the state. It was indeed Hegel who regarded the value of the state in modernity as “the actuality of concrete freedom.”³²⁴ To rub salt into the wound, he would at times couch the significance of the state in the language of religion: “The state consists in the march of God in the world.”³²⁵ On top of this (for a liberal) preposterous claim of his, Hegel famously stated in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right* that “What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational.”³²⁶ This would amount to saying that, so his detractors claimed, the modern individual is in no account entitled to criticise its existent sociopolitical order just because it is always as it should be. It is a fact that, despite the increasing interest in his philosophy (see Section 4.1), the Hegelian political philosophy is still beset by these calumnious accusations, especially for the individualistic standpoint of liberal theorists.

³²³ Allen W. Wood, “Hegel’s Ethics” in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 214-6.

³²⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §260.

³²⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

³²⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, 20.

To understand the genuine intention and prevailing import of the *Philosophy of Right*, whose author was renowned for declaring the central value of historicism in philosophy, we should have a brief look at the historico-political context of the Berlin of the early 19th century.³²⁷ In the wake of the decisive defeat of the Prussian army of Friedrich Wilhelm III against the *Grande Armée* of Napoleon in 1806 at the Battle of Jena, the Prussian State underwent a reform movement under the chancellors Karl vom Stein (1808-10) and Karl August von Hardenberg (1810-22). On their programme were progressive reforms such as abolishing serfdom, introducing an Estates assembly based on representation, enabling the middle class to enter the ranks of the army and bureaucracy, eliminating trade barriers between provinces, and abolishing the outdated, medieval association of the guilds. Hegel was invited to Berlin in 1818 with the invitation of the Interior Minister, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and the Education Minister, Karl von Altenstein. It was von Altenstein's plan to promote the Hegelian philosophy at the University of Berlin against the (then influential) Romantics and the historical school of law. Friedrich Karl von Savigny (1779-1861) was the most popular philosopher of the latter, and a prominent conservative. Both as a person and philosopher, he was anathema to the reformist Hegel, who attacks the him for his opposition to adopting the more liberal Napoleonic code of law in the *Philosophy of Right* without ever mentioning his name.³²⁸

Moreover, the *Philosophy of Right* cannot be considered an apologia for the Prussian State for the simple reason that its main outlines were already drafted before Hegel's arrival in Berlin. Furthermore, in his view, if there were to be grounds for hope of reform movement in the German-speaking world, it was Austria, not Prussia, as the most suitable candidate. It is reported by one of his students that even decades after the French Revolution, he would drink a toast to it on the day of the storming of the Bastille. Such reform-minded elements of his work as a constitutional monarchy,

³²⁷ Allen W. Wood, "Hegel's Political Philosophy," in *A Companion to Hegel*, ed. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur (Oxford: Blackwell, 2011), 298-301, 307, 308; Kenneth Westphal, "The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 238-9; Beiser, *Hegel*, 16-7, 222-3, 307.

³²⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§3, 211.

an elected assembly, and a civil service, were far from a reality in Prussia during his years in Berlin as a professor. In fact, they were nonexistent until 1848, when Friedrich Wilhelm IV promulgated the first constitution of Prussia as a response to revolutions of 1848. A careful analysis of his treatment of the institutions of the state would lay bare the affinities between Hegel's, and the Chancellors Stein as well as Hardenberg's reformist agenda: a bi-cameral estates assembly (on the British example), assigning more power to local governments, the curtailment of the unlimited powers of the monarch, delineating the inviolable rights of all citizens of the state. In defiance of all these plans, the reactionary circles of Prussia decisively gained the upper hand during the 1830s, namely after Hegel's death in 1831. Two events in the 1810s could be said to instigate this fateful shift.

The first was the Wartburg Festival of 1817 in Eisenach, organised by the student fraternities (*Bursenschaften*), whose aim was to celebrate the tricentennial of the Reformation, as well as the fourth anniversary of the victory over Napoleonic forces at the Battle of Leipzig. Even though only some five hundred university student took part in the celebration, they were seen by the authorities as a serious menace to the status quo. The philosopher Jakob Friedrich Fries, whom Hegel spares no effort to criticise in the *Philosophy of Right*,³²⁹ delivered a speech at the event. Also, Hegel's friend Lorenz Oken was as a prominent personality as Fries; and, his student, Karl Ludwig Carové, whom Hegel could not assign as his assistant at Berlin, was the founder of a *Bursenschaft*. A peculiar amalgamation of the ideals of French Revolution, German nationalism, as well as Romantic and Christian doctrines, could be said to represent their views. Most conspicuously, the burning of books, such as the Napoleonic Code, and some Prussian laws, would take place at the end of the first day. In brief, in this quasi-seditious event where the conservative state authorities and defiant university students were pit against each other, Hegel had chosen the sure path of keeping aloof from it.

Matters came to a head less than two years later, in March 1819, when the dramatist August von Kotzebue was murdered by Karl Ludwig Sand, who belonged to the circle of Fries. It was Fries who glorified such political assassinations if the motive were a noble one, such as in this case. For the assassinator, the reactionary

³²⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, 15-19.

writer Kotzebue was a spy of the Alexander the First of Russia; in fact, the former was just a proponent of the Tsarist Regime. This bloody event provided the conservative authorities with the pretext to suppress the ongoing reform movement in the States of the German Confederation (*Deutscher Bund*). As a result, the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819 were passed, under the leadership of Metternich, the authoritative statesman of Austria. From now on, the spirit of reformation in Prussia came to an end, which resulted in the resignation of the Minister Wilhelm von Humboldt. The direct result of the decree was nothing less than the abolishment of student fraternities, the restriction of academic freedom, clamping down on the liberal press, the dismissal of some professors from their chairs (e.g. Fries' discharge from the University of Jena). In effect, democratic demands and the ideal of unification would now be treated under the label of rabble-rousing (*Volksverhetzung*). The abolishment of fraternities resulted in the persecution of some of his students. For instance, in exchange for releasing one of his students on bail, Hegel had to pay a fee amounting to his three months' salary. In the case of Gustav Asverus, another of his 'insurgent' students, he could not but wait his release until 1826.

In the wake of these fateful events, Hegel felt obliged to appease the now reactionary Prussian authorities. To this end, although it was finished, he postponed the publication of the *Philosophy of Right*. Also, not to antagonise the authorities with his reformist agenda, he went to great pains to design the Preface to the work so as to conceal its main progressive goal, that is, the protection of individual freedom within the rationally structured state. His scathing remarks about Fries, which comprises one fourth of the Preface and hence makes it a tedious reading for the 21st-century reader, should be taken to be his definitive turning away from him, in a time when he was forbidden to lecture until 1824. As a reaction, Fries severely denounced Hegel's work as a product of servility, and his friend, the theologian Heinrich Paulus, condemned the *Philosophy of Right* as a reactionary apologia for the Prussian State. As is clear from the historical context, although this defamatory evaluation of the work arose purely out of personal and political issues, this negative perception of Hegel is still prevalent among some readers of Hegel even two centuries later.

5.2. The Programme of the *Philosophy of Right*

After a brief look at the twists and turns of the early 19th-century Prussia, an analysis of the main structure and the aim of the *Philosophy of Right* is in order. As is well known, considered as a whole, Hegel's entire philosophical system is divided under three, systematically related, headings: Logic, the Philosophy of Nature, and the Philosophy of Spirit (See Section 4.1). The Philosophy of *Geist* in its turn is divided into three interdependent parts:

- I. In the form of relation to its own self: it has the ideal totality of the Idea arise within it, i.e. what its concept is comes before it and its being is to be together with itself, i.e. free. This is subjective [spirit].
- II. In the form of reality, as a world produced and to be produced by it; in this world freedom is present as necessity. This is objective [spirit].
- III. In the unity of the objectivity of [spirit] and of its ideality or concept, a unity that is in and for itself and eternally produces itself, [spirit] in its absolute truth. This is absolute [spirit].³³⁰

What Hegel calls the Objective Spirit (*objektive Geist*), as the second moment of the Philosophy of Spirit, refers to the social, concrete aspect of freedom. Thus, the *Philosophy of Right* can be considered as the fleshing out of the summary version of the *Encyclopaedia*.

At the commencement of the work, Hegel maintains that “[t]he subject-matter of the philosophical science of right is the Idea of right.”³³¹ First of all, (as stated in 4.2) although rendered in English as science, the term *Wissenschaft* denotes in German a systematically treated body of knowledge. This systematicity is a sine qua non for Hegel, inasmuch as it refers to the requirement that the speculative philosophy is pursued according to its own method, that is, by letting be the inner development of the Idea. As will be discussed in the following, this is the reason why Hegel asserts that the divisions of the *Philosophy of Right*, and the transitions between them, are structured according to the *Science of Logic*.³³²

³³⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §385, emphasis removed.

³³¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §1, emphasis belong to Hegel.

³³² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, 10.

In Hegel's terminology, the concept (*Begriff*) of right together with its actualisation (*Verwirklichung*) constitutes the Idea of right. Drawing on Aristotle's insight that the body and soul of an organism are not separate yet interdependent entities, Hegel remarks that the existence (*Dasein*) and the abstract notion of a concept necessarily require each other.³³³ According to his organicist metaphysics (see Section 4.2), the *Begriff* designates not the Platonic, the "abstract determination of the understanding,"³³⁴ which bears no relation to actualisation, but the teleological conception that it must concretise itself to achieve its ultimate telos.³³⁵

Accordingly, as far as the *Philosophy of Right* is concerned, what remains to be done for the philosopher is to comprehend (*begreifen*) the rational core "in the semblance of the temporal and transient[,] the substance which is immanent and the eternal which is present."³³⁶ Because, for Hegel, "the truth concerning right, ethics, and the state is at any rate as old as its exposition and promulgation in public laws and in public morality and religion."³³⁷ Therefore, the task of philosophy consists neither in repudiating these truths in the name of an extreme form of historicism, or relativism, nor in inventing, as it were, the so-called 'new truths' for novelty's sake.³³⁸

This insight designates the philosophical lesson of Hegel's (in)famous saying, "What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational,"³³⁹ which is also known as the *Doppelsatz*. Understood as a teleological principle, the notion of actuality (*Wirklichkeit*), which characterises the essence, is to be distinguished from mere existence (*Existenz*), or reality (*Dasein*), which represent the contingent aspect of

³³³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §1 Addition.

³³⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §1 Remark.

³³⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §21 Addition; §1 Addition. For a further elaboration of what Hegel understands by the concept, see Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, §§ 163-4.

³³⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, 20.

³³⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, 11, emphasis removed.

³³⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §4; Preface, 11-2. The first criticism is directed against the historical school of law, who reacted against the Enlightenment conception of a-historical reason. He would in all probability level the second criticism against Nietzsche if he were his contemporary.

³³⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, 20.

phenomena. Whilst the second part of the dictum states that actuality is the realisation and development of the Idea, the first part holds that the view that teleological reason necessarily realises itself, achieves its goal in the course of history. From this perspective, such phenomena as crime and poverty are by no means a facet of what is actual, but just part of contingent reality. Therefore, Hegel's demand is not our reconciliation with the *Existenz*, but with the rational core of human life, the *Wirklichkeit*. In other words, Hegel's philosophy consists in the affirmation of existing reality insofar as it corresponds to the rational essence. Understood in this way, his proposition does not sound conservative. Only a non-metaphysical reading, which does away with his *Logik*, would end up with the preposterous reading discussed above.³⁴⁰

As for the meaning of right (*Recht*) as far as the *Philosophy of Right* is concerned, he asserts that "[right] is any existence in general which is the existence of the free will. Right is therefore in general freedom, as Idea."³⁴¹ It should be noted that, although they are cognate words, the translation of *Recht* as right is to a certain extent misleading. For, the latter's scope of meaning is broader: it means the rights of individuals and people, as well as the philosophical concepts, and institutions, of law and justice.³⁴² Also, what Hegel means by *Recht* as such and its specific configuration in the name of Abstract Right (which will be discussed in Section 5.4) should not be confused, because the latter is just a one-sided embodiment of it.

Bearing in mind this philosophical baggage of Hegelian philosophy, now we are in a position to comprehend his assertion that "[t]he Idea of right is freedom."³⁴³ That is, the coming into being of the initially abstract, or better, *unwirklich*, concept of right takes place with a view to achieving freedom as its ultimate goal.

³⁴⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, 22; Beiser, *Hegel*, 221-2; Frederick Neuhouser, "The Idea of a Hegelian 'Science' of Society," in *A Companion to Hegel*, ed. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur (Oxford: Blackwell, 2011), 294-5; Frederick Neuhouser, "Hegel's Social Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel and Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 228.

³⁴¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §29.

³⁴² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 'Translator's Preface', xxxviii.

³⁴³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §1 Addition.

According to Hegel, this process takes place within the realm of (objective) Spirit, in general, and the will (*Wille*), in particular: “the will is free, so that freedom constitutes its substance and destiny and the system of right is the realm of actualised freedom, the world of spirit produced from within itself as a second nature.”³⁴⁴ Accordingly, the *Philosophy of Right* is nothing other than the narrative of the will’s, as an element of *Geist*, achieving freedom concretely.

Drawing on the method of speculative logic, this concretisation, or *Verwirklichung*, takes place under three main headings. In its abstract stage, the will is treated as the concept of personality (*Persönlichkeit*), whose existence is found in an immediate external thing (*Sache*), namely property. This is the realm of formality in the name of the Abstract Right, or personal freedom. The second stage, the will as subjective individuality, or individual subject, results from the reflection from the external sphere of abstract right into its internal sphere. This is the moment of Morality (*Moralität*), whose principle concern is the good, that is, the universal as existing internally. The partial truths of these two moments are realisable only within the moment of mediated universal, which is the Ethicality (*Sittlichkeit*).³⁴⁵ The freedom of moral subjectivity and personal freedom is realisable only when substantial, or social, freedom is ensured. The Ethicality refers to the concurrence of the realisation of the good both in the inner life of the individual and in the external world. Similar to the three-tiered division of the entire work, the Ethicality too is structured tripartitely: the Family, as the natural stage; Civil Society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*), as the moment of difference; the State, as the realisation of concrete freedom, for which it has to entail the preceding moments in a harmonious fashion. In brief, the moment of the State includes the entirety of the principles and institutions of modern social life.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §4, emphasis removed.

³⁴⁵ To my mind, there is no need to translate *Sittlichkeit* as ‘ethical life’, which is the convention in Hegel scholarship. Keeping the parallel with the term *Moralität*, which is translated as ‘morality’, *Sittlichkeit* could be best rendered in English as ‘Ethicality’.

³⁴⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §33; Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §487; Wood, “Hegel’s Political Philosophy,” 301; Neuhaus, “Hegel’s Social Philosophy,” 205; Westphal, “The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*,” 246.

In the following sections, we will go into detail about each of these sections as regards the necessity of mutual recognition in the relation between the individual and society. For now, it is necessary to bear in mind that this three-layered structure is nothing but the embodiment of Hegel's organicism. Hegel's insight that the whole is prior to its parts, yet the embodiment of the former is completely dependent on the latter, informs the divisions in question. As we will see in the following sections, the moment of Abstract Right is preoccupied with the *external* sphere of human life, whereas that of Morality with the *internal* life of the individual. What makes both of these stages insufficient in the eyes of Hegel is that they both conceptualise the individual in a vacuum, disregarding the integrality of individual and its society, its specific socio-political structure. It is for this reason that as against the abstract universality of Abstract Right and Morality (which makes the part prior to, and independent from, the whole), Hegel places the concrete universality of Ethicality, according to which the individual attains and sustains its value only in the concrete whole of society.³⁴⁷

In the following, we will briefly look at Hegel's understanding of the inner determinations of the will as an abstract concept, as they are treated in the Introduction to the *Philosophy of Right*.³⁴⁸ The working out of the three divisions discussed above is preceded by it, because one should comprehend the inner workings of the will in itself, or the will before its realisation in the external and internal spheres of human life, so as to grasp the dialectical transitions of the work. Nevertheless, the wherefore of the transitions should never be lost sight of: "[T]he purposive activity of this will is to realize its concept, freedom, in the externally objective realm [hence the Objective Spirit], making it a world determined by the will, so that in it the will is at home with itself, joined together with itself, the concept accordingly completed to the Idea."³⁴⁹

³⁴⁷ Beiser, *Hegel*, 234-5.

³⁴⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§5-32.

³⁴⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §484.

5.3. The Will in Itself

Examined in itself, the will first of all includes “the element of *pure indeterminacy* or of the ‘I’'s pure reflection into itself, in which every limitation, every content [...] is dissolved.”³⁵⁰ Hegel calls this capacity of the will to abstract from any objective whatsoever as “the limitless infinity of *absolute abstraction*,”³⁵¹ or, the moment of abstract universality. The upside of this capacity lies in its providing human beings with the ability to give themselves universality with a view to eradicating all particularity, all determinate elements of life.³⁵² In this regard, this is a prerequisite for the realisation of human freedom. Without having this negative aspect of freedom, namely the ability to flee from every concrete content as a limitation, the opening of new vistas for the individual would be unfathomable. One of the most conspicuous examples of it would be reconciliation.³⁵³ As we saw in Section 4.5, the life-and-death struggle of two consciousnesses for the sake of unconditional freedom takes place owing to their inability to reconcile with each other, because they are mired in this absolutely negative standpoint.³⁵⁴ According to Hegel, this is the stance of understanding, which “treats a one-sided [i.e. partially true] determination as unique and elevates it to supreme status.”³⁵⁵ Instead, it is the reason (*Verstand*) which comprehends the first element of the will in its teleological, relational organicism, and thus regards it only as a moment of freedom.

Nevertheless, insofar the will as absolute negativity is construed as the sole element of freedom, it is doomed to be absolute passivity, or pure destruction. According to Hegel, as a theoretical stance, the indeterminate will is best exemplified in Hinduism, according to which all worldly activities of life lead to *dukkha*, i.e.

³⁵⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5.

³⁵¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5.

³⁵² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5 Addition.

³⁵³ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 124. R. Williams also gives the example of forgiveness. However, Hegel does not deal with it directly, as far as the *Philosophy of Right* is concerned.

³⁵⁴ Dudley Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right* (London: Routledge, 2002), 95.

³⁵⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5 Addition.

ceaseless suffering. The Four Noble Truths of Hinduism stipulates in Hegelian language that all difference, concrete elements of life, be eradicated so as to attain the moment of lifeless, purely abstract universality.³⁵⁶

In the second place, if the universal will achieves “actuality, it becomes in the realm of both politics and religion the fanaticism of destruction, demolishing the whole existing order, eliminating all individuals regarded as suspect by a given order, and annihilating any organisation which attempts to rise up anew.”³⁵⁷ The Reign of Terror in the Revolutionary France epitomises this description of the negative will, which dismisses any content as a restriction on its freedom.³⁵⁸ Accordingly, the ideals of the revolutionaries were so distanced from the mundane realities of their country that any concrete attempt to realise them would be thwarted.³⁵⁹ As will be discussed in the following, unless one disposes of this destructive stance, the establishment of a rational, legitimate social order is impracticable.³⁶⁰

It could be said that the extreme individualism of negative freedom (which we saw in the previous Chapter) is the product of the universal will. As will be discussed in the following, it is due to its deficiency that the *Philosophy of Right* is principally aimed at combining the modern individualism (of morality) with the sociability of Hellenic polis (or, modern ethicality).

The second component of the will is the moment of differentiation, or determination, in which it posits for itself a specific content.³⁶¹ Hegel is of the view that the particularity, concreteness, and determinacy, of the second element of the will is as essential for freedom as the universal, abstract, indeterminate will.³⁶²

³⁵⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5 Remark, §5 Addition.

³⁵⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5 Remark.

³⁵⁸ For a earlier version of Hegel’s criticism of the bloody Revolution, see Hegel, *Phenomenology*, §§584-593, where he famously remarks that “The sole work and deed of universal freedom is therefore *death* [...] with no more significance than cutting off a head of cabbage.”

³⁵⁹ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 30.

³⁶⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §29.

³⁶¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §6.

³⁶² Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 30.

Whereas the first moment enables one to open new horizons, the second moment is “a closing and ceasing of consideration of possibilities and a simultaneous opening of the self in which it enters into determinacy and exposes itself to contingency and risk.”³⁶³

According to Hegel, dismissing the second moment as a necessary element of freedom is exemplified by the attitude of the Romantics. Accordingly, seeing the unbridgeable gap between their ideals and the harsh realities of life, they abstained from the latter by indulging in the former in an abstract fashion. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel calls this standpoint ‘the beautiful soul’ (*schöne Seele*), and characterise them as *wirklichkeitslos*, lacking an actual existence.³⁶⁴ What the beautiful soul cannot grasp is the fact that “for the will, in order to be a will, must in some way limit itself.”³⁶⁵

Nevertheless, cautions Hegel, the second element on its own cannot account for genuine freedom.³⁶⁶ Without the cooperation of the first element, the will as self-reflection, it would be immersed in its object excessively. In such a condition, even if the object were rational, the will’s freedom would be at stake.³⁶⁷ In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, this cul-de-sac is best represented by the attitude of the consciousness as desire.³⁶⁸ As we saw in Section 4.4, it is bereft of any reflected universality, and thus completely fixated on its object of satisfaction. (As we will see in Chapters 6 and 7, Nietzsche objects to this classical position of philosophy. For him, the *Natürlichkeit* of the masterly evaluation represents the apogee of human creativity and freedom.)

Hegel insists that without conceptualising these two elements of the will in their relationality, the will cannot be freed from finitude.³⁶⁹ Freedom as negation,

³⁶³ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 125.

³⁶⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology*, §668.

³⁶⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §6 Addition. For another formulation, see Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §13 Addition.

³⁶⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §6 Addition.

³⁶⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §26.

³⁶⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology*, §§174-7.

³⁶⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §7; §21-28.

which is conditioned by what it can oppose or destroy,³⁷⁰ and positive³⁷¹ freedom, engrossed in its object, are of consequence to the extent they operate in unison.³⁷²

In Hegel's narrative, the speculative moment comes in when the will is conceptualised as the unity of these two moments.³⁷³ The development of these three moments follow the (speculative) sequence of Universality (the first moment of the will), Particularity (the second moment of the will), and Individuality (the unity of both).³⁷⁴ Hegel's formulation of the third moment of the will in the *Philosophy of Right* too makes use of the same terminology.

Every self-consciousness knows itself as *universal*, as the possibility of abstracting from everything determinate, as *particular*, with a determinate object, content, and end. But these two moments are only abstractions; what is concrete and true (and everything true is concrete) is the *universality* which has the *particular* as its opposite, but this *particular*, through its reflection into itself, has been reconciled with the universal. This unity is *individuality*. [...] [I]t is the third moment, the true and speculative (and everything true, in so far as it is comprehended, can be thought of only speculatively), which the understanding refuses to enter into, because the concept is precisely what the understanding always describes as incomprehensible.³⁷⁵

Put differently, this unity refers to the (desired and necessary) unity of substantive and reflective elements of freedom. That is, it is the concrete universality, according to which universals could exist only in what is particular (See Section 4.2). Thus, positing an object of the will is not a limitation of freedom, just because its object is generated by, and in accordance with, the rational reflection of the subject³⁷⁶ – hence, the metaphysical doctrine of subject-object identity expressed in terms of practicality.

³⁷⁰ This description is also to be found in Nietzsche's conception of servile consciousness, which will be treated in Chapter 6.

³⁷¹ Note that this adjective is derived from the Latin verb, *ponere*, which means to place, ordain, or set up. In this sense it is in parallel with Hegel's view that the second element of the will is positing a determinate object.

³⁷² Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 126.

³⁷³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §7.

³⁷⁴ For a treatment of these concepts of the *Logik*, see Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, §§163-5.

³⁷⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §7 Remark.

³⁷⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §7.

Moreover, Hegel maintains that this principle constitutes “the principle of right, of morality, and of all ethics.”³⁷⁷ Therefore, that the concept of the will corresponds to its reality, or Idea, in the third moment of the will, refers by no means to an ideal, an unrealisable end. Rather, it is indissociably linked with actuality, i.e. it is *infinitem actu*.³⁷⁸

In order for the individual will to operate according to its concept, “the purification of the drives”³⁷⁹ is required. In their uncultivated, pristine condition, natural drives are entirely irrational, and thus cannot be in accordance with the universality of thought. For Hegel, therein lies the ineliminable value of *Bildung*, the education of the humankind.³⁸⁰ He lays so much emphasis on education that the entire edifice of the *Philosophy of Right* might be said to be resting on this requirement. For, nothing else provides us with the ability to oppose “the immediacy of desire,” or to prevent one falling into “mere subjectivity”³⁸¹ in general.

As we saw in Chapter 4, in Hegel’s philosophy nature and spirit are not two incompatible realms, but different aspects of the substance. Yet, it is Hegel’s and his generation’s conviction that the latter represents a more developed stage than the former. It is for this reason that we are in need of making the “transition to the infinitely subjective substantiality of Ethicality, which is no longer immediate and natural, but spiritual and at the same time raised to the shape of universality.”³⁸²

As we saw in Chapter 2, as regards the role of nature, it is Rousseau’s contention that the human being is good by *nature* but corrupted by society (or, Spirit, in Hegel’s terminology). Hegel is of the view that such a stance would only lead to unfreedom, because only under the rational structure of spirit one is able to withstand, educate, and transform one’s natural, immediate desires. On the other

³⁷⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §21 Remark. These are the main divisions of the *Philosophy of Right*, respectively.

³⁷⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§21, 22.

³⁷⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §19.

³⁸⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §20.

³⁸¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §187.

³⁸² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §187.

hand, the opposite stance of the original sin, canonised by the Augustine of Hippo in Roman Catholicism, rests on a similar fallacious ground for Hegel.³⁸³

One of the most popular misconceptions of freedom is *Willkür*, or arbitrariness.³⁸⁴ Hegel regards it as a halfway house between the will which is free in and for itself and the unfree will under the sway of natural desires. What *Willkür* is able to do is to reflectively think about which content to choose as its object, and therefore it is free only in this sense. Nevertheless, this is insufficient for genuine freedom, because this freedom in form is never complemented by freedom in content. In other words, since the *Willkür*'s content is not derived from itself and its givenness is accepted unquestioningly, its objective freedom is lacking. In popular language, the inadequate freedom of arbitrariness is expressed when it is opined that freedom consists in "being able to do as one pleases."³⁸⁵ In brief, as long as the *Natürlichkeit* of desires remain intact, the unity of substantial and reflective freedom cannot be accomplished. The ultimate value of *Bildung* lies in its capacity for this transformation of natural drives, adopting and adapting them to the rational and thus free structure of the will.³⁸⁶

5.4. Legality as the Inchoate Form of Recognition

What we have seen in the previous section, namely the will in itself, the will as consisting of the element of absolute abstraction and positing of a determinacy, refers merely to an abstract stage. Its materialisation, which alone enables human freedom to come into existence, is possible under the stages of Abstract Right (Section 5.4), Morality (Section 5.5), and Ethicality (Section 5.6), respectively. In this regard, three

³⁸³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §18.

³⁸⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§15-18.

³⁸⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §15 Remark.

³⁸⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Natural Law: The Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law, Its Place in Moral Philosophy, and Its Reaction to the Positive Sciences of Law*, trans. T. M. Knox (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), 470. In his discussion of the *Willkür*, Hegel also remarks that Kant's (and Fries') understanding of freedom relies on this problematic conception. Considering the purview of the thesis, I will not go into the question to what extent Hegel's interpretation of Kant is accurate.

distinct yet related types of freedom might be said to be the subject matter of Hegel's mature political work: personal freedom in Abstract Right, moral and social freedom in the succeeding chapters.³⁸⁷

Before delving into the particularities of these sections it should be noted that the aim of this thesis is not to elaborate all points of the *Philosophy of Right*. The topical theme is to demonstrate that, in Hegel's political philosophy, the realisation of human freedom inevitably entails the element of mutual recognition. That is, the purely individualistic stance of modernity, riding roughshod over the requirements of society and neglecting how the whole (one's community) undergirds the parts (the individuals of a community), must be curbed in order to secure both subjective and objective freedom. The dialectical transitions within the sections (and subsections) of the *Philosophy of Right*, and the cumulative insight to be gained from this rational and teleological process will be that for the modern individual the other must come into play in one's life by way of the materialisation of mutual recognition. As we saw earlier, freedom by its very definition entails a limitation as its intrinsic moment. This amounts to saying that mutual recognition involves the perspective of one's society and the other for each individual. In its absence, both the freedom of individual and the communal, lawful order are at stake.

Abstract Right (*abstrakte Recht*) is the first, most immediate configuration of the freedom of the will.³⁸⁸ In this stage, the subject is designated as a *person*,³⁸⁹ who acts as "an abstractly and arbitrarily free agent" towards the (parts of the) external world.³⁹⁰ The freedom of the person consists in its arbitrary exercise of the world.³⁹¹ Hegel designates this as a necessity since freedom, to be actual (*wirklich*), must be given a concrete form. For him, the most immediate form of this is exercised over the material world.³⁹² This emphasis of Hegel is important for us to understand that

³⁸⁷ Neuhouser, "The Idea of a Hegelian 'Science' of Society," 289.

³⁸⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§34, 40.

³⁸⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§34, 35.

³⁹⁰ Wood, "Hegel's Political Philosophy," 301.

³⁹¹ Wood, "Hegel's Ethics," 220.

³⁹² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §41.

Abstract Right is nothing other than legality, whose focus is solely on the *external* actions of persons, namely the observance of the rules, laws of society. Given its purview, whether the inner sphere of a person conforms to these rules is out of question here.³⁹³ The fundamental aim of the *Philosophy of Right* is to demonstrate that analysing the pros and cons of the standard liberal individualist principle that taking an object into possession constitutes the most basic free act, would lead us to recognise the necessity of membership in a society.³⁹⁴

The person of abstract right is denuded of its all possible particularisations, e.g. birth, race, and so forth.³⁹⁵ Hegel indicates that this stage was not a given, but has been one of the greatest achievements of humankind. Only through the arduous, age-long education (*Bildung*) of humanity could we come to the point where one could say “[a] human being counts as such because he is a human being, not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc.”³⁹⁶ This element of universality amounts to the fact that in this stage all persons are to be treated equal, which constitutes the foundation of modern individuality. This formalisation of the individual at the same time makes possible the individualization of the person, opening a private sphere in which it can enjoy its freedom as an atom.³⁹⁷ “As this person, I know myself as free in myself, and I can abstract from everything, since nothing confronts me but pure personality.”³⁹⁸ As will be seen in the following, taken in itself this modern achievement of humanity is not conducive to rationality and freedom. Here, Hegel’s focus is only on the upside of individuality.

