“The Fate of Reason in Modernity”
Hegel on Religion, Love, and Alterity

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DISSERTATION

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Christopher David DiBona was born on January 5th, 1988, in Lowell, Massachusetts and moved to Duxbury, Massachusetts in 1995, where he spent most of his youth enjoying friends, the outdoors, and athletics. He graduated from the Duxbury High School in 2006. He then attended Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, where he was a member of the varsity wrestling team and the Psi Upsilon fraternity. He graduated from Trinity College in 2010 with a B.A. in Philosophy, studying under Drew Hyland, Erik Vogt, and Donna-Dale Marcano. He wrote a senior thesis on Jean-Paul Sartre's conception of freedom. After graduating from Trinity, he spent five years selling orthopedic technology in the Greater Boston area. In 2015, he earned his M.A. in Philosophy from Boston College in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, studying the history of Western philosophy under the guidance of John Sallis, David Roochnik, and Oliva Blanchette. Upon earning his M.A., he enrolled in the Religion and Critical Thought program at Brown University. While at Brown, he was an invited speaker at numerous national and international conferences and was awarded an Andrew W. Mellon Graduate Fellowship in Collaborative Humanities, the Udo Keller Stiftung Forum Humanum Grant, the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs Fellowship, the Dean's Faculty Fellowship, and a Cogut Institute Research Assistantship in Collaborative Humanities. He also published articles in *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology* and *Claremont Studies in Philosophy of Religion* and lectured on Western philosophical ethics at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. In September 2021, he will serve as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Religious Studies Department at Brown University.

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ABBREVIATIONS FOR FREQUENTLY CITED WORKS

In citing primary sources, I have made extensive use of previously published translations where available but have modified them in certain instances. Except in cases of special significance for my interpretation, I have not noted the modifications. All citations are to the available English editions. For Hegel's texts, I have included the German editions in the abbreviations list for reference.

HEGEL

BCSC "The Basic Concept of the Spirit of Christianity."
"Grundkonzept zum Geist des Christentums." In *Werke* 1.

D *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy.* Translated by H.S. Harris and Walter Cerf. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977.
Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems der Philosophie. In *Werke* 2:9-138.

EL *The Encyclopedia Logic: Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Züsatz.* Translated by T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, and H.S. Harris. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991. Cited by paragraph number.
Enzyklopädie der philosophischen im Grundrisse (1830). Werke 8-10.

ETW *Early Theological Writings.* Translated by T.M. Knox. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1948.

FK *Faith and Knowledge.* Translated by Walter Cerf and H.S. Harris. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977.
Glauben und Wissen oder Reflexionphilosophie der Subjektivität in der Vollständigkeit ihrer Formen als Kantische, Jacobische und Fichtesche Philosophie. In *Werke* 2:287-433.

FS "Fragment of a System" in *ETW* 309-321.
"Fragmente zur Verfassungsschrift." In *Werke* 1.

GW *Gesammelte Werke. Rheinisch-Westfäliche Akademie der Wissenschaften.* Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1968.

HTJ *Theologische Jugendschriften*, Edited by Herman Nohl. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1907.

JL *Jena Lectures.* In *Hegel and the Human Spirit: A Translation of the Jena Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit* (1805-1806) with commentary. Translated and Edited by Leo Rauch. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983. In *Werke* 2.
Jensener Realphilosophie. Edited by J. Hoffmeister. Leipzig: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1931.

LF "Love" Fragment in *ETW* 302-308.
"Die Liebe." In *Werke* 1:244-250.

LHP *Lectures on the History of Philosophy in Three Volumes.* Translated by E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson. London: Kegan Paul, 1896
Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte. Werke 18-20.

LPR *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion.* Translated by R.F. Brown, P.C. Hodgson, J.M. Stuart, and H.S. Harris. Edited by P.C. Hodgson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion. Edited by Walter Jaeschke. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1983-1985.

PCR "The Positivity of Christian Religion" in *ETW* 67-181.
"Die Positivität der christlichen Religion." In *Werke* 1:104-229.

PhS *Phenomenology of Spirit.* Translated by Terry Pinkard. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.
Phänomenologie des Geistes. Werke 3.

PN *Philosophy of Nature.* Translated by A.V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
Die Naturphilosophie. In *Werke* 9.

PR *Elements of the Philosophy of Right.* Translated by H.B. Nisbett. Edited by Allen Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts. Werke 7.

RFR *"*Religion, founding a religion" (1797). Translated by C. Hamlin and H.S. Harris. In *Miscellaneous Writings of G.W.F. Hegel* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002).
*"*Religion, eine Religion stiften." In *Werke* 1:241-243.

SCF "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" in *ETW* 182-301.
"*Der Geist des Christenums und sein Schicksal."* In *Werke* 1:274-418.

SL *Science of Logic.* Translated by George Di Giovanni. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
Wissenschaft der Logik. Werke 5-6.

TE *Three Essays, 1793-1795: The Tübingen Essay, Berne Fragments, The Life of Jesus.* Translated by Peter Fuss and John Dobbins. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.

TF "Tübingen Fragment" in *Three Essays,* 1793-1795.

W *Werke.* Edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel. 20 vols. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1969-1971.

HEIDEGGER

BT *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper & Row Press, 1962.

BPP *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.

KANT

CPR *Critique of Pure Reason.* Translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

GMM *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated and Edited by Mary Gregor and Jens Timmermann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

RLR *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*. In *Religion and Rational Theology.* Translated by George di Giovanni, 39-215. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

LEVINAS

TI *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority.* Translated by Alphonso Lingis. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991.

INTRODUCTION
RELATING TO ALTERITY

In its broadest aim, this dissertation attempts to demonstrate that and how key theoretical debates about alterity in Continental thought have significant value for diagnosing, understanding, and addressing pressing ethical and political aspects of how we engage with others – especially "others" not like "us" – in the present moment, both within the academic humanities and within modern Western societies at large. Within the Continental tradition, German idealism and phenomenology are particular potent sites for thinking about this question. For central to much thinking in these traditions is the idea that the constitution of the subject entails a constitutive relation to alterity, to what is *other* than the subject. How the subject can and should relate to this alterity – whether it be the alterity of another human or otherwise – is one of the foundational questions these traditions try to address, albeit in decisively different ways and with decisively different conclusions. To be sure, German idealism and phenomenology are not univocal traditions with rigidly defined sets of methodological principles – quite the opposite in fact, with each subsequent thinker innovating their respective traditions with new insights and approaches. But German idealism and phenomenology do offer us two broadly contrasting theoretical frameworks for approaching the question of alterity and its significance for ethical and political theory and practice. In this dissertation, G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) and Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995) – two giants of the Continental tradition – will serve as my chief representatives of these two general theoretical frameworks. For in many ways the question of alterity acts as the center of gravity around which their thinking is fundamentally oriented, and, moreover, their respective philosophical approaches to alterity have had an outsized influence on ethical and political thought across the humanities. Despite their common

preoccupation, however, Hegel and Levinas offer largely opposed conceptions of alterity and reach radically different conclusions about how the subject can and should relate to it. One of my overarching contentions, to be argued for throughout this work, is that gaining a sense for how these two intensely complex and deeply influential thinkers respectively theorize alterity will afford us a deeper understanding of the ethical and political pathologies and possibilities for relating to alterity in practice.

Underlying and animating Hegel's and Levinas's respective philosophical approaches to and conclusions about alterity are their engagements with the ideas and practices of their respective religious traditions – Christianity for Hegel and Judaism for Levinas. For this reason, this dissertation is situated firmly at the intersection of philosophy and the study of religion, even as it simultaneously problematizes the possibility of any neat distinction between these fields of study. At the same time, and for these reasons, by drawing attention to the religious roots of Hegel's and Levinas's philosophical concepts and constructs, this dissertation also aims to render explicit the operative presence of religion in broader, and largely secular, academic discourses that adopt and employ broadly Hegelian and Levinasian theoretical orientations for thinking about ethical and political theory and practice. And for these same reasons yet again, this dissertation is also intended as a contribution to Hegel studies, Levinas studies, and the history of post-Kantian Continental philosophy. Within Hegel studies – where this dissertation more intensively engages – we will broach and challenge both contemporary and long-running interpretive debates at the core of Hegel scholarship, including the relation between Hegel's early and mature writings, the place of love in Hegel's system, the relation between religious representation [*Vorstellung*] and philosophical thought [*Denken*], the Hegelian conception of God, the relational nature of autonomy, and the democratic nature of the state [*der Staat*]. Within

Levinas studies, we will consider the relation between Levinas's Talmudic and phenomenological writings, the transcendental heritage of his thought, and the much-debated relation between his ethical and political thought. And with regard to the history of Continental philosophy, we will develop some of the underlying themes and approaches that unite the tradition as well as some of the key critical engagements between thinkers that have shaped its development. And finally, through our engagements with the work of Levinas, Hegel, and other figures in the Continental tradition this dissertation is also intended to contribute to a number of classical and contemporary debates in and at the intersection of Continental philosophy, philosophy of religion, religious and philosophical ethics, and political thought, including the nature of the given and its relation to conceptuality, the relation between love and reason, the nature of philosophical and cultural modernity, the relation between modernity and postmodernity, and the role of religion in ethics and public life.

The Levinasian approach by and large dominates the contemporary theoretical landscape for thinking about alterity and its significance for ethical and political theory and practice. Indeed, it is difficult to overstate the extent to which academic discourses about ethics and politics over the last fifty years are critically indebted to the Levinasian framework, in one way or another. For Levinas, alterity names the radical singularity of an "Other," that aspect of an "Other" which is not simply different from me, but utterly incommensurable, resisting all conceptualization. But while Levinasian alterity cannot be conceptually grasped or comprehended, it can be encountered in experience through a particular kind of conceptual-practice stance, one which Levinas frequently describes in terms of radical hospitality. Showing radical hospitality to the singularity of an "Other" is at the core of the Levinasian approach to ethics and an ethical form of political life.

However, as we will consider in more detail in chapter one, despite the virtues of Levinas's approach to ethical and political life, the ethical encounter with alterity – with the singularity of an "Other" – made possible by this stance of radical hospitality is detached from all conceptually determined concrete particularities and thus suffers from a level of abstraction and indeterminacy that undermines its theoretical cogency and its pragmatic efficacy. These deficiencies in Levinas's approach to alterity ought to encourage us to go back to the drawing board in search of an alternative. Enter Hegel, who envisions a more determinate and hermeneutically sensitive relation between alterity and conceptuality, one which does not keep alterity at a distance from our conceptual grasp but rather encourages us to freely and ecstatically immerse ourselves in alterity, to sink into its free movements, as if they were one's own, and to be forever changed as a result of this intimate ecstatic engagement. As we will see, to engage with alterity via this dynamic of free ecstasis and return is the essence of rational cognition, in the distinctively Hegelian sense of the term.

Hegel's rational approach to alterity, however, has often been misunderstood and rejected, especially by thinkers in the Continental tradition. Examples abound. A decade after Hegel's untimely death in 1831, F.W.J. Schelling (1775-1854) issues a critique of what he perceived as Hegel's conflation of reason and the actuality of sheer existence that has reverberated throughout the Continental tradition.[1] For example, Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), who attended Schelling's lectures on Hegel, later similarly critiques the unlimited scope of Hegelian rationality and its abstraction from the facticity of everyday life. Shortly later, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) adds his own spin to this line of critique, deeming Hegelian

[1] Stephen Houlgate, "Schelling's Critique of Hegel's *Science of Logic*," *The Review of Metaphysics* 53, no.1 (September 1999): 99-128.

rationality as nothing more than a disguise for the will to power, rather than a force of put in service of universal truth and freedom. Deeply influenced by Nietzsche, Georges Bataille (1897-1962) argues that Hegelian rationality epitomizes "project thinking" – thinking that always encounters the other strictly as an instrument that serves one's pre-determined ends and ambitions rather than as the other exists apart from its sheer utility. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), who takes inspiration from all the aforementioned thinkers, positions Hegel as one of the culminating figures of the metaphysics of presence, describing Hegel's philosophical science as one that has taken all of existence into its firm possession. After Heidegger, Levinas identifies Hegelian rationality as carrying forward a long tradition of totalizing thinking that "violently" covers over alterity. After Levinas, Jean-Francois Lyotard (1924-1998) characterizes Hegel as a grand narrator *par excellence*, offering us a rigid, univocal, and purportedly universal account of reason that is said to have mastered all alterity. And finally, for much of his career Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) channels this line of critique in his own engagements with Hegel, often rebuking him for his hubristic attempts to assimilate all difference within a self-enclosed logo-centric dialectical logic.[2] Frederic Jameson aptly sums up the illustrious anti-Hegelianism of the

[2] See, for examples, F.W.J. Schelling, *On the History of Modern Philosophy*, trans. Andrew Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 134-63; Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 75; Friedrich Nietzsche, *Unfashionable Observations*, trans. Richard Gray (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 142-143; Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*, trans. Leslie Anne Boldt (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), 80-81, 108-112; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), § 82; Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 36-37, 289-298; Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington & Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 33–34; Jacques Derrida, *Glas*, trans. John P. Leavey, Jr. & Richard Rand (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 22-25. More recently in the American context, William Desmond, John Caputo, and Merold Westphal have been highly sympathetic to this line of interpretation. See William Desmond, *Hegel's God: A Counterfeit Double?* (New

Continental tradition of thinking when in the Foreword to the English translation of Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* he writes, "[T]he rhetoric of totality and totalization that derived from…the Hegelian tradition is the object of a kind of instinctive or automatic denunciation by just about everybody" (*The Postmodern Condition,* xix).

Despite the nuances of these thinkers' respective positions vis-à-vis Hegel, chiefly at issue in one form or another in all of their critiques is Hegel's conception of autonomous reason, in both its theoretical and practical modes.[3] In Hegel's thinking, autonomous reason connotes a mode of rationality which is self-determined, or ruled by itself, in the distinctively Greek sense of *autos* [self] and *nomos* [law]. In a broad sense, then, to claim that reason is autonomous is to claim that reason does not count as theoretically or practically valid any sources of authority – of nature or of tradition – which it has not itself first ratified according to its own immanently derived judgments. In the eyes of many of his critics, Hegel is widely thought to consummate philosophical modernity and the Western philosophical tradition by rendering explicit the infinite purview of autonomous reason.[4] But for these critics, what was propped up by Hegel and other

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York: Routledge Press, 2017); John Caputo, *The Insistence of God: A Theology of the Perhaps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 2013), 92-72; Merold Westphal, *In Praise of Heteronomy: Making Room for Revelation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 124-189.

[3] For a powerful articulation of the centrality of the autonomy of reason not only to the development of Hegel's thought and of philosophical modernity but also to postmodern reactions to modernity see Robert Pippin, *Modernism as a Philosophical Problem: On the Dissatisfactions of European High Culture* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1999).

[4] This is a view popularized especially by Martin Heidegger's and Jacques Derrida's positioning of Hegel as one of the culminating figures of the metaphysics of presence. As Derrida writes of Hegel, "He undoubtedly *summed up* the entire philosophy of the logos. He determined ontology as absolute logic; he assembled all the delimitations of philosophy as presence; he assigned to presence the eschatology of Parousia, of the self-proximity of infinite subjectivity." Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 24. Also see

Enlightenment thinkers as a vehicle of intellectual and social liberation (i.e., autonomous reason) is instead seen as a vehicle of totalization and violence.[5] For autonomous reason is seen as denying autonomy to the phenomena with which it is concerned by imposing on them a set of antecedently determined concepts and categories without regard for the possibility that those concepts and categories might be poor representations of the phenomena in question or that phenomena might transcend those concepts and categories altogether. In other words, in its attempt to master phenomena according to its own concepts and representations of them, autonomous reason renders the thinking subject blind to the autonomy of the other qua wholly other, to the autonomy of alterity. For this reason, postmodernity definitively presents as anti-modern, and this postmodern stance toward the project of modernity describes an emotional and theoretical current that has deeply penetrated all spheres of contemporary intellectual life in the West.

Given their suspicions and criticisms of Hegel's philosophical ambitions, these Continental thinkers have developed their own array of approaches to alterity, oftentimes in direct reaction to what they perceived as the rationalistic excesses of Hegel's system. Common to many of these approaches is an insistence that in order for a phenomenon (e.g., a person, a natural event, a state of affairs) to show up autonomously, on its own terms, unimpeded by an antecedently posited interpretive horizon or conceptual schema, the subject must first cultivate a non-discursive stance of receptive openness that primes it to encounter the singular and

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Heidegger's 1930-1931 lecture courses on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit.* Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit,* trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

[5] These are the Heidegger's, Levinas's, and Derrida's respective terms for describing Hegelian reason's grasp of its objects.

autonomous self-givenness of the phenomenon in question. The autonomous self-givenness of a phenomenon thus points to a raw, immediately given level or dimension of experience that is purported to be more fundamental than the level of experience which has undergone conceptual mediation and organization. This raw, immediately given level of experience has been the theoretical preoccupation of many thinkers in Continental tradition. Bataille's notion of a non-discursively accessed "excess of naked experience," the later Heidegger's conception of "releasement" [*Gelassenheit*] and his fixation on the irreducible event [*Ereignis*] of being's givenness, and Levinas's and Derrida's respective ideas of the alterity of the Other [*l'autrui*] encountered through radical hospitality serve as a few noteworthy attempts to articulate the nature of this raw level of experience and how it might be that one can access it.[6] And while it may seem as though these theoretical considerations about the experience of alterity move us far afield from practical concerns, for these thinkers it is precisely here that the theoretical rubber meets the ethical and political road. For accessing this raw level of experience requires cultivating a non-totalizing (to stick with the Levinasian parlance for the moment) mode of relating to what is *other* than the subject, that is, a mode of relating to the other that affords it its own space in which to exercise its autonomy, unrestricted by any antecedently determined conceptual schemes or projects. It is here, then, at the raw aconceptual level of experience, that

[6] While my focus here is on Continental figures, in anglophone philosophy, this topic most often takes the form of the debate over the possibility and form of non-conceptual content as articulated up by thinkers such as Wilfrid Sellars and John McDowell among others. See Wilfred Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997) and John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

we are able to encounter the autonomous self-givenness of the other qua wholly other, the autonomous self-givenness of alterity.[7]

However, as we will see in greater detail in section one, this general approach to the relation between rational conceptual predication and the autonomy of the other qua wholly other brings with it at least two critical limitations. Stated briefly and in anticipation, the first, briefly alluded to above, concerns its pragmatic efficacy. From a broadly pragmatic perspective, the efficacy of the practical application of a conceptual schema – how well it works in practice – serves as a means of judging that schemas theoretical adequacy. Because the encounter with alterity occurs at such a high level of abstraction and indeterminacy, removed from the facticity and particularities of concrete life, it lacks the hermeneutical sensitivity that is required for an efficacious ethical encounter between self and other. In other words, this family of approaches cannot do what they aspire to do. The second limitation is that this general approach merely assumes there to be an irreducible antagonism between conceptuality, on the one hand, and alterity, on the other, and thus artificially and unnecessarily limits the logical space of possibility for thinking about these notions and the nature of their relation. In other words, this approach assumes that concepts *necessarily* perpetrate a kind of "violence" against alterity.[8] They do not fully explore the idea that another way of conceiving this relation is both possible and plausible.

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[7] This is especially true of Levinas's ethical phenomenology of alterity, but it also true of Bataille's and Heidegger's respective approaches to the relation between ethics and alterity. I have written about Bataille's and Heidegger's approaches to the relation between ethics and the experience of alterity elsewhere. See "Toward a Bataillean Ethics of Play" and "Being-toward-Death and Being-with-Others: Toward a Heideggerian Ethics."

[8] Kevin Hector offers a powerful and concise analysis of this trend in continental approaches to religion in his book *Theology Without Metaphysics: God, Language, and the Spirit of Recognition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1-47.

Motivated by these limitations, this dissertation aims to develop an alternative platform for thinking about and relating to alterity by revisiting Hegel's conception of autonomous reason, or rational cognition, so vehemently called into question by many of his critical successors. Hegel's conception of autonomous reason is often and aptly connected to the general deployment of the concept in the history of Western philosophy. The ancient Greeks' espousal of reason, or *logos,* as an autonomous source of authority, irreducible to the authority of myth, nature, or tradition; Rene Descartes' (1596-1650) insistence on a method of radical doubt which requires that whatever is said to possess normative authority must first be clearly and distinctly authenticated by the rational thinking subject [*res cogitans*] rather than by the authority of religious or philosophical tradition; and Immanuel Kant's (1724-1804) adoption of a conception of reason that obeys no laws other than it imposes on itself and his Enlightenment exhortation for us to have the courage to use our own reason all stand as indispensable and influential precursors of Hegel's distinctive conception of autonomous reason. Hegel takes from these thinkers the idea that the rational subject thinks and acts autonomously by determining *for itself* what it will accept as an authoritative account of the nature of things and of an ethical life. But Hegel pushes this line of thought to its extreme limit, conceiving of reason as possessing no limits, as truly infinite, as truly unbound, in the sense that it possesses no external and a priori limitations that determine the knowledge it is capable of affording us. It is precisely this conception of reason as utterly limitless and self-sufficient that raises the philosophical, ethical, and political concerns of Hegel's Continental critics.

However, equally as significant but much less recognized is the importance of Hegel's early and mature writings on religion – especially on Protestant Christianity and its conception of free love – for properly understanding his distinctive deployment of autonomous reason. For the

account of free love, it will be argued, provides the genetic structural and phenomenological scaffolding for the subsequent development of his account of autonomous reason. Stated more baldly, any account of Hegelian reason that does not take into account the enduring centrality of his account of love leaves us with a gross misrepresentation of the former. To be sure, defending this thesis will require a deep immersion in many of Hegel's most difficult texts, including his so-called *Early Theological Writings, The Phenomenology of Spirit, The Science of Logic, The Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* and *The Philosophy of Right.* However, despite the challenges that these texts pose for even the most seasoned Hegel scholars, my contention – to be justified across the course of this work – is that the fruits of this labor are worth the arduous effort and not available elsewhere. For they reveal a nuanced, innovative, and non-totalizing approach to alterity in both its theoretical and practical configurations that should be appealing to modern and postmodern sensibilities alike.[9]

By way of preview, chapter one takes a focused look at Levinas's critique of the modern philosophical tradition, epitomized by Hegel, as well as Levinas's influential position on the question of alterity that grows out of this critique. The core aims of this chapter are to more clearly identify and explicate the theoretical and practical issues at stake in Levinas's thought and the shortcomings of his ethical phenomenology of alterity and the vision of politics it gives rise to. In this chapter, I also consider the impact of Levinas's work by turning to some of his

[9] To this extent, this project can be placed in the line of recent non-totalizing interpretations of Hegel championed by Judith Butler, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Catherine Malabou. Judith Butler and William Connolly, "Politics, Power and Ethics: A Discussion between Judith Butler and William Connolly," *Theory and Event* 4, no.2 (2000); Jean-Luc Nancy, *Hegel: The Restlessness of the Negative,* trans. Jason Smith and Steven Miller (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality, and Dialectic,* trans. Lisabeth During (London: Routledge Press, 2005).

most well-known critical successors whose ethical and political thought continues to operate within a broadly Levinasian framework, including Jacques Derrida and Simon Critchley.

Chapters two through five take up a sustained analysis of Hegel's accounts of love and reason and the connections between them as developed across several of his core texts. In chapter two, I turn to Hegel's early pre-systematic writings on religion (1797-1799) – the so-called *Early Theological Writings* – and specifically to the account of love developed therein. My aims in this chapter are twofold and lay the conceptual groundwork for what follows in chapters three, four, and five. The first is to demonstrate that the account of love that Hegel develops across these early writings contains the seeds of a formative, integrative, and non-totalizing approach to alterity. The second is to begin to demonstrate that the account of love developed in these early writings is absolutely pivotal to understanding the account of autonomous reason that Hegel develops in his 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit.*

Chapter three further develops the significance of Hegel's early account of love to his account of autonomous reason by turning to Hegel's most difficult work – *The Science of Logic* (1812/1813/1816). For many, the *Logic* may seem far removed from the concerns of love. This chapter, however, endeavors to render explicit the ways in which the account of love developed in the early writings on religion permeates and illuminates the account of autonomous reason that we find developed across this work. Establishing the connection between love and reason in the *Logic* will, in turn, help us to further discern Hegel's distinctive approach to alterity and its significance for his ethical and political thought.

Chapter four turns to Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* delivered four times during Hegel's period in Berlin (1821/1824/1827/1831). Here in the *Lectures* we find the connection between love and reason established in chapters two and three systematically united

within a single work in a way that lends further depth and specificity to the love-reason connection and to the distinctive approach to alterity it entails. Specifically, this chapter focuses on the way Hegel positions the Christian account of love collectively represented by the Incarnation, the Passion, the Resurrection, and Pentecost as a powerful illustration of autonomous reason. Unpacking Hegel's treatment of these representations will thus shed further light on his account of reason, its relation to alterity, and its relevance to ethical life.

Chapter five – the culminating chapter of the work – takes up Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* with the aim of recontextualizing Hegel's social and political philosophy in light of the connection between love and reason and the approach to alterity it entails developed across chapters two, three, and four. In the *Philosophy of Right,* Hegel attempts to articulate the elements of a fully rational state in which universal freedom prevails. For many critics, Hegel's vision of a fully rational and universally free state epitomizes the problematics of his thinking and of Western philosophical modernity more generally, for such universal freedom, vouchsafed by reason, is claimed to be nothing but a totalitarian veil masking parochial interests and various forms of domination. Equipped with the insights afforded us in chapters two, three, and four, chapter five offers an alternative interpretation of the rational state and universal freedom it fosters. More specifically, chapter five argues that reframing the rationality and freedom of the state in terms of love reveals an innovative institutional approach to alterity and an agonistic democratic kernel at the heart of Hegel's social and political though that provides a welcome alternative to predominant modes of theorizing and practicing democracy.

CHAPTER ONE
THE FATE OF REASON IN POSTMODERNITY

A. Reason and Identity Thinking

The concept of reason forms the locus of much of the Western philosophical tradition. It is also one of the most criticized concepts in postmodern philosophy. Painting in broad brushstrokes, postmodernists tend to view reason as a totalizing instrument that feigns objective knowledge by categorizing its objects according to prefabricated notions about them. Rather than affording objective knowledge of the object, the rational subject presents only what it itself brings to the object a priori, only what it itself produces, rather than the givenness of the object itself, its self-presentation, or self-givenness. To think rationality, then, is to conduct a kind of inquiry that privileges – sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly – one's own conceptual schemes as the standard by which the object is to be understood, as the rational subject attributes to the object a function and meaning that fits within its own existing projects and interpretive horizons. The rational subject, in other words, shoehorns the object into a conceptual mold which is alien to its normative features and commitments, a conceptual mold in which the object cannot recognize itself. The possibility that the object might in fact transcend or elude familiar conceptual classification – the otherness of the object – is thereby covered over. For postmoderns, this act of conceptual classification amounts to a form of "violence." For by constraining of the object within a priori conceptual limits that are alien to the way in which the object gives itself, the rational subject one-sidedly exercises power over the object. The autonomy of the rational subject thus negates the autonomy of the object.

To mitigate against the "violent" tendencies of the rational subject, many postmodern thinkers have responded by articulating and espousing alternative conceptions of the subject as

fundamentally open and receptive to the self-presentation of the world. This line of critique of rational thinking and the espousals of alternative models of subjectivity have had a substantial and far-ranging impact in a variety of philosophical domains of inquiry. Most directly relevant for our purposes are their overlapping impact in the fields of epistemology, ethics, philosophy of religion, and social and political philosophy. The aims of this chapter are to lend further specificity to this line of critique, to the alternative conceptions of subjectivity that are recommended in its place, and to the impact that this trajectory of thinking has had on these various domains of inquiry. I will pursue these aims by turning to the work of the 20th century Jewish French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who offers one of most potent and influential articulations of this general criticism and corresponding conception of subjectivity. For, in many ways, Levinas's work is programmatic for contemporary trends in contemporary thought across the humanities, especially as they pertain to ethical and political theory and practice. By understanding the former we will thus be able to gain a general sense of the latter. Examining Levinas's writings will also set us up to see how Hegel's account of reason, when viewed through the lens of his conception of love in the early and mature writings on religion, not only falls outside the purview of the postmodern critique of rational subjectivity but also offers us conceptual resources for innovatively approaching alterity in a way that resolves key shortcomings of the broadly Levinasian line of approach.

B. Emmanuel Levinas and the Critique of Conceptual Cognition

Levinas's work is not easy to classify, but in general terms its chief aim is to offer a phenomenological description of the event of encountering the alterity of the Other, unencumbered by any antecedently determined concepts and categories of the Western

philosophical tradition. Levinas's project is, accordingly, properly understood against the backdrop of the history of Western philosophy and what he takes to be its erasure of alterity. The term alterity is widely used across theoretical discourses in the humanities in varying ways and with varying degrees of precision. To understand Levinas's distinctive employment of the term, we must consider his engagement with the phenomenological tradition inaugurated by the German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and his account of the givenness [*gegebenheit*] of phenomena. Husserl's principle of givenness consists, first, in the methodological demand that the phenomenological inquirer restrict him or herself to describing rigorously and without prejudice what is given to experience and the manner in which it is so given and, second, that that which is given in experience functions as an authoritative source of knowledge. "Every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition…everything originarily offered to us in 'intuition' is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being, but also only within the limits in which it is presented there."[10] Husserl's appeal to intuition thus amounts to an insistence that we accept what is directly, or non-inferentially, given in experience. However, beginning with Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) – who declares givenness [*gegebenheit*] to be the central issue animating phenomenology in his pivotal 1920 Freiburg lectures – the strictures of immediate presence to which the principle of givenness had been originally confined begin to loosen, as phenomenological thinkers began to have a greater interest for what we might call limit-phenomena – phenomena whose appearance

[10] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. Daniel O. Dahlstrom (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2014), §24.

occurs at the threshold of givenness understood in terms of stable presence.[11] Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of "Dasein's" being-towards-death in *Being and Time* is a prime early example, as there Heidegger demonstrates that Dasein's effort to representationally grasp its being-a-whole to itself is structurally impossible due to the ever-present impending possibility of death, a phenomenon which itself can never be directly given in experience. One can never fully experience one's own death precisely because death marks the end of experience. Heidegger thus foregrounds the ways in which some phenomena are to be properly characterized in terms of the interplay of presence and absence in experience.[12]

In his early *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, Levinas, too, aligns himself with Husserl's phenomenological principle of principles – the strict reliance on givenness – but, following Heidegger, he criticizes Husserl for failing to recognize that some phenomena exceed the intentional objectifying acts of consciousness and strictures of givenness understood in terms of stable presence.[13] Years later, Levinas's critique of the Husserlian correlation between intentionality and the given continues to animate his thinking. For example, in *Totality and Infinity,* Levinas writes, "[Husserlian] intentionality, where thought remains an *adequation* with the object, does not define consciousness as its fundamental level" (*TI,* 27-29). For Levinas, the encounter with another human being – what he describes as "the face" of the

[11] See Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982). Anthony Steinbock has recently made the case that already in Husserl's work we find a sustained interest in limit-phenomena. Anthony Steinbock, *Limit-Phenomena and Phenomenology in Husserl* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017).

[12] See, for example, Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row Press, 1962), ¶46.

[13] Emmanuel Levinas, *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, trans. André Orianne (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), liv, lviii, 4, 134.

other – is one of the preeminent phenomena that exceeds the intentional structures of consciousness and phenomenological order givenness. "The way in which the other presents himself, exceeding the idea of the other in me, we here name the face" (*TI,* 50). The face thus connotes not the empirical particularities of an individual's countenance, such as the color of one's skin, eyes, or hair or the shape of one's nose or jaw (the implications of which we will consider shortly), but rather that aspect of the Other whose givenness breaks with all conceptual mediation. The face, in other words, *gives itself* but what it gives cannot not be represented as a concept. In the encounter with the face, then, the Other presents itself, unencumbered by the a priori conceptual gaze of the rational subject. This is the autonomous self-givenness of alterity, of the other qua wholly other. And it is in this encounter with the face that we enter into the domain of ethics, in the distinctively Levinasian sense of the term.

For Levinas, however, the Western philosophical tradition is by and large a "totalizing" tradition, as it systematically neglects the face of the Other – of alterity – in favor of the self-identity of the rational knowing subject, imposing on the Other some set of a priori ideations that determine the function, meaning, or identity on the Other in a way that is alien to that Other's own self-determined features, purposes, projects, and commitments.

> The concept of totality…dominates Western philosophy. Individuals are reduced to being bearers of forces that command them unbeknown to themselves. The meaning of individuals (invisible outside of this totality) is derived from the totality. The unicity of each present is incessantly sacrificed…to bring forth its [i.e., the totality's] objective meaning (*TI,* 21-22).[14]

[14] Cf. "The history of philosophy…can be interpreted as an attempt as universal synthesis, a reduction of all experience…to a totality wherein consciousness embraces the world, leaving nothing outside of itself, and thus becomes absolute thought…There have been few protestations in the history of philosophy against this totalization." Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo,* trans. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985), 75-76. This critique is powerfully formulated again in Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other,* trans. M. B. Smith and B. Harshav (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 1–11.

Levinas's critique is far-reaching, targeting many of the canonical figures and concepts of Western philosophy, including Plato's maieutic method and privileging of vision as the chief vehicle of intellectual thought (*TI*, 43), John Locke's and Thomas Hobbes' characterizations of humans as fundamentally egoistic and ensuing justifications of the state (*TI*, 21, 234), Spinoza's pan-monistic rationalism (*TI,* 87, 102, 119), the "concept" of German idealism (*TI,* 126, 153, 216, 298), Husserl's intentional horizons of meaning (*TI,* 122-123), and Buber's I-thou relation (*TI,* 67-69), among others. Levinas insists, however, that the totalizing "trend of Western philosophy culminates in the philosophy of Hegel."[15] For everything that enters into Hegel's system is irremediably conditioned in advance by the determinations of the dialectic and its distinctive concerns and ambitions. As Levinas writes, "[for Hegel] the given enters into a thought which recognizes in it or invests it with its own project, and thus exercises mastery over it…domination is in consciousness as such. Hegel thought that the *I* is but consciousness mastering itself in self-equality, in what he calls the freedom of this infinite equality."[16] And yet, despite Hegel's consummatory role in the Western philosophical tradition, Levinas also insists that "one can see this nostalgia for totality everywhere in Western philosophy," even after

[15] Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity,* 76.

[16] Emmanuel Levinas, "From existence to ethics," *The Levinas Reader,* ed. Sean Hand (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 92. Cf. "In the critique of Totality which comports the association between the two words [Totality and Infinity] there is a reference to the history of philosophy. This history can be interpreted as a tendency toward Universal synthesis. It is a reduction of all experience and all that is sensible to a Totality that engulfs the world and does not let anything outside in, so that consciousness becomes absolute thought" (*TI,* 36). Also see "Since Hegel…modern man persisted in his being as a sovereign who is merely concerned to maintain the powers of his sovereignty. Everything that is possible is permitted. In this way the experience of Nature and Society would gradually get the better of any exteriority." Emmanuel Levinas, "From existence to ethics," 78.

Hegel.[17] Indeed, Levinas frequently and instructively comments on Heidegger's nostalgia for totality, claiming that his phenomenological ontology represents a prominent localized instance of for this nostalgia for totality.

Levinas's critical engagement with the early Heidegger is complex, as he insists on the "profound need to leave the climate of Heideggerian philosophy" while acknowledging "that we cannot leave it for a philosophy that would be pre-Heideggerian" (*TI,* 19). Levinas's insistence on taking leave of Heideggerian philosophy is based on Heidegger's privileging of the question of Being over the question of ethics, which is to say one's relation to the other qua other, to the face of the Other. One passage is particularly instructive for understanding Levinas's critique.

> To affirm the priority of *Being* over *existents* (i.e., beings, in Heideggerian terms) is to… subordinate the relation with *someone,* who is an existent, (the ethical relation) to a relation with the *Being of existents,* which, impersonal, permits the apprehension, the domination of existents…Heideggerian ontology…subordinates the relationship with the Other to the relation with Being in general… [Heideggerian ontology] remains under the obedience to the anonymous, and lends inevitably to another power, to imperialist domination to tyranny (*TI,* 45-46)

Levinas's concern is that by privileging the question of Being over the concrete ethical relation with the other, Heidegger effaces the alterity of the other within the sameness of the Being that all "existents" share in common. In plainer terms, Heidegger's phenomenological ontology can account for the other only insofar as the other *is,* and since Being is a quality that all others share in common the other is primarily encountered as impersonal and anonymous rather than as singular and unique. For this reason, Levinas considers Heideggerian phenomenology to be inherently totalizing, leading to a form of domination over the other that is deeply de-humanizing.

[17] Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo,* 76.

C. Alterity and Hospitality

We saw in the previous section that Levinas calls into question all efforts to circumscribe phenomena within some prefabricated conceptual horizon, such as Hegelian spirit, Husserlian horizons, or Heideggerian Being. In response to what he perceives as Western philosophy's totalizing tendencies, Levinas develops his own alternative conception of "subjectivity as welcoming the other, as hospitality" (*TI,* 27), a conception of subjectivity which embodies an active receptiveness to the self-presentation of the other qua wholly other, to alterity. Approached hospitably, as Levinas claims, "the other presents himself, exceeding the idea of the other in me…. There is here a relation…with something absolutely *other*…Infinity *presents itself*…paralyzing my [conceptual] powers" (*TI,* 51/199). Unpacking just what it means to present subjectivity as hospitality and how this conception of subjectivity coincides with an experience of alterity will occupy us for much of the rest of this chapter.

To begin, we should consider the methodology of *Totality and Infinity.* Levinas explicitly employs a variation of the transcendental method as practiced by his German predecessors, especially Immanuel Kant and Martin Heidegger, claiming to work backwards from a given phenomenon to the conditions that render that phenomenon determinate and intelligible. "The way we are describing to work back [from the phenomenon] …resembles what has come to be called the transcendental method (in which the technical procedures of transcendental idealism need not necessarily be comprised)" (*TI,* 25).[18] Turning briefly to Kant's and Heidegger's

[18] Cf. "The method practiced here does indeed consist in seeking the condition of empirical situations" (*TI,* 173). Levinas scholars Robert Bernasconi, Theodore De Boer, and John Drabinski all acknowledge, to varying degrees, the transcendental elements in Levinas's thought; however, none of them focus specifically on the way that the practice of hospitality functions as a transcendental condition for an experience of alterity, as I will argue shortly. Robert Bernasconi "Rereading Totality and Infinity," *The Question of the Other: Essays in*

respective deployments of the transcendental method will shed light on Levinas's distinctive appropriation of it. Recall that in the "Transcendental Analytic" in the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant begins with the intelligible givenness [*gegebenheit*] of particular objects and events in the world and then proceeds to explain how cognition [*Ektenntnis*] of such object *as* objects is made possible in the first place via the a priori categories of the understanding [*Verstand*] which transcendentally structure the raw manifold given in intuition.[19] Heidegger's phenomenological project in *Being and Time,* as many commentators have noted, is deeply indebted to these aspects of Kant's transcendental philosophy.[20] For Heidegger's chief task in that work is to offer an "interpretation of the fundamental structures of Dasein with regard to the average kind of Being which is closest to it" (*BT,* 41) by way of an "analytic of Dasein" (*BT,* 36). Heidegger's analytic of Dasein, like Kant's transcendental analytic, thus seeks to determine the irreducible and general structures – what Heidegger refers to as existentials [*Existentialia*] – that grant intelligibility to Dasein's familiar, everyday experience of the world and the various beings that populate it. Indeed, Heidegger is explicit about this transcendental dimension of his project, claiming that "every disclosure of being…is transcendental knowledge…Phenomenological truth (disclosedness of being) is veritas transcendentalis" (*BT,* 62).

Contemporary Continental Philosophy (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 23-34; Theodore De Boer, "An Ethical Transcendental Philosophy," *Face to Face with Levinas* (Albany: SUNY Press, Albany, 1986), 83-117; John Drabinski "The Status of the Transcendental in Levinas' Thought," *Philosophy Today* 38, no. 2 (1994): 149-158.

[19] See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* trans. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), B75, A65/B90, A85/B118-A91/B-123.

[20] See William Blattner, *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in Being and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Daniel Dahlstrom, "Heidegger's Transcendentalism," *Research in Phenomenology* 35 (2005): 29-54.

However, there is at least one important difference between Heidegger's and Kant's transcendental approaches that will prove decisive for Levinas's distinctive formulation of the transcendental method – whereas Kant locates the a priori conditions of cognition of objects in a transcendental subject equipped with twelve categories of the understanding, Heidegger's insists that cognition is derivative of an even more fundamental encounter with the world rooted in human practices, especially directed technical activity in the world (*BT,* 78-81).[21] Particularly important for understanding how practice functions as a transcendental category in *Being and Time* are Heidegger's uses of the terms "comporting" [*Verhalten*] and "understanding" [*Verstehen*] to indicate Dasein's practical bearing in the world. "Comportments," Heidegger tells us, "have the structure of directing-oneself-toward, of being-directed toward…Phenomenology calls this structure intentionality" (*BPP,* 58/H.80). And, he continues, "the intentional constitution of Dasein's comportment is precisely *the ontological condition of the possibility of every and any transcendence*" (*BPP,* 65/H.91). Heidegger's point is that intentional practices – which include "having to do with something, attending to something and looking after it, making use of something, giving something up and letting it go, undertaking, and accomplishing" (*BT,* 83) – have a transcendental status because they play an essential role in rendering Dasein's familiar, everyday experience of the world and the entities that populate it determinate and intelligible (cf. *BPP,* 64-65/H.89-92). But Heidegger also recognizes that Dasein's comportments

[21] Several of Heidegger's commentators have noted that human practice functions as a primordial transcendental condition in *Being and Time.* See, for examples, Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991); Hubert Dreyfus, *Background Practices,* ed. Mark Wrathall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); William Blattner, "Ontology, the A Priori, and the Primacy of Practice: An Aporia in Heidegger's Early Philosophy" in *Transcendental Heidegger,* eds. Steven Crowell and Jeff Malpas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 10-28; Mark Okrent, "The 'I Think' and For-the-Sake-of-Which" in *Transcendental Heidegger,* 151-169.

– Dasein's practical, everyday dealings [*Umgang*] with the world – are always already informed by an implicit background "understanding" of Being (*Seinsverständnis*), where "understanding" is intended to connote an implicit, pre-thematic practical know-how or ability-to (*Sein-können*) carry out a specific task within a particular domain of action governed by its own distinctive set of norms.[22] In other words, the intelligibility of our intentional everyday dealings with the world and the entities that populate it is predicated on an implicit acceptance and mastery of a certain set of "background practices."[23] As Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Spinosa aptly note,

> According to Heidegger our nature is to be world disclosers. That is, by means of our…coordinated practices we human beings open coherent, distinct contexts or worlds in which we perceive, act, and think. Each such world makes possible a distinct and pervasive way in which things, people, and selves can appear and in which certain ways of acting make sense.[24]

Heidegger's famous hammer analysis in *Being and Time* illustrates precisely this point – it is because of the carpenter's immersion in the norms and skills governing the practice of carpentry that he is able, first, to intuitively recognize the thing composed of a long metal handle affixed to a compact metal head *as* a hammer and, second, to effectively use the hammer to start hammering nails. In other words, the carpenter's "comportment" – his recognition and purposive use of the hammer – is predicated on the carpenter's "understanding," his ability to effectively use a hammer in the manner appropriate to the skills and norms of carpentry. As Heidegger writes,

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[22] As Heidegger rather cryptically puts the point, "In understanding, as an existentiale, that which we have competence over is not a 'what,' but Being as existing" (*BT*, 183).

[23] This general point is developed at length by Mark Wrathall in his introduction to Hubert Dreyfus's *Background Practices*, 1-15.

[24] Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Spinosa, "Highway bridges and feasts: Heidegger and Borgmann on how to affirm technology," *Man and World* 30 (1997), 159-177: 160.

> The less we stare at the hammer-thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is…When we deal with [the hammer] by using [it] and manipulating [it], this activity has its own kind of sight…from which it acquires its specific thingly character (*BT*, 98).

The hammer is thus made "available" [zuhanden] to the carpenter as the thing that it is thanks to the background practices associated with the practice of carpentry and the skillful discriminatory capacities those practices cultivate (e.g., this object is a hammer and not a wrench or a paperweight). It is in this sense, then, that Dasein's engagement in directed activity and its implicit technical mastery of certain background practices enables the thing to appear *as* the thing that Dasein takes it *to be*. And it is in this sense that Heidegger deploys practice as a transcendental condition of the determinate intelligibility of Dasein's everyday experiences.

Heidegger's practice-oriented transformation of Kant's transcendental method proves to be of great import in Levinas's own philosophizing, even if this particular debt goes relatively unacknowledged by Levinas. Specifically, what Levinas takes from Heidegger is an appreciation for the way in which one's experience of the world is pragmatically predicated on the particular conditioning effects of one's practices and practical comportment. Accordingly, we can understand Levinas's efforts in *Totality and Infinity* to present subjectivity as hospitality as a claim about the way in which the practice of hospitality primes the subject for a certain type of experience, namely an experience of alterity, of the other qua infinitely other. For by engaging in the practice of hospitality one encounters the other prior to the deployment of any finite conceptual determinations that circumscribe in advance one's encounter with the other. As Levinas writes, hospitality consists in "receiving from the Other beyond the capacity of the I, which means to have the idea of infinity… [the Other] comes from the exterior and brings me more than I contain" (*TI*, 51). What we encounter in Levinas's treatment of hospitality as a

transcendental practice is thus a form of active receptivity wherein the subject's conceptual powers are held in abeyance, wherein the subject, rather than inscribing a meaning on the other, is impressed upon by the other – a movement from other to self rather than self to other. Levinas's positioning of the practice of hospitality as a form of transcendental meditation that makes possible an experience of alterity thus attempts to think Kant's transcendental method to its conclusions, ultimately turning it on its head by identifying a practical form of transcendental mediation that grants access to a level of immediacy in experience that Kant thought impossible for human beings.

D. Abraham as an Exemplar of Hospitality

Levinas's approach to alterity is clearly and significantly shaped by his engagement with the Western philosophical tradition. However, it is equally clear that Levinas's engagement with the Western philosophical tradition and his resulting approach to alterity is deeply shaped by his Talmudic writings and specifically his engagement with Abraham, the patriarch of the monotheistic religions, and Abraham's acts of hospitality. To be sure, the relationship between Levinas's Talmudic commentaries and his philosophical work is complex and continues to be debated by Levinas's commentators. For while Levinas claims there is "a very radical distinction" between his Talmudic commentary and his philosophical works, he also claims "there is a certain relationship between them."[25] Elsewhere he clarifies this relationship by claiming that while he "would never…introduce a Talmudic or biblical verse into one of [his] philosophical texts to try to prove or justify a phenomenological argument," his "ethical reading

[25] Emmanuel Levinas, Tamra Wright, Peter Hughes & Alison Ainley, "The paradox of morality: An interview with Emmanuel Levinas," in *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other,* eds. Robert Bernasconi & David Wood (London: Routledge Press, 1998), 173-174.

of…inter-human [relationality]" – which is of decisive interest to us in this chapter – is deeply influenced by his Talmudic thought, even though the Western philosophical tradition "has largely determined its…expression in language."[26] Thus, as Michael Morgan aptly notes, we can say that one of the key goals of Levinas's philosophy "is to locate and understand the ethical teaching central to Judaism and its role in an understanding of the human condition and social existence generally."[27] Unpacking Levinas's treatment of Abraham and Abrahamic hospitality in his Talmudic writings will thus prove vital for understanding his philosophical approach to alterity and its significance for the ethical dimensions of his thought.

Turning to Levinas's analysis of Genesis 18 in his Talmudic commentaries, we see the practice of hospitality concretely deployed in the transcendental register sketched in the previous section through Abraham's welcoming of three strangers. The Genesis passage in question reads as follows:

> The Lord [*Adonai*] appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the opening of the tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and he saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he ran to them from the opening of the tent and bowed to the ground. And he said "My Lord [*Adonai*], if I have found favor in your eyes, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be drawn and wash your feet and rest yourselves under tree… (Genesis 18:1-4).

[26] Richard Kearney, "Dialogue with Emmanuel Levinas: Ethics of the Infinite," *Debates in Continental Philosophy: Conversations with Contemporary Thinkers* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 54-57.

[27] Michael Morgan, *Levinas's Ethical Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 216. For more on the influence of Judaism on Levinas's philosophical thought see Adriaan Peperzak, "Emmanuel Levinas: Jewish Experience and Philosophy," *Philosophy Today* 27, no.4 (1983): 297-306 and Catherine Chalier, "Emmanuel Levinas: Responsibility and Election," *Philosophy: The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy* 35, supplement (1993): 63-76.

At first glance, this narrative is perplexing, as it begins by claiming that God appeared to Abraham but then suggests that it was actually the three strangers who Abraham encountered. Meanwhile, the same term – *Adonai* (a Hebrew name for God) – is used to refer to God and the three strangers. Commenting on this scene, Levinas helps clarify the potential confusion.