³⁹³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §104 Addition; Beiser, *Hegel*, 234. As we will see in the next section, the latter is the subject matter of morality.

³⁹⁴ Westphal, “The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*,” 247.

³⁹⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §35 Remark.

³⁹⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §209 Remark, emphasis removed.

³⁹⁷ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 135-6. Also see Hegel, *Phenomenology*, §477-483, where Hegel considers the legal standpoint of personhood as the contribution of the Roman culture. He describes it as the foundation of a soulless community, a lifeless Spirit, which consists of empty units of the person. To the extent that the person is isolated from its community and leads a quasi-solipsistic life, it must be seen as living in a contemptuous condition. This stage in the narrative of the *Phenomenology*, which points to the downside of extreme individualism lacking the element of sociability, comes after his treatment of the Hellenic polis, which he regards as the epitome of communality without individuality.

³⁹⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §35 Addition.

Hegel designates the first stage of freedom as *abstract* right, since it abstracts not only from the society as a whole, but also from the kinds of freedom not issuing from the free exercise over the external world.³⁹⁹ Despite this limitation, Hegel stresses that it refers to the achievement of “the presencing of freedom in its possessions.”⁴⁰⁰ As D. Knowles suggest, what sets Hegel’s analysis of property apart from his predecessors is that he disregards the contractarian, or utilitarian, accounts of it in favour of an outlook which gives freedom centre stage.⁴⁰¹

However, this achievement relies on the principle of mutual recognition, or what Hegel calls ‘the commandment of right’ (*Rechtsgebot*): “be a person and respect others as persons.”⁴⁰² In order for the right to have personal freedom over the external world to become effective and sustainable, the “duty of the *other* to respect *my* right”⁴⁰³ must be at work. This entailment of right and duty must be reciprocal, which is possible only through the establishment of mutual recognition.⁴⁰⁴

As the formulation of the *Rechtsgebot* suggests, the subject of Abstract Right is limited to a sphere of freedom which is couched in terms of permission or warrant.⁴⁰⁵ This entirely negative characteristic stipulates that there can be “only prohibitions of right.”⁴⁰⁶ In a sense, Abstract Right might be said to operate according to the formulation of ‘Don’t ...’⁴⁰⁷ Despite having a purely negative connotation, this secures a minimal condition of recognition as required by legality.

³⁹⁹ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 120.

⁴⁰⁰ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 120. At this stage, the natural world is claimed to have no moral value, or without any right, which grants the person absolute right of appropriation (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§40, 42). This stance on nature is in no way an endorsable one given the climate crisis of our age.

⁴⁰¹ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 111.

⁴⁰² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §36, emphasis removed.

⁴⁰³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §486 Remark.

⁴⁰⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §51.

⁴⁰⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §38.

⁴⁰⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §38, emphasis removed.

⁴⁰⁷ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 89.

In the first subsection of Abstract Right, ‘Property,’ the significance and centrality of recognition, or the commandment of right, becomes explicit when Hegel says that my possession (*Besitz*) can become a property (*Eigentum*) only by dint of the recognition of other.⁴⁰⁸ Whereas the former refers to my having external power over a thing, the latter represents its gaining a rightful, lawful status, recognised by the members of a society, thus transforming the subjective status (of possession) into an objective one.⁴⁰⁹

This distinction becomes more understandable if we remember Rousseau’s narrative of the state of nature. Accordingly, any act of taking possession before the so-called institution of lawful condition through the contract might mean nothing else than a possession. This stage is a precarious one insofar as it is not recognised by others, since it can be captured by a more powerful agent at any time. Property, freed from this instability, is the one which is conducive to human flourishing and freedom. This is enabled by the mutual trust established among the members of a society, who mutually recognise that the free will of its fellows exists in the external things of the world.

Understood in this way, Hegel regards property as the first (i.e. necessary yet insufficient) condition of human rationality and freedom.⁴¹⁰ Given that, the usual and uncritical association of Hegelian (political) philosophy with Marxist philosophy is a grave misunderstanding of his thought. He is of the view that since the will of person is individual, my placing it in the external sphere must take on the form of *private* property. Thus, according to Hegel, common ownership, the only permissible form of property in Marxist thought, is in no way an expression and realisation of human freedom. In a similar vein, he criticises Plato’s famous draft of a utopic polis in the *Politeia*, in which the guardians are to lead their lives without having private property.⁴¹¹ In brief, together with the defamation of Hegel as the Prussian apologist (see Section 5.1), the idea of Hegel as the precursor to communistic ideals should be

⁴⁰⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §45. Also see Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §§490, 491.

⁴⁰⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §51.

⁴¹⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§42, 45.

⁴¹¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §46.

tossed in the dustbin of history and be dismissed as a gross misreading of his corpus.⁴¹²

Just as the transformation of possession into property is accomplished through the mediation of the other in the form of mutual recognition, the transference of the property of a person takes place under the same principle in the form of contract (*Vertrag*). At this stage, the formal-universal will of the person, which finds its embodiment in a particular thing and thus excludes another person from it, relinquishes this solipsistic stance.⁴¹³ By way of a contract, “the will of another person comes into being,”⁴¹⁴ because it “presupposes that the contracting parties recognise each other as persons and owners of property.”⁴¹⁵

As the transition from ‘Property’ to ‘Contract’ takes place, we can see an increasing importance of sociability in the narrative of Hegel. This shift is part and parcel of the arduous journey of humanity, namely *Bildung*, as stated above. Here, we can see how the arbitrary will of person curbs its pure subjective stance, and thus learns to form a ‘common will’ with another person. As a result, the particular stance of the person gives way to a more universal position, achieving for itself a more actualised perspective in the way of freedom.⁴¹⁶

However, the degree of mutual recognition attained at this stage is only a limited, insufficient one. The recognition of an Other *qua* a human being is still out of reach. What is recognised in the contract is only the legal person, or the owner of a property. The common will two persons establish here relates only to the property under question. In brief, it is an external, formal, impersonal type of recognition, which is in need of many modifications as the remaining chapters of the *Philosophy of Right* aim to carry out.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹² As an aside, it should be noted that although he is principally against common property, Hegel endorses distributive justice in the sense that those living under subsistence level have a right not to recognise the social rules of private property. Freedom entails the right not to be starving (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§49, 127; Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 125-6).

⁴¹³ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 148.

⁴¹⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §72.

⁴¹⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §71.

⁴¹⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §71 Addition.

⁴¹⁷ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 149.

In Hegel's organicist political thought, the proper function of contract is to be found in the transference of ownership between persons. Therefore, he discredits every attempt at founding the state (i.e. a society structured according to a rational, lawful order) through a contract. The most conspicuous fallacy here is to ignore the fact that in a contract the agents are the *arbitrary* wills, who are invariably able to back out of the agreement. On the other hand, "in the case of the state, this is different from the outset, for the arbitrary will of individuals is not in a position to break away from the state, because the individual is already by nature a citizen of it. It is the rational destiny of human beings to live within a state."⁴¹⁸ Hegel credits Rousseau with foregrounding the will (the general will as opposed to the will of all, as we saw in Section 3.4) as the bedrock of the social order. However, maintains Hegel, basing the state on the consent of arbitrary wills was a serious misunderstanding of the relation between individual and society.⁴¹⁹ Here, he adheres to the Aristotelian tradition, according to which we are always already social beings. Thus, even (modern) individualism, of which the abstract right represents an important stage, develops and sustains itself in this ineradicable element of sociability.

The free, arbitrary will of the person finds itself (partially) realised when it places its will on a thing, and undertakes to change its owner through the contract. The moment of 'Wrong' (*Unrecht*) comes in the moment the person goes to the extreme of executing its arbitrary will regardless of the social norms established through mutual recognition. Since in the stage of Abstract Right there are no ultimately binding social norms to prevent any breach of contract, the possibility of wrong is ever-present.⁴²⁰ This deficiency calls for a more comprehensive understanding of human relationship (which is *verwirklicht* in the final stage of Ethicality, as we will see in Section 5.6). Here, Hegel demonstrates that analysis treating the individual in a vacuum, in abstraction from its social context, results in an impasse.

⁴¹⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §75 Addition.

⁴¹⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

⁴²⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §81 Addition.

Wrong is nothing but the violation of the common will, established temporarily in the contract. Therefore, it refers to the cancellation of mutual recognition, or *Anerkanntsein*.⁴²¹ Hegel's construal of the relation between right (*Recht*) and wrong (*Unrecht*) follows the patterns of his speculative logic. Accordingly, for the right to establish itself as actual and valid, it is in point of fact in need of the moment of difference, or opposition. This corresponds to the stage of Wrong, which presents itself as the negation of right. Through the mediation of this first-order negation, "right re-establishes itself by negating this negation of itself."⁴²² Hence, one could see this process as a second-order of negation, as the moment of concrete universality. Accordingly, right before the occurrence of wrong refers to an immediacy, whose transformation into actuality can take place only through the mediation of its negation.⁴²³

Even though Abstract Right is intrinsically a coercive right, which seeks to cancel an attack on the person's freedom in a thing,⁴²⁴ it must be noted that there is a fine line between the punitive and avenging justice. The limited perspective of this stage, namely its being based on an extremely individualistic stance, prevents it from delineating this delicate balance and executing accordingly the just penalty.⁴²⁵ This restriction on the part of Abstract Right needs to be removed by (what Hegel calls) the Administration of Justice (*Rechtspflege*). Yet, this stage can be achieved only under Ethicality, in which the duties and rights of citizens are known by all and put into practice according to the social norm based on mutual recognition directed at promoting freedom without unduly restricting individual freedom.⁴²⁶

In other words, the impartial, just application of punishment requires common recognition of the impartiality of judgment and judges, which is possible only under the presence of social institutions. This impartiality is achievable only when the

⁴²¹ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 152.

⁴²² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §82.

⁴²³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §82 Addition.

⁴²⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §94.

⁴²⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §103.

⁴²⁶ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 157.

universal standards of justice, or the good, is recognised and executed. This is the reason why the first stage of the actualisation of freedom, Abstract Right, gives way to the second stage of Morality in Hegel's narrative.⁴²⁷ In the absence of moral agency and the institutions of justice, the cancellation of the attack on mutual recognition is condemned to be a never-ending vendetta.

5.5. Morality as the Right of the Subjective Will

In contrast to the Abstract Right, in which the will is embodied in external things, in the stage of Morality the will exists in an internal sphere.⁴²⁸ Put in Hegel's terminology, the transition from the in-itself form of the will into the for-itself one results in the development of the will under the name of a *subject*.⁴²⁹ In other words, the immediate stage of Abstract Right gives way to the stage of Morality, the moment of difference. Here, the issue is not the right of ownership and its insufficient construal of intersubjectivity, but the presence of freedom under the form of subjectivity.⁴³⁰ This reflection of the will into itself refers to a more comprehensive understanding of freedom than the non-self-conscious will of propriety relations, which acts in accordance with the arbitrary will. Here, the negative freedom of doing whatever one pleases is sublated into the freedom of moral subjectivity, according to which the source of principles guiding one's behaviour is, not the arbitrary will of legality, but the normative principles, universal values of good.⁴³¹

Whereas in the stage of legality the principal concern was only the person's observance of social norms, now the elements of the intention, motive, subjective purpose, and self-determination of the subject, come into play.⁴³² From this stage

⁴²⁷ Westphal, "The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*," 249.

⁴²⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §104 Addition.

⁴²⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §105.

⁴³⁰ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 178.

⁴³¹ Neuhouser, "The Idea of a Hegelian 'Science' of Society," 290.

⁴³² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §106 Addition.

onwards, a mere external obeying is no longer considered as sufficient for the realisation of mutual recognition, hence human freedom.⁴³³ The unbridgeable gap between the universal and the particular will (i.e. the feud in the last stage of Abstract Right) is now found as internalised⁴³⁴ in the inner life of the subject. The aim of the will in this stage is the coincidence of what is universal and particular in its actions. Therefore, the subject bears moral responsibility for its actions and its consequences according to the degree of this coincidence.⁴³⁵

In order for the good to leave its abstractness behind, it must be materialised by the moral subject. The term Hegel chooses for this process is action (*Handlung*).⁴³⁶ He detects three principal elements in action: i) “it must be known by me in its externality as mine.”⁴³⁷ According to this principle, the subject can recognise any action as its own only when its knowledge and will are contained in it.⁴³⁸ Accordingly, an action considered as objectively good “should nevertheless still contain my subjectivity.”⁴³⁹

Just as the first subdivision of the development of the person was ‘Taking Possession’ (*Besitznahme*), marking the external thing as *mine*, now the first element of the dialectical development of the subject becomes recognising the action as *mine*. Hegel regards the latter as the hallmark of modernity.⁴⁴⁰ In Hellenic culture such a development of individuality was absent, since the ancient Greeks would unconditionally acquiesce to tragic events befalling them. Dismissing them as

⁴³³ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 167.

⁴³⁴ As will be discussed in Chapter 7, the internalisation is a crucial theme for Nietzsche too.

⁴³⁵ Wood, “Hegel’s Ethics,” 222. In a sense, Hegel’s understanding of morality is a halfway house between Utilitarianism and Kantian deontology. Accordingly, Hegel rejects the fallacy of introducing a crude distinction between the consequence of, and the good will behind, an action, and adhering to the primacy of one over another. The outlook of reason forbids such an attempt of the understanding (Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 171).

⁴³⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §113. Hegel speaks of the *Äußerung* of the will, literally its externalisation.

⁴³⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §113.

⁴³⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §504; *Philosophy of Right*, §§117, 118.

⁴³⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §110.

⁴⁴⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §124; *Philosophy of Mind*, §503.

irrelevant to their responsibility was unfathomable for the tragic heroes.⁴⁴¹ Nevertheless, as we will see in the following, taken in itself, this fulfilment of modernity is far from a blessing. In the absence of the element of sociability, which is realised only in the stage of Ethicality, modern individualism is doomed to unfreedom.

ii) The moral subjectivity operates from the standpoint of obligation, or requirement.⁴⁴² the subject *ought* to make the universal will (i.e. the rational, freedom-enhancing good) conform to its own particular will. According to the Hegelian system, the moment of particularity must be incorporated into the dialectical transformation of the abstract universal into a concrete one. Yet, at the individualistic stage of morality, in which the subject is entirely absorbed within itself, this desired transformation is doomed to remain as a contentless, formal prerequisite.⁴⁴³

In the narrative of *the Philosophy of Right*, we should always bear in mind that personhood and subjectivity are mere abstractions, or abstract universals,⁴⁴⁴ since they treat the individual as self-sustaining, rendering the part prior to the whole. For Hegel the concrete universal is reached only at the final stage of Ethicality,⁴⁴⁵ according to which “the very identity of the individual depends on its place in the whole.”⁴⁴⁶ At this stage, the human being no longer recognises itself as absolute, thus freeing itself from the “one-sidedness of mere subjectivity.”⁴⁴⁷ In brief, the limitation of the moral point of view, i.e. its excessive, non-sociable individuality, makes it

⁴⁴¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §118 Remark. Today this statement of Hegel might not sound as novel and provocative as it used to be in the early 19th century, when the uncritical glorification and heroising of ancient Hellenic culture was the order of the day.

⁴⁴² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§108, 111, 113.

⁴⁴³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§108, 111.

⁴⁴⁴ Wood, “Hegel’s Ethics,” 218.

⁴⁴⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §108 Addition.

⁴⁴⁶ Beiser, *Hegel*, 234.

⁴⁴⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §107 Addition.

mired in the non-coincidence of the universal and the particular. Hegel considers this impasse “as a perennial and hostile struggle against one’s own satisfaction.”⁴⁴⁸

iii) The moral subject “has an essential relation to the will of others.”⁴⁴⁹ Contrary to Abstract Right, which establishes a purely negative relationship between the persons, in Morality the subject has “a *positive* relationship to the will of others.”⁴⁵⁰ This is the reason why Hegel maintains that by making the transition from the former to the latter “[a] higher ground has thereby been determined for freedom.”⁴⁵¹ In this novel condition, the particular will seeks to bring into effect the universal will, which has an objective status for all particular wills. In this way, the individualistic stance of morality might be said to be eliminated, resulting in the positive outcome that for the moral will “the welfare of others is also involved.”⁴⁵²

The downfall of the stage of Morality comes about when the self-determination of the particular will takes up an absolute role. Hegel calls this absolutisation of particularity conscience (*Gewissen*).⁴⁵³ This last stage refers to a descent into the self, in which all social norms disappear, because it treats its inner self-certainty as having the ultimate say. Here one should not overlook Hegel’s play on words: conscience, *Gewissen*, is nothing but the absolute certainty, *absolute Gewißheit*, of oneself.⁴⁵⁴

Hegel regards the emergence of this standpoint as a characteristic feature of modernity.⁴⁵⁵ It was the philosophers of the Enlightenment that propagated the idea

⁴⁴⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §124 Remark.

⁴⁴⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §113.

⁴⁵⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §112.

⁴⁵¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §106, emphasis removed.

⁴⁵² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §112.

⁴⁵³ Hegel works out the theme of conscience also in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. There he describes it similarly as “the caprice of the individual,” “the self that knows itself as essential being,” or “the doer’s own immediate individuality” (Hegel, *Phenomenology*, §§632-654). His later account in the *Philosophy of Right* is a more comprehensive account, since it also deals with its necessary relation with the Ethicality.

⁴⁵⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §136.

⁴⁵⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §136.

of self-legislation, obeying obligations issuing only from one's own conscience (or reason). According to Hegel, this achievement of modernity, that is, the non-objective, non-universal self-certainty of conscience, is pure vanity,⁴⁵⁶ because it invariably runs the risk of turning into evil (*böse*).⁴⁵⁷ Devoid of any universal, objective content of the good, this formal⁴⁵⁸ subjectivity might consider both what is good and evil as having an absolute worth.⁴⁵⁹ Once the modern subject clings to the so-called infallibility of conscience, "no act can be morally condemned as long as the agent followed his own conscience or moral convictions."⁴⁶⁰ To borrow a Nietzschean term, this is the standpoint of modern nihilism, according to which anything can be regarded as null and void,⁴⁶¹ because all determinations are carried out from the perspective of a purely arbitrary will.

The gist of Hegel's critique of conscience is that human values about what is good and bad have their source not in the solipsistic, purely individualistic atoms of modern subjectivity. Such an attitude is in fact the indication of a (again, to use a Nietzschean term) decadent society. Socrates' relentless critique of all present values of Athens was a case in point: "Socrates made his appearance at the time when Athenian democracy had fallen into ruin."⁴⁶² By contrast, the inner convictions of an individual by no means detract from the objective status of the rational norms of

⁴⁵⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §511.

⁴⁵⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §139.

⁴⁵⁸ Although it is not directly germane to the discussion, it should be noted that for Hegel the most conspicuous example of the empty formalism of modern subjectivity belongs to Kant's conception of morality. According to him, "to cling on to a merely moral point of view without making the transition to the concept of ethics [i.e. Ethicality] reduces [the former] to an *empty formalism*." (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §135 Remark) His much more substantial treatment of Kantian morality is to be found in the *Phenomenology of Right*, where he argues that in order for, say, theft to be universally deemed as wrong, the institution of property must be existent beforehand. Thus, obeying the categorical imperative that one should not steal is based on the pre-existing Ethicality, whose foundation lies in the mutual recognition of such an institution. In brief, the defect of Kantian morality is its excessive individualism, which neglects the underlying factor of sociability. Individual freedom is realisable only when social freedom is established (Hegel, *Phenomenology*, §§419-437). For an earlier account of Hegel's criticism of Kantian formalism, see Hegel, *Natural Law*, 435-41.

⁴⁵⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §139.

⁴⁶⁰ Wood, "Hegel's Ethics," 224.

⁴⁶¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §138 Addition.

⁴⁶² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §138 Addition.

society,⁴⁶³ because the realisation of the former is possible to the extent that it is in conformity with the latter. In fine, the values and norms of humanity refer to an intersubjective standpoint, in which my own freedom is achievable only insofar as it heeds the freedom of others.

The lack of this desired condition of intersubjectivity is the lesson of the standpoint of conscience, the right of modern subjectivity. This extreme form of individualism is condemned to be mired in an abstract ideal: “the abstract good which *merely ought to be*, and an equally abstract subjectivity which *merely ought to be good*;⁴⁶⁴ or, “the good lacking subjectivity and determination, and the determinant, i.e. subjectivity, lacking what has being in itself [i.e. substantiality].”⁴⁶⁵ The stage of Ethicality in Hegel’s narrative refers to the moment of concrete universality, in which “the unity of the subjective with the objective good”⁴⁶⁶ is brought into being, in contrast to the stages of Abstract Right and Morality, which are incapable of bridging this gap.

5.6. Ethicality as the Embodiment of Freedom as Mutual Recognition

The final locale in the narrative of the *Philosophy of Right* is what Hegel terms Ethicality (*Sittlichkeit*). Although it is treated as the final element of freedom, in accordance with his speculative, organicist treatment, it is the telos and foundation of concrete human freedom.⁴⁶⁷ At this stage, the methodological individualism⁴⁶⁸ of Abstract Right and Morality is no longer at work, since Ethicality is immune from their atomism, or abstract individualism.⁴⁶⁹ Abstract Right makes possible the

⁴⁶³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §132 Remark.

⁴⁶⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §141 Remark.

⁴⁶⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §141 Remark.

⁴⁶⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §141 Addition.

⁴⁶⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §142.

⁴⁶⁸ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 199.

⁴⁶⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §156 Addition.

presencing of freedom in things, whilst Morality deals with subjective freedom. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of Ethicality these are merely insufficient forms of freedom.⁴⁷⁰ “The sphere of right and that of morality cannot exist independently; they must have the ethical as their support and foundation.”⁴⁷¹ It is for this reason that Hegel designates the latter as “the spirit living and present as a world,”⁴⁷² and as “the actual spirit of a family and a people.”⁴⁷³

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the introduction of *Sittlichkeit* into the vocabulary of modern political thought was Hegel’s most seminal contribution. Contrary to the moral thought of Kant, which is based on an unbridgeable cleft between *Sollen* and *Sein*, Hegel’s Ethicality seeks to demonstrate the unity-in-difference between these two poles.⁴⁷⁴ That the term *Sittlichkeit* cannot be properly translated into English attests to its richness and polysemy. It suggests, along with morality understood in modern world, what is customary and regarded as good manners, or, how a community lives and acts. In this sense, it might be regarded as the counterpart of *ethos* in ancient Greek language.⁴⁷⁵

Hegel’s designation of Ethicality as the living, concrete good⁴⁷⁶ refers to the necessity of “laws and institutions which have being in and for themselves.”⁴⁷⁷ Just as Abstract Right requires that the individual reflection of Morality put an end to the unending feud, the right of the subjective will is unfathomable and unaccountable without the objectively valid and mutually recognised social norms.⁴⁷⁸ On the other hand, the personal freedom of Abstract Right and the moral, or subjective, freedom of Morality are in no way to be treated as the secondarily important elements of

⁴⁷⁰ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 197.

⁴⁷¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §141 Addition.

⁴⁷² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §151, emphasis removed.

⁴⁷³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §156, emphasis removed.

⁴⁷⁴ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 221; Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 206-7.

⁴⁷⁵ Hegel, *Natural Law*, 468; Beiser, *Hegel*, 234.

⁴⁷⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §142.

⁴⁷⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §144, emphasis removed.

⁴⁷⁸ Westphal, “The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*,” 254-5.

freedom. In the absence of them one cannot talk about the existence of rational social institutions, i.e. Ethicality.⁴⁷⁹ In brief, the common criticism of Hegelian political philosophy that it is ready to suppress individual freedom (which corresponds to the moments of Abstract Right and Morality in the *Philosophy of Right*) for the sake of communal order is wide off the mark.⁴⁸⁰ The three types of freedom worked out in his work are required to be working in unison.⁴⁸¹

Hegel's account of freedom emphasises that the rights of individual and the substantial order of one's society must be established in such a way that they become interdependent. The organicist understanding of freedom stipulates that the whole (the society) is both phenomenologically and notionally prior to its parts (the individuals), yet the former is invariably in need of the latter for its proper functioning.⁴⁸² Without this approach of reason, the understanding by itself would be mired in the perennial oppositions between reason and sense, and social norms and individual reflection.⁴⁸³ Hegel maintains that by way of this reconciliation of Ethicality, "self-conscious freedom becomes nature,"⁴⁸⁴ or "subjective freedom becomes the rational will, universal in and for itself."⁴⁸⁵ Therefore, it is only by taking into account the social norms, institutions, laws, and order (of Ethicality) that the demands of modern individualism can be satisfied, because (as will be treated in the following) they are nothing but the conditions and determinations of concrete freedom.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁷⁹ Neuhouser, "Hegel's Social Philosophy," 211.

⁴⁸⁰ This position is the intended aim of Hegel. Whether he achieves to do it is another issue, which will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

⁴⁸¹ Neuhouser, "The Idea of a Hegelian 'Science' of Society," 291. By the way, it should be noted that for the early Hegel Morality was an opponent of Ethicality, and hence it was deserved to be discarded. It was only in his mature works that he came to mean an indispensable yet insufficient moment of freedom (Wood, "Hegel's Ethics," 222).

⁴⁸² Beiser, *Hegel*, 235.

⁴⁸³ Wood, "Hegel's Ethics," 225-228.

⁴⁸⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §513, emphasis removed.

⁴⁸⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §513, emphasis removed.

⁴⁸⁶ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 205.

This demand on the part of Hegel as regards the understanding of Ethicality is at variance with the ancient Greek conception of ethical life.⁴⁸⁷ Whereas in the former we see that “the subject bears spiritual witness to them [i.e. social norms] as to its own essence, in which it has its self-awareness and lives as in its element which is not distinct from itself,”⁴⁸⁸ for the ancient Greeks the rights of subjectivity were out of the question.⁴⁸⁹ Since in modern Ethicality the individual regards the social norms as its “absolute final end in actuality,” “the absolute *ought* [of the latter] is *being* as well.”⁴⁹⁰ Already in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel indicates that for the Greeks the *sittliche* norms are simply given, whose origins and foundations never become the subject matter of enquiry. As an example he cites Sophocles’ *Antigone*: “They are not of yesterday or today, but everlasting/Though where they came from, none of us can tell.”⁴⁹¹ Recognising the negative outcome of the Enlightenment in the form of atomism, Hegel was fascinated by how the Greeks saw the good of their society as indissociably connected with their own particular good, and thus considered the participation in polis life as a worthwhile way of life.⁴⁹² In brief, the Greek notion of Ethicality is a living good too, yet lacks the element of self-consciousness.⁴⁹³ It is the hallmark of modern (to be specific, post-Lutheran Germanic) world that the standpoint of particularity is contained and developed in ethical substantiality.⁴⁹⁴

Nevertheless, the social norms exist independently of the whims of its individuals. Ethicality is “exalted above subjective opinions and preferences;”⁴⁹⁵ “whether the individual exists or not is a matter of indifference to objective ethical

⁴⁸⁷ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 227; Neuhouser, “The Idea of a Hegelian ‘Science’ of Society,” 291.

⁴⁸⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §147.

⁴⁸⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §144.

⁴⁹⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §514, emphasis removed.

⁴⁹¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology*, §437.

⁴⁹² Neuhouser, “Hegel’s Social Philosophy,” 207-8.

⁴⁹³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §150 Remark.

⁴⁹⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §154.

⁴⁹⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §144.

life.”⁴⁹⁶ It is true that the rights of modern individual are inalienable, but they cannot be actualised outside the society: “The individual attains his right only by becoming the citizen of a good state.”⁴⁹⁷ This rather Aristotelian remark of Hegel suggests that it was his aim in the *Philosophy of Right* to bring into harmony the ethical freedom, or the freedom of polis life, with the modern freedom of individualism. Accordingly, the lack of self-consciousness in the polis and atomism, the excessive individualism of liberal worldview must be cancelled out in favour of a novel conception of human freedom, which makes way for both subjective and objective freedom. The former is socially mediated, because it never considers the duties of communal norms as limitation; the latter never refers to an authoritarian state, riding roughshod over individual freedom, because it cannot operate in the absence of free individuals.

The realisation of this double-edged ideal is based on Hegel’s understanding of positive freedom, according to which one “finds his liberation in duty.”⁴⁹⁸ The freedom of doing what one pleases cannot recognise that the concrete freedom needs to be mediated by the element of difference, which is the limits, duties, and norms, imposed on us by the order of society. Any individual disregarding these as hindrance to its freedom are doomed to be stuck in negative freedom, which corresponds to the moment of abstract universality in Hegel’s speculative thought.⁴⁹⁹ Such a mindset cannot see the necessity of sociability, or of mutual recognition, in realising one’s freedom. The element of sociability here is nothing else than what Hegel calls Ethicality.

The objectification of Ethicality as the embodiment of sociability takes place according to the moments of speculative logic: i) the Family, as the immediacy, naturalness of ethical spirit; ii) Civil Society, as the moment of difference; and lastly, i) the State, or the Constitution, as the moment of concrete universality, the self-conscious substance.⁵⁰⁰ In the following, we will discuss these subdivisions of

⁴⁹⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §144 Addition. The problematic connotations of these two remarks will be dealt with at the end of this chapter.

⁴⁹⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §153 Addition.

⁴⁹⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §149.

⁴⁹⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §149, §149 Addition, §155 Addition.

⁵⁰⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §517; *Philosophy of Right*, §157.

Ethicality as regards the theme of recognition. Thereafter, the critical question about the tenability of Hegel's ideal of reconciling classical and modern understanding of freedom will be posed.

5.6.1. Love as the Inchoate Form of Recognition

The earliest form of concrete freedom in Ethicality is the institution of the family. It is the "immediate substantiality of spirit,"⁵⁰¹ which is based on the natural feeling of love. It is through this feeling that the individuals that constitute the family consider themselves, not independent persons, but as members of it.⁵⁰² Thus, the family refers to the establishment of a collective will and common good, which are pursued by all its members.⁵⁰³

The objectification of this immediate feeling is the marriage,⁵⁰⁴ which achieves the formation of a single unity out of two distinct persons.⁵⁰⁵ Hegel's interpretation of the role of the marriage differs from that of Kant in that whereas the latter sees it as a contract to be able to use one's partner for sexual gratification,⁵⁰⁶ the former as the *Bildung* of humanity through the transformation of a natural feeling into a spiritual one.⁵⁰⁷ Hegel does not undervalue the sexual character of marriage, yet points to its greater contribution in its granting social roles to the members of the family.⁵⁰⁸ The essential duties of the marriage consist in customising the natural feeling of desire to establish trust between the spouses, and raising children and educating them for their future social lives.⁵⁰⁹ Through these achievements "the

⁵⁰¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §158, emphasis removed.

⁵⁰² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §158.

⁵⁰³ Neuhouser, "Hegel's Social Philosophy," 222.

⁵⁰⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§161-5.

⁵⁰⁵ Wood, "Hegel's Political Philosophy," 302.

⁵⁰⁶ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 215.

⁵⁰⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§161, 163, 164, 165.

⁵⁰⁸ Neuhouser, "The Idea of a Hegelian 'Science' of Society," 292.

natural determinacy of the two sexes acquires an *intellectual* and *ethical* significance.”⁵¹⁰

As we saw in Section 4.5, it was due to the incapacity of the masterly consciousness to undergo this transformation that it could not free itself from its solipsism, thus rendering the desirable recognition to be obtained from the other impossible. Hegel asserts that through love the absolute otherness of the other is broken, for it is essentially “the consciousness of my unity with other.”⁵¹¹ The immediate feeling of love contains two basic moments: i) the renunciation of abstract, absolute freedom, that is, recognising that giving consent to found a family is in point of fact not self-limitation, but one’s liberation from pure *Natürlichkeit*, or abstract universality.⁵¹² ii) As a result of i) “I find myself in another person, that I gain recognition in this person, who in turn gains recognition in me.”⁵¹³ In brief, by means of love not only atomism but also pure naturalness is sublated. Thus, the opposition between being-for-other and being-for-itself is removed, and therefore, the organic relation between the whole and its parts is established on a secure basis.⁵¹⁴ Put differently, since the family is a form of mutual recognition, the other turns into a member (*Mitglied*), who is no longer a mere object to be consumed, used, or exploited as in the case of *Begierde*.⁵¹⁵ The greatest achievement of the Family in the way of freedom is distinct individuals’ “overcoming their separation by finding themselves at home in the other.”⁵¹⁶

Given Hegel’s view on the relationship between love and mutual recognition, one might pose the question, if both love and *Geist* refer to recognition, why did he introduce the latter? To grasp the main difference between the role of love and Spirit

⁵⁰⁹ Westphal, “The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*,” 257.

⁵¹⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §165.

⁵¹¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §158 Addition.

⁵¹² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §158 Addition, §162.

⁵¹³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §158 Addition.

⁵¹⁴ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 209, 211.

⁵¹⁵ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 222; 210; 220.

⁵¹⁶ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 242.

in Hegel's philosophy, it should be heeded that for the younger Hegel the former amounted to what he meant by the latter in his later years. As we saw in Chapter 4, a well-established, mutually recognised, organicist understanding of freedom is nothing else than the Spirit itself. By distancing himself from his earlier standpoint, Hegel came to the conclusion that love in itself is in fact too narrow a conception to establish recognition, because it is restricted to one's family members. One can love one's spouse or children, but not all the citizens of its country. Therefore, in the *Philosophy of Right*, love is allotted to the moment of immediacy, having a similar structure to Spirit (namely the renunciation of negative freedom and the achievement of positive freedom in and through the other), yet lacking the latter's self-conscious rationality.⁵¹⁷

The dissolution of the Family is part and parcel of its natural character:⁵¹⁸ the death of parents, or the children's founding their own families, is unavoidable.⁵¹⁹ In addition, the transitoriness of feelings between the partners makes the immediate stage of family unstable.⁵²⁰ What ensues is "the loss of ethical life,"⁵²¹ because once the family member finds itself amidst the other individuals, it falls back on its own arbitrary, particular will.⁵²² In this novel stage, the other no longer counts as the ground of my freedom but merely as another particular will, who regards, not the common good, but its own particular interest as having the absolute value, and therefore does not abstain from falling foul of the other.⁵²³ In brief, in this novel stage "the particular is to be my primary determining principle,"⁵²⁴ which corresponds to the stage of Civil Society in Hegel's system.

⁵¹⁷ See Beiser, *Hegel*, 110-23 for an extended discussion of the metamorphosis of the concept of love in Hegel's philosophy.

⁵¹⁸ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 256-7.

⁵¹⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§178-81.

⁵²⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §522.

⁵²¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §181.

⁵²² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §179.

⁵²³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §523.

⁵²⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §181.

5.6.2. Civil Society as the Materialisation of Individualism

Hegel's introduction of the term Civil Society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) might be considered as one of his original contributions to political philosophy. It is true that the conception of *societas civilis*, and its counterparts in modern languages, such as *société civile*, *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, and civil society, used to exist in the early modernity.⁵²⁵ Nevertheless, these terms would be used to refer to the state of civilisation, or the political state, in contrast with the state of nature.⁵²⁶ However, by drawing a distinction between the civil society and the State, Hegel construes the latter as the whole of political institutions, whereas the former came to mean the moment of difference, particularity, or the apex of modern individualism, in the market place. As we will see in the following, the current meaning of civil society as capitalist economy is too narrow a definition for Hegel. As constituting a part of the stage of Ethicality, it includes also the institutions which are supposed to solve the problems caused by its excessive particularism.⁵²⁷

Hegel's characterisation of Civil Society as "the loss of ethical life"⁵²⁸ does not mean that at this novel stage the element of ethicality is completely and irrevocably forfeited. Rather, it refers to the loss of partial, natural, and non-rational, recognition of the Family. In Hegel's speculative narrative, this negative moment is essential, because the genuine form of freedom and mutual recognition to be achieved in the final stage of the State is achievable only through the mediation and *Aufhebung* of its immediate one.⁵²⁹ In the Family, the children have at their disposal constant parental care and material resources for their survival and growth. Yet, in Civil Society, this endless loving-kindness gives way to the cold-hearted competition between the particular individuals, whose principal concern is the satisfaction of their

⁵²⁵ Wood, "Hegel's Political Philosophy," 302.

⁵²⁶ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 261.

⁵²⁷ Beiser, *Hegel*, 244.

⁵²⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §181.

⁵²⁹ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 230.

needs.⁵³⁰ In order for the true, or rational, mutual recognition to come into play, Hegel sees this negativity as needed. (In this sense, his understanding of Civil society might be regarded as steering a middle course between economic liberalism and Marxist statism.⁵³¹)

In the wake of the loss of the loving relationship between the *members* of the Family, in Civil Society, the aggregate of “many *persons*”⁵³² have their particular satisfaction of needs in a stable fashion as their ultimate goal. In this regard, the most conspicuous element of this stage is its atomism, for not the general, common good of society, but one’s own particular good is taken to be holding absolute value by the persons in market place.⁵³³ In Rousseau’s terminology, Civil Society is a paradigm of aggregate, operating against the sociability of association.

Nevertheless, asserts Hegel, the principle of Civil Society that “the particular is to be my primary determining principle”⁵³⁴ is one of the greatest achievements of modernity.⁵³⁵ It is in fact “the modern recognition of subjective freedom, specifically, the right of subjective freedom to find embodiment in the world in labour and poverty.”⁵³⁶ By contrast, such a notion would not have been possible in antiquity. Plato’s *Politeia*, which aims to eliminate particularity for the sake of substantial unity of the polis, is one of the most salient examples of this situation.⁵³⁷ *Prima facie*, Civil Society is nothing more than the institutionalisation of self-interest, which disregards the significance of the other, exploiting one’s fellow people as a means for one’s particular end.⁵³⁸ Yet, Hegel maintains that this absolute self-centredness on the part

⁵³⁰ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 236.

⁵³¹ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 263; Beiser, *Hegel*, 250.

⁵³² Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §533.

⁵³³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §523.

⁵³⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §181 Addition.

⁵³⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §182 Addition.

⁵³⁶ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 227.

⁵³⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §185 Remark, §185 Addition.

⁵³⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §182; Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 262; Beiser, *Hegel*, 245.

of the individual serves “the universal [i.e. the whole, the common good] which in fact retains ultimate power over me.”⁵³⁹ According to him, “rationality consists in general in the unity and interpenetration of universality and individuality”,⁵⁴⁰ and this is achieved (partially) in Civil Society, because “everyone satisfies his self-interest only if he also works to satisfy the self-interest of others.”⁵⁴¹ In point of fact, this insight of Hegel might be said to be adopted from A. Smith, who maintained that the market place is governed by the interdependence between individual and collective interests.⁵⁴²

Furthermore, the individual in Civil Society attains its material well-being,⁵⁴³ enjoys its individual, or subjective freedom,⁵⁴⁴ gains self-esteem, recognition, and honour, as a result of its participation in the market place, and as being a member of an estate.⁵⁴⁵ Also, the non-rational, traditional, and immediate, character of the Family is eliminated in favour of a rational one, because in Civil Society all individuals relate to each other and to the material world through the mediation of reflection.⁵⁴⁶ Therefore, the atomism of Civil Society includes the rights of the person (Abstract Right) and those of the subject (Morality). In other words, these two individualist, solipsist stages come into existence in a concrete manner in Civil Society, which enables individual freedom to be enjoyed in society.

Contrary to Abstract Right and Morality, Civil Society is an essential form of Ethicality, because it involves social norms governing the relation between human

⁵³⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §181 Addition. Also cf. §182 Addition, §186, §199.

⁵⁴⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

⁵⁴¹ Beiser, *Hegel*, 245. Also cf. Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 284.

⁵⁴² Neuhauser, “The Idea of a Hegelian ‘Science’ of Society,” 285.

⁵⁴³ Neuhauser, “The Idea of a Hegelian ‘Science’ of Society,” 292.

⁵⁴⁴ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 230; Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 263. This freedom consists of “equality of opportunity, the right to pursue one’s self-interest, and the freedom to buy and sell goods in the market place” (Beiser, *Hegel*, 245).

⁵⁴⁵ Neuhauser, “The Idea of a Hegelian ‘Science’ of Society,” 292; Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 254.

⁵⁴⁶ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 230.

beings.⁵⁴⁷ For instance, the abstract right of property becomes enforceable only within the norms established by Civil Society. In other words, the right to have possession is recognised by all not in the individualistic stage of Abstract Right, but in the differential stage of Ethicality.⁵⁴⁸ These rules are regulated by the Administration of Justice,⁵⁴⁹ whose authority and legitimacy is based on the constitution, or the State, as the last leg of the Ethicality.

These upsides of Civil Society notwithstanding, Hegel regards it as “the external state.”⁵⁵⁰ Hegel contrasts what he calls the external state with the later stage of ethical stage. The principal difference between them is that in the latter the entirety of society is heeded, whereas in the former the participants in the commercial society aim at fulfilling their particular interests.⁵⁵¹ This criticism of Hegel as regards Civil Society reminds one in fact of Rousseau’s stipulation that true freedom can be achieved only in a society governed by the general will, for only it strives to materialise the common good. For this reason, he rejects the rule by a faction, however strong and beneficial it might be for the society, because even the most popular faction cannot include the entirety of population (See Section 3.4).

In the second place, although individuals acquire recognition and honour by belonging to an estate and working in the market place, this recognition dooms to be an insufficient one, because “the other here is not affirmed for his own sake, but only because it is in someone’s private self-interest to do so.”⁵⁵² In civil society people enter into relations with each other not because they recognise each other as having equal worth as themselves, but because they regard each other as competitors in the market place. This is the stage of “universal egoism and reciprocal exploitation,”⁵⁵³

⁵⁴⁷ Wood, “Hegel’s Political Philosophy,” 302, 303.

⁵⁴⁸ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 273.

⁵⁴⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§209-29.

⁵⁵⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §183.

⁵⁵¹ Neuhouser, “The Idea of a Hegelian ‘Science’ of Society,” 287.

⁵⁵² Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 232.

⁵⁵³ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 233.

where “need and necessity bring [people] together only externally.”⁵⁵⁴ In brief, in Civil Society the other counts only when it is useful to my selfish interest.

Hegel maintains that this lack of genuine reciprocity in recognition in the market place necessarily leads to poverty and corruption.⁵⁵⁵ If left unchecked, Civil Society brings about an evergrowing inequality between the citizens of a society, because its main source of operation is the irrational, selfish desires.⁵⁵⁶ Worse still, the ossification of this inequality “leads to the creation of a *rabble*.”⁵⁵⁷ Hegel designates the rabble (*Pöbble*) as those who are below subsistence level, and hence excluded from the (partial) recognition attained in Civil Society. In other words, the *Pöbble* are those who are “in civil society but without being *of* civil society.”⁵⁵⁸ Without the honour of others, this marginalised class becomes an object of scorn for those who feel, or are, superior to them.⁵⁵⁹ It might be stated that this condition resembles Hegel’s narrative of master-slave relationship in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in which one class of society lives off the labour of another, without giving anything to them in return (see Chapter 4).

We have seen (in Chapter 2) that, for Rousseau, humanity’s deviation from its original, natural way of living was the real ground for destructive inequality in society. In other words, the Rousseau of *First* and *Second Discourse* sees Civil Society as the main impediment to human freedom, and hence tells us how freedom was an essential element of the state of nature. Both Hegel and Rousseau are at one with each other regarding the characteristic malady of Civil Society. Nevertheless, Hegel departs from Rousseau’s early writings in that the solution to this problem lies not in the glorification of the (conjectural or real) pre-history of mankind, but in the strict regulation of the market place by the State.⁵⁶⁰ This stance of Hegel might be

⁵⁵⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §431 Addition.

⁵⁵⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §185.

⁵⁵⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §195; Hegel, *Natural Law*, 94, 99, 123; Beiser, *Hegel*, 245.

⁵⁵⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §244.

⁵⁵⁸ Wood, “Hegel’s Political Philosophy,” 303.

⁵⁵⁹ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 255.

⁵⁶⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §185 Addition, §201 Addition; §§236, 243, 246.

said to be a halfway house between liberalism, which generally advocates a laissez-faire capitalism in modern society, and such statist views as Marxism or communitarianism, which principally reject the necessity of individualistic market economy for human freedom. In a nutshell, according to Hegel “[p]articularity must be contained, channelled, controlled, but nonetheless respected.”⁵⁶¹

Hegel calls the institutions which are tasked with dealing with the inequality of Civil Society the Administration of Justice,⁵⁶² whose main task consists in the annulment of “the infringements of property and personality,”⁵⁶³ and the Police and the Corporation,⁵⁶⁴ which aims at securing “the welfare of individuals.”⁵⁶⁵ He lays greater emphasis on the role of the Police and the Corporation, which are supposed to prevent the emergence of a rabble class within the unequal society. The Police (*Polizei*) in Hegel’s time used to refer not to today’s police, but to the welfare state whose duty ranges from public works, economic regulation to public health, and care for the poor.⁵⁶⁶ Accordingly, its chief purpose is the prevention of any disruption of free individual action.⁵⁶⁷ The Corporation refers not to a company in our sense, but to a professional organisation, or a guild,⁵⁶⁸ which functions “as a kind of ‘second family’ to its members, providing them with economic security and a determinate

⁵⁶¹ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 263. Also cf. Beiser, *Hegel*, 250.

⁵⁶² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§209-29.

⁵⁶³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §230.

⁵⁶⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§230-56.

⁵⁶⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §230.

⁵⁶⁶ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 285; Wood, “Hegel’s Political Philosophy,” 303. Therefore, Fichte could speak of the *Polizeistaat* without invoking any negative connotations of today (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 450).

⁵⁶⁷ Westphal, “The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*,” 258.

⁵⁶⁸ Historically, Hegel’s espousal of the Corporation in modern capitalism is his admission of the necessity of an confederation of merchants such as the Hanseatic League (*Hanse* in German; *Hansa Teutonica* in Latin), which operated in between the middle of 12th and of 17th centuries mainly in the Northern Germany. Cf. Beiser, *Hegel*, 242, where he emphasises that, for Hegel and his contemporary Romantic tradition, the Middle Ages possessed valuable practices lacking in modernity. Hegel deviates from Marxism in this respect too.

ethical home in civil society.”⁵⁶⁹ In this sense, for Hegel “[t]he family is the first ethical root of the state; the corporation is the second.”⁵⁷⁰ As a matter of fact, the need for such institutions results from the necessity of mediating intermediate groups between the State and its citizens. In order to bring into being the interpenetration of universality and particularity, or objective and subjective freedom, the modern world requires voluntary organisations. Otherwise, the disintegration of society into selfish atoms would ensue.⁵⁷¹ Hegel witnessed that both the downfall of the France of Louis XVI, and that of Jacobinism, was related to this lack.⁵⁷²

Hegel’s view that intermediate associations such as the corporations are indispensable in order to root out, or at least mitigate, poverty, diverges from Rousseau’s contention that the general will is indivisible, and hence the formation of factions within society must be prevented (See Section 3.4). This stance of Rousseau does not accept Hegel’s insight that in order to achieve real, concrete universality, the mediation of particularity is required. Accordingly, without the differential element of Civil Society, the State, or the society as a whole, would get stuck in the stage of immediate, abstract universality, not letting the flourishing of its individuals. In other words, from a Hegelian standpoint, the absence of such associations in a society threatens the permanence of the general will.⁵⁷³

In spite of these advantages of Civil Society, Hegel acknowledges that by its very nature it *per necessitatem* leads to untold misery, and consequently, the emergence of the rabble: “The important question of how poverty can be remedied is one which agitates and torments modern societies especially.”⁵⁷⁴ It is true that the institutions of Corporation and Police are meant to eschew the extremes of collectivism and unlimited market capitalism. Nevertheless, Hegel himself admits

⁵⁶⁹ Wood, “Hegel’s Political Philosophy,” 303. Hence, “the term ‘cooperative’ rather than ‘corporation’ better captures what Hegel has in mind” (Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 228).

⁵⁷⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §255.

⁵⁷¹ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 252.

⁵⁷² Beiser, *Hegel*, 241.

⁵⁷³ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 299-301.

⁵⁷⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §244.

that they fall short of achieving a genuine mutual recognition and equality in modern society. Market capitalism might have produced immense wealth, yet this does not hold true for the entirety of society: “[D]espite an excess of wealth, civil society is not wealthy enough.”⁵⁷⁵ That is to say, not the creation of ever-increasing surplus in capitalist economy, but its unequal distribution constitutes the main problem.⁵⁷⁶ This inequality does not allow the actualisation of individual freedom, which is the chief aim of the individuals of Civil Society, but it remains merely a possibility.⁵⁷⁷ Therefore, on their own the corporations cannot remedy the entrenched problem of inequality, since they are “not yet the state; they are private voluntary organisations, and as such are self-limiting and self-regulating.”⁵⁷⁸ The ultimate solution to this problem cannot be provided within the framework of Civil Society, whose concern is not the general good of society. Therefore, the intervention of the ethical State, as the last stage of Ethicality, into the market place is a requisite for a society promoting the individual freedom of its all citizens.⁵⁷⁹ In the absence of the ethical State, the external state, i.e. Civil Society, runs the risk of institutionalising the master-slave relation within modern society, the eradication of which constitutes one of the main aims of Hegel’s (and Rousseau’s) political thinking.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §245, emphasis removed.

⁵⁷⁶ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 243.

⁵⁷⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §230.

⁵⁷⁸ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 258.

⁵⁷⁹ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 258-260. It is also another issue that, even if the State could solve the problem of modern inequality, Civil Society had to solve it on its own without any intervention, given Hegel’s insistence that all organic stages of Ethicality should contribute towards freedom. In Hegel scholarship, the general consensus is that “Hegel sees the inevitability of poverty and the creation of a rabble but fails to propose any solution to these problems” (Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 251).

⁵⁸⁰ As we will see in the following chapters, not its elimination, but recognising its interminability within society is the task of Nietzsche’s philosophy.

5.6.3. The Ethical State as the Telos of *Objektiver Geist*

What Hegel calls the political constitution,⁵⁸¹ or the constitution of the state,⁵⁸² refers to the complete objectification of freedom in society, or the Objective Spirit. In the *Philosophy of Right*, the hierarchy of social institutions, and the types of freedom realised in each of them, are structured according to the categories of logic. The Family is the moment of immediate unity, since it is based on a collective will established through love, uniting the members of family in a natural, non-reflective manner. The Civil Society embodies the stage of difference, whose guiding principle is the egoism and self-satisfaction of individuals. The competitive nature of market place renders all its participants as rivals to be outdone. The State represents the moment of mediated unity, because its main aim is to include the stages of Family and Civil Society without detracting from the common good of society. Since neither the immediate feeling of love nor the competitiveness or egoism of market place can be the bedrock of society, the objective and subjective freedom can be realised only through the establishment of a lawful, rational social order, which in turn rests on the mutual recognition between the citizens of a society.⁵⁸³

That the State is treated at the end of the *Philosophy of Right* does not mean that the Family, or Civil Society, can exist prior to the establishment of the former. Although the constitution is discussed as the last stage, it was existent *in potentia* in the preceding moments.⁵⁸⁴

However, from this course taken by our inquiry it does not follow in the least that we wanted to make ethical life something later in time than right and morality, or to explain the family and civil society as something preceding the state in actuality. We are well aware that ethical life is the foundation of right and morality, as also that the family and civil society with their well-ordered differentiations already presuppose the presence of the state. In the philosophical development of the ethical, however, we cannot begin with the state, since in the state the ethical has unfolded into its most concrete form, whereas the beginning is necessarily something abstract.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §517.

⁵⁸² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §157.

⁵⁸³ Neuhauser, "The Idea of a Hegelian 'Science' of Society," 293.

⁵⁸⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §32; Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 229.

⁵⁸⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §408, §408 Addition, emphasis removed.

In Hegel's terminology, Civil Society is called the external State, because at this stage the social bond between the individuals are merely external, that is, based on the need and material satisfaction. By contrast, the State, as "the actuality of the ethical Idea,"⁵⁸⁶ might be called the ethical State, since it is established, and sustained, through mutual recognition. In this regard, what Hegel means by the State is not to be confused with the government. Whereas the latter refers to the "strictly political state,"⁵⁸⁷ the former to the entirety of "a civilly and politically well-organised society."⁵⁸⁸

According to Hegel, "the state in and for itself is the ethical whole, the actualisation of freedom,"⁵⁸⁹ just because only in it the disjunction between universality and individuality is eliminated, and the mediated unity between objective freedom and subjective freedom is materialised.⁵⁹⁰ In the *Encyclopedia* he terms this unity as "the self-conscious ethical substance."⁵⁹¹ Understood in this way, Hegel's conception of the State does not prioritise the individual or the communal order over each other, because they are invariably in need of each other for concrete freedom.⁵⁹²

Hegel's incorporation of Abstract Right, Morality, and Civil Society (which are the instantiations of subjective freedom, or the arbitrary will on different levels) into the ethical substance, or the will in itself, might be regarded as his mediation of ancient and modern conceptions of freedom. This unity consists in the de-absolutisation of the arbitrary will, the quasi-solipsistic stance of individualism. Only in a rational state established by mutual recognition, the will in itself (*Wille an sich*)

⁵⁸⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §257.

⁵⁸⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§273, 276.

⁵⁸⁸ Westphal, "The Basic Context and Structure of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*," 259; Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§257-71.

⁵⁸⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258 Addition.

⁵⁹⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

⁵⁹¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §535, emphasis removed.

⁵⁹² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §260; Wood, "Hegel's Political Philosophy," 304, 310.

and the arbitrary will (*Willkür*) might coincide.⁵⁹³ As discussed in Section 4.2, Hegel's understanding of identity consists not in a simple, abstract identity between objectivity and subjectivity, but in the identity of subject-object identity and subject-object non-identity. Accordingly, this mediated unity is nothing other than "mutual recognition, being at home with self in an Other, pursuing common causes and ends cooperatively with others."⁵⁹⁴ In a rational state, the otherness of an Other is not (attempted to be) extirpated, but only its alien character is eliminated.⁵⁹⁵

It should be noted that this de-absolutisation of the arbitrary will in the ethical State corresponds by and large to what Rousseau calls the "remarkable change in man,"⁵⁹⁶ in which the immediacy of impulses is substituted for the rationality of duty and morality (See Section 3.5). In this regard, it might be pointed out that both Rousseau and Hegel see the denaturing of non-reflective, individualistic human being as prerequisite for human freedom.

Despite this similarity, in the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel sets a critical tone concerning Rousseau's methodology as a whole:

[I]t was the achievement of Rousseau to put forward the *will* [i.e. the general will] as the principle of the state... But Rousseau considered the will only in the determinate form of the *individual* will (as Fichte subsequently also did) and regarded the universal will not as the will's rationality in and for itself, but only as the *common element* arising out of this individual will as a *conscious will*. The union of individuals within the state thus becomes a *contract*, which is accordingly based on their arbitrary will and opinions, and on their express consent given at their own discretion; and the further consequences which follow from this, and which relate merely to the understanding, destroy the divine element which has being in and for itself and its absolute authority and majesty.⁵⁹⁷

As per usual, Hegel's discussion here is cursory and just hinting at the key words. What he finds untenable in Rousseau's thinking is his introduction of the concept of social contract. Accordingly, construing the rational order of society as based on a social contract confuses the stage of Civil Society with that of the ethical State.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹³ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 262-5.

⁵⁹⁴ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 263.

⁵⁹⁵ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 274.

⁵⁹⁶ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 150.

⁵⁹⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

⁵⁹⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §75 Remark, §75 Addition.

The former rests on the arbitrary will of the individuals. Therefore, it allows for the possibility of backing out of the contract, since it is established by means of consent. However, being a citizen in the State, or taking part in a society as an individual, is not “an optional matter.”⁵⁹⁹ In this regard, we might regard Hegel’s understanding of human being’s inherent sociability as typically Aristotelian, who maintained that

he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god: he is not part of a state. A social instinct is implanted in all men by nature... [M]an, when perfected, is the best of animals, but, when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all.⁶⁰⁰

In brief, although Hegel agrees with Rousseau that the curbing of modern atomism is necessary for freedom, and the principle of the will constitutes its bedrock, the conceptualisation of state as issuing from the social contract removes its ethical nature, rendering the arbitrary will of the individual the sole determinant element. The *Willkür* of Abstract Right, or propriety relations, is irrevocable, limited in scope, and establishes a merely external, temporary relation between the individuals. Yet, the ethical State is based on mutual recognition, namely the rational, mediated unity between sociable individuals: “In this respect, their union is a self-limitation, but since they attain their substantial self-consciousness within it, it is in fact their liberation.”⁶⁰¹ Hence, even though Rousseau shares Hegel’s contention that the denaturing, or self-overcoming, of human being is needed for freedom,⁶⁰² he falls short of this aim owing to his still too individualistic notion of contract.⁶⁰³

Another Rousseauian element in Hegel’s political philosophy is the distinction between aggregation and association (See Section 3.4). Accordingly, the general will (for Rousseau), or the ethical State (for Hegel), cannot be established based on the former, i.e. a mass of people having no common goal, each striving for

⁵⁹⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

⁶⁰⁰ Aristotle, *Politics*, I.2 1253a27-1253a32.

⁶⁰¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §162.

⁶⁰² As we will see in Chapters 6 and 7, human being’s denaturing constitutes one of the main topics of Nietzsche’s philosophy.

⁶⁰³ For a detailed discussion of Hegel’s critique of Rousseau’s contract theory, cf. Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 306-15; Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 275-80.

its own end in the absence of mutual recognition. Despite this demand on the part of Rousseau, his individualistic understanding of contract seems not to meet this criterion. It might be said that Hegel's conception of organicism (See Section 4.2) mainly seeks to bring about this transformation from the aggregate to a genuine society.⁶⁰⁴ His formulation that the *Geist* is the interdependence between the individual and the society, or famously, "'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'"⁶⁰⁵ is better suited to bring about this element of sociability, or better, ethicality. In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel never tires from reiterating that the ethical State is to be understood as an organic whole.⁶⁰⁶

Firstly, it must be pointed out that Hegel's organicism is not his own original contribution to philosophy, for already in the 1790s it gained currency in the republican and romantic circles of German-speaking world.⁶⁰⁷ More specifically, Hegel adopted this notion from Fichte, and seeing that the latter did not foreground it in his philosophy, he brought it to the centre stage of his understanding of society and freedom.⁶⁰⁸ Hegel's working out of the organic structure of the State in the *Philosophy of Right* is scattered across the book, whose main features can be recapped as follows: i) there is not to be any predominance either of the whole (the state) or of the part (the individual). In other words, the Hegelian State is neither purely liberal nor purely sociable, or communitarian, yet aims to satisfy the criteria of the both. ii) In order for the organic whole to have concrete existence, each of its constituent parts should have partial independence. This feature of the ethical State makes room for partially autonomous, economically oriented groups, which are outside the control of the central government. iii) Fulfilling the second criterion necessarily contributes to the development of the whole. This view maintains that, unlike the Hellenic polis, the modern individual (of the Hegelian society) sees no

⁶⁰⁴ Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right*, 324.

⁶⁰⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §177.

⁶⁰⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §267, Addition; §269; §270 Addition; §271; §276 Addition; §278 Remark; §286, Remark; §299 Remark; §308 Remark; §316 Addition; §324 Remark; §360.

⁶⁰⁷ Beiser, *Hegel*, 239.