> Abraham is the one who knows how to receive…men, the one whose tent was open to the four winds. Through all these openings he watched out for passerby he could welcome. Without being aware that they were angels…Abraham must have taken the three passers-by for three Bedouins, three Nomads from the Negev desert…[But] God would have [also] appeared to Abraham at the same time as the three passers-by. He would say to Him, "*Adonai*, do not pass by your servant." He would say "Wait while I receive these three travelers" since those passing by were overcome by heat and thirst, they come before the Eternal our God. The transcendence of God is his effacement itself, but this obliges us in relation to men...Abraham's descendants are people to whom their ancestors bequeathed a difficult tradition of duties toward the other, which we have never finished fulfilling, an order from which we are never released. This is the meaning of monotheism according to Abraham. [28]

Here Levinas mobilizes Abraham's practice of unconditional hospitality to gesture toward a normative conception of ethical subjectivity based on the infinite responsibility to practice welcoming the other *as* wholly other, with the utter openness of Abraham's tent spatially underscoring the unconditional nature of such hospitality. For Abraham does not welcome the strangers *as* angels, *as* divine messengers, but rather precisely *as* strangers, *as* wholly unknown. Abraham's hospitality is thus not aimed at someone in particular but rather is indifferent to the identity of the guest, demonstrating a level of universality and openness to the radical alterity. Accordingly, Abraham's encounter with the strangers as wholly other can be said to be transcendentally predicated on the particular conditioning effects that his practice of hospitality

[28] Emmanuel Levinas, "The Name of God According to a Few Talmudic Texts," *Beyond the Verse: Talmudic Readings and Lectures,* trans. Gary D. Mole (London: Athlone Press, 1994), 125; Emmanuel Levinas, "From the Sacred to the Holy: Five New Talmudic Readings," *Nine Talmudic Readings,* trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 19.

toward the strangers has on his subjectivity. For if we interpret Abraham's empirical situation to consist in an experience of the strangers qua strangers, qua wholly unknown, and then work backwards to that which makes possible this empirical situation we see that it is the practice hospitality that serves this transcendental function. For the practice of hospitality involves holding determinate judgment in abeyance in favor of welcoming the other *as* other, unconditioned by the application of any a priori conceptual categories or judgments that attempt to assimilate the infinite alterity of the other in advance of or during the actual encounter.

Levinas's account of Abrahamic hospitality and its openness to alterity in his Talmudic writings concretely epitomizes not only the conception of ethical subjectivity as hospitality developed in his phenomenological writings in *Totality and Infinity* but also what Levinas refers to as the "Jewish moments" of the Western philosophical tradition, in which alterity breaks through the totalizing walls it has erected, such as in Socrates' daimon, Plato's Good beyond Being, Plotinus's trace, and Descartes' idea of the infinite.[29] In these "Jewish moments," the conceptual schemas of the Western philosophical tradition recognize their limits, glimpsing something beyond their intelligible grasp. Abraham thus represents an alternative point of departure and path for Western ethics and Western philosophical thought more broadly, symbolizing a universal normative conception of human subjectivity fully attuned to its responsibilities to the other qua wholly other. In other words, in Abraham we find exemplified our basic ethical humanity, "a human nature which has reached the fullness of its responsibilities and self-consciousness"[30] As Levinas explains,

Abraham's descendants are people to whom their ancestors bequeathed a difficult

[29] W.P. Simmons, *An-Archy and Justice: An Introduction to Emmanuel Levinas's Political Thought* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003), 7-9, 38-54.
[30] Emmanuel Levinas, "From the Sacred to the Holy: Five New Talmudic Readings," *Nine Talmudic Readings,* 98.

> tradition of duties toward the other, which we have never finished fulfilling, an order from which we are never released… Defined as such, the heirs of Abraham are of all nations. Any man who is truly a man is no doubt of the line of Abraham.[31]

Abraham thus embodies the Jewish ethical stance, but, at the same time, Abraham's lineage transcends religion, blood and nation, and is instead based upon one's fulfilling one's duties to the other qua wholly other. And it is precisely this Abrahamic model of ethical subjectivity which receives a universal philosophical expression in *Totality and Infinity.*

E. Alterity and Hospitality in Levinas's Political Philosophy

Levinas considers our inauguration into a certain set of shared ethical practices to be an essential part of belonging to a broader political community, and his writings grant the ethical practice of hospitality a privileged status in the formation of political subjectivity. For Levinas, this passage from ethical subjectivity to political subjectivity is immanent, in the sense that in the hospitable encounter with the other, all of the other others, who Levinas refers to as "the third party" [*le tiers*], are always already present, looking at me through the eyes of the singular other before me. It is the introduction of the third party that organically propels us from the realm of ethics to that of politics. For my encounter with the face of a singular other implies the presence of all the other others, for whom I am equally responsible, for whom I am equally obliged to show hospitality. Ethics thus directs us toward a singular other, but the third party remind us that ethical responsibility is not limited to a singular other. That is to say, with the appearance of the third party responsibility assumes a new guise, as I can no longer justifiably prioritize the singular other with whom I am in close proximity. The third party therefore ruptures the closed circuitry of the face-to-face relation by reminding me that my relation to a singular other is

[31] Ibid., 19.

always already structurally conjoined to my relation to all of the other others who stand paradoxically outside of and yet within my relation to a singular other.[32] As Levinas explains,

> The third party looks at me in the eyes of the other…It is not that there would first be the face, and then the being it manifests or expresses would concern himself with justice; the epiphany of the face qua face opens humanity…The presence of the face, the infinity of the other…is…the presence of the third party, (that is, of the whole of humanity that looks at us) (*TI*, 213).

The entrance of the third party in and through the relation to a singular other indicates that, for Levinas, ethics and politics are inextricably intertwined, but it also brings to the fore the limitations of ethics. For insofar as ethics is exclusively concerned with the relation to a singular other, it is incapable of fulfilling its responsibility to the multitude of others. This limitation introduces the need for various laws and state institutions to mete out order and justice. As Levinas writes, "In the measure that the face of the other relates us with the third party, the metaphysical relation of the I with the other moves in the form of the We… a State, institutions, laws, which are the source of universality" (*TI,* 300).[33] For Levinas, then, the appearance of the third party entails the necessity of the state. For with the recognition that my ethical obligation to one singular other cannot be neatly extricated from my ethical obligations to all the other others

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[32] Here I follow Robert Bernasconi, who writes of the passage from ethical subjectivity to political subjectivity: "my relation to the other in his or her singularity and my relations to the other others [are] conjoined in a single structure." Robert Bernasconi, "The Third Party: Levinas on the Intersection of the Ethical and the Political," *The Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 30, no. 1 (1999): 79.

[33] Cf. "We must, out of respect for the categorical imperative or the other's right as expressed by his face, un-face human beings, sternly reducing each one's uniqueness to his individuality in the unity of the genre and let universality rule. Thus, we need laws, and— yes— courts of law, institutions and the state to render justice." Emmanuel Levinas, "On Jewish Philosophy," *In the Time of the Nations*, trans. Michael B. Smith (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 174.

– my limitless responsibility – comes the realization that I cannot possibly satisfy the innumerable demands laid upon me and that therefore the state and its totalizing institutions are necessary if these demands are to be adjudicated in a more-or-less just manner. The ethical posture thus presses the subject in the direction of a universality which it is functionally ill-equipped to handle. Hence, as Levinas pithily remarks, "It is impossible to escape the State."[34]

However, the necessity of the state reintroduces the necessity of human conceptuality – of defining, classifying, judging, comparing, calculating, et al. – as it attempts to institute a particular set of purportedly universal laws and rights, and norms that are indelibly marked by their own internal limits, thereby reneging on the possibility of welcoming the other *as* wholly other within the political sphere. As Levinas writes,

> Thematization and conceptualization, which…are inseparable, are not peace with the other but suppression or possession of the other. For possession affirms the other, but within a negation of its independence. "I think" comes down to "I can" – to an appropriation of what is, to an exploitation of reality…It issues in…the tyranny of the State. Truth, which should reconcile persons, here exists anonymously. Universality presents itself as impersonal; and this is another inhumanity (*TI*, 46).[35]

What Levinas is saying is that in its quest for order and justice, state institutions inevitably totalize the other with its universalized protocols and procedures and thereby undermine the possibility of a genuine ethical state that welcomes others qua wholly other. For ethics, in the distinctively Levinasian sense, deals in a radical alterity that, in principle, eludes the grasp of the a priori conceptual determinations that undergird the quasi-universalized law, policies, and

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[34] Emmanuel Levinas, *Beyond the Verse: Talmudic Readings and Lectures,* 178.

[35] Levinas expresses this point again in a later essay, claiming that "justice is already the first violence…by bringing this giving-oneself to my neighbor under measure, or moderating it by thinking in relation to the third." Emmanuel Levinas and Florian Rotzer, "Emmanuel Levinas," *Conversations with French Philosophers,* trans. Gary E. Aylesworth (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1995), 44.

norms of any given institution. The law of the land, for instance, may fail to take account of the irreducibly particular situations in which one finds oneself precisely because laws, by their very nature, are intended to be universally applicable, regardless of the unique particularities of the situation and the parties involved. Always already conditioned by the generic deployment of the law, the alterity of the other – the other's autonomous self-presentation – is thus precluded from coming into view in the public sphere. In other words, in its quest for order and justice, the state undermines the cultivation of a free and plural public "space of appearance."[36] For it renders the unicity of citizens invisible by subjecting them to the sheer commonality of public vision. For in the eyes of the law what is "seen" amounts to nothing other than what was already made available for "viewing" by the a priori conceptual determinations that are operative in the law. This is the other as reduced to the same, the sphere of totality, or, rendered politically, totalitarianism. Thus, Levinas concludes, governed by the logics of universality and conceptuality, "politics...bears a tyranny with itself…it deforms the I and other who have given rise to it, judging them according to universal rules and thus as in absentia" (*TI*, 300).[37] And for this reason, Levinas insists that politics must be forever kept in check by ethics, now tasked with unceasingly judging and interrupting the totalizing tendencies of the state's reductive conceptual apparatuses and working to render politics more just, which is to say more receptive to the

[36] Here I borrow from Hannah Arendt's use of the phrase in *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).199-208.

[37] Cf. "For me…the element of violence in the State, in the hierarchy, appears even when the hierarchy functions perfectly, when everyone submits to universal ideas. There are cruelties which are terrible because they proceed from the necessity of the reasonable Order. There are, if you like, the tears that a civil servant cannot see: the tears of the Other [*Autrui*]…the I alone can perceive the 'secret tears' of the Other, which are caused by the functioning – albeit reasonable – of the hierarchy." Emmanuel Levinas, "Transcendence and Height," *Basic Philosophical Writings*, eds. Adriaan Peperzak, Simon Critchley, Robert Bernasconi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 23.

alterity of the other.[38] Accordingly, Levinasian ethics – with its roots in Abrahamic hospitality – can be said to contain a deeply democratic kernel in that it seeks to cultivate an attentiveness to the voices of each unique other.[39] But this democratic kernel cannot develop into a full-blown democratic politics precisely because of what Levinas perceives as the intrinsic totalizing tendencies of the state.

F. Levinas's Legacy and Its Limits

Levinas's philosophical framework for approaching alterity and its relevance for ethics and politics has had a deep and lasting influence on theoretical discourses across the humanities, acutely informing the work of many 20th century notables, including Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion, Judith Butler, Simon Critchley, Chantal Mouffe, Mayra Rivera, and John Caputo to name but a few of Levinas's admiring critical inheritors. Tracing Levinas's full influence on this cadre of contemporary thinkers is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but for each of these authors, alterity enters into the experiential sphere – be it religious, ethical, or political – only as a permanent interruption that in principle cannot be assimilated into the framework of a given set of conceptual apparatuses and modes of reasoning. In what follows, I will focus specifically on Derrida's well-known and influential appropriation of the Levinasian approach to ethics and

[38] Here it is worth raising a perplexity in Levinas's thinking, namely how ethics can serve as a standard of judgment on politics when ethics is a mode of experience that exceeds the conceptual sphere of judgment. Something more than "ethics" seems necessary to make judgments about good and bad or better and worse political arrangements.

[39] Michael Morgan draws a similar conclusion, claiming that, for Levinas, "what Judaism means and democracy – or liberal democracy – requires converge…Any [democratic] state ought to be attentive to the needs and concerns of all her citizens, ought to treat all fairly and humanely, and ought to seek justice and peace." Michael Morgan, *Levinas's Ethical Politics*, 217.

politics detailed above. For Levinas's influence on these other thinkers if often filtered through Derrida's reception of him.[40]

As is the case with Levinas, the entirety of Derrida's philosophy remains deeply influenced by phenomenology, despite his significant critiques and modifications of the tradition.[41] "It was Husserl," Derrida writes, "who taught me a technique, a method, a discipline, and who has never left me. Even in moments when I thought I had to question certain presuppositions of Husserl, I tried to do so while keeping to phenomenological discipline."[42] But, like Levinas, Derrida is critical of Husserl's insistence that the givenness of phenomena can be rendered fully present and intelligible in terms of an a priori intentional horizon or some other

[40] For prominent examples of the Levinasian-Derridean impact on continental ethics and social thought see Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003); Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso Books, 2000); Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance* (London: Verso Books, 2007). Regarding the impact of Levinas and Derrida on continental philosophy of religion see Jean-Luc Marion, *Prolegomena to Charity*, trans. Stephen E. Lewis (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002); Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*, trans. Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); John Caputo, *The Weakness of God: A Theology of the Event* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); John Caputo, *The Insistence of God: A Theology of the Perhaps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).

[41] For a helpful overview of Derrida's critiques and modifications of the phenomenological tradition see Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 299-308.

[42] Interview with Jacques Derrida, *On My Word: Philosophical Snapshots* (1999), 84.

Cf. Derrida's interview with Antoine Spire in *Le Monde de l'éducation* in September of 2000: "Husserl wasn't my first love in Philosophy. But he left a deep trace on my work. Nothing of what I do would be possible without the phenomenological discipline, without the practice of eidetic and transcendental reductions, without attention in the sense of phenomenality, etc. (...) Even if, having reached a certain point, I believe I have to throw back questions about the limits of that discipline and its principles, about the intuitionist 'principle of principles that guides it."

such discursive apparatus.[43] Derrida discusses this idea in his early seminal essay "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas" (1967). Here he speaks of an "economy of violence" engendered through the application of language to irreducibly singular persons and events.

> How to think the other…if speech…cannot conceive separation and absolute alterity? If…all discourse essentially retains within it…the Same, does this not mean that discourse is originally violent? And that the philosophical logos…is inhabited by the war…There is war only after the opening of discourse, and war dies out only at the end of discourse.[44]

Following Levinas, the early Derrida thus conceives of language – and with it conceptual comprehension – as essentially reductive of alterity, as incapable of grasping the utter singularity of a person or event.[45]

Derrida leverages his philosophical position regarding the relation between language and conceptuality, on the one hand, and alterity, on the other in order to reconceive the ethical and political spheres as sites that are indelibly marked by exposure to the transformative but also

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[43] Interestingly, in this respect Levinas and Derrida agree in some sense with Hegel about the inadequacy of the pure immediacy of experience, but Levinas and Derrida treat this inadequacy and its implications in a radically different direction than Hegel. We will consider these differences later in this dissertation, once we have unpacked Hegel's position. Cf. Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena: And Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, trans. David Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 85. Also see Jacques Derrida, E*dmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry,* trans. John P. Leavey, Jr. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 61-62.

[44] Jacques Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 116-117.

[45] To be sure, Derrida's account of alterity is not identical with Levinas's. For whereas Levinas positions alterity as prior to the inauguration of the self, or better still, as the inauguration of the self, Derrida maintains that the other, even though infinitely other, must nevertheless always retain some relation to the self, for otherwise it would cease to be other. As he writes, "the infinitely other…can be what it is only if it is…other *than*…But since *other than* must be *other than* myself… [the other] is no longer absolved of a relation to an ego." Jacques Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 157-158.

incalculable risk that attends our duty to unconditionally welcome the other qua wholly other. And what is more, in his later writings Derrida, once more following Levinas, becomes increasingly convinced that the key to understanding the West's ethical and political legacy and future lie in turning to its complex theological origins. Specifically, Derrida devotes considerable attention to Abrahamic hospitality as a way of developing a non-totalizing transcendental approach to alterity. Citing Genesis, Derrida deems Abraham a "saint of hospitality."[46] For in Abraham's faithful reception of the covenantal word of God "the [divine] visitor radically overwhelms the self of the 'visited' and the *chez-soi* of the hôte."[47] For Derrida, Abraham's reception of the word of God is an instance of hospitality par excellence because this reception ruptures the finite threshold of Abraham's subjectivity, exposing him to the infinite, to the unconditioned.[48]

In turn, this model of Abrahamic subjectivity and its relation to alterity serves as the basis of Derrida's approach to ethics and politics. In one of his more striking statements of this ethical and political vision, he writes,

> For an unconditional welcome…let us say yes to *who or what turns up,* before any determination, before any anticipation, before any *identification,* whether or not it has to do with a foreigner, an immigrant, an invited guest, or an unexpected visitor, whether or

[46] Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion,* ed. Gil Anidjar (London: Routledge Press, 2002), 368.

[47] Ibid., 372. Derrida also draws extensively on Genesis 22 to make a similar point about Abraham's hospitable subjectivity. Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death,* trans. David Wills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 65-67.

[48] Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality,* trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 77.For more on this point see Jacques Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 45-46.

> not the new arrival is the citizen of another country, a human, animal, or divine creature, a living or dead thing, male or female.[49]

Derrida's radical formulation of unconditional hospitality stems from his Levinasian insistence on the "violent" totalization that results from the state and its laws and institutions. For Derrida, law bears an intrinsic relationship to violence, because law entails the application of a prefabricated and purportedly universal prescription to an utterly singular person, event, or states of affairs. But at a more fundamental level, the economy of violence that Derrida sees as intrinsic to law is rooted in his philosophical position concerning the relation between conceptuality and alterity.[50] This is especially apparent in Derrida's 1990 essay, "The Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority." There Derrida argues, along Levinasian lines, that law, like language, operates at a level of universality which does not and cannot grasp the other in the singular and hence that law enacts a sort of violence that undermines the pursuit of justice, where "justice" is defined "as the experience of absolute alterity."[51]

> [The] act of justice must always concerns singularity, individuals, irreplaceable groups and lives, the other, or myself *as* other, in a unique situation [whereas] rule, norm, value,

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[49] Cf. "If you are the guest and I invite you, if I am expecting you and am prepared to meet you, then this implies that there is no surprise, everything is in order. For pure hospitality or a pure gift to occur, however, there must be an absolute surprise. The other, like the Messiah, must arrive whenever he or she wants. She may even not arrive. I would oppose, therefore, the traditional and religious concept of 'visitation' to 'invitation': visitation implies the arrival of someone who is not expected, who can show up at any time. If I am unconditionally hospitable, I should welcome the visitation, not the invited guest, but the visitor. I must be unprepared, or prepared to be unprepared, for the unexpected arrival of any other." Jacques Derrida, "Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility: A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida," *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy*, eds. Richard Kearney & Mark Dooley (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 1998), 125.

[50] See Leonard Lawlor, "From the Trace to the Law: Derridean Politics," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 15, no.1 (1989), 15.

[51] Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority," *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, eds. Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld & David Gray Carlson (London: Routledge Press, 1992), 27.

> or the imperative of justice…necessarily have a general form, even if this generality prescribes a singular application in each case.[52]

Laws not only rely on the application of generalized rules to a broad and diverse public but also presuppose the regularity of language as a condition of their possibility. And yet, justice – in distinctively Derridean sense – is utterly "heterogenous and foreign to the order of the calculable and the rule."[53] Hence Derrida's description of "violence as the exercise of law [*droit*] and law as the exercise of violence."[54] Unconditional hospitality, he thinks, provides an opening to a form of radical political justice irreducible to the violent totalizations perpetrated by existing states and laws. For the practice of unconditional hospitality is what renders the subject open to the utter singularity of the other, that is, to the other's self-givenness, independent of the other's a priori circumscription within the conceptual apparatuses deployed by existing state laws and institutions.

This openness to alterity – to justice – in the midst of conditional laws and institutions is the defining feature of what Derrida calls a "democracy to come [*à venir*]."[55] So conceived, the practice of unconditional hospitality functions as the quintessential political virtue of a democracy to come, for it is what renders the subject open to alterity of every other,

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[52] Ibid., 17.

[53] Ibid., 24.

[54] Ibid., 34. Cf. "Violence is not exterior to the order of droit." Jacques Derrida, "Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority," 34.

[55] Derrida develops this notion in a number of works. See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (London: Routledge Press, 1993), 73-83; Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. George Collins (London: Verso Books, 1994), 1-112; Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 28-95.

to justice, and hence what disrupts the existing boundaries of any established state's laws, customs, and institutions. Accordingly, Derrida's democracy to come is to be understood as a fundamentally open-ended and messianic form of sociality, in which laws and norms of the polis are revisable in light of the demands laid upon it by the heterogeneity of the many others within and outside of its existing boundaries. As John Caputo aptly summarizes,

> Democracy calls for the hospitality to the other, but the other is the shore we cannot reach, the one we do not know. Democracy – a porous, permeable, open-ended affirmation of the other – is the best name we have for what is to come…for the unforeseeable future, for the promise of the unforeseeable.[56]

However, as Derrida readily acknowledges, despite its inherent predisposition to try to grasp and manage that which is in principle ungraspable and unmanageable, Derrida considers the state and its conditional laws to be a necessary feature of social existence. No democracy could exist without specific, and hence conditional, laws and institutions. In fact, Derrida claims the unconditional laws of a democracy to come "needs the conditional laws [of the state], it *requires* them."[57] These are "the laws (in the plural), those rights and duties that are always conditioned and conditional, as they are defined by the Greco-Roman tradition and even the Judeo-Christian one, by all of law and all philosophy of law up to Kant and Hegel in particular, across the family, civil society, and the State."[58] For "it [the unconditional laws of a democracy to come] wouldn't be effectively unconditional, the law, if didn't *have to become* effective, concrete, determined [then] it would risk being abstract, utopian, illusory…In order to be what it is, *the* law thus needs

[56] Jacques Derrida and John Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida,* ed. John Caputo (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 122-23.

[57] Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality,* 79.

[58] Ibid., 77.

the laws, which, however, deny it, or at any rate threaten it, sometimes corrupt or pervert it."[59] Without the possibility of becoming effective, the unconditional law would be unobtainable, a utopian fantasy. This means that the unconditional law requires conditions, rules, and regulations to bring into being and history. At the same time, however, the conditional laws of the state necessarily pervert and corrupt the unconditional law. The two regimes thus exist in a relation of tensive mutual dependence, as each needs the other while simultaneously calling the other into question. For, on the one hand, the practice of unconditional hospitality is intended to hold actively suspend all conceptual determinations that condition in advance one's welcome of the other; and yet, on the other, as Richard Kearney aptly notes, "every empirical act of hospitality is, *in practice*, conditional," since one always welcomes the other in terms of some finite conceptual determination embodied in the laws, norms, prejudices, and institutions of one's society that are indelibly marked by their own internal limits.[60] As Derrida explains,

> There is no democracy without respect for irreducible singularity or alterity, but there is no democracy without the 'community of friends,' without the calculation of majorities, without identifiable, stabilizable, representable subjects, all equal. These two laws are irreducible one to the other. Tragically irreconcilable and forever wounding.[61]

Like Levinas, Derrida thus presents us an aporetic account of the relation between the laws and institutions of the state, on the one hand, and alterity, on the other. For the conditions of possibility for the practice of unconditional hospitality are simultaneously the conditions of its impossibility. However, despite its aporetic status, Derrida sees the practice of unconditional

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[59] Ibid., 79.

[60] Richard Kearney, "Hospitality: Possible or Impossible?" *Hospitality & Society* 5, no.2 (2015), 174.

[61] Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, 22.

hospitality as nevertheless capable of reorienting the subject and the state beyond its static self-enclosure and toward what infinitely escapes its conceptual grasp by functioning as a mode of negative critique against the totalizing tendencies of various existing state apparatuses. In other words, despite its impossibility Derrida sees the practice of unconditional hospitality as a vehicle through which the political can be reconceived and remade as a site of exposure to the transformative yet incalculable risk that attends welcoming the other as wholly other. As Derrida writes, "the experience of this impossibility is not simply the experience of something not given in actuality, not accessible, but something through which a possibility is given."[62]

We may laud Derrida, and Levinas before him, for acutely recognizing the ways in which alterity deeply affects the dynamics of political life, continuously confronting it with new challenges that elude the fixity afforded by our existing conceptual schemas and classifications. And we may also laud them for recommending a theoretical and practical attitude that attempts to inscribe alterity and plurality into democratic political institutions in a non-totalizing manner. However, the Levinasian and Levinasian-inspired philosophical approaches to alterity suffer from rather serious limitations that ought to prompt us to consider whether an alternative approach to alterity can be formulated. The root of the limitations of the Levinasian and Levinasian-inspired approaches lie in a philosophical commitment to the relation between concepts and linguistic classification, on the one hand, and alterity, on the other. For Levinas and his critical inheritors, conceptuality cannot act as a home for alterity – the two live in a state of irreducible antagonism. In other words, within these overlapping frameworks there is no space for an agonistic-symbiotic meeting of alterity and conceptuality, and, by extension, alterity and

[62] Jacques Derrida, *Deconstruction Engaged: The Sydney Seminars,* eds. Paul Patton and Terry Smith (Sydney: Power Publications, 2001), 64.

the laws and institutions of the state. Accordingly, they recommend a stance of pure hospitality, in which the host receives the other unconditioned by the host's prefabricated conceptual schemas, that is, according to the self-givenness of the other, the other qua wholly other – alterity. However, this fear of the concept and conceptually laden modes of ethical and political reasoning undermines the ethical and political goals that motivate these approaches from the outset. For it is difficult to grasp how the practice of unconditional hospitality could be pragmatically efficacious without taking into account something conceptually determinate about the one to whom one is being hospitable. For surely there is a difference between showing hospitality toward a person, a dog, and a tree, let alone between different persons, animals, and plants.[63] But once we start introducing these determinate qualities of these various "others," we move into the realm of conceptuality and so beyond the theoretical platform championed by Levinas, Derrida, and others of their theoretical ilk. In fact, Levinas explicitly warns against noticing the empirical particularities of different faces.

> You turn yourself toward the Other as toward an object when you see a nose, eyes, a forehead, a chin, and you can describe them. The best way of encountering the Other is

[63] Underlying this criticism of Levinasian hospitality-approach to alterity are essentially Kantian presuppositions. As we have discussed, the practice of unconditional hospitality involves receiving whoever or whatever turns up without positing any preemptive conceptual determinations that attempt to circumscribe one's reception of the other, leaving the subject in a supposedly immediate relation to the singular other being encountered. But this immediacy leaves us with an essentially indeterminate experience. We are afforded no space – no spacing – with which to gain a broader and more determinate perspectival glance at the other who appears before us. As Kant may have put this point, "intuitions without concepts are blind," since the immediacy of an intuition by itself lacks the determinacy that is constitutive of an object of experience. From this Kantian vantage, we could say Levinas and Derrida fail to adequately consider how what may seem to be the most direct kind of apprehension – an experience of alterity – is actually always already mediated by the application of certain conceptual determinations. In this case, the active conceptual determinations implicit in their distinctive interpretations of the practice of hospitality, such as waiting, openness, receptivity, and welcome.

> not even to notice the color of his eyes! When one observes the color of the eyes on is not in a social relationship with the Other.[64]

Levinas's point is that a genuinely ethical response – a genuinely hospitable response – to the Other cannot be based on this or that empirical difference that the Other may possess. For the empirical world is the world of totality, a world wherein what the given is interpreted a priori by a given conceptual schemas posited by the interpreting subject. To reduce ethics to empirics would thus be to reduce ethics to ontology, as Levinas had criticized Heidegger for doing. Instead, Levinas insists that for ethics to remain primary – for ethics to be first philosophy – it must relate to the Other qua wholly other, as transcending and cutting across all empirical particularities if it is to perpetually call us back to the imperative of *infinite* responsibility.[65] However, the problematic upshot of this ethical response to other qua the wholly other, engendered as it is through the practice of unconditional hospitality, is that the phenomenological vision of alterity it makes possible lacks the hermeneutical sensitivity required to adequately attend to the diverse needs of the many distinct others to whom hospitality is being shown. In other words, we cannot expect that the extra-conceptual given to which unconditional hospitality grants us access to provide us with the level of determinacy that we need to make effective ethical judgments and perform effective ethical actions. Thus, from a broadly pragmatic perspective, wherein the efficacy of the practical application of a conceptual schema – how well it works in practice – serves as a means of judging that schemas theoretical adequacy, Levinas's ethical approach to alterity is inadequate. For absent conceptuality, unconditional hospitality threatens to turn the ethical encounter into a highly generic, formalized, and abstract event, one

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[64] Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity,* 85.

[65] In a certain respect, Levinas thus agrees with Kant's view that the grounds of morality cannot be rooted in the empirical realities of the phenomenal realm.

which lacks pragmatic efficacy in the domains of ethics and politics. No matter the Other to which one responds, the response is always the same. For stripped of all particularity and kept at a distance, the other becomes for me an abstraction rather than a person with a particular history with particular abilities, needs, and desires. People remain strangers to each other, other to each other. The generative friction that arises from encounters with genuine interpersonal difference is extinguished. In his effort to avoid the totalizing tendencies of conceptual classification, Levinas thus inadvertently risks committing the very same offense. For by detaching the ethical encounter from its concrete situatedness in the world, from the historically specific and all too real asymmetrical relations of power and marginalization which the Other may indeed want the ethical subject to notice, Levinas effectively totalizes the many particular others under the generic rubric of the wholly Other. The American author bell hooks captures something of this critique in her own criticisms of many postmodern discourses about otherness when she writes that "often this speech about the "other" annihilates and erases."[66] For hooks, it seems, Levinasian approaches to the Other cover over the ethically and socially salient empirical particularities, be they race, gender, class, or otherwise. For hooks, in other words, to neglect these empirical particularities is to neglect features that are in many cases not only central to one's identity and to one's standing in the world but also directly relevant to the nature of our

[66] bell hooks, "Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness," *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, no. 36 (1989), 22.

obligations to those particular others in question.[67] But these features are precisely those which Levinas and his critical inheritors lack a theoretical language for accommodating.[68]

[67] See Lisa Guenther, "The Ethics and Politics of Otherness: Negotiating Alterity and Racial Difference." *Philosophia: A Journal of Continental Feminism* 1. no.2 (2011): 195-214.

[68] To be sure, my reading of Levinas and the ethical and political limitations of his approach has recently been contested by Michael Morgan, who argues that Levinas's ethics justifies our determinate political responsibility for others. See Morgan, *Levinas's Ethical Politics,* 62-147. While no doubt called for, a critical engagement with Morgan's reading is beyond the scope of this project.

CHAPTER TWO
TO SENSE WHAT IS LIVING:
LOVE IN HEGEL'S EARLY THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS

Chapter one argued that Emmanuel Levinas draws on Abraham and Abrahamic hospitality to develop a live alternative approach to alterity and its significance in the domains of ethics and politics in the West. Central to Levinas's approach is the idea that alterity is fundamentally at odds with forms of determinate conceptuality that underlie not only much of the Western intellectual tradition but also the institutional apparatuses of Western democratic societies. Chapter one also argued that Levinas's approach to alterity and the influential tradition it spawned is, in many ways, born out of a negative critical reaction to the perceived totalizing tendencies of much of the Western intellectual tradition, of which Hegel is often considered the prime representative. And finally, chapter one argued that this Levinasian way of thinking about alterity suffers from serious theoretical and pragmatic limitations and that this line of approach too quickly dismiss the possibility that the laws and institutions of the state, with their conceptually laden modes of reasoning, could be an agonistic-symbiotic ally of alterity rather than a sheerly totalizing force. Accordingly, in this chapter I attempt to lay the textual and conceptual groundwork for a Hegelian rethinking of the relation between alterity and conceptuality and between alterity and the laws and institutions of the state.

As we saw in chapter one, Hegel has often been maligned by many Continental philosophers as a thinker of totality par excellence. And while the narrative has many iterations, for this tradition of thought Hegel's dialectical method and the toolbox of concepts and neologisms at his disposal – the concept (der *Begriff*), absolute knowing, spirit, the state – indicates a method of philosophizing that, in principle, cannot truly encounter alterity. For under the purview of the Hegelian apparatus, that which appears is only that which the determinations

of dialectical thinking have allowed to be seen. The autonomous self-givenness of phenomena are thus lost from view. Accordingly, some readers may be surprised by the attempt to offer a Hegelian approach to alterity that goes beyond the Levinasian-Derridean model, as so many in the continental tradition and beyond have insisted that Hegel is a totalizing thinker for whom all vestiges of alterity are ultimately subsumed and effaced within a mono-logical horizon of sameness and identity. Careful attention to Hegel's texts, however, reveals a rather different, and in fact generative, account of the relation between alterity and conceptuality and, by extension, between alterity and the laws and institutions of the state. The hermeneutical key to unpacking this alternative account consists in drawing attention to the intimate and complex connections between Hegel's account of love developed in his early and mature writings on religion and his accounts of conceptual thinking, or reason, found in some of his core philosophical texts, including the *Phenomenology of Spirit,* the *Science of Logic,* and the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right.* By establishing and explicating the precise nature of the connection between love and reason, we will be in a position to see that Hegel's texts contain an innovative and non-totalizing yet unacknowledged approach to the relation between alterity and conceptuality and between alterity and the laws and institutions of the state that is not readily susceptible to popularized critiques of Hegel as a quintessential totalizing thinker. More specifically, we will see that woven into Hegel's early writings is a conception of love that fosters complex, integrated, and yet non-totalizing forms of intersubjectivity between selves and the alterity of others, providing a platform for navigating the complex democratic task of promoting the self-determination of a plurality of different individuals in light of their necessary immersion in shared networks of meaning, responsibility, and cooperative activity.

Many commentators acknowledge the significance of love in Hegel's early writings on the relation between religion, ethics, and society, but they generally maintain that while Hegel still carved out an ethical and social role for love he abandoned it as the central concept of his ethical and political thinking in favor of notions of notions better able to accommodate the freedom and individuality that were increasingly becoming hallmarks of modern identity and modern society.[69] And what is more, many of these commentators draw a neatly demarcated distinction between Hegel's early theological phase and his later philosophical thought.[70] By positioning Hegel's early account of love as the hermeneutical key for deciphering his later conception reason (chapters two, three, and four) and by positioning reason as lynchpin of Hegel's ethical and political thought (chapter five), this dissertation thus offers an alternative to these prominent approaches to long-running interpretative debates in Hegel scholarship about the role of religion and love in Hegel's mature philosophical system.

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[69] See, for examples, Thomas A. Lewis, "Beyond Love: Hegel on the Limits of Love in Modern Society," *Journal of the History of Modern Theology* 20, no.1 (2013): 3-20; H.S. Harris, *Hegel's Development: Toward the Sunlight* 1770-1801 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972); Dieter Henrich, *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981); Toula Nicolacopoulos and George Vassilacopoulos, *Hegel and the Logical Structure of Love: An Essay on Sexualities, Family, and the Law* (Melbourne: Routledge Press, 1999); Terry Pinkard, *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[70] See, for examples, Alexander Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit,* trans. James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980); Robert Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Robert Williams, *Recognition: Fichte and Hegel on the Other* (New York: SUNY Press, 1992); Dieter Henrich, "Hölderlin and Hegel," *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin,* ed. Eckart Förster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

By way of preview, this chapter begins in section A by framing the three core texts under consideration – "The Positivity of Christian Religion" (1795-1796[71]), "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" (1798-1799), and the "Love" fragment (1797-1798). Section B looks more carefully at the "Positivity" essay, tracing Hegel's early interest in a *Volksreligion* to his enchantment with ancient Greek religion and its capacity to support a free and democratic form of sociality. Section B then outlines Hegel's earliest attempt at resuscitating Christianity as a modern *Volksreligion* using the tools of Kantian philosophy, specifically the Kantian conception of autonomous reason. Section C develops the themes charted in section B by reconstructing Hegel's treatment of love in "the Spirit" essay, focusing specifically on the way that Hegel mobilizes love as a transformation of Kant's conception of autonomous reason. On the basis of this fusion of Christian love and Kant's conception of autonomous reason, section C then begins to develop a platform for articulating a holistic, dynamic, and law-bound approach to alterity and otherness. Drawing on the "Spirit" essay and the "Love" fragment, section D addresses more explicitly the question of how love relates to its others, arguing that love fosters a distinct non-totalizing form of intersubjectivity between self-determining selves. Drawing on the preceding considerations, Section E begins to develop, first, the explicit connections between Hegel's account of love in the *Early Theological Writings* and his account of reason articulated in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and, second, the distinctive conception of *Bildung* that this connection entails. Section F rebuts some potential objections to Hegel's early account of love by isolating two distinct strands of influence informing Hegel's treatment of love and considers their impact on how we evaluate the ethical and political potential of Hegel's early account of love.

[71] Knox dates parts one and two of the "Positivity" essay to 1795-1796 but suggests that Hegel drafted part three – the beginnings of an intended revision of parts one and two – in 1800. My analysis will focus on parts one and two.

A. Framings: The Early Writings on Religion

Compiled under the heading of Hegel's *Early Theological Writings* (1948), "The Positivity of Christian Religion," "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," and the "Love" fragment are T.M. Knox's original translations of three core texts contained in Herman Nohl's *Theologische Jugendschriften* (1907), a compilation of Hegel's earliest surviving writings composed over the course of his time in Tübingen (1788-93), Bern (1793-96), and Frankfurt (1797-1800). The writings collected in Nohl's volume remained unpublished in Hegel's lifetime and, as Knox notes in the preface to his translation, they were highly fragmentary, experimental, and even enigmatic, reflecting Hegel's attempts to grapple with a set of shifting and intersecting issues through his complicated inheritance of classical Greek culture, Kantian philosophy, Christian theology, and early German romanticism. Indeed, Knox even claims that some of Hegel's writings – in particular a fairly lengthy series of rather scattered fragments placed by Nohl under the heading "Volksreligion und Christentum" (1793) and "Das Leben Jesu" (1793-1794) – proved so elusive so as to either defy translation or render it pointless (*ETW*, v).[72] It is important that we foreground the fragmentary and experimental style of the early writings and tease out the various strands of influence informing them, as these efforts will help us to discern two distinct conceptions of love operative in Hegel's thinking, each of which harbors drastically different implications for thinking about love and its significance to Hegel's thinking about modern religion, ethics, and politics and the relation between them. Drawing attention to these qualities of the text is also especially important when attending to Knox's translations in

[72] These writings were translated in 1984 by Peter Fuss and John Dobbins as the "Tübingen" fragment and "The Life of Jesus" in their volume *G.W.F. Hegel, Three Essays, 1793-1795*, eds. Peter Fuss and John Dobbins (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

particular, for, in an effort for coherence, Knox sometimes misleadingly presents to the reader a more finished piece of writing than what Hegel actually penned or intended, as evidenced, in part, by the fact that when we turn to Nohl's compendium we find that the "Positivity" and "Spirit" "essays" read much more like a loose collection of experimental fragments.

B. Reason, Religion and Freedom in the "Positivity of Christian Religion"

In the "Positivity" essay, we find Hegel grappling with the possibility of a *Volksreligion* – translated literally as a "religion of a people" but better as "civil religion"[73] – that could support the emerging modern form of social and political life founded on the principle of freedom. This was a topic that occupied Hegel throughout his career, claiming his attention from the early "Tübingen" fragment (1793) all the way through his 1831 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. Hegel's interest in the possibility of a *Volksreligion* stems from his interest in how religious concepts and practices can shape and animate the social and political culture that define a nation's way of life. While not supporting a theocracy, a *Volksreligion*, as Hegel puts it in the "Tübingen" fragment, is intended to "influence the spirit of a people in a general way" (*TF*, 52), to inculcate a deep-seated pattern of sociality – an ethos – that animates members of a society and connects them to one another and to their reigning social and political institutions. However, in order for religion to so animate the spirit of modern social and political life in this way, in order for it to "become incarnate in the souls of individuals, and all the more so in the people as a whole" (*TF*, 53), Hegel claims that it must not only be "founded on universal reason" but that it also must capture *"the imagination, the heart, and the senses"* (*TF*, 33). A modern

[73] For a defense of the term "civil religion" as a translation for *Volksreligion* see Thomas A. Lewis, *Religion, Modernity, and Politics in Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 25-28.

Volksreligion, in other words, had to appeal to the whole person – only then could it take root in the life of a distinctively modern people, in their habits, ideals, customs, in their hearts, wills, and deeds.

In the "Positivity" essay, Hegel traces the ideal of a *Volksreligion* to the ancient Greeks, as they considered engaged citizenship as a quintessential component of religious life.[74] While in Tübingen, Hegel developed an abiding fascination with ancient Greek culture and society as transmitted to him by the not always historically accurate ideas and ideals of the early Romantics who dominated the intellectual milieu. Hegel shared with the early Romantics a longing for an organic community that would cure the problems of social alienation and fragmentation that they perceived around them. Hegel's and the early Romantic's enthusiasm for ancient Greece stems from what they saw as its harmonious political culture, in which there was an immediate and organic unity between the individual and the common good. And, for Hegel especially, the political culture of the ancient Greeks was inseparable from ancient Greek religion. In other words, ancient Greek political culture was expressed and supported through the religion of the ancient Greek people – a *Volksreligion* par excellence.

More specifically, Hegel interprets Greek religion as a religion of freedom, which, in turn, promoted a political culture of freedom. In Greek religion, Hegel claims, adherents were "at home" [*zu Hause*] in their religious beliefs and practices – in no way were Greek religious beliefs and practices foreign to the individual's self-determined intellect and will. As Hegel writes,

> "Greek…religion…was a religion for free peoples only…In Greek religion…moral commands…were not treated or set up as if they were the objective rules…[The Greek] will was free and obeyed its own laws; he knew no divine commands, or if he called the

[74] Terry Pinkard, *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 42.

> moral law a divine command, the command was nowhere given in words but ruled him invisibly" *(PCR,* 154/143/155).

Because Greek religion arose out of the personal experiences and needs of the Greek people – because the ethos of Greek religion, its *Sittlichkeit*, was so deeply integrated into the daily lives of the "faithful" – the need for some type of external authority to enforce the commands of Greek religious morality were entirely superfluous. Religion gripped and moved the Greek individual from within, rendering the Greek religious subject free to live in accordance with one's own view of things and one's own self-determined nature. And, in turn, Hegel understood this religious principle of freedom to play an essential role in cultivating and sustaining the freedom of the citizens of the Greek polity. "[Greek] civic religion which generates and nourishes noble dispositions goes hand in hand with freedom" (*HTJ,* 27). Because Greek religion upheld the individual's inalienable right to legislate for oneself, from out of one's own convictions, its practitioners felt obligated to recognize and honor this same capacity for self-determination in other members of the community.

> The Greek…recognized everyone's rights to have a will of his own, be it good or bad. Good men acknowledged in their own case the duty of being good, yet at the same time they respected other people's freedom not to be so; thus they did not set up and impose on others any moral system, whether one that was divine or one manufactured or abstracted [from experience] by themselves (*PCR,* 155).

Hegel proceeds to clarify the nature of the freedom promoted by Greek religion, claiming that it possesses a distinctly "democratic spirit," in the sense of *demos-kratia,* or power (*kratia*) by the people (*demos*) (*PCR,* 82). As Hegel explains,

> As free men, the Greeks obeyed law laid down by themselves, obeyed men whom they had themselves appointed to office, waged wars on which they had themselves decided, gave their property, exhausted their passions, and sacrificed their lives by thousands for an end which was their own. They neither learned nor taught [a moral system] but evinced by their actions the moral maxims which they could call their very own. In public as in private and domestic life, every individual was a free man, one who lived by his own laws (*PCR,* 154).

What resulted from this coalescence of Greek religion and Greek social and political life was thus a "picture of the state as a product of one's own energies," (*PCR,* 156), a picture of the state that was in no way "other" to the individual, since its laws and institutions arose out of the freedom intrinsic to the customs, traditions, and beliefs of Greek religion. In other words, the principle of freedom animating ancient Greek religion organically found its most developed expression in the distinctively democratic freedom that characterized Greek social and political culture.

Hegel deeply admired this purported Greek unity of religious and public life and the democratic culture it engendered, but he knew that this Greek ethos could not simply be restored in an increasingly divided modern world that so privileged the freedom of the individual qua individual. For in the unity of Greek religious and public life, any robust sense of the individual qua individual – with *particular* interests, desires, dispositions, predilections, sentiments, and the like – is precluded from coming into view because of the sheer immediacy that characterizes Greek citizens' identification with the state.

> The idea of his country or of his state was the invisible and higher reality for which he strove, which impelled him to effort; it was the final end of his world or in his eyes the final end of the world, an end which he found manifested in the realities of his daily life or which he himself co-operated in manifesting and maintaining. Confronted by this idea, his own individuality vanished it was only this idea's maintenance, life, and persistence that he asked for…It could never or hardly ever have struck him to ask or beg for persistence…of his own individuality (*PCR,* 154).

Viewed from the standpoint of modernity, Hegel thus considered ancient Greek individuality and its distinctive form of freedom to be woefully overdetermined by the universality of the laws and institutions of the state, rendering it unstable and unfit for the modern world. For in ancient Greece, individual freedom remains intuitively embedded within the substantial unity of the state, in the sense that the Greek citizen unreflectively adopts the customs, beliefs, and habits of

the polis.[75] Even Socrates, whom Hegel praises as most fully embodying this principle of individual freedom in the ancient Greek world (*PCR,* 81-82), does not escape this fate, as evidenced by his refusal to flee from prison and elude capital punishment because of his total identification with the laws of Athens.

Despite his criticisms and his belief that the organic unity of the Greek polis was forever lost, Hegel nevertheless insisted on the need for some kind of return to a renewed unity, to a new polis, that could offer individuals a deeper sense of social solidarity and organic unity beyond the fragmentation and mechanistic interactions that he perceived around him. Hegel's turn to Christianity in the "Positivity" essay can be read as his earliest sustained attempt to develop and revivify the classical Greek ideal of a *Volksreligion* and the organic unity between the individual and the state within his own modern milieu, marked as it was by the irreducibility of individuality – or what Hegel will later come to call "subjective particularity" – and a demand for a sense of collective unity (see especially *PCR,* 98-99). Hegel's early effort at reconstructing a modern *Volksreligion* whose core principles could cultivate and sustain a model of citizenship and political community suited to these distinctive needs of modernity takes Christianity as its point of departure. However, in Hegel's mind, the first issue to grapple with if Christianity were to be considered a modern *Volksreligion* is its "positivity." For, unlike Greek religion, Hegel considered Christianity to have developed into a religion whose normative authority is ratified through a source external to one's own reason and will.

> [W]e shall in the main touch only on those features in the religion of Jesus which led to its becoming positive, i.e., to its becoming either such that it was postulated, but not by reason, and was even in conflict with reason, or else such that it required belief on authority alone, even if it did accord with reason (*PCR,* 74).

[75] For Hegel, it is in ancient Rome that the significance of individuality and the idea of the individual invested with private right is fully brought to the fore, albeit to the problematic exclusion of social cooperation and solidarity.

In the context of the Enlightenment [*Aufklärung*], Hegel considered positivity to be one of the primary obstacles to the revitalization of Christianity as a modern *Volksreligion,* for an enlightened and self-determined people could not uncritically accept Christianity's theological claims and moral commands that either ran counter to reason or disregarded its epistemic authority. As Hegel explains,

> The fundamental errors at the bottom of a church's entire system is that it ignores the rights pertaining to every faculty of the human mind, in particular to the chief of them, reason. Once the church's system ignores reason, it can be nothing save a system which despises man. The powers of the human mind have a domain of their own, and this domain was separated off for science by Kant (*PCR,* 143).[76]

Whereas Greek religion had been intuitively at one with the individual's reason (*PCR,* 143), the Christian church – from the time of the earliest disciples up to Hegel's own milieu – had too often failed to adequately acknowledged the native capacity of individuals to decide about religious and moral matters on the basis of their own rational convictions. As Hegel writes, "the Christian church has taken the subjective element in reason and set it up as a rule as if it were something objective…The Christian religion proclaims the moral law is something outside of us and something given" (*PCR,* 143-144). Lacking an organic relation to the rationality of an individual's subjectivity, Christian religion and its ethical ethos were thus hard pressed to find a home in the modern world as a *Volksreligion.*

Foreshadowing his pivotal distinction in his mature *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* between religious representation and philosophical thinking, Hegel insists, however,

[76] Cf. "The church…educates the child to believe in the faith…the ideas and words engraved on imagination and memory are so girt with terrors and placed by command in such a holy, inviolable, and blinding light that either they dumbfound the laws of reason…by their brilliance and prevent [its] use, or else they prescribe to reason…laws of another kind" (*PCR,* 116).

"that the question about positivity does not affect the content of a religion so much as the way in which the religion is conceived, i.e., whether as something given throughout or as something given [*gegeben*] *qua* free and freely received" (*PCR,* 174). Woven into his critique of the positive elements of Christianity we thus find Hegel persistently gesturing toward an alternative way of relating to its given content suitable for modernity – "given qua free and freely received." The full scope of this peculiar claim will increasingly come into view across chapters three, four, and five, but for now it is important to draw attention to its connection with Kant's conception of autonomous reason.