⁶⁰⁸ For further discussion, cf. Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 299-300. In addition to Fichte, Montesquieu's influence was important as well, cf. Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 294.

inherent, unavoidable conflict between the common good and the individual interest.⁶⁰⁹

Hegel provides us with a detailed analysis of the organic, ethical State, which is structured according to the logical categories of universality, particularity, and individuality. As far as the scope of this thesis is concerned, its empirical details are not germane to our discussion. In fact, such an investigation would be anachronic considering the fundamental differences between the 19th- and 21st-century state apparatus. However, a brief look at it would demonstrate that Hegel was far from being a Prussian apologist (as chiefly propagated by Popper). To begin with, for Hegel constitutional monarchy is the only suitable form of the state.⁶¹⁰ This might sound an archaic proposal for our age. Yet, it should be borne in mind that Prussia adopted a constitution only after the 1848 Revolutions, and Hegel saw its necessity in the early 1800s. The moment of individuality is represented by the monarch, or the sovereign.⁶¹¹ The monarch secures the unity of the State⁶¹² and is chosen based on hereditary principles,⁶¹³ thus the fight for the throne is already prevented;⁶¹⁴ he has no possibility of becoming an autocrat, since he is completely bound by the common good, or the law.⁶¹⁵ In point of fact, all responsibility lies on the ministers of the State,⁶¹⁶ “he [i.e. the monarch] often has nothing more to do than to sign his name.”⁶¹⁷ For this reason, his personality has no relevance for the affairs of the State, since in a rational state only the rational principles of freedom prevail.⁶¹⁸

⁶⁰⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§269-70; 272, 303 Remark; 184, 286 Remark, 260-1; Beiser, *Hegel*, 240.

⁶¹⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §273.

⁶¹¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§275-86.

⁶¹² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §276.

⁶¹³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §280.

⁶¹⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §281 Remark.

⁶¹⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §278 Remark.

⁶¹⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §284.

⁶¹⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §279 Addition.

⁶¹⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §280 Addition.

The moment of particularity in the State is the executive power,⁶¹⁹ whose principal task consists in “the execution and application of the sovereign’s decisions.”⁶²⁰ It includes the institutions of the judiciary, the police, and civil service.⁶²¹ One of the most conspicuous characters of the Hegelian state is its delegating a great power to the civil service, or bureaucracy.⁶²² The civil servants are appointed from the educated class;⁶²³ they are supposed to be immune from the corruption of the nobility, as well as from the rabble mentality that sees working for the State only as a means for making money.⁶²⁴ For them, the common good of society, the affairs of the State are above all particular, egoist considerations.⁶²⁵ It is due to this positive characteristic of civil servants that their proposals are to be seen as binding on the monarch.⁶²⁶ In addition, Hegel sees them fit to see the best interests of the market place.⁶²⁷

This seemingly naïve trust in civil servants on the part of Hegel might be accounted for by the emergence of bureaucracy in the 19th century. Nevertheless, Hegel partially realised that this educated class is prone to corruption too. Therefore, he suggests that they have to be checked by the sovereign and the corporations.⁶²⁸ The downside of Hegel’s discussion of the Executive Power is that he provides us no answer to the question whether civil service could ever be monitored once it is granted such a great power as he suggests.

⁶¹⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §273.

⁶²⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §287.

⁶²¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §287.

⁶²² Beiser, *Hegel*, 255.

⁶²³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §291; §297, §297 Addition.

⁶²⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §294 Remark.

⁶²⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §296.

⁶²⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §279 Addition.

⁶²⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §289.

⁶²⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§295, 297.

The legislative power represents the moment of universality.⁶²⁹ Adopting the British example, Hegel proposes a bicameral Estates Assembly.⁶³⁰ This assertion of Hegel too shows us that he did not see the Prussian State as the embodiment of the ethical State. The main advantage of the bicameral system lies in that both the interests of the estates of landed aristocracy and agriculture, and those of capitalist market place, are represented in the Assembly.⁶³¹ Given that the ministers and the civil servants are occupied with the bulk of the affairs of the State, the Assembly is tasked mainly with nurturing the political consciousness of the people, as well as diminishing the possible clashes between the people and the government.⁶³²

There is no need to go into the further detail of the Hegelian blueprint of the State. It is true that in its many parts it has almost nothing to say to this century, yet, interpreted contextually, it is undoubtedly in advance of his own age. As stated above, the most problematic feature of the Hegelian State is its placing too much trust in bureaucracy. It might be said that this naivety of Hegel is similar to that of Rousseau, when the latter claims that the legislator is the one who is supposed to bring about civilisation without having any intention of using the masses for its own purposes (See Section 3.5).

This feature of Hegelian State might be considered as a minor issue, the product of a historical condition. It seems that Hegel was fascinated by the birth of modern bureaucracy, and hence could not foresee that it was no less corruptible than Civil Society. However, as far as the primary aim of Hegel's political project is concerned (i.e. the realisation of mutual recognition, and the unity of subjective and objective freedom), the problem of the international relations poses the greatest danger.

Hegel asserts that just as the mutual recognition is a *sine qua non* for human freedom, each state needs to be recognised as sovereign by other states: "Without relations with other states, the state can no more be an actual individual than an

⁶²⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §273.

⁶³⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§312, 313; Beiser, *Hegel*, 256.

⁶³¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§303, 304.

⁶³² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§301, 302.

individual can be an actual person without a relationship with other persons.”⁶³³ Nevertheless, the substantial difference between these two types of recognition is that whilst a human being deserves to be recognised simply because it exists,⁶³⁴ a state cannot achieve this by dint of its mere existence.⁶³⁵ “The relationship of states to one another is a relationship between independent entities and hence between *particular* wills.”⁶³⁶ This particularity refers to the fact that international relations are regulated by the *arbitrary* will of the states, which are under no moral, or ethical, obligation to recognise, value, and respect each other.⁶³⁷ In a sense, “sovereign states are in a state of nature in their relations to each other.”⁶³⁸

Furthermore, even if this lack of recognition were to be eliminated between the states, this would in no way lead to the formation of a supranational, universal institution, which secures the permanence of peace and recognition, simply because by its very definition a sovereign state cannot be restrained, or dictated, by another superior organisation.⁶³⁹ It is for this reason that Hegel dismisses the main idea of Kant’s *Perpetual Peace (Zum ewigen Frieden)* as untenable and contrary to the very definition of sovereignty.⁶⁴⁰ According to the latter, permanent peace can, and should be, established on the international level through the unanimous agreement between the states not to wage war on each other.⁶⁴¹ For Hegel, between the sovereign states no such unanimity can be established: “In their relationship to each other, wilfulness and contingency obtain, because, owing to the autonomous totality of these persons, between them the universal of right only ought to be, but it is not actual.”⁶⁴²

⁶³³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §331 Remark.

⁶³⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §209 Remark.

⁶³⁵ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 350.

⁶³⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §336.

⁶³⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§330 Addition, 337 Remark, 333 Remark.

⁶³⁸ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 335.

⁶³⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §324 Addition.

⁶⁴⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§324 Addition, 333 Remark.

⁶⁴¹ Williams, *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition*, 359-60.

⁶⁴² Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, §545, emphasis removed.

In the absence of such a supranational, conciliator arbiter, the irresolvable disagreements between the states necessarily lead to war.⁶⁴³ This unavoidability refers to the ultimate lack of ethicality on the level of international relations. In brief, Hegel acknowledges that even if the states were to be ethical, organic individuals, on the universal level, the parochialism of master-slave relationship could not have been eliminated.⁶⁴⁴

Hegel's stance on the lack of 'We' on the international level demonstrates his down-to-earth approach to this issue, unlike Kant, who clings to the non-realizable ideal of the good will of the states. However, his astuteness in evaluating the *Realpolitik* does not seem to be leading him to the insight that in the face of this absence of recognition, the primary aim of the *Philosophy of Right* is at stake. Admitting that mutual recognition cannot be achieved and sustained on the most universal level would amount to indicating that the atomism, parochial individualism of modernity cannot be eradicated from social life. This would mean that the Objective Spirit cannot be realized completely, which is a serious problem for Hegel, the philosopher of *concrete* freedom. We should remember that for Hegel, the Idea without its materialisation (*Verwirklichung*) is a mere abstract notion, having no worth until it is embodied in the real world.⁶⁴⁵

Furthermore, Hegel's mature political work as a whole seems to suffer from one fundamental defect. We have seen throughout this chapter how he takes great pains to bring about the coincidence of subjective and objective freedom, modern individuality and ethical substantiality, as the only rational form of human freedom. Although the popular defamation that the *Philosophy of Right* is the description of the Prussian State pure and simple because he was ingratiating himself with the authorities, is wide off the mark (see Section 5.1), one can nevertheless assert that he most of the time takes sides in this equilibrium in favour of objective freedom over the subjective one. His work is riddled with statements, which demonstrate to us that

⁶⁴³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§334, 330 Addition, 333 Remark, 336, 337 Remark.

⁶⁴⁴ Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, 362.

⁶⁴⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §1.

despite his stated aim Hegel tends to prioritise the unity of State, or society, over individual freedom.

For instance, when Hegel asserts that “The individual, however, finds his liberation in duty,”⁶⁴⁶ a reader of post-war era could think of the infamous slogan of ‘*Arbeit macht frei*.’ Hegel openly states that “[b]y educated people, we may understand in the first place those who do everything as others do it.”⁶⁴⁷ The State amounts to “the march of God in the world;”⁶⁴⁸ the readiness of the individual for self-sacrifice in a war demonstrates the genuine valour of modern citizens.⁶⁴⁹ Since the substantial side of Ethicality, namely laws and institutions, have objective validity,⁶⁵⁰ “[w]hether the individual exists or not is a matter of indifference to objective ethical life.”⁶⁵¹ So that, in a truly ethical, rational society, what remains to the individual is to “do simply what is prescribed,”⁶⁵² because “the subjective will has worth and dignity only in so far as its insight and intentions are in conformity with the good.”⁶⁵³ In such a state, the freedom of the press, the public freedom to do what one pleases cannot be allowed, for the rationality of society is already established.⁶⁵⁴ The normally realist Hegel glosses over the atrocities of war for the individual: “Modern wars are accordingly waged in a humane manner, and persons do not confront each other in hatred.”⁶⁵⁵ It is surprising that Hegel could hold this view as a contemporary of Napoleonic Wars (1799 - 1815), which claimed the lives of 3 to 6 million people. F. Neuhouser detects that “[t]here are [...] no passages in

⁶⁴⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §149, emphasis removed.

⁶⁴⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §187 Addition.

⁶⁴⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §258 Addition.

⁶⁴⁹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §§327 Addition, 328; Hegel, *Natural Law*, 93.

⁶⁵⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §144.

⁶⁵¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §145 Addition.

⁶⁵² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §150 Remark.

⁶⁵³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §131.

⁶⁵⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §319 Remark.

⁶⁵⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §338 Addition.

the *Philosophy of Right* that acknowledge the importance of citizens' freedom to engage in public discourse critical of social institutions."⁶⁵⁶ Also, as a proponent of individual freedom Hegel remarks that "[t]o enter the state of marriage is ... an ethical duty."⁶⁵⁷

The presence of such remarks in the *Philosophy of Right* does by no means indicate that Hegel was solely a champion of objective freedom, disregarding entirely the rights of individual freedom. Rather, "whenever there is a conflict between the rights of subjectivity and objectivity, Hegel unhesitatingly and emphatically gives clear priority to the right of objectivity."⁶⁵⁸ This criticism might be circumvented by (rightly) indicating that the rational, freedom-promoting, and ethical society of the *Philosophy of Right* has no truck with existing reality, which is always destined to possess non-rational elements, and hence it provides us with a horizon, yet never with a realisable goal.⁶⁵⁹ Even if this were to be admitted, it would run contrary to the general aim of Hegelian philosophy, which consists in the *concretisation, realisation* of the (originally abstract) idea of freedom.

This insistence on the necessity of heeding the *real* conditions of humanity is shared both by Rousseau (See Section 5.3) and Hegel. Yet, as our discussion shows, both seem to miss their stated aims. It is for this reason that the investigation of human freedom from the perspective of Nietzsche is in order. Although in the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel impressively undertakes to integrate subjective and objective freedom in a systematic and painstaking manner, one should never forget that this organic structure is operable only under ideal conditions. Accordingly, the critical question "[w]hat if the individual, through his critical reflection, does not endorse the laws, customs and morality of the state?"⁶⁶⁰ remains tellingly unanswerable. For Hegel, the modern individual must completely conform to the socio-political norms of its own society, because, as far as his work is concerned, it is

⁶⁵⁶ Neuhouser, "Hegel's Social Philosophy," 227.

⁶⁵⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §162 Remark.

⁶⁵⁸ Beiser, *Hegel*, 238.

⁶⁵⁹ Neuhouser, "The Idea of a Hegelian 'Science' of Society," 294.

⁶⁶⁰ Beiser, *Hegel*, 236.

already rational, and thus promotes human freedom. However, this answer leaves open the problem of existent, yet non-rational, oppressive social structures, or states. At this juncture, Nietzsche's oeuvre seems to provide us with a novel insight into this problem. As we will see in the following chapters, although Nietzsche does not seek to bring about the harmonious coincidence of objective and subjective freedom, his entire philosophy never loses sight of the material, bodily, and mostly bloody, history of humanity, and of the significance of individuality.



CHAPTER 6

NIETZSCHE'S RE-EVALUATION OF THE MASTER AND THE SLAVE

6.1. The Life of the Wanderer, the Radicality of His Thought

The figure, and the philosophy, of Nietzsche in modern continental thought strikes one in at least two respects: i) Like Rousseau, he was not a philosopher by profession, and led a non-academic, nomadic life. ii) Taken in general, his thought does not deal with the particularities of epistemology, morality, or political philosophy, for he dismissed the entirety of European philosophical tradition and called for a radical break with it.

As for the first point, one of his latest works, *Ecce Homo*,⁶⁶¹ gives us concrete evidence. In this quasi-autobiographical work, Nietzsche writes that his father passed away very early (which might explain the psychological reason behind his great fascination with Wagner in his early years); he was appointed as a professor of classical philology at Basel in 1868 when he was only 24 years old; fed up with what he calls “scholarly junk,”⁶⁶² he resigned from this post almost ten years later in 1879.⁶⁶³ The brevity of his academic career notwithstanding, his education in the Classics might be said to have left an indelible mark on his thought. For instance, he holds that a few literary works of Greco-Roman world is worth more than “half of a

⁶⁶¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols*, trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁶⁶² Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, ‘HAH,’ §3.

⁶⁶³ For Nietzsche’s remarks on his own academic career, cf. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, ‘Wise,’ §1; ‘Clever,’ §9; ‘HAH,’ 3.

[modern European] nation's literature."⁶⁶⁴ The art of writing and reading practised by such prominent rhetoricians as Demosthenes and Cicero throws into sharp relief the poor quality of German style.⁶⁶⁵ He claims that his "sense of style, of epigrams as style, was roused almost immediately by contact with Sallust;"⁶⁶⁶ and that "[c]ertain languages cannot even want what Horace is able to accomplish [in Latin]."⁶⁶⁷ More importantly, he dismisses Plato as an "instinctive Semite and Anti-Hellene"⁶⁶⁸ owing to his escapist ontological dualism, with which he compares Thucydides, the first scientific historian, who was a realist through and through.⁶⁶⁹

The main reason for his resignation was his unending, excruciating, incurable, and debilitating health problems.⁶⁷⁰ He was suffering from stomach pain, eye-aches and poor eyesight, weakness of gastric system, migraine headaches, wracking vomiting to name but a few.⁶⁷¹ To alleviate his physiological problems he embarked on leading a nomadic life in the southern Europe, to avail himself of the sunny climate of the Mediterranean. That he had to take utmost care of his health for the rest of his life was arguably the reason that in his philosophy the body plays a momentous role. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* he famously says that "Body am I through and through, and nothing besides; and soul is merely a word for something about the body. The body is a great reason, a manifold with one sense, a war and a

⁶⁶⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals: A Polemic*, trans. Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1998) III §22. For him, among these writers are Plutarch, Tacitus, Petronius (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1968), §§217, 175, 187).

⁶⁶⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Marion Faber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), §247.

⁶⁶⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols in The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols*, trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 'Ancients,' §1.

⁶⁶⁷ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 'Ancients,' §1, emphasis removed.

⁶⁶⁸ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §195.

⁶⁶⁹ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 'Ancients,' §2.

⁶⁷⁰ Although as not acute as his, Rousseau had a similar fate (Rousseau, *Confessions*, 306, 472).

⁶⁷¹ Nietzsche talks about some of these problems in Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 'Wise,' §1. For an account about Nietzsche's health problems, see Richard Schacht, 'Introduction' in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), xi-xii.

peace, a herd and a herdsman.”⁶⁷² The lack of this insight in modern humanity leads disastrously to the fact that the small, daily, i.e. bodily, physiologically, and psychologically, needs of human beings have been neglected in favour of the so-called great issues, e.g. metaphysical and religious disputes, or “the service of the state, the advancement of science, or the accumulation of reputation and possessions.”⁶⁷³ It is for this reason that in his semi-autobiographical work, *Ecce Homo*, he values the issues of nutrition, climate, and daily habits over the traditional questions of God, the immortality of the soul, or its redemption in a beyond.⁶⁷⁴ For instance, in another work, he points to this negligent stance of philosophical tradition by asking that “Do we know the moral effects of foods? Is there a philosophy of nutrition?”⁶⁷⁵ (As we will see in the following, the body and its feeling of pain have a central significance in Nietzsche’s understanding of human sociability.)

Throughout all his life the nomad Nietzsche dismissed all kinds of social movements and institutions as worthy of the rabble. Although he was living in the heyday of Germany in both political (the unified Germany was declared an Empire in 1871) and economic (the only rival of the *Deutsches Kaiserreich* was the British Empire) respects, he rejected this success of Bismarckian Empire, since this could lead to an excessive growth of nationalism.⁶⁷⁶ This in turn would lead to a cultural deprivation, for what is called the *Kultur-Staat* could be nothing more than an oxymoron: “All the great ages of culture have been ages of political decline.”⁶⁷⁷ The modern schooling for him was not a place of higher education, but of training hordes of young people for the civil service. Therefore, he was against the democratisation

⁶⁷² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Graham Parkes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), I “On the Despisers of the Body.” For a similar evaluation of Rousseau, cf. Rousseau, *Confessions*, 136.

⁶⁷³ Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 304.

⁶⁷⁴ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, ‘Clever,’ §1.

⁶⁷⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), §7. For a brief account of Nietzsche’s understanding of the body on the physiological level, see Didier Franck, *Nietzsche and the Shadow of God*, trans. Bettina Bergo and Philippe Farah (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2012), 145-6.

⁶⁷⁶ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, ‘Germans,’ §1.

⁶⁷⁷ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, ‘Germans,’ §4. For instance, the age of Plato and Aristotle corresponds to the downfall of Athens in both political and economic respects.

of education: “‘Higher education’ and horde – these are in contradiction from the outset. Any higher education is only for the exceptions: you have to be privileged to have the right to such a high privilege. Nothing great or beautiful could ever be common property: *pulchrum est paucorum hominum*.”⁶⁷⁸ Modern scholar is anathema to Nietzsche, the champion of higher *Bildung*, who considers them as unable to think inventively, or create new life-affirmatory values, owing to their extreme bookishness.⁶⁷⁹ In the *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche baptises these lifeless experts as ‘inverse cripples,’ (*umgekehrte Krüppel*) who are “human beings lacking in everything except one thing of which they have too much.”⁶⁸⁰ The ancient Greek ideal of *kalokagathia*, i.e. the complete development of human personality in both the intellectual and bodily sense, is a far cry from the requirement of over-specialisation of modern academy.

Moreover, he was critical of the capitalist working ethic. Incessant work for the sake of profit is the greatest enemy of *vita contemplativa*, whose most integral element is *otium*.⁶⁸¹ He reminds us of the well-known fact that in classical antiquity any Greek, or Roman, aristocrat would deem working for the sake of money as a plebeian activity.⁶⁸² Also, liberalism and democracy, far from demonstrating progress in human history, are the products of modern decadence.⁶⁸³ For Nietzsche, a healthy, well-ordered society necessarily rests on a hierarchy. For this reason, the modern movement of equal rights with a view to abolishing masters and servants in society is an untenable idea.⁶⁸⁴ Socialism is no less repugnant to the elitist Nietzsche than democracy, because its preachers teach the working class how to revenge on their

⁶⁷⁸ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, ‘Germans,’ §5.

⁶⁷⁹ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, ‘Clever,’ §8.

⁶⁸⁰ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, II ‘On Redemption.’

⁶⁸¹ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §329. Cf. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 176-7, where he compares the greedy mentality of Protestant Europe with the cosiness of the Mediterranean countries of Europe.

⁶⁸² Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §58.

⁶⁸³ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, ‘Skirmishes,’ §§38, 39.

⁶⁸⁴ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §377.

bosses.⁶⁸⁵ (As we will see in the following, revenge is just a manifestation of decaying life, which is not capable of opening new constructive vistas in human life.) The French Revolution too could not escape the criticism of Nietzsche, who considers the era of Ancien Régime,⁶⁸⁶ or that of Napoleon,⁶⁸⁷ as the desirable ones by comparison with the preachers of ‘*liberté, égalité, fraternité*.’⁶⁸⁸ To the extent that they both disseminate the ideas of human equality, the socialist movement is merely the reproduction of Christianity in a novel guise.⁶⁸⁹ It could be seen that what makes Nietzsche reject liberalism, democracy, socialism, or any kind of mass revolution, is that they champion the “tyranny of the least and the dumbest.”⁶⁹⁰ (As we will see in Chapter 7, what Nietzsche calls the domestication of human animal is the fleshing out of this process.) The creation of higher culture, one of the ultimate goals of humanity for Nietzsche, rests precisely on the ineliminability of the higher and lower castes, that is, those who are in possession of *otium* and those who *have to* work to continue their lives.⁶⁹¹

Nietzsche was of the view that the modern decay of old aristocratic values was the manifestation of nihilism: “Nihilism stands at the door: whence comes this uncanniest of all guests?”⁶⁹² Modern condition of humanity is marked by the fact that the ground of certainty established by the (so-called) truth of religion holds no longer true. This is the reason why he famously and rhetorically maintains that “God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!”⁶⁹³ In the wake of the death of

⁶⁸⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ* in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols* trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), §57. Also cf. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 165.

⁶⁸⁶ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §94.

⁶⁸⁷ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §362.

⁶⁸⁸ Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 169. Also cf. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 373.

⁶⁸⁹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §184.

⁶⁹⁰ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §125. Also, cf. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §§202-3.

⁶⁹¹ Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 162.

⁶⁹² Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §1. For a brief account of Nietzsche’s understanding of nihilism, see Wolfgang Müller-Lauter, *Nietzsche: His Philosophy of Contradictions and the Contradictions of His Philosophy*, trans. David J. Parent (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 41-57.

⁶⁹³ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §125.

God, modern humanity is bereft of an ultimate goal: “What does nihilism mean? That the highest values devalue themselves. The aim is lacking: ‘why?’ finds no answer.”⁶⁹⁴

Nevertheless, Nietzsche cautions that this death is not to be construed as a sudden event, taking place once and for all. God himself might be dead, but modern humanity will continue to live in its shadow.⁶⁹⁵ Therefore, the task of Nietzschean philosophy lies not only in pronouncing the fateful death of God, but more importantly, in vanquishing its shadow.⁶⁹⁶ Nietzsche detects two main heirs of the religious interpretation of life, two (up to now) invincible shadows of God: modern morality and (scientific, philosophical) truthfulness.⁶⁹⁷ Whilst the problem with the latter is that it is obsessed with certainty under the name of scientificism, or positivism,⁶⁹⁸ the former’s anti-naturalism constitutes its greatest peril for humanity.⁶⁹⁹ For this reason, one could assert that “the birth of moral man marks the beginning of Western nihilism.”⁷⁰⁰ That is why Nietzsche names himself “the first immoralist,”⁷⁰¹ or “a dynamite,”⁷⁰² who is tasked with the de-denaturalisation of (Christian) morality.⁷⁰³ (His undertaking of a genealogy of morality is part and parcel of this theme, which will be discussed in the following.)

⁶⁹⁴ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §2, emphasis removed. For a similar description, cf. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §12.

⁶⁹⁵ Haar, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 22.

⁶⁹⁶ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §108.

⁶⁹⁷ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §357. Also cf. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, III §§23-27, for the same discussion in the context of the ascetic ideal.

⁶⁹⁸ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §347.

⁶⁹⁹ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §1. Also, cf. Lawrence J. Hatab. “How Does the Ascetic Ideal Function in Nietzsche’s *Genealogy*,” *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 35/36 (2008), 111-2.

⁷⁰⁰ Wolfgang Müller-Lauter, “Nihilism as Will to Nothingness,” in *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*, ed. Christa David Acampora (New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 210.

⁷⁰¹ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, ‘Destiny,’ §2.

⁷⁰² Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, ‘Destiny,’ §1.

⁷⁰³ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §299.

Given the indomitableness and inveterateness of nihilism, and of its guises in morality and thinking, Nietzsche recognised the necessity of the revaluation of all existing values (*Umwertung aller Werte*):⁷⁰⁴ “No longer joy in certainty but in uncertainty; no longer ‘cause and effect’ but the continually creative; no longer will to preservation but to power.”⁷⁰⁵

This desirable condition is achievable only to the extent that we learn to think and live perspectively. According to Nietzsche, there is no knowledge *sub specie aeternitatis*, but “only a perspectival seeing, only a perspectival ‘knowing.’”⁷⁰⁶ Accordingly, for the Nietzschean critique there cannot be any criterion other than life itself. (Hegel’s taking of universe as a whole as the absolute rests on a similar, immanent understanding.) In this respect, one could state that Nietzsche’s point of view might be that of a physician, not of a philosopher in the traditional sense, since “[p]hysiology is to him the criterion of value, the sole arbiter of what is good or bad.”⁷⁰⁷ All statements, ways of living, types of interpreting phenomena refer to a specific kind of perspective, whose value can be determined only by reference to life: “Are they a sign of distress, of impoverishment, of the degeneration of life? Or, conversely, do they betray the fullness, the power, the will of life, its courage, its confidence, its future?”⁷⁰⁸ From such a perspective, such notions as objective, or absolute, knowledge (in Hegel’s ontology) turn out to be untenable and redundant, just because all knowledge is produced under the service of human survival and development. For this end, not the truthfulness of knowledge, but its utility for life becomes the deciding factor. This requires not the Hegelian demand of objectivity, but distorting, simplifying, and equalising phenomena.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰⁴ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §§269, 335; Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §269.

⁷⁰⁵ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §1059.

⁷⁰⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, III §12.

⁷⁰⁷ George De Huszar, “Nietzsche’s Theory of Decadence and the Transvaluation of All Values,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 6, no. 3 (1945), 259.

⁷⁰⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface, §3.

⁷⁰⁹ Michael Haar, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (New York: SUNY Press, 1996), 15.

It might be said that Nietzsche's insistence on the ineluctability of perspectivism⁷¹⁰ is a product of his ontology. Nietzsche conceptualises the entirety of (human) life as the embodiment of will to power.⁷¹¹ Accordingly, "life itself in its essence means appropriating, injuring, overpowering those who are foreign and weaker; oppression, harshness, forcing one's own forms on others, incorporation, and at the very least, at the very mildest, exploitation."⁷¹² For Nietzsche, the fundamental characteristic of the will to power is that it is motivated by the activity itself, not the (temporary) achievement of a specific goal in this process.⁷¹³ Hence, one could say that "power is not a means to anything beyond itself. ... [W]e cannot do anything *but* will to power."⁷¹⁴

One⁷¹⁵ of the most common misunderstandings of this doctrine has been that by laying such an emphasis on the will to *power*, Nietzsche in point of fact glorified those who were after worldly – political, economic, etc. – power.⁷¹⁶ (And, preposterously, it has been seen as paving the way for the catastrophe of the *Drittes Reich*.) Yet, Nietzsche himself dismisses such a reading as untenable, regarding the so-called masters of modern capitalist society as "superfluous creatures."⁷¹⁷ For him, the will to power refers to the unceasing competition between the different

⁷¹⁰ Hatab. "How Does the Ascetic Ideal Function in Nietzsche's *Genealogy*," 113.

⁷¹¹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §254. On a metaphysical level, this doctrine of Nietzsche stipulates that not substances, subjects, or things, but the relation between them is the fundamental element of life (Alan D. Schrift, "Nietzsche, Deleuze, and the Genealogical Critique of Psychoanalysis: Between Church and State," in *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*, ed. Christa David Acampora (New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 247.)

⁷¹² Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §259.

⁷¹³ Katsafanas, "Philosophical Psychology as a Basis for Ethics," 308.

⁷¹⁴ Katsafanas, "Philosophical Psychology as a Basis for Ethics," 310.

⁷¹⁵ Another common misunderstanding is that one could conceptualise not the will to power, but the will as such. This was the mistake of Nietzsche's great teacher, Schopenhauer. For its criticism, see Müller-Lauter, "Nihilism as Will to Nothingness," 213.

⁷¹⁶ Daniel W. Conway, "The Birth of the State," in *Nietzsche, Power and Politics: Rethinking Nietzsche's Legacy for Political Thought*, ed. Herman W. Siemens and Vasti Roodt (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 38.

⁷¹⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I 'On the New Idol.' Also, it should be pointed out that "the German word *Macht* has a broad meaning, while the English word 'power' implies brute force and domination" (De Huszar, "Nietzsche's Theory of Decadence and the Transvaluation of All Values," 259).

interpretations, or perspectives, of life.⁷¹⁸ Furthermore, he emphasises that this process of overpowering and being defeated is not terminable,⁷¹⁹ and that in the absence of resistances it cannot manifest itself.⁷²⁰ It might also be pointed out that the perspectivism of the will to power de-absolutises the central value of modern subjectivity, replacing it with an impersonal understanding of life. This constitutes the subject matter of the so-called paralogism, which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

In brief, Nietzsche's philosophy rests on the insight that the loss of 'absolute' table of values is the principal reason behind the decadence of modernity, or nihilism. However, the death of God might herald a new era, in which we could realise that life is comprised of decaying and healthy interpretations of life which vie for ascendancy.

It was one of the most conspicuous achievements of Nietzsche's philosophy that he recognised morality, the most powerful element of human life,⁷²¹ as the shadow of God, and thus attempted to carry out its genealogy, to demonstrate the (detrimental) impact it has on our lives. As we will see in the following, Nietzsche's understanding of human freedom and of the role of society in it is connected with his critique of morality.

6.2. The Pedigree of a Famous Lie

In one of his earlier works Nietzsche states that "[m]any ideas have entered the world as errors and fantasies but have become truths, because men have afterwards foisted upon them a substratum of reality."⁷²² For Nietzsche, our values of good and evil, or bad, constitutes the most conspicuous instance of this process. In Nietzschean philosophy, morality is considered as the most fundamental, vital, and seminal

⁷¹⁸ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §556. To be sure, this is just one way of reading the will to power.

⁷¹⁹ Paul Patton, "Politics and the Concept of Power in Hobbes and Nietzsche," ed. Paul Patton, *Nietzsche, Feminism and Political Theory* (London, New York: Routledge, 2002), 152.

⁷²⁰ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §656.

⁷²¹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I 'On the Thousand Goals and One.'

⁷²² Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 260.

element of human life. Yet, for him, it was never subjected to a critique,⁷²³ just because the value of morality has been regarded “as given, as a fact, as beyond all calling-into-question.”⁷²⁴ The ontology of the will to power stipulates that moral values refer nothing more than to a way of interpreting human life.⁷²⁵ As is the case in all interpretations, the moral interpretation too is the product of a certain physiological condition of humanity.⁷²⁶ Therefore, what modernity lacks is not a discussion of the values of good and evil, which has been one of the primary tasks of modern philosophy. Rather, we are in need of an investigation into the *value* of the value of morality.⁷²⁷ In other words, in the *Genealogy* Nietzsche seeks to remind ourselves of the unpleasant, and hence repressed and forgotten, truths about modern culture.⁷²⁸

This task requires asking whether morality is “a sign of distress, of impoverishment, of the degeneration of life? Or, conversely, do they betray the fullness, the power, the will of life, its courage, its confidence, its future?”⁷²⁹ I suggest that this rhetorical question of Nietzsche should not be taken at face value, because it provides us with (what can be called) the Nietzschean criterion for interpreting phenomena. Ascertaining that would show us that the trenchant critic of modern nihilism himself was not a nihilist, but had a noble table of values securing the future of humanity. The most important statement of it can be found in the *Anti-Christ*, where he openly states that

What is good? – Everything that enhances people’s feeling of power, will to power, power itself.
What is bad? – Everything stemming from weakness.

⁷²³ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §345.

⁷²⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface §6.

⁷²⁵ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §254.

⁷²⁶ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §254.

⁷²⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface §3. Also, cf. Alexander Nehamas, “The Genealogy of Genealogy: Interpretation in Nietzsche’s Second *Untimely Meditation* and in *On the Genealogy of Morals*,” in *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*, ed. Christa David Acampora (New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 58-9.

⁷²⁸ Keith Ansell Pearson, “A ‘Dionysian Drama on the ‘Fate of the Soul’: An Introduction to Reading *On the Genealogy of Morality*,” in *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*, ed. Christa David Acampora (New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 22-3.

⁷²⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface §3.

What is happiness? – The feeling that power is growing, that some resistance has been overcome. Not contentedness, but more power; not peace, but war; not virtue, but prowess.⁷³⁰

Thus, it should never be lost sight of the fact that, given that in Nietzsche's philosophy the sole 'objective' criterion is the "quantum of enhanced and organised power,"⁷³¹ the investigation into the origin of morality is to be undertaken only from this standpoint. Such a critique is never to be regarded as providing the last word on the subject. That is why in the *Genealogy* he repeatedly states that he only puts forward a hypothesis concerning the origin of morality.⁷³² Nevertheless, Nietzsche was well aware that he adopted an unconventional approach to the theme. A genealogy in the proper sense exceeds the traditional boundaries of philosophy, requiring the disciplines of philology, history, psychology, and physiology.⁷³³ As stated in Section 6.1, Nietzsche's short career as a philologist as well as his life-long preoccupation with health problems might be said to be providing to him a fertile soil for this investigation.

Another radicality of Nietzsche's critique is that it is carried out not for the sake of itself. In this sense, his work is far from an academic treatise. Nietzsche, who retired early from professorship, was in his entire lifetime a sceptic of the value of academic activities: "Beware of the scholars! They hate you: for they are unfruitful! They have cold and dried-up eyes; before them every bird lies defeathered."⁷³⁴ By this rhetorical statement Nietzsche means that modern scholars are so much engrossed in passively reading and discussing the books of other people that in the end they become incapable of thinking themselves.⁷³⁵ However, Nietzsche suggests

⁷³⁰ Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ*, §2, italics removed. Also, cf. Paul Katsafanas, "Philosophical Psychology as a Basis for Ethics," *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 44, no. 2 (2013), 299-300; Richard Schacht, *Nietzsche* (London, New York: Routledge, 2002), 364-5.

⁷³¹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §674; Aurelia Armstrong, "The Passions, Power, and Practical Philosophy: Spinoza and Nietzsche Contra the Stoics," *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 44, no. 1 (2013), 20.

⁷³² Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface §4; II §16; III §15.

⁷³³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface §3; I §17.

⁷³⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, IV 'On the Superior Human' §9. Also see Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, II 'On the Scholars.'

⁷³⁵ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 'Clever,' §8.

that what is required is not writing another conceptual book on morality, but overcoming this age-old illusion by means of a genealogy, which would demonstrate its inherent perilousness for humanity.⁷³⁶

Nietzsche's critique of morality is worked out on two levels. On the first one, two interpretations of life are brought under scrutiny (which is the subject matter of the following section). In human history the eternal clash between them has been unavoidable, since they originate from two fundamentally opposing conditions of life, and, for this reason, seek to eliminate each other. On the second, Nietzsche carries out a critique of sociability, which is regarded as the main inhibitor of individual freedom. This process indicates that in modernity the original confrontation between these two types of morality has given way to the predominance of the nihilist one. (This second theme is the subject matter of Chapter 7.)

6.3. Bad or Evil?

Nietzschean genealogy rests on the insight that in human history two fundamentally opposing points of view about life exist: "master moralities [*Herren-Moral*] and slave moralities [*Sklaven-Moral*]." ⁷³⁷ It is true that the *locus classicus* of this theme is the first treatise of the *Genealogy*. Yet, before delving into it, it should be pointed out that in this work Nietzsche's treatment of the issue might suggest that these two opposing views are at work without having any influence on each other. It is in his previous work, the *Beyond Good and Evil*, that Nietzsche cautions that they are in our time invariably intermingled with each other. Accordingly, in the case of one individual, or a specific society, they are supposed to be operating concurrently.⁷³⁸

⁷³⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface §7. For a critical assesment of the so-called genealogical method, see Tom Angier, "On the Genealogy of Nietzsche's Values," in *Nietzsche as Political Philosopher*, ed. Manuel Knoll and Barry Stocker (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), 405-416. Here Angier argues that this method seems to dismiss the insight that the current value of a phenomenon cannot be determined by its narrative of emergence.

⁷³⁷ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §260.

⁷³⁸ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §260.

Also, it should be noted that the most fundamental difference between Nietzsche's treatment of the master and slave moralities and that of Hegel is that the latter emphasises its transience, the lack of durability, in the development of consciousness (See Section 4.5), whilst the former draws attention to its everlasting centrality and inherence in our lives. In this regard, Nietzsche's view might be taken as asserting that although the historical institution of lordship and slavery belongs to a bygone era, in terms of mentality, or way of living, these two standpoints still exist.

Nietzsche calls the masterly type of evaluation, or its holders, under different names, such as "the knightly-aristocratic value judgments,"⁷³⁹ the noble,⁷⁴⁰ or the blond beast.⁷⁴¹ This diversity of epithets should not distract us from the fact that by examining, and, more importantly, reminding ourselves of its almost forgotten value in modernity, he declared war on the modern notion of equality, or democracy. As we saw in Section 6.1, almost the entirety of Nietzschean corpus is glutted with negative remarks on democracy. The view of Nietzsche was that in modernity we stand in need of an aristocratic way of thinking, feeling, or living, against the levelling out of democratic movements of his time. To understand the radicality and urgency of his demand, it should be brought to mind that he was living in the heyday of popular movements. At the end of the day, the Revolutions of 1848 proved to be unsuccessful in the Continent, yet it paved the way for the strengthening of liberalism, socialism, and democratic movements. (We should never forget that, until the collapse of the Weimar Republic in 1933, the possibility of the triumph of communism was an ever-present fact for the German-speaking people.)

In the second place, Nietzsche's re-evaluation of the noble might be interpreted as coming to grips with philosophical tradition. As we saw in the previous chapters, both Hegel and Rousseau emphasise the role of the noble in human history. Nevertheless, by citing the central importance of sociability, or communal values, which work against the notion of individualism, they disregard it as inimical to the realisation of concrete freedom. As we will see in the following,

⁷³⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §7.

⁷⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §2.

⁷⁴¹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §11.

and in the next chapter, Nietzsche was thoroughly at odds with this view. Also, comprehending the reason why Nietzsche lays so much emphasis on the noble could enable us to see the main deficiency of modernity.

We saw in Section 4.5 that although the (Hegelian) master was the winning party in its bloodstained encounter with the (Hegelian) slave, the slave proved to be more adequate for attaining a more comprehending stage, and thus secured the development of self-consciousness. The upside of the servile type of consciousness was that it not only lived through the transformatory experience of death, but also learned to overcome the immediacy of its natural, biological life. Even though there is no reference to Hegel in the pertinent passages of the *Genealogy*, one might read Nietzsche's understanding of the masterly type of evaluation as a reinterpretation of the view of Hegel,⁷⁴² or better, as part and parcel of his project of the *Umwertung aller Werte*. Nietzsche praises the master for its bodily strength:

The knightly-aristocratic value judgments have as their presupposition a powerful *physicality*, a blossoming, rich, even overflowing *health*, together with that which is required for its preservation: war adventure, the hunt, dance, athletic contests, and in general everything which includes strong, free, cheerful-hearted *activity*.⁷⁴³

This designation of the master meets the criterion of the genuine good for Nietzsche, which we saw in the previous section. In the *Zarathustra* too Nietzsche ascertains the long-forgotten value of good as embodied by the strong: "What is good? To be brave is good. It is the good war that hallows every cause."⁷⁴⁴

Furthermore, this strong, healthy, vigorous physicality of the master is immune from any kind of "calculating prudence [*berechnende Klugheit*]." ⁷⁴⁵ Inasmuch as the master feels itself strong, capable of overcoming obstacles in the material world, it sees regarding things from the standpoint of utility as beneath itself. It should be emphasised that this is not a lack on the part of the master. In

⁷⁴² Such a suggestion should not deceive us into thinking that Nietzsche had a satisfactory understanding of Hegel's philosophy. Generally speaking, he tends to mistake Hegel for Hegelianism, a vulgar interpretation of the former (Daniel Breazeale, "The Hegel-Nietzsche Problem," *Nietzsche-Studien* 4, no. 1 (December 1975): 149-50, 158-9).

⁷⁴³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §7, emphasis added.

⁷⁴⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, IV 'Conversation With the Kings' §2.

⁷⁴⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §2.

other words, that the physically strong master is far from having cleverness (*Klugheit*) represents not a deficiency for it, but, to the contrary, an overwhelming superiority. (We will see in Chapter 7 that according to Nietzsche having to live on the guidance of reason represents a downfall for humanity, not the accomplishment of the progress of history.)

Considering that the master morality rests on a healthy physicality free from any assessment of utility, its table of values, or its values of good and bad, has a radically different character than the slave morality. Contrary to the modern understanding of morality, which generally endorses an “anti-egoistic, universalist, and egalitarian morality”⁷⁴⁶, aristocratic morality had a completely egoistic, self-centred, and hierarchical character. In Nietzsche’s philosophy as a whole, the neglected value of egoism, its archaic positive assessment, is a recurrent theme: “‘Selflessness’ has no value in heaven or on earth; all great problems demand great love, and only strong, round, secure minds who have a firm grip on themselves are capable of that.”⁷⁴⁷

Accordingly, the noble used to live according to (what Nietzsche calls) a “pathos of distance,”⁷⁴⁸ which enabled them to value those who are like themselves as good. It is important to bear in mind that for the noble the assessment of bad ensues only after its establishment of good. Behind this mode of evaluation lies the inherent strength of the noble, who is in a sense under the spell of its sure guide of unconscious drives:

[T]he noble manner of evaluation [...] acts and grows *spontaneously*, it seeks out its opposite only in order to say ‘yes’ to itself still more gratefully and more jubilantly – its negative concept ‘low’ ‘common’ ‘bad’ is only an *after-birth*, a pale contrast-image in relation to its positive basic concept, saturated through and through with life and passion: ‘we noble ones, we good ones, we beautiful ones, we happy ones!’⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁶ Robert B. Pippin, “Agent and Deed in Nietzsche’s Genealogy of Morals,” in *A Companion to Nietzsche*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 371.

⁷⁴⁷ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §345. Also, cf. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §328. Also, Nietzsche regards the negligence of the majority of humankind as regards the cultivation of a sound ego as a pitiable condition (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), §105).

⁷⁴⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §2.

⁷⁴⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §10, emphasis added.

In brief, the bad of aristocratic evaluation bears no cardinal significance, namely it is not a guiding principle for it. Nietzsche contrasts the *bad* of the noble with the *evil* of the weak, which constitutes, not a secondarily important element of its morality, but “the original, the beginning, the true deed in the conception of slave morality.”⁷⁵⁰ The main reason behind this reversal of evaluation on the part of the servile evaluation is that it is not capable of adopting an affirmatory perspective in, and of, life. Far from the spontaneous powerfulness of the noble, the slave leads a powerless, oppressed life, “festered with poisonous and hostile feelings.”⁷⁵¹ Hence, in lieu of starting off its evaluation with a yes-saying to itself, its original act becomes the negation of the other, namely the noble. In short, the servile type of evaluation is not in possession of action in the proper sense, which requires a genuine physicality. Yet, its action is destined to be a *reaction*, namely due to its powerlessness, it can only react to external phenomena by dint of a no-saying.⁷⁵²

Nevertheless, Nietzsche cautions that this helplessness of the weak on the level of material world is not to be confused with barrenness on the level of ideas. Realising that the weak cannot outdo the noble in terms of action, it conspires to gain the upper hand “only through an imaginary revenge.”⁷⁵³ Nietzsche designates this weakness of the slave as the main source of its *ressentiment*⁷⁵⁴, which seeks to overcome the noble through imposing its table of values. The *ressentiment*-laden evaluation of the weak creates its values of ‘evil and good,’ in opposition to the ‘good and bad’ of the aristocratic type of evaluation:

It was the Jews [i.e. the sick, or the weak] who in opposition to the aristocratic value equation (good = noble = powerful = beautiful = happy = beloved of God) dared its inversion, with fear-inspiring consistency, and held it fast with teeth of the most unfathomable hate (the hate of powerlessness), namely: ‘the miserable alone are the good, the poor, powerless, lowly alone are the good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly

⁷⁵⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §11, emphasis removed.

⁷⁵¹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §10.

⁷⁵² Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §10.

⁷⁵³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §10.

⁷⁵⁴ Nietzsche’s deliberate italicisation of the term *ressentiment* serves to distinguish it from revenge in ordinary sense. Whereas the latter refers to avenge against specific acts, the former to “the temporal-historical character of human existence as such, the revenge against *time* and all ‘it was’ (Christa Davis Acampora, *Contesting Nietzsche* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 137).

are also the only pious, the only blessed in God, for them alone is there blessedness, – whereas you, you noble and powerful ones, you are in all eternity the evil, the cruel, the insatiable, the godless, you will eternally be the wretched, accursed, and damned’!⁷⁵⁵

This reversal of values, which heralds the beginning of the downfall of aristocratic morality, brings into play the vital importance of Nietzsche’s notion of perspectivism (which was discussed in Section 6.1 in connection with the will to power). In addition to the opposing values of bad and evil, one should heed the co-existence of two distinct sorts of good. Also, for the noble, the evil of the weak cannot be considered as a serious objection to its own way of living: “‘The human is evil’ [...] For evil is the human’s best strength. ‘The human being must become better and more evil’ – thus I teach.”⁷⁵⁶ (It is to be borne in mind that the term evil is non-existent in the vocabulary of the noble.)

Nietzsche calls this sickly re-evaluation of values as “an act of spiritual revenge,”⁷⁵⁷ or “[t]he slave revolt in morality.”⁷⁵⁸ The most conspicuous element of slave morality is its *ressentiment* stemming from the chronic sickness of actionlessness, or powerlessness. According to Nietzsche, the slave is both physiologically and psychologically sick: “to desire to revenge without possessing the strength and courage to carry revenge means to carry about a chronic illness, a poisoning of body and soul.”⁷⁵⁹

As the block quote above indicates, Nietzsche sees the Judeo-Christian civilisation as the instigator of this sickly reversal. Accordingly, the slave revolt in morality commences with what Nietzsche calls the Jewish hate, and it was inherited by the Jesus of Nazareth, as the so-called harbinger of a new love under the heading of glad tidings.⁷⁶⁰ The imaginary revenge of the Judeo-Christian worldview is

⁷⁵⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §7.

⁷⁵⁶ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, IV ‘On the Superior Human’ §5.

⁷⁵⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §7, emphasis removed.

⁷⁵⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §10.

⁷⁵⁹ Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 42.

⁷⁶⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §7, 8. Cf. Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ*, §24, where Nietzsche remarks that Christianity was not to be considered as disseminating a different, even opposing, understanding of life from Jewish religion. Rather, the former was merely the logical conclusion of the latter.

materialised through the establishment of the idea of an afterlife. So that, this ephemeral life is interpreted as nothing more than a bridge to the eternal, genuine one.⁷⁶¹ Nietzsche formulates this sickly yet seminal invention of slave morality as the embodiment of “life against life.”⁷⁶² As a matter of fact, the monotheistic lie of an afterlife, which seeks to overcome this material world, is simply another manifestation of this worldly life, albeit a pernicious one.

The principal reason behind Nietzsche’s waging war on these monotheistic religions, (and also on its shadows in modernity (See Section 6.1)) is that they propagate what is sick, base, and mean, as the touchstone for goodness.⁷⁶³ That is why Nietzsche sees Christianity as a spiritual alcoholism of Europe to the extent that it has exterminated the healthy instincts of life.⁷⁶⁴ From a Nietzschean standpoint, the decline of religions in modernity cannot put an end to this dominance of nihilism, since the shadow of God still continues to have a detrimental impact on our lives in the names of morality, science, and philosophy (See Section 6.1).

As stated earlier, the main task of genealogy consists in overcoming this sick morality. In other words, the project of the re-evaluation of all values should be construed as battling against the revaluation of old, aristocratic values undertaken by the slave morality. For Nietzsche the philologist, we should learn to adopt and adapt the pagan (i.e. Hellenic, Hellenistic as well as Roman) way of evaluation, which was considerably immune from this sick, poisonous morality.⁷⁶⁵ The present condition of humankind is mired in nihilism, which denigrates life under the name of science and philosophy. That is why we are in need of a novel way of interpreting life, whose most concrete example is to be found in the pagan world, in the way of living not

⁷⁶¹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, III §11.

⁷⁶² Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, III §13, emphasis removed.

⁷⁶³ Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ*, §5. In a similar fashion, Rousseau stated that “All wickedness comes from weakness. The child is wicked only because he is weak. Make him strong; he will be good” (Rousseau, *Emile*, 67).

⁷⁶⁴ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §147, where he says “Liquor and Christianity, the narcotics of Europe.”

⁷⁶⁵ Cf. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §195, where he gives the example of such a perspective in Rome.

contaminated by the monotheistic slanderers of life: “[A] pagan is anyone who says yes to life, who sees ‘god’ as the word for the great yes to all things.”⁷⁶⁶

What renders the issue of master against slave morality so vital in Nietzsche’s philosophy is its interminableness in human history:

The two opposed values ‘good and bad,’ ‘good and evil,’ have fought a terrible millennia-long battle on earth; and as certainly as the second value has had the upper hand for a long time, even so there is still no shortage of places where the battle goes on, undecided. One could even say that it has in the meantime been borne up ever higher and precisely thereby become ever deeper, ever more spiritual: so that today there is perhaps no more decisive mark of the ‘higher nature,’ of the more spiritual nature, than to be conflicted in that sense and still a real battleground for those opposites. The symbol of this battle, written in a script that has so far remained legible across all of human history, is ‘Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome.’⁷⁶⁷

Nietzsche’s characterisation of this battle as the confrontation between Rome and Judea might sound anachronic, or even anti-Semitic, in our age. What Nietzsche emphasises here is that any evaluation of life, or any sort of morality, hinges necessarily either on an individualistic or communalistic basis. From this perspective, the last centuries of Roman Republic as well as the first centuries of Roman Empire, Renaissance culture (considered as the most important revival of the classical ideal), and the age of Napoleon, are considered as the embodiment of the former, whereas the movement of Reformation, and the French Revolution, as of the latter.⁷⁶⁸ In other words, the battle is between the aristocratic morality, which unconditionally and individually says yes to life in its fullness of healthy life, and the slave morality, whose sole concern is the defamation of earthly life in its sick, nihilist condition.

As we will see in the next chapter, Nietzsche’s understanding of human freedom is entirely individualistic. In this respect, he is at total variance with (the later) Rousseau and Hegel, who (as we saw in previous chapters) consider the freedom of individual as dependent on the socio-political structure. Nevertheless, Nietzsche rejects the tenability of such an idea, for the establishment and development of (in Hegel’s parlance) objective and subjective freedom is not

⁷⁶⁶ Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ*, §55.

⁷⁶⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §16, italics removed.

⁷⁶⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §16.

possible at the same time: “*The welfare of the majority and the welfare of the few* are opposing viewpoints.”⁷⁶⁹ From this standpoint, a congruence (in Hegel’s case) between the rights of Abstract Right, as well as those of Morality, and of Ethical Life, or (in Rousseau’s case) between the general will and individual freedom, is unfathomable.

Also, it should be heeded that Nietzsche endorses not the ascendancy of the welfare of *all* individuals. Rather, his concern is only with those select individuals, who are in possession of realising the higher ends of humanity. In this sense, one should never interpret Nietzsche’s political philosophy as laying the groundwork of a well-ordered, freedom-enhancing society. The figure of Zarathustra, the protagonist of Nietzsche’s masterpiece, might be seen as the most salient example of this facet of Nietzsche’s thought. Zarathustra does never mince his words as regards the essential worthlessness of the multitude: “[B]eware of the good [of the slave morality] and the righteous! They like to crucify those who invent their own virtue for themselves – they hate the solitary;”⁷⁷⁰ “Life is a fount of pleasure; but where the rabble drinks too, there all wells are poisoned. [...] what? is the rabble, too, needed for life?”⁷⁷¹

As we will be discussing in the next chapter, the second treatise of the *Genealogy* provides us with an account of the process of the socialisation of human being. Considering Nietzsche’s understanding of human history, this process points to the ascendancy of the principle of the privilege of the majority to the detriment of that of the few. Taken in this sense, the present condition of humanity might be seen as in a state of deadlock. As we will see, Nietzsche seems to give us hardly sufficient way out of this situation. That is why, as I suggest, Nietzsche’s individualistic and elitist understanding of human freedom would make sense, and retain its actuality, only within the framework provided by Hegel and the later Rousseau, who emphasise the sociable character of individual. So that we will be able to see the inherent interdependence between these two views.

⁷⁶⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §17.

⁷⁷⁰ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I ‘On the Way of the Creator.’

⁷⁷¹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, II ‘On the Rabble.’

CHAPTER 7

NIETZSCHE'S INTERPRETATION OF SOCIABILITY AS SICKNESS

7.1. Memory as the Basis of Sociability

In the second treatise of the *Genealogy* Nietzsche provides us with his insight into the process of the socialisation of (modern) human being. He maintains that the metamorphosis of the primordially *forgetful* human animal into an *promise-keeping* one⁷⁷² designates the genuine issue of humanity:

To breed an animal that *is permitted to promise* – isn't this precisely the paradoxical task nature has set for itself with regard to man? isn't this the true problem of man?... That this problem has been solved to a high degree must appear all the more amazing to one who can fully appreciate the force working in opposition, that of *forgetfulness*.⁷⁷³

Here, one must pay heed to Nietzsche's careful formulation of the issue. In the first place, the breeding of the human being constitutes *the* problem for us, because this process has still been taking place.⁷⁷⁴ For this reason, it could be stated that the present condition of humanity represents neither the old days of forgetfulness nor the acquirement of a fully-fledged capacity of promise-keeping (hence, Nietzsche's contention that the problem of humanity "has been solved to a high degree.").

In the second place, Nietzsche's counterposing the faculty of forgetfulness (*Vergesslichkeit*) against that of promise-keeping, or memory (*Gedächtnis*), ought to

⁷⁷² Nietzsche formulates this process also as the breeding of the 'sovereign individual'. For two lines of reading this problematic figure in Nietzsche's philosophy, see Christa Davis Acampora, "On Sovereignty and Overhumanity: Why It Matters How We Read Nietzsche's *Genealogy* II:2," *International Studies in Philosophy* 36, no. 3 (2004), 127-145; Lawrence J. Hatab, *A Nietzschean Defense of Democracy* (Illinois: Open Court, 1995), 37-8.

⁷⁷³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §1.

⁷⁷⁴ Lawrence J. Hatab, *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 69.

be interpreted against the backdrop of metaphysical tradition.⁷⁷⁵ The most conspicuous instance of it is that in the *Phenomenology* Hegel describes the Absolute Knowing, the ultimate stage of the phenomenological journey of consciousness, as the “recollection (*Erinnerung*)”⁷⁷⁶ of the previous deficient modes of consciousness. Another example is that the ancient Greeks would use the word *aletheia* to mean truth. Etymologically, it derives from the lack of (the prefix a-) forgetfulness (*lethe*⁷⁷⁷).

Given the prejudice of tradition against the role of forgetfulness, Nietzsche asserts that “[f]orgetfulness is no mere *vis inertiae* as the superficial believe; rather, it is an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of suppression.”⁷⁷⁸ His designation of forgetfulness as *active* rather than passive refers to his interpretation that it is by no means to be construed as the lack of remembering, or memory, but a faculty of letting-go.⁷⁷⁹ As we will see in the following, this novel evaluation of forgetfulness is part and parcel of Nietzsche’s critique of the becoming-conscious of modern human in an excessive manner. In the absence of the positive faculty, power, or force, of forgetfulness, any way of healthy living is impossible. The fundamental role of it is that it functions as a doorkeeper, as a selective barrier against the enormous inundation of consciousness. In a similar way, it does not let consciousness be unsettled by the inner workings of subconsciousness and subservient organs. A human being without this faculty could be called a dyspeptic, lacking the capacity for ‘digestion.’ Nietzsche coins the word inanimation (*Einverseelung*) to refer to the psychic absorption, likening it to the process of physical absorption, namely incorporation (*Einverleibung*). The lack of

⁷⁷⁵ Peter Bornedal, *The Surface and the Abyss: Nietzsche as Philosopher of Mind and Knowledge* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 380; Hatab, *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morality*, 84.

⁷⁷⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §808.

⁷⁷⁷ In Hellenic mythology, Lethe, the river of forgetfulness, is one of the five rivers of the underworld, all having negative denotations.

⁷⁷⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §1. Despite this insistence on the part of Nietzsche, some of his interpreters tend to commit this mistake, cf. Rosalyn Diprose, “Nietzsche and the Pathos of Distance,” in *Nietzsche, Feminism and Political Theory*, ed. Paul Patton (London, New York: Routledge, 2002), 4.

⁷⁷⁹ Acampora, *Contesting Nietzsche*, 131; Hatab, *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morality*, 70.

Einverseelung for the human means not being able “to live in the presence of the present, but only a presence informed decisively by the past.”⁷⁸⁰

We have seen in Section 6.1 that according to the doctrine of the will to power, life is designated as the ever-present urge to growth. In the *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche asserts that this continual growth can be sustained only under the condition of letting some elements decline in life. Thus, the will to more, yes-saying to life, can be possible if and only if it goes together with a concomitant will to less, or yes to ignorance.⁷⁸¹ In this way he resembles this fundamental tribe of living beings to a stomach, whose health is contingent on a selectivity, not letting everything go through its door.⁷⁸² (In fact, this view of Nietzsche might be considered as a Hegelian element in his thought. By regarding the compresence of growth and decline, affirmation and negation, as a necessity for life, Nietzsche comes close to Hegel’s concept of unity-in-difference.) Based on the view that the will to power cannot realise itself in the absence of resistances to overcome, a healthy organism is invariably in need of a strong stomach, i.e. a well-functioning forgetfulness: “The strong man, mighty in the instincts of a powerful health, digests his deeds in just the same way as he digests his meals.”⁷⁸³

In a sense, one could consider Nietzsche’s forgetful human animal as representing the blissful state of the savage human of the state of nature in Rousseau’s account. What they held in common is a healthy life both on physiological and psychological levels. This similarity between them is not confined to this primordial stage alone. We have seen in Chapter 2 that this virtually impeccable stage of humanity was gradually replaced by a modern one, which is replete with hostile feelings, bloodshed, and decay in all senses. An increasingly growing element of sociability of the erstwhile solitude human animal is the most conspicuous and fundamental characteristic of this novel type. As we will see in this chapter, Nietzsche shares Rousseau’s view in this respect too. It might be said that he

⁷⁸⁰ Bornedal, *The Surface and the Abyss: Nietzsche as Philosopher of Mind and Knowledge*, 381.

⁷⁸¹ Hatab, *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morality*, 107.

⁷⁸² Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §230.