A child of the Enlightenment and freshly steeped in Kant's critical philosophy, the young Hegel was intent on remedying the "positivity" he found endemic in the Christian church and recrafting Christianity as a modern *Volksreligion* by reframing the Gospels through the lens of Kantian reason (*Vernunft*). For Kant, reason occupies its own unique domain, in the sense that it brings forth from entirely out of its own immanent determinations its own laws, principles, and standards. Kantian reason, in other words, is thoroughly self-governing. As Kant writes in the preface to the A and B editions of the first *Critique,* "reason has insight only into what it itself produces according to its own design" (*CPR*, Bxiii), "into that which it brings forth entirely out of itself" (*CPR,* Axx). In ratifying its own immanently determined laws, principles, and standards, reason thereby imposes on itself only that which is authorized by itself and thus is not conditioned, or determined, by anything external to itself. In this way, reason – in both its theoretical and practical manifestations – "freely gives and receives" its own laws, principles, and standards – hence its autonomy (*autos nomos)*.

Kant later leverages reason's capacity to impose on itself self-given laws in his *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* to argue in favor of a moral religion of reason that does not

rely on any non-rational form of revelation, tradition, or dogma – any forms of external givenness – to ground, or justify, its claims to authority. Here Kant argues that when we pass Christianity through the crucible of reason, we find there exists no fundamental conflict between the demands of a rationally determined moral life and the content of Christian belief and practice and, further, that the rationally determined moral life can be lived by acting in accordance with Christian belief and practice, such that the latter receives its justification on the authority of the former (*RLR*, 6:12-6:13). "We shall be able to say that between reason and Scripture there is, not only compatibility but also unity, so that whoever follows the one (under the guidance of moral concepts) will not fail to come across the other as well" (*RLR*, 6:13).

Hegel sees in Kant's rational model of moral religion an antidote to the positivity he saw endemic in Christianity, as it provides an avenue through which the modern subject can come to claim a religious tradition and its moral ethos as genuinely one's own, as an expression of one's own rational convictions, as self-given, rather than something simply imposed on one from without via the sheer authority of dogma or tradition. Following Kant, Hegel thus claims that "reason [ought to be] trained so as to be led to develop [its] own native principles or to judge what [it] hear[s] by [its] own standards" (*PCR*, 116). Only when reason was so developed, Hegel thought, could the content of Christianity become a living personal and social force in the life of a distinctively modern people. For "the sole moral motive, respect for the moral law, can be aroused only in a subject in whom the law is itself the legislator, and from whose own inner consciousness this law proceeds" (*PCR*, 144). The language of independence, self-grounding, and the like, thus indicates the degree to which Hegel's interpretation of Jesus's teachings is deeply indebted to the Kantian conception of self-determining reason discussed above, as the

moral law is conceived of as "self-given" through the use of one's own native capacity for reason.

Hegel brings his Kantianized conception of reason to bear on his interpretation of Jesus in the "Positivity" essay, claiming that Jesus's core intention in preaching the Gospel was to encourage people to embrace a moral life as part of their deepest inclinations and highest nature as rational beings. "Jesus," Hegel writes, "was the teacher of a purely moral religion, not a positive one" (*PCR,* 71), and his goal was "to restore to morality the freedom which is its essence…[For] morality had sunk from the freedom which is its proper character to a system of like usages" (*PCR,* 69). In Hegel's eyes, Jesus's Jewish milieu had been "restricted solely to the study of sacred sources, and it [had] confined virtue to a blind obedience to these authoritarian commands" (*PCR,* 76). It had become, in other words, thoroughly positive, reduced to an ossified product of "objective" doctrinal formulae, ceremonial rituals, and norms of interaction. Hoping to revivify the religious community, Jesus sought "to convince them of the inadequacy of a statutory ecclesial faith" (*PCR,* 76), insisting instead, along Kantian lines, on a "morality which is independent, spurns any foundation outside itself, and insists on being self-sufficient and self-grounded" (*PCR,* 79).[77] For Hegel, then, Jesus represents the irreducible world-

[77] Here it is worth noting that Hegel's critique of the positivity of Christian religion is also tapping into long-standing and prevalent anti-Jewish tropes regarding what he perceived as the slavish, fear-driven, and intellectually limited nature of Jewish religion. I read Hegel's anti-Judaism in the early writings as a symptom of his underlying dissatisfaction with unfree forms of life rooted in submission to coercive laws. Hegel just so happens to have a very distorted and selective grasp of Judaism that he thinks falls into this category. But Judaism isn't alone here – in the "Spirit" essay, Hegel insists that Kant's moral philosophy also promotes this unfree form of life, as Kant merely internalizes the unfree obedience to law that he accuses Judaism of. And moreover, Hegel thinks that Christianity is also guilty of this unfreedom (although he thinks this is largely due to the Jewish milieu in which Jesus preached). In Hegel's mind, then, Kantian moral philosophy, Jewish religion, and predominant strands of Christian religion are all examples of an unfree form of life that he rails against. Thus, Hegel's issue is not with Kant,

historical birth of a form of subjectivity in which obedience to the moral law organically coalesces with the autonomous reason of the individual qua individual. Indeed, Jesus's emphasis on the preservation of the individuality of the individual marks what Hegel considered Jesus's advance over Greek religion, in which individuality is ultimately quashed within the universality of the state. Importantly, however, on Hegel's reading, Jesus did not consider himself to be the sole embodiment of this life of freedom life; rather he thought that Jesus's intentions were to inspire *others* to a similar life of freedom by awakening and developing their own innate yet underdeveloped rational inclinations toward virtue [*Tugend*]. "Jesus," as Hegel writes, appealed to the human's "native capacity for virtue and the character of freedom" (*PCR*, 79); he "urged not a virtue grounded on authority…but a free virtue springing from man's own being" (*PCR,* 71).[78] Here, then, we see Hegel creatively apply Kant's conception of free reason to Jesus's teachings on virtue, for just as reason determines its own laws and codes of conduct from out of

Judaism, or Christianity per se but rather with the unfree form of life that he sees underlying them all. To be sure, ther are certainly anti-Judaic attitudes and tropes at work in Hegel's early writings, but I think we can nevertheless dissociate Hegel's early account of love and its development in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* from his anti-Judaism. Also, worth noting is that Hegel had a lifelong interest in Judaism and his treatment of it evolved throughout his life and career. The early writings are undeniably and harshly critical of Judaism, but, as Peter Hodgson notes, his "1827 lectures carry further the favorable reassessment of Judaism begun in 1824" (*LPR* 1:55). Specifically, in his mature works Hegel conceives of Judaism not as a static system of coercive laws but rather as an essential part of the development of the human spirit in its movement toward freedom. In this way, the freedom of Jewish religion can be understood as positively contributing to the development of his account of love rather than something that stands in opposition to it.

[78] Cf. "If nothing whatever in our hearts responded to the challenge to virtue, and if therefore the call struck no chord in our own nature, then Jesus's endeavor to teach men virtue would have had the same character and the same outcome as St. Antony of Padua's zeal in preaching to fish" (*PCR,* 73).

itself, so too is virtue seen as something toward which one is immanently driven, from within one's very being.

C. Love and the Alterity of the Law in the Frankfurt Writings

After penning parts one and two of the "Positivity" essay Hegel moved from Bern to Frankfurt where he spent the next three years drafting attempts to think through love's role in overcoming the positivity he had so adamantly diagnosed. Particularly important in this regard are Hegel's efforts in "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate." Here, as in the "Positivity" essay, Hegel continues to insist that Jesus lived and taught a form of "free virtue," but he now places an increased and conscious emphasis on the idea that such free virtue is possible only if there is space for what he often generically refers to as "the subjective." "Against purely objective commands Jesus set something totally foreign to them, namely, the subjective in general" (*SCF*, 209). At this point in Hegel's thinking, "the subjective" still functions somewhat loosely, although it will come to play an increasingly important and well-defined role in his later thinking, especially as we will see in his *Philosophy of Right.* However, already in the "Spirit" essay we can discern important features of Hegel's deployment of this crucial term that persists throughout much of his corpus. Here the subjective connotes the way in which the individual relates to the "objective" doctrines, laws, rituals, and way of life codified by the church. When the individual relates to these objective codified features as purely external, the integrity of the subjective is comprised. But when one is able to wholly identify oneself with these objective codified conditions such that their sheer externality is overcome, such that one does not experience them as alien to oneself, including one's natural needs and inclinations, then the integrity of the subjective is left intact. For Hegel, this latter way of relating to these objective

codified features emerged in a specific historical form of life that first emerged in the teachings of Jesus. As he writes, "Over and against commands which required a bare service to the Lord…an obedience without joy, without pleasure or love…Jesus set their precise opposite, a human urge, so a human need" (*SCF,* 206). For Hegel, Jesus is not annulling the commands of the moral law but recommending a new way of relating to them, such that one does not experience them as alien command to be obeyed begrudgingly but rather finds satisfaction in them. In other words, Jesus is urging a form of morality that coincides with and is supported by one's innate needs and desires. Hegel cites the examples of the disciples' plucking ears of corn and Jesus's healing of a withered hand on the Sabbath as examples of the dynamic coalescence of the subjective and the objective (*SCF,* 208). On Hegel's account, to uphold the prohibition against work on the Sabbath simply because it is the law would be to sever the objective from the subjective, for it would result in a law which one would find utterly alien to one's innate needs and desires (i.e., the need for food and a desire for an able body rid of chronic pain). The individual, in other words, would not be internally compelled to abide by the law because the law commands something contrary to human nature. Instead, Hegel insists that the satisfaction of these commonest human wants must rise superior to the dead letter of the law (*SCF,* 207). Importantly, however, this is not an annulment of the law in favor of mere whim or want; rather, the embodied needs and desire of the individual are seen to condition the applicability of the law in a way that transforms both the latter and the former. In keeping with his earlier insistence in the "Tübingen" fragment that a modern *Volksreligion* needs to appeal to the whole person, motivating one from within, Hegel thus sees in Jesus's teachings and actions a platform for revitalizing Christianity as a modern *Volksreligion*.

Here we begin to see Hegel's departure from his Kantian depiction of Jesus in the "Positivity" essay, as Kant's moral philosophy explicitly disavows – or at least strongly cautions against – the elevation of one's embodied needs and desires to the level of a moral imperative. The idea that the wellspring of morality could lie nascent within one's natural needs and inclinations was unacceptable in Kant's eyes, for whom moral action was always a matter of mastering one's wayward natural inclinations through self-imposed rational laws. Recall that, for Kant, every event that transpires in the phenomenal world is caused by antecedent material conditions, which themselves have antecedent causes *ad infinitum*. The phenomena of human action are no exception – every action, being subject to the mechanistic laws of natural causality, is causally explicable in terms of the natural inclinations that preceded it, since the laws of nature privilege our natural inclinations such that if you have an inclination then you will perform the associated action. Belonging to the realm of natural necessity, inclinations and other drives are thus determined externally by the laws of nature. However, as Kant notes in his *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, "beyond this constitution of [the] subject, made up of nothing but appearances, [one] must necessarily assume something else lying at their basis, namely his self [*Ich*] as it may be constituted in itself as possessing pure activity" (*GMM*, 4:451). This "pure activity" of the self, Kant claims, is "a capacity that every human being really finds in himself…a capacity by which he distinguishes himself from all other things, even from himself insofar as he is affected by objects… [A capacity] that goes far beyond anything that sensibility can ever afford it" (*GMM*, 4:452). This pure spontaneous activity Kant called *Willkür*, which is free insofar as it is able to make a spontaneous choice, a choice that is not determined by any antecedent natural causal factors, to either act in accordance with or violate the moral law given by our self-determined pure practical reason, or *Wille*. But in order to make space for this free

choice (*Willkür*) Kant is forced to resort to a distinction between the phenomenal realm of appearances and the noumenal realm of things-in-themselves, placing natural inclinations in the former and moral reason in the latter. With the natural side of life separated from the rational demands of morality, the Kantian moral subject thus finds himself divided between these two seemingly disconnected poles of its existence, as our empirical self is understood to be causally determined by antecedent natural inclinations while our noumenal self is understood to be unencumbered by the ordinary mechanistic laws of nature.

In the "Spirit" essay, Hegel now realizes that by dissociating moral reason from one's natural inclinations and desires emanating from embodied life and subordinating the latter to the former, Kant effectively reinstates an element of positivity that undermines true moral freedom. Hegel's revised take on Jesus memorably diagnoses this inner diremption of the Kantian moral subject.

> [W]e might have expected Jesus to work along these [Kantian] lines against the positivity of moral commands, against sheer legality, and to show that, although the legal is a universal whose entire obligatoriness lies in its universality, still, even, if every ought, every command, declares itself as something alien, nevertheless as concept (universality) it is something subjective, and, as subjective, as a product of a human power (i.e., of reason as the capacity for universality), it loses its objectivity, its positivity, its heteronomy, and the thing commanded is revealed as grounded in an autonomy of the human will. By this line of argumentation, however, positivity is only partially removed; and between the Shaman of the Tungus, the European prelate who rules church and state, the Voguls, and the Puritans, on the one hand, and the man who listens to his own command of duty, on the other, the difference is not that the former make themselves slaves, while the latter is free, but that the former have their lord outside themselves, while the latter carries his lord in himself, yet at the same time is his own slave. For the particular – impulses, inclinations, pathological love, sensuous experience, or whatever else it is called – the universal is necessarily and always something alien and objective. There remains a residuum of indestructible positivity (*SCF,* 210-211).

This passage marks a particularly significant development in Hegel's thinking, as the form of Kantian reason that served as his analytical lens in the "Positivity" essay is now itself explicitly seen as positive precisely because it does not make space for the natural needs and inclinations

that vitally animate a human life. Kant had suggested in his *Religion* book that the Tungus and the Voguls – both Siberian tribes – as well as the European prelate and the Puritans are ruled by sheerly external laws whereas the person ruled by reason was thoroughly self-determined, obeying laws given by one's own inner reason. Hegel's departure from Kant along with his revised take on Jesus stem from his realization that by excluding "the subjective" dimensions of human life from the domain of morality proper Kant's moral subject merely internalizes these external forms of positivity, trading one form of unfreedom for another. For insofar as one's reason treats one's embodied needs and inclinations as something fundamentally other and antithetical to reason and its ends, the self will remain internally divided, understanding and experiencing the demands of morality as thoroughly positive.

Facing what he now considered the glaring inadequacies of Kant's model of moral virtue, Hegel turns his efforts toward articulating a robust and holistic conception of moral subjectivity in which one's rationality and natural needs and inclinations (i.e., the "subjective" aspects of one's existence) freely coalesce in the fulfillment of the moral law. In order to flesh out this holistic conception of the moral subject, Hegel foregrounds what Jesus says about love, focusing particularly on the love commandment. "Jesus demands that love shall be the soul of his friends [John xiii. 34-35]: 'A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; thereby will men know that ye are my friends'" (*SCF,* 246). Specifically, Hegel focuses on the imperative form that accompanies Jesus's command to "love thy neighbor," urging us not to understand his prescription as a command of an external power fundamentally *other* to the subjective particularity of the individual (*SCF,* 212-213). He begins to explicate what he takes to be a proper interpretation of the love commandment by again framing his treatment in terms of his disagreement with Kant, claiming that the command to "[l]ove God above everything and thy

neighbor as thyself' was quite wrongly regarded by Kant as a 'command requiring respect for a law which commands love'" (*SCF,* 213). Kant's treatment of the love commandment is complex, developing across the course of his writings in moral philosophy, beginning with his *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), continuing in his *Critique of Practical Reason* (1787), and then once more in his mature *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797). But across these treatments, Kant insists that we should not understand the love commandment to be rooted in and motivated by any of our natural inclinations – what Kant calls "pathological love" – but rather in a sense of pure duty, uncompelled by natural inclinations. This love borne from pure duty is what Kant approvingly calls "practical love" (*GMM* 4:399). The significance of this distinction can be brought into view by recalling that across his moral writings Kant argues that the fundamental principle of morality requires one to be motivated purely by respect for the moral law itself and not merely act in accordance with it. Only under this condition can an action be said to possess moral worth. For example, in the *GMM* he writes, "For, in the case of what is to be morally good it is not enough that it *conforms* with the moral law, but it must also be done *for the sake of the law*" (*GMM* 4:390). A person of good will, in other words, cannot just inadvertently happen to do what duty requires but instead must be motivated exclusively by the recognition that the action in question is his or her duty – one's inclinations cannot play any role in determining an action's moral worth. In order to maintain parity between the rational demands of the moral law and the moral demands of a Christian life Kant must therefore dissociate pathological love from his interpretation of the love commandment, since pathological love cannot be commanded and hence cannot be performed out of a sense of sheer duty. Therefore, Kant instead reads the love commandment as a practical form of love, since only those actions

which are performed purely out of a sense of duty to the moral law can be said to possess moral worth.[79]

Hegel agrees with Kant that love – at least in its "pathological" form – cannot be commanded, that one cannot be forced into loving someone without undermining love's true character. "Love," as Hegel writes, "pronounces no imperative [*Sollen*]" (*SCF,* 247). Indeed, he declares it "a sort of dishonor to love when it is commanded" (*SCF,* 247), as the lover is expected to organically desire to fulfill his or her obligation to the beloved or beloveds if love is to remain true to its essence. "In love all thought of duty vanishes" (*SCF,* 213). But Hegel thinks that the lover's inner propulsion to love the beloved is an irreducible feature of any conception of love and that for Kant to suggest that we have no natural inclinations to fulfill the love commandment is to altogether misrepresent the nature of love. In other words, in Hegel's eyes, what Kant calls "practical love" is not in fact love precisely because it can only be commanded from without. Hegel, by contrast, takes the fact that love, by its very nature, cannot be externally commanded to be one of love's greatest conceptual assets, as it allows him to reintroduce subjective particularity as an essential ingredient in the fulfillment of the rational demands of moral law.

Hegel turns to Jesus's teachings in the Sermon on the Mount as a way to begin to illustrate how love unites subjective particularity and the rational demands of the moral law.

> This spirit of Jesus, a spirit raised above morality, is visible directly attacking laws, in the Sermon on the Mount, which is an attempt, elaborated in numerous examples, to strip the

[79] For more on Kant's distinction between practical and pathological love see Allen Wood, "The Final Form of Kant's Practical Philosophy," *Kant's Moral Philosophy: Interpretive Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 16-20. Also see Paul Guyer, *Knowledge, Reason, and Taste: Kant's Response to Hume* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 185-187; Iris Murdoch, *Existentialists and Mystics: Writings on Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Penguin, 1997), 219-220; Christopher Insole, *Kant and the Divine: From Contemplation to the Moral Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 118-120.

> laws of legality, of their legal form. The Sermon does not teach reverence for the laws; on the contrary, it exhibits that which fulfills (*pleroma* / πλήρωμα) the law but annuls it as law and so is something higher than obedience to law and makes law superfluous (*SCF,* 212).

As Hegel goes on to clarify, it is love which fulfills the law in this way. For in the experience of love the subject is raised above the cleavage between what he is naturally inclined to do and what the universal law tells him he ought to do, between "is" and "ought," negating all lingering forms of positivity by rendering the imperative form of the law superfluous. In love, in other words, the tension between the rational universality of the moral law and the subjective particularity of the individual is annulled. As Hegel writes, "in the 'fulfillment' [*pleroma*] of both the laws and duty the moral disposition ceases to be…opposed to inclination…This correspondence of law and inclination is life, and, as the relation of differents to one another, love" (*SCF,* 215).[80] Or again, "The opposition of duty to inclination has found its unification in the modifications of love (*SCF,* 225). In the fulfillment of the law through love, then, no longer does one portion of the self command another portion of the self, as the embodied aspects of the self (its natural needs and inclinations) are mobilized as essential motivational factors in the fulfillment of the universal moral law, transforming it from something given qua positive into something with which one deeply identifies. Love, as Hegel thus writes, issues a command "quite different from that of the 'shalt' of a moral imperative" (*SCF,* 213), for it does not exert external force to get the subject to comply with its commands but rather compels from within,

[80] Hegel uses the expression "correspondence of inclination with the law" to describe this unification but immediately cautions his readers that even this locution "is…unsatisfactory," since in love – understood as a unified, active, organic mode of being-in-the-world – the two are no longer really different particulars opposed to each other (*SCF*, 214-215).

granting the subject the space in which to fulfill the demands in a way that accords with his subjective particularity.

Throughout the "Spirit" essay, Hegel describes this form of love as a virtue [*Tugend*]. Against the self-coercion of Kantian virtue, Hegel writes,

> Jesus set virtue, i.e., a loving disposition, which makes the content of the command superfluous and destroys its form as a command because that form implies an opposition between a commander and something resisting the command…This inclination to act as the law may command, a virtue, is a synthesis in which the law…loses its universality and the subject its particularity; both lose their opposition... (*SCF,* 214-215).

That Hegel describes love as a virtue that synthesizes universality and particularity indicates that such love is not mere liking, inclination, or impulse – not sheerly pathological – but rather a relatively permanent co-alignment of our pathological (from the Greek *pathos*) drives and particular inclinations, on the one hand, and the rational universality of the moral law, on the other. With his insistence that the virtue of love consists in an inclination to act as reason commands, Hegel can be understood to be channeling something of Aristotle's idea that true virtue consists in desiring to do what one ought to do and in desiring this consistently over time to the point where it becomes second nature, or habit. Consider, for example, Aristotle's claim in the *Nichomachean Ethics*: "The man who does not enjoy doing noble actions is not a good man at all: no one would call a man just if he did not like acting justly, nor liberal if he did not like doing liberal things, and similarly with the other virtues."[81] On Hegel's reading of Aristotelian virtue, the liking or enjoyment of acting virtuously – the "pleasure" one takes in it (recall, as Aristotle notes, "pleasure perfects the activity") – is not seen as an obfuscation of virtuous

[81] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, trans. Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 1099a17-20.

action, as Kant would have thought, but rather is seen as essential to its actualization.[82] As Hegel remarks in the "Tübingen" fragment: "[T]he fundamental principle of our empirical character is love…[T]his empirical aspect of our character, confined as it is to the arena of inclinations, does contain a moral feeling bent on weaving its delicate thread throughout the entire fabric" (*TF,* 48). Indeed, Hegel's later remarks on Aristotelian virtue in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* further bear out this point.

> Aristotle…distinguishes a rational and an irrational part in the soul; in the latter, reason [*nous*] exists only in potentiality; and what befits it are sensations, inclinations, passions, and affects. In the rational side of the soul, there is intellect, wisdom, level-headedness, knowledge – all of which have their place. However, they still do not constitute virtue, which first exists in the unity of the rational with the irrational side. We call those things virtues when the passions (inclinations) comport themselves to reason in such a way that they do what reason commands…Reason is not…the principle of virtue purely in itself…both desire and reason are necessary moments in virtue…Thus, in virtue, because it has realization as its aim, and pertains to the individual, reason is not the solitary principle; for inclination is the force that impels the particular, which as far as the practical side of the individual subject is concerned, is what makes for realization (*LHP* 2*:* 204-205).

On Hegel's reading of Aristotle, not only do reason and inclination align in a virtuous individual but the individual cannot act virtuously without the inner propulsion provided by inclination. For it is precisely these natural drives that consistently push the individual to act on what she thinks is the virtuous course of action is in a particular situation. "There must be an irrational impulse towards what is good" (*LHP*, 2:205). But, to be sure, as Hegel also notes, reason must bring inclination and passion under its purview. "If reason (*logos*) is bad or not even present but passion (inclination, the heart) acquits itself well, then good heartedness can very well be at

[82] Several scholarly studies have argued that Hegel's sincere engagement with Aristotle's thought began as early as 1801. However, given the Aristotelian tenor of Hegel's early conception of virtue, not to mention his general infatuation with all things Athenian, it stands to reason that Aristotle's influence on Hegel's thinking began as early as the Frankfurt years. For a helpful overview of the relevant studies on Aristotle's impact on Hegel see Alfredo Ferrarin, *Hegel and Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4-7.

work, but there is no virtue because the ground (*logos*) is lacking" (*LHP*, 2:223). On Hegel's reading, then, Aristotelian virtue consists in a sort of convergence and integration of the rational demands of the universal, on the one hand, and the particular impulses and inclinations of the self, on the other, such that the virtuous person takes pleasure in acting virtuously and flourishes as a result. Accordingly, Aristotle's understanding of virtue as desiring to do what one ought to do provides Hegel a platform for moving beyond Kant's dualism between reason and inclination.

Hegel's key conceptual modification of Aristotelian virtue – made possible by the advent of Christianity – is to see *love* as a unique phenomenon in which the rational universality of the moral law and particular inclinations of the individual are brought together in a mutually symbiotic fashion. Hence Hegel's pithy but otherwise enigmatic claims that "love [is] the sole principle of virtue" and that "love reconciles…man with virtue" (*SCF,* 245). For through love the particularity of the individual is reconciled with the universality of the moral law. In love, as Hegel puts the point later in the "Spirit" essay, individuals find themselves "living in the harmony of their developed many-sidedness and their entire being and character" (*SCF*, 277).

To help illustrate the distinctive manner in which love qua virtue accomplishes this symbiotic reconciliation of one's embodied needs and inclinations and the rational universality of the moral law, Hegel draws on the command "Thou shalt not kill" from Matthew v. 21-22.

> This command is recognized as valid for the will of every rational being and [is] valid as a principle of universal legislation. Against such a command, Jesus set the higher genus of reconcilability (a modification of love) which not only does not act counter to this law but makes it wholly superfluous; it has in itself a so much richer, more living, fullness that so poor a thing as a law is nothing for it at all. In reconcilability the law loses its form, the concept is displaced by life; but what reconcilability thereby loses in respect of the universality which grips all particulars together in the concept is only a seeming loss and a genuine infinite gain on account of the wealth of living relations with the individuals…with whom it comes into connection (*SCF*, 215).

On Hegel's view, an individual with a cultivated disposition to love would simply not be inclined to kill another person and would therefore satisfy the demands of the law without the law ever acquiring a positive status for him. Instead, satisfying the law would be seen as a natural outward expression of "a human urge and so a human need" (*SCF,* 206; also see 225) and hence the command form of the law would be seen as superfluous. What is more, as Hegel notes, when approached in the spirit of love the content of the law is "fulfilled," receiving an "expanded content" as it undergoes a consummatory transformation (*SCF,* 214). In other words, given qua positive the content of the law is given as a bare proscription on killing, which is so "indigent that it permits any transgression except the one that it forbids" (*SCF,* 216). But when the law is given *qua* free and freely received, i.e., when the law is found to coalesce with one's impassioned inclinations *and* one's rational commitment to it, the law yields a community of mutually engaged and concerned individuals, or what Hegel describes as "a wealth of living relations with individuals" (*SCF,* 215). The content of the universal moral law is thus rendered unequivocally richer, fuller, and more determinate on account of the subject's transformed relation to it in love, developing from a relatively indeterminate, impoverished, and abstract ought into a living, breathing, and ethically enriching principle that binds together a community of irreducibly particular individuals. On Hegel's account, then, in the fulfillment of the moral law through the virtue of love, embodied needs and inclinations (i.e., one's subjective particularity) and the rational universality of the moral law are not at perpetual loggerheads but rather are co-constitutive and mutually enriching.

Hegel offers further insight into this reciprocal and generative dynamic between the universality of the moral law and the subjective particularity of the individual with his brief but

instructive discussion of religious worship through dance in another early fragment translated in the *Early Theological Writings* titled "Fragment of a System" (1800).

> It is the essence of worship…to blend this attitude [i.e., thoughtful contemplation of God] with the joyful subjectivity of living beings…of motions of the body, a sort of subjective expression which…can become objective and beautiful by rules, namely: dance…[T]his variety of expression…demands unity and order which come alive in someone who orders and commands… (*FS,* 316).

Here Hegel describes how the "subjective expressions" issued by the visceral "motions of the body" are transformed into "objective and beautiful" expressions of the universal when ordered by the "rules" of dance. Importantly, however, this ordering does not consist in an individual subject's mere passive reception of a universal form; rather, as Hegel explains, these sensuous movements that issue from the singular subject play an active role in concretizing the universal, in granting vivacity and dynamism to the rules of the dance. "This variety of expression," as Hegel explains, "demands unity and order which come alive in someone who orders and commands…" (*FS,* 316). The objective form of the dance is thus one that is perpetually mediated by the willed movements of an embodied individual, as any one dancer can, to a certain extent, revise and reform – if ever so slightly – the form of the dance on ever more complex levels without these singular instantiations ever falling outside of the rules of the dance (i.e., the domain of the universal). As Hegel notes already in the "Positivity" essay, "the concept…admits of infinite modifications" (*PCR,* 168). The universal form of the dance thus retains a kind of in medias res normativity – the dance remains "objective," but its objectivity is a mediated objectivity, as it has given itself over to the free creative power of the individual dancer. For while the dancer is inundated by a form of dance belonging to an objective and perhaps reified tradition of dance that he did not create, he is able to make this form uniquely his own by participating in it in an irreducibly singular way, drawing the rules of the dance into the

particular movements produced from out of his creative appropriation of them. In this way, the dancer becomes a genuinely creative – a genuinely generative – inheritor of the rules governing the performance of the dance. In this dynamic and generative relation, the rules of the dance are thus not annulled through their particular instantiations; rather, they become richer, fuller, more diverse and determinate: they are "fulfilled."

In his discussion of Hegel's concept of the concrete universal, Slavoj Zizek offers an example that lends further determinacy to the way that the universal comes alive via the particular actions of singular individuals. Broadly speaking, for Hegel the concrete universal connotes the concept of a thing embodied in external reality. As embodied in external reality, as concrete, the universal is modified by its particular instantiations even as it simultaneously places constraints on them. Accordingly, the concrete universal is not complete in advance of its embodied emergence in various instantiations. To be sure, Hegel does not fully and explicitly develop his concept of the concrete universal until much later in his career. Zizek's example, however, helps us to discern the ways in which Hegel's thinking on this important topic is already prefigured in significant ways in his early discussion of the fulfillment of the universal moral law through the practice of love. Drawing on the various performance of a violin concerto, Zizek explains how musicians such as Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and Bartók each represent a creative and irreducibly singular effort at actualizing the essence pointed to by the universal concept of a "violin concerto," i.e., an instrumental composition written for a solo violinist. And yet, Zizek adds, despite the novelty in each of their compositions and performances, these musicians remain in a certain sense united by virtue of their shared effort to compose and perform – to actualize – a violin concerto. Zizek's point is that the irreducibly singular compositions and performances of Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Bartók, et al. play a vital role in

determining the form and content that a violin concerto can take while simultaneously being internally constituted by that very concept. The musicians thus actively determine the universal even as they are simultaneously determined by it. As Zizek writes,

> Here we have an example of Hegelian 'concrete universality'; a process or a sequence of particular attempts that do not simply exemplify the neutral universal notion but struggle with it, give a specific twist to it – the Universal is thus fully engaged in the process of its particular exemplification; that is to say, these particular cases in a way decide the fate of the universal notion itself.[83]

Similar to Hegel's dance example, the rules governing what counts as an instance of a violin concerto cannot be rendered fixed and determined in advance of its singular instantiations, even as these singular instantiations remain bound by the normativity of the antecedently posited concept. For while the universality of the concept imposes certain constraints upon the multitude of its instantiations, it does so in a way that remains deeply shaped by these singular instantiations. The concept of a "violin concerto" thus retains a kind of in media res normativity even as it develops and is contested across the unique performances that render it alive and contribute to its contestation, growth, and development. For Zizek, this dynamic exemplifies Hegel's notion of concrete universality, in which the universal undergoes modification but without sacrificing the generic features that make the universal that universal that it is.

The preceding analysis and examples illuminate how already in the early writings Hegel conceives of the universal as fundamentally open to the embodied subjective particularity of the singular individual as the irreducibly localized point in and from which the content of the universal is realized and revised, even as the universal simultaneously and necessarily imposes constraints on the subjective particularity of the individual. In the early writings on religion,

[83] Slavoj Zizek, *The Ticklish Subject*: *The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London: Verso Books, 1999), 102.

love's fulfillment of the moral law exemplifies this co-constitutive dynamic between universality and particularity. For each singular act of love potentially represents a novel fulfillment of the content of the universal moral law. For while the law "commands" us to love, what exactly this universal command entails and how it is to be carried out remains relatively indeterminate until it is mediated through the subjective particularity of a self-determining singular subject. "Love," as Hegel writes, "appears, even in the most variegated mixture of relations…Its external shape may be modified in infinite ways; it will never have the same shape twice. Its expression will never be able to afford a rule, since it never has the force of a universal opposed to a particular" (*SCF,* 246). The lover must thus determine for herself the proper avenue for fulfilling the moral law, which no positive prescriptions could specify a priori.[84] The lover, in other words, determines the concrete content of the law while still being conditioned by the universal commands of the law.[85] When viewed through the lens of love, the relation between the universality of the moral law and subjective particularity of the individual thus takes on an intriguing configuration that prefigures the later account of concrete universality, as the universal moral law and the subjective particularity of the individual do not stand in a relation of fixed opposition but rather one of mutual enrichment and determination, as each is seen to reciprocally condition the other. Accordingly, love opens up a space for the individual to inhabit a universal in a way that makes

[84] Hans-Georg Gadamer aptly expresses this idea when he claims that "the meaning of any universal, any norm, is only justified and determined in and through its concretization." Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Reason in the Age of Science*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), 82. Also see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London: Continuum, 1975), 317-320.

[85] In this way, Hegel's early discussions of the fulfillment of the universal moral law through love prefigures his later account of concrete universality, which we will consider in chapters three and five.

it uniquely one's own, in a way that dynamically and dramatically contributes to the form and content of the universal. And herein lies one of the key sources of Hegel's hope that the virtue of love could serve as the basis of a modern *Volksreligion* capable of supporting a socio-political culture founded on the principle of freedom. For in the experience of love, inclination and law, subjectivity and objectivity, shed their opposition such that the latter comes to be seen as an organic expression of the former. In the experience of love, in other words, the commands of the law are no longer seen as *other* to a life built upon the ideal of self-determination but rather a deep expression and condition of it.

D. Love and the Alterity of the Other in the Frankfurt Writings

Up to this point, we have mostly been treating love as a form of freedom that reconciles the subjectivity particularity of an individual and the rational universality of the moral law. But love, of course, is a deeply other regarding phenomenon. Fulfilling the moral law thus requires an engagement with the others with whom it brings one into contact. Given Hegel's reputation in many quarters as a thinker of totality par excellence, it is of utmost important that we carefully consider in what way Hegel thinks love relates to its others and the form of subjectivity this mode relationality entails.

We begin with a series of orienting, if initially enigmatic, claims that Hegel advances in the "Love" fragment and "Spirit" essay. In the "Love" fragment, written just a year to eighteen months before the "Spirit" essay, Hegel states, "In love, life is present as a duplicate of itself and as a single unified self" (*LF,* 305).[86] And in the "Spirit" essay, Hegel advances a remarkably similar claim, asserting that to "[l]ove thy neighbor as thyself…means [to] 'love him as the man whom

[86] Here I follow Knox's dating of the "Love," fragment. See *ETW*, 302.

thou art,' i.e., love is a sensing of a life similar to one's own, not a stronger or a weaker one" (*SCF*, 247). Taken on their own, these remarks are admittedly rather elusive and could be taken as evidence in support of the well-trodden contention that Hegel is a thinker of totality, of self-sameness, for whom alterity counts for little, and that love epitomizes this form of totalizing thinking, since it only recognizes that which is the same as or similar to itself. Shortly after making this claim in the "Spirit" essay, however, Hegel offers two important clarifications that cast the collection of remarks from both the "Love" fragment and "Spirit" essay in a new light, linking the likeness in power that love senses to each individual's inherent power for self-determination as defined by the life and teachings of Jesus identified by Hegel in the earlier "Positivity" essay.

First, in his discussion of the Prologue to John's Gospel, Hegel describes Jesus as "the man who is φῶς [light], as the man who is self-developing" (*SCF,* 258) and then immediately adds that "the world of men is his very own (ἴδιον), is most akin to him" (*SCF*, 259). However, Hegel continues, most "men do not receive him" – do not recognize him as one of them – "but treat him as a stranger" (*SCF*, 259). But "those who do recognize themselves in him acquire power [*Macht*] thereby" (*SCF*, 259). And this "power," Hegel proceeds to clarify,

> means not a living principle [*Lebendiges*] acquired for the first time or a new force [*Kraft*], but only a degree of life, a similarity or dissimilarity of life [*Gleichheit oder Ungleichen des Lebens*]. They do not become other than they were, but they know God and recognize themselves as children of God, as weaker than he, yet of a like nature [*gleicher Natur*] insofar as they have become conscious of that spiritual relation suggested by his name (ὄνομα), as the ἄνθρωπος [*anthropos*] who is lighted by the true light. They find their essence in no stranger, but in God (*SCF*, 259).

These remarks are significant both within the larger context of Hegel's philosophy of religion and in the more immediate context of Hegel's early conception of love's relation to its others. With regard to the former, these remarks are indicative of Hegel's early yet enduring position on the relation between humanity and divinity – in Hegel's view, God is not fundamentally *other* to

human being; human and divine nature are of a kind, differing only in terms of degree. And this likeness consists in the distinctive self-determining power of both divinity and humanity. Qua self-determining, human beings inhabit the fundamental existential structure characteristic of the divine life, albeit to a lesser degree. Therefore, in the more immediate context of the early writings of religion, when Hegel claims that love is a sensing of a life with a power similar to one's own, the power that love senses is precisely this self-determining power that Hegel sees manifest in the life and teachings of Jesus, a power which Hegel describes both in the "Love" fragment and elsewhere in terms of the self-determining power of love.[87] "True unification, or love proper, occurs only among living beings [*Lebendingen*] who are equal in power [*an Macht sich gleich*] and thus in one another's eyes living beings from every point of view; in no respect is either dead for the other…[In love], life in the subject senses life in the object" (*LF,* 304-305). When we foreground love's recognition of the divine power [*Macht*] of self-determination inherent in the life of each individual, we thus begin to see that even though the life that love senses is in fact permeated by the "same" divine principle, this principle does not encourage us to construe the relation between love-bound subjects in terms of sheer selfsameness – this would only result in "self-love," a word Hegel declares to be "without meaning" (*SCF,* 247). Rather, we see that love strives to cultivate a non-totalizing form of relationality with a self-determining other imbued with an innate power equal to our own, making possible a diverse community of free individuals, a community forged in and through self-determined differences rather than through relations of domination and servitude.

[87] Cf. Hegel's claim in the *Science of Logic*: "The universal is…*free* power, for it is itself while reaching to its other and embracing it, but without *doing violence* to it…it is at rest in its other as *in its own*. Just as it has been called free power, it could also be called *free love*" (*SL,* 532). I consider this passage in greater detail in chapter three.

Hegel gestures toward this form of relational unity between self-determining equals across the early writings. In the "Spirit" essay, for example, Hegel claims that

> What Jesus calls the "Kingdom of God" is the living harmony of men…men living in the harmony of their developed many-sidedness and their entire being and character…In this harmony their many-sided consciousness chimes in with one spirit and their many different lives with one life…[as] the same living spirit animates the different beings, who therefore…make up a communion….[T]hey are unified…through love (*SCF,* 277-278).

Again, in the "Love" fragment, Hegel gestures toward this form of relational unity, writing that "in love the separate does still remain, but as something united…(*LF,* 305). Hegel repeats this line of thought in two fragments from Nohl's volume left untranslated by Knox. First, in a fragment written during the summer of 1797 and placed under the heading "Love and Religion," Hegel writes: "Religion is one with love. The beloved is not opposed to us, he is one with our essential being; we see only ourselves in him – and yet also he is still not we – a miracle, that we cannot grasp" (*LR*, 244).[88] And in yet another fragment placed by Nohl under the heading "The Basic Concept of the Spirit of Christianity," Hegel writes, "The principle of morality is love; relationship in separation" (*BCSC,* 388).

The significance of Hegel's remarks concerning the distinctive form of relational unity forged in and through self-determined differences that emerges in love can be brought to the fore by contrasting it with a form of relationality more typical of the interactions between a subject and a piece of more or less inert equipment in their environment. Consider that in our everyday interactions with the familiar equipment of our environment, we typically attribute meaning to objects in accordance with our own desired ends – the "hammer," as Heidegger famously shows

[88] Although we cannot address the issue here, it is important to begin tracking Hegel's claim that love is a miracle we cannot grasp in relation to his later insistence on the infinitude of reason's grasp. I treat these topics explicitly in chapter three.

us, derives its meaning from its use in my projects that require driving and pulling nails. The "end" of the hammer – its telos, if you will – is always framed with a view to the agent who uses it. The relation between human agents can and often does take this form of use, or instrumentalization. Indeed, such instrumentalization is a common and perhaps even inevitable feature of human interaction – employers and employees use each other for their own respective ends, the general uses soldiers to win a battle, etc…[89] However, Hegel thinks that the encounter with the other in love is of a wholly different kind than this sort of use-relation, for in love we recognize a free, equal, and active power who is irreducible to our own projects and meaning-making capacities, an other whom we cannot simply grasp, seize, or instrumentalize in the way we could the hammer. As Hegel writes, "It is love's triumph…that it lords over nothing, is without any hostile power over another" (*SCF,* 247).[90] Love's task, then, is to forge a unity between two self-determining individuals, enriching each qua individual through this unity. This relational unity in and through self-determined differences is the "miracle" to which Hegel alludes. The French philosopher Jean Hyppolite powerfully captures something of this dynamic happening when, in a discussion of Hegel's treatment of how two opposed self-conscious individuals become reconciled without cancelling their freely determined differences, he writes, "Love is the miracle through which the two become one without, however, completely suppressing the duality. Love goes beyond the categories of objectivity and makes the essence of life actually real by preserving difference within

[89] Although Kant's categorical imperative would challenge the necessary pervasiveness of this mode of relation.

[90] Hegel describes the dynamic of this encounter again in the *Phenomenology* when he writes: "The first [self-consciousness] does not have the object [another self-consciousness] before it in the way the object merely is initially for desire. Instead it has an object existing for itself self-sufficiently…Each sees *the other* do the same as what he himself does" (¶ 182).

union."[91] Love's striving for unity thus presupposes and preserves a certain heterogeneity within its own bond, for without the endurance of separation and distinction between the relata in the love relation, the relation would cease to be a *love* relation. "Since love is a unification of life, it presupposes division and a developed many-sidedness of life" (*SCF*, 278). The notion harmony is instructive here. In Greek and Latin, *harmonia* was originally an architectural term, used especially in shipbuilding where is had to do with the fitting together of wood to form joints.[92] Drawing on this etymology, musical theory and composition used *harmonia* to describe the fitting together of different of different sounds to form a cohesive and pleasing whole. Harmony, in other words, brings different sounds into a richer kind of relation that enhances their overall effect. Conceived on the model of harmony, we see that love proper reconciles self and other – lover and beloved – without sacrificing the integrity, independence, and particular differences of either party. If I love someone, I love him not simply because he conducts himself according to standards that conform to my idea of what he ought to be and how he ought to be have. I love the other not merely as an instantiation of my abstract ideal of what the beloved should be like. Rather, the beloved is non-substitutable. The beloved cannot simply be replaced by another person who possesses similar qualities. I love the beloved not simply as *a* person but as *this* person.[93] And when two lovers enter into a relation of this sort, the result is a harmonious whole that is greater than and something other than the parts. To be sure, this ideal of love, of a free relational unity engendered in and through

[91] Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit,* trans. S Cherniak and J. Heckman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 164.

[92] See Michael Kelly, *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics, Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 82.

[93] bell hooks offers a similar account of love. See bell hooks, *All About Love: New Visions* (New York: Harper, 1999). So does Jean-Luc Marion. See Jean-Luc Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon,* trans. Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

self-determined differences, may strike us as ambitious – a miracle, as Hegel puts it. And yet, despite the ambitiousness of the notion, these love relations do in fact exist all around us. The reality attests to the possibility.

E. Love and Bildung

Forging such a unity, however, involves more than recognizing and honoring the other's power for self-determination and the differences engendered therein from afar – love desires more than mere surface contact with its others, as it is part of love's nature to freely immerse itself in the life of its other with a view to "finding itself" therein – a point which Hegel emphasizes across the early writings. For example, in the "Tübingen" fragment, he writes, "Forgetting about itself, love is able to step outside of a given individual's existence and live, feel, and act no less fully in others" (*TF,* 30). And in the "Spirit" essay, he notes, "In love man has found himself again in another" (*SCF,* 278). Or again, in the "Love" fragment, he remarks, "Love…dissolves…barriers and drives on til it disperses itself in the manifold…with a view to finding itself in the entirety of this manifold" (*LF,* 304-305). Prefiguring his later characterization of love as a mode of "being with oneself in an other" [*Bei sich selbst ein in einem Anderen*], Hegel's remarks give us a glimpse into the way that love propels the subject out of itself, renders it ecstatic, expropriates it from out of its self-enclosed space, and immerses it in the movements of self-determining others. As Judith Butler notes in her commentary on the "Love" fragment, "love involves a displacement of a purely subjective point of view – some dispossession of the self takes place in love. Internal to the singular and living feeling of love is an operation of life that exceeds and disorients the perspective of the

individual."[94] Immersed in the free movements of a self-determining other, love's work is thus guided by a hermeneutical attentiveness to the exigencies generated by an irreducibly particular other's freedom.[95]

In good dialectical fashion, however, the loving subject "returns" to itself from out of its immersion in alterity, but, crucially, it returns to itself *other* than it originally was, since, in love, the self-determined ends of the beloved will have become, at least partially, constitutive of the lover's own subjectivity. For, from a phenomenological point of view, the loving subject so thoroughly gives itself over to the life of the other, entering into the immanent content of that other's singular existence, that it comes to, in a certain sense, share in the experience of the other. That is to say, it is a mark of love that the lover's own joy, flourishing, vulnerability, sadness, et al. are bound to the beloved – when the beloved flourishes the lover, too, flourishes; when the beloved hurts so too will the lover hurt, etc... The life of the beloved is thus internally connected with the life of the lover, thereby providing the lover a displaced vantage point from which to critically interrogate and revise his or her own "settled" sense of identity and patterns of behavior. In love, then, the beloved is not reduced to the same but rather renders the selfsame subject *other.* Love, we might in other words say, enables the subject to translate (rather than cancel) the differences of the other such that more complexly integrated forms of free subjectivity and intersubjectivity become possible. So conceived, Hegel's early account of love thus jettisons any kind of

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[94] Judith Butler, *Senses of the Subject* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 100.

[95] Hegel makes a similar point in his 1807 Phenomenology of Spirit: "*Love thy neighbor as thyself…*is directed to an individual in a relationship with another individual, and it *asserts it as a relationship between an individual and an individual…*[This] active love…aims at…imposing some good for him. To this end… [we must consider] what counts in general as his welfare; i.e., I must love him *intelligently.* Unintelligent love will do him harm, perhaps even more so than hatred" (*PhS* ¶ 424).

"totalitarian" logic of appropriation by introducing a radical difference into his very conception of identity, a difference which the subject brings back to itself, as it were, as its subjectivity is organically re-constituted and expanded through its relations to self-determining others. And yet, even in this other-determined reconstitution, the loving subject remains free, for in love, the lover gladly restricts him or herself in relating to the beloved. That is to say, the lover actively desires to fulfill his or her "obligations" to the beloved. Thus, in love, the subject is simultaneously self-determined and other-determined, for even though the lover's identity is determined by an other, this other-determination does not undermine the lover's own self-determination. Freedom and constraint are therefore reconciled.[96]

In his Introduction to the *Early Theological Writings,* Richard Kroner astutely remarks on the structural dynamics of ecstatic displacement and return that characterize Hegel's distinctive method of philosophizing.

> Hegel went through a period of self-estrangement to find himself in the end – a pattern of thinking which was to be characteristic of him throughout his life, part of the very fabric of his dialectical method. It was his peculiar gift to be able to project himself into the minds of other people and of other periods, penetrating into the core of alien souls and strange lives, and still remain the man he was (*Intro. ETW,* 9).