⁷⁸³ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §906.

interprets Rousseau's 'remarkable change' of humanity not as a transition from the state of nature to that of civilisation, but as the replacement of unconsciousness by consciousness, forgetfulness by remembering, individual freedom by sociability. According to him, the seminal turn of events came when "this *necessarily forgetful* animal"⁷⁸⁴ gained the capacity of memory. Memory, which operates in the opposite direction of forgetfulness, is nothing but the bedrock of modern humanity, because through it alone can the latter be rendered inoperative, and thus the most characteristic feature of modern humanity, namely stability and predictability, can be achieved.⁷⁸⁵

The principal target of this breeding programme consists in strengthening the faculty of memory.⁷⁸⁶ It is through the latter that the solipsistic, carefree, forgetful human could turn into a sociable, promise-keeping one.⁷⁸⁷ The communal norms require nothing less than "the knowability and stability of the person,"⁷⁸⁸ which is the subject matter of the education of man, i.e. turning the savage human into a civilised one. As the doctrine of will to power asserts, the human being in possession of a healthy physicality necessarily rides roughshod over the norms of society, dismissing them as encumbering its freedom of activity. Nevertheless, modernity, civilisation, or lawfulness, stipulates that one must cease to be a self-legislating actor, and obey the existing laws of one's society.⁷⁸⁹

Nietzsche is of the view that this new condition of living was so repulsive to the forgetful, solipsistic human animal that it took an arduous, long-lasting process. Breeding a *responsible* human being, that is, "*making* man to a certain degree necessary, uniform, like among like, regular, and accordingly predictable"⁷⁹⁰ is in no

⁷⁸⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §1, emphasis added.

⁷⁸⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §§1, 2.

⁷⁸⁶ Christa Davis Acampora, "On Sovereignty and Overhumanity: Why It Matters How We Read Nietzsche's *Genealogy* II:2," 129.

⁷⁸⁷ Peter Sedgwick, "Violence, Economy and Temporality. Plotting the Political Terrain of *On the Genealogy of Morality*," *Nietzsche-Studien* 34, (2005), 169.

⁷⁸⁸ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §277.

⁷⁸⁹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §279.

⁷⁹⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §2.

way to be regarded as turning it into a more enlightened, more civilised one. (In this regard Nietzsche is at variance with Hegel, who asserts that the positive contribution of *Bildung* lies in the elimination of the mere subjectivity, curbing it within the rational boundaries of objectivity.⁷⁹¹) Rather, it refers to a lengthy, tortuous process:

‘How does one make a memory for the human animal? How does one impress something onto this partly dull, partly scattered momentary understanding, this forgetfulness in the flesh, so that it remains present?’ ... As one can imagine, the answers and means used to solve this age-old problem were not exactly delicate; there is perhaps nothing more terrible and more uncanny in all of man’s prehistory than his *mnemo-technique*. ‘One burns something in so that it remains in one’s memory: only what does not cease to *give pain* remains in one’s memory” – that is a first principle from the most ancient (unfortunately also longest) psychology on earth.⁷⁹²

Here we can see that according to Nietzsche becoming sociable, responsible, and reasonable, of the human animal can be understood only by taking into consideration the cultural signification of the feeling of pain in human history.⁷⁹³ For the 21st-century reader this fact of our history might be pertaining to a long bygone era. Yet, such punitive practices as stoning, breaking on the wheel, casting stakes, quartering, boiling in oil or wine, flaying, and so forth,⁷⁹⁴ were at work for millennia in human history. In brief, the Nietzschean understanding of human history claims that the improvement of humanity, or the development of our mental faculties and sociability, was achieved by means of a tortuous process of body-writing: “how much blood and horror there is at the base of all ‘good things’!”⁷⁹⁵

At this point, it is crucial to emphasise that this insight of Nietzsche seeks to bring about a complete reversal of the metaphysical tradition,⁷⁹⁶ one of whose most important example we saw in Chapters 4 and 5 in Hegel. According to Hegel, the teleological development of consciousness, or humanity in general, represents the

⁷⁹¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §187 Remark.

⁷⁹² Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §3.

⁷⁹³ For a discussion of the terminology used in Nietzsche’s discussion of pain, see Abraham Olivier, “Nietzsche and Heidegger on Pain” in *Heidegger & Nietzsche*, ed. Babette Babich, Alfred Denker, and Holger Zaborowsk (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2012), 148.

⁷⁹⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §3.

⁷⁹⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §3.

⁷⁹⁶ Acampora, *Contesting Nietzsche*, 133.

Aufhebung of bodily, material, and biological aspects of life with a view to achieving the stage of concrete universality on a spiritual, mental, or cultural level. He regards the *geistliche* progress in the form of the Enlightenment as one of the most important instantiations of this process. Nietzsche, by contrast, argues that pain, as “the most powerful aid of mnemonics,”⁷⁹⁷ has always taken the centre stage in the process of breeding. The development of reason and sociability, or the transition from nature to *Geist* in Hegel’s philosophy, could not have been possible without the forceful branding of “five, six ‘I will nots’”⁷⁹⁸ on the memory of this forgetful, egoistic being. In sum, in contrast to Hegel, who appreciates the salutary development of *sensual* consciousness into the Spirit in the realm of religion, art, and speculative philosophy, Nietzsche holds to the ineliminability, ever-present centrality of the role of body:

Body am I through and through, and nothing besides; and soul is merely a word for something about the body.
The body is a great reason, a manifold with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a herdsman.
A tool of the body is your small reason too, my brother, which you call ‘spirit,’ a small tool and toy of your great reason.⁷⁹⁹

Apart from pointing to the forgotten centrality of the body, Nietzsche by no means considers the growth of consciousness and sociability as progress on the part of humanity à la Hegel, rather as a grave, incurable sickness that has ever befallen human beings. Having to live under the straitjacket of communal norms, without which peace and prosperity cannot be possible, resulted in the obstruction of unconsciousness of human being. Not being able to live according to its unconscious drives, the human beings “were *reduced* to thinking, inferring, calculating, connecting cause and effect, these unhappy ones, reduced to their ‘consciousness,’ to their poorest and most erring organ.”⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §3.

⁷⁹⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §3.

⁷⁹⁹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I ‘On the Despisers of the Body.’ Also, cf. Diprose, “Nietzsche and the Pathos of Distance,” 3.

⁸⁰⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §16, emphasis added. Also, cf. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §327, where Nietzsche similarly says that “[f]or most people, the intellect is an awkward, gloomy, creaking machine that is hard to start.” For a discussion of Nietzsche’s view on consciousness as an epiphenomenal faculty, see Paul Katsafanas, “Nietzsche’s Theory of Mind: Consciousness and Conceptualisation,” *European Journal of Philosophy* 13, no. 1 (2005): 1-31.

True to his contention that spirit could be nothing more than a plaything of the body, the great reason, Nietzsche maintains that what is called philosophical or conscious thinking is merely a manifestation of instinctual activity.⁸⁰¹ For what is called thinking is in point of fact carried out constantly and unconsciously through, and in, the body. In this process, consciousness, which can capture only a fraction of it, plays the role of communicating it in words, or symbols, by distorting it. The translation of unconscious, bodily activities into the realm of consciousness eradicates what is unique about it, because language consists of symbols and rules dictated and sustained by the norms of society.⁸⁰²

According to Nietzsche, allocating a central role to consciousness is beset with these problems. Firstly, the belief that consciousness constitutes the kern of mental activity is a fallacious idea, because, in point of fact, the vast majority of our intellectual life is comprised of unconsciousness activities. Secondly, consciousness by its very nature distorts, or falsifies, the phenomena with a view to producing a stable, uniform world of its own.⁸⁰³ Thirdly, consciousness is nothing more than a simplified version of unconsciousness. Therefore, strengthening the former to the detriment of the latter does not serve well to the former either.⁸⁰⁴

The obligation to live under the oppressive norms of society also brought about the overgrowth of bad conscience.⁸⁰⁵ As a result, the human being, once steeped in the non-moralised joyfulness of living according to instincts, has begun to feel ashamed of its bodily, material existence. This amounts nothing less than to “a declaration of war against the old instincts.”⁸⁰⁶ From now on, the human being internalised its instinctual life, thus rendering itself a moral battlefield. As a

⁸⁰¹ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §3.

⁸⁰² Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §354.

⁸⁰³ Acampora, *Contesting Nietzsche*, 139.

⁸⁰⁴ Katsafanas, “Nietzsche’s Theory of Mind: Consciousness and Conceptualisation,” 1-2.

⁸⁰⁵ Daniel W. Conway, “How We Became What We Are: Tracking the ‘Beasts of Prey,’” in *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*, ed. Christa David Acampora (New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 306.

⁸⁰⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §16. Also, cf. Pearson, “A ‘Dionysian Drama on the ‘Fate of the Soul’: An Introduction to Reading *On the Genealogy of Morality*,” 32.

consequence, the responsible, communal, and rational aspect of human undertook to castigate its forgetful, egoistic, and instinctual one.⁸⁰⁷ (This transformation bears strong resemblance to the ‘remarkable change of human being’ in Rousseau.)

From this perspective, the transition from the state of nature to that of civilisation (in Rousseau), or from parochial individualism to the *Sittlichkeit* (in Hegel), is to be seen as a serious mishap. For, compared with the age-old bodily capacities of human being, “[c]onsciousness is the latest development of the organic, and hence also its most unfinished and unrobust feature.”⁸⁰⁸ Therefore, Nietzsche counsels that the forfeited health of modern human being can be recovered only if its bodily and unconscious life is resuscitated again⁸⁰⁹: “Genius resides in instinct; goodness likewise. One acts perfectly only when one acts instinctively.”⁸¹⁰

Also, he likens this drastic transformation in the history of humanity to the necessary transformation from being an aquatic animal to a land one in the process of evolution. As a result, the ease with which the former would lead their life in water is forfeited once and for all. Having to live under the novel and arduous conditions of earth is similar to being reduced to the leadership of consciousness.⁸¹¹ In a sense, we could say that the transition from the state of nature to that of civilisation (of Rousseau) transforms into the forceful metamorphosis from being a water animal into a land animal. We can find a similar motif in one of his earlier works, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,”⁸¹² the second meditation of the *Untimely Meditations*. There Nietzsche depicts the cattle, which has ‘luckily’ no capacity for memory, or responsibility, free from the oppressive norms of society:

Consider the cattle, grazing as they pass you by: they do not know what is meant by yesterday or today, they leap about, eat, rest, digest, leap about again, and so from morn till night and from day to day, fettered to the moment and its pleasure or displeasure, and thus neither melancholy nor bored. This is a hard sight for man to see; for, though

⁸⁰⁷ Conway, “The Birth of the State,” 51-57.

⁸⁰⁸ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §11.

⁸⁰⁹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §439.

⁸¹⁰ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §440.

⁸¹¹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §16.

⁸¹² Friedrich Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. Daniel Breazell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

he thinks himself better than the animals because he is human, he cannot help envying them their happiness – what they have, a life neither bored nor painful, is precisely what he wants, yet he cannot have it because he refuses to be like an animal. A human being may well ask an animal: 'Why do you not speak to me of your happiness but only stand and gaze at me?' The animal would like to answer, and say: 'The reason is I always *forget* what I was going to say' – but then he *forgot* this answer too, and stayed silent: so that the human being was left wondering.⁸¹³

In sum, in Nietzsche's thought, 'forgetfulness' taking the centre stage in one's life amounts to robust health, great creativity, the affirmation of life, and, above all, overcoming the modern sickness of human being, i.e. nihilism in the wake of the death of God.

Nietzsche's dictum that 'genius resides in instinct' might be said to be laying the groundwork for his dismissal of the social contract theory in favour of the doctrine of 'might is right.' As we saw in Section 3.3, Rousseau definitively dismisses the view that, since it is the stronger and more clever party, the strong's exerting an authoritative hegemony over the weak is justifiable. Similarly, we saw in Chapter 4 that Hegel concurs with Rousseau by demonstrating that neither the bloodstained struggle for life and death nor the predatory relationship between the lord and the slave could materialise the desired condition of mutual recognition, the core element of freedom and sociability. In fact, Nietzsche's (attempt at) reversal of these two views might be seen as a return to the Rousseau of the *Second Discourse* in that both Nietzsche and the early Rousseau appreciate the solitude, egoism (i.e. the lack of sociability), and healthiness of the savage human. It is true that Nietzsche's working out of the issue is not detailed enough, contrary to Hegel's and Rousseau's accounts. Yet it points to the necessity of the lost values of individualism and physiological health, which seem to be downplayed in the *Philosophy of Right*.

The principal difference between Rousseau's and Nietzsche's savage human lies in that whereas the former is almost entirely preoccupied with self-survival, the latter includes

some pack of blond beasts of prey, [or] a race of conquerors and lords, which, organised in a warlike manner and with the power to organise, unhesitatingly lays its terrible paws on a population enormously superior in number perhaps, but still formless, still roaming about. It is in this manner, then, that the 'state' begins on earth: I think the flight of fancy that had it beginning with a 'contract' has been abandoned. Whoever can give

⁸¹³ Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," 60-61, emphasis added.

orders, whoever is 'lord' by nature, whoever steps forth violently, in deed and gesture – what does he have to do with contracts!⁸¹⁴

The 'race of conquerors' in the second treatise of the *Genealogy* might be seen as nothing else than the masterly type of the first treatise, who are, to be precise, the holders of the masterly type of evaluation. As we have seen in Section 6.3, the master, who epitomises a healthy physicality, is immune from the considerations of utility, or better, not tainted by the 'calculating prudence' of the servile mentality. This is the main reason for Nietzsche's outright dismissal of the contract theory.⁸¹⁵ As we have seen in earlier chapters, the transition from savagery to civilisation as well as recognising the necessity of the contract (in Rousseau), or the development from mere naturalness to spirituality (in Hegel), is based on the strengthening of rationality. The implementation of the social contract requires a process of deliberation. Nietzsche at this juncture cautions that such a creative, seminal act of 'signing' the contract could be possible only under duress on the part of the subjugated party, and under the sure guidance of instinctive creativity on the part of the conquerors: "With such beings [i.e. the latter] one does not reckon, they come like fate, without basis, reason, consideration, pretext... Their work is an instinctive creating of forms, impressing of forms; they are the most involuntary, unconscious artists."⁸¹⁶ One might say from a Nietzschean point of view that to the modern human, who is 'reduced' to live according to its weak guidance of consciousness and reason, this creativity of the beasts of prey sounds unfathomable.

Although, as stated above, the Rousseau of the *Social Contract* might be said to be in the same camp with Hegel, the enigmatic figure of the legislator in a sense anticipates Nietzsche's figure of the beast of prey. As we have seen in Section 3.5, the formidable task of the denaturalisation of the savage human, turning this solipsistic being into a sociable one, falls to the legislator. Accordingly, it might be said that both Nietzsche and Rousseau consider the ineluctability of a strong, clever

⁸¹⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §17.

⁸¹⁵ Patton, "Politics and the Concept of Power in Hobbes and Nietzsche," 154; Conway, "The Birth of the State," 48.

⁸¹⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §17.

figure for the commencement of sociability, since in their absence the great majority of humanity, an aimless, unorganised mass (like the aggregate in Rousseau), could not initiate this momentous action.

The origin of the state as the product of the strong might be considered as epitomising Nietzsche's insistence that "[i]n former times every smallest steps on earth was won through spiritual and bodily torments."⁸¹⁷ A look at his discussion of the social role of punishment might be said to be bringing into a sharper relief this view of Nietzsche. We have seen above that turning the forgetful human animal into a promise-keeping one is the product of a breeding programme, in which the memory of the former is made to grow through the infliction of pain on its body. In other words, it is through the use of pain that the solipsistic stance of the earlier times was sought to be eradicated in favour of a communal one.

Nietzsche maintains that this excruciating practice of humanity was at place in (what he calls) the creditor-debtor relationship.⁸¹⁸ Such an encounter between the seller and the buyer used to exist in contractual relations, which could be designated as the most primordial relationship between human beings.⁸¹⁹ In this relationship there is no room for the old days of forgetful blissfulness. If one wants to live the advantages of society, one has to keep its promises all the time. Therefore, this relationship stipulates that in the case of default by the debtor, the creditor is granted the right of inflicting pain on the body of the debtor.⁸²⁰ As G. Deleuze states, this encounter could be formulated as "[i]njury caused = pain undergone – this is the equation of punishment that determines a relationship of man to man."⁸²¹ Through the establishment of this equality, the solipsism, the egoism of the forgetful, irresponsible one is curbed. In other words, the branding of such 'I will nots' on the

⁸¹⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, III §9.

⁸¹⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §§4-8.

⁸¹⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §8.

⁸²⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §4; Schrift, "Nietzsche, Deleuze, and the Genealogical Critique of Psychoanalysis: Between Church and State," 250; Elizabeth Grosz, "Nietzsche and the Stomach for Knowledge," in *Nietzsche, Feminism and Political Theory*, ed. Paul Patton (London, New York: Routledge, 2002), 66.

⁸²¹ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 134.

consciousness of the creditor is carried out through the medium of body, to be precise, of its capacity for suffering from pain. Thus, one could say that from a Nietzschean point of view violence is the basis of civilisation and all sociable relationships.⁸²²

On the other hand, the creditor, the injured party of this relationship, “is granted a certain *feeling of satisfaction* as repayment and compensation, – the feeling of satisfaction that comes from being permitted to vent his power without a second thought on one who is powerless.”⁸²³ It could be said that whereas the unbearable feeling of pain is meted out to those who insist on clinging to the parochial egoism, the creditor is rewarded by the pleasure in making suffer, since it is the exemplary one who abides by the rules of its society. Nietzsche emphasises the age-old yet nowadays forgotten fact that the human being would take immense pleasure by seeing-, or making-suffer: “Without cruelty, no festival: thus teaches the oldest, longest part of man’s history – and in punishment too there is so much that is *festive!*”⁸²⁴ Not only the creditor, but its community as a whole would reap benefit from this agonising equality by ridding itself of its gloomy atmosphere in a festive joy.⁸²⁵

That the punishment was meted out to the forgetful one, and this would in its turn lead to the intensification of its sense of responsibility and sociability, was not the telos of this practice. In order to grasp Nietzsche’s genealogical account, one should not confuse this momentous by-product with the main motive behind the punitive practices of earlier humanity. Depending on his ontology of will to power, which conceptualises an impersonal account of life, Nietzsche maintains that “[t]hroughout the greatest part of human history punishment was definitely *not* imposed *because* one held the evil-doer responsible for his deed.”⁸²⁶ Holding someone accountable just because it is in possession of rationality is a very late

⁸²² Sedgwick, “Violence, Economy and Temporality. Plotting the Political Terrain of *On the Genealogy of Morality*,” 171.

⁸²³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §5.

⁸²⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §6.

⁸²⁵ Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, §18; Olivier, “Nietzsche and Heidegger on Pain,” 149.

⁸²⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §4.

phenomenon in Nietzsche's understanding of human history. For us moderns, who are irreversibly cut off from the healthy guide of instincts and thus reduced to the feeble faculty of reason, this age-old practice of humanity might seem unfathomable.⁸²⁷ According to Nietzschean ontology, the main fallacy of us is our misinterpretation of life, the happenings of the universe, in terms of subject-object metaphysics.

7.2. 'Das Thun ist Alles'

Although he works out his treatment of the role of punishment in the second treatise of the *Genealogy*, the mainstay of this view is to be found in the first treatise (in I §13, known as the section of 'paralogism'). This section is of utmost importance for us to understand Nietzsche's conceptualisation of human freedom. As we have seen in the previous chapters, both Rousseau and Hegel base their political philosophies on the centrality of freedom. They champion the idea that the lawful and peaceful conditions of society is the sole medium for the possibility of human freedom. Rousseau is of the view that the denaturalisation of the savage, its ridding itself of its absolute egoism to establish the general will is not to be interpreted as a loss of freedom. To the contrary, in the state of civilisation human beings are in fact 'as free as before.' In a similar vein, Hegel regards this transformation of human being with a view to making it a sociable one as the ultimate telos of political philosophy.

Nietzsche, by contrast, holds that eliminating the rapacious relationship between the master and the slave, the strong and the weak, the clever and the dim-witted, amounts to an abortive attempt. Instead, a sound social and political philosophy ought to recognise that this inequality is omnipresent and ineliminable. In the *Genealogy* Nietzsche depicts this element in the figures of the lamb and the bird of prey, which are by their very nature destined to be on an unequal footing.⁸²⁸

⁸²⁷ This lies principally in that in our daily lives we are not confronted with the ruthless, corporal punishments of the earlier times. The punishment of today is much more abstract, cerebral, or at least, relies not only on bodily elements (Grosz, "Nietzsche and the Stomach for Knowledge," 68).

⁸²⁸ For earlier accounts of this theme, cf. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §127; Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, §§127, 130.

Whereas the lambs opine that those strong and wild animals are *evil*, the latter are by no means in such a moralisation, rather see the former nothing but tasty.⁸²⁹ In Homer's *Iliad* we can find one of the first formulations of this Nietzschean theme in the Western canon.⁸³⁰ In a context in which Achilles speaks to his arch-enemy Hector, the former reminds the latter that there can be no reconciliation between those who are to be strong and to be weak by nature:

‘Hector, stop!
You unforgivable, you ... don't talk to me of pacts.
There are no binding oaths between men and lions –
wolves and lambs can enjoy no meeting of the minds –
they are all bent on hating each other to the death.
So with you and me. No love between us...’⁸³¹

Contrary to this pagan worldview, which was substantially immune from the hyper-moralised ideology of theistic religions, the modern interpretation of events clings to the view of the lambs, demanding that “strength not express itself as strength.”⁸³² This is just as untenable as the demand that weakness not express itself as weakness. Underlying this implausible view is the metaphysical tradition, which projects the fictitious elements of subjects and objects onto the impersonal happenings of life.⁸³³ Nietzsche opposes this entrenched interpretation of life by maintaining that “the doing is everything (*das Thun ist Alles*).”⁸³⁴

One could tease out three basic stages in this misinterpretation of life. i) In point of fact, there is only the impersonal happenings of life. Yet, by attributing the

⁸²⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §13.

⁸³⁰ For a brief account of Nietzsche's Homeric thinking in terms of *agon*, see Friedrich Nietzsche, “Homer's Contest,” in *The Nietzsche Reader*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson and Duncan Large (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006); Christa Davis Acampora, “Nietzsche Contra Homer, Socrates, and Paul,” *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 24 (2002), 26-9.

⁸³¹ Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. Robert Fagles (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 22: 308-313.

⁸³² Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §13. In a terminology not adopted by Nietzsche, his view on freedom can be formulated as non-voluntarism (Pippin, “Agent and Deed in Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*,” 373).

⁸³³ Conway, “How We Became What We Are: Tracking the ‘Beasts of Prey’,” 310-1.

⁸³⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §13; Armstrong, “The Passions, Power, and Practical Philosophy: Spinoza and Nietzsche Contra the Stoics,” 21.

fictions of causality onto this event,⁸³⁵ force (the basic unit of the will to power) is divided into two elements as the cause and its effect. ii) Once the force is split, it is hypostasised.⁸³⁶ Thus, ‘the causing force’ is interpreted as the subject, who has autonomy in its actions. iii) The actions of this free subject are construed on a moral level. Thus, the spontaneous, natural, agentless activity of life could be interpreted as morally reprehensible, that is, evil.⁸³⁷

Nietzsche asserts that by the advent of this misunderstanding, the ‘innocence’ (*Unschuld*) of life has been deprived.⁸³⁸ Concocting moral grounds to interpret life, seeking the lack of responsibility in the acting out of powerfulness as itself, replacing the joyful spontaneity of natural actions by the deliberations of good or evil, useful or harmful (i.e. the hypertrophy of consciousness) – these were the prices to be paid by humanity owing to the dominance of metaphysical thinking.

One should not forget that in Nietzsche’s philosophy all evaluations are carried out from a specific perspective. He claims that the ‘paralogism’ has been the best tool of the weak to debilitate the strong. As we have seen in Chapter 6, the former by their very nature cannot overcome the latter openly. Thus, they are in need of artificial constructions, or *Klugheit* in general, to achieve their end. Nietzsche emphasises that as long as we cling to the metaphysics of substance, we will not be able to see that there is no subject who is free to be so. Put differently, in point of fact, neither the bird of prey is free to be strong, nor the lambs to be weak. Yet, the lambs, or the weak, are in need of this artifice in order to punish the strong, unforgetful, immoral, egoistic ones.

This kind of human *needs* the belief in a neutral ‘subject’ with free choice, out of an instinct of self-preservation, self-affirmation, in which every lie tends to hallow itself. It is perhaps for this reason that the subject (or, to speak more popularly, the *soul*) has until now been the best article of faith on earth, because it made possible for the majority of mortals, the weak and oppressed of every kind, that sublime self-deception

⁸³⁵ Pearson, “A ‘Dionysian Drama on the ‘Fate of the Soul’: An Introduction to Reading *On the Genealogy of Morality*,” 28.

⁸³⁶ In western philosophy, the hypostatisation of life has found its most famous formulation in Descartes. For Nietzsche’s critique of the *cogito* principle, cf. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §17.

⁸³⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlison (London, New York: Continuum, 2002), 122-4.

⁸³⁸ Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, §13; *The Will to Power*, §765.

of interpreting weakness itself as freedom, of interpreting their being-such-and-such as a merit.⁸³⁹

Here again, we can see (for the 21st-century reader almost intolerable) elitism of Nietzsche. The vast majority of people could be living according to the moral demands of their community, leading a sociable life. Yet, for Nietzsche, this sort of living is a far cry from the heroic, individualistic one, whose constant preoccupation lies in creating new life-affirming values in order not to get bogged down in modern nihilism.

The Nietzschean demand for the re-evaluation of values is in fact to be named the re-re-evaluation of nihilistic values. For it was the weak who firstly and stealthily turned the original, healthy values upside down. As a result of this, powerlessness transformed into kindness; fearfulness into humility; forceful subjection into obedience to God; cowardice into patience; the incapacity to defeat the enemy into forgiveness, or even the love of one's enemies.⁸⁴⁰

In nuce, it could be said that the central theme of Nietzsche's thinking lies in its detecting the modern decay of humanity as its main problem. In his oeuvre as a whole, this process is formulated differently: the replacement of pagan values by Christian ones; the hypertrophy of consciousness as a result of the loss of instinctual life; the painful breeding of responsibility in, and by, the body of the forgetful human animal. In either case, we are provided with the irrefutable assertion that the increasingly becoming sociable, domesticated, and moral human being turns it into a sick being. However much we emphasise the achievements of the progress, *Bildung*, or the Enlightenment of humanity (in the manner of Hegel), we are mistaken in believing that this could in the future salvage us from nihilism. The principal impediment to this goal lies in that the human being is neither to be seen as the rational, moral, or self-conscious subject (as the tradition sees it to be) nor could it become an inhabitant of the state of nature. This is the reason why at the beginning

⁸³⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §13. R. Pippin states critically that if we were to interpret phenomena without having recourse to substance metaphysics, individuating the expressions of force would be impossible. Thus, the Nietzschean figures of the master and the slave could not be referred to (Pippin, "Agent and Deed in Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals," 374).

⁸⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I §14.

of his treatise Nietzsche asserts that the breeding programme has not still achieved its so-called aim.⁸⁴¹ Accordingly, in Nietzsche's understanding of modern human being, we are neither completely forgetful animals, nor the strong beasts of nature, who are capable of leading solipsistic lives. Nor are we to be fitted into the Procrustean bed of society, for its communal norms, and moral stipulations, are the biggest impediment to human greatness. In other words, his agonistic psychology stipulates that the modern conditions of society play an inhibitory role for us, because "for Nietzsche the self is not a suitable unity, but an arena for an irresolvable contest of differing drives, each seeking mastery."⁸⁴² In Nietzsche's philosophy as a whole, modern sociability rides roughshod over this richness of human capability. If this line of reading Nietzsche⁸⁴³ holds true, one could say that his philosophy is the genuinely philosophical one – since the task of philosophy lies not in finding ready-made solutions to complex problems of humanity, but in pointing to the inescapable pitfalls of it.

7.3. A Coda: A Nietzschean Hegel as a More Concrete Universality?

As we have seen in Chapter 4, Hegel asserted that genuine philosophical thinking is to be nothing less than systematic and teleological. This demand could be achieved only by heeding the entirety of life, or universe. Accordingly, the ostensibly insuperable dichotomies of subject and object, intellect and sensibility, body and mind, (in our context) individualism and sociability, and negative and positive freedom, are in point of fact the product of the understanding, i.e. non-philosophical thinking. We have seen in Chapter 5 that this opposition is a spurious one, because genuine philosophy is not preoccupied with clinging to either of these poles. Instead,

⁸⁴¹ Cf. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, II §1, where he states that "this problem [of breeding a promise-keeping animal] has been solved [only] to a high degree."

⁸⁴² Hatab, *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morality*, 79.

⁸⁴³ Cf. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §765. Nietzsche sometimes talks about restoring the lost innocence of life, which could be interpreted as a wish for returning to the state of nature. I believe that making central this feature of Nietzsche's thinking would not prove fruitful, given the reasons indicated in our discussion.

it seeks to demonstrate that both the rights of subjectivity and objectivity are to be so integrated into a whole that both of them exist interdependently (i.e. organicism).

In this respect, one could state that Hegel's blueprint for a rational society, whose principal task is to promote individual freedom without detracting from the lawful order of society, achieves what Rousseau aims, yet fails, to achieve. It was Rousseau who saw the necessity of establishing a social whole in which the individuals would not be suppressed. However, as we have seen in Chapters 2 and 3, Rousseau could not materialise this given the lacuna in his political works. He had to resort to the enigmatic figure of the legislator owing to his fallacious starting point. The savage human beings cannot on their own recognise the necessity of putting an end to the bloodshed of the last stages of the state of nature. However much harm they suffer from those incessant wars, they are not capable of bringing about a transition into the state of society – simply because Rousseau conceived of those pre-civilised humans as absolutely individualistic. The desirable transition from parochial individualism to sociability and rationalism cannot be actualised by beings who are completely steeped in the former.

Thus, the Hegelian insight (i.e. human beings have essentially been sociable and rational yet the problem lies in materialising this potentiality in a rational context) might be taken to mean that we should cease to entertain the Rousseauian idea of blissful, savage, egoistic humans living in the bosom of nature. Hegel does not fail to recognise the role of the body, instincts, and negative freedom in human life. Yet, he maintains that in a rational society which promotes genuine freedom, these could exist only in a sublated, curbed state. The *aufgehobene* role of subjectivity and egoism could be sustained only in a rational whole, whose basis lies in objectivity and sociability. (As we have seen at the end of Chapter 5, this ambitious aim of Hegel can be said to be amounting to squaring the circle. Although he aims to integrate the rights of subjectivity and objectivity without harming either, he in fact tends to favour the latter over the former.)

Nietzsche's trenchant criticism of modernity and its central notions such as sociability, morality, stability, uniformity, responsibility, and punishment, are to be interpreted against the backdrop of the enlightened optimism of Hegel. By maintaining that the elements of body and parochial individualism have never been

overcome even today, Nietzsche attempts to reverse the views of (later) Rousseau and Hegel. In other words, Nietzsche's political thinking rests on the insight that the unequal, rapacious, tyrannical relationship between the master and the slave, or the strong and the weak, has always been an undeniable fact of human society. For this reason, we should stop evaluating this ineliminable element of human life through the glasses of morality, pitying the weak and condemning the strong, as if one were free to be what one is. The nihilistic achievement of modernity was to establish an artificial set of communal norms with a view to demanding that the privileged few not be materialising the will to more.

It is beyond question that taken in itself, Nietzsche's views on social and political issues of humanity are radical to the core. No one, even Nietzsche himself (given the formidable difficulties of his own life), would not envisage a life lacking the modern institutions of state. Given the veracity of the organicism of Hegel, one cannot advocate Nietzsche's uncompromising stance that all practices of society and the state are impediments to human development and freedom.⁸⁴⁴ For this reason, we should rather attempt to integrate the extreme individuality of Nietzschean political philosophy into the structure of the *Philosophy of Right*, to the extent that the latter tends to diminish the role of individual to preserve the unity of social whole. In the *Phenomenology* Hegel sought to demonstrate how all historical philosophies are in need of sublation in order to achieve a more concrete stage. I believe that we should interpret Hegel's own (social and political) philosophy in this way. In the absence of a Nietzschean critique of modernity, and the appraisal of individuality, the Hegelian state would run the risk of turning into an abstract ideal, slanting in favour of the whole to the detriment of its parts. To be more precise, it seems that in times of crisis the problems of an irrational state and society calls for the necessity of Nietzschean type of creative individuals, who are to be tasked with surmounting our social and political problems.

⁸⁴⁴ For the contrary view that Nietzsche's philosophy as a whole provides us with a sound, profound framework of political philosophy, see Manuel Knoll and Barry Stocker, "Introduction: Nietzsche as Political Philosopher," in *Nietzsche as Political Philosopher*, ed. Manuel Knoll and Barry Stocker (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2014).

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I argue that the general framework established by the *Philosophy of Right* might be taken as the cornerstone of genuine human freedom. The organicism of Hegel is based on the insight that to give a concrete account of freedom not only the rights of individualism but also the rational structure of society must be maintained at the same time. As I discuss at the first sections of Chapter 4, Hegel's organicism in the field of political and social philosophy is undergirded by his metaphysical view, according to which the dichotomies of modern philosophy might be avoided only when one adopts the doctrine of the subject-object identity.

As we have seen in Chapter 5, Hegel provides us with a detailed analysis of such a two-tiered structure of social structure. Accordingly, the individualistic stances of Abstract Right, Morality and Civil Society (the second stage of Ethicality) are no less important than the *geistlichen* stages of the Family and the State. The main contribution of Hegelian political philosophy consists in that a harmonious, concrete integration of these two standpoints might be realised only in an organicist manner. Thus, the *Philosophy of Right* might be said to be materialising the central aim of the *Social Contract*, that is, realising the rational order of society without detracting from individual freedom (Chapter 3). It could be said that what Rousseau sought to realise by way of the concept of general will, yet failed to achieve owing to his fallacious approach, is best worked out by the *Philosophy of Right*.

Hegel's discussion of the master-slave dialectics in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* demonstrates the necessity of recognition in a rational society. Thus, he avoids the pitfall of the state of nature. The latter is utilised by Rousseau (Chapter 2), whose account of the formation of society ends up with a cul-de-sac, because he cannot

account for the so-called transformation of the egoistic savage into the sociable modern human. I sought to demonstrate that the fallacious starting point of Rousseau (i.e. taking the human as originally and essentially individualistic) leads him to introduce the legislator, as a *deus ex machina*, whose task consists in educating the savage people of the state of nature.

In Chapters 6 and 7, Nietzsche's trenchant criticism of modernity (namely, the notions of responsibility, uniformity, memory, morality, and nihilism, *inter alia*) is critically examined from the vantage point of Hegel and the later Rousseau. Accordingly, considered in itself, Nietzsche's radical dismissal of the socialisation of humanity might seem too radical and impracticable. Yet, his account might be read against the background of Hegel's approach, which leaves no room for a genuine individual freedom. Nietzsche's defence of the individual against the oppressive modern state makes sense only when one realises that he seeks to protect merely the select few (i.e. the creative and healthy individuals) from the detrimental effects of hyper-socialisation. His attempt at a reversal of modern values (e.g. prioritising the role of body over that of intellect) is connected with his insight that modern human is sick and barren owing to the loss of healthy egoism of earlier times.

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Karatekeli, Emre

Nationality: Turkish (TC)

Date and Place of Birth: [REDACTED]

Marital Status: Married

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	METU Philosophy	2016
BS	ITU Civil Engineering	2012

LANGUAGES

English, German, Spanish, Ancient Greek, Latin, Turkish (native).

PUBLICATIONS

1. Karatekeli, E. (2016) “*Ahlakın Soykütüğü’nde Hınç Duygusu.*” *Doğu Batı* 77, 181-192.
2. Karatekeli, E. (2018) “Stoic Ethics and Its Evaluation by Hegel.” *FLSF Felsefe ve Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 13.26, 443-455.

B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

1. Giriř

Batı siyaset felsefesine genel olarak bakıldığında birbirine zıt olarak konumlanmış olan iki ana görüşün bulunduğunu görrz. Bu görüşler liberalizm ve toplumculuk olarak isimlendirilebilir. Kabaca söyleyecek olursak, politik liberalizm bireyin nihai değerine yaslanmakta iken, toplumculuk bireyin değerini ancak ve ancak içinde yaşadığı geniş çerçevede, yani toplum içinde elde edeceği fikrini desteklemektedir. Bu bakış açılarından yola çıkarak, liberalizm bireyi devleti önceleyen, kendi başına yetebilen bir atom olarak kavramsallaştırmaktadır. Toplumcu bakış açısı ise (bu görüşün en önemli temsilcilerinden Hegel'in formlasyonuna gre) devleti bir organizma şeklinde kavramsallaştırmakla bireyin ancak onun bir parçası olduđu ölçde değer kazandığını ileri srmektedir. İřte bu iki bakış açısına karşılık gelen özgrlk anlayışları (popler olarak) negatif ve pozitif olarak isimlendirilmiştir. Pozitif özgrlk anlayışı özgrlğü belirli sosyal ve politik eylemlerin gerçekleştirilmesinde ararken, negatif özgrlk anlayışı ise gerçek özgrlğn istediğini yapabilme ya da tm sosyal kısıtlardan muaf olma ayrıcalığında yattığını söylemektedir. Bu çalışmada ele alınan Rousseau, Nietzsche ve Hegel'in siyaset ve toplum felsefelerine baktığımızda, yukarıda kısaca açıklanmış olan bu iki anlayışın aralarındaki çatışmanın söz konusu düşünrlerin eserlerinin temelini oluşturdđu ileri srlebilir.

Giriř ve Sonuç blmleri bir kenara konulacak olursa, bu çalışma toplam 6 blmden oluşmaktadır. İlk iki blmde Rousseau, c ve drdnc blmlerde Hegel ve son iki blmde ise Nietzsche'nin toplumsallık kavramı zerinden insan özgrlğn tartışmaya nasıl açtıkları incelenmektedir.

2. Rousseau: Bireycilikten Toplumsalcılığa Kırılğan Dönüş

2. Bölümde Rousseau'nun erken dönem politik eserlerinden olan *Eşitsizliğin Kökeni Üzerine Söylev* tartışılmaktadır. Bu eserin ana temasını aslında Rousseau'nun (sonraki bölümde tartışılacak olan) *Toplum Sözleşmesi* adlı eserinin başlangıcında bulunan şu ünlü ifadesi teşkil etmektedir: “İnsan özgür doğar ve [fakat günümüzde] her yerde zincire vurulmuş halde.” Kısacası, 2. Bölüm'ün konusu doğasında özgürlük olan insanın ve insanlığın modern çağda nasıl bu biricik vasfını yitirerek modern toplumun kölesi olduğudur.

Rousseau bu meseleyi sorunsallaştırmak için ‘doğa durumu’ (*state of nature*) olarak adlandırılan bir kavramdan faydalanmaktadır. Bilindiği üzere, doğa durumu ilk defa Rousseau tarafından kullanılmamıştır. Ondan önce, en bilinen örnekleri verecek olursak, Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679) ve John Locke (1632 - 1704) doğa durumu kavramı vasıtasıyla siyaset felsefesi metinleri üretmişlerdir. Aralarındaki önemli fark ise üç düşünürün de aynı kavramı kullanmalarına rağmen birbirinden oldukça farklı sonuçlara varmış olmalarıdır.

Doğa durumu kavramı, insanın günümüz koşuluna ışık tutabilmek için farazi bir geçmiş anlatısı üretimi üzerine kuruludur. Rousseau'ya baktığımızda bu hipotetik dönemin yer yer olgusal olabileceğine dair güçlü ipuçları bulabilmekteyiz. Hegel'in doğa durumu kavramına tamamen karşı olduğunu (4. ve 5. Bölümler), Nietzsche'nin ise *Ahlakın Soykütüğü* isimli çalışmasında bu kavramı ismini anarak kullanmasa da aslında düşüncesini bu minvalde ilerlettiğini söyleyebiliriz (6. ve 7. Bölümler).

Eşitsizliğin Kökeni'nde Rousseau iki tip eşitsizlik olduğunu ve bunların ayrımının modern durumu anlamamızda temel öneme sahip olduğunu söyler. Birinci çeşidin adı ona göre ‘ahlaki ya da politik eşitsizlik’tir. Bu kavram doğa durumunda asla olmayan, ama günümüzde mevcut olan düzeni ifade etmede kullanılmaktadır. Politik eşitsizliğin temelinde nüfuz sahibi ile önemsiz, zengin ile yoksul, eğitilmiş ile eğitimsiz kesimler arasındaki farkın sürekli açıldığı toplumsal ve kurumsal düzen ifade edilmektedir. Rousseau'ya göre, birinci kesim ikinci kesimin sırtından geçinirken, ikinci kesim gittikçe daha fazla insanlığın en temel vasfı olan özgür olmak durumundan uzaklaşmaktadır. İkinci çeşit eşitsizlik ise Rousseau'ya göre ‘doğal ya da fiziksel eşitsizlik’ olarak ifade edilebilir. Bu ikinci çeşit eşitsizlik

durumu doğa durumuna özgüdür. Buna göre, insanların arasındaki farklılıklar politik eşitsizlik durumundaki kadar açılmaz, çünkü burada söz konusu olan (yaş, sağlık, vb.) doğadan kaynaklanan farklılıklardır. Bu ikinci tip eşitsizliğin birincisi kadar tehlikeli görülmemesinin sebebi doğadan kaynaklandığı için, toplumsal düzenin yol açtığı aksine, aşırı seviyelere ulaşamayacak olmasıdır.

Rousseau'nun doğal eşitsizliği politik eşitsizlik gibi yok edilmesi gereken bir unsur olarak görmemesinin arkasında yatan düşünceyi anlamak için 17. yüzyıl siyaset felsefesine bakabiliriz. Bu dönemde Hobbes ve Grotius gibi düşünürler (Ortaçağ düşüncesinden kalma) Tanrı mefhumunun merkeziliğinin bertaraf edilmesi sonucu kendilerine (Kartezyen düşüncedeki Arşimetçi dayanak noktasına benzer şekilde) dayanak noktası olarak doğayı ele almışlardır. İşte Rousseau da bu çizgiyi takip ederek “doğadan gelen her şey doğrudur” düsturunu benimsemektedir. Sonraki bölümlerde tartışıldığı üzere, doğanın *Geist* tarafından dönüştürülmesini savunan Hegel'in aksine, Nietzsche'nin soykütüksel soruşturmasının Rousseau çizgisinde ilerlediği söylenebilir.

Rousseau'nun *Eşitsizliğin Kökeni*'ndeki anlatısına bakacak olursak, (farazi) doğa durumundan günümüzü ifade eden medeniyet durumuna geçişin beş temel aşamada gerçekleşmiş olduğunu görmekteyiz. Burada, Rousseau'nun tüm insanlığın hakiki özgürlükten modern esaret durumuna nasıl evrildiğinin anlatısı söz konusudur. Buna göre, ilk aşamaya baktığımızda burada Rousseau'nun bozulmamış, sağlıklı ve güçlü, özgür ve mutlu doğa durumu insanlarını buluruz. İşte bu medeniyet öncesi insanları moderniteye özgü aile ve eğitim gibi kurumların süzgecinden geçmiyorlardı. Aksine, sabit yerleşimden uzak, göçebe halinde yaşamaktaydılar. Rousseau'ya göre ‘vahşi insan’ın biz modernlere göre en üstün vasıfları hem maddi hem de manevi anlamda kendi kendilerine yetebilmeleridir. Vahşi insan fiziksel anlamda özgürdür, çünkü onu besleyen doğanın ürünleri (o dönemki düşük popülasyon göz önüne alındığında) hiç çalışmasını gerektirmeyecek kadar boldur. Vahşi insan psikolojik olarak da özgürdür, çünkü modern insanı karakterize eden *amour-propre* (öz saygı)'dan muafır. Bu yıkıcı duygudan muaf olmak, kişinin kendisini başkalarıyla karşılaştırmadan özgürce yaşaması anlamına gelmektedir. Bu durum ise, Rousseau'ya göre insanın toplumsallığın dayatmalarından kaynaklanan bozulmasına bir set çekmektedir. Ayrıca, doğa durumu insanı bağımsız olduğu ve

kendi kendine yetebildiği için modern hayatın olmazsa olmaz gereksinimleri arasında olan soyut dil ve karmaşık teknolojik aletlere ihtiyacı bulunmuyordu.

Tamamıyla mutluluk ve özgürlükle dolu bu birinci aşama insanın göçebe yaşamı bırakarak yerleşik düzene geçmesiyle kademeli olarak terkedilmiştir. Bu kırılma sonucu aile kurumu ve özel mülkiyet gibi kavramlar ortaya çıkar. Birinci değişimin sonucu olarak insan duyguları daha önemli bir yer edinir ve bunun sonucunda da başlangıç durumunda yer almayan toplumsallık güçlenmeye başlar. Kişinin eşine, çocuklarına ve anne babasına beslediği duygular, cinsiyete dayalı iş bölümü ve toplumsal tutkal olarak ifade edebileceğimiz ahlaki normlar eskisine nazaran insan yaşamını hiç olmadığı kadar belirlemektedir. Tüm bu değişimleri Rousseau'nun eleştirel bir tonda anlatmasının sebebi ise, bunlar sonucunda kendi kendine yetebilme ve vahşi dönemin mutlu, sağlıklı basitliğinin yitirilmiş olmasıdır.

Bu dönüşümler elbette ki bir çırpıda gerçekleşmemiştir. Örnek verecek olursak, mülkiyet fikri önce geçici bir nitelik taşıırken ilerleyen aşamalarda kalıcı hale gelir; aile kurumu da aynı şekilde günümüzdeki haline aşama aşama gelir. Bu gelişmeler sonucunda vahşi insan başlangıçta sahip olmadığı düşünce, dil ve teknoloji gibi onun bağımsızlığını azaltıcı unsurların etkisine daha fazla girmeye başlar.

Son aşama olan beşinci aşamaya gelindiğinde ise, herkesin herkesle her daim mücadele içinde olduğu topyekün savaş durumunu görürüz. Bu aşama Thomas Hobbes'un *Leviathan*'nda doğa durumunun özü olarak ifade ettiği *bellum omnium contra omnes* olarak da ifade edilebilir. Bu yıkıcı, kanlı savaşta doğal olarak akıl ve beden olarak güçlü olanlar güçsüzleri sömürmektedirler ve bu eşitsizliğe son verecek, ya da en azından yavaşlatacak, bir toplumsal mekanizma bulunmamaktadır.

Anlatının son kısımlarında ise bu bitmek bilmeyen savaşa son vermek adına güçlü olanların güçsüzleri 'toplumsal sözleşme' imzalamaları için ikna ettiklerini görürüz. Bu, eşitsizliğe son verecek bir adım değildir. Aksine, doğa durumunun en sonunda erişilmiş olan yıkıcı eşitsizliğin artık norm haline getirilmesini ve bu durumun tüm taraflarca tanınmış olduğunu ifade eder. Rousseau'nun bu tespiti, Nietzsche'nin toplumsal düzenin ortaya çıkışı anlatısı ile koşutluklar barındırmaktadır.

3. Bölüm’de ise *Toplum Sözleşmesi*’ne odaklanılmaktadır. Bu eser Rousseau’nun geç dönem eserlerinden birisi olup, *Eşitsizliğin Kökeni*’nden oldukça farklı bir bakış açısıyla yazılmıştır. İşte bu sebeple birinci eserde bireyselliğin merkeze alındığı görüş kenara bırakılarak Rousseau’nun (Hegel’i önceleyen bir şekilde) toplumsallığın insan özgürlüğündeki merkezi rolünü öne çıkarttığını görürüz. Bu değişimi en çarpıcı şekilde Rousseau’nun toplum sözleşmesinin işlevi, devletin ve toplumsal düzenin, toplumsallığın fonksiyonu üzerindeki düşüncelerinin başkalaşımından anlayabiliriz.

Buna göre, farazi sözleşme artık toplumsal eşitsizliği ortadan kaldırılamaz kılan bir kandırmaca olarak değil, özgürlüğün temel ilkesi olarak ele alınır. Rousseau özgürlük anlayışını bu çizgide detaylandırmaktadır. Başlangıçta tartışılan negatif ve pozitif özgürlük anlayışlarına benzer şekilde, ‘doğal özgürlük’ ile ‘medeni özgürlük’ ve ‘ahlaki özgürlük’ arasında bir ayırım yapma yoluna başvurur. Doğal özgürlük kavramı ile (doğa durumunun vahşi insanının yaşamını karakterize eden) tam bireysellik içinde toplumsal normlardan bağımsız olarak istediğini yapma özgürlüğünü ifade eder. Ahlaki özgürlük ise (Aristotelesçi bir şekilde) kişinin özünde toplumsal bir canlı olduğu görüşünden yola çıkarak özgürlüğün ancak ve ancak toplumsal, politik hayatın içinde gerçekleştirilebileceğini savlamaktadır. Bu görüş, toplum kurallarının kısıt değil bilakis özgürleştirici olduğunu öne süren Hegel’in düşüncesiyle paralellikler taşımaktadır. Ahlaki özgürlük ile birlikte anlam bulan medeni özgürlük ise özel mülkiyet hakkını ifade eder. Rousseau’nun *Toplum Sözleşmesi*’nde savunduğu özgürlük anlayışı Hegel’e koşut, Nietzsche’yle çatışacak şekilde toplumsallığın değerini merkeze koymaktadır.

Eşitsizliğin Kökeni’nde eşitsizliği daimi kılan unsur olarak öne çıkan toplum sözleşmesi kavramı, *Toplum Sözleşmesi* eserinde ise tam tersi bir anlam kazanarak modernitenin bu büyük sorununu çözebilecek yegane unsur haline dönüşür. Bu pozitif yeniden yorumlamaya göre, sözleşme sayesinde herkes herkesle, kimseye boyun eğmeden, özgürlüğünden hiçbir taviz vermeden toplumsal düzeyde birleşmektedir. Bu birleşmeyi sağlayan mekanizma ise Rousseau’nun ortak irade (Fr. *volonté générale*; İng. *general will*) olarak adını koyduğu toplumsal birlikle ortaya çıkabilmektedir. Ortak irade kavramı Rousseau’nun bu geç eserinin neredeyse en önemli kavramını oluşturmaya rağmen maalesef eserinde net bir formülasyona

kavuşmamaktadır. Bu kavramı anlamak için elimizdeki en önemli ipucu onun ne olmadığıdır anlamakta yatar. Rousseau'ya göre, ortak irade hiçbir şekilde 'herkesin iradesi' (*will of all*) ile karıştırılmamalıdır. Bunlardan ikincisi bireysel iradelerin basitçe toplamını ifade ederken, birincisi ise toplumun ortak çıkarını gözetken, saf bireyselliği bertaraf ederek toplumsallık ögesini merkeze koyan özgürleştirici iradeyi ifade etmektedir. *Toplum Sözleşmesi* eserinde ortak iradenin en az sorunlu olan formülasyonu, onun bireysel iradelerin bir araya getirildiğinde doğal olarak ortaya çıkacak olan çatışmaların ortadan kaldırılmasıyla kurulabileceğini iddia etmektedir. Bu soyut formülasyonu somutlaştırmanın önündeki en önemli engel ise Rousseau'nun böyle bir operasyonun hangi şekilde gerçekleştirileceğini bizlere söylemiyor olmasıdır.

Ortak iradeye dair Rousseau'nun başka bir önemli saptaması ise, onun elden çıkarılamaz, bölünemez ve herhangi bir hata işleyemez olmasıdır. Ayrıca, ortak irade özü gereği toplumsal çıkara hizmet ettiğinden uygulanmasında herhangi bir spesifik nesne ya da hedef söz konusu olamaz. Ortak iradenin sahip olması gereken bu sıfatlar da onun günümüz dünyasına 'uygulanması'nı müşkül kılan özellikleri arasındadır. Örneğin, Rousseau ortak iradenin elden çıkarılamaz olması gerektiğini söyleyerek temsili demokrasi fikrini en baştan ortadan kaldırmaktadır. Çünkü, bir kişinin iradesi başka bir özel, bireysel irade tarafından devralınamaz. Ayrıca, ortak iradenin bölünemez oluşu ise günümüz demokrasisinin olmazsa olmaz unsurlarından birisi olan siyasi partilerin, yani hizipleşmelerin, varlığını mümkün kılmamaktadır. Bu sebeple, Rousseau'nun *Toplum Sözleşmesi*'nde çizdiği ideal toplumsal örgütlenme tasarısının uygulanabilir bir proje olmaktan çok bize yol gösterebilecek lakin hiçbir zaman tam anlamıyla uygulanamayacak bir ufuk sağladığı ileri sürülebilir.

Rousseau'nun eserinin bir başka sorunlu tarafı ise 'yasa koyucu' adını koyduğu figürde karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Yasa koyucu toplum sözleşmesinin daha önce toplumsal normlara uygun biçimde yaşamamış doğa durumu insanların saf bireysellikten saf toplumsallığa evrilmesinde en hayati unsurlardan bir tanesidir. Buna göre, yasa koyucu gibi dahi, yetenekli, akıllı, ahlak sahibi ve toplumsallığı (yani pozitif özgürlük anlayışını) tamamıyla sindirmiş bir figür, vahşi ve yıkıcı bir topyekün savaş durumunda bulunan toplum-öncesi insanların sözleşmeyi

imzalamaları, yani toplumsal normlara göre yaşamının hepsinin özgürlüğü için tek çıkar yol olduğunu onlara göstermesi, gerekmektedir. Burada yasa koyucunun önüne çıkan en büyük sorun ise bu ikna sürecidir. Zira, bu toplum-öncesi aşırı bireyci insanlar (ancak toplumsal normlar kurulduktan sonra ortaya çıkabilecek olan) akıl, sorgulama, vs.'den yoksun oldukları için yasa koyucunun fikrini sadece duygular yoluyla görebileceklerdir. Burada önemli olan husus ise akıl sahibi yasa koyucunun buna sahip olmayan yığınları kendi çıkarı için kullanmadan, onların özgürlüğü uğruna onları bir şekilde ikna ederek toplumsal sistemi kurmalarına yardımcı olması gerektiğidir. Tüm bu zorluklardan dolayı, yasa koyucu kavramı bizce *Toplumsal Sözleşme* eserinin en sorunlu kısmını oluşturmaktadır. Bunun arkasında yatan en önemli unsur ise Rousseau'nun problemlili başlangıç noktasıdır: Rousseau, toplumsallığın insan ve insanlık için en başından beri olmadığını, aksine bireyciliğin başat unsur olduğunu iddia ederek günümüzdeki insanın toplumsallığını açıklayabilmek için bir anlamda *deus ex machina* olan yasa koyucu figürünü devreye sokmak zorunda kalmıştır. Bu başlangıç noktası Hegel'in siyaset düşüncesine taban tabana zıt olmakla birlikte, Nietzsche'yle oldukça önemli yakınlıklar barındırmaktadır.

3. Hegel: Köle-Efendiden Somut Özgürlüğe

Çalışmamızın 4. Bölümü'nde Hegel'in *Tinin Fenomenolojisi* isimli erken dönem çalışmasında ele aldığı ünlü efendi-köle (*Herrschaft und Knechtschaft*) diyalektiği soruşturma konusudur. 2. ve 3. Bölümler'de gördüğümüz gibi Rousseau erken dönem eserinde bireyi merkeze alan bir görüşe sahipken geç dönem eserinde toplumsallığın merkezi önemini keşfeder. Hegel'e baktığımızda ise buna benzer bir kırılma görmemekteyiz. Zira, Hegel tüm külliyatı boyunca (Aristotelesçi bir şekilde) toplumsallığın, yani devlet kurumunun ve toplumsal normların, birey için olmazsa olmaz niteliği düşüncesini kendisine esas almıştır. Bunu ispatlamak adına *Fenomenoloji*'de yer alan köle ve efendi arasındaki karşılaşmayı kavramsallaştırır. Buna göre, ilk önce öz-bilincin arzu (*Begierde*) formu karşımıza çıkar. Spekülatif mantık yöntemiyle (yani, herhangi bir varsayımda bulunmadan ilgili bilinç formunun iddia ettiği şeyi ne kadar karşılayıp karşılamadığına bakarak ve bu şekilde öteki

haliyle olan özsel ilişkisini keşfederek) arzu durumu toplumsallığın inşası için biricik temel taşı olan ‘karşılıklı tanınma’ya (*mutual recognition*) evrilmektedir.

Bu anlatıya göre, arzu kendisinden başka her şeyi yok etme güdüsüyle hareket ettiği için hayvani bir duygu olarak karşımıza çıkar. Hegelci görüş kişinin ancak ötekini kendisine denk şekilde tanıdığına özgürlüğün ve insanca yaşamın mümkünlüğünü ileri sürerken, arzuya göre öteki anında yok edilmesi gereken bir engeldir. (Bu ayrımın pozitif ve negatif özgürlük anlayışları ile, ya da Rousseau bağlamında, doğa durumunun aşırı bireyciliği ile medeniyet durumunun toplumsalcılığı arasındaki ihtilafa denk geldiği gözlerden kaçmamalıdır.)

Bilincin böylesine katı bir egoizmin içindeki bu hali şüphesiz modifiye edilecektir, ya da Hegel’in terminolojisine bağlı kalacak olursak, *Aufhebung*’a uğrayacaktır. Bu ise bu özellikleri taşıyan bir bilincin kendisi gibi başka bir bilinçle karşılaşmasında meydana gelir. İşte Hegel bu karşılaşmayı ‘ölüm kalım mücadelesi’ (Alm. *Kampf auf Leben und Tod*; İng. life-and-death struggle) olarak isimlendirmiştir. Buna göre, iki egoist bilinç birbirlerini yok etmek için harekete geçerler. Bu durum Rousseau’nun doğa durumunun son aşamasını tasvir ettiği Hobbesçu topyekün savaş durumunu anımsatmaktadır. İkisini benzer kılan unsur, bireylerin birbirleriyle olan ilişkilerinde onları regüle edecek sosyal, kurumsal normlar (kısacası toplumsallık bağı) olmadan yaşamın ve özgürlüğün mümkün olmadığını gösteriyor olmasıdır.

Bu ölümcül mücadelenin sonu Hegel’e bakacak olursak ancak iki şekilde sonlanabilir. Ya taraflardan birisi ölecektir ya da bir taraf diğere üstün gelerek onun efendisi olacaktır ve böylelikle diğeri de efendinin kölesi olduğunu kabul edecektir. Bu iki seçenektan birincisi Hegel’in anlatısında takip edilmez, çünkü taraflardan birinin ölümü tanınma mücadelesindeki diğeri bilinç için de her şeyin sonu anlamına gelmektedir. Bu sebeple, eşitsizliğin kurumsallaşmış hali olan köle-efendi ilişkisi kurulmuş olur. Bu ilişki her ne kadar tanınma, özgürlük ve eşitlik gibi durumlardan oldukça uzakta olsa da, Hegel’in spekülative anlatısına göre, gene de *Begierde* formundaki bilinçten daha kapsamlı, zengin bir seviyeyi işaret eder. Zira, en başta bilinç ötekini katıyen tanımazken, efendi olduğunda kölesini en azından yaşayan bir canlı olarak tanımaktadır. Bu iyileşme durumu ise Hegel’in *Fenomenoloji*’deki en basit, yalın bilinç seviyesinden ‘Mutlak Bilme’ (*Absolutes Wissen*) olarak

adlandırdığı özne-nesne gibi tüm karşıtlıklardan muaf olan nihai, gerçek anlamda spekülâtif noktaya ulaşmayı gaye edinen ilerlemeci anlatısına uygun düşmektedir. Bu anlatıdan çıkaracağımız bir başka ders ise, Hegel'in günümüzde verili olan toplumsal kurumların ve hakların bir çırpıda değil tedrici olarak kazanıldığını göstermesidir.