Viewed in light of the preceding analysis of love's dynamics, Kroner's remark can be read to suggest that Hegel was no stranger to love's edifying effects. Stated otherwise, Kroner's remarks help us appreciate the ways in which Hegel's early account of the love commandment amounts to

[96] Cf. "In love we are not inherently one-sided; we restrict ourselves gladly in relating ourselves to another, but in this restriction know ourselves as ourselves. In this determinacy a man should not feel himself determined; on the contrary, since he treats the other as an other, it is there that he first arrives at the feeling of selfhood (*PR* §7). As we will see in chapter five when we turn to a careful treatment of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right,* the structural dynamics undergirding Hegel's early account of the intersubjective constitution of the self in love is expanded and installed at the core of Hegel's mature social and political philosophy.

a call to *Bildung* – a term of art in Hegel's day for a self-directed process of development of the person's heart and intellect – that occurs in and through the conflict-ridden plane of intersubjective experience. For *Bildung*, on Hegel's rendering, involves the ability to critically reflect on one's immediately given beliefs and practices in a more or less detached way through serious consideration of a manifold of other possible standpoints. As Hegel writes in the preface to the *Phenomenology,* "The beginning of *Bildung*, of working one's way out of the immediacy of substantial life, must always be done by acquainting oneself with universal principles and points of view" (*PhS*, ¶4). When taken seriously, alterity, or otherness, is therefore seen as an essential vehicle of *Bildung*, as it affords the subject a certain distance from itself, a distance from which the self can look at itself through the eyes of an other. Taking alterity seriously, however, involves a continual process of alienation [*Entfremdung*] or disruption [*Zerrissenheit*] wherein the subject is rendered ecstatic, propelled outside of itself, in its immersion into these other living standpoints. In the early writings, love is the vehicle of this self-reflexive movement of *Bildung.*

Importantly, however, Hegel's early account of love would continue to play a pivotal – although largely unacknowledged – role in the subsequent formation and deployment of his trademark dialectical style of philosophizing.[97] The impact of love is especially salient in Hegel's 1805-1806 Jena Lectures and in his 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit.* In his Jena Lectures of 1805-1806, Hegel describes love as a mode of "cognition" [*Erkennen*] or "knowing" in which one

[97] To be sure, Dieter Henrich claims that "once Hegel adopted the concept of love as the basic principle of his thinking, the system came forth without interruption." Dieter Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin,* 276. However, Henrich maintains that while love served as an initial impetus for Hegel's later thinking, love is ultimately left behind in favor of the more developed concept of Spirit [*Geist*]. One of the chief aims of this dissertation is to show far from being left behind, love plays a vital and ongoing role in Hegel's subsequent philosophical projects.

recognizes oneself in an irreducibly distinct "other." Hegel describes this love-bound mode of cognition in an extended and somewhat meandering remark, claiming that love engenders

> a sublation [*Aufheben*] of both [lovers]: each of the two "selves" is identical to the other precisely in that wherein it opposes it; the other, that whereby it is the "other" to it, is it itself. In the very fact that each knows itself in the other, each has renounced itself – love. Knowledge is precisely this ambiguity: each is identical to the other in that wherein it has opposed itself to the other. The self-differentiation of each from the other is therefore a self-positing of each as the other's equal. And this knowledge is cognition in the very fact that it is itself this knowledge of the fact that for it itself its *opposition* goes over into *identity*; or this, that it knows itself as it looks upon itself in the other…In their interrelation, the two poles…approach one another with uncertainty and timidity, yet with trust, for each knows itself immediately in the other…The stimulus is itself an excitation, i.e., the condition of not being satisfied in oneself, but rather having one's essence in another – because one knows oneself in the other…This self-negation is one's being for another, into which one's immediate being is transformed. Each one's self-negation becomes, for each, the other's being for the other. Thus, the other is for me, i.e., it knows itself in me. There is only being for another, i.e., the other is outside itself. This cognition is love. It is the movement of the "conclusion," so that each pole, fulfilled by the I, is thus immediately in the other…It is the totality of ethical life [*Sittlichkeit*] – though not yet it itself, but only the suggestion of it (*JL,* 106-107).

This is a difficult passage to decipher, reflecting the lecture-venue in which it was delivered. But three general features of it are particularly striking and important for the argument concerning the significance of love for Hegel's account of rational cognition. First, the account of love given here clearly channels the account of love developed in the early writings on religion, as love is once again positioned as a form of relationality premised on an ecstatic immersion in and identification with an other, an identification which, in turn, engenders in the subject an expanded and transformed sense of identity. Second, and more striking, is Hegel's alignment of love and cognitive knowledge. While Hegel does not offer any definitive doctrines or statements about the nature of this alignment in this passage, two features stand out as particularly significant. First, it seems that Hegel is appealing to a mode of relation with which he presumes his audience will have a basic familiarity – love – and then leveraging that basic familiarity as a way to clarify what it means to cognitively know something, whether that something be another person or some kind of

object. However, at the same time – and here we broach the second feature – Hegel is not merely using love as a heuristic tool for helping his audience come to grips with what it means to cognitively know something that can then be kicked away once an adequate grasp of cognitive knowing is achieve. He seems to be suggesting some stronger – that love is itself constitutive of cognitive knowledge, that to love something is to come to know it. And third, as we will consider in more detail in the following chapters, that this love-bound form of cognitive knowing is the normative archetype for social and political relations writ large, for ethical life [*Sittlichkeit*].

To be sure, in what sense love is "constitutive" of this form of cognitive knowing is not worked out in the Jena Lectures beyond the passage cited above and even these remarks leave much to be worked out. However, in his *Phenomenology of Spirit,* published the following year, Hegel seems to have developed a more perspicacious and systematic understanding of the relation between love and cognitive knowing that has clear roots in the early writings on religion and Jena lectures. Specifically, in the preface to the *Phenomenology,* Hegel draws a distinction between the way the understanding [*Verstand*] and scientific cognition [*wissenschaftliche Erkennen*] relate to the "life of the object" [*leben des Gegenstandes*] that brings these myriad connections to the fore. "The understanding," he writes, does not "enter into the immanent content of the subject-matter," into its "living movement" [*lebendige Bewegung*], but rather "stands above the individual existence of which it speaks" (*PhS* §53). The understanding "does not see it [the object] at all" it does not see it at all (*PhS* §53). The understanding is thus a detached form of knowledge, lacking intimacy with its object. "Scientific cognition," by contrast, gives itself over to "the life of the object" and "has the inner necessity" [*innere Notwendigkeit*] of the object before it and…expresses this inner necessity of the object" (*PhS* §53). This "inner necessity," to be sure, is not to be conceived of as an external necessity in the way of the causality of one billiard ball

striking another, but rather as the object's own self-formation from out of its *own* immanent determinations. To grasp the inner necessity of the object before oneself is thus to grasp the object qua free, qua self-determining. Hegel's methodological demand that scientific cognition "surrender to the life of the object" thus requires that one immerse oneself in the processes in and through which the object – the other – forms itself from out of its own freely determined principles. It requires that one inhabit the life of the object, from the inside, as it were, and to think the object according to the object's own self-determined terms of action and appearance. Indeed, it is precisely this demand which makes Hegel's method "phenomenological," for "absorbed in its object…sunken into the material and advancing in that material's movement" (*PhS* §53), the phenomenologist comes to, in a sense, share in the experiences of the object, in its free movements and determinations. This is why the content of *Phenomenology* is so often described as a series of attempts to make a variety of other "worlds," or what Hegel calls "shapes of consciousness" [*Gestalten des Bewußtseins],* intelligible to its readers by illuminating them from within, according to their freely determined self-development, and it also why Hegel draws so heavily on literature throughout the *Phenomenology.* For these literary references make palpable the inner lives of these various worlds in ways that philosophical prose by itself cannot – they help the phenomenological reader immerse himself in the life of the object.[98] Importantly, however, scientific cognition does not lose itself in its immersion in the life of the object; rather, it "returns back to itself," permanently affected by what it has learned on its ecstatic journey (*PhS* §53). So conceived, the *Phenomenology* and the dialectical pattern of thinking it employs can be read as a vehicle of *Bildung*.

[98] For more on the role of literature in the *Phenomenology* see Allen Speight, *Hegel, Literature, and the Problem of Agency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Although love is nominally absent from the *Phenomenology's* preface, there is a clear structural isomorphism between the circular ecstasis of love described in the early writings and the dynamics of "scientific cognition," one which more fully spells out the connection first established in the Jena lectures. And while it may be too early to draw any definitive conclusions about this intriguing structural isomorphism, it nevertheless clearly indicates that the dynamic movement of love's ecstasis and return outlined in the early writings on religion serves as the inspiration for the more formalized dialectical method found in the *Phenomenology.* While this structural isomorphism is apparent, how exactly we are to understand this isomorphism is not rendered explicit by Hegel's texts, bequeathing to us the important hermeneutical task of determining more precisely the relation between love and reason in Hegel's writings, both within the *Phenomenology* and beyond. I propose that the account of love offered in the early writings on religion is an indispensable hermeneutical lens for grasping what it means to cognize scientifically, dialectically, rationally. More specifically, I propose that the early account of love functions as the structural conceptual basis and phenomenological prerequisite for grasping what Hegel means by scientific cognition (and its cognates), illuminating its phenomenological dimensions and dynamic movements. To be sure, in Hegel's mind the move from love to scientific cognition was not a smooth and seamless transition – in the early writings Hegel at times also positions love and conceptual cognition as disparate ways of relating to others. "[In] the Kingdom of God…men are unified not in a universal, a concept (e.g., as believers) but through life and through love" (*SCF,* 277-278). Again, "In the Kingdom of God what is common to all is life in God. This is not the common character which a concept expresses, but is love, a living bond which unites the believers; it is the feeling of unity of life, a feeling in which all oppositions, as pure enmities…are annulled" (*SCF,* 278). But between the time he finished penning the "Spirit" essay in 1799 and the delivery

of his 1805-1806 Jena Lectures and the publication of his 1807 *Phenomenology*, we find Hegel thinking about the relation between love and conceptual forms of knowing in strikingly a different manner, evidenced not only by the clear structural homology identified above but also by the fact that conceptual cognition is no longer conceived of in the Jena lectures and the *Phenomenology* as a detached apathetic application of generic universals to particulars but rather as requiring an ecstatic and attentive immersion in the life of an irreducibly particular other, as will become increasingly apparent as we progress through the coming chapters.

F. Two Conceptions of Love: Living and Dead

Despite Hegel's early enthusiasm about the power of love to found and sustain an increasingly diverse modern society of self-determining equals, in the early writings on religion we already find him voicing some serious concerns about love's limits in this regard, the most serious of which concerns love's relation to private property. In both the "Spirit" essay and the "Love" fragment, Hegel suggests that the acquisition of private property undermines the distinctive form of unity that love seeks to achieve by asserting an irreducible (i.e., non-unifiable) remainder of personal individuality. As Hegel writes in the "Love" fragment,

> If the separable element persists in either of the lovers as something peculiarly his own before their union is complete, it creates a difficulty for them. Union feels…a still subsisting independence…as a hindrance; love is indignant if part of the individual is severed and held back as private property (*LF,* 306).

Again, he writes, "The one who sees the other in possession of a property must sense in the other the separate individuality which has willed this possession" (*LF,* 308). On Hegel's later account developed in the *Philosophy of Right,* which we will discuss in detail in chapter five, to own private property is an indispensable feature of modernity, as private property represents a sphere through which one can assert and cultivate one's freedom and unique individuality. "The will, as

personal and hence as the will of a singular [*des Einzelnen*], becomes objective in property, the latter takes on the character of private property…of being mine" (*PR,* ¶46). But, already in the "Spirit" essay and the "Love" fragment, Hegel is of the mind that private property is a permanent fixture of modern life that cultivates and preserves one's individuality. "The fate of property has become too powerful for us to tolerate reflections on it, to find its abolition thinkable" (*SCF,* 221). "Since possession and property make up such an important part of men's life, cares, and thoughts, even lovers cannot refrain from reflection on this aspect of their relation" (*LF,* 308). In the early writings, it is precisely this exclusive individuality brought to the fore by the ownership of private property which Hegel thinks love cannot abide. Private property thus appears to jeopardize love's capacity to engender a modern society of free and united individuals.

Many commentators have taken this tension between love and private property to mark the beginning of the end of Hegel's enthusiasm for love's capacity to unite a modern society of self-determining individuals, arguing that here Hegel came to see that love's drive to unity was simply too powerful, too unifying, to admit of an adequately robust conception of the individuality of the modern self-determining subject and that with this acknowledgment came Hegel's displacement of love in favor of notions more capable of accommodating this persistent individuality, such as spirit [*Geist*], reason [*Vernunft*], mutual recognition [*gegenseitige Anerkennung*], and the concept [*der Begriff*].[99] However, we should already have a sense that the conception of love under consideration in Hegel's discussion of private property is significantly different than the freedom and difference-honoring conception of love foregrounded in our

[99] Dieter Heinrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin, 27-28.* Also see Thomas A. Lewis, "Beyond Love: Hegel on the Limits of Love in Modern Society," *Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 20, no.1 (2013): 3-20.

earlier analysis. Indeed, in the same discussion of private property in the "Love" fragment, Hegel adds some important remarks which further suggest as much. He claims that

> A pure heart…is ashamed if its love is incomplete; it upbraids itself if there is some hostile power which hinders love's culmination. Shame enters only through…the presence of an exclusive personality or the sensing of an exclusive individuality…The raging of love against exclusive individuality is shame (*LF,* 306).

For Hegel, shame enters onto the scene as a result of what the "pure heart" considers to be its own failure to fully unify self and other. In other words, Hegel conceives of shame as a reaction to the exclusive and irreducible individuality of the other, established through the ownership of private property or otherwise. Shame, then, is a force working against separation, against, difference, against individuality.[100]

Hegel continues his discussion of shame by claiming that it is a reaction driven by fear, especially a fear of separation from the beloved which becomes permanent in death, "a fear which vanishes as the separable element in the lover is diminished by his love" (*LF*, 306). "It [shame] is not a fear *for* what is mortal, for what is merely one's own, but rather a fear *of* it," for mortality is that which will inevitably and irrevocably separate the lovers from each other. Shame cannot conquer the separation wrought through death. Hence its fear of it. When love is led by this fear, Hegel thus concludes, it strives to annihilate any lingering separation. "It is only when love [is] led by its fear [that] it cancels separation, apprehensive as it is of finding opposition which may resist it or be a fixed barrier against it" (*LF*, 307). Indeed, led by this fear, love's fearful drive to cancel separation is so strong that "love strives to annul even this distinction between the lover as lover and the lover as physical organism by making itself

[100] Werner Hamacher, *Pleroma – Reading in Hegel,* trans. Nicholas Walker and Simon Jarvis (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 83-89.

immortal" (*LF,* 305-306). For it is only by conquering death that "consciousness of a separate self disappears, and all distinction between the lovers is annulled" (*LF,* 307).

And yet, woven into this same discussion in the "Love" fragment is a decidedly different vision of love, one which is not driven by the fear of separation but instead holds individual freedom and difference in extremely high regard. In this vein, Hegel claims that "Love is stronger than fear. It has no fear of its fear," indicating that love is capable of another path. This type of love, Hegel continues, "is a mutual giving and taking" wherein "the lover…is enriched indeed, but only so much as the other is" (*LF,* 306-307). That such love engages in a *mutual* giving and taking thus indicates that here the distinction between lovers is not annulled but rather preserved within a richer dynamic unity. As Hegel expresses the point, "each separate lover is one organ in a living whole" (*LF,* 308). For like the function of each individual organ within a living being, each lover plays an indispensable role in the formation and preservation of the dynamic unity that is the love relation. The body cannot function and thrive absent the harmonious orchestration and integrity of each of its organs, just as the love relation cannot endure absent the harmonious orchestration and integrity of each of the lovers. And a bit further down the page in the "Love" fragment, Hegel offers another suggestive remark in his discussion of the antagonism between love and private property that further corroborates the presence of this freedom and difference-honoring account of love, claiming that a lover qua lover "cannot himself annul the exclusive dominion of the other [over his property], for this…would be an opposition to the other's power…he [the lover] would be cancelling the beloved's exclusion of others from his property" (*LF,* 308). Thus, even while Hegel positions private property as a formidable – perhaps even insurmountable – obstacle to a society connected in and by love, he nevertheless insists that a lover must respect the dominion of the beloved, even if this dominion

leaves intact the beloved's exclusive individuality. For to do otherwise would be to abolish the freedom and difference of the other which are form part of the very essence of the love relation. Without the enduring freedom and difference of the lovers, the love relation is impossible. Thus, although Hegel's remarks here in the "Love" fragment are rather schematic, condensed, and inconclusive, it is fairly clear that within the stretch of just a few pages of text he has gestured toward two distinct conceptions of love. And when we consider the freedom-honoring account of love that emerged from our analysis of the "Spirit" essay the difference between these two accounts becomes even more apparent – one fosters a form of relational unity in and through the dynamic and harmonious integration of self-determined differences of particular individuals and the other strives to homogenize any and all alterity out of a fear of separation and difference, even the absolute alterity of death.

That these two conceptions of love are both operative within Hegel's early writings should come as little surprise given what we have said in section A about their experimental and unfinished nature. Whereas the freedom and difference-honoring conception of love seems to be heavily rooted in the combination of Hegel's philosophical appropriation of the Kantian emphasis on autonomy and his Pauline-Lutheran inflected exposition of Christian love, the totalizing conception of love seems more to reflect the impact of German Romanticism on Hegel's early thinking. It is important that we tease apart these strands of influence before evaluating the merits, demerits, and possibilities of Hegel's conception of love. We have already begun to consider the Kantian influences on Hegel's account of love and will continue to do so in chapter three. With regard to the Christian influences at work in Hegel's account of love, St. Paul and Martin Luther deserve special noting. Like Hegel, Paul is gripped by the logic of love and its relation to the moral law, proclaiming to the Romans that "love is the fulfillment of the

law" (Romans 13:10). And, like Hegel, Paul insists that the fulfillment of the law in love issues forth in the highest freedom – "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free" (Galatians 5:1) and, even more intriguingly in the context of Hegelian *Geist*, "the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17). For both Paul and Hegel, then, we are obliged to fulfill the law, but when the law is carried out in the spirit of love the subject is freely moved, as if by an interior dynamism, toward fulfilling what the law prescribes. However, perhaps the most remarkable point of contact between Hegel and Paul is the genealogy of translation connecting Hegel to Paul's understanding of *pleroma*, or fulfillment. In *The Time that Remains,* Giorgio Agamben highlights Paul's use of the Greek verb *katargeo* to describe the transformed relationship one has to the law in the *pleroma* of the law. On Agamben's rendering, *katargeo* indicates the way in which the law is rendered inoperative without being abolished. We can expand on Agamben's point along Hegelian lines to say that what is rendered inoperative is the imperatival form of the law, not the law itself. But the most intriguing point of connection between Hegel and Paul that Agamben helps us to see is that Martin Luther uses the word *aufheben* in his German translation of the Bible specifically to denote Paul's *katargeo* in the letters to the Romans – "the very word that harbors the double meaning of abolishing and conserving" and which is "used by Hegel as a foundation for his dialectics."[101] Agamben's etymological detective work helps us to appreciate how in the early writings – especially in the "Spirit" essay – Hegel is already employing Luther's conception of *aufheben* to describe

[101] Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains, A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans,* trans. Patricia Dailey (Stanford University Press, 2005), 99; see 95-99 for Agamben's full discussion.

precisely these dynamics of *pleroma* first articulated by Paul.[102] In other words, Agamben helps us to see that Hegel's early account of love is in many ways responding to the same problem which transfixed Paul and Luther – how in the *pleroma* of the law the two seemingly contradictory propositions that "a Christian person is an utterly free lord of all things, subject to none" and that "a Christian person is an utterly dutiful servant of all things, subject to all"[103] are reconciled.[104] Hegel's contribution to this line of inquiry, as we have begun and will continue to see, lies in his multifaceted account of love and the distinctive mode of intersubjective freedom it engenders.

As several commentators have noted, Hegel's Frankfurt writings also represent a high-water mark of his engagement with German Romanticism, the defining feature of which is often said to be its longing for a sense of wholeness and organic unity in a modern age marked by rampant materialism and alienation from the natural and social world, a sense of wholeness and unity often sought through a certain ideal of love.[105] While contemporary scholarship has helped

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[102] See, for example, the following description in the "Spirit" essay: "This spirit of Jesus, a spirit raised above morality, is visible, directly attacking laws, in the Sermon on the Mount, which is an attempt, elaborated in numerous examples, to strip the laws of legality, of their legal form. The Sermon does not teach reverence for the laws; on the contrary, it exhibits that which fulfils the law but annuls it as law and so is something higher than obedience to law and makes law superfluous" (*ETW*, 212).

[103] See Martin Luther, "The Freedom of a Christian" (1520) in *Martin Luther: Three Treatises*, trans. W.A. Lambert & Harold J. Grimm (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1970), 277.

[104] George Lukács also observes that it is in Hegel's early account of love, which is rooted in his understanding of Christ, that Hegel "has a glimmering of his later definition of "Aufheben" as both to 'annul' and to 'preserve.'" Georg Lukács, *The Young Hegel: Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976), 118.

[105] See, for examples, Thomas A. Lewis, "Beyond Love: Hegel on the Limits of Love in Modern Society"; Frederick Beiser, *Hegel* (London: Routledge Press, 2005), 34-47; Richard Kroner, "Hegel's Philosophical Development," in *ETW*,14-20, 43-45.

us to see that Romanticism as a movement is not nearly as homogenous as such a description suggests,[106] this trope is nevertheless prevalent in many prominent Romantic writings that Hegel would have been familiar with. As one example, consider Goethe's depiction of Faust's unyielding tragic yearning to be reabsorbed into the homogeneity of pure, infinite life – his infinite desire for infinity.[107] Or consider Novalis's *Hymns to the Night* (1800), in which his eternal love for his deceased beloved, Sophie, leads him to pine for the quiet homogeneity of night and death. "What once sunk us into deep sorrowfulness / now draws us onward with sweet longing."[108] In a chapter from his *Lucinde* (1799), titled "Yearning and Peace," Friedrich Schlegel, too, speaks of two lovers' longing for a release from the contingencies of life that prevent them from attaining a "perfect" unity with each other in the utter selfsameness of death.[109] But the influence of Hegel's good friend and once roommate Hölderlin is probably the most noteworthy, especially Hölderlin's *Vereinigungsphilosophie*, or philosophy of union. In his "Judgment and Being" fragment (1795) ["*Urtheil und Seyn*"], Hölderlin defends the idea that all judgments we make presuppose a primordial [*ursprüngliche*] unity of subject and object, thought and being. "Judgment is the original division between subject and object, the two of which are

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[106] See, for example, Charles Larmore, "Hölderlin and Novalis," *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 141-160. Also see Dieter Heinrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*.

[107] The version of Goethe's story that was known to Hegel was the so-called "Faust-Fragment" (1790). For a helpful discussion of the impact of the "Faust-Fragment" on Hegel's thinking see H.S. Harris, *Hegel's Ladder, Volume 2, The Odyssey of Spirit* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997), 24-32.

[108] Novalis, *Hymns to the Night and Spiritual Songs*, trans. George Macdonald (Maidstone: Crescent Moon Publishing, 2013), 21.

[109] Friedrich Schlegel, *Lucinde and the Fragments*, 125-127. I have borrowed this example from Terry Pinkard's *Hegel*, 102.

most intimately united in intellectual intuition. Through this original division…subject and object first become possible."[110] Leaving aside for now the complex philosophical issues motivating this claim, which would prematurely move us into the heart of post-Kantian idealism, Hölderlin considers this primordial unity to be the alpha and omega of human existence – that out of which our sense of self as a distinct ego originally arises and that toward which the self strives to reconnect. Hölderlin expresses this dynamic movement from originary unity through separation and ultimately restoration in the penultimate preface to *Hyperion*, considered by many to be a quintessential ode to Romantic love.

> We all traverse an eccentric path and there is no other way possible from childhood to completion. Blissful unity, being, in the singular sense of the word, is lost for us and we must lose it if we are to strive for and attain it. We tear ourselves loose from the peaceful *hen kai pan* of the world in order to bring it about through ourselves. We have fallen away from nature and what, if one can believe, was once One, now opposed itself…To end that eternal conflict between our self and the world, to bring back the peace of all peace that is higher than all reason, to unite ourselves with nature in one boundless and infinite whole – that is the goal of all our striving…But in no period of our existence does either our knowledge or our action arrive at a point where all conflict ends, where All is One; the particular route unites itself with the universal only in an infinite approximation.[111]

The general thrust of Hölderlin's thought is thus oriented toward permanently overcoming separation, difference, and conflict and achieving a sense of wholeness – a wholeness of self and a wholeness between self and other.[112]

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[110] Friedrich Hölderlin, "Judgment and Being," trans. H. S. Harris, in H. S. Harris, *Hegel's Development: Toward the Sunlight 1770 – 1801* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 515–516.

[111] Friedrich Hölderlin, Gross Stuttgarter Ausgabe. Sämtliche Werke, ed. Friedrich Beissner. 8 Vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1943-1985, 236.

[112] Robert Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 27, 208. Also see Dieter Heinrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin* for an account of the way Hegel misunderstands Hölderlin, 131-133.

Hegel's discussion of love's drive to forge a unity that rids itself of any lingering exclusive individuality can be understood as channeling this general Romantic line of thought espoused in one form or another by many prominent German intellectuals of his day. This Romantic inflection is apparent at various junctures in Hegel's treatment of love. For example, in his depiction of the unity of two lovers in the "Love" fragment, he writes, "What in the first instance is most the individual's own is united into the whole in the lovers' touch and contact; consciousness of a separate self disappears, and all distinction between the lovers is annulled (*LF,* 307). We find further evidence of this Romantic inflection again in Hegel's discussion of the lovers' yearning for immortality as a means to overcome the separation wrought through death already cited above (*LF,* 307). Indeed, we even find this Romantic strain informing aspects of Hegel's interpretation of the way the early Christian communities interpreted Jesus's love commandment. Hegel describes how after Jesus's death the early Christian communities "abolished property rights against one another" (*SCF,* 280; also see 287 and 290), "ate and drank and common" (*SCF,* 280; also see 287), and "introduced a community of goods" (*SCF,* 287). They "recoiled" if they sensed "an exclusive individuality in the other" (*SCF,* 279). In Hegel's eyes, the early Christian communities thus appear to have embodied something of the Romantic spirit in their drive to abolish any practices that could serve as a haven of exclusive individuality.

That Hegel interprets the love animating the early Christian community and their approach to private property through this Romantic lens has tremendously important implications for how he comes to construe the relation between religion and politics and the possibility of a modern *Volksreligion,* in the remainder of the "Spirit" essay. Hegel claims that the religious community could not simply overthrow the private property right that were so deeply ingrained in the "profane" world, rendering their measures applicable only within their

restricted communities. Frustrated by the recalcitrance of the ways of the profane world, love thus increasingly turns its unifying energy inward, solidifying the bonds of the community against the unwanted intrusions of the values and projects of the outside world. "Love become[s] restricted to itself, i.e., to its own group, instead of spreading throughout the world" (*SCF,* 279; also see 281, 301). As a result, Hegel explains, "one great element in a living union is cut away…one important bond of association is snapped…[and] a number of active relationships and living ties are lost" (*SCF,* 284). Indeed, "every other tie in other objective activities is alien to the [religious] community, whether the purpose of such a tie be the achievement of some end or the development of another side of life or a common activity. Equally alien is every spirit of co-operation for something other than the dissemination of the faith (*SCF,* 280; also see *SCF,* 279, 301). Separated from the profane community and its needs, pursuits, and values, the religious community therefore develops a "hostile…[and] passive relation to state." (*SCF,* 284). However, Hegel continues, in the eyes of the religious community such isolationism was necessary. For if members of the religious community were to actually engage in common pursuits with those outside their network, it would have required them to draw on the resources harbored by their unique characters, abilities, and backgrounds, threatening the homogenized unity demanded by the group's love. To engage in any such "common activity," as Hegel writes, would be to "have forsaken love" (*SCF,* 281).

> [F]or its members would have put themselves in jeopardy of clashing against one another's individuality, and must have done this all the more as their education was different; and they would thereby have surrendered themselves to the province of their different characters, to the power of their different fates. For the sake of…a different of character in some detail…love would have been changed into hatred (*SCF,* 281).

Here, again, we thus find Hegel deploying a Romanticized lens in his interpretation of the early Christian community's reception Jesus's love message, as the community cannot abide any

exclusive individuality without its love turning into hatred for what eludes its grasp. Accordingly, the religious community was able to "ward…off this danger [of individuality] only by an inactive and undeveloped love, i.e., by a love which…remains unliving" (*SCF,* 281) and "deficient in life" (*SCF,* 294), a love that flees "from all determinate modes of living," (*SCF,* 281), a "love [which] did not manifest itself in the development…of beautiful ties and the formation of natural relationships" (*SCF,* 294; also see 215), further signaling the community's misappropriation of Jesus's message of love as a practice that honors and requires the endurance of freedom and difference. Indeed, channeling another key element of the early Romantic tradition, Hegel even describes the sequestering love of the early Christians in terms of "beauty of soul" (*Schönheit der Seele*) (*SCF,* 236), wherein members of the group renounce contact with the world and its others, leaving everything outside of the group just as it is in order to maintain the inner purity and certainty of its own moral subjectivity.[113] In "beauty of soul," Hegel writes, "there arises a living free elevation…above struggle" and an "escape [from] the necessity of engaging with the other" (*SCF,* 235). This conception of love which animates the beautiful souls of the early religious community and which shuns a genuine engagement with its other thus stands in stark contrast to the ecstatic account of love which honors and requires freedom and difference operative across Hegel's early writings.

At this juncture, it should be apparent that Hegel sees a stark gap between Jesus's teachings on love and the religious community's reception of those teachings. Whereas the love that characterizes the early religious community is "inactive," "deficient," "undeveloped,"

[113] For more on the Romantic roots of Hegel's conception of the beautiful soul see Allen Speight, *Hegel, Literature, and the Problem of Agency,* 106-107; Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy, 1760-1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 240. Drew Milne, "The Beautiful Soul from Hegel to Beckett," *Diacritics* 32, no.1 (2002):63-82.

"unliving," and "deadened," the love preached by Jesus is "free," "alive," and "generative" (*SCF,* 214-215, 247, 259; *LF,* 304). Whereas the former conception of love cannot abide freely posited differences and exclusive individuality, the latter honors it as a condition of its possibility. And whereas the former is inward facing, the latter is ecstatic. According to Hegel, it was the fate of the early Christian community to take up the former track, "submitting to a life undeveloped and without pleasure in itself" (*SCF,* 285; also see 286-287). For them, "love" became a "bare ideal" and hence "something positive" (*SCF,* 294).[114] When considering the philosophical, ethical, and political import of Hegel's account of love, it is too often this deficient conception of love that is given weighted, even exclusive, emphasis; however, Hegel's conception of love qua free, ecstatic, alive, and generative opens up a different set of possibilities for thinking about the relevance of love for Hegel's later thinking on knowledge, ethics, and politics that have generally gone overlooked in the scholarly commentary. With this early account of love sufficiently delineated, we are now in a position to render explicit the essential role that love plays in shaping and animating these facets of Hegel's later philosophical work.

[114] Further revealing the anti-Jewish edge of his early writings, Hegel attributes this unfortunate outcome to the deep influence of Judaism and what he perceived as the positivity that it engendered within the early community. Troubled by the indifference and antipathy with which his message was received, Jesus restricts his work to individuals, fleeing from the broader society. "From now onwards he restricts himself to working on individuals and allows the fate of his nation to stand unassailed" (*SCF,* 283). Jesus's flight from the broader society is then passed on to his followers and compounded with his death and ascension to heaven. As a result of Jesus's earthly life and heavenly ascension, "the opposition to the rest of the world [thus] became fixed and an essential part of the principle of the group" (*SCF,* 287).

CHAPTER THREE
LOVE IS THE HEART OF REASON: HEGEL'S SCIENCE OF LOGIC

A. Love, Logic, and Sociality

Chapter two offered an interpretation of the multifaceted workings of love in Hegel's early writings on religion, arguing, first, that throughout those writings there is a continuous strand of thinking about love as an intersubjective practice that requires honors freedom and difference while cultivating personal and social growth [*Bildung*] and, second, that this practice of love serves as the dynamic structural and phenomenological foundation for Hegel's distinctive pattern of dialectical, or scientific [*Wissenschaftliche*], thinking in the *Phenomenology of Spirit.*[115] Chapter three further develops the connections between love, scientific thinking, and personal and social *Bildung* by demonstrating how the early account of love serves as a vital hermeneutical key for better understanding some of most difficult features of Hegel's *Science of Logic,* including the self-movement [*Selbstbewegung*] of thought [*Denken*], the logic of the concept [*der Begriff*], and the "speculative identity" of concept and object, or thinking and being. As we will see, virtually all of the key elements of Hegel's early account of love – including love's ecstatic immersion in and cultivated return to itself from out of alterity, love's power, love's freedom, love's reciprocity, love's differentiated unity, love's connection to reason, love's attentiveness to the subjective particularity of selves and others, and love's connection to social life – can be found animating his account of these themes in the *Logic* in crucial ways. Attending to these connections will also us to begin to further develop a dynamic and non-totalizing figure of Hegelian reason than is often overlooked by many of Hegel's readers.

[115] In keeping with the variation in Hegel's general usage, in this chapter I use the phrases "scientific cognition," "philosophical thinking," "conceptual thinking," "dialectical thinking," and "reason" more or less interchangeably.

Following the publication of the *Phenomenology, The Science of Logic* is Hegel's second major work.[116] However, the *Logic* is, rather notoriously, Hegel's most difficult text, due to the complexity and range of its ideas and to the sheer density of its prose. And yet, Hegel avows the *Logic* as an integral component of his broader philosophical project. Despite the difficulty of the text, a steadily growing body of scholars have taken Hegel at his word and turned their attention to the *Logic* and its general significance for his thought.[117] However, despite the influx of recent attention to the *Logic* from contemporary Hegel scholars, no canonical interpretation has emerged. As Robert Pippin flatly and aptly notes in his recent study, "The book has produced no standard commentaries."[118]

Common to many of these recent works is the tendency to treat the *Logic* more or less on its own, independently of the other parts of the system. There is certainly much value in and reasons for these sorts of focused approaches, as Hegel claims that to recognize the determinations of thought in the representations of ordinary life epitomizes philosophy itself (*SL,*

[116] The *Science of Logic* appeared in two volumes. The first part – which includes the Doctrines of Being and Essence – was published in 1812-1813, while the second part – comprising the Doctrine of the Concept – was published in 1816. For a more detailed account of the publication history of the *Logic* and Hegel's subsequent revisions to the work see the prologue to George di Giovanni's translation.

[117] Despite the difficulty of the text, it seems that offering an account of the *Logic* has been one of the chief aims of many contemporary North American Hegel scholars. A few more or less recent examples include Angelica Nuzzo, *Approaching Hegel's Logic Obliquely: Melville, Moliere, Beckett* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2018); Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Realm of Shadows: Logic as Metaphysics in The Science of Logic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019); Rocio Zambrana, *Hegel's Theory of Intelligibility* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Stanley Rosen, *The Idea of Hegel's Science of Logic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Stephen Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's Logic: From Being to Infinity* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2006). For a prominent example of the attempt to separate Hegel's *Logic* from the rest of his thought see Allen W. Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[118] Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Realm of Shadows: Logic as Metaphysics in The Science of Logic,* 31.

628). However, many of these approaches generally fail to heed Hegel's repeated insistence that we cannot properly understand and appreciate the *Logic* without reference to the other domains of philosophical science and thereby leave us with somewhat one-sided interpretations of the text. As Hegel writes, "Only after a more profound acquaintance with the other sciences does…the scope, depth, and broader significance…[of] logic rise for subjective spirit from a merely abstract universal to a universal that encompasses within itself the riches of the particular" (*SL,* 37).[119] For through the engagements with the other philosophical sciences, "the rules and forms" of logic come "to "have an enriched, living value," in much the same way that the content of a moral maxim comes alive – "is expressed in full force" (*SL,* 37) – "in the spirit of a man with a lifetime of experience" as compared with that same content in the mind of a "youngster" who lacks such experience (*SL,* 37). Indeed, this is why Hegel refers to pure logic as a "realm of shadows" (*SL,* 37). For even though pure logic is "self-subsistent" and "independent" and "freed of all sensuous concretion" (*SL,* 37) and even though pure logic "is the innermost moment of objects, their simple life pulse" (*SL,* 17), it nevertheless remains abstract – shadowy – if exclusively considered apart from the concretions of which logic is the shadow.[120] "It is conceded," as Hegel writes, "that the cognition that does not go past the concept, purely as concept, is still incomplete, that it has only arrived at abstract truth…the concept in its formal abstraction reveals itself to be incomplete" (*SL,* 522). As Robert Pippin notes in his recent study of Hegel's logic, "this would seem have as unavoidable implication at the very least a caution about the limitations of Hegelian logic, a warning that however central the logic is to everything

[119] Cf. "The value of the logic receives full appreciation only when it comes as the result of the experience of the sciences" (*SL,* 36).

[120] Karen Ng makes a similar point in her "Science of Logic as Critique of Judgment? Reconsidering Pippin's Hegel," *European Journal of Philosophy* 27, no.4 (2020): 1055-1064.

else Hegel wants to say, it is still a restricted and limited picture of thought's self-determination."[121] Thus, while logic may be self-sufficient and while it may operate independently "from the intuitions and…the senses, remote from feeling and the world of…representation" (*SL,* 37), Hegel considers this sort of bare logic which is disconnected from the riches of concrete life and experience to be, in an important sense, incomplete and one-sided.[122] For pure logic exhibits an untroubled quality and unity with itself, for which the otherness of the concrete is not a serious matter.[123] It is only in the realm of Hegel's *Realphilosophie,* which confronts the embodied materiality of pure logic, that the significance of the logical forms of thought are fully brought into view.[124] Accordingly, my aim in this chapter and the ones that follow is to investigate the logic alongside several of the other philosophical sciences that comprise *Realphilosophie* – specifically, Hegel's philosophy of religion in chapter four and his ethical and political thought in chapter five – with the aim of mutual illumination. It is this task which chiefly motivates and delimits our investigations of the *Logic* in this chapter.

This investigation into the relation between Hegel's logic and his philosophical treatment of other areas is especially important in the case of the relation between logic and philosophy of

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[121] Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Realm of Shadows: Logic as Metaphysics in The Science of Logic*, 28.

[122] Hegel reiterates this characterization of the thought-determinations of logic in his 1842 *Philosophy of Nature,* claiming that "as thoughts invade the limitless multiformity of nature, its richness is impoverished, its springtimes die and there is a fading in the play of its colors. That which in nature was noisy with life, falls silent in the quietude of thought; its warm abundance, which shaped itself into a thousand intriguing wonders, withers into arid forms and shapeless generalities, which resemble a dull northern fog" (*PN* §246Z).

[123] Cf. Hegel's claim in the *Phenomenology* that scientific cognition "sinks into mere edification, and even insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labor of the negative" (*PhS* ¶19).

[124] Cf. Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Realm of Shadows: Logic as Metaphysics in The Science of Logic,* 29.

religion given several of Hegel's other core and interconnected commitments, which we will discuss across the course of this and coming chapters. By way of preview, though, these commitments include: (1) that the "thought-determinations" [*Denkbestimmungen*] that comprise logic "*pervade all our representations* [*Vorstellungen*]" (*SL,* 15); (2) that "representation" is the chief mode of cognition [*Erkenntnis*] for religious consciousness; (3) that philosophical thought [*Denken*] and religious representation share the same content – "God" – but present this content to us in complementary albeit decisively different forms; and (4) that logic ought to "embrace these other forms of cognition" (*SL*, 36). Considered together and in light of Hegel's insistence on the importance of bridging logic and the materiality of ordinary life and experience, these commitments thus indicate that a fuller grasp of the *Logic* can be achieved through a careful analysis of the religious representations that Hegel so painstakingly details in his mature philosophy of religion (chapter four), just as a fuller grasp of the philosophy of religion and the representations it analyzes can be gained through careful study of the *Logic.*

And in the case of the relation between Hegel's logic and his ethical and political thought, it is equally important to remember that Hegel repeatedly reminds us in the second preface to the *Logic* that the determinations of thought thoroughly permeate "the spirit of a people" [*Volksgeist*], assuming an instinctually operative presence therein.[125] Citations abound. "The science of logic deals with the thought determinations that instinctively and unconsciously pervade our spirit everywhere" (*SL*, 19). "Logic…permeates all man's natural behavior [*Naturverhalten]*, his ways of sensing, intuiting, desiring, his needs and impulses" (*SL*, 12). "The

[125] The second preface was written in 1831, which, it is worth noting, was also the final year Hegel delivered his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* as well as the year of his death, as it further suggests a close connection between these works that will become increasingly apparent over the course of this work.

activity of thought at work in us across all representations, interests, and actions is, as we have said, unconsciously busy" (*SL,* 16). "In real life, it is then a matter of making use of the thought determinations…such determinations are…[in] the position of serving in the creation and exchange of ideas required for the hustle and bustle of social life" (*SL,* 14). "So much is logic natural to the human being [that it] is indeed his very *nature*" (*SL,* 12). So, while the *Logic* chiefly deals with the pure forms of thought, it is important we remember that these pure thought-forms undergird, animate, and orient, often instinctually and pre-reflectively, a people's experience and way of life, which includes its ways of understanding, perceiving, valuing, imagining, and feeling as well as its habits, norms, practices, laws, institutions, and the like – precisely the elements which comprise "the spirit and culture of a people" (*SL,* 36). In other words, when Hegel is talking about the determinations of thought he is, in a sense, also talking about forms of human living and sociality, about ways of individually and collectively being in and experiencing the world.[126] For these determinations of thought – which include being,

[126] To be sure, when Hegel is talking about thought and its determinations, he is not *only* talking about them as determinations of human thought exclusively. For Hegel, there is also a sense in which thought is irreducible to human thinking, even if human thinking is the primary site of thought's concretion – a topic which is too complex to consider in full here. For now, suffice it note that in the *Logic* Hegel approvingly cites Aristotle's claim in the *Metaphysics* that "In so many respects is human nature in bondage; but this science, which is not pursued for any utility, is alone free in and for itself, and for this reason it appears not to be a human possession." (*SL,* 14). In keeping with this line of thought, also consider Hegel's claim that "it is all the less possible to believe that the thought determinations…are at our service…that it is we who have them in our possession and not they who have us in theirs" (*SL,* 15). Considered together, these remarks are indicative of Hegel's insistence on the objectivity of thought and that subjective thought moves within the boundaries it establishes without thought's objectivity being experienced as an alien force but rather as that through which subjectivity exercises its highest freedom, since objective thinking is the subject's proper nature. And considered in the context of the philosophy of religion, these remarks are indicative of Hegel's insistence on the distinction between the divine and the human, even if this distinction does not render divinity and humanity wholly other to each other.

nothing, becoming, something, other, finitude, infinitude, the one, many, continuity, magnitude, number, measure, essence, appearance, identity, difference, contradiction, ground, relation, concept, judgment, syllogism, life, truth, and goodness – are what render intelligible and meaningful one's experience of the world, one's relation to it, one's sense of self, and one's relations with the others with whom one cohabitates. The *Logic* simply renders explicit in the cool regions of pure thought the determinations of thought which typically remain non-objectified and unnoticed in the course of ordinary experience. An adequate account of Hegel's logic must therefore consider both the pure determinations of thought *and* the implications these logical determinations of thought have for various forms of life that embody them. In other words, as Robert Pippin aptly notes, the logical determinations of thought and the sorts of self-understandings they engender have "various action-or-praxis implications, can even be said to be action-guiding (or "world-constituting") in a way."[127]

Gathering together these strands of Hegel's logic, his philosophy of religion, and his ethical and political thought requires introducing one last set of claims that can, at this point, only be stated baldly and in anticipation. Our central focus in the *Logic* is Hegel's account of the logic of the concept. My contention is that the logic of the concept is bound up with a mode of relationality – between self and other and self and world – rooted in the concept and practice of love as articulated in Hegel's early writings on religion and mature systematic philosophy of

[127] Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Realm of Shadows: Logic as Metaphysics in The Science of Logic*, 30. In his discussion, Pippin also aptly notes that "the notion of a "living" or organic or properly concrete or animated understanding of thought itself…has remarkably little resonance in the literature on Hegel's book," 30. This dissertation is intended to remedy this lack in Hegel scholarship.

religion.[128] There thus emerges a sense in which Hegel's philosophy of religion and the forms of ethical and political relationality it entails concretizes the logic of the concept. In other words, the philosophy of religion and the forms of ethical and political relationality it entails act as the material corollaries of the pure logic of the concept explicated in the *Science of Logic.* To this extent, my reading is thus largely in agreement with commentators like Terry Pinkard who would suggest that "the rest of [Hegel's] system…is to be no more than an application both of the program and the general categories of the *Science of Logic…*[that] the other parts of the system display in concrete form the more abstract categorical structures elaborated and defended in the *Science of Logic.*"[129] Importantly, however, the philosophy of religion should not *only* be understood as an application of the categories of the *Logic.* For the *Logic,* as we will see, is deeply influenced by Hegel's pre-systematic writings on religion and especially by the accounts of love contained therein, a point often overlooked by commentators.[130] Especially important in

[128] For recent accounts of the significance of the *Logic* to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* see Thomas A. Lewis, *Religion, Modernity, and Politics in Hegel* and Martin Wendte, *Gottmenschliche Einheit bei Hegel* (Munich: De Gruyter, 2007).

[129] Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Dialectic: The Explanation of Possibility* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 8. More recently, Jean-François Kervégan has similarly argued that "the doctrine of objective spirit, like every part of the system, rests not only on the 'spirit' of the logic but on its letter." See Jean-François Kervégan, *The Actual and the Rational: Hegel and Objective Spirit*, trans. Daniela Ginsburg and Martin Shuster (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), viii. H.S. Harris also maintains a similar position in his essay "The Hegelian Organon of Interpretation," in *Hegel, History, and Interpretation* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997).

[130] As mentioned in chapter two, Dieter Henrich intimates some sense of the significance of love to Hegel's mature thinking but insists that love ultimately gives way to Hegel's conceptions of life, reason, and spirit. See Dieter Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin, 119-142.* By contrast, I will argue for a much stronger connection where the early account of love is seen as inspiring and structuring the mature accounts reason and spirit in significant ways. In some ways, my account more closely aligns with Alison Ormiston's efforts in her *Love and Politics: Re-interpreting Hegel,* where she argues that the early account of love

this chapter will be to track the how account of love contained in the early writings in many ways provides both a structural and phenomenological blueprint for understanding Hegel's account of the self-movement of thought and of the logic of the concept. On my reading, then, a study of the early writings on religion becomes something of a propaedeutic for understanding the *Logic.* As we will see across the course of this chapter, positioning the relation between the early writings and the *Logic* in this way has massive implications for how we understand vital issues at the core of Hegel's thought and of Hegel scholarship. Most notably, my interpretation forces us to rethink Hegel's claims regarding the absolute self-sufficiency and self-propulsion of the logical determinations of thought. For how can logic be self-sufficient and self-propelling if it has a historically specific and theologically inflected account of love as its basis? Does positioning love as the basis of logic spell trouble for Hegel's claims? Or might it provide us a platform for interpreting them afresh in compelling and innovative ways? These are some of the core questions I will endeavor to address in the course of the treatment that follows. And this treatment will then set us up for chapter four, where we will take up Hegel's mature account of love in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* and further explore its hermeneutical utility for understanding the logic of concept.

B. Intimations of Love in the Science of Logic - The Self-Movement of Thought

As mentioned, the impact of Hegel's early account of love is most salient in his discussions of the logic of the concept – which represents the highest stage of thought's

forms the subconscious basis of Hegel's mature political thinking. Alison Ormiston, *Love and Politics: Re-interpreting Hegel* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004).

development. The logic of the concept will therefore be the primary focus of our analysis. But already in the opening movements of the *Logic* we begin to gain a sense for how the early account of love undergirds the general structure and movement of thought as well as the relation between thought and thought's objects. Attending to some of these opening movements will not only better position us to approach the logic of the concept but also help us to discern the broader significance of love for the *Logic.*

In the second preface, Hegel declares the content of the *Logic* to be the immanent development of the determinations of thought – "thought [*Denken*] in its necessary development" (*SL,* 19), or thought in its inner "self-movement" [*Selbstbewegung*] (*SL,* 53). We saw in chapter two that Hegel's account of love as a form of self-determination via ecstatic mediation with an "other" creatively appropriates and revises the Kantian conception of self-determining reason, with his account of the free movement of "scientific cognition" in the Preface to the *Phenomenology* demonstrating the nature of this appropriation particularly well. For in that work scientific cognition undergoes *Bildung* – formation, development – in and through its ecstatic mediations with the inner life of its content. That is to say, scientific cognition immerses itself in the life of its content – that which it is thinking about – and in doing so comes to identify with that content, experience the world as its content experiences it, and returns to itself *other* than it was before. And yet, even as it is determined by the otherness of the content, scientific cognition remains free. Indeed, for Hegel, this is the quintessence of freedom as embodied in the concept and practice of love. In other words, we cannot make sense of how it is that scientific cognition is at once free and other-determined apart from the distinctive form of freedom found in love. In the *Logic,* Hegel further formalizes scientific cognition's dynamic movement of ecstasy and elevated return in his articulation of the self-movement of thought [*Denken*].

Hegel begins the *Logic* by telling us that if thought is to be self-determining then its development must proceed free from extraneous determinations, premises, or principle. That is to say, thought must accept as valid only those determinations, premises, and principles which have been immanently generated by thought, i.e., generated from out of thought's own internal dynamism. However, that the dynamism of thought is modeled on the experience of love – as we will see in the following sections – should give us pause when it comes to Hegel's contentious claim that the *Logic* is a presuppositionless project. Commentators have long been divided over whether the *Logic* succeeds in making a presuppositionless beginning and in making sense of how exactly Hegel intends the presuppositionless of the project. It is not my intention to rehash the long and complex history of these debates here.[131] Rather, I seek to offer some insight into how the structural isomorphism between Hegel's early account of love and later account of thought sheds light on Hegel's claims to presuppositionlessness. Before entering into these considerations, however, some preliminary remarks about what Hegel means and does not mean by presuppositionlessness are in order. First, when Hegel speaks about the *Logic* as a presuppositionless project, he does so in a rather circumscribed manner. For he explicitly acknowledges that the *Logic* presupposes the result of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* – the overcoming of a strict division between consciousness and its object. As he writes in the *Logic,* "The concept of pure science and its deduction is…presupposed in the present work in so far as the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is nothing other than that deduction…Pure science thus presupposes the liberation from the opposition of consciousness" (*SL,* 29).[132] The *Logic* thus begins with the

[131] For a detailed overview of the debate see Stephen Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's Logic,* 29-115.

[132] Cf. *SL,* 11, 46-47.

recognition that what stands before consciousness is not some self-standing and static given but rather is always already conceptually mediated by the scientific cognition of consciousness. And as we saw in chapter two, Hegel's distinctive blending of Kantian autonomy and Christian love in the early writings is baked into the self-movement of scientific cognition, indicating that these influences have not exited the scene of Hegel's *Logic*. But rather than undermining Hegel's claims to presuppositionlessness, recognizing the operative presence of autonomous love at the heart of thought's self-movement opens up another interpretive avenue suggested by Hegel himself.[133]

In the *Logic,* Hegel rather clearly indicates that it is the beginning, or starting point, of logic which must be presuppositionless, in the sense that thought must not smuggle in preconceptions about its inaugural object of investigation. "The beginning must…be an abstract beginning; so there is nothing that it may presuppose, must not be mediated by anything or have a ground…It cannot have any determination…It cannot have any content" (*SL,* 49). In an effort to adhere to this deeply Kantian methodological demand, Hegel thus insists that thought must begin with the absolute barest determination of givenness. Thought, as Hegel writes, must "simply…take up *what is there before us*" (*SL,* 47) and see "what there is in this representation" (*SL,* 51). And "what we have before us," he continues, "is only the *simple immediacy…pure*

[133] To be sure, my commentary on the presuppositions of the *Logic* is far from exhaustive. For example, my considerations leave aside Gadamer's well-known insistence that the presuppositions baked into language – especially the German language – are always already at work shaping the development of Hegel's logic. See Hans Georg Gadamer, *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies,* trans. P. Christopher Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 90-120. For a reply to Gadamer's concern, see Stephen Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's Logic,* 75-88. My considerations also leave aside F.W.J. Schelling's influential critique of Hegel's *Logic* as neglectful of the sheer facticity – the "thatness" – of existence. See F. W. J. Schelling, *On the History of Modern Philosophy,* trans. Andrew Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 134-163.

being" (*SL,* 47), in which there is no determinate (i.e., distinguished) content and so nothing to presuppose (*SL,* 48). The immediate facticity of being – the sheer givenness of what is simply there, without any further determination – marks thought's point of departure. For thought brings to bear no determinate conception of being in advance of thought's immanent thinking through what is given to it. It does not assume being as idea, as energeia, as *causa sui,* et.al. "Being is what makes the beginning here…The beginning is…*pure being*" (*SL,* 47-48). Thought's inaugural task is thus to try to discursively comprehend its own representation of the immediate facticity of being – to render explicit what is already there, implicitly, within this representation. Philosophizing without presuppositions thus involves suspending one's familiar assumptions about the categories and their content which are taken up by thought.[134] "Logic," as Hegel writes, "cannot presuppose any of these forms of reflection, these rules and laws of thinking…they first have to be established within it…Logic…cannot say what it is in advance…its concept is generated in the course of its elaboration" (*SL,* 23). Instead, logic can only come to know the categories of thought by thinking through them on their own terms, by immersing itself in their content and occupying that content from the inside, as it were. This is the circular ecstasis of thought, which has its roots in Hegel's account of love in the early writings on religion.

Importantly, despite the fact this concept, practice, and experience of love described by Hegel in is baked into the self-movement of thought – and hence can be considered a presupposition of the *Logic* – there also emerges a sense in which the conceptual dynamics of love make possible the presuppositionless movement of thought, which is equally to say that Hegel considers Christian religion to have played a vital role in the emergence of speculative

[134] Cf. Stephen Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's Logic: From Being to Infinity,* 30-31.

philosophy, or what in the *Phenomenology* we saw Hegel call scientific cognition.[135] For one who engages in speculative philosophy must be ready and able to let go of his firmly held assumptions, entrenched positions, and established sense of self via a dynamic movement of ecstasis into alterity and a transformed return to self. This ability, Hegel's early writings on religion suggest, is both premised on and first gained through the ethical practice of love, a point which we will develop and defend in greater detail in chapter four. For love enjoins the lover to let go of [*ablassen von*] of himself, to immerse himself in the self-determined movements of the beloved, and to be transformed as a result. Accordingly, we begin to see how the early account of love affords us a conceptual and phenomenological framework for understanding how thought comes to intimately know its objects without first presupposing anything about them. And in this way, Hegel considers Christian religion – and specifically the Christian account of love – to lend support to and pave the way for the presuppositionless philosophizing that characterizes the self-movement of thought, but without this historical and hermeneutical presupposition predetermining the course or outcome of the *Logic.*[136]

Hegel proceeds to unpack what is implicit in thought's representation of pure being by first noting that "we" – the readers of the *Logic* – might naturally expect that the thought of "pure being should mean nothing but *being* in general; *being*, and nothing else, without further determination and filling" (*SL,* 47). However, when *thought* tries to think the sheer immediacy of being, thought finds that it cannot say anything determinate about it without violating what it

[135] Houlgate also emphasizes the importance of the historical emergence of Christianity for the development of speculative philosophy. See Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's Logic: From Being to Infinity*, 69.

[136] Cf. Houlgate's discussion of the religious presuppositions of speculative philosophy in *The Opening of Hegel's Logic: From Being to Infinity*, 69-71.

originally considered to be the immediate givenness of pure being. In other words, thought realizes that its thought of pure being must remain empty and indeterminate if it is still to remain a thought about the sheer immediacy of pure being and not something different, something other than pure being. As a result, thought grasps that its thought of the immediacy of pure being is in fact "no-thing" in particular. As Hegel writes, "Being, the indeterminate immediate, is in fact *nothing*" (*SL,* 59). Accordingly, thought's thinking of the immediacy of pure being "passes over" [*Ubergehen*] to its "other" – the thought of nothing – freely, of its own accord, without introducing anything external to its own thinking through of the immediacy of being.

However, Hegel continues, when thought tries to think through its thought of "nothing" – that nothing *is* – "nothing" turns out to be equally indeterminate and so is ultimately indistinguishable from the thought of the immediacy of pure being with which thought began. "*Nothing, pure nothingness,* is simple equality with itself, complete emptiness, complete absence of determination and content; lack of all distinction from within" (*SL,* 59). Lacking determinacy, the thought of nothing is "thus altogether the same as pure *being* is" (*SL,* 59). "P*ure being and pure nothing are therefore the same*" (*SL,* 59).

For thought, however, the proposition that being and nothing are altogether the same is a contradictory proposition that is not permitted to stand as it is. Thought must therefore immanently generate a category capable of capturing the truth that the thoughts of pure being and pure nothing are "always already" passing over into each other without simply collapsing the distinction between them. This is the category of "*becoming*" [*Werden*], for becoming makes sense of "this movement of the immediate vanishing of the one into the other" (*SL,* 60).[137] In the

[137] Cf. "Being passes over into nothing, but nothing is just as much the opposite of itself, the passing-over into being…nothing goes over into being, but being equally sublates itself and is rather the passing-over into nothing…each…[is] within itself the opposite of itself" (*SL,* 81).

category of becoming, in other words, being and nothing gain an individuated determinacy that they did not previously possess – they are distinguished from each other – but without that determinacy undermining their fundamental interconnectedness. As Hegel writes, "*becoming* [is] a movement in which the two are distinguished, but by a distinction which has just as immediately dissolved itself" (*SL,* 60). Accordingly, thought comes to retroactively recognize the category of becoming as the truth of its previous thoughts of being and nothing.

With this rough sketch, we can already begin to gain a sense for how, despite its nominal absence, love plays an operative role in the way Hegel conceives of the self-movement of thought. For, on the one hand, thought is not compelled by any premises or principles external to itself – thought is utterly free, self-determined. Nothing is simply given to thought from without, or given qua positive, to hearken back to Hegel's language in the "Positivity" essay. Thought's free advance is fueled by the internal tensions contained within its own immanently posited determinations. This is why the *Logic* does not need to introduce anything extraneous into its investigations – the progressive determinations of thought (from being to nothing to becoming) emerge from out of thought's own attempts to think through what is given to it. However, at the same time, thought's self-determination coincides with thought's determination by an "other." For, as we have just seen, the thought of being's other – nothing – is constitutive of thought's determination of being, for the thought of being contains the thought of nothing within itself, implicitly. And yet, this other (i.e., nothing) does not undermine thought's self-determination, its freely passing over from the thought of being to nothing. Thought freely arrives at the realization, since this other is not imported from outside of thought's original determination of being. The thought of being contains an essential reference to the thought of nothing. And because the category of nothing equally reveals itself to be indistinguishable from the immediacy

of pure being, the category of nothing can also be seen to be constituted by *its* other – being. For nothing *is* – it has being within itself. "In non-being there is contained the reference to being" (*SL*, 60). In this way, the immanent determinations of thought are revealed to be at once self-determined and other-determined. And as we have seen from our treatment of the early writings on religion in chapter two, love names the concept and practice in which self-determination and other-determination coincide. For in love the beloved can be said to determine the life of the lover. And yet, the lover does not feel constrained or coerced by this other-determination, but rather acts freely in this relation. That is to say, one gladly restricts oneself in relating to the beloved – one actively desires to fulfill one's obligations to the beloved. What is more, the opening movements of the *Logic* from being to nothing to becoming help us to see that love does not so much defy rational thought as enable us to see how apparent incompatibles in fact belong together as part of an organic yet internally differentiated whole. So conceived, the dynamics of love thus provide the basic conceptual blueprint for understanding how thought can be simultaneously self-determined and other-determined, simultaneously free and dependent on an other.

C. Intimations of Love in the Science of Logic – the Logic of Determinacy

A bit later in the *Logic* but still within the logic of being, we see the mediation of self-determination and other-determination at work even more acutely in Hegel's discussion of thought's thinking of the category of determination [*Bestimmung*]. The category of becoming passes over into that of existence, where we are eventually led to a consideration of the category of determination. Across his analysis of the category of determination, Hegel emphasizes that the determinacy of a thing – that which makes a thing the thing that it is – is essentially open to

being constituted and reconstituted anew by the "others" it finds itself in relation with. Citations abound. "Determination is affirmative determinateness; it is the in-itself by which a something abides in its existence while involved with an other that would determine it, by which it preserves itself in its self-equality, holding on to it in its being-for-other" (*SL,* 95). "[T]hat which something is *in itself…*is affected with being-for-other; determination is therefore open, as such to the relation with other" (*SL*, 97). "Determinateness… holds the other in itself…otherness is introduced in determination (*SL*, 97). Considered together, these remarks indicate that, for Hegel, otherness is at the heart of a thing's determinate identity; it is, we might in other words say, constitutive of the selfhood of the thing.

And yet, Hegel claims, "this determining from outside" – this other-determination – "is at the same time determined by something's own immanent determination" (*SL,* 97). Here, then, other-determination is found not to undermine the self-determination of the thing but rather to coincide with it. For the thing retains a bounded identity that is *its own* even though this identity has been constituted by an other which it is not. The determinacy of the thing, as Hegel writes, "stands in *reference* to an otherness without being just this otherness. The otherness is at once contained in it and yet *separated* from it" (*SL,* 92). The thing therefore possesses its own intrinsic identity which sets limits to how the other can affect it. This is what Hegel means when he claims that the thing "preserves itself in its self-equality" even as it is intrinsically affected by its relation to an other. For example, water, unlike kindling, cannot be set ablaze by the application of heat but can only but can only be brought to a boil. In this way, the inner constitution of water

– its determinate identity – sets constraints on how an other – heat – can affect it.[138] For water is determined by heat but without this other-determination undermining or defying the intrinsic properties that constitute the identity of water *as* water, i.e., without undermining what makes water itself and not something other, like kindling or paper. Hegel's early account of the concept, practice, and experience of love names the common phenomenon that helps render intelligible the mediation of self-determination and other-determination that happens in the category of "determination." In other words, we arrive at a more thorough understanding of how determinate identity can be forged in and through a relation with otherness by attending to and having first experienced the way in which the identity of the lover is forged in and through his relation to the beloved. Thus, once again we see Hegel's early account of love animating and illuminating the otherwise seemingly abstract determinations of the *Logic.*

D. On the Way to the Logic of the Concept

That the self-movement of thought and its immanent determinations examined thus far exhibit the structural pattern of being simultaneously self-determined and other-determined suggests, in a preliminary way, that the early account of love, despite its nominal absence from the opening movements of the *Logic,* nevertheless plays a formative role therein. The significance of love, however, acutely and explicitly comes to the fore in Hegel's discussions of the logic of the concept, which comprises the final and most developed segment of the work, in which the abstract universality of the pure determinations of thought and the concrete

[138] I borrow this example from Houlgate, who reaches similar conclusions about Hegel's remarks on the category of determination in the *Logic.* See Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's Logic: From Being to Infinity*, 352-354.

particularity of objects are organically united in what Hegel calls concrete universality (recall our discussion in chapter two). But before directly taking up the logic of the concept, a few words about the rest of thought's immanent journey on the way to the logic of the concept are in order. For briefly tracing this trajectory will better position us to grasp just what Hegel means by the logic of the concept and the significance of love to his account.

The first major division of the *Logic* Hegel calls the doctrine of being. Within the sphere of being, the determinations of thought – which Hegel broadly categorizes under the headings of determinateness, magnitude, and measure – are by and large aimed at capturing the simplicity of the immediate fact of being, the immediate facticity of being. "Being is the immediate," as Hegel writes (*SL,* 337). However, the thought-determinations that comprise the sphere of being eventually exhaust their own internal coherence, and thought passes over into the sphere of essence, which marks the second major division of the *Logic.* For thought, as Hegel claims, "does not stop at the immediate and its determinations but penetrates beyond it on the presupposition that behind this being there still is something other than being itself, and that this background constitutes the truth of being" (*SL* 337). In other words, thought tries to make sense of the myriad of appearances that are given to it by conceiving of an underlying permanence which are their "essence" – what Hegel declares to be "the truth of being" (*SL,*337). Hegel gives examples like the relation between ground and grounded (*SL,* 386-417), appearance and being (437-448), essential and unessential (*SL,* 449-464), and inner and outer (*SL,* 466-469) to demonstrate the way in thought conceives of the doubled nature of the given. Here, then, in the sphere of essence we enter into the sphere of mediation rather than sheer immediacy, as each of

these distinctions relativize the immediacy of pure being by mediating it with a hidden "essence" that is its foundation (*SL* 337).[139]

Collectively, the doctrines of being and essence comprise what Hegel calls the "objective logic," for here thought offers an account of the categories that are constitutive of reality, of what *is*, the object in its supposed externality – its "objective" side. "It is *ontology* which objective logic most directly replaces in the first instance, that is, that part of metaphysics intended to investigate the nature of *ens* in general (and *ens* comprises within itself both *being* and *essence*)" (*SL*, 42). However, once an account of the object in its externality has been given, thought finds itself internally compelled to advance to a third locus of analysis – that of the concept, which Hegel calls the truth of being and essence. For thought's attempt to think the immediacy of being and the mediation of essence explicitly brings to the fore thought's own conceptual operations in constituting the object and its seemingly doubled nature (between ground and grounded, et.al.). In other words, the logic of the concept grasps that it is "we" who posit an essence as the truth lying behind appearances. Thought's advance to the level of the concept thus marks the transition from "objective logic" to "subjective logic," as here Hegel's focused attention shifts to the way that subjective activity – the activity of the cognitive process – plays a constitutive role in rendering determinate and intelligible that which appears before us as objective (*SL,* 46).[140] Accordingly, Hegel conceives of the concept as both the result of the thoughts of being and essence and their foundation and truth. For it emerges from out of the immanent contradictions

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[139] Cf. Hegel's claim in the *Encyclopedia Logic* that "essence – which is Being coming into mediation with itself through the negativity of itself – is self-relatedness, only in so far as it is relation to an Other" (*EL* §112).

[140] As Stanley Rosen concisely notes, "the object reappears in the subjective logic, but now from the standpoint of conceptual knowing." Stanley Rosen, *The Idea of Hegel's Science of Logic,* 395.

inherent in thought's thinking of being and essence and yet is retroactively realized to play a key role in constituting the determinations that comprise their spheres. As Hegel writes, "The concept is at first to be regarded simply as the third to being and essence, to the immediate and to reflection. Being and essence are therefore the moments of its becoming; but the concept is their foundation and truth as the identity into which they have sunk and in which they are contained" (*SL,* 508). And it is here, as we will see, in the realm of the concept, that we find Hegel's early account of love most explicitly at work.

E. The Kantian Backdrop

We can begin can to gain some preliminary traction on what Hegel means by "the concept" by turning to its etymology, a strategy which Hegel himself endorses in the *Encyclopedia*. "However great the distance between the concept of formal logic and the speculative concept may be, a more careful consideration will still show that the deeper significance of the concept is in no way so alien to general linguistic usage as it might seem to be at first sight" (*EL,* §160A). Elaborating on Hegel's remark, it is important to note that the German noun *Begriff* has its roots in the verbs *greifen,* which means a physical capacity to grasp, seize, or lay hold of, and *begreifen,* which connotes a capacity to grasp something in a cognitive sense.[141] Combining Hegel's remarks and the etymology of *der Begriff,* we can thus understand Hegel's doctrine of the concept to offer an account of one's cognitive capacity to grasp or comprehend that which is given in the course of experience. Of particular concern to us in what

[141] See *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon,* trans. Steven Rendall, et al. Ed. Barbara Cassin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 90-93.

follows is to articulate more precisely the nature of the concept's "grasp" and the sorts of relations it engenders with other subjects and objects.

As discussed in chapter one, for many, especially in the Continental philosophical tradition, the concept's grasp is indicative of the totalizing nature of Hegel's thinking, as it is said to preemptively and externally categorize its "others" in terms dictated by its own dialectical movement rather on the basis of an other's own immanent self-determination and self-manifestation. So conceived, the grasp of the concept epitomizes a logic of totality. Contrary to this view, what I hope to demonstrate in what follows is that by leveraging the early account of love as our primary hermeneutical lens we will be able to see that the sort of grasp that the concept has on its others is not one of totalization or forceful imposition but rather one that is the result of a patient, attentive, and non-dominating immersion in the life and experience of a self-determining other and that the grasp of the concept reflects the knowledge gained from this ecstatic immersion.

Our point of departure for developing this reading will be, once again, the self-determination of thought. In the realm of the concept, thought has advanced to its highest stage of self-determination, or freedom, a point which Hegel emphasizes repeatedly. "[T]he concept [is] the realm…of freedom" (*SL,* 505). "In the *concept…*the kingdom of *freedom* is disclosed" (*SL,* 513). "In [its] consummation, the concept has the form of freedom" (*SL,* 527). "The pure concept is the absolutely infinite, unconditioned, and free" (*SL,* 530). To start to make sense of what he means by the freedom of the concept, Hegel once again brings Kant into the picture, claiming that Kant's idea of "the original synthetic unity of apperception" provides an important clue for understanding the nature of the concept and its distinctive mode of freedom. "[Kant's] original synthesis of apperception is one of the most profound principles for speculative

development; it contains the beginning of a true apprehension of the nature of the concept…" (*SL,* 520).[142] Unpacking the relation between the freedom of the Hegelian concept and the Kantian original synthesis of apperception, however, requires us to delve a bit more deeply into some of the most complex issues of Kant's theoretical philosophy. My aim in taking up Kant's original synthesis of apperception is not to offer an exhaustive exegesis of the idea and vast body of literature pertaining to it, but rather to shed a bit of light on some general aspects of it that are particularly important for our interpretation of the Hegelian concept.

For Kant, *apperception* amounts to self-awareness – awareness of oneself as having representations. And the *unity* of apperception signifies an awareness of oneself as an "I" that remains identical to itself throughout its various representational states, that is, an awareness that all of one's representations must all inhere in a single self in order for those representations to be rendered synchronically and diachronically intelligible. And the *synthesis* of the synthetic unity of apperception consists in this I's capacity to combine, or synthesize, the manifold of representations into an intelligible experience. By combining the manifold of representations across time and space, the synthetic unity of apperception is thus what makes possible empirical cognition, i.e., experience (*CPR*, A363-A364). William James provides a helpful example that illustrates important aspects of what Kant is driving at with this idea: "Take a sentence of a dozen words, and take twelve men and tell to each one *a* word. Then stand the men in a row or

[142] Already in the early "Faith and Knowledge" essay (1802), Hegel had gravitated to Kant's apperception theme and its importance for understanding the freedom of the concept, claiming that "here, the original synthetic unity of apperception is recognized also as the principle of the figurative synthesis…and spontaneity…" (FK, 69). Cf. "It is one of the profoundest and truest insights to be found in the Critique of Reason that the *unity* which constitutes the *essence of the concept* is recognized as the *original synthetic* unity of *apperception*, the unity of the "*I think*," or of self-consciousness" (*SL,* 515).

jam them in a bunch and let each think of his word as intently as he will. Nowhere will there be a consciousness of the *whole* sentence."[143] James's aim with this example is to point out that if we are to be able to account for the intelligibility of experience, we must posit some sort of continuous "I" which binds – combines, synthesizes, unifies – the manifold. Twelve consciousnesses each bearing in mind one word only would be unable to achieve an intelligible representation of the sentence, whereas one consciousness of twelve words would have an intelligible representation of the sentence because of the ordered unity that single consciousness lends to the individual words. At a general level, this self-conscious gathering together of the words by a single consciousness is illustrative of the synthetic work of apperception.

However, Kant had learned from Hume that I cannot become aware of this stable, unified self simply by induction, or abstraction from empirical states, such as "I am hungry," "I am happy," "I hear music," or "I see a fox." For Hume, we cannot have an idea of something without a corresponding sense impression. And because we do not have a sense impression of a stable self across time and space, we cannot validly posit the idea of a stable self of the sort Kant finds necessary if we are to account for the intelligibility of experience. As Hume writes,

> There are some philosophers who imagine we are at every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence; and are certain, beyond the evidence of demonstration, both of its perfect identity and simplicity…But from what impression could this idea be derived?...If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same, through the whole course of our lives; since self is supposed to exist after that manner. But there is no impression constant and invariable. Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations succeed each other, and never all exist at the same time. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impression, or from any other, that the idea of self is derived; and consequently there is no such idea…For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself* I always stumble on some particular perception or other….I never can catch

[143] William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (Mineola: Dover, 1950), 160.

> *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception…[144]

In order to account for the intelligibility of empirical cognition in the wake of what he considered Hume's genuine insight, Kant therefore found it necessary to argue for a kind of apperceptive self which precedes all empirical states which an "I" can be in – an *original* "I" that is not derivable from a source or principle rooted in empirical sensibility (*CPR,* B132). "This pure, original, and unchangeable consciousness" is what Kant "call[s] *transcendental apperception*" (*CPR,* A107), or what in the B-edition of the first *Critique* he famously describes as "the I think [that] must be able to accompany all my representations" (*CPR,* B132). And Kant regards transcendental unity of apperception as "the supreme principle in the whole of human cognition" (*CPR,* B135).

Crucially, when Kant talks about the transcendental unity of apperception he often places particular emphasis on its native *spontaneity*.[145] Kant's characterization of the spontaneity of the thinking subject is perhaps the most important theme picked up and developed by later German idealists and will be especially important as we consider the Hegelian *Begriff.* As Robert Pippin rightly notes, "for Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel it was Kant's characterization of the subject as

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[144] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon, 1896), 251-252.

[145] While Kant's conception of spontaneity admits of varying interpretations, scholars tend to agree that his spontaneity thesis forms the innovative conceptual core of his account of thinking. See, for examples, Wilfrid Sellars, "The I or He or It (the Thing) Which Thinks," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 44, no.1 (1971): 5-31; Henry E. Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 273-276; Robert Pippin, "Kant on the Spontaneity of the Mind," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 17, no.2 (1987): 449-476; Stanley Rosen, "Is Thinking Spontaneous?" in *Kant's Legacy: Essays in Honor of Lewis White Beck* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2001), 3-24.

spontaneously apperceptive that, more than anything else, convinced them that Kant…had begun a new kind of philosophy of subjectivity."[146] Indeed, in his earliest published work, titled *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy* (1801), Hegel affirms this Kantian idea, claiming "that the world is the product of the freedom of intelligence is the determinate and express principle of idealism" (*D,* 130).

So, how, more precisely, are we to understand Kant's spontaneity thesis and its relevance to the Hegelian *Begriff*? Kant argues that because intelligible experience requires the presence of a self that is capable of synthesizing the manifold and because the synthesizing self is not derivable from empirical sensibility, we must therefore instead conceive of the self's synthesizing capacity as "an act of spontaneity" (*CPR,* B132).

> The combination…of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses…for it is an act of the spontaneity of the power of representation, and, since one must call the latter understanding, in distinction from sensibility, all combination, whether we are conscious of it or not, whether it is a combination of the manifold of intuition or of several concepts…is an action of the understanding, which we would designate with the general title synthesis in order at the same time to draw attention to the fact that we can represent nothing as combined in the object without having previously combined it ourselves, and that among all representations combination is the only one that is not given through objects but can be executed only by the subject itself, since it is an act of its self-activity. (*CPR,* B129-130).[147]

[146] Robert Pippin, "Kant on the Spontaneity of the Mind," 451-452.

[147] Cf. "Combination does not lie in the objects, however, and cannot as it were be borrowed from them through perception and by that means first be taken up into the understanding, but is rather only an operation of the understanding, which is itself nothing further than the faculty of combining a priori and bringing the manifold of given representations under unity of apperception, which principle is the supreme one in the whole of human cognition" (*CPR,* B135).

For Kant, that which is given [*gegeben*] in empirical sensibility becomes an *object of experience* through the spontaneous unifying power of the understanding [*Verstand*].[148] More specifically, in order for the manifold of pure intuitions to be thought of *as an object,* it must be spontaneously synthesized by the twelve categories of the understanding – unity, plurality, totality, reality, negation, limitation, inherence and subsistence, causality and dependence, community, possibility, existence, and necessity. These twelve categories are what lend order and coherence to the raw manifold given in intuition. Without them, we could not recognize or judge any determinate features of what is given to us in intuition. But whereas the mind passively *receives* the manifold of representations given in intuition, the synthesizing work of the categories is spontaneously active, ordering the manifold in accordance with its own inherent rules so that we are left with an experience *of an object* rather than the raw data afforded by sensible intuition. Accordingly, Kant conceives of the objectivity of the object – its status as *an object of experience* – as a product of the spontaneous synthesizing power of the understanding.

With a basic sense of Kant's spontaneity thesis on the table, we can now begin to unpack its significance for Hegel's construal of the concept. Kant claims that

> It is only because I can [spontaneously] combine a manifold of given representations in one consciousness that it is possible for me to represent the identity of the consciousness in these representations itself…The thought that these representations given in intuition all together belong to me means, accordingly, the same as that I unite them in a self-consciousness…only because I can comprehend their manifold (*CPR,* B134).

[148] Kant further specifies the spontaneous unifying power of transcendental apperception in terms of what he calls the "figurative synthesis," or "synthesis speciosa," of the transcendental imagination in a way that will prove especially intriguing for Hegel, especially in the early "Faith and Knowledge" essay (*CPR* B151-152). For Kant, figurative synthesis pertains to the way in which the understanding spontaneously and immanently affects sensibility, gathering and unifying it from within. It is, as Kant writes, "an action of the understanding on sensibility and its first application to objects of an intuition that is possible for us" (*CPR* B150). Clearly this is an extremely complicated issue that cannot adequately be dealt with here.

This means that when a subject encounters an object, it does not confront something foreign, or other, to itself, since the object is what is produced from out of the subject's own spontaneous activity. The subject's consciousness of the object is, in other words, at the same time an apperceptive consciousness of its own constitutive spontaneous activity, of its own self-activity in the constitution of the object. In a strong sense, then, the subject encounters only itself when it encounters an object of experience and thus is self-consciously united with itself in its consciousness of the object.

In Hegel's discussion of the relevance of the original synthetic unity of apperception to his understanding of the concept in the *Logic*, he keys in on the way that Kant's spontaneity thesis brings the "I" into unity with itself via its consciousness of an object of experience. As he writes of Kant's thesis,

> On this explanation [of the original synthetic unity of apperception], the unity of the concept is that by virtue of which something is…an *object,* and this objective unity is the unity of the "I" with itself…In point of fact, the conceptual comprehension of a subject matter consists in nothing else than in the "I" making it its own, in pervading it and bringing it into its own form (*SL,* 515-516).

For Hegel, in Kant's account of the spontaneous synthesis of transcendental apperception, the subject remains self-identical in its relation to its object, as it unifies what is given to it into an intelligible object in accordance with laws and determinations that are its own, i.e., which are posited spontaneously, from out of its own inherent laws and principles. The Kantian subject is thereby conscious of *itself* in its conceptual grasp of its object – it does not encounter something fundamentally *other* than itself – since the objectivity of what is given is the product of the thinking subject's own thought-determinations.

To the extent that Kant gestures toward the unity of subject and object in his thesis of the spontaneous synthetic unity of transcendental apperception, Hegel considers Kant's philosophy

to contain the seed of authentic idealism – a point which Hegel grasped already in the 1801 *Differenzschrift* essay and in the 1802 *Faith and Knowledge* essay.[149] However, Hegel also claims that the "further development [of Kant's thought] did not live up to this beginning" (*SL*, 520), that Kant did not fully recognize the significance of his insight into the unity of subject and object in spontaneous synthesis, and that, therefore, "the Kantian philosophy needed to have its spirit distinguished from its letter" (*D*, 79). Accordingly, we must be careful not to let our interpretation of the Hegelian *Begriff* be overdetermined by Kant's spontaneity thesis, at least not as the letter of Kant's texts envisions it. For while Kant offers us glimpses into the speculative core of the *Begriff* with his arguments for the identity of subject and object in the spontaneous synthesis of transcendental apperception, Hegel thinks that Kant's thought ultimately lapses into a form of "subjective idealism" by affording us knowledge of objects only as the appear – where such appearances reflect the nature of the apperceiving subject – rather than knowledge of objects as they are "in themselves," independent of the knower (a point to which we will return in the final section of this chapter). As Hegel writes, Kant's transcendental idealism "takes the activity of cognition…to be only a one-sided positing, beyond which the *thing-in-itself* remains hidden" (*SL*, 701).

While Hegel's critique of the Kantian thing-in-itself is subject to a lively interpretive debate which will not be fully spelled out or adjudicated here, grasping something of Hegel's critique of Kant's subjective brand of idealism as well as his conception of the thing-in-itself will be important for better understanding what Hegel takes from Kant and what he leaves behind in his own construal of the concept. For Hegel, Kant's thing-in-itself represents the non-sensible

[149] See especially Hegel's discussion of Kant's deduction of the categories in *Differenzschrift*, 79-81 & his discussion of Kantian apperception and productive imagination in *Faith and Knowledge*, 69-72.

and epistemically inscrutable causal ground of an object's appearance. It is what a thing is apart from the way it appears to a thinking subject, the real which lies beyond the realm of spatio-temporal experience and hence beyond the reach of what one can know with objective certitude. What Hegel finds especially problematic about the Kantian thing-in-itself is that by positing an impassable gulf between the appearance of a thing and the thing as it exists apart from the knowing subject and associating the latter with what is really real, Kant effectively undermines the objectivity of knowledge and experience. As Hegel writes, even though "the concept is given as the *objective element* of cognition [and] consequently as truth … it is [ultimately] taken to be something *merely subjective,* and we are not allowed to extract reality from it, for by reality objectivity is to be understood, since reality is contrasted with subjectivity" (*SL*,516).[150] In Hegel's estimation, Kant, therefore, leaves us with a kind of pseudo-objectivity. For while the categories of the understanding are constitutive of the objectivity of objects, they nevertheless leave us stranded in a realm of appearances that is, by definition, cut off from the underlying reality of things.[151] In other words, on the Kantian picture, the knowing subject remains caught inside its own circle of consciousness – what Quentin Meillassoux has recently dubbed the correlationist circle – knowing nothing besides an object which is the product of its own

[150] Cf. "But after all, objectivity of thought, in Kant's sense, is again to a certain extent subjective. Thoughts, according to Kant, although universal and necessary categories, are only our thought – separated by an impassable gulf from things, as it exists apart from our knowledge" (*EL* §41z). Also consider: "Still, though the categories, such as unity, or cause and effect, are strictly the property of thought, it by no means follows that they must be ours merely and not also characteristics of the objects. Kant however confines them to the subject-mind, and his philosophy may be styled subjective idealism (*EL,* §42z).

[151] Sally Sedgwick adopts this line of thought, claiming that "Hegel challenges Kant's inference from the fact that the categories must be the contribution of the thinking subject to the conclusion that they cannot therefore also be determinations of objects themselves" See Sally Sedgwick, "McDowell's Hegelianism," *European Journal of Philosophy* 5, no.1 (2002), 30.

subjectivized self-activity.[152] Providing knowledge of appearances only, Kant's thought thus denies to the object qua object an intelligible and independent existence apart from the finite subject who thinks it. Hegel's basic charge, then, is that Kant derives the structural unity of empirical reality strictly "from us" rather than from the "real essences of things" (*EL* §41z). Hence Hegel's frequent charges of subjective and psychological idealism.

Already in his early writings Hegel had identified these difficulties in Kant's conception of the thing-in-itself in ways that prove helpful in parsing his mature critique. In *Faith and Knowledge,* for example, Hegel claims that the Kantian "thing in itself becomes object insofar as it obtains from the active subject some determination…Apart from this they [subject and object] are completely heterogeneous…identical only as sun and stone in respect to warmth when the sun warms the stone" (*FK,* 75; also see 92-93). When unpacked, Hegel's brief example is instructive. The sun represents the subject, the stone the object of experience, and the warmth that which unites them, that which renders them identical because it, in a sense, is shared by both. But the warmth is itself produced *by the sun*, which is to say produced *by the subject*. So, even though the stone also possesses warmth, this warmth is not its own, is not of its inner essence. For warmth is not of the stone; it bears no intrinsic relation to it. Instead, warmth is of the sun; warmth is conceptually implied by the idea of the sun just like weight belongs to the idea of matter. Hence that by virtue of which sun and stone are identical – i.e., warmth – is that which essentially belongs only to the former. Any intrinsic features of the life of the stone is extrinsic to the unity. Hegel's example thus helps us to see what he finds problematic about Kant's position, namely that the subject-object identity wrought through original apperception

[152] See Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency,* trans. Ray Brassier (New York: Continuum, 2008), 5-6.

bears no intrinsic relation to the essential life of the object but rather only reflects the life of the subject.

And in the earlier penned fragments on love, Hegel again voices a similar line of critique, but this time he does so in terms of the conception of deadened and fearful love we encountered in chapter two, claiming that when the relation between subject and object is so one-sidedly determined "no living union between the individual and his world" is possible (*LF,* 303). For here the object is treated as dead and inert while genuine relation requires the reciprocity of two living, self-determining beings. As Hegel writes, "the only love possible is a sort of relationship between the living subject and dead objects by which he is surrounded" (*LF,* 303). Hence, he concludes, "Love's essence at this level…is that the individual in his innermost nature is something opposed to objectivity; he is an independent unit for whom everything else is a world external to him (*LF,* 303). And this "consciousness of separation" between subject and object, Hegel explains in another early fragment, "instills fear of it [object] in the subject," which, in turn, drives "the subject, the free entity to act as the superior power and [to treat] the object…[as] the one which is ruled" (*RFR,* 261).[153] In Hegel's eyes, then, this deadened and domineering love in many ways reflects the standpoint and implications of Kant's subjective brand of idealism wherein the life of the object becomes exclusively determined by the self-activity of the subject.

Gathering together what has been said in this section, we see that while Hegel considers Kant's spontaneity thesis to harbor an indispensable kernel of truth regarding the nature of thought – namely that thought plays an active role in determining the given as an object of experience – Kant's approach ultimately fails to do justice to the inner constitution of objects by

[153] The fragment is titled "Religion, founding a religion" (1797). For a translation of the full fragment see "Two Fragments on Love," translated by H.S. Harris in *Clio* 8, no. 2 (1979): 257-265.

denying such objectivity a "real" status. It could thus be said that the Kantian subject has an air of totality about it, as it relates to objects exclusively in terms that it one-sidedly posits, denying to objects any sense of autonomy. My contention to be taken up in the following section is that Hegel introduces the early account of love into his account of the concept as a way to creatively appropriate Kant's spontaneity thesis. More specifically, love provides Hegel a platform for preserving Kant's insistence on the autonomy of thinking but in a way that honors the agentic dimensions of the object. In other words, love provides Hegel a platform of mediating the self-determination of thought and the fact that thought is nevertheless conditioned by the autonomous givenness of the object, its other.

F. Love and the Logic of the Concept

In an effort to overcome the one-sided relation between subject and object that he thinks results from Kant's spontaneity thesis, Hegel introduces the concept of love. Attending to Hegel's invocation of love in the *Logic* affords us a vital hermeneutical key for grasping not only some of the core yet often overlooked features of Hegel's account of conceptual cognition but also his distinctive appropriation of Kant's spontaneity thesis. The most relevant passage in which love is discussed comes in a discussion of the relationship between the act conceptualization, broadly construed, and conceptualized particulars.[154] Hegel treats this relation under the heading of "The Universal Concept." Echoing Kant's spontaneity thesis, Hegel begins his discussion by claiming that the universal concept is "the absolutely infinite, unconditioned and free" (*SL*, 530). Crucially, however, Hegel construes the absolute freedom as intimately and inextricably bound up with its relation to what is other than it. As Hegel explains, "the concept is

[154] Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Realm of Shadows,* 255.

absolute self-identity by being…the infinite unity of negativity with itself…this pure self-reference of the concept, which is such by positing itself through the negativity, is the universality of the concept" (*SL,* 530). Hegel's claim, therefore, is that the universal concept maintains its own self-identity in and through the otherness of conceptualized particulars (i.e., negativity), in and through its being other than itself qua abstract universality. And yet, as Hegel writes, the otherness, or negativity, of a conceptualized particular does not act as "a restriction for the universal" (*SL,* 530). It is not something external to the universal concept. Rather, the universal concept "maintains itself in it…remains in it what it is…. unhindered and equal to itself in its manifoldness and diversity (*SL,* 530). It is the context of his efforts to explicate of the peculiar relation between the universal concept and conceptualized particulars that Hegel introduces love into the discussion.

The relevant passage reads as follows:

> The universal [concept] is…*free* power [*freie Macht*]; it is itself while reaching out to its other and embracing it, but without *doing violence* [*Gewalt*] to it; on the contrary, it is at rest in its other, as *in its own.* Just as it has been called free power, it could also be called *free love* and *boundless blessedness,* for it relates to *that which is distinct from it* as *to itself;* in it, it has returned to itself (*SL,* 532).

While this is one of the only substantive references to love across the *Logic,* its connection to the early writings on religion and its broader significance for understanding the logic of the concept should not be underestimated.[155] But before directly unpacking the connection between love and conceptual cognition in this passage, it is important that we first establish that the conception of love referenced above can be instructively read as an allusion to the account of love developed in

[155] The other interesting mention of love – which indirectly corroborates the claims that are to follow in this chapter – comes in Hegel's discussion of chemism. There he suggests that "the chemical object" contain "within its nature" an implicit "*reference to other"* and claims that this "[chemical] relation…found in the form of elemental nature…also constitutes the *formal* basis for the spiritual relations of love" (*SL*, 645-646).

the early writings on religion. Several pieces of evidence – both direct and indirect – warrant us making this connection.

First, although "The Doctrine of the Concept" was not published until 1816, Hegel had offered virtually no other sustained account of love since the early writings on religion. He did not begin espousing his mature account of love until the first cycle of the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* in 1821. And love does not nominally come up for discussion in his 1802 *Faith and Knowledge* – although, as we will see, its presence can be acutely discerned in Hegel's discussion of the speculative Good Friday in the conclusion of that work (*FK,* 190-191). To be sure, this is not to suggest that love did not play an important role in Hegel's early thinking during this time – on the contrary. As we have seen, the early account of love plays a decisive structural role in Hegel's account of the movement of scientific cognition in the 1807 *Phenomenology* and in his 1805-1806 articulation of conceptual cognition in the 1805-1806 Jena Lectures. Viewed in light of this brief genealogy, Hegel's invocation of love to explicate the doctrine of the concept in the *Logic* can reasonably be interpreted as an allusion to the conception of love developed in the early writings on religion.

Turning now to the content of the passage itself, we find this contention corroborated by several striking conceptual resonances with the early writings on religion. Let us begin, somewhat indirectly, by noting how Hegel's reference to "violence" [*Gewalt*] in the passage cited above bears an uncanny resemblance to his account of positivity in the early writings on religion. Across the *Logic,* Hegel identifies violence as a form of "external" power typically associated with the idea of "mechanism," or what Hegel describes as "the externality of

causality" (*SL*, 503; also see, 630, 639).[156] "Violence is the appearance of power, or power as external" (*SL*, 501; also see 639, 663, 685). For Hegel, the external causal power of mechanism appears as violence because it undermines another object's capacity to determine itself, to be self-determined. With the external power of mechanism, in other words, the object is passive and simply acted upon and so is determined from without by whatever external power happens to affect it.[157] As Hegel writes, the object is determined through the "impact…pressure and thrust [of the mechanism]…through influence from outside" (*SL*, 148, also see 641). And to the extent that the object is determined in this external manner, "it suffers *violence*" (*SL*, 501). Mechanism therefore relates to the object instrumentally, as a mere means for its own ends. "That the [mechanism's] purpose immediately refers to an object and makes it into a means, as also that through this means it determines another object, may be regarded as violence inasmuch as purpose appears of an entirely different nature than the object" (*SL*, 663). Accordingly, the "power" of the concept can be understood to turn "violent" when the concept forcefully imposes itself on its object from without, when it "acts on an other which it presupposes" (*SL*, 501).[158]

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[156] That Hegel defines "mechanism" broadly as the "externality of causality" indicates that its usage exceeds the domains and subject matters of the physical sciences, applying to matters of the spirit as well. As he writes, "Since mechanism is a logical category, one correctly speaks of it even in the sphere of the mind. There is mechanical memory; there are mechanical arrangements in the State, just as much as, where various sensible objects form an aggregate, there are mechanical combinations of them." Johann Eduard Erdmann, *Outlines of Logic and Metaphysics*, trans. B. C. Burt (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1896), §192, note 2. Also see Di Giovanni's Introduction to the *Science of Logic*, li.

[157] See Karen Ng, *Hegel's Concept of Life: Self-Consciousness, Freedom, Logic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 156-157.

[158] Cf. "Power becomes violence when power, an objective universality, is identical with the nature of the object, yet its determinateness or negativity is not the object's own immanent negative reflection according to which the object is a singular (*SL*, 639).

In important ways, Hegel's account of the violence of mechanism in the *Logic* can be seen as rendering explicit the underlying social logic that Hegel articulated in terms of positivity in the early writings on religion, indicating an often overlooked yet vital connection between logic, religion, and sociality that spans Hegel's corpus. As we saw in chapter two, positivity in the early writings consists in what Hegel sees as slavish and deadened obedience to the "ought" of religious and moral beliefs and practices, i.e., mechanistic acquiescence to forms of normative belief and practice that are ratified through a source *external* to one's own self-determination. There, recall, Hegel writes, "what Jesus attacked above everything else was the dead mechanism of…religious life…of lifeless, spiritless, and mechanical worship" (*PCR,* 179-180).[159] What in the early writings Hegel described in terms of positivity can thus be seen to embody the logic of mechanism outlined in the *Logic,* for just as mechanism is said to produce "only an *ought*" (*SL,* 641), similarly does positivity stifles the freedom of individuals – their self-determination – by indifferently imposing certain external ends, imperatives, and practices on them. As Hegel writes, positivity induces "submission to the fetters of the stronger…[to] an infinite power which one sets over against oneself and could never conquer" (*SCR,* 282).

Further underscoring the connection between Hegel's early account of positivity and the account of violence in the *Logic* is Hegel's somewhat surprising use of the term "fate" [*Schicksal*] in both works. In the *Logic,* he describes fate as a form of mechanistic relation between concepts and objects in which the latter dominates the former. As he writes, "power…as violence against the object is what is called fate – a concept that falls within mechanism" (*SL,*

[159] These references come specifically in Hegel's discussion of Judaism, of which he is particularly harsh in the early writings. Despite the antisemitic undertones of some of Hegel's critiques, he also leverages the same criticism against predominant forms of Christian religion. Hegel's point here is not against Judaism or Christianity or against any other particular religion but rather against mechanical forms of human life and sociality.

639). Governed by the logic of mechanism, fate constitutes violence against the object precisely because it undermines the self-determination of the object, subjecting it to its own externally imposed ends. The object is thus not in control of its own fate, we might say. It is not self-determined. Rather its fate is determined for it according to the logic of whatever mechanism happens to be imposed on it. Across the early writings essays, and especially in "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," we find Hegel repeatedly using the term fate, and while he does not always deploy the term univocally, he often uses it to articulate how the logic of mechanism plays out within the context of individuals in a positivistic society. "[A]dopting an alien nature…. submitting to the fetter of the stronger…is called 'fate'" (*SCR,* 182). "[F]ate is…lack of will" (*SCR,* 233). "[F]ate…remains a loss of freedom, a restriction of life, passivity under domination of an alien might" (*SCR,* 284). In the early writings just as in the *Logic* fate thus names an unfree manner of being-in-the-world, both as an individual and as a society. And read together, the categories of the *Logic* and the social analysis of the early writings on religion are seen to mutually illuminate each other, with the thought-determinations of the *Logic* clarifying the conceptual dynamics of the positivistic form of sociality at issue in the early writings even as this positivistic form of sociality concretizes the force and relevance of the logical determinations underlying it.

But "the concept," properly conceived, is not guilty of such violence because it does not exert the external causal power associated with the logic of mechanism. Rather, the concept exercises a form of "free power" [*freie Macht*] that could equally be called "free love." That Hegel distinguishes between two forms of power – the freedom-robbing power of mechanism and the free power of the concept – is a point worth dwelling on, not only for the purpose of clarifying Hegel's doctrine of the concept but also in light of contemporary debates in,

philosophy of religion and religious ethics regarding the nature of power and its ethical and political significance.[160] To begin to gain a sharper sense of the free power of the concept and the way that love factors into Hegel's construal of it, let us once more consider his claim that

> just as [the concept] has been called free power, it could also be called *free love* and *boundless blessedness,* for it is itself while reaching out to its other and embracing it but without *doing violence* to it…[for] it is at rest in its other, as *in its own*….[for] it relates to *that which is distinct from it* as *to itself*; in it, it has returned to itself (*SL*, 532).

With these remarks, several key features of the concept and its relation to the early account of love begin to come into view. We are told that the concept freely renders itself ecstatic, enters into the self-determined movements of an irreducible "other," and finds itself "at home" therein.[161] That Hegel likens the dynamic movement and power of the concept to love should not be taken lightly, even if the precise nature of this "likening" remains somewhat unclear. If we take into consideration the account of love developed in the early writings, it seems that, at a minimum, Hegel is suggesting that the dynamic conceptual structure of love articulated in the early writings serves as the inspiration and blueprint for how he comes to about the dynamic conceptual structure of conceptual cognition in the later works. This insight alone is an important one for coming to grips with Hegel's developed notion of thought [*Denken*] in the *Logic.* For it reveals that the concept is essentially non-totalizing, since it does not determine the appearance of its other in advance – it does not commit "violence" unto the other – but rather is shaped in accordance with what the object reveals about itself in the course of its encounter with it. The contours and content of the concept, in other words, are molded in accordance with what it is has learned from its patient, attentive, and ecstatic immersion in the self-determined movements of

[160] We will revisit the relevance of this distinction for these fields in chapter four.

[161] Cf. "[T]he absolute concept…alone grasps *otherness* as such, or its absolute opposite, as its own self" (*PhS* ¶ 611).

its object. The concept, therefore, does not dominate its objects. It does not exercise a one-sided power over them. It does not operate according to an a priori logic that attempts to mechanistically subordinate its others in accordance with its own purposes or preconceived notions about them. Rather, conceptual cognition is attentive and responsive to the autonomous life of the objects with which it engages. As Hegel explains,

> When we speak of things, we call their nature or essence their concept, and this concept is only for thought; but still less shall we say of the concepts of things that we dominate them, or that the thought determinations of which they are the complex are at our service. On the contrary, our thought must accord with them, and our choice or freedom ought not to want to fit them to its purposes… the activity of the…concept must be regarded…as the explication of what is already in the object" (*SL,* 16//701).[162]

Conceptual cognition so thoroughly immerses itself in the life of the object that what it comes to "grasp" is the object in its immanent, self-determined essence – the object in its freedom. The concept, therefore, does not dominate its objects. It is attentive and responsive to the autonomous life of the object with which it engages. This is the ecstasy of the concept, according to which the concept must accord with the self-determined essence of things – and not the other way around. Stated with a phenomenological edge, we could say that conceptual comprehension signifies the capacity to "experience" the world from the perspective of a self-determined other and to gain a grasp of the other on the basis of this ecstatic experience. As Hegel writes of this ecstatic experience in another work, "One puts oneself entirely in the thing [*Sache*], considers the object in itself, and takes it according to the determinations that it has."[163] Indeed, Hegel's invocation of

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[162] Jean Hyppolite captures something of this dynamic when he claims that "Hegelian Logic starts with an identification of thought and the thing thought. The thing, being, is not beyond thought, and thought is not a subjective reflection that would be alien to being." Jean Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence,* trans. Leonard Lawlor and Amit Sen (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 3.

[163] *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* in *Werke in zwanzig Bänden. Theorie Werkausgabe.* 18:303

the "boundlessness of love" is intended to highlight precisely this ecstasy of the concept. For in the experience of love, as we saw Hegel espouse in the early writings, each of the lovers is so fully immersed in the other that the they can be said to be "outside" of themselves and "in" the other, each sharing in the experienced weal and woe of the other.[164] In this way, the lovers gain a sense of being unbounded, or infinite, in their togetherness. Recall, as Hegel notes in the "Love" fragment, "a life…contained in love is one that dissolves its barriers and drives on till it disperses itself in the manifold…with a view to finding itself in the entirety of this manifold" (*LF*, 304; also see 307). It is along these lines that we should understand the dynamic movement of the concept, as the concept, like love, so thoroughly gives itself over to the life of an other, entering into the immanent content of that other's singular existence, that it comes to "relate to that which is distinct from it as to itself" (*SL*, 532). Indeed, Hegel's often misunderstood use of the term "speculative" to describe the movement of the concept further underscores this line of thinking, as the term speculative derives from the Latin *speculum*, or mirror, and Hegel's usage of the term in connection with the concept intentionally channels this etymology such that we can understand the concept to mirror the free movements of its "others" through its own immanently determined movement of expropriation into them. The knowledge gained by the concept's grasp of its other is therefore not a cool, distant appraisal but rather a deeply experiential ordeal – the result of engaging the object empathetically, up close, and personal, further underscoring the genetic significance of the experience of love to grasping Hegel's understanding of conceptual comprehension. Indeed, we could say that the greater love the concept has for its object the more

Cf. Our discussion in chapter two of Hegel's remarks regarding scientific cognition in the preface to the *Phenomenology*.

[164] Cf. Hegel's claim that "[t]o love…is to feel oneself in the "all" of life, with no restrictions, in the infinite" (*SCF*, 247).

of the object it grasps.[165] To be sure, we should not interpret the "love" the concept has for its object in terms of an overly romanticized conception of love, characterized by a frictionless self-same unity. Instead, we must conceive of the love binding concept and object to be characterized by a state of ongoing negotiation – of conflict and resolution – driven by the concept's efforts at developing a better grasp of the self-determined life of the object. To this extent, Hegel can be said to uphold a level of givenness that serves as restraint around which thought increasingly tries to come to grips.

With these considerations in mind, it should therefore come as little surprise that Hegel describes his discourse in the *Logic* as "immanently plastic." "The presentation of no subject matter can be in and for itself as strictly and immanently plastic as is that of thought in its necessary development" (*SL*, 19). For thought – particularly in its determination as concept – is capable of molding the contours of its determinations in accordance with the spontaneous movements and manifestations of its "other." It is this capacity that is the essence of thought's plasticity, a capacity which "requires a plasticity of sense also in hearing and understanding" (*SL*, 20). Plasticity thus designates the capacity of the concept to attend to the object – to the matter at hand – with hermeneutical sensitivity and attentiveness at the level of sensibility (e.g., sight, hearing, et al.) and intellect, indicating the simultaneously concrete and ideational nature of conceptual cognition. And by attending to its others in this way, Hegel claims, "the immanent determinations of the concept…can be seen…to have the same content as the true nature of its others" (*SL*, 25). Accordingly, the plasticity of the concept designates the concept's fundamental

[165] So conceived, Hegel's thinking lends surprising specificity to Novalis's rather enigmatic claim in the "Teplitz Fragments" that "The *more the object* – the greater the love for it – an absolute object is met with absolute love See *Novalis*: *Philosophical Writings,* trans. Margaret Mahony Stoljar (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 102.

openness and receptivity to its other, its capacity for *Bildung* through listening to an "other" speak, as it were, with its distinctive authorial voice and, in turn, learning about the other from this experience.[166] Such plasticity points to the processual nature of conceptual cognition, as the initial cognition of the concept is not a complete cognition. It is followed by coming to know its other again and again, each time more intimately than before. In this sense, conceptual cognition is essentially re-cognition [*Anerkennung*]. This last point should give us pause, especially in light of the long-running debate over the relation between spontaneity and receptivity in Hegel and the other German idealists.[167] The love theme provides a conceptual and phenomenological platform for understanding how it is that conceptual cognition can be simultaneously spontaneous and receptive, free and dependent on an other. For love's freedom involves letting oneself by determined by the extant reality of the beloved and thus requires a strong degree of receptivity. That love's freedom is a freedom gained through receptivity to the other and that love is central to the way that Hegel thinks about conceptual cognition should thus prompt us to thoroughly reconsider what Hegel means when he describes the concept as the absolutely infinite, unconditioned, and free. At a minimum, it forces us to realize that, for Hegel, there is no autonomy – no spontaneity – without receptivity and that there is nothing to receive what is given without autonomy. In other words, it forces us to realize that autonomy and receptivity

[166] In this regard, my interpretation builds on Catherine Malabou's rendering of plasticity in Hegel's thinking as a capacity to receive, produce, and destroy form. See Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality, and Dialectic*, 9.

[167] Indeed, this debate begin immediately following Kant's publication of the Critique of Pure Reason and spurred the development of the later German idealists. A lively debate on the relation between spontaneity and receptivity in German idealism was reinitiated in the work Wilfred Sellars and, more recently, in the work of John McDowell, Robert Brandom, Robert Pippin, and Stephen Houlgate.

exist in an irreducible state of symbiotic negotiation, with each making a vital contribution that can nevertheless not be isolated from each other.

Hegel further unpacks the plastic *Bildung* of the concept and the relation between the autonomy and receptivity it entails in the final chapter of the *Logic* – "The absolute idea" – where the "unity" of the "the concept" and "the object" is achieved.[168] The following remark is especially instructive:

> The concept *maintains* itself in its otherness…at each stage of further determination, the universal [concept] elevates the whole mass of its preceding content, not only not losing anything through its dialectical advance, or leaving it behind, but, on the contrary, carrying with itself all that it has gained, inwardly enriched and compressed (*SL,* 750).

By ecstatically immersing itself in a self-determining "other," the concept itself undergoes modification and growth while still retaining its own self-identity. The stage of ecstatic immersion into a self-determining other is what Hegel calls the moment of expansion. "This *expansion* may be regarded as the moment of content" (*SL,* 750). This expansion of the concept, however, is accompanied by the "turning back of the concept into itself" (*SL,* 540, 548, 668), a turning back in which "what was antecedently found" (SL, 348) in the moment of ecstatic expansion becomes an integral and irreducible aspect of the concept's re-fashioned self-identity. In other words, as a result of "turning back," the concept is inwardly reworked and expanded in accordance with what was learned about the free life of the other it found itself immersed in. As Hegel writes, "[e]ach new stage of [the concept's] *exteriorization…*[is] also a withdrawing into itself… [T]he greater the *extension,* just as dense is the *intensity*" (*SL,* 750). So conceived, the logic of the concept is thus, essentially, a logic of self-transformation, a logic of *Bildung* (see *EL,*

[168] "The [absolute] idea is truth in and for itself – the absolute unity of concept and objectivity" (*EL,* §213).

§131). For the "grasp" of the concept undergoes a series of alterations and transformations in the process of coming to an ever more sophisticated understanding of the self-presentation of its object. There is, in other words, a constraint on thinking that comes from outside of thinking – something given – but this constraint, this givenness, does not lie outside the purview of what is thinkable.[169] The concept is thus progressively revised and reworked in light of those aspects of the other that manifest themselves during the course of its ecstatic encounter with them, shedding aspects of itself that are found to longer accord with the self-determined life of its object in favor of one's that achieve a better grasp of this truth, indicating that Hegel's philosophical "system" is essentially open and receptive to its others.[170]

That the concept and practice of love illuminates and animates conceptual cognition in these ways also brings into view the distinctive way in which Hegel reconceives the form of relational unity that obtains between the concept and its object. Already in several of the early fragments we find Hegel leveraging love as a structural and phenomenological analogue for describing the free relational unity that obtains between subject and object in the absolute idea. In "Religion, founding a religion," for example, Hegel claims that "the beloved is not opposed to us… we see ourselves only in him…he is one with our essential being even though he [the beloved] is still not we" (*RFR,* 262). Thus, in the love relation, no longer does the "subject retain the form of the subject or the object the form of the object" (*RFR,* 261). For "in love…one is one at one with the object… subject and object…are thought as united," even as an irreducible element of autonomous difference remains (*RFR,* 261). In the same fragment, Hegel then applies

[169] See John McDowell, *On Mind and World,* 13.

[170] Cf. Graham Ward, "How Hegel became a philosopher: Logos and the economy of logic." *Critical Research on Religion* 1, no. 3 (2013): 270-292.

the unity of subject and object achieved in love to an intriguing early account of conceptual comprehension. "To observe a stream, how according to the laws of gravity it must fall to deeper regions and be limited and pressed in by the grounds and its banks, is to comprehend it...to take part in it as in one's equal" (*RFR*, 261).[171] Thus, in this early account, conceptual comprehension, like love, involves participating in the life of the object, identifying with it, so much so that one comes to experience the object from the object's point of view, from the perspective of the object in its very freedom, or self-determination, to the extent that such a feat is possible.[172]

Considered together, the preceding analysis indicates that Hegel positions love as a vehicle through which to overcome the opposition between subject and object and between self-conscious subjects without simply collapsing the distinction between them. It also indicates that the early account of love provides the genetic structural and phenomenological basis of the dynamic movement of the concept, that love provides a conceptual and phenomenological scaffolding for understanding what it means to think conceptually, that love establishes the position from which to think conceptually. For as was made clear in chapter two, Hegel conceives of love as a phenomenon par excellence in which the lover, by freely immersing

[171] This parallel between love and conceptual cognition receives another clear expression in another early fragment, titled "Religion is one of the most important matters of our lives. "The underlying principle of the empirical character is love, which has something analogous to reason in the sense that as love finds itself in the other or rather, forgetting itself, it get itself outside its own existence and as it were lives on in others, feels and is active therein – just so does reason, as a principle of universally valid laws, knows, recognizes itself in every rational being as a citizen with them in the intelligible world" (*GW* 1:101).

[172] In this regard, Hegel's thinking can be seen as a precursor of object-oriented ontology, which aims to describe the reality and agency of living and nonliving nonhuman entities. Although where Hegel's thinking differs decisively from object-oriented ontology is in his insistence that such entities cannot be thought of as existence wholly beyond the purview of human conceptuality.

himself in the life of the beloved, has his own self-identity continually expanded and reshaped.[173] However, it seems that Hegel is gesturing toward something more than the idea that love conceptually structures and phenomenologically illuminates the nature of conceptual cognition, namely that Hegel considers the practice of love as a propaedeutic to conceptual cognition, as training and preparing us to think conceptually. For love requires one to step outside of one's singular existence (ecstasis) and identify with the life of an other, so much so that the other comes to be constitutive of one's own self-identity. And, as Hegel emphasizes, these are precisely the abilities that one needs to cultivate if one is to engage in conceptual cognition – one must be willing and able to let go of one's firmly held assumptions, entrenched positions, and established sense of self in and through engagements the other. And while what it means to love and what it means to think conceptually are not one and the same in Hegel's mind, he does seem to think that the practice of love equips one with these necessary skills and preparedness to think conceptually. To be sure, while we already considered some aspects of this claim in our earlier discussion of the presuppositionless beginning of the *Logic*, at this juncture, it must be stated largely in anticipation. For it is in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* and the *Philosophy of Right* where we find Hegel most fully develop and defend this claim. These works and the relation between love and conceptual cognition they suggest will occupy our attention in chapters four and five, respectively. But at present, the preceding claims – that love not only provides a conceptual and phenomenological scaffolding for understanding what Hegel means by conceptual cognition but also trains and prepares one to think conceptually – serves to

[173] In the "Love," fragment, Hegel suggestively appeals to Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet as a well-known and concrete instance of the love-dynamic: "So too the giver does not make himself poorer; by giving to the other he has at the same time and to the same extent enhanced his own treasure - compare Juliet in Romeo and Juliet: 'My bounty is as boundless as the sea, My love as deep; the more I give to thee, The more I have'" (*LF*, 307).

significantly reorient how we understand Hegel's doctrine of the concept and, by extension, his system more generally. At a minimum, by foregrounding the significance of love to conceptual cognition we see that love is not something simply left behind by philosophical thought but serves as its condition of possibility. And moreover, by foregrounding the significance of love to philosophical thinking, we are also able to see that the latter is not so easily classified under the rubrics of many classical metaphysical and/or ontotheological conceptions of reason that postmoderns often rightly deride for being governed by problematic notions of totalization.

G. Kant and Hegel Revisited

Based on the conceptual, phenomenological, and deeply practical significance of love for Hegel's account of conceptual cognition, we are led to see that when Hegel claims that "the…concept is absolutely infinite, unconditioned, and free" (*SL,* 530), this freedom is to be understood in deeply relational rather than one-sided terms – not freedom *from* an other or freedom to do with an other what one pleases but rather freedom *with* an other, freedom in and through an other, the freedom of love. Foregrounding the significance of love for understanding the absolute freedom of the concept helps us to now better appreciate Hegel's distinctive appropriation of Kant's spontaneity thesis. We saw that Hegel follows Kant in granting the thinking subject a level of self-identity in its conceptual grasp of its object and that Hegel considers this subject-object identity to be the speculative core of Kantian philosophy. However, Hegel thought that Kant failed to capitalize on this revolutionary insight, leaving us instead with a subjective idealism that affords us knowledge of appearances only, appearances which are regarded as entirely passive with regard to their determinate constitution. For Kantian spontaneity results in a one-sided relation between the thinking subject and objects, as the

objectivity of the object is exclusively determined by the subjectivized categories of the transcendental subject. Hegel introduces love to correct what he sees as this deficiency in Kant's spontaneity thesis, and in doing so radically transforms Kant's thought. For, as we have seen, in love the lover does not one-sidedly dominate the beloved; instead, the self-determination of the beloved is seen as an essential component of the love relation. There is no love without mutual freedom. In fact, the self-identities of the lovers are reworked and expanded in light of the freedom of the beloveds. Applied to the question of conceptual thinking, this is to say that the object is not exclusively and passively constituted by the activity of the concept but rather that the identity of concept is itself forged in light of the self-determined manifestations of the object. "Our thought," as Hegel writes, "must accord with them [the objects], and our choice or freedom ought not to want to fit them to its purposes" (*SL,* 16)

Importantly, however, Hegel clarifies that the self-determined appearance of the object consists in the appearance of *the concept* of the thing, and here we begin to broach Hegel's reply to Kant's unknowable thing-in-itself. Hegel agrees with Kant that experience requires the cooperation of two faculties – logical categories and sensible intuitions.

> This bonding of the categories with the stuff of perception is what Kant understands by 'experience.' And that is quite correct. There is perceiving in experience…. but this stuff is not apprehended merely according to its…immediacy. To the contrary, it is posited in the very bonding with those categories (*LHP,* 177).

But Hegel takes issue with the Kant for thoroughly subjectivizing the result of this bonding in the form of mere appearance. As Hegel explains, Kant "attached to appearance [*Erscheinung*] a subjective meaning only, and put the abstract essence immovable and outside it as the thing-in-itself beyond the reach of our cognition" (*EL*, §131). Kant's categories (and the forms of intuition) are thus what turn the raw manifold into something objective, into the objects of experience, but since Kant claims that these categories come "from us" – from the subjective

side, as it were – the sphere of objectivity they engender are removed from the really real things-in-themselves, leaving us with a subjectivized objectivity cut off from the self-determined life of objects. In Hegel's estimation, however, the chasm opened up by Kant's distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves is itself an unnecessary misconception produced by thought – a mere mental construct. "The *thing-in-itself* is itself only the product of thought, and of merely abstractive thought at that" (*SL,* 41).[174] For Hegel, Kantian thought thus produces something from out itself – a purportedly truth-bearing realm of the real – to which it is nonetheless denied access, all while attributing to this inscrutable ground definite properties and functions (such as the causal ground of appearances).[175]

Hegel's way around Kant's subjectivization of experience is to insist that when we enter the realm of critical philosophy proper, we cannot simply assume – as he thinks Kant does – that the categories "must…be merely something of ours, and not also determinations of objects themselves**"** (*EL,* §42).[176] For Hegel, the fact that we can have experience of objects only if they conform to certain categorical conditions does not necessarily imply that those objects do not in themselves conform to those conditions.[177] In other words, Hegel calls into question the Kantian assumption that form and content, categories and intuitions, are originally heterogenous. And if

[174] Cf. "What there is in these things in-themselves is therefore very well known; they are as such nothing but empty abstractions void of truth" (*SL,* 94).

[175] Kant insists that we cannot make sense of the idea of an 'appearance' without 'something' that appears (*CPR,* B xxvii). In this respect, the thing-in-itself is thought of as the cause of appearance. Also see *CPR,* B 306, B344.

[176] See Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Realm of Shadows: Logic as Metaphysics in Hegel's Science of Logic*, 55-60.

[177] See Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 338.

we do not assume this gap from the outset of the investigation, Hegel thinks that we cannot but conclude that the categories of thought can in fact disclose the nature of the object as it is in itself. The problem Kant creates is thus avoided by dismissing the uncritical assumptions on which it rests.[178]

No longer beginning with the assumed gap between concept and object, or form and content, Hegel is thus able to maintain that the concept of thing as it is in itself "must appear or shine forth" in experience (*EL,* §131). "[I]n this Logic, something better is understood by the *in-itself* than an abstraction, namely, what something is in its concept; but this concept is itself concrete…[and] inherently cognizable" (*SL,* 94). In the *Encyclopaedia, Hegel* gives us a series of examples to illustrate what he has in mind when he speaks of the object's appearance "in-itself" through its concept.

> [F]or example, the human being in-itself is the child whose task consists, not in obdurately persisting in this abstract and undeveloped in-itselfness, but in becoming also *for itself* what it is *in itself* – namely, a free and rational being. Similarly, the state in-itself is the still undeveloped, patriarchal state in which the various political functions residing in the concept of the state have not yet attained their constitutional form in keeping with the concept of them. In the same sense, the seed can also be regarded as the plant-in-itself. What should be taken from these examples is that one finds oneself very much in error if one thinks that the in-itself of things or the thing-in-itself in general is something inaccessible for our cognizing. All things are initially in themselves but they are not thereby left at that, and just as the seed which is the plant in itself is only this, to develop itself, so too the thing in general advances beyond its mere in-itself as the abstract reflection-in-itself, proving itself to be reflection-in-another as well, and thus it has properties (*EL,* §124).

Hegel's position appears to be that there are immanent concepts, somewhat akin to Aristotelian *eidos*, that structure, orient, drive, and render determinate a particular individual person or thing, even as these things and persons render the concept alive and concrete. These immanent

[178] See Stephen Houlgate, "Hegel's Critique of Kant" in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 89, no.1 (2015): 21-44.

concepts explain what people or things are and why they do what they do.[179] The concept of an object is what Hegel calls its "the informing and creative principle" (*SL,* 532), immanently determining it from within.[180] The object thus becomes what it is "in itself" by developing freely in accordance with its own concept. To be sure, that the object's immanent development and appearance is "constrained" by its concept need not undermine its autonomy. In fact, just the opposite – the concept provides the scaffolding for the object's freedom. For while Hegel insists that the concept is the creative and informing principle of the particular object in question, the latter nevertheless "exhausts" the sphere of the former. In other words, the particular object remains determined by the concept even while exceeding, expanding, and modifying it. As Hegel writes, "The particular contains the universality that constitutes its substance… [And yet], the particular… not only *contain[s]* the universal but exhibits it also *through its determinateness;* accordingly, the universal constitutes a *sphere* that the particular must exhaust" (*SL*, 534). *Through its determinateness* – these are Hegel's italics – the particular thus simultaneously embodies and exhausts the bounds of the universal concept, giving rise to what Hegel calls the "universally unique" (*SL,* 16).[181] Just as in Hegel early discussion of the universality of the moral law and particular inclinations of individuals who fall under its purview, here, too, the concept

[179] Robert Pippin adopts this line of thought in *Hegel's Realm of Shadows*, claiming Hegel learns from Aristotle that the answer to the question of what an object is "in itself" consists in the universal concept it actualizes, 54-60, 199-202. Alfredo Ferrarin similarly insists on this quasi-Aristotelian dimension of Hegel's thinking about immanent concepts. See Alfredo Ferrarin, *Thinking and the I: Hegel and the Critique of Kant* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2019), 53-88.

[180] Cf. "The nature, the specific essence, that which is truly permanent and substantial in the manifold and accidentality of appearance and fleeting externalization, is the concept of the thing, the universal which is present in it" (*SL*, 16).

[181] Cf. "We cannot speak of the universal [concept] apart from the determinateness which, to be more precisely, is particularity and singularity…" (*SL*, 532).

does not one-sidedly determine the nature of the particular. There is, instead, a relation of mutual dependence – the particular content depends on the conceptual form just as the conceptual form depends on the particular content it finds itself instantiated in. Conceptual form does not determine experience simply of its own accord but rather adjusts to forces that are not entirely of its own design.[182]

And yet, crucially, Hegel insists that the object becomes manifest "for us" as the thing that it is "in itself" – in its unique instantiation of its concept – insofar as "we" have developed the conceptual capacity to "grasp" that which is so given. As Hegel claims, "for us, the essence can only be the concepts that we have of things" (*SL,* 16).[183] There is, in other words, no unmediated experience of the object; the intelligibility of the object is always a conceptually mediated intelligibility. For it is only through conceptualization that "we" can come to an adequate understanding of what the object is.[184] But insofar as this mediated intelligibility is the product of the concept's ecstatic immersion into the life of a self-determining object, the concept through which the object is known can be understood as identical with what the object shows

[182] To take an example of Hegel's, while "there is present…in each individual animal a specific *principle* that makes it an animal" (*SL,* 16-17), "the *animal as such* cannot be shown, but only a determinate animal. *The* animal does not exist, but is the universal nature of individual animals, and each existing animal is a far more concrete, determinate, particularized thing" (*EL,* §24 A).

[183] Cf. "To *thought* [*Denken*], the object…move[s] in *concepts,* which is to say the object moves itself...What is *represented*…*what is an existent,* has as such the form of being something other than consciousness…However, in that this content is at the same time a conceptually grasped [*begriffener*] content, consciousness remains *immediately* self-aware of its unity with this determinate and distinguished existent…[For] the concept is to me immediately *my* concept" (*PhS* ¶197).

[184] It is in this sense that we can begin to understand Hegel's claim that "*logic* coincides with *metaphysics*" (*EL* §24).

itself to be.[185] The concept is therefore united with the object because it reflects the same immanent conceptual determinations that are inherent in the object.

For Hegel, the concept's ecstatic movement into its object and its transformed return to itself is definitive of the concept's freedom, a peculiar brand of freedom is difficult to fathom if considered apart from the dynamic freedom of love. And it is with this love-bound conception of freedom that we see just how far from and yet how close to Kant's notion of the spontaneity of thinking Hegel remains. Hegel has departed from Kant's spontaneity thesis by investing the givenness of objects with their own self-sufficient and agentic standing – now, thinking must accord with the self-determination objects, with forces that are not of its own creation, and not exclusively the other way around. And yet, despite this departure from Kant, at the same time, Hegel remains surprisingly close to him. For even though the object of experience is not one-sidedly determined by the thinking subject – a consequence which Hegel thinks results from the Kantian apparatus – the thinking subject nevertheless does not encounter the self-determining object as something external, or other, to itself. That is to say, the thinking subject remains entirely with itself – free – in its object, because the concepts it has developed to think the object are the products of its own self-determined movements while at the same time the immanent self-determinations of the object in itself. There is thus a differentiated unity – a speculative (*speculare*) unity – that obtains between the order of thinking and the order of what is.

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[185] Importantly, this "unconditioned" relation between the concept and the self-determining object holds whether the object in question is a human being or a non-human object, such as an object of nature. For, on Hegel's account, both human and nonhuman objects possess an inherent freedom capable of being recognized by the concepts that grasp them. In his *Philosophy of Nature*, for example, Hegel develops an intriguing yet overlooked conception of freedom that inheres in nonhuman natural objects. Even "the stones," Hegel there tells us, "cry out and lift themselves up to [free] spirit" (*PN*, § 206). Cf. "The living products of nature…[are] inwardly determined and determining" (*EL*, § 57). Also see the comments on Hegel's "Religion" fragment on page 37 of this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR
REPRESENTING REASON:
LOVE IN THE LECTURES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

A. Reason and Religion

In chapter three, we saw, first, just how extensively the relations of love are built into the core of the *Logic*. In particular, we saw that love not only provides a conceptual and phenomenological platform for understanding what Hegel means by conceptual cognition but also serves as a propaedeutic for thinking conceptually, as preparing one to think conceptually. In the years following the publications of the *Phenomenology* and the *Logic,* Hegel delivered a series of lectures on the philosophy of religion in Berlin.[186] Across these lectures, Hegel continues to develop the intimate connection between love and conceptual cognition by expanding upon the early account of love on the basis of his treatment of some of the representations [*Vorstellungen*] of God as love found in Christian religion and explicitly linking this expanded account of love to the account of conceptual cognition developed earlier in the *Phenomenology* and the *Logic.* Accordingly, attending to the *Lectures*' account of love contained within these representations will shed light on further aspects of conceptual cognition and its intimate connection to Christian religion that are not readily apparent when viewed strictly through the lens of the early account of love. Specifically, the *Lectures* uniquely call attention to the suffering of love, and calling attention to this dimension of love will add further texture to

[186] Hegel delivered versions of these lectures in 1821, 1824, 1827, and 1831. Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* were not published during his lifetime. What has been handed down to us are a combination of drafts and notes from Hegel's lecture manuscript along with relatively complete student transcriptions. For more on the publication history of the *Lectures* see Peter Hodgson's "Editorial Introduction" to the work

Hegel's mature account of conceptual cognition and the distinctive modes of subjectivity and sociality that it entails.

In keeping with his early aspirations for a conception of religion rooted in reason, Hegel begins the *Lectures* by claiming that the goal of his philosophy of religion is to ascertain "everything that could be known of God by reason alone" (*LPR* 1:83), or, what is the same thing, "the conceptualized nature of God grasped in thought [*Denken*]" (*LPR* 1:118). Hegel's claims about conceptually grasping the nature of God through reason should be heard primarily in light of our analyses of conceptual cognition in the *Phenomenology* and in the *Logic*, in which it was seen that conceptual cognition consists in an ecstatic immersion into and return from out of the inner life of a self-determining "other." As Hegel emphasizes in the *Lectures*,

> Knowledge of God is inwardly a movement; more precisely, it is an *elevation to God*…an elevation, a passing over from one content to another…I relate myself to the absolute, infinite object and pass over to it…while at the same time I am finite self-consciousness, indeed to the full extent of my empirical condition (*LPR* 1:414/*LPR* 1:212).

The great though not immodest task Hegel thus sets before his audience is to gain conceptual knowledge of God by ecstatically immersing oneself in the self-determined movements of the divine life, so much so one comes to participate in these movements, to take them upon oneself, as if they were one's own. "We may and must…contemplate a life in and with the eternal…we sense this life and feel it [as our own]" (*LPR* 1:84).

This task, then, leads us to ask the following questions: how does Hegel understand the self-determined movements of the divine life, of the infinite and unconditioned object? And what might it mean for one to immerse oneself in them? These are questions that cannot be answered succinctly at the outset but can only be unpacked gradually across the course of our investigation in this chapter. Suffice it for now to note, proleptically, Hegel's insistence that to immerse oneself in the self-determined movements of the divine life is to immerse oneself in the infinite

movement of reason. As Hegel states, "in philosophy of religion it is God, or reason in principle, that is the object. God is essentially rational, is rationality that is alive…When we philosophize about religion, we are in fact investigating reason, intelligence, and cognition…the cognition of reason is exactly the object [of philosophy of religion], is what it is all about" (*LPR* 1:139).[187] In other words, in immersing oneself in the "absolutely self-sufficient, unconditioned, independent, free" life of God (LPR 1:84) one is, at the same time, immersing oneself in what he described in the *Logic* "the absolutely infinite, unconditioned, and free" life of the reason (*SL,* 530). Hence Hegel's claim in the *Lectures* that gaining knowledge of God is equivalent to gaining "the consciousness of the concept [der *Begriff*]" (*LPR* 1:250), to taking on the ecstatic movements of the concept as one's own.

Hegel's claim that thinking about God amounts to thinking about reason may strike as arbitrary and infelicitous – arbitrary in its decision to align God with reason and not some other category and infelicitous in its insistence on circumscribing the radical alterity of God within the purview of reason. We can avoid the charge or arbitrariness by recalling the unconditioned, self-moving activity of rational cognition detailed in the *Logic.* The unconditioned nature of rational cognition serves as the only viable conceptual vehicle capable of honoring what Hegel considers to be God's irreducibly infinite, or unconditioned, nature. But whereas religion *represents* God's infinitude, the *Logic* explicates God's infinitude with a greater degree a level of conceptual rigor. And while much remained unsaid in chapter three regarding the full the development of thinking in the *Logic,* it is important to recognize that Hegel's claims in the *Lectures* are self-conscious

[187] Cf. "In philosophy of religion we have as our object God himself, *absolute reason…*Therefore when we occupy ourselves with this object it is immediately the case that we are dealing with and investigating rational cognition" (*LPR* 1:170).

allusions to other aspects of his philosophical system. And with regard to the potential infelicity of Hegel's rational circumscription of radical divine alterity, many thinkers – both classical and contemporary – insist that God is simply and wholly beyond the purview of reason, since God is infinite whereas reason is finite. Reason, it is therefore said, cannot claim to grasp the uncontainable plentitude of God without totalizing God, without performing a kind of conceptual violence unto God. Within the Western philosophical tradition, Immanuel Kant, Soren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion, and John Caputo all subscribe to this line of thought in one form or another. And this line of thinking has long been prominent in the Western theological tradition as well, with Psuedo-Dionysius the Areopagite serving as perhaps its most influential and well-known proponent.[188] For this tradition of thought, then, Hegel's claims would appear as exceedingly radical. However, if we take a wider view of the Christian tradition, Hegel's claims may appear as strikingly orthodox. Consider the use of the *Logos* in the prologue to John's Gospel – "In the beginning was the *Logos,* and the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God" (John 1); "the *Logos* was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). We need not delve into the theological complexities of these statements to recognize that John's words about the divine *Logos* would have resonated with the ancient Greek meaning of the term. Recall that *Logos* functions as one the arche-concepts of ancient Greek philosophy, both pre- and post-Socratic. For the ancient Greeks, *Logos* was used to variously indicate a cosmic divine reason, humans' inner faculty of reason, and their capacity to outwardly express reason via language. Heraclitus, Parmenides, Zeno, Socrates,

[188] Additionally, there are those like St. Thomas Aquinas and Paul Tillich who would take a more moderate position regarding the relation between God and reason, claiming that while reason can afford us *some* knowledge of God, revelation affords us a fuller knowledge of God that is simply beyond the purview of reason.

Plato, and Aristotle all employed the term in this capacity. When Hegel aligns God with reason in the *Lectures,* it is precisely this Greco-Christian conjunction he is channeling.[189] When we consider the lineage of Hegel's alignment of God with reason, we are thus able to see that Hegel is not offering a reductive account of God by somehow circumscribing God within the finite artificial bounds of reason, for reason is through and through premised on the infinitude of the divine Logos from the very outset of his thinking. Accordingly, the infinitude of reason is capable of grasping the divine object without doing violence to it, a point which will be further developed throughout this chapter.

Furthermore, that Hegel conceives of the principle object of investigation – God – as co-extensive with the self-determining movement of rational cognition indicates, in a preliminary way, that thinking about God sheds light on the activity of rational cognition itself. However, there is one crucial difference between thinking about God and thinking about rational cognition – at the level of religion, the object of investigation is given to consciousness in the mode of representation (about which more soon), but at the level of philosophy, the object of investigation is given to consciousness in mode of pure thought. Accordingly, the representations of God examined in the *Lectures* can be understood to provide a more vivid and concrete scaffolding for grasping the abstract movements of thought detailed in the *Logic.* Religious

[189] See, for instance, Hegel's references to the connection between God and *Logos* in the "Spirit" essay and the *Lectures, SCF,* 258 & *LPR* 3:288. Also see Hegel's claim in the *Logic* concerning Anaxagoras's claim that "Nous, thought, is the principle of the world" (*SL,* 29). Also see Karl Rosenkranz's discussion of the significance of the Logos to Hegel's thought. As a sample of Roszenkranz's position, consider the following: "Hegel still loved... in his first exposition of metaphysics, to present the creation of the universe as the utterance of the absolute Word, and the return of the universe into itself as the understanding of the Word, so that nature and history become the medium between the uttering and the understanding of the Word." Karl Rosenkranz, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegels Leben* (Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010), 163.

representations of God, in other words, can be understood as powerful vehicles in and through which reason, or the logic of the concept, finds concrete expression. As Hegel claims, "Religious consciousness is the material in which the concept carries itself out…the material it makes its own, and shapes in conformity with itself" (*LPR* 1:143). Religious representation affords us a more palpable grasp "of what the concept is" (*LPR* 1:143). Thinking through Hegel's treatment of the relevant religious representations will thus assist us in the task of thinking about thinking, in thinking about conceptual cognition.

Before further explicating the connection that Hegel sees between God, rational cognition, and religious representation, it is worth pausing to briefly situate these topics with the broader context of his philosophy of religion. To be sure, an adequate account of Hegel's philosophy of religion is far beyond the scope of this project but saying a few words about it will be instructive for what is to come. Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* have been handed down to us in three volumes – "The Concept of Religion," "Determinate Religion," and "The Consummate Religion." In highly simplified form, Hegel's philosophy of religion consists in an investigation into how well different determinate religions correspond to the concept of religion in general.[190] "True religion," as he concisely states in one of the *Lectures*, is religion that "corresponds to its concept" (*LPR* 2:93). Volume one of the *Lectures* provide a sketch of a general concept of religion, volume two examines various determinate religions – which comprises virtually all world religions sans Christian religion – in light of how well they correspond to the concept of religion explicated in volume one, and volume three positions

[190] Hegel begins the *Lectures* by reminding his audience of the necessity of the religious standpoint on the basis of the results of other philosophical disciplines – logic, philosophy of nature, and philosophy of spirit. For more on this point, see Walter Jaeschke, *Reason in Religion: The Foundations of Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, trans. J. Michael Stewart and Peter C. Hodgson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 218-265.

Christian religion as the consummate religion, the religion which most fully corresponds to the concept of religion in general. In volume one, Hegel arrives at a general concept of religion by abstracting from the totality of determinate religions and the various religious representations and practices they contain. On the basis of this derivation, Hegel insists that the subject's relation with "God" – a term whose meaning Hegel does not presuppose at the outset of the investigation – is essential to the concept of religion. "In its concept religion is the relation of the subject, of the subjective consciousness, to God" (*LPR* 1:178). As we have already considered, Hegel develops an argument that God – the Absolute, the Unconditioned – must be conceived of as nothing other than the self-moving activity of the concept discussed in chapter three. Accordingly, it is the self-moving activity of the concept – of rational cognition – that serves as the benchmark for judging the merits and limitations of various determinate religious representations of God and modes of relating to God they encourage. Hegel insisted that all religions participate in and contribute to the progressive development and actualization of the concept to some degree but that in Christianity – the speculative [speculare] religion – the self-moving activity of the concept is most fully manifest and brought into a kind of unity with finite spirit. It is not my attention to weigh the merits and demerits of Hegel's broader philosophy of religion in the present work. Rather, I limit my efforts to exploring and explicating this conjunction of Christian religion and the self-movement of concept will be one of the chief focuses of this chapter.

B. Representation and Rational Cognition

In order to adequately grasp how rational cognition is illuminated by religious representations of God, we must first consider in more detail Hegel's general account of

representation and its relation to reason. Hegel situates representation as an intermediary stage of cognition [*Erkenntnis*], between intuition [*Anschauung*] and thought [*Denken*]. These three categories form the loci of Hegel's account of cognition and correspond to the three spheres where absolute spirit is apprehended – art, religion, and philosophy, respectively. While a thorough analysis of Hegel's arguments for analyzing these particular elements of cognition is beyond the scope of this work, it is important that we highlight the guiding thread of Hegel's general theory of cognition.[191] Driving Hegel's progression from intuition, representation, and thought – and art, religion, and philosophy – is his effort to increasingly overcome a strict subject-object dichotomy in favor of a relational unity between subject and object, as was discussed in detail in chapter three. Accordingly, as Hegel moves from each loci of analysis, the subject-object dichotomy is increasingly transformed into a relational unity. Crucially, however, the content deemed valid at the more basic levels of cognition are preserved in translated form at the more developed levels, a point which will prove especially vital when we consider the transition from representation to thought.

For Hegel, the object of intuition is an immediately apprehended spatio-temporal extended object with definitive properties, for which "sensation," or "feeling," [*Empfindung*] provide the raw material. What sensation delivers to consciousness is a given content which is simply there,

[191] Hegel's most developed discussion of intuition, representation, and thought and their role in cognition comes in the Psychology of Subjective Spirit in Part III of *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Science,* §445-468. Willem A. DeVries offers what is to my knowledge the most comprehensive treatment of the role of intuition, representation, and thought in Hegel's theory of cognition. See Willem A. DeVries, *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity: An Introduction to Theoretical Spirit* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). For an account of the development and role of intuition, representation, and thought within the broader framework of Hegel's philosophy of religion see Walter Jaeschke, *Reason in Religion: The Foundations of Hegel's Philosophy of Religion,* 180-183.

standing over and against the subject, immediately and independently in time and space (*EL* §440-§448). Not yet capable of realizing its own power of determination, consciousness, as Hegel notes, relates "to a given content…to a determination that it has simply found" (*EL* §447). At the level of intuition, subject and object are thus conceived of as wholly separate. As Hegel writes, "*as immediate*, spirit does not yet recognize itself as this unity" (*EL* §440). Recognizing the brute otherness of what is given to it in intuition, spirit is thereby driven to overcome it, bringing us to the next level of cognition – representation.

Representation is an advance on intuition, in that it begins to synthesize and internalize the given – Hegel calls it an "internalized intuition" [*erinnerte Anschauung*] (*EL* §451) – in a more complex manner than is afforded by intuition. This act of internalization is an advance because it marks a stage where the subject begins to permeate the given, annul its sheer externality, and elevate it into the form of universality (as opposed to the sensuous particularity of intuition) (*LPR* 1:238-239).[192] Importantly, however, Hegel emphasizes that despite this internalization, in representation one still places a content before oneself as an object distinct from oneself, only now in the form of an image, symbol, metaphor, or mythic or historical narrative. Hence representations, like intuitions, still relate to the given as over and against [*jenseits*] the subject, as something essentially other to the subject. The etymology of the German verb *vorstellen* is especially telling here – *vor* meaning "before" and stellen meaning "to place," leaving us with the meaning "to place before" as in "in front of." As Hegel states in the *Lectures,* in representation "the content remains for me *something given* – what is called *positive…*immediately given…The content… has and retains the form of an externality over and against me" (*LPR* 1:249). In

[192] For a more detailed analysis of these three stages of cognition and their relevance to Hegel's philosophy of religion see Thomas A. Lewis, *Freedom and Tradition in Hegel: Reconsidering Anthropology, Ethics, and Religion* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 84-94.

representation, there thus appears a meaning given by a discrete object that stands before the subject. Unity is yet to be achieved.

Hegel insists that the meaning that stands before us in representation is initial, undeveloped, not yet thought through. And yet, despite its inchoate state, a representation is nevertheless expressive of a rational content distinct from yet intimately related to what is given in the representation – a point which will prove critical to our forthcoming analysis of the relation between love and reason. Hegel's remarks in the introduction to the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* is particularly helpful in framing the relation between representation and reason. Here Hegel claims that

> Chronologically speaking consciousness produces for itself representations of objects prior to generating concepts of them. What is more, only by passing *through* the process of representing and by turning *towards* it, does *thinking* spirit progress to knowing by way of thinking and to conceptual comprehending [*Begreifen*] (*EL* §1).

So, although "philosophy replaces representations…with concepts," these concepts have been forged in the crucible of representation (*EL* §3). They are the result of immersion in the representation placed before us. Chronologically speaking, representations are thus a *sine qua non* for conceptual cognition, for they are given to us prior to the pure movements of thought. They express the absolute content prior to thought. We do not simply begin with the pure movements of thought but can only advance to this stage thanks to what has been first afforded us by intuition and representation. And in this respect, representation serves as a vital pedagogical function by affording us a more concrete grasp of the conceptual determinations of thought than can be afforded by the pure movements of thought alone. "The Christian religion," as Hegel writes, "contains cognition within itself essentially and has stimulated cognition to develop in all its consistency as form…and at the same time to oppose itself to the form in which the Christian content exists as a given truth, only for representation" (*LPR* 1:107). This is why Hegel describes

the process of conceptual cognition as a *Nachdenken,* as a *thinking-after*. For our thought [*Denken*] of the object is forged in response to its prior re-presentation. Elements of the representation therefore endure in our conceptual comprehension of the represented content, albeit in a transformed sense, since the conceptual breakthrough afforded us by philosophy concerns precisely this re-presented content, a point corroborated by Hegel's general insistence that human cognition does not occur at the level of thought alone but rather consists in the complex and layered integration of thought, representation, and intuition. According to this bottom-up reading of the relation between representation and rational thinking, representations do not dissemble the truth of the matter at hand but rather are seen as the foundational material on which thought goes to work as it endeavors to render conceptually explicit the rational content contained therein. In other words, in the move to conceptualization, thought does not cleanly extricate itself from the representation; it remains wedded to it, is constantly referred back to it. Indeed, so much so that the representation should be seen as acting as a structural constrain of the concept itself, even as thought transforms the representation into a conceptual idiom. This is a contention developed at length by Cyril O'Regan, who argues for a relation of a continuity between *Vorstellung* and *Begriff,* claiming that "it would seem that the concept is inextricably tied to representation."[193] This means that when we consider Hegel's well-known and contentious claim regarding the *Aufhebung* of religious representations into philosophical thought, we must recognize that the philosophical thought does not dispense with the religious representations but rather incorporates them into own developed structure, even as it elevates them to the level of conceptual universality.

[193] Cyril O'Regan, *The Heterodox Hegel* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 358. See 330-363 for O'Regan's full account.

But this, of course, once more raises a critical problem that we already considered in chapter three: what are we to make of Hegel's claims concerning the autonomy of speculative thought in light of thought's inextricable connection to representation? That is, how can thought be autonomous and yet constrained by representation? At a basic level, this apparent tension can be resolved by noting that the representations contained within Christian religion can be regarded as the basis and an expression of the autonomy of thought, even as thought redescribes this genetic basis that it made it [thought] possible in conceptual language. What thought encounters in the representation is thus not something fundamentally alien to itself, since the representation already expresses the content validated by thought. Instead, thought encounters *itself*, albeit in the form of a narrativized representation. We can state this point with a bit more precision by noting that Hegel parses the representations contained within Christina religion in terms of "free love" and it is precisely this representation of "free love" that forms the genetic and structural basis of autonomous thought – a point which we will develop in the coming pages. For now, suffice it to note that because the freedom of love represented in Christian religion is a deeply relational form of freedom – freedom in and through an other – so too should we understand the freedom of thought along similar relational lines, a point developed at length in chapter three. There we saw that one who engages in speculative philosophy – one who exercises thought – must be ready and able to let go of his firmly held assumptions, entrenched positions, and established sense of self via a dynamic movement of free ecstasis into alterity and a transformed return to self and that this ability is both premised on and first gained through the ethical practice of love. Once we recognize the deeply relational nature of autonomous thought, the idea that thought is somehow problematically constrained by religious representation begins to dissipate. For the very essence of thought is to be free in and through determination by an other. The representations of Christian

religion simply offer a narratival account of this movement.[194] Insofar as the conceptual thought is able to retroactively and recursively account for its religious presuppositions – to recognize them as its own – conceptual thought thus retains its autonomy.[195]

In the *Lectures,* Hegel begins to lay out the relation between representation and thought with further precision.

> We are directly conscious that they [representations] are only images but that they have a significance distinct from what which the image as such primitively expresses – that the image is something symbolic or allegorical and that we have before us something twofold, first the immediate and then what is meant by it, its inner meaning. the latter is to be distinguished from the former, which is the external aspect (*LPR* 1:397-398).

The inner, or rational, meaning discerned by thought is manifest in and through the representation but without simply being reducible to the representation. The representation, in other words, offers an image that lets the inner rational truth of the matter shine forth for thought to grasp. But the inner rational truth is not simply there on the surface of the representation, in its immediate and external givenness. This inner rational truth is accessible only after the contents of the representation are *thought through* such that the contents come to be seen in a new light – the light of the concept (see *EL* §3-5). Representations are thus inherently two-fold, or doubled, harboring two distinct yet inextricably related levels of meaning.

In the *Lectures,* Hegel provides several examples of the doubled nature of the representational image, citing the notion that God has begotten a son, that God has created the world, the tree of knowledge, Homeric narratives, and stories about Prometheus, to name just a

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[194] Cf. "Representations may generally be regarded as metaphors of thoughts and concepts" (*EL* §3).

[195] Cf. O'Regan's claim that "Hegel's thought…exemplifies a…conceptual discourse [that] has the ability to recursively account for its own presupposition. And in this ability to account for its own genesis lies its autonomy." Cyril O'Regan, *The Heterodox Hegel,* 359.

few (*LPR* 1:398-400). In the case of God begetting a son, the doubled nature of the representation is especially apparent. Hegel notes that

> if we say that God has begotten a son…this is only an image; representation provides us with "son" and "begetter" from a familiar relationship, which…is not meant in its immediacy, but is supposed to signify a different relationship, which is something like this one. This sensible relationship has right within itself something corresponding for the most part to which is properly meant with regard to God (*LPR* 1:398).

We are familiar with the term begetting from the sorts of natural relationships in which it occurs – a human begets a child, a beaver begets kits, a bird begets chicks, etc… In each case, what is begotten is of the same kind as the begetter. Our familiarity with the term as it applies to these natural relationships allows us to grasp something about the spiritual relationship between God and God's son – that what God begets is not something of a different kind or substance than God. In this respect, the divine act of begetting "is something like" the natural act of begetting. By *thinking through* the immediately given meaning of the representation – the meaning given to us from the realm of nature – we thus grasp something essential about the underlying content being represented.

Hegel proceeds to develop his account of representation beyond figurative expressions derived from natural life by considering the representational nature of history [*Geschichte*], claiming that "it is not merely things that are manifestly figurative that belong to the mode of representation in its sensible aspect, but also things that are to be taken as historical" (*LPR* 1:399). For Hegel, while historical narratives and events differ from natural sensible forms of representation, they obey a similar doubled logic. To help us to begin to better grasp the doubled logic of historical events, Hegel appeals to Homeric narratives about Jupiter and other ancient deities. He claims that when viewed flatly the Homeric representations contain merely an "external sequence of occurrences and actions" (*LPR* 1:399), "a series of actions and sensible

determinations that follow one another in time and then occur side by side in space" (*LPR* 1:399-400). So conceived, historical representations are seen to deal chiefly with the literal happenings of certain actions and events and the contingent relations that obtain between them.

But Hegel's chief interests lie not in the literal happening or historical veracity events and actions and their contingent nature – the sort of stuff that could have been captured by a video camera. For Hegel, the genuine significance of Homer's narratives rests in their ability to place before us an inner rational content grasped in and by thinking (*LPR* 1:400). "[When] we enjoy these narratives of Jupiter and other deities…we do not inquire further about what Homer reports of them to us, we do not take it in the way we do some other historical report" (*LPR* 1:399). Rather, in thinking things over [*Nachdenken*] we discern the allegorical significance that lies embedded within the particular occurrences and actions that Homer reports to us. "We can say that…a moral may be extracted from…[this] history" (*LPR* 1:400). This moral allegory is "the inner and substantial element" which thought discerns within and across the external series of represented events and occurrences (*LPR* 1:400).

Now Hegel acknowledges the relative superficiality of claiming that a moral can be extracted from every represented history but insists on the idea's pedagogical utility for affording his students a foothold into the material at hand (*LPR* 1:400). With his audience adequately primed, Hegel then proceeds to add some more texture to this claim, telling us that while "history certainly has this aspect of singularity, of extreme outward individuation" – i.e., is represented as occurring in an irreducibly particular time and place – "the universal laws and the essential powers of ethical life are also recognizable within it" (*LPR* 1:400). For Hegel, these universal laws and essential ethical powers denote the substantial normative principles that immanently constitute and animate a particular form of life, a *Volksgeist*, including its ethical views and

practices, its laws, its customs, its political institutions, and its religion. In other words, these universal laws and essential ethical powers animate – often implicitly – the thoughts and actions of the community and the individuals who comprise it. To hearken back to the early "Spirit" essay, these laws and powers determine the fate [*Schicksal*] of the community, for they are constitutive of its underlying logic in both theory and practice. As Hegel writes, "these essential ethical powers…have contributed to the action and have brought about the [historical] event" in question (*LPR* 1:400). Hegel's well-known interpretation of Sophocles' *Antigone* in the *Phenomenology* is one place in his corpus that demonstrates particularly well how certain universal ethical laws and powers can determine the fate of individuals and their community. There, recall, Hegel highlights how Antigone's invocation of a natural, unwritten, divine law rooted in ritualistic family traditions compels her to break her uncle Creon's public edict – which is, by contrast, rooted in the human laws of the polis – not to bury her dead brother, Polyneices. Antigone's and Creon's actions are thus carried out according to the logic and under the authority of the respective codes of conduct that they consider to be universal *for them.* The fated actions of Antigone and Creon, in other words, are to be understood in terms of the demands laid upon them by their respective conceptions of the universal ethical law. Antigone thinks that the divine law requires a particular action of her, while Creon thinks the human law requires a particular course. But the fate of each actor is nevertheless determined by the laws and ethical powers they deem universal (see *PhS* §436 & §470).

Nevertheless, Hegel claims that "[t]hese universal [ethical] powers" and the logic of thinking and action they entail "do not exist for representation as such" (*LPR* 1:400), since, "for representation…the content is empirical, concrete, and manifold, its combination residing partly in spatial contiguity and partly in temporal succession" (*LPR* 1:400). Representation thus fails to

grasp the universal ethical substance that undergirds and animates the logic of these empirical happenings. Instead, what it beholds are "several isolated simple determinations…strung together, remaining outside one another… [R]epresentation leaves them [the empirical happenings] standing side-by-side in its indeterminate space, connected only by the bare also" (*EL* §20). It could thus be said that representational cognition obeys a paratactic logic, as the events in question are considered to exhibit little or no intrinsic logical relations to the other events in the series, even if it affords an obscure consciousness of those relations (*LPR* 1:400). It is only rational cognition which renders conceptually explicit the logic – the internal connections – embedded within and across the events and occurrences under consideration by discerning the universal ethical substance at work therein. Thus, whereas representation places before us a chronological and contingent series of events – the matter of actual history [*wirkliche Geschichte*] – rational cognition transfigures this series of events "according to their conceptually grasped organization" to yield what in the *Phenomenology* Hegel calls "conceptually grasped history [*begriffne Geschichte*]" (*PhS* §808).

By giving reason the task of rendering conceptually explicit the universal divine content embedded within historical representations, Hegel is establishing a clear hierarchy between representational cognition and conceptual cognition. Importantly, however, Hegel indicates that even though representational cognition is ultimately an inadequate vehicle for fully grasping the underlying rational content on account of the residual elements of exteriority and contingency it possesses, the absolute content found in representation nevertheless remains the indispensable fodder for rational cognition – a point which we will see prominently comes to the fore in Hegel's treatment of God in the *Lectures* where he tells us that philosophy and religion share a common absolute content but that "philosophy…transform[s] our representations [of the divine

content] into concepts" (*LPR* 1:397). Grasping the nature of this transformation will be crucial for understanding the nature of Hegel's philosophy of religion and its relevance to his ethical and political philosophy.

C. The Representation of God as Love

After unpacking the general distinction between historical representations and conceptually grasped history, Hegel considers the history of Jesus, drawing on the preceding analysis of the "twofold character" of representation to frame his approach to this particular historical narrative (*LPR* 1:399). Unlike the Homeric narratives, Hegel claims that with the biblical narrative of Jesus we are dealing with an account that explicitly claims to portray actual historical events. "[T]he story of Jesus," he writes, "is supposed to be history in the proper sense…The story does not merely count as a myth, in the mode of images." (*LPR* 1:399). Nevertheless, just as with sensible representations and more straightforwardly mythic narratives, the story of Jesus harbors a doubled logic. There are the historical events, on the one hand, and the inner meaning – the universal laws and powers of ethical life – that finds representational expression in the historical events, on the other. "Just as a myth has a meaning or allegory within it, so too is there this twofold character generally in every history" (*LPR* 1:399). Just as with Homeric narratives, Hegel's interests thus lie not in the veracity of the historical reports about Jesus's life but rather in the underlying universal ethical substance that these histories represent, a point which Hegel insisted upon already in his interpretation of the resurrection in the early "Spirit" essay.

> To consider the resurrection of Jesus as an event is to adopt the outlook of the historian, and this has nothing to do with religion. Belief or disbelief in the resurrection as a mere fact deprived of its religious interest is a matter for the intellect whose occupation (the fixation of objectivity] is just the death of religion…The religious aspect of the risen Jesus [is] configured love in its beauty…[I]n the risen Jesus…love found the objectification of

> its oneness…The need for religion finds its satisfaction in the risen Jesus, in love given shape (*SCF,* 292).

To be sure, the young Hegel does not simply write off the empirical aspect of the historical representation. For, as he claims, "the intellect, of course, seems to have a right to discuss the matter, since the objective aspect of God is not simply love given shape; it also subsists on its own account, and, as a reality, claims a place in the world of realities" (*SCF,* 292). Thus, the question of the historical veracity of the resurrection is not a question entirely removed from Hegel's mind. Indeed, in the early writings and mature *Lectures* Hegel consistently lays great stress on the idea that the historicity of Jesus is essential for consciousness to gain immediate certainty of the truth. As he succinctly notes in the *Lectures,* "sensible history constitutes the point of departure for spirit" (*LPR* 3:229).[196] And yet, aiming to cast a bridge over G.E. Lessing's ugly broad ditch[197], Hegel nevertheless insists – in both the early and mature writings – that the properly *religious* significance of the resurrection of Jesus lies not in the sensible history but in the universal ethical substance – "love configurated" – that comes to be discerned by thought in the empirical events placed before us by the reported history (*SCF,* 294).

> The history of the resurrection and ascension of Christ to the right hand of God begins at the point where this history receives a spiritual interpretation…[T]he empirical mode of

[196] Also consider the following: "This cognition [of Jesus and the events that comprise his life] must come to use in such a way that it actually can be empirically universal, universal for immediate consciousness. For the immediate consciousness this can only happen as the demonstration of the unity of divine and human nature to it in wholly temporal, completely ordinary worldly appearance in a single human being" (*LPR* 3:110). Cf. "Two days after his death Jesus rose from the dead; faith returned into their hearts; soon the Holy Ghost came to them; and the Resurrection became the basis of their faith and their salvation. Since the effect of this Resurrection was so great, since this event became the center of their faith, the need for it must have lain very deep in their hearts" (*SCF,* 291).

[197] Lessing's image is intended as a metaphorical expression of his insistence that "accidental truths of history can never become the proof for necessary truths of reason." Accordingly, Lessing thought that Christianity can only be authenticated on the basis of some kind of inner truth. See G.E. Lessing, "On the Proof of the Spirit and of Power" (1777).

> the appearance, and investigations concerning the conditions surrounding the appearance of Christ after his death, the church is right insofar as it refuses to acknowledge such investigations; for the latter proceed from a point of view implying that the real question concerns the sensible and historical elements in the appearance of Christ, as though the confirmation of the Spirit depended on narratives of this kind about something represented as historical, in historical fashion (*LPR* 3:326/330).

Despite his vacillations, Hegel ultimately insists that the true significance of the resurrection lies not in its veracity as a historical event but in the spiritual interpretation given by Christ's followers, namely that Christ is risen in the consciousness of the community of believers – a point to which we will return. For if the historical veracity were foundational, then it would mean that sensible history is foundational to spirit, a point which Hegel took to be at odds with the Christian message as well as his own philosophical position. [198] And yet, even though the truth of the history can neither prove nor disprove the truth of the concept, the historical narrative nevertheless approximates and represents an important moment in the development of the concept.[199]

In volumes one and three of the *Lectures,* Hegel fleshes out the idea that the historical account of Jesus's life places before us a divine ethical content – love configurated – by appealing to the key "sensible occurrences" in his life, namely incarnation, passion, death, resurrection,

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[198] This is a point made by Thomas A. Lewis in *Religion, Modernity, and Politics in Hegel*, 222. Also see Walter Jaeschke, *Reason in Religion*, 326-332.

[199] To be sure, Hegel's approach to the resurrection still leaves us with some pressing questions concerning the relation between the historical veracity of the event and its properly religious significance apprehended through the concept, questions which were largely responsible for the split between left and right Hegelian after Hegel's death. For instance, if the historical record of events turns out to be flatly false, then does that somehow undermine the religious truth that these events purport to represent? Alternatively, if the historical account does not matter for the validity of the religious truth, then does that mean the ditch need not be bridged in the first place? To my knowledge, Hegel does not decisively address these questions in the *Lectures* or elsewhere, but he does seem to maintain – at least indirectly – that belief in the authenticity of the sensible history is an indispensable stage in the development of cognition of the truth, for this certainty serves as the point of departure for more sophisticated ways of cognizing the content on display therein.

ascension, and Pentecost. "The birth, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ," Hegel claims, "count as something completely historical…[and] therefore exist for representation and in the mode of representation" (*LPR* 1:399).[200] In his treatment of these events, Hegel insists that representational consciousness continues to operate according to the paratactic logic outlined above, as it considers these historical events to "exist primarily…as a content that…presents itself in sensible form, as series of actions and sensible determinations that follow one another in time and then occur side by side in space," (*LPR* 1:400). a series of actions and events connected by "the bare also" (*EL* §20). But for philosophical thought, the occurrences and actions afforded us by these historical representations are not to be grasped simply in their sensible immediacy, contingency, and external relations to each other; rather, thought discerns the underlying logic and divine ethical substance placed before us by these representations. "Not only is there this outward history, which should only be taken as the ordinary story of a human being, but also it has the divine as its content: a divine happening, a divine deed, an absolutely divine action. This absolute divine action is the inward, the genuine, the substantial dimension of this history, and this is just what is the object of reason" (*LPR* 1:399). Philosophical thought thus grasps the doubled nature of the represented occurrences and actions in the life of Jesus, discerning within and across them an underlying divine ethical content, which, as we will see, Hegel characterizes in terms of love.

Importantly, in claiming that philosophical thought discerns a divine ethical content in and through the historical representations of the definitive occurrences and actions of Jesus's life,

[200] The passage cited here is from footnote 83, where two student transcriptions – one anonymous and the other from Hube – of Hegel's 1827 *Lectures* include mention of the resurrection whereas the transcript inserted in the body of the text does not mention the resurrection but only "nativity, passion, and death." The ambiguity in the transcriptions is a curious one, as is the editorial decision to foreground the transcription without mention of the resurrection.

Hegel is once again indicating that the outward history given in representation, when properly considered by philosophical thought, is not a distortion of the underlying absolute content but rather is an organic vehicle for letting it be seen and understood. Indeed, as Stephen Houlgate remarks, religious representations "are appropriate – and, indeed, necessary ways of picturing the truth."[201] The necessity which Houlgate attributes to religious representation is not be taken as strictly synonymous with the inner necessity of the movement of pure thought but rather speaks to the vital role that these specific religious representations play in concretizing these pure movements of thought and rendering them accessible to non-philosophical forms of consciousness. In other words, these specific representations play an indispensable pedagogical role in educating people about the nature of the absolute content conceptually articulated by thought and in training people to think conceptually. One does not simply begin at the standpoint of pure thought. Religious representations are essential if one is to reach this level of cognition. And if and when one does reach the level of conceptual thought, it is not as though the content of such representations is simply erased from memory, for it is precisely these representations (of love) that inform the structure and dynamic of pure thought. As O'Regan puts this point more generally, "For Hegel, the ontotheological narrative perdures in the logical space of the concept…. narrative not only is tolerated by logico-conceptual space but is intrinsic to it."[202] The particular content of these specific religious representation is therefore not contingent but rather intrinsically connected

[201] Stephen Houlgate, "Religion, Morality, and Forgiveness in Hegel's Philosophy," in *Philosophy and Religion in German Idealism,* eds. William Desmond, Ernst-Otto Onnasch, Paul Cruysberghs (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004), 99.

[202] Cyril O'Regan, *Heterodox Hegel,* 363.

to the life of conceptual thought.[203] To be sure, Hegel does maintain that "a deep speculative content cannot be portrayed in its true and proper form in images and mere representations" (*LPR* 3:105), but the representations of Christian religion seem to serve as an exception, at least to some extent. For these particular representations – as we will soon consider in detail – are uniquely suited to express and approximate the divine dynamism of conceptual thought. As Hegel states, "the Christian religion gives this content in a developed form, and as essentially for representation… Christianity has revealed what God is, so that we now *know* what he is" (*LPR* 1:106). Or as he claims a bit later in the *Lectures*, "The infinite spirit that makes itself an object gives itself essentially the shape of a *representation,* of something given, of something appearing to the other finite spirit *for which* it is…Spirit comes to be for itself in the shape of representation (*LPR* 1:139). For Hegel, then, to attend to religious representation is not to attend to a distorted image of the absolute divine content, despite the imperfections associated with representational cognition. For the divine content takes the initiative, as it were, by *giving itself* in the mode of representation, indicating that representation is one of its choice modes of authentic self-expression, even if it is not the final and most developed mode of its appearance.

As we discussed in section A, Hegel thinks that thinking about what religious representation says about God – the absolute content – is another way of thinking about reason, or what we have been calling conceptual thought. "In philosophy of religion we have as our object God himself, *absolute reason…* and so when we occupy ourselves with this object it is immediately

[203] In this respect, the relation between representation and thought is not analogous to the relation between pure arithmetic and the concrete items that help us grasp the principles of arithmetic. I can add two apples and two apples to make four apples, and this concrete example illustrates the mathematical truth that 2+2=4. But I could just as easily replace apples with sheep to illustrate the same truth. The relation between religious representation and philosophical thought does not work like this, for we cannot simply replace the content of representation without fundamentally altering the truth of pure thought.

the case that we are dealing with and investigating rational cognition" (*LPR* 1:170). And what Christian religion says about God is that "God is love" (*LPR* 3:276). And while Hegel insists that "when we say, 'God is love,' we are saying something very great and true," he also insists that "it would be senseless to grasp this saying in a simple-minded way as a simple definition" (*LPR* 3:276). Accordingly, carefully attending to Hegel's treatment of the Christian representation of God as love – collectively epitomized by the incarnation, passion, and resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost – promises to offer us a fuller picture of how Hegel thinks about both love and reason.

D. Incarnation

The Christian account of the incarnation of God in the person Jesus is one of the primary focal points of Hegel's analysis in volume three of the *Lectures.* Hegel classifies the incarnation under the rubric of the Kingdom of the Son – the second person of the Trinity. Preceding the Kingdom of the Son, however, is the Kingdom of the Father – the first person of the Trinity. For Hegel, the Kingdom of the Father is the sphere of abstract pure universality. "If we say, "God the Father," we speak of him as universal, only abstractly, in accord with his finitude" (*LPR* 3:279; also see 362). As abstract universality, however, "God the Father is not yet the truth" (*LPR* 3:284). Accordingly, in the incarnation, God the Father is represented as renouncing his abstract universality and entering into relation with Godself and finite spirit in the form of an immediately present person – Jesus. "God appears as the concrete God…appearance in sensible presence…it is *the appearance of God in the flesh.* This is the monstrous [*das Ungeheure*] reality whose necessity we have seen. What it posits is that divine and human nature are not intrinsically different – God is in human shape" (*LPR* 3:214). Hegel's use of the terms monstrous and necessity to describe the incarnation are especially noteworthy here. From the perspective of

reflective logics that absolutize the operations of the understanding [*Verstand*], God is infinitely beyond [*jenseits*] the finite.[204] Hence the idea of "the God-man" – the idea that God would take the form of a single, sensible, finite human individual – appears to the understanding as "a monstrous compound" (*LPR* 3:315). For it incongruently conjoins what the understanding thinks ought to be two intrinsically and irreducibly separate categories – divine infinitude and human finitude.

However, what the understanding views as a monstrosity, reason views as an immanent necessity. To get a sense for the immanent necessity grasped by reason, recall that in the *Logic* Hegel describes the logic of the concept as "the infinite form. "If there was to be a real progress in philosophy, it was necessary…[that] the path should be opened for the cognition of the infinite form, that is, of the concept" (*SL,* 41). According to Hegel, the infinite form of the concept [*Begriff*] serves as an immanent constraint on what can appropriately be said about the nature of God (*LPR* 1:62). For if one is committed to the idea that God is infinite, unconditioned, or absolute – as Hegel claims Christian religion is (*LPR* 1:162; *LPR* 3:169) – then this means that there are certain logical criteria which derive from the concept of infinitude itself that necessarily serve as immanent constraints regarding the nature and character of God.[205] Accordingly, as we will see, it is the logical requirements generated from the concept of infinitude that undergird the transition from God the Father (God as abstract universality, infinitely beyond the finite) to a

[204] Kant's relegation of God to the noumenal realm beyond the realm of phenomenal experience is a prime example of this logic.

[205] The idea of God as infinite has had a firm place in the history of Christian doctrine since Gregory of Nyssa, a 4th century Cappadocian Father who associated God's unlimited goodness with a sense of divine infinitude (see Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomiun*). Similarly, Augustine and Aquinas ascribed to God the quality of infinitude, as a result of his divine omniscience and omnipresence, and in the medieval period Duns Scotus held that infinitude is essential for the doctrine of the Trinity of God.

conception of God the Son (God as infinite in and through a certain kind of identity with the finite, God as incarnate). And it is Hegel's contention that the representations found in Christian religion place before us a powerful illustration of this logical development. Hence his claim that Christian religion "has *essentially* the character of…*infinite form*" (*LPR* 3:169).[206]

To demonstrate the necessity of this transition from one conception of God to another, Hegel often appeals to the conceptual difficulties that inhere in a notion of God as wholly beyond finitude. In the *Lectures,* for example, Hegel claims that a "God whom we designate as a mere object *over against* [finite] consciousness" (*LPR* 1:62) – a God of the beyond – runs afoul of the logic of true infinitude. For a God that exists over and against the finite is not *truly* infinite but rather what Hegel calls a spurious infinite, or finitized infinite, since God would be only one of two and therefore particular and finite – the opposite of the infinite.[207] In other words, insofar as God exists exclusively over and against the finite, God himself would necessarily be finite, since there exists something that limits God from outside God. As Hegel states, "If God has the finite only over against himself, and thus if he confronted finitude from the other side, then God's infinitude would be a spurious infinitude… If God has the finite only over against himself, then God himself is finite and limited" (*LPR* 3:264). Accordingly, in order for God to live up to the conceptual requirements of genuine infinitude, the separation of God from the finite *must* be

[206] To claim that the concept of infinitude serves as an immanent constraint on the nature of God is not to suggest that the infinite form is somehow externally imposed on God. For even though infinitude "constrains" the nature of God, this constraint is internal to God's very nature. It is part of the quintessence of God's inner being qua God.

[207] For more on Hegel's account of bad infinity see *SL,* 109, 210-211 and *EL* §94. Interestingly, Hegel links bad infinity – represented as a straight line infinitely extended at either end – with a form of positivity that we saw first surface in his critique of Kantian morality in the early writings. "This bad infinite," he there writes, "is in itself the same as the perpetual ought [*Soll*] (*SL,* 113, 120).

overcome, *must* be "sublated" [*Aufhebung*]. That is, the finite must be grasped as a necessary logical component of God's developed structure. God "must have…finitude within himself…Finitude must be posited in God himself" (*LPR* 3:264).[208] The incarnation – the becoming man of God, the movement of the infinite into the finite – represents the first stage of this logical movement of true infinity. And, importantly, just as in the *Logic,* in the *Lectures* Hegel again likens the truly infinite relation – in the present case, between God the Father and God the Son – to love, directly stating the "the unity of the Father and the Son is love" (*LPR* 3:370; also see 194, 324).

E. The Death of God

In the next representation that Hegel considers, the divine movement into the alterity of finitude advances even more radically, as this immediately present individual – Jesus – passes over into having been, into death. For Hegel, the representation of the death of the God-man is illustrative of the infinite's full assumption of finitude, since death is itself the pinnacle of finitude.

> The pinnacle of finitude is not actual life in its temporal course, but rather death, the anguish of death; death is the pinnacle of negation, the most abstract and indeed natural negation, the limit, finitude in its highest extreme. The temporal and complete existence of the divine idea in the present is envisaged only in Christ's death (*LPR* 3:124-125).[209]

[208] Cf. "[T]he true infinite is [thus] not merely on the far side of the finite, but instead contains the finite as sublated within it" (*EL* §45).

[209] Cf. "God himself is dead, it says in a Lutheran hymn, expressing an awareness that the human, the finite, the fragile, the weak, the negative are themselves a moment of the divine, that they are within God himself, that finitude…[and] otherness are not outside of God…[that] otherness….is known to be a moment of the divine nature itself" (*LPR* 3:326).

Here Hegel broaches the Pauline-Lutheran theme of kenosis, which Hegel, following Luther, renders as *Entäußerung,* indicating a movement in which one empties oneself without entirely losing oneself in the process (*LPR* 3:83). And here, in the representation of the kenotic unification of the infinite living God with that which is most extrinsic, most other, to God – death, the hallmark of finitude – Hegel emphasizes that "love itself" is manifest.

> This death is…the highest love. It is precisely love that is consciousness of the identity of the divine and the human, and this finitization is carried to its extreme, to death. Thus, here we find an envisagement of the unity of the divine and the human at its absolute peak, the highest intuition of love. For love consists in giving up one's personality, all that is one's own…the supreme surrender of oneself in the other, even in the most extrinsic other being of death…The death of Christ is the vision of this love itself – not love merely for or on behalf of others, but precisely *divinity* in this universal identity with other-being, death. The monstrous unification of these absolute extremes is love itself (*LPR* 3:125).[210]

Hegel's remarks stress the truly radical degree to which God qua love engages with and is affected by alterity, as negation, finitude, and suffering, which are often conceived by classical theological metaphysics as essentially *other* to God, become essential parts of God's developed structure. Indeed, that Hegel insists that Christianity represents God as freely transformed by the radical alterity of finitude thus signals his rejection of one-sided views of the relation between God and world in which God and finitude are left wholly *other* to each other in favor of a view of God wherein God freely and ecstatically identifies with and is transformed by that which is most other to God. What is more, Hegel here seems to be drawing a rather direct and intrinsic

[210] Cf. "[F]initude, human nature, and humiliation are posited of Christ – as of him who is strictly God – as something alien. It is evident that finitude is alien to him and has been taken over from an other; and this other is humanity…It is their finitude that Christ has taken upon himself, this finitude in all its forms… As the monstrous unification of these absolute extremes, this shameful death is at the same time infinite love. It is out of infinite love that God has made himself identical with what is alien" (*LPR* 3:324). Also see: "The speculative mode of love that arises from infinite anguish…occurs through the infinite mediation; and this infinite mediation has its objective shape in the life, suffering, death, and exaltation of Christ" (*LPR* 3:139).

connection between love and alterity – the greater the alterity the more truly love is on display. As Hegel states, "It is out of infinite love that God has made himself identical with what is alien" (*LPR* 3:324). Here, then, we begin to see just how far Hegel's mature account of divine love is from his earlier Romanticized version outlined in chapter two, wherein love is marked by its shameful desire to annul all otherness in an unfaltering self-same union.

Especially worth noting, however is that the conception of love on display in the representation of the death of God bears clear similarities with key aspects of the difference-honoring account of free love found in the early writings on religion, as both accounts offer an essentially ecstatic conception of love, a conception of love in which the lover is dispersed in the manifold of alterity. Here in the *Lectures,* however, Hegel emphasizes aspects of this ecstatic love only partially developed in the early work. Most significant is his insistence that such ecstatic love cannot be conceived of as separate from what he calls "infinite anguish" [*unendliche Schmerz*]. Citations abound. "Love as originating in infinite anguish is precisely the concept of spirit itself…[and] becomes objective in Christ" (*LPR* 3:240). "The deepest anguish…[is] the highest love; in anguish love is contained" (*LPR* 3:131). "Infinite love…exists as infinite anguish" (*LPR* 3:137). "The speculative mode of love that arises from infinite anguish…occurs through the infinite mediation; and this infinite mediation has its objective shape in the life, suffering, death, and exaltation of Christ" (*LPR* 3:139). The German *Schmerz* covers a range of English words, including "pain," "anguish," and "grief." Hegel's insistence on the inseparability of love and *Schmerz* in the representation of the death of God further indicates just how drastically his mature vision of love in the *Lectures* departs from his early idealizations of the tranquil and serene harmony found in ancient Greek ethical life and early Romanticism [*Frühromantik*]. It also signals Hegel's break from then circulating Enlightenment conceptions

of love, which Hegel derides for their tendency to draw a sharp distinction between love and suffering. "The contradiction it [Enlightenment] makes between love and suffering is without any value, utterly spiritless" (*LPR* 3:143). "In our time," he continues, "the quest for private welfare and enjoyment is the order of the day…[and] where the teaching of love in infinite anguish is abandoned in favor of enjoyment…the salt has lost its savor" (*LPR* 3:160-161). In contrast to these ways of thinking about love, in the *Lectures* Hegel insists that the consummatory unity forged in the Christian account of love contains irreducible elements of suffering and antagonism. Indeed, he claims that this suffering is not to be simply transcended in the love relation; rather, he thinks love consists precisely in the power to maintain a unity while enduring suffering and antagonism. "Spirit [or love] is the absolute power to endure this anguish, i.e., to unite the two and to be in this way, in this oneness" (*LPR 3:215*).[211] On Hegel's account, then, the unity forged in Christian love is neither peaceful nor serene and yet preserves itself in spite of the persistence of strife and pain.

Having considered the incarnation, passion, and death of Christ and the anguished conception of love they together entail and bearing in mind that what religion says about God provides indispensable clues for grasping what Hegel thinks about conceptual cognition, we are now in a position to see how these representations illustrate a key moment of the self-determined logical movement of the concept detailed in the *Logic* – its movement of self-determined ecstatic self-expropriation, or self-diremption. "Speculatively understood," as Hegel claims, "this [the death of Christ] is self-emptying precisely at its highest level; this eternal movement is its concept. This [concept] is expressed in love" (*LPR* 3:83). What Hegel is suggesting is that what

[211] Cf. As Hegel writes, "Anguish is precisely the element of negativity in the affirmative, meaning that within itself the affirmative is self-contradictory and wounded" (*LPR* 3:306).

religion represents in terms of God's anguished kenotic love, God's self-emptying into the radical alterity of human finitude and death, philosophical thought grasps in terms of the self-determined infinite movement of the concept into its object. Crucially, however, the representation of anguished love is not merely an external isomorphism of the concept but rather deeply informs the movement of the concept, so much so that Hegel wants us to understand *Schmerz* to be part of what it means to think conceptually, to be an effect of the concept's expropriation of itself into alterity. Indeed, this is a point which Hegel already gestured toward in his 1802 *Faith and Knowledge*, where he claims that

> The pure concept…must signify…infinite grief…as a moment of the supreme Idea…By marking this feeling [of infinite grief] as a moment of the supreme Idea, the pure concept…must re-establish for philosophy the Idea of absolute freedom and along with it the absolute Passion, the speculative Good Friday in place of the historic Good Friday. Good Friday must be speculatively re-established in the whole truth and harshness of its God-forsakenness…The highest totality can and must achieve its resurrection solely from this harsh consciousness of loss (*FK*, 190-191).

So, what does the representation of the historic Good Friday reveal about conceptual cognition? That is to ask, how might Hegel's contention that the concept must re-establish the infinite anguish of divine love as a constitutive element of its own logical progression prompt us to think differently about conceptual cognition? Taking our cue from Hegel's insistence on the inseparability of love and anguish found in the Good Friday narrative, we are able to see that thinking conceptually is neither a serene affair nor one of cool detachment but is instead quite anguishing. For it requires one to let go of one's established sense of oneself – of one's established sense of identity – in an expropriative movement into alterity. There is thus a certain death and rebirth of the self, characterized by what Hegel describes as an "extreme disruption" of the subject via the "interiorization" of the other (*LPR* 3:131). When viewed through the representation of divine love, we are thus able to see that the self-determined logical movement

of the concept is not an impassive happening but rather one that propels the knowing subject outside of its self-enclosure, engendering a certain kind of suffering wrought through a displacement of self through an empathetic interiorization of the experience of an other.[212] The *Lectures*, however, are not the only place where we witness the conjunction of the pathos of anguished love and the ecstatic logic of the concept. Already in the *Phenomenology* we see this conjunction come into view in powerful ways, a testament to the consistent significance of love throughout Hegel's philosophical corpus and specifically his thinking about cognition. In the preface to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel aligns the dialectical advance of scientific cognition with the anguish of self-loss fueled by ecstatic labor of divine love. As he writes, "divine cognition may well be spoken of as a disporting of Love with itself; but [that] this idea sinks into mere edification, or even insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labor of the negative" (*PhS* §19). Once more, then, we find Hegel articulating the highest mode of cognition in terms of a kind of love that engages with alterity to the utmost, that does not shrink from it but maintains itself in it.[213] This is why Hegel describes the journey of "natural consciousness" across the *Phenomenology* as "a path of despair" (*PhS* §78), for natural consciousness gradually comes to immanently recognize the theoretical and practical untenability of its existing ways of thinking and acting in the world precisely through its ecstatic engagements with *other* ways of thinking and acting. That natural consciousness dies a series of

[212] Robyn Marasco similarly argues that the pathos of despair inheres in the dialectic of the *Phenomenology* in her book *The Highway of Despair: Critical Theory after Hegel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015). However, Marasco does not consider the ways in which Hegel's philosophy of religion and especially his conception of anguished love contained therein critically informs the nature of this dialectical pathos.

[213] Cf. "The life of Spirit is not the life that shrinks from death and keeps itself untouched by devastation, but rather the life that endures it and maintains itself in it. It wins its truth only when, in utter dismemberment, it finds itself" (*PhS* §32).

deaths in this way is what induces the despair and anguish of the journey. And what is more, it is "we" – the phenomenologists – who must endure the anguish of natural consciousness and carry forth the knowledge gleaned from its ordeals. That is, it is we who must give ourselves over to the journey of natural consciousness, immerse ourselves in its movements, and learn from its experiences by identifying with the standpoints of its particular shapes, recognizing for ourselves the immanent contradictions contained within our own various ways of thinking and acting and being "reborn" from the ashes by altering our thinking and practices in light of the knowledge gained from these ecstatic episodes (see *PhS* §53 & *PhS* §58). Hence, we are not permitted to remain safely at a distance from the unfolding drama of natural consciousness's engagement with alterity but rather are beckoned to engage with it, to be unsettled by it, to be altered by it.[214] Here, then, we find love – in this instance the pathos of anguished love – operating as an integral element of scientific cognition and development of natural consciousness across the course of the *Phenomenology*.

We can add even more concreteness and depth to Hegel's understanding of the ecstatic and anguished logic of the concept by turning our attention to literature, which, as Martha Nussbaum has argued at length, enables us "to imagine what it is like to live the life of another person who might, given changes in circumstance, be oneself or one of one's loved ones."[215] Or as Richard Rorty describes literature: it offers us "detailed description of what unfamiliar people

[214] Molly Farneth's recent analysis of the section of the *Phenomenology* titled "The Beautiful Soul, Evil, and Its Forgiveness" offers an especially a powerful analysis of this dynamic, demonstrating how the wicked consciousness and judging consciousness advance beyond their own respective viewpoints by immersing themselves in the standpoint of the other. Molly Farneth, "Hegel's Sacramental Politics: Confession, Forgiveness, and Absolute Spirit," *The Journal of Religion* 95, no.2 (2015): 183-197.

[215] Martha Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 5.

are like and of redescription of what we ourselves are like…Fiction like that of Dickens, Olive Shreiner, or Richard Wright gives us details about kinds of suffering being endured by people to whom we had previous not attended. Fiction like that of Choderlos de Lacos, Henry James, or Nabokov gives us details about what sorts of cruelty we ourselves are capable of, and thereby lets us redescribe ourselves."[216] As just one example of the sort of the phenomenon pointed to by Nussbaum and Rorty, consider Ian Holding's recent *Of Beast and Beings,* a dystopian novels that tells the story of racial strife in the context of Zimbabwe's efforts toward racial reconciliation. The novel's protagonist, Ian, is a white schoolteacher who, faced with an increasing sense of shame over his whiteness, seeks to place himself in the position of a black person in order to transform his present identity. This act of imaginative identification requires Ian to come to know the other, indeed, to become the other such that the other's experience becomes his own, to the extent that such an act of ecstatic identification is possible. Holding illustrates this phenomenon when Ian sees and reflects on the suffering of a black man carrying his pregnant wife to the hospital for delivery in a wheelbarrow in the middle of the night during a heavy rainstorm.

> How did they proceed on in the dark after me? How did they make it with the rain falling over them like a scourge over the plagued? How did they navigate the unseen potholes? What if the wheel of that barrow got wedged in a crater in the road? What if she was thrown off? What if the man, already tired, exhausted, spent, had to heave with all his might to lift it? To deliver it from the ground? Did they make it in the end, just him, his wife & the barrow trundling those slimy hellish roads all the way to the clinic? Or did they encounter someone else, someone with a little compassion & humanity to finally help them?[217]

[216] Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), xvi.

[217] Ian Holding, *Of Beasts and Being* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 266.

In asking these questions, Ian places himself in the position of these two black people. He temporarily identifies with the experience of others and empathetically participates in their sufferings, while continuing to be aware of his own separateness from the others' experiences. To be sure, this suffering of the self through identification with an other does not amount to a full participation in the other's suffering. The self does actually experience the embodied suffering of the other. Nevertheless, this act of identification facilitates a transformation in Ian's own sense of identity and his attitude toward those who he deems "other" to himself, a transformation which is not without its own distinctive sense of suffering as the old self dies as it gives way to a new self.[218] This transformative process through ecstatic identification with an other comes remarkably close to the dynamics of the Hegelian process of *Bildung.*

F. Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost

Although a prominent theme in Hegel's philosophy of religion, the representation of the death of God is not the terminus of his thinking on religion. Instead, it serves as a necessary segue from God's sensible presence to a new modality of presence – God as spirit. As Hegel states "love in death is a transition" (*LPR* 3:135) and "[t]his transition is what is termed the *outpouring of the Spirit.* It could occur only after the Christ who had become flesh had withdrawn" (*LPR* 3:230).[219] Remaining overly tethered to the representational standpoint, however, religious consciousness is not expressly aware of the presence and actuality of God qua

[218] See Michael Marais, "Reconciliation, White Shame, and Sympathetic Imagination in Ian Holding's *Of Beasts and Beings" Research in African Literatures* 50, no.1 (2019), 203-205.

[219] Cf. "The witness of faith is represented as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the departure of Christ. 'I will send you a Comforter, the Spirit; the Spirit will lead you into all truth'" (*LPR* 3:149).

spirit, since, in accordance with its general cognitional structure, it interprets the resurrection as a reinscription of the idea that the infinite divine content exists over-and-against finite humanity. In other words, for the representational consciousness of the religious community the resurrection signals a reconciliation between the infinite and the finite that happens only in one singular individual – Jesus. "The singularity of the divine idea, the divine idea as *one* human being, is first brought to completion in actuality to the extent that initially it has *many* single individuals confronting it" (*LPR* 3:133). The representational consciousness of the religious community thus remains torn between a finite this-worldliness and an other-worldly beyond and thereby grasps its own finitude as unreconciled with the infinite, leaving us once again with a conception of God as wholly other to the finite order of existence. This, however, "is only *one* aspect" of the resurrection – its outward, or external, aspect.

In contrast to the representational consciousness of the religious community, for philosophical thought the resurrection does not reinscribe a rigid dichotomy between the finite and the infinite, between human and divine, but rather signals their reconciliation, as the finite is elevated to infinite life in the here and now. For death releases the spirit of the God-man from its restricted mode of singular sensible presence in the person Jesus so that the divine spirit can be born again – resurrected – in the universal consciousness of the members of the religious community. As Hegel memorably puts this point in the *Phenomenology,* "Death is transfigured from what it immediately means, i.e., from the non-being of this singular individual, into the universality of spirit which lives in its own religious community, dies there daily, and is daily there resurrected" (*PhS* ¶784). The resurrection is therefore conceived of as an ongoing and intrinsic feature of religious life generally and places before us in representational form what philosophical thought grasps as the first stage of the consummatory return of the concept to

itself. "The *envisaged consummation* of the return of the divine idea to itself…is contained in…the *resurrection*…The divine principle of turning, of return to self, is equally present in [conceptual] cognition" (*LPR* 3:131/*LPR* 3:103). The representation of the resurrection thus offers us an image of the burgeoning consummation of conceptual cognition, of the concept's return to itself from out of otherness.

For Hegel, however, resurrection coincides with Pentecost, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the religious community and the inauguration of a new form of sociality rooted in free love. "The pouring out of the Holy Spirit is then represented at the feast of Pentecost" (*LPR* 3:269).[220] For Hegel, Pentecost represents the pinnacle of conceptual cognition, as it conveys the idea that the infinite divine content no longer takes a position over and against the consciousness of the community but rather attains its worldly actuality [*Wirklichkeit*] therein. Indeed, Hegel considers the spiritual presence of God in the religious community to be the essential kernel that philosophical thought grasps in its conceptualization of the religious representation of Pentecost found in Matthew 18:20: "Where two or three are gathered in my name there am I in the midst of you" (*LPR* 3:140). In Pentecost, as Hegel thus claims, the absolute content "has moved through the circuit of inward self-diremption in accordance with the form of finitude and returned from this self-diremption" (*LPR* 3:269), signaling the full consummatory return of the concept to itself from out of its ecstatic expropriation into alterity.[221]

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[220] Cf. "The community itself is the existing Spirit, the Spirit in its existence, God existing as community" (*LPR* 3:331).

[221] Hegel's treatment of Pentecost as representing pinnacle of rational cognition is especially striking when considered alongside Pentecostalism. For while both are centrally concerned with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the religious community, Pentecostalism's emphasis on glossolalia – or speaking in tongues – marks a significant point of departure from the conceptual determinacy that characterizes Hegel's approach.

G. Conceptual Cognition and the Love of the Religious Community

Having traversed this arduous circuit of ecstatic self-diremption and elevated return, Hegel repeatedly characterizes the resurrected Spirit in the religious community in terms of the dynamic of love outlined above. "Love as originating in infinite anguish is precisely the concept of Spirit itself" (*LPR* 3:140). "[T]he sphere of infinite love is the kingdom of the Spirit" (*LPR* 3:135). "The unity in the infinite love that arises from infinite anguish is…a unity simply *in the Spirit*, the love, in fact, which is just the notion of Spirit itself" (*LPR* 3:140).[222] Considered together, Hegel's remarks indicate that the actuality and presence of the divine Spirit represented by Pentecost is co-extensive with the ethical practice of love that occurs between members of the religious community, that the community's ethical practice of love is the concrete site of Spirit's worldly becoming. Accordingly, Hegel thinks the ongoing task of the religious community is to perform, or re-enact, this love in its own thinking and practical conduct, i.e., to participate in the moments of death and resurrection – destruction and rebirth – that are given consummate expression in the Christian religion's representation of the God who, out of love, engages radical alterity to the point of death but is ultimately enriched as a result. As Hegel states, "the preservation of the community…is a continuous activity that creates the community, forming and bringing it forth. It entails an eternal repetition of the life, passion, and resurrection of Christ in the members of the church" (*LPR* 3:152), which "involves…having within oneself…the

[222] Also see "The Spirit of God is present and actual…only through this mediation…of love…in the community…this is the Spirit of God, or God as present [*gegenwärtig*], actual [*Wirklich*] *Spirit*, God as dwelling in his community" (*LPR* 3:140) & "The divine idea, which is there for them as infinite love in infinite anguish, is present within them precisely in this intuition; they are the community of the Spirit" (*LPR* 3:142).

infinite power to maintain oneself in an other pure and simple" (*LPR* 3:135).[223] So conceived, ongoing engagements with alterity and transformations of self are constitutive features of the life of the religious community. As Hegel says of its members,

> As far as personality is concerned, it is the character of the person, the subject, to surrender its isolation and separateness. Ethical life, love, means precisely this giving up of particularity, of particular personality, and its extension to universality…In love I give up my abstract personality and thereby win it back as concrete. The truth of personality is found precisely in winning it back through this immersion, this being immersed in the other (*LPR* 3:285-286).[224]

The love of the religious community is at once disruptive and formative, as one's particular self-identity is ruptured and expanded through immersion in the experience of an other. For the individuals within the community undergo a movement of circular ecstasis whereby the otherness they find themselves immersed in comes to be seen as constitutive of their very sense of themselves. They interiorize the alterity into which they are immersed and thereby expand their own limited subjectivities toward a more universal perspective. In this kind of love, then, the otherness of the other is thus not simply a moment to be overcome but rather is to be

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[223] Hegel's account of the community as undergoing daily death and resurrection seems to be rooted in Luther's understanding of the sacrament of baptism. As Luther writes, "it signifies that the old Adam in us, together with all sins and evil lusts, should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance and to be put to death, and the new man should come forth daily and rise up, cleansed and righteous, to live forever in God's presence." See Martin Luther, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,* trans. Charles P. Arand (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2000), 349.

[224] It is important to note that these remarks come the 1827 version of Hegel's *Lectures.* This is significant as it signals a development in Hegel's thinking from the 1821 and 1824 iterations of the *Lectures,* where he remained skeptical about the broader socio-ethical import of the religious community in much the same ways he expressed in the early writings. Here, however, Hegel explicitly links love with ethical life, a point which we will take up at the beginning of chapter five. Thomas A. Lewis effectively draws attention to this development in Hegel's thinking across the course of the *Lectures.* Thomas A. Lewis, "Religion, Reconciliation, and Modern Society: The Shifting Conclusions of Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, Harvard Theological Review* 106, no.1 (2013): 37-60.

endured, internalized, and learned from. And through all this, the subject remains free, so long as we understand this freedom in terms of the freedom of love.[225] And in this way, alterity acts as a vehicle for the *Bildung* of the self.

What is more, in keeping with his account of love in the early writings, Hegel continues to position the love of the religious community as guided by a hermeneutical attentiveness to the exigencies generated by the other's irreducible particularity rather than any a priori determinations one might make about the other. As Hegel notes, "The most outstanding and at the same time comprehensible teaching of Christ is…*love,* and indeed: 'love your neighbor' [Matt. 22:36-40]…Love in Christ's sense is moral love for one's neighbor in the particular circumstances in which one is related to him" (*LPR* 3:118). Or again, "Love is not what is legally right but the well-being of the other, hence a relationship to the particularity of the other, and to my sensibility (*LPR* 3:118).[226] For Hegel, loving one's neighbor well therefore involves a patient and attentive immersion in the particularity of an other, echoing his earlier description of the concept as possessing "a plasticity of sense also in hearing and understanding" (*SL,* 20). And yet, at the same time, this immersion in particularity is also "an extension into universality" (*LPR* 3:285). For through this immersion in the particularity of the other the enclosed boundaries of the subject are disrupted, reworked, and expanded beyond their current horizon, toward a more universal perspective. This is the *Bildung* of the subject that happens in love.

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[225] We find evidence of this position already in the *Phenomenology,* where Hegel writes, "Spirit is this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: The *I* that is *we* and the *we* that is *I"* (*PhS* ¶ 177).

[226] Cf. "*[L]ove* is made the principal commandment – not an impotent love of humanity in general but the mutual love of the community" (*LPR* 3: 218).

What emerges from Hegel's account of the religious community is a rather expansive sense in which the community's re-enactment of the love placed before it by the series of religious representations of the incarnation, passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus instantiates a form of ethical life rooted in rational cognition. This is what Hegel means when he claims that "religion is *cognitive*, is the activity of reason or the activity of conceptualization and thought" (*LPR* 1:139). For when members of the religious community re-enact this the representations of divine love they are, at the same time, exercising conceptual cognition. They are ecstatically and attentively immersing themselves in alterity and returning to themselves *other* than they were, bringing us full circle with Hegel's remarks in the preface to the *Logic* regarding the connection between the determinations of thought and the spirit of a people [*Volksgeist*], as the ethical life of the religious community instantiates the pinnacle of thought's immanent development as concept and absolute idea. But as we will consider in chapter five, Hegel eventually realizes that ethical life of the religious community, rooted as it is in love, need not be limited to an intra-community ethics, as he thought in the early writings and in the 1821 and 1824 *Lectures.* Instead, he realizes that the ethical life of the religious community ought to serve as the foundation of ethical life for the entire community, not just those within the religious community. Hence his claim at the end of the *Lectures* that "the institutions of ethical life are divine institutions" (*LPR* 3:342). For, as we will see, the institutions of ethical life collectively actualize the conceptions of infinite subjectivity (i.e., the subject who remains free, self-determined, even when being determined by an other) and sociality (a form of unity in and through strife and difference) that Hegel considers to be central components of Christianity.

CHAPTER 5
LOVE IS THE HEART OF THE STATE: HEGEL'S *PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT*

Building on the findings of chapter three, chapter four further highlighted and developed both the extensive ways in which Hegel's understanding of rational cognition is vitally informed by the representation of love found in Christian religion and Hegel's insistence that the religious community's acts of love are one of the pre-eminent instances of rational cognition, that love is the actuality of reason. For Hegel, however, the love of the religious community is not the pinnacle of reason's actuality in the world. Rather, it is in the sociality of the state – Hegel's term of art for a specifically political community which is sovereign, organized, and subject to public authority[227] – where reason is maximally actualized, even if the sociality of the religious community is its point of origin and ongoing foundation. "The state must be regarded as a great architectonic, a hieroglyph of reason which becomes manifest in actuality" (*PR* §279).[228] If the state is the fullest actuality of reason, and if reason is modeled on the representation of God as love, then we should expect to find intimations of love across Hegel's philosophy of the state as articulated in the *Philosophy of Right*.[229] Establishing and unpacking the connection between love and reason in Hegel's political philosophy and the role of religion therein is one of the core aims of this chapter. The other is to show foregrounding the role of love in the state reveals a democratic kernel at the heart of Hegel's social and political thought.

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[227] Z.A. Pelczynski, "Political Community and individual freedom in Hegel's philosophy of state," *The State and Civil Society, Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy,* ed. Z.A. Pelczynski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 55-58.

[228] Cf. "The state…[is] reason as it actualizes itself in the element of self-consciousness" (*PR*, preface).

[229] Thus when Hegel claims that "[t]he state consists of the march of God in the world" (*PR*, §258) we should understand the state to be intimately and inextricably bound up with love. We will further consider this infamous claim of Hegel's near the end of the chapter.

A. The Religious Cultus and the Political Community

Before entering into the *Philosophy of Right* in earnest, it will behoove us to spend some more time on Hegel's remarks in the *Lectures* concerning the relation between the practice of love in the religious cultus and the life and structure of the political community, between church and state. We saw in the final section of chapter four that Hegel considers love to be the quintessential virtue of the religious community and that by practicing love one also engages in conceptual cognition. As we have seen, throughout his career Hegel grappled with the relation between the religious community and its ethical practice of love, on the one hand, and the broader social and political culture, on the other, coming up with various answers at different points in his corpus. Most significant for this work are Hegel's insights near the end of the 1827 version of the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion.* Here Hegel outlines three forms of "reconciliation" between these two social bodies. In the first form, the religious community renounces the "worldly realm" in a sort of "monkish withdrawal" (*LPR* 3: 340), reminiscent of the approach taken by the beautiful soul of the religious community that came to the fore in our discussion of the early writings in chapter two. On this construal, the religious community finds the worldly order incompatible with its own values and convictions and sees no choice but to renounce its ways and retreat from the public sphere. The reconciliation achieved is therefore not a "genuine mode of reconciliation" since the two bodies remain wholly alienated from each other (*LPR* 3: 340).

In the second form, the religious community enters into relation with "worldliness" (*LPR* 3:340-341) but the relation is exclusively defined in terms of conflict and antagonism. Here church and state are locked in a kind of either-or struggle in which the religious community "is

not at home with itself…in public life" (*LPR* 3:341) but does not seek to withdraw from it either. In other words, in this second form, the religious community continues to see public life as at odds with its general ethos and mission and hence as "unholy" (*LPR* 3:341). Instead of retreating from worldly society, "it is felt that the religious should be the dominant element…[that] the church ought to prevail over what is unreconciled, the worldly realm" (*LPR* 3:341). Once more, then, "there is no reconciliation at all" (*LPR* 3:341), as the religious community merely seeks to dominate a world that remains recalcitrant to its values, beliefs, and practices. No mutuality is attained. Hegel thus concludes that this stark opposition between the religious community and the broader political culture breeds an ethos in which "everything that can be called human, in all impulses, in all attitudes that have reference to the family and to activity in public life, a cleavage enters into play" (*LPR* 3:341).

In the third form of reconciliation, however, "this contradiction [between church and state] is resolved" in what Hegel calls "*ethical life*" [*Sittlichkeit*] (*LPR* 3:341). "It is in ethical life that the reconciliation of religion with worldliness and actuality comes about and is accomplished" (*LPR* 3:342). Hegel's claim here is tremendously important for my argument across this chapter and is in many ways quite remarkable on its own, especially in light of his construal of the relation between the religious community and the worldly social order not only in the early writings but also in the 1821 and 1824 iterations of the *Lectures* where he is deeply skeptical about the possibility of integrating religion into the broader fabric of society.[230] In the 1827 edition, however, Hegel seems to have changed his tune considerably, claiming that the

[230] For an excellent account of Hegel's shifting construal of the relation between religion and the broader social order in the *Lectures* see Thomas A. Lewis, "Religion, Reconciliation, and Modern Society: The Shifting Conclusions of Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*," 37-60.

spirituality of the religious community contains within itself the foundational principles of the worldly realm. "The principles for this worldly realm are ready to hand in the spirituality of the [religious] community; the principle, the truth, of the worldly, *is* the spiritual" (*LPR* 3:339).[231]

Hegel proceeds to develop this claim by appealing to the conception of "infinite subjectivity" that came to the fore in his treatment of the religious community. As we saw, the infinitude – or unboundedness – of the religious subject consists in its freedom. "The vocation to infinitude of the subject…is its *freedom*…The substantial aspect of the subject is that it is a free person" (*LPR* 3:340).[232] But this freedom – as I have emphasized throughout this work – is to be understood in terms of the distinctive brand of freedom found in the conception of love represented in Christian religion, or what Hegel often describes as being "with oneself" [*bei sich*] in an other.[233] Thus, when Hegel claims that "this vocation of the subject" – the vocation to infinite freedom – "ought to be foundational in its relation with what is worldly" (*LPR* 3:340), we should understand him to also be claiming that the religious community's practice of love lies at the heart of the ethical life of the broader socio-political community. This is, of course, are a rather dramatic claim. But if we accept that, for Hegel, what it means to be free cannot be properly understood without grasping something of what it means and what it is like to love, then it is seems as though we have no choice but to interpret him along these lines. Indeed, we will see this contention borne out even more when we turn to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* later in this

[231] Cf. "The self or subject constitutes that aspect of spiritual presence in accord with which there is a developed worldliness present in it" (*LPR* 3:339).

[232] Cf. "This freedom of the subject…has been attained…through religion" (*LPR* 3:340).

[233] "Love is a distinguishing of two, who nevertheless are absolutely not distinguished for each other. The consciousness or feeling of the identity of the two – to be outside myself and in the other – this is love…Without knowing that love is both a distinguishing and the sublation [*Aufhebung*] of the distinction, one speaks emptily of it" (*LPR* 3:276).

chapter. Particularly remarkable about the operative, if implicit, presence of religious love found in the *Philosophy of Right* is that this text was written in 1820, a year before Hegel delivered his first round of the Berlin *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion.* That we find religious love at work in Hegel's conception of political life in the *Philosophy of Right* even as he struggled with the relation between church and state over the course of a decade of *Lectures* should thus shed fresh light on Hegel's seminal work in political philosophy.

In volume one of the 1831 *Lectures* – the year of Hegel's death and thus the final iteration of the *Lectures* – Hegel continues to develop the idea that the infinitely free subject of Christian religion and the form of sociality it entails acts the basis of modern political subjectivity and sociality, of modern ethical life. He begins by claiming that "religion and the foundation of the state are one and the same – they are implicitly and explicitly identical" (*LPR* 1:452) and that this "implicit and explicit unity" is based on the knowledge afforded by Christian religion – that "human beings are free…[are] *free* spirit" (*LPR* 1:452).[234] And once more, he clarifies that human beings are free "because they make their will conform to the divine will" and that it is "in the [religious] cultus" that "the sublation of this rupture" between the human and divine will first occurs (*LPR* 1:452). At the risk of being repetitive, we saw in our analysis of the *Lectures* in chapter four that what it means for the religious cultus to conform to the divine will is for its members to participate in the movements of divine love, collectively represented by the incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, in their daily lives. For Hegel, participating in divine love in this manner is the epitome of freedom. Thus, that Hegel claims that "there is *one* concept of freedom in religion and state" and that "the state is simply *freedom*

[234] Cf. "Religion passes over into… the *state*…the *state* is simply *freedom in the world,* in actuality" (*LPR* 1:451-452).

in the world" (*LPR* 1:452) suggests that we should find the dynamics of divine love at work in Hegel's normative articulation of a modern political community. With this task in mind, we will turn to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right,* his seminal work in political philosophy.

B. Reason, Right, and the Freedom of the Will

In the introduction to the *Philosophy of Right,* Hegel makes two key claims that orient the entire work and underscore its deep conceptual ties to Hegel's treatment of Christianity. First, that his chief concern is with "the Idea of right [*Recht*] – the concept of right and its actualization" (*PR* §1) and, second, that "[t]he Idea of right is freedom, and in order to be truly apprehended, it must be recognizable in its concept and in the concept's existence" (*PR* §1A). In condensed and preliminary fashion, Hegel thus indicates that his philosophy of right is concerned with embodiments of freedom in modern social life. "[T]he system of right is the realm of actualized freedom" (*PR* §4). Accordingly, Hegel's task is to offer an account of the various shapes [*Gestaltungen*] of modern social existence, of ethical life, in which freedom is manifest. Already, then, we can begin to see vital connections to Hegel's philosophy of religion and the account of free love developed therein. For when Hegel speaks of modern freedom in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right,* he is speaking of a form of freedom first identified in the Christian representation of love. As he writes, "The doctrine of the Church" – epitomized by the conjunction of love and freedom – "is in fact an *expression*…of a content which is intimately connected, or even directly concerned, with ethical principles and with the laws of the state" (*PR* §270).

Hegel's point of departure for considering the actualization of freedom in the modern world – i.e., the development of right – is the concept of the will [*der Wille*]. "The basis of rights is the *realm of spirit*…and its precise location and point of departure is the *will*; the will is *free,*

so that freedom constitutes its substance and destiny (*PR* §4).[235] As the work progresses, Hegel will thus offer an account of the development of the will's freedom and the various social conditions that facilitate this development. However, before directly turning to that account, it will be helpful to further contextualize Hegel's endeavor in light of some of his other introductory remarks.

Especially important is that Hegel begins explicating his concept of the will by comparing it his account of "thought" [*Denken*], claiming that "[t]he distinction between thought and will is simply that between theoretical and practical attitudes…[T]hey are not two separate faculties; on the contrary, the will is a particular way of thinking – thinking translating itself into existence, thinking as the drive to give itself existence" (*PR* §4). Hence "[t]he will contains the theoretical within itself" (*PR* §4).[236] We can gain some clarity about Hegel's concept of the will and its relation to thought by recognizing that Hegel's invocation of the latter is a direct reference to the account of thought developed in the *Logic* (and in the *Lectures* as well). In the *Logic*, recall, we saw that thought's defining feature, especially in its determination qua concept [*Begriff*], is its capacity to remain free – self-determined – even while being determined by an "other." In other words, we saw that the freedom of thought is to be understood in terms of the freedom characteristic of love. Hence Hegel's striking likening of the concept to "free love." That the freedom of thought is to be thusly understood and that thought becomes actual as a free will thus indicates that the freedom of the will ought to similarly be understood in terms of the

[235] Cf. Hegel's discussion of freedom as the destiny of the will in *EL* §469.

[236] Hegel offers an extended discussion of the relation between thought and will in *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Science* that forms the background of his invocation of the connection between the will and thought in the *Philosophy of Right.* In that discussion, one of Hegel's core points is that thought becomes actual [*Wirklich*] as will. See *EL* §469-483.

freedom of love, that the will, like thought, remains self-determined even as it is determined by an other. Indeed, Hegel directly corroborates this conjunction between the freedom of the will and the freedom won in love.

> The will is…the *self-determination* of the 'I' in that it is…*determinate and limited* [by an other], and at the same time remains with itself [*bei sich*] …in *identity with itself*...determines itself…The 'I' is with itself in its limitation, in this other; as it determines itself, it nevertheless still remains with itself…This…is the concrete concept of freedom…[W]e already possess this freedom [of the will] in the feeling…of love. Here, we are not one-sidedly within ourselves, but willingly limit ourselves with reference to an other, even while knowing ourselves in this limitation as ourselves. In this determinacy, the human being should not feel determined; on the contrary, he attains his self-awareness only by regarding the other as other…Freedom is to will something determinate, yet to be with oneself [*bei sich*] in this determinacy (*PR* §7).

Here, then, Hegel aligns the freedom of the will with the conception of love developed across the early and mature writings on religion, utilizing the latter a hermeneutical device to explicate the nature of the former. For it is through the will's ecstatic immersion into the life of an other and transformed return to itself that its freedom is progressively actualized. The man with a free will, as Hegel remarks, "must work through the process of self-production by going out of himself and by educating himself inwardly" (*PR* §10). Only via this formative process does the will become "infinite will" (*PR* §13), wherein its object is "not something which it sees as…a *limitation;* on the contrary, it has merely returned into itself in its object (*PR* §22).[237] Thus, the free will – the infinite will – does not push the object away "and distance it as something alien" (*PR* §22), as something limiting it from the outside, as something wholly other. Rather, it immerses itself in its other and in doing so comes to understand and identify with it, *as if* the life of the other were one's own. The structural dynamics of the will's movements are thus thoroughly premised on the structural dynamics of the account of love developed across Hegel's philosophy of religion, so

[237] Cf. "In the free will, the truly infinite has actuality and presence" (*PR* §22).

much so that one would be hard-pressed to make concrete sense of the former without having an experiential grasp of the latter. That is to say, one can neither readily understand nor develop a free will absent an understanding and experience of love. To be sure, the full complexity and significance of Hegel's thorough alignment of the freedom of the will and the freedom of love will gradually come into view across the course of this chapter, but that Hegel has now appealed to love to clarify both the freedom of thought and the freedom of will – which are, recall, distinguishable yet inseparable – should prompt us to further think through the role of love in the *Philosophy of Right* and its implications for Hegel's political philosophy.

C. Ethical Life

In the third and final section of the *Philosophy of Right* – titled ethical life – Hegel offers an account of the chief stages of the development of the will's freedom and the modern institutional forms that make such development possible. The most significant sites of Hegel's investigation into the progressive development of the will's freedom are the institutions of the family, civil society, and the state, which collectively comprise what we have seen Hegel refer to "ethical life" [*Sittlichkeit*]. "Ethical life is the *Idea of freedom* as the living good which has its…actuality through self-conscious action…Ethical life is…the *concept of freedom which has become the existing world and the nature of self-consciousness*" (*PR* §142). Importantly, in the *Lectures* Hegel describes these "institutions of ethical life" as "divine institutions" (*LPR* 3:342). Here Hegel is not suggesting that the institutions of ethical life amount to some sort of theocratic regime, in which the priests rule in the name of the deity. Rather, Hegel is gesturing toward the fact that the conception of infinite subjectivity – of subject qua free, qua self-determining – first found in Christian religion is actualized and supported in and through these institutions. The

institutions of ethical life thus reconcile the religious community to the secular world by engendering a conception of infinite subjectivity that Hegel considered to be the hallmark of the religious community. And to the extent that we understand the infinite subject to subtended by the account of unboundedness of love provided in Hegel's philosophy of religion – a connection that should, I hope, be readily apparent by now – we can also understand these divine institutions of ethical life as worldly sites of love's manifestation. It is to an investigation of these divine institutions of ethical life that we now turn.

D. The Family

Hegel identifies the family as the most basic socio-ethical institution in which the will's freedom begins to develop. What is especially noteworthy for our purposes is that Hegel considers the feeling of love found in the family to be the vehicle of this development. "The family," he writes, "as the *immediate substantiality* of spirit, has as its determination the spirit's *feeling* [*Empfindung*] of its own unity, which is *love*" (*PR* §158). Hegel's deployment of love here harbors a level of complexity that will be unpacked over coming pages. To begin, he appeals to family love as the most immediate form of concrete freedom, of being with oneself in an other, since in the family one overcomes one's abstract and atomistic individuality and enters into unity with an other. As Hegel explains,

> Love in general means the consciousness of my unity with another, so that I am not isolated on my own, but gain my self-consciousness only through the renunciation of my independent existence and through knowing myself as the unity of myself with another and of the other with me…The first moment in love is that I do not wish to be an independent person in my own right and that, if I were, I would feel deficient and incomplete. The second moment is that I find myself in another person, that I gain recognition in this person, who in turns gains recognition in me. Love is therefore the most immense contradiction; the understanding [*Verstand*] cannot resolve it, because there is nothing more intractable than this punctiliousness of the self-consciousness which is negated and which I ought nevertheless to possess as affirmative. Love is both

> the production and the resolution of this contradiction. As its resolution, it is ethical unity (*PR* §158).

Through familial love one first comes to experience oneself as part of a larger whole, since within this ethical unity the well-being of each member of the family is so deeply and immediately bound up with the well-being of the other particular members of the family that each member can be said to gain his or her own sense of self only in relation to the other members of the family unit. In the family, as thus Hegel writes "the individual has overcome [*aufgehoben*] his personal aloofness and finds himself and his consciousness within a whole" (*PR* §33). "The disposition appropriate to the family is to have self-consciousness of one's individuality within this unity…so that one is present in it not as an independent person but as a member" (*PR* §158). Indeed, Hegel's ensuing discussion of marriage – which inaugurates the formation of a new family – highlights with further precision these the dynamics of marital love and the way they support the development of the will's freedom. For marriage, he explains, is "a *spiritual* union [of] self-conscious love" (*PR* §161) characterized by "the *free surrender*" and "free consent" of the persons concerned (*PR* §162 & §168). For Hegel, marriage is thus at once a form of limitation and other-determination, on the one hand, and a form of liberation, on the other, as the will undergoes a sort of *Bildung* wherein by giving itself to an other a new, stable, free, and internally diverse corporate self emerges.[238] As he writes, "Their union is a self-limitation, but since they attain their substantial self-consciousness within it, it is in fact their liberation" (*PR* §162). And for Hegel, as we have seen, this manner of gaining one's self-

[238] Hegel discussion of the love-relation between parents and their children is similarly structured. He describes the child as an object [*Gegenstand*] which the parents "love as their…substantial existence" (*PR* §173) and in which they are loved by the child in return (*PR* §173A), indicating that here, too, the parent finds him or herself in an other [i.e., the child].

consciousness in and through love for an other is the structural hallmark of freedom. Hence why the family unit represents the first vital developmental stage of the will's freedom.

Importantly, in his discussions Hegel draws a distinction between two different forms of familial love – affective love and ethical love. At times, Hegel describes familial love as an affectively rooted natural and immediate form of ethical life (*PR* §11 & §158). "In the family, the will's initial existence is…something natural, in the form of love and feeling" (*PR* §33). To the extent that familial love is rooted in nature and immediacy, Hegel deems it an inadequate vehicle for the full development of the will's freedom, and this for two reasons. First, the sheer immediacy of these natural drives – their status as simply there and given to us rather than cultivated by us and identified as genuinely our own – undermines the robust sense of individual freedom that Hegel views as essential to the will's proper development (*PR* §11). In other words, in the family, the will remains over-determined by immediately given natural drives and desires and hence not self-determined enough. A symbiotic balance between the two has not been struck. Second and relatedly, Hegel is skeptical that the feeling of love can facilitate the development of the will's freedom because of its inherent contingency. "Love, as a feeling [*Empfindung*], is open in all respects to contingency, and this is a shape which the ethical may not assume" (*PR* §161). Hegel's point is that feelings are apt to wax and wane in a way that threatens the stability necessary for freedom and ethical unity. As he writes of the marriage relation, "Since marriage is based only on subjective and contingent feeling, it may be dissolved" (*PR* §163A).[239] Thus, to

[239] Cf. "Marriage is…only the immediate form of the ethical Idea and thus has its objective actuality in the inwardness of subjective disposition and feeling. This accounts for the basic contingency of its existence" (*PR* §176).

the extent that the family is rooted strictly in the feeling of love, Hegel considers it an unstable form of ethical unity.

Crucially, however, Hegel insists that marriage and the family are not simply reducible to the feeling of love but instead are rooted in another kind of love, which he calls "ethical love" [*sittliche Liebe*]. For instance, he claims that "marriage should…be defined more precisely as ethical love, so that the transient, capricious, and purely subjective aspects of love are excluded from it" (*PR* §161A). Or again, "When a marriage takes place, a new family is constituted… the new family is based on ethical love" (*PR* §172).[240] The idea here seems to be that ethical love transforms what would otherwise be only an immediate relationship based solely on natural feelings of attraction into a relationship mediated by the institution of marriage, thereby placing it on a more stable foundation. For in ethical love, each partner in the marriage remains bound to the other through, bound by the ties of love, even in the absence of the feeling of love. Ethical love, in other words, endures through the contingency – the waxing and waning – that is inherent in the *feeling* of love, turning a merely natural relationship into a properly ethical, or spiritual, one.[241] "[T]he spiritual bond [of ethical love] asserts its rights as the substantial factor and thereby stands out as indissoluble in itself and exalted above the contingency of the passions and of particular transient caprice" (*PR* §163).

[240] Cf. "As the initial appearance of substantial will within existent actuality, this [marital] love has a natural aspect, although it is also an ethical duty" (*LPR* 3:455).

[241] To be sure, while ethical love exalts the couple above the contingency of feeling, it does not annul or suppress feeling. Instead, the feeling of love becomes an essential moment in the development of ethical love. As Hegel writes, "When this disposition and actuality are present, the natural drive is reduced to the modality of a moment of nature (*PR* §163).

For reasons that will become apparent over the course of this chapter, it is important to emphasize the significance of Hegel's distinction between the mere feeling of love and rightfully ethical love. At present, however, two points are especially relevant.

First, Hegel's discussion of the ethical love of the family helps us gain a better sense for what he means when he describes the institutions of ethical life as divine institution. In the 1831 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* Hegel claims that "the love that God is exists within actuality as conjugal love" (*LPR* 1:455), meaning that the love that obtains in the marriage relation actualizes the divine in the worldly realm in much the same way that the love practiced by the members of the religious cultus does. In both cases, God is actualized qua Spirit in the form of a stable love-relation between human beings. To the extent that a social institution fosters this form of relation it can therefore be thought of as divine.

Second, Hegel's distinction between affective and ethical love affords him the conceptual space to begin to develop an account of a stable ethical unity between free and distinct individuals. This point is especially worth pausing on in light of Hegel's analysis of the inability of the family to full advance the development of the will's freedom. Hegel tells us that because the members of the family experience their own sense of self as so thoroughly bound up with and absorbed by the singularity of the family unit, that the family precludes the mediation necessary to promote an adequately developed conception of the free individual. In other words, the unity of the family proves too absorbing and too singular to be able to cultivate and preserve the independence and uniqueness of each member of the group. We have only *one* personality in the family. As Hegel remarks, in marriage the partners "consent to *constitute a single person* and to give up their natural individual personalities within this union" (*PR* §162). Indeed, the overarching singularity of the family is what prompts the child (in Hegel's iteration the male

child) to eventually leave the family, for it is only outside the confines of the family unit that the "free personality" of the child can fully develop (*PR* §177). Within Hegel's discussions of the family, we thus again find two distinctive conceptions of love at work – one which requires and honors freedom and difference and one which is so all-encompassing as to deny them – in much the same way that we found two distinctive conceptions of love at work in Hegel's early writings in chapter two, suggesting that Hegel's youthful grappling with the social promises and pitfalls of love continued to animate – if implicitly and unconsciously – his thinking on this pivotal dimension of ethical life. Another way of putting this point is to say that the Romanticism of Hegel's youth, with its ceaseless drive to cancel separation and individuality within a self-same unity, is at work in his interpretation of the family and what he considers to be its ultimate suppression of the individuality of each of its members, even as Hegel simultaneously acknowledges an opposing tendency in his conception of ethical love. And yet, despite Hegel's identification of this opposing tendency toward a free unity-in-difference that obtains in properly ethical love, the Romanticized conception of love is nevertheless privelleged in the final analysis of the family. For it is the family's inability to cultivate a space for freedom and individuality – two hallmarks of modern society that immanently drives Hegel's account forward toward the next institutions of ethical life – civil society and the state. But that Hegel foregrounds this romanticized conception of love in his final analysis of the family should not cause us to overlook the significance of ethical love to his account, especially in light of the fact that Hegel repeatedly declares ethical love to be the substantive and enduring basis for the family (*PR* §161A & §163). For, as we will see, it is this model of ethical love, in which liberation and other-determination are integrated, which holds the key for unlocking Hegel's innovative approach to thinking about and relating to alterity within the broader political community.

E. The Status of Women in Hegel's Philosophy of Right

Before considering Hegel's accounts of civil society and the state we should first consider his dated treatment of the limited and exclusionary status of women in relation to the institutions of ethical life. Hegel infamously denies women access to the full life of reason in the public, simultaneously relegating them to the natural, affective sphere of the home and family life while also instrumentalizing them as the catalyst that propels the immanent movement of spirit from the family into civil society and the state. In other words, Hegel positions the institutions of civil society and state as the product of female labor and yet excludes the female from these domains. As Hegel writes, "Man…has his actual substantial life in the state, in learning, etc…, and otherwise in work and struggle with the external world and with himself…Woman, however, has her substantial vocation in the family, and her ethical disposition consists in this family piety" (*PR* §166).[242] Many scholars of politics and society, especially those working in feminist traditions of thought, have a complex relationship to Hegel. For, on the one hand, they recognize generative elements of Hegel's philosophical and political program that align with the feminist project of creating a free society, and yet, on the other, they are faced with Hegel's glaring debarring of women from public life. As Seyla Benhabib notes,

> Hegel's philosophy is significant because the Hegelian problem of the relation between identity and difference that is central to his phenomenology is at the heart of the feminist project to create a free and equal society. That is, Hegel articulates the fundamental problem of contemporary society with which feminists are concerned even though his analysis fails when sexual difference is 'essentialized' and all that woman represents is confined to the family and 'overreached'.[243]

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[242] Cf. "A man has a field of ethical activity apart from the family, [but] a woman's vocation consists essentially only in the marital relationship" (*PR* §164).

[243] Seyla Benhabib, "On Hegel, Women and Irony," *Feminist Interpretations and Political Theory*, eds. Mary Shanley and Carol Pateman (University Park: Pennsylvania State University

Stated in advance, my goal in this section is to show that when foreground Hegel's thinking about ethical love – love which requires and honors freedom and difference – we are able to read Hegel against himself on this matter, clearing one obstacle – but by no means the only obstacle – for thinking through the theoretical and practical relevance of Hegel's thought in contemporary politics and society. My point of entry for this task is the writings of the French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray, who offers an incisive and productive critique of Hegel's account of women in relation to civil society and the state. Irigaray's analysis at once helps us to see the problems and Hegel's account as well as the possibilities that his account of free ethical love holds for resolving them.

For Irigaray, the Western philosophical tradition – which, for her, minimally includes Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, Levinas, Freud, and Lacan – is premised on the simultaneous suppression and instrumentalization of humanity's feminine-maternal ancestry.[244] Accordingly, she claims, the Western philosophical tradition is governed by a fundamentally mono-sexual logic that assigns all otherness, especially the otherness of female sexual difference, a suppressed and/or instrumental function within its broader conceptual

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Press, 1991), 84. For other feminist critiques of Hegel's account of women see Patricia J. Mills, *Women, Nature and Psyche* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Kelly Oliver, "Antigone's Ghost: Undoing Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit," *Hypatia* 11, no.1 (1996): 67-90; Benjamin Barber, "Spirit's Phoenix and History's Owl or The Incoherence of Dialectics in Hegel's Account of Women," *Political Theory* 16, no. 1 (1988): 5-28; Heidi M. Ravven, "Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?" *Owl of Minerva* 19, no.2 (1988): 149-68.

[244] See, for example, Luce Irigaray's essays "Sorcerer's Love: A Reading of Plato's Symposium, Diotima's Speech," *Hypatia* 3, no.3 (1989): 32-44; "Wonder: A Reading of Descartes *The Passions of the Soul, Feminist Interpretations of Descartes,* ed. Susan Bordo (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999):105-113; "The Eternal Irony of the Community," *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 214-227; "Questions to Emmanuel Levinas: On the Divinity of Love," *Re-Reading Levinas,* eds. Robert Bernasconi and Simon Critchley (Bloomsbury: Bloomsbury Academic, 1991), 109-118.

framework.[245] As a result, the genuine otherness of feminine-maternal sexual difference is effaced as it comes to serve merely as a mirror image (speculum) of the dominant masculine system it functions within. According to this logic, the otherness of the feminine-maternal is measured in terms of *sameness* of the masculine ego, preventing the feminine-maternal from developing in self-determined manner and with its difference intact.[246] For the female-maternal is unable to enter the discourse – philosophical, political, religious, or otherwise – in terms other than those laid out in advance by a "male imaginary." That is to say, the female-maternal is barred from entering into these discursive spaces in ways that she can genuinely identify with as her own. And under such conditions, the female-maternal lacks what Irigaray consistently refers to throughout her corpus as "autonomy" – the capacity to cultivate one's own subjectivity in a way that is not exclusively determined in advance by a foreign conceptual grid of possibility.

In her essay "The Eternal Irony of the Community," Irigaray turns to Hegel's famous account of Sophocles' *Antigone* to illustrate the way in which his political thinking epitomizes the Western tradition's tendency of simultaneously suppressing and instrumentally appropriating the feminine-maternal within its own conceptual architecture. Here Irigaray is intrigued by the way Hegel's reading sets up a series of binary oppositions that structure the dialectical struggle between Antigone and her brother Creon, with Antigone standing for the female element (which

[245] For Irigaray, the female-maternal connotes a pluralized and strategic essentialism about the possibilities for thinking and acting inherent with the feminine-maternal imaginary. See especially *Speculum of the Other Woman.* I leave aside for the moment the long debate about the nature of Irigaray's essentialism. For more on this debate see Margaret Whitford, *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature, and Difference* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

[246] Luce Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference,* trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 61-63. Also see Luce Irigaray, *Sexes and Genealogies*, trans. Gillian C. Gill (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1993), 68.

is primarily associated with nature/earth/home/affect/passivity/divine law/blood relations/darkness) and Creon standing for the male element (which is primarily associated with the polis/spirit/activity/reason/civil law/light). By highlighting Hegel's juxtaposition of these categories, Irigaray thinks we can better appreciate the spectacularly exceptional nature of Antigone's actions. For on Irigaray's interpretation of Hegel's telling of the ancient tale, Antigone engages in an explicitly *political* action according a feminine logic – the burial of her brother Polyneices in defiance of Creon's order and her public defense before Creon – from *within* a masculine order that is founded upon the exclusion of an autonomous female element.[247] In refusing to acquiesce to Creon's demand, Antigone thus acts in the political order from her side of sexual difference in a manner that escapes the conceptual machinery of a masculinist logic of the same. Antigone's act thus appears within the masculinist domain *as* other. Even Creon himself cannot quite comprehend what has taken place – is confronted with a radical otherness – since he can only conceive of the entry of the feminine into the masculinized public order through an exclusively masculinized vocabulary. As Creon proclaims, "It's clear enough that I'm no man, but she's the man, / if she can get away with holding power like this."

Antigone's ability to enter into the political order *as* herself, with her sexual difference intact, is a prime example, albeit in this instance a profoundly tragic one, of what Irigaray calls "autonomy" – the ability of a subject to give one's life a shape that one intends it to have, to give one's life a shape that one can identify it as one's own. Indeed, the Chorus in the play gestures toward this conception of autonomy when they accuse Antigone of being a law unto herself (*autonomous*). Importantly, however, Antigone's autonomy, far from being indicative of a kind of lawless order based on mere whim, as Creon had believed, is firmly rooted in her commitment

[247] Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman,* 214.

to and identification with her female-maternal ancestry, which is associated with the local goddesses of the family and the household (*oikos*), or what Hegel refers to in the *Phenomenology* as the Penates.[248] Antigone's autonomy is thus intimately and inextricably linked with her connection to a historically specific conception of and identification with certain sexed divinities and the specific laws and ordinances they issue. In this sense, Antigone is autonomous by virtue obeying laws which she herself as ratified as having authority. For Irigaray, Antigone provide a dramatic example of and a platform of possibility for what it could mean for the autonomy and values of the feminine-material element to enter into a masculinist public sphere on its own terms.

To be sure, in the end, the introduction of feminine difference into a masculine conceptual apparatus ultimately leads to Antigone's tragic death. Unable to accept Antigone's sexed political act, Creon infamously decides to bury her alive, consigning her to a slow death in a moist hole in the earth, bathed in eternal darkness. And yet, at the same time, the political order represented by Creon ironically relies on the suppressed feminine-maternal element for its own continued existence, especially its role in preparing young boys for life in the polis. For Irigaray, Antigone's fate symbolizes the simultaneous suppression and appropriation of the female element within a masculinist political order.

> Woman is the guardian of the blood…She [has] had to…nourish the universal consciousness of self…in the form of *bloodless shadows…*Powerless on earth, she remains the very ground in which manifest mind secretly sets its roots and draws its strength. And self-certainty – in masculinity, in community, in government – owes the truth of its word and of the oath that binds men together to that substance common to all, repressed, unconscious and dumb, washed in the waters of oblivion.[249]

[248] *PhS* ¶ 451.
[249] Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman,* 225.

However, her critiques of Hegel notwithstanding, Irigaray by no means seeks to scrap the Hegelian edifice altogether. For Irigaray shares with Hegel an insistence on the important role that the institutions of family and marriage play in the cultivation of political subjectivity, even as they disagree about who and who is not suited for such cultivation. Accordingly, Irigaray seeks to intervene immanently within the dialectic, to enter into its movements, with the intention of organically redirecting its development at the critical juncture of the family. Irigaray's approach to is show how despite Hegel's aptness in identifying the centrality of the family and of marriage in the formation of political subjectivity and sociality, his account of familial and marital love stifles the expression of freedom for all, especially women, and hence is not suited for contemporary political life. In place of Hegel's account of familial and marital love, Irigaray offers her own alternative account of familial and marital love in an attempt to open a passage for the feminine-maternal element to autonomously assert itself in the public sphere.[250] My primary concern at this juncture, however, is not with Irigaray's own critical redirection of Hegel's dialectic and the vision of love and politics it engenders. I have written about these topics elsewhere.[251] Rather, at present I am interested in demonstrating given Hegel's insistence that ethical love proper actualizes mutual freedom and honors genuine difference, Hegel's restriction of women to the institutions of the family and marriage, in which the maximal development of one's freedom is stifled, seems conceptually out of step with his broader project in the *Philosophy of Right* of locating and describing the maximal actualization of the will's freedom via the institutions of the modern world. For by excluding women from the laws, norms,

[250] Luce Irigaray, *Democracy Begins Between Two,* trans. Kirsteen Anderson (New York: Routledge, 2001), 52.
[251] I have written about these topics elsewhere. See "Autonomy and Self-Giving: Problems and Prospects in Contemporary Feminist Theology" (RCT Concept Exam).

and practices of civil society and the state, Hegel undermines the alpha and omega of his project – the maximal universalization of freedom that characterizes the progressive development of spirit. It thus strikes me as not only truer to the spirit of Hegel's philosophy but also more intellectually generative to allow Hegel's overarching philosophical interest in the actualization of freedom in the modern world guide our interpretation of his political philosophy. And further, if we grant that Hegel's conception of freedom is modeled on the freedom found in love, in which freedom and difference are necessarily cultivated and sustained, then it appears that Hegel, if he is to remain consistent with his philosophical ambition and argumentation, ought to be committed to the free activity of both sexes in the public sphere as a vital part of spirit's most developed form.[252]

F. Civil Society

[252] Alison Stone complicates this position. On her reading, Hegel argues that because the bodies and psyches of women are essentially organized by the principle of immediate unity, they are specially well-equipped to run the home and family, because these domains are similarly governed by the same principle of immediate unity as opposed to the realms of civil society and the state which operate in ways that negate the immediate unity of family life. On Stone's reading, then, it is Hegel's philosophical anthropology – rather than sheer sexism – that determines the fate of women in the *polis* in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right.* See Alison Stone, *Nature, Ethics, and Gender in German Romanticism and Idealism* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 191-207. While Stone is correct to point out these aspects of Hegel's philosophical anthropology, one could respond by pointing out the overriding conceptual significance of Hegel's insistence that the culmination of humanity occurs when "all are free," when all human beings are no longer dominated by "positive" social, political, and religious forces. To attribute a philosophical anthropology to Hegel that stifles this ambition would thus be inadequate on Hegelian grounds. Along these lines of response to Stone, one could also point to Hegel's insight that what we take human to be is, in a strong sense, historically mutable and historically developing. Accordingly, any historically specific anthropology that stops short of freedom for all would similarly be found wanting on Hegelian grounds.

Despite the form of ethical love that emerges in the family, Hegel insists that family relations are unable to fully actualize the will's freedom, since the will's individuality – its difference from other wills – is not given the proper space to develop within this institution. "The disposition appropriate to the family is to have self-consciousness of one's individuality *within this unity*…so that one is present in it not as independent person but [only] as a *member* (*PR* §158). Thus, even though ethical love is present in the family, preserving the freedom of each of its members, this freedom is still limited by the general insularity characteristic of family life as well the overdetermination of the individual by the singularity of the family unit. Family life can thus cultivate genuine freedom through ethical love but only to a certain extent. The terminus of freedom as Hegel envisions it is much more expansive, requiring further individuation of the will as well as bringing the will into relation with a much wider circle of others than can be found in family life. For through this broader network of interaction the individual is able to actualize its freedom on a more universal scale and thereby better establish a determinate identity for itself beyond the confines of the family.

These limitations of the family lead to its "natural disintegration" and gives rise to civil society [*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*] (*PR* §181) – the second institution of ethical life – in which the particularity of the will receives its due. "The point of departure of [civil society] is the self-sufficiency of the particular…In civil society…a relation now arises whereby the particular is to be my primary determining principle" (*PR* §181A). In civil society, then, the particularity of the individual is re-asserted, as selves relate to one another as self-interested individuals pursuing their own self-chosen projects and welfare in a marketplace bound largely by contractual obligations, professional associations, and rights to private ownership. "In civil society, each individual is his own end, and all else means nothing to him…the concrete person who, as a

particular person…is his own end…Particularity…is the only standard by which each particular person promotes his welfare" (*PR* §182).

Because of its seemingly exclusive privileging of the particularity of the subject and its self-interest over and against its total identification with the family unit, Hegel initially describes civil society as "the loss of ethical life" (*PR* §181). For some kind of integrated and symbiotic unity between self-determining individuals is a quintessential feature of ethical life. The utter self-interest of the individual appears to undermine the possibilities for such union. However, in good dialectical fashion, the subject's particular self-interest passes over into a certain kind of ethical regard for others, thereby re-establishing an ethical unity on a more sophisticated and expansive level than was found in the family. As Hegel writes, "*subjective selfishness* turns into a *contribution towards the satisfactions of the needs of everyone else.* By a dialectical movement, the particular is mediated by the universal so that each individual, in earning, producing, and enjoying on his own account, thereby earns and produces for the enjoyment of others" (*PR* §199).[253] What originally appeared as a realm in which ethical life was lost due to an exclusive privileging of particularity and self-regard thus comes to be seen as formative of deeply ethical unities between selves and others via their interconnectedness through the reciprocity of work, economic association, and the meeting of common basic needs.

Accordingly, Hegel claims that civil society is, to some extent, a sphere of "semblance," for "while I believe that I am adhering to the particular…while my particularity remains my determining principle – that is, my end – the universal and the necessity of the wider context

[253] Cf. "Civil society…establishes a system of all-round interdependence, so that the subsistence and welfare of the individual and his rightful existence are interwoven with, and grounded, on the subsistence, welfare, and rights of all" (*PR* §183).

nevertheless remain the primary and essential factor…I am thereby serving the universal which in fact retains ultimate power over me" (*PR* §181A). In civil society, then, particularity and universality are only seemingly at odds, but are, in fact, bound up with and conditioned by each other. The individual is motivated by self-interest even as this self-interest naturally passes over into care for the other. "Although each appears to do precisely the opposite of the other and imagines that it can exist only be keeping the other at a distance, each nevertheless has the other as its condition" (*PR* §184A). Channeling the legacy of Adam Smith, Hegel thus insists that self-interest is not to be understood in exclusively selfish terms, since the interests of others – the universal – are met as a result of the individual's self-interested activity. Consider the following example to help elucidate Hegel's claim that particular self-interest passes over of its own accord into ethical regard for others, for the universal. An individual develops and exercises her skills and pursues her social and economic self-interest as a medical doctor. In order to successfully pursue her own self-interest in medicine, the doctor must necessarily take into account the interests and needs of others in the medical community and thereby widen her sphere of interest beyond her own limited self-regard. In this way, the doctor's self-interested activity and developed capacities are organically bound up with the development of a more universal perspective through tending to the health of others. Thus, as Hegel notes, "Through its reference to others, the particular end takes on the form of universality, and gains satisfaction by simultaneously satisfying the welfare of others" (*PR* §182A; cf. §185; §198).

Hegel goes on to highlight how the self-interest of the subject engenders more advanced forms of ethical unity through a discussion of the formation of various civic, economic, and professional associations, including corporations, companies, trade unions, universities, and churches (*PR* §182A). Through membership in one of these corporate bodies, the individual

comes to see that her own self-interest coincides with the interests of the other members – what is good for one is good for the other members of the corporation, since, presumably, all members of the corporation have certain shared interests. Just as in the family, corporations, estates, unions, and the like are thus given an "ethical status" (*PR* §255A) precisely because they organically connect the individual and her private ends and welfare with a more universal standpoint and concern. As Hegel states, "within the family, as well as in civil society…the individual makes his appearance…as a member of a universal (*PR* §303). But whereas in the family the freedom and individuality of the subject is overdetermined by the universality of singular family unity, in civil society the freedom and individuality of the subject attains a higher degree of development in and through integration with a more-expanded universality. And it is this sense that freedom of the will developed in civil society marks an advance over the family. For it is precisely through this expanded identification with others in civil society, that is, through the particular's immersion in universality, that one's *distinctive* sense of self becomes increasingly defined. One further becomes the self that one is through one's civil relations to others.

Importantly, Hegel attributes the initial reconciliation between the freedom and self-interest of the individual and ethical universality accomplished in civil society to the progressive materialization of the principle of freedom found in Christian religion, claiming that "in the Christian religion the right of subjectivity…and subjective freedom…arose…with sufficient strength to bring particularity into harmony with ethical unity" (*PR* §185).[254] Hegel's account of love in the early writings in religion is once again helpful in elucidating his point, for there we

[254] Cf. "The principle of the *self-sufficient and inherent infinite personality* of the individual, the principle of subjective freedom…arose in an inward form in the Christian religion" (*PR* §185).

saw that without love the universal moral law has the status of an external ought that was simply to be obeyed. Hegel positions love as a vehicle capable of symbiotically integrating the freedom and subjective particularity of the individual with the universality of the moral law, such that the universal law is transformed from a thoroughly positive command to an ethical practice that one freely identifies as one's own, as springing from the depths of one's own being. These integrative dynamics of love appear to function as the conceptual underpinning of civil society and the nascent reconciliation between particularity and universality it engenders, even as civil society functions as a vehicle that facilitates this integration within an increasingly expansive sphere. For whereas in the family this dynamic occurs within the context of a more limited kind of universality – a society bound by the natural and affective ties of blood and home – in civil society one learns to be "at home" [*zu Hause*] with oneself in relation to a more expansive pool of others that includes not only the others within a given professional association but also the many others outside the profession who members of the profession are intended to serve, even if this inherent other-directedness is not explicitly recognized by various self-interested actors.

Despite the important progress civil society makes toward actualizing the will's freedom, Hegel ultimately deem it to be an inadequate vehicle for the consummation of this task. For despite the other-regarding orientation of labor, members of civil society tend to remain overly tethered to their own self-interest and the specific skills and interests of their particular group(s). Hence in civil society we are still dealing with a relatively insular level of universality. As Hegel writes, "the member of civil society, in accordance with his *particular skill*, is a member of a corporation whose universal end is…no wider in scope than the end inherent in the trade which is the corporation's proper business and interest" (*PR* §251; also see *PR* §252). Indeed, Hegel worries that left untethered from a wider scope of universality, the principle of subjective

particularity subtending civil society is prone to boundless excesses of desire and consumption that threaten the various ethical unities formed in civil society. "Particularity in itself is boundless extravagance, and the forms of this extravagance are themselves boundless. Through their representations and reflections, human beings expand their desires, which do not form a closed circle like animal instinct and extend them to false infinity (*PR* §185A). In turn, these limitations of civil society immanently give rise to what Hegel refers to as the state [*der Staat*] – the most developed institution of ethical life, in which the will's freedom is fully actualized through the reconciliation of the opposing tendencies of the family (toward excessive unity) and civil society (toward excessive individuality and self-interest). For the state binds people together in a broader political community while simultaneously allotting them the independence to cultivate their own subjective particularity. And it is here, in the distinctive freedom achieved in the state, that the love first given voice in the early writings is consummated. It is to Hegel's account of the state that we now turn.

G. The State

Despite the respective excesses and deficiencies of the ethical unities found in the family and civil society, Hegel considers these ethical institutions to be the foundations of the state, Hegel's term of art that connotes not just the bare political order but the totality of communal human life animated by tradition, religion, moral conviction, and the like.[255] "The *family* is the first *ethical* root of the state; the *corporation* is the second, and it is based in civil society" (*PR*

[255] "The state, as the spirit of a nation [*Volk*], is both the law which *permeates all relations within it* and the customs and consciousness of the individuals who belong to it" (*PR* §274). Also see T.M. Knox's note 9 to §267 of his translation of *The Philosophy of Right.*

§255).[256] For the ethical unities found in the family and civil society provide the preliminary and intermediary stages of the will's fully developed freedom in the state. But the state reconciles the family's tendency to overdetermine the particularity of the individual and civil society's privileging on the self-interest of particular individuals by engendering a form of ethical unity between members of the broader political community and not just the members of one's family or guild. In the state, in other words, the freedom of the individual and the interest of the universal are symbiotically and consummately reconciled in what Hegel considers the pinnacle forms of freedom and ethical unity. "Union as such is itself the true content and end [of the state], and the destiny of individuals [in the state] is to lead a universal life…Accordingly, in the state…freedom enters into its highest right" (*PR* §258).[257] My contentions in what follows are, first, that the account of love that Hegel develops across his writings on religion shows up in important ways in his account of patriotism, or love of country, and the form of ethical unity it engenders and, second, that by attending to this connection we are able to discern a distinctive democratic kernel at the core of Hegel's political philosophy.

Our point of departure for discerning the presence of love at the heart of the state is a telling remark from the *Encyclopedia* where Hegel claims that "the state is the self-conscious ethical substance, the unification of the family principle with that of civil society. The same unity, which is in the family as a feeling of love, is its [the state's] essence, receiving however at the same time through the…principle of conscious and spontaneously active will the form of conscious universality" (*EL* §535). Hegel is telling us something quite remarkable – that the

[256] Cf. "The family is the primary basis of the state, the estates are the second" (*PR* §201A) & "the state is the immanent end…of the family and civil society" (*PR* §261).
[257] Cf. "In this condition of universal freedom, when I am reflected into myself, I am immediately reflected into the other, and…in relating myself to the other, I am related immediately to myself" (*EL* §436 A).

unity found in natural feeling of love is the essence of the state but that this form of "political love" achieves the form of universality through the actualization of the free and rational will. This means that love is present at the heart of the state but not in the form of feeling. For when confined to the mode of feeling, love's reach is limited to those within its immediate proximity. As Hegel states in the *Lectures,* "the human beings that one can love are only a few particular individuals" and "the heart that seeks to embrace the whole of humanity within itself indulges in a vain attempt to spread out its love until it becomes a mere pretense" (*LPR* 3:118). Thus, while the feeling of love may reign supreme in the more intimate spheres of marriage, family, and friendship, a feeling of political love – defined as love for those who are not our intimates – appears to Hegel to be a contradiction in terms. The absence of the feeling of love in the state, however, does not indicate the absence of love altogether but rather its presence in altered form – as an active structuring and restructuring presence in the creation and ratification of the laws of the state that bind citizens to one another. "Love is a feeling [*Empfindung*], that is, ethical life in its natural form. In the state, it is no longer present. There, one is conscious of unity as law" (*PR* §158). Here I take Hegel to be gesturing toward two points. First, that while *the feeling* of love is no longer present in the state, the form of unity engendered through love is in fact present in and through the laws of the state, that the laws of the state structure, secure, and actualize a form of sociality rooted in the concept and practice of love. And second, that the love first practiced and experienced in the family and the religious community – both of which are themselves manifestations of divine love (*LPR* 1:455) – trains and prepares one to participate in the creation of this form of unity engendered through law. The love practiced and promoted in familial and religious institutions, in other words, plays a vital role in preparing individuals to participate as

members of a properly rational state.[258] It could thus be said – in preliminary fashion – that through the ratification of collectively endorsed laws, the state exhibits the relational structure of divine love as developed across Hegel's corpus at a maximally expansive and mediate level. In other words, it could be said that collectively endorsed laws of the state are what most fully actualize and stabilize what we have identified throughout this work as a form of divine love in which self-determination and other- determination coincide. For when members of the state collectively create, endorse, and identify with mutually determined laws of the state, they are required to step outside of their isolated existences and identify and act in concert with the many others – strangers, acquaintances, adversaries, friends, and otherwise – who have different experiences and visions of life. And because other members of the state have also freely endorsed and identified with the same laws, the interests and well-being of other citizens are therefore no longer "other" to the individual but rather become co-extensive with the individual's own interests and well-being, thereby creating complex and ever-developing forms of unity between citizens. As Hegel writes, "Particular interests should…*pass over* of their own accord into the interest of the universal…[should] knowingly and willingly acknowledge the universal interest as their own *substantial spirit*" (*PR* §260). And yet, at the same time, Hegel also insists that in the particular's passing over to the universal one's subjective freedom – one's right [*Recht*] to find satisfaction in one's actions and choices – is not only kept intact but also enriched. The universal does not stamp out the particular but contributes to its growth and development.

[258] Thomas Lewis helpfully develops a related point regarding the importance of religion for shaping citizens' basic intuitions about justice in society. See Thomas A. Lewis, *Cultivating Our Intuitions: Hegel on Religion, Politics, and Public Discourse*" in *Journal of Society of Christian Ethics* 27, no.1 (2007): 205-224.

> The modern state has enormous strength and depth [precisely] because it allows the principle of subjectivity to attain fulfilment in the self-sufficient extreme of personal particularity, while at the same time bringing it back to substantial unity [with the universal…The universal does not attain validity or fulfillment without the interest, knowledge, and volition of the particular (*PR* §260).

Legislation therefore requires expansive and particularized "participation in the government's knowledge, deliberations, and decisions on matters of universal concern" (*PR* §314). For lacking the insights of the particular, the good of the political community merely hangs in the air, unrooted from the daily needs, desires, and aspirations of the people that comprise it. These daily needs, desires, and aspirations are simply not seen and accounted for by the merely abstract universal. We thus begin to see that Hegel's invocation of the universal does not suggest an exclusively top-down or a priori mode of legislation. True to form, he instead favors a dialectical approach in which citizenry are able and prepared to revise received universal laws in light of particularized changing social needs and circumstances, even as this process of revision is framed in light of the always already operative and circulating universal laws of the land. Stated otherwise, we could say that Hegel envisions a symbiotic relation between the particularity of the individual and universality of the law, such that each constitutes and is constituted by the other in a way that contributes to the ongoing development of both. For the content of the law is not a fixed and formal construction but rather depends upon a citizenry able and prepared to reinterpret and reapply received law in light of changing social circumstances. "The state, as the spirit of a nation, is…also the customs and consciousness of the individuals who belong to it (*PR* §274). And yet, at the same time, law enables novel forms of individual self-expression and social relation. For in a law-abiding society, individuals learn to act in an orderly manner so as to cultivate a level of individual and collective freedom that is simply not possible in a Hobbesian state of nature that lacks such structuring constraints. In Hegel's vision, then, collectively

determined laws promote mutual freedom rather than perpetrate violence unto the other. Indeed, this difficult and dynamic collective process of mutually determining the laws of the state marks the developmental pinnacle of the will's concrete freedom in the state.

For Hegel, this process of mutual ratification and revision of collectively determined laws is what binds citizens to each other in a way that designates the unity of the people (*populus*) as opposed to the people as mere multitude (*multitudo*). So conceived, we see coming into a view a deeply democratic vision of the Hegelian state. For democracy is essentially a form of collective self-governance (*dêmos- kratos*), in which the citizens are ruling themselves, and Hegel's vision of the state is one in which self-determination and self-interest and other-determinations and the interests of others are agonistically and yet symbiotically negotiated – in which each is free despite being bound by the interests of other citizens – through mutual articulation and endorsement of laws.[259] And crucially, we begin to see that through this democratic process of mutual legislation, the state actualizes the hallmark relational structure of love – its circular ecstasis – developed across Hegel's writings on religion at a maximally expansive and mediate level. That is to say, we begin to see that the democratically determined laws of the state are the worldly sites in which the absolute content of religion – free love – "gives itself secular

[259] My understanding of democracy in this dissertation is deeply informed by the tradition of American Romanticism and Pragmatism, especially the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, and John Dewey. For these authors, democracy connotes first and foremost a pervasive public culture, ethos, or way life wherein articulate personal freedom and growth coincides with social unity and collective flourishing. See, for example, Walt Whitman's claim, "The purpose of democracy is to illustrate at all hazards, the doctrine or theory that man, properly trained in sanest, highest