Hegel'in anlatısına göre efendi ile köle arasındaki eşitsiz ilişkinin sona ermesi efendinin iddia ettiği şeye, yani ötekinden gelen tanınmaya, aslında sahip olmadığının anlaşılmasıyla sona ermek zorundadır. Köle efendiyi tanıyor olabilir, fakat bunun eşitlik ilkesine göre kurulan karşılıklı tanınma olmadığı açıktır. Zira, köle efendiyi kendi iradesiyle, aklıyla değil zor kullanma sonucu tanımaktadır. Öte yandan, efendi iddia ettiği gibi her şeyin kontrolünde değildir: yaşayabilmesi için kölenin çalışmasına gereksinim duymaktadır. Hegel ayrıca eklemektedir ki çalışmanın efendi için bir yoksunluk durumunu göstermesine karşılık, aynı unsur köle için pozitif bir değer taşımaktadır. Kölenin efendisi için çalışması etrafındaki nesneleri, genel anlamda onu çevreleyen dış dünyayı kendi istenci doğrultusunda şekillendirmesi demektir.

Tüm bu sebeplerden dolayı *Fenomenoloji* metni köle-efendi diyalektiğinin çözülmesinden sonra anlatısına efendi değil köle üzerinden devam eder. Çünkü bu süreçte değişen, dönüşen, daha kapsamlı bir öz bilinç seviyesine çıkan taraf, (efendi için zorla) çalışması ve ölüm korkusu sonucu manevi anlamda sarsılması sonucu köle olmuştur. Ancak bu durum bizleri Hegel tarafından kölenin yeterli bir seviyeyi temsil eden bir bilinci temsil ettiği yanılgısına götürmemelidir. Bu tezin kapsamı içinde vurgulandığı üzere, kişiler arası ilişkileri düzenleyen toplumsal normların yokluğunda ya ölüm kalım mücadelesi ya da olabildiğine eşitsiz bir efendi köle ilişkisi tesis edilebilir. Akli, tinsel, manevi, kültürel gelişme ve özgürlük gibi mefhumların soyut birer ideal olmaktan çıkıp somut, gerçekleştirilmiş olgular olması için toplumsal bağlam olmazsa olmaz bir öneme sahiptir.

Hegel'in *Tinin Fenomolojisi*'ndeki söz konusu bölümün bizim için önemli olan hususunu toparlayacak olursak, toplumsallıktan yoksun şekilde istediğini yapma özgürlüğüne (kısacası negatif özgürlüğe ya da aşırı bireyselliğe) saplanmış olan birisi için özgürlüğün olmazsa olmaz koşulu olan eşit tarafların birbirlerini tanıması mümkün değildir. Bunun pozitif biçimde inşası Hegel tarafından *Tüze Felsefesi* isimli geç dönem eserinde gerçekleştirilmektedir. Bu şekilde Hegel *Geist*'in nasıl

somut bir şekilde inşa edilebileceğini ispatlamaktadır. Hegel *Geist* mefhumunu ben ve bizin birbirlerine olan karşılıklı bağımlılığı olarak tanımlamıştır. Buna göre, bireyin yaşamı ve özgürlüğü onu çevreleyen toplumdan ayrı düşünülemez. Öte yandan, toplum ise bireyden bağımsız bir anlam kazanamaz. İşte bu karşılıklılık ilkesine Hegel *Sittlichkeit* adını vermektedir.

5. Bölüm’de *Tüze Felsefesi* eserinin karşılıklı tanınma veya toplumsallık bağlamında inşa ettiği toplum modeli incelenmektedir. Hegel bu eserini (*Tinin Fenomenolojisi*’nde olduğu gibi) spekülatif ya da mutlak mantık kategorilerine göre işlemiştir. Buna göre, iradenin somut şekilde özgürlüğe kavuşması üç aşamada meydana gelir. i) Soyut Hak: bireyin iradesinin kişinin iç dünyasına bakılmaksızın yasalara, hukuk normlarına uygun olup olmadığına odaklanılmaktadır (kısacası, *legality*). ii) Ahlak: Soyut Hak aşamasında iradenin sadece dış dünyada hukuka uygunluğunun araştırılmasına zıt bir şekilde, bu aşamada kişinin sadece iç dünyasına odaklanılır. Buna göre, kişinin niyeti, vicdanı gibi içsel özellikleri araştırılarak ahlakın nihai nesnesi olan evrensel iyiliğe ne kertede uyup uymadığına bakılmaktadır. Hegel’e göre Ahlak aşamasının en başat örneğini Kant’ta bulabiliriz. Hegel’e göre Kantçı ve genel anlamda ise modern ahlak anlayışı, olan ile olması gereken arasındaki hiçbir zaman kapanmayan yarığa hapsolmuş durumdadır. Bu yoksunluğun aşılması Ahlak’ın kendi işleyişi göz önüne alındığında mümkün değildir. Bu sebeple bu kapanmaz boşluk en son aşamaya gereksinim duymaktadır. iii) *Sittlichkeit*: Hegel’in siyaset felsefesine yaptığı orijinal katkılardan birisini oluşturmaktadır. Bu kavram türkçeye töresellik olarak çevrilebilir. Fakat bu çevirinin sorunlu yanı Türkçe’deki töre kavramının negatif çağrışım taşımaya rağmen Hegel için *Sittlichkeit* ya da *Sitte* özgürlüğün biricik temeli olduğu için pozitif anlamda kullanılmaktadır. İngilizce çevirilere baktığımızda bu kavram etik yaşam (*ethical life*) olarak çevrilmektedir. Aslına bakacak olursak, İngilizce çevirinin de işaret ettiği üzere, *Sittlichkeit*’in tek sorunsuz çevirisi eski Yunanca’daki *ethos* kavramıdır. Hegel zaten kendi kavramını polis yaşamında olduğu iddia edilen *ethos* üzerinden, yani toplumsal ve politik hayatın yurttaş adına kendinde değerli bir uğraş olduğu görüşünden tüetmiştir.

Hegel *Tüze Felsefesi*’ni üç ana kısma ayırmış olmasına rağmen nicelik olarak bakıldığında Ahlak ve Soyut Hak bölümlerinin toplamı *Sittlichkeit*’ten az

tutmaktadır. Bunun sebebi, Hegel'e göre özgürlüğün ve karşılıklı tanınma ilkesinin ancak ve ancak bu son aşamada gerçekleşiyor olmasıdır. Metne baktığımızda iradenin telosunu ifade eden bu son aşamanın kendi içinde üç ana bölüme ayrıldığı görülür. Bu aşamalar sırasıyla Aile, Sivil Toplum ve Devlet şeklindedir. Aile kurumu Hegel'in soyut birlik dediği aşamaya denk gelir. Zira, burada aile bireyleri bir birlik oluşturmalarına rağmen bu birliktelik akla, rasyonel ilkelere değil sevgiye, yani rasyonel olmayan bir duyguya dayanır. Aile kurumu ve sevgi duygusu özgürlük ve insanca yaşam için gerekli unsurları oluştururlar fakat tek başlarına yeterli değildir. Zira, rasyonel, akılcı bir seviyeye evrilecek şekilde *Aufhebung* edilmeleri gerekmektedir. Zira, kişi ailesini, eşini ve çocuklarını sevebilir ama aynı ülkeyi paylaştığı tüm yurttaşları sevemez.

Sivil Toplum aşaması ise Hegel'in modern dünyada kapitalizmin gerekliliğini kabul ettiği aşamaya tekabül eder. Buna göre, artık bireyler birbirlerine aile üyelerinin davrandığı gibi sevgi aracılığıyla değil kar maximizasyonu saikiyle yaklaşırlar. Kapitalist piyasada Rousseau'nun doğa durumu ya da Hegel'in ölüm kalım savaşını anımsatır bir mücadele söz konusudur. Hegel kapitalizmin modern yaşam için olmazsa olmaz niteliğini kabul etmekle birlikte onun ancak ve ancak devlet tarafından sürekli kontrol altında tutulması gerektiğini öne sürer. Zira, devlet kontrolünde olmayan bir piyasa eşitsizliğin gittikçe daha da ayyuka çıktığı, özgürlüğün ve insanca yaşamın yitirildiği bir hukuksuzluğa hapsolacaktır.

İşte bu sebeple *Sittlichkeit*'in son aşaması olan Devlet, Aile ve Sivil Toplum'un telosunu oluşturan nihai aşama olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Devlet Hegel'in *Logik*'indeki somut ya da dolayımlanmış evrenselliğe karşılık gelir. Hegel Devlet'in işleyişinde en büyük görevi bürokratlara, devlet memurlarına vermiştir. Çünkü onlar (Plato'nun *Politeia*'daki yönetici sınıfı diğer sınıflardan izole etmesini andırır şekilde) kapitalist piyasa aktörleri gibi bireysel çıkarları için değil aksine toplumsal çıkar için çalışırlar. Hegel'in memur sınıfına duyduğu bu güven Rousseau'nun yasakoyucu figürüne olan güvenini akla getirir şekilde naif gelebilir. Zira, Hegel'in *Tüze Felsefesi*'ni kaleme almış olduğu 19. yüzyıl başında modern bürokrasi daha yeni ortaya çıkan bir unsurdur ve bu sebeple dönemin düşünürleri piyasadaki eşitsizliğin çaresi olarak onlara haddinden fazla umut bağlamış olabilirler.

Hegel'in bu geç eserinin tüm bölümleri tartışıldıktan sonra tezde odaklanılan soru aslında Hegel'e sıklıkla atfedilen eleştiriden bir başkası değildir: Hegel eserinde sürekli olarak bireyin özgürlüğü ve toplumsal düzenin eşit önemi haiz olduğunu iddia edip ne toplumcu ne de bireyci olduğunu idda etmesine rağmen düşüncesi aslında toplumculuktan ya da Devlet'in bireyden daha değerli olması fikrinden beslenmektedir. Bu birinci klasik eleştiri kategorik bir hayır ile cevaplanırsa bile karşımıza daha spesifik olan ikinci bir soru ortaya çıkar: Modern dünyada, birey içinde bulunduğu toplumun normlarını, kurumlarını özgürlüğünün temeli değil de tam tersine onu baskılayan bir unsur olarak gördüğü bir durumda, Hegel bireye isyan etme, Devlet'e baş kaldırma özgürlüğünü tanıyacak mıdır? Hegel'in metni böyle bir soruya cevap verecek bir pasaj barındırmamaktadır. Buna rağmen, tezde örnekleri verildiği üzere Hegel'in her ne kadar birey-toplum ikiliğinden denklik öngörmesine rağmen bazı durumlarda tercihini ikincisinden yana kullandığı idda edilebilir. Kısacası, bu çalışmada Rousseau bireycilikten toplumculuğa savrulan bir düşünsel kariyere sahipken, Hegel toplumculuğun ve bireyciliğin birlikteliğini savunan ama yer yer bütünü parçaya öncelleyen bir kuram geliştirdiği öne sürülmektedir. İşte Hegel'de bulunan bu sorunlu boşluktan dolayı çalışmamızın son iki bölümünde Nietzsche'ye odaklanılmaktadır. Bunun en büyük sebebi Hegel'de kısmen ihmal edilen bireyselliğin Nietzsche'de tam tersine merkeze konulmasıdır. Ayrıca, Hegel'in de Rousseau'nun da düşünceleri Nietzsche'ninki ile kıyaslandığı zaman daha idealist, ütöpik özellikler taşıdığı görülmektedir.

4. Nietzsche: Toplumsallığın Reddi ve Elitist Bireycilik

6. ve 7. Bölümlerde *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üzerine* isimli eserine odaklanılarak Nietzsche'nin geç dönem Rousseau ve Hegel'in aksine toplumsallaşmayı, bireyin bencilliğini askıya almasını insanlığın başına gelen en tehlikeli olay olarak ileri sürmesi soruşturulmaktadır. *Ahlakın Soykütüğü* Nietzsche'nin geç dönem eserlerinden birisi olup siyaset ve toplum felsefesi çalışmalarında öne sürdüğü sıradışı savlardan ötürü önemli bir yere sahip olagelmiştir. Bu çalışmada Nietzsche iyi ve kötü olarak bilinen ahlak değerlerinin modern filozoflar tarafından verili olarak ele alındığını, hiçbir zaman problematize edilmediklerini hatırlatarak

onları soykütüksel bir soruşturmaya tabi tutar. Kısacası, Nietzsche bu çalışmasında iyi ve kötü değerlerinin değerlerini araştırmaktadır.

6. Bölüm'ün konusu *Soykütük*'ün birinci denemesidir. Burada Nietzsche insanlık için söz konusu olan iki zıt dünyayı yorumlama biçimine dair bir araştırmaya girişir. Bunlar köle ahlakı ve efendi ahlakıdır (*Sklavenmoral und Herrenmoral*). Nietzsche bunlara ahlak biçimleri dese de, bunları kişinin hayatı nasıl yaşadığının temelinde yatan bakış açıları olarak görmek daha yerinde olacaktır. Birbirine zıt bu iki yorumlama biçiminin iyi ve kötü olandan ne anladıkları birbirlerinden oldukça farklılık arz etmektedir. 4. Bölüm'de gördüğümüz üzere Hegel de *Tinin Fenomenolojisi*'nde köle ve efendi kavramlarından bahseder. Aradaki fark, Hegel'in bunları *Aufhebung*'a muhtaç iki bilinç formu olarak ele alırken Nietzsche'nin tüm yaşamı her daim belirleyen ve bilinç boyutu dışında fizyolojik boyutu da olan sabitler olarak ele almasıdır. Yani, Nietzsche'ye göre köle ve efendi ahlakları aşılamaz ve yaşamı belirleyen biricik, daimi unsurlardır. Hegel ise yukarıda gördüğümüz gibi bu bilinç formlarının çözülmesine dayanarak onların geçiciliğinin altını çizmektedir.

Nietzsche'ye göre *Herrenmoral* en başta bedensel olarak güçlü ve sağlıklı olanların yaşama bakışını yansıtır. Yaşamı tüm olumsuzlukları ve zorluklarıyla kucaklayarak evetlemek, eylemlerinin sonucunu faydacı bir biçimde hesaba dökmeden spontane şekilde hareket etmek ve de tepkiden çok eylemde bulunmak efendinin temel özelliklerindendir. Efendi için önce iyi kavramı gelir, bunu soylu, güzel ve mutlu olan şeylerle özdeşleştirmiştir. Efendinin kötü kavramı ise iyinin inşasından sonra gelen ikincil bir önemi haizdir. Bu ikincilliğin sebebi Nietzsche'ye göre efendi ya da yönetici olanların ahlakında ötekini dışlamanın, tepeden inme ahlaki ve toplumsal kıstaslara göre yermenin her daim yaratıcı kendiliğindenlikten (*spontaneity*) çok daha az öneme sahip olduğu gerçeğidir.

Sklavenmoral ise bir nevi efendi ahlakının değillenmesinden ibarettir. Buna göre, köle ahlakı efendininkinin aksine yaşama, kendisine, ötekine ya da kendisine benzemeyen herşeye hayır demekle eyleme geçer. Bu sebeple kölenin eylemi (*action*) aslında tepkidir (*reaction*), çünkü kölenin hem bedensel hem de zihinsel, psikolojik güçsüzlüğü göz önüne alındığında kendi olanakları içinde spontane eyleme geçme kapasitesinden mahrumdur. Nietzsche'nin köle figürüne atfettiği en

başat duygu onun tartışmasındaki orijinal noktalardan birini oluşturmaktadır: acizlik içinde olan ve güçlü ve hükmedici olan efendiye karşı eylemsel düzeyde karşı koyamayan kölenin bu eylemsizliği ister istemez *ressentiment* duygusunun onda hakim duygu olmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır. Nietzsche'nin anlatısına baktığımızda, *ressentiment*, yani bitmek bilmeyen, acizlikten kaynaklanan hınç duygusu, sadece köleyi zehirlemekle kalmaz. Daha da kötüsü, kölenin *ressentiment* içinde meydana getirdiği köle ahlakı zamanla efendiyi, güçlü olanı da zehirlemeye başlamıştır.

Nietzsche, 'Tanrı'nın ölümü'nü ilan eden modernitenin dini değerler sisteminin çöküşü sonucu referans noktasından mahrum, yani nihilizmin bataklığında olduğunu görmüştür. Ona göre, ne pozitivizm ve sözde bilimsel kesinlik ne de modern ahlak ve bunu temellendirmeye çalışan modern düşünce yıkılmış değerlerin yerini almaya aday değildir. Bu sebeple Tanrı'nın ölmüş olsa dahi gölgesinin felsefe, bilim ve ahlak anlayışlarımızda halen yaşamaya devam ettiği tespitinde bulunmuştur. Nietzsche'ye göre nihilizmin güçlenmesinin arkasında yatan temel unsur ise yukarıda anlatılmış olan yaratıcı eyleme geçmekten mahkum, sadece ötekini değilleyebilen, hınç dolu, güçsüz ve mutsuz bir bakış açısının modern insanı gittikçe daha fazla oranda belirliyor oluşudur.

Soykütük'te köle ve efendi birbirleri aleyhine çalışan, 0-1 mantığında kurgulanmış kavramlar olarak ele alınırken, Nietzsche'nin bu eserden bir önceki çalışması olan *İyinin ve Kötünün Ötesinde*'de ise bunun konuyu açabilmek için yararlandığı bir çeşit basitleştirme olduğunun altı çizilmektedir. Buna göre, tüm toplumlar ve bireylerde aslında bu iki bakış açısı değişen oranlarda bulunmaktadır. Önemli olan hangisinin (yani nihilizm ve hınç dolu güçsüzlüğün mü yoksa yaşamla dolu olan sağlık ve güçlülüğün mü) baskın unsur olduğunu saptamaktır.

Nietzsche'nin bedensel, fizyolojik ya da materyal olanın merkeziliğine dikkat çekerek Hegel'in de içinde bulunduğu metafizik gelenekten ayrıldığını ileri sürebiliriz. Hegel'de önemli olan bilinç formlarıyken Nietzsche *Böyle Söyledi Zerdüş*t isimli çalışmasında akıl, zihin, vb. kavramların ikincil önemde olduğunu söyleyerek bedenin büyük akıl, aklınsa onun bir oyuncağı olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Çalışmamızın Nietzsche ile ilgili olan ilk kısmında düşünürün yaşamı kısaca anlatılmaktadır. Burada Nietzsche'nin bedene yaptığı bu vurgunun biyografik kökenleri bulunabilir.

Toparlayacak olursak, bu bölümde doğaya uygun bir yaşam anlayışından yaşamı baskılayıcı bir ahlak anlayışına geçişin günümüz insanlığını oluşturduğu incelenmektedir. Buradan yola çıkarak, Hegel ve Rousseau'da gördüğümüz insanlığın toplumsal, ahlaki ve rasyonel olarak eğitilmesinin (Hegel'de *Bildung*, Rousseau'da ise ortak iradenin tesis edilmesinin) gerekli olduğu teması Nietzsche'nin düşüncesinde insanlığın kurtulması gereken bir hale bürünmektedir.

Çalışmamızın 7. Bölümünde ise *Soykütük* çalışmasının 2. denemesi tartışılmaktadır. Burada, modern insanın ve toplumsallığın olmazsa olmaz öğeleri olan sorumluluk, değişmezlik, sağduyu, geleceği planlayarak yaşama ve ahlaklı olma gibi kavramların nasıl ortaya çıktıkları konu edinilmektedir. Önceki bölüme koşut bir biçimde, Nietzsche için Aydınlanma ve sürekli ilerleme fikri için hayati öneme sahip bu kavramların aslında bizi nihilist ve hasta kılan, yaratıcı bireyselliklerimizden koparan unsurlar olduğu belirtilmektedir.

Nietzsche'nin buradaki anlatısı (kendisi bu kavramı açık bir şekilde kullanmasa da) Rousseau'da gördüğümüz insanlığın doğa durumundan toplumsallık durumuna evrilişi anlatısına paralellikler barındırmaktadır. Buna göre, toplumsal düzen öncesi yaşayan insanların yaşamını belirleyen en başat yetilerden birisi unutabilme yetisidir (*Vergesslichkeit*). Bu yeti yüzünden toplumsal normlar, devlet, politik kurumlar gibi mefhumlar inşa edilemez. Bunun yerine yukarıda anlatılan efendi ahlakının yaratıcı bireyselliği ve spontane yaşayışı hakim unsurdur. İşte bu unutkan, toplum-dışı insanı sözünü tutan, sorumluluklarını yerine getiren (kısacası Rousseau ve Hegel'in ideali olan toplumsal düzeni bireysel özgürlükle tamamen özümsemiş) insan haline getirmek için unutabilme yetisine zıt yönde çalışan bir yetiye gerek vardır. İşte Nietzsche buna hafıza (*Gedächtnis*) adını vermektedir. Burada önemli olan husus unutabilme yetisinin ortaya çıkması ya da merkezi rol oynaması doğal bir durumken, toplumsallık ve onunla ilişkili olan sorumluluk kavramlarının güçlenmesini mümkün kılan hafızanın doğal bir yeti olmadığı için kültürel, politik, toplumsal unsurlar yoluyla meydana getirilmesi gerektiğidir. Nietzsche'nin bu vurgusunun çalışmamız açısından önemli olan tarafı, Rousseau'nun erken dönemini anımsatacak bir şekilde, bireyselliğin ve özgürlüğün toplumsallık ve esaret ile zıt unsurlar olduğunu iddia ediyor oluşudur. Böylelikle, Rousseau'nun bu görüşü terk edip Hegel'in toplumculuğunu öncesine zıt bir şekilde,

Nietzsche'nin düşüncesinin zıt yönü işaret ettiğini söyleyebiliriz. Yani, insanlığın nihilizmden çıkış yolu daha fazla *Bildung*, aydınlanma ya da toplumsallaşma değil, doğallığını ve bu sebeple yaratıcılığını, mutluluğunu, sağlığını baskılayan bu unsurların etkisini azaltmalarında yatmaktadır.

Anlatıya dönecek olursak, hafıza ve toplumsallığın tesis edilebilmesi acı (*Schmerz*) duygusunun beden üzerindeki etkisinde yatar. Buna göre, insanlık ancak acı vasıtası ile eğitilebilmiştir, çünkü Nietzsche'ye göre insan bedeni üzerine uygulanan dayanılmaz acı hafızayı güçlendirici bir etkide bulunmaktadır. Nietzsche'nin bu yorumunu (düşüncesini detaylı bir şekilde incelememiş olsa da) Hegel'e bir cevap olarak düşünebiliriz: insanlığın gelişimi, yani egoizmden toplumsal hale dönüşü, *Fenomenoloji*'de gördüğümüz üzere bilincin soyut bir evrende kendi kendini aşarak ilerlemesiyle değil acı duygusunun bedene uygulanmasıyla, yani bedensel ve maddi düzlemde, gerçekleşmiştir. Bunun gerçekleşmesi ise cezalandırma uygulamasında olmaktadır.

Acı dolu cezanın uygulandığı yer ise Nietzsche'nin alacaklı (*Gläubiger*) ile borçlu (*Schuldner*) olarak ifade ettiği ilişkide kendisine yer bulmuştur. Nietzsche bu ticari ilişkiyi aslında insanlığın en eski ve en temel ilişkisi olarak ele alır. Burada söz konusu olan, alacaklının borçlunun borcunu ödememesi durumunda ona istediği gibi davranabilme, spesifik olarak, bedenine işkence edebilme hürriyetine kavuşmuş olmasıdır. Borcunu ödeyemeyen borçludan anlaşılması gereken ise toplumsallaşma sürecinde hazıfa ve sorumluluk yetileri henüz yeterince gelişmemiş unutkan olanlardır. Bu eski doğal devirlerden kalma insanlar toplum tarafından cezalandırılarak bertaraf edilir. Nietzsche'ye göre insanlığın eşitsizliği yok edebilmesi beyhude bir çabadan ibarettir. Çünkü alacaklı ile borçlu, iyi hafızaya sahip olan ile hala unutkan kalmış olan, sorumluluk sahibi ile unutkan arasındaki fark insanlığın sabitlerinden bir tanesidir.

7. Bölüm'de tartışılan bir başka tema ise yukarıda anlatılan süreç sonucunda insanın içgüdülerini bastırmayı öğrenerek içsellik kazanmış olmasıdır. Bu süreçte insan hiç olmadığı kadar ruhani derinleşme yaşar. Bunun sonucunda da iki farklı kişi arasında kurulan alacaklı-borçlu ya da cezalandıran-cezalandırılan ilişkisi artık bireyin kendi içinde yaşanmaya başlar. Nietzsche bu dönüşüme insanın içselleşmesi (*internalisation*) adını verir. İçine dönmüş modern insanı karakterize eden şey,

eskiden (yani efendi ahlakına sahipken) vicdanı sızlamadan doya doya açığa çıkardığı içgüdülerine bir anlamda ahlaki bir savaş açmış olmasıdır. Kişinin doğaya karşı verdiği bu savaş Hegel ve Rousseau'nun umdukları gibi başarılı bir şekilde sonlanacak bir duruma değil, Nietzsche'nin iddia ettiği gibi insanın daha da hasta ve nihilist olmasına sebep olmuştur.

Bu içsel savaş durumundaki toplumsallaştırılmış insanın reddettiği gerçek insanın bireysel iradeye sahip olmadığıdır. Nietzsche'ye göre güçlünün güçlü ya da zayıfın zayıf olması onların bile isteye oldukları bir şey değildir. Bu görüşün inkarı üzerine kurulmuş olan modern anlayış ise insanın gerçek durumunu anlamaktan oldukça uzaktadır.

5. Sonuç

Bu çalışmada tartışılan Rousseau (2. ve 3. Bölümler), Hegel (4. ve 5. Bölümler) ve Nietzsche'de (6. ve 7. Bölümler) toplum ve toplumsallığın rolü, birey ve toplum arasındaki ilişki, ve insan özgürlüğünün bu kavramlarla ilişkisinin nasıl kavramsallaştırıldığı ele alınmaktadır. Rousseau'ya baktığımızda erken dönem eseri olan *Eşitsizliğin Kökeni*'nde insanın özünde ve başlangıçta egoist olduğunu ve sahip olduğu bireyci özgürlük anlayışına göre toplumsal normları insan için gerekli değil kısıtlayıcı unsurlar olarak ele aldığını görmekteyiz. Bu bakış açısından yola çıkarak, toplumun olmazsa olmaz kurumları olan aile, özel mülkiyet, vb.'nin eşitsizliğin somutlaşmış halleri olduğunu söylemektedir. Rousseau geç dönem eseri olan *Toplum Sözleşmesi*'nde ise bir nevi dönüşü yaparak bireyin sadece toplumsallığın inşası ile (yani ortak iradenin kurulmasıyla) özgürlüğüne kavuşabileceği fikrini öne sürmektedir. Yurttaş için artık asıl öneme sahip olan bireysel istekler değil kamu yararı olmalıdır.

Hegel'e baktığımızda ise Rousseau'nun söz konusu dönüşünün aksine başından sonuna kadar *Toplum Sözleşmesi* çizgisinde toplumsallığın merkezi rolünün işlendiğini görmekteyiz. Buna göre, karşılıklı tanınma insan özgürlüğünün olmazsa olmaz şartıdır. Bunun gerekliliğinin ispatı *Tinin Fenomenolojisi*'nde tartışılan köle ile efendi arasındaki ilişkide tematize edilmektedir. *Tüze Felsefesi* eserinde ise tanınmanın spekülâtif mantığın prensiplerine göre nasıl somutlaşacağının taslağı

verilmektedir. Hegel'e bütün olarak baktığımızda Rousseau'nun ikiye bölünmüş düşüncesinin burada entegre edilmiş halini bulduğumuzu söyleyebiliriz. Hegel'in metnindeki problematik nokta ise her ne kadar bireyin özgürlüğü ile toplumsal düzenin eşit önemde olduğunu savunsa da yer yer ikincisini birincisi karşısında daha öne çıkartma eğiliminde bulunmasıdır. Bu sebeple Nietzsche'nin alabildiğine bireyci, toplumsal normu realist bir şekilde eleştiren düşüncesine başvurulmuştur.

Nietzsche *Ahlakın Soykütüğü* isimli çalışmasının birinci denemesinde Hegel'in köle-efendi diyalektiğini köle ve efendi ahlak sistemleri olarak yeniden yorumlayarak tüm insanlığın bu ikisi arasındaki mücadele sonucu oluştuğunu tartışmaktadır. Nietzsche'ye göre bu eşitsiz ilişki aşılabilecek ya da aşılması gereken bir ilişki olmaktan uzaktır. Mücadelenin kazananı bedenlen güçlü efendi değil güçsüzlüğünü hınç duygusuyla ve kurnazlıkla dengeleyen köleci yaşam biçimi olmuştur. *Soykütük*'ün ikinci çalışmasında ise köle ahlakının efendi ahlakı aleyhine galip çıkmasının, cezalandırma uygulamasına sahne olan alacaklı-borçlu ilişkisinde gerçekleştiği tartışılmaktadır. Buna göre, başlangıçta unutkan ve egoist olan insan bedensel acının toplum tarafından ceza olarak uygulanmasıyla sorumluluk sahibi, yani zorla toplumsallaştırılmış birey ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu dönüşümün bedeli daha doğal olan durumdaki yaratıcılığın, mutluluğun ve sağlığın geriye dönülemeyecek şekilde kaybedilmesidir.

Sonuç olarak, Nietzsche'nin aşırı bireyci ve toplumsallık karşıtı soykütüksel eleştirisinin ancak ve ancak Hegel'in *Tüze Felsefesi*'nde sunduğu toplumsal düzen taslağı içinde anlamlı olacağı ileri sürülmüştür. Her zaman göz önünde tutulması gereken nokta, bireyin egoizminin ancak ehilleştirilmiş bir şekilde yani toplumsallığında yaşanmasının mümkün olduğudur. Bu görüşü her ne kadar Hegel Rousseau'nun aksine tutarlı bir şekilde işlemiş olsa da bireyin irrasyonel bir toplumda sahip olması gereken Nietzsche'ci eleştirel bakış açısını geliştirmemiştir.

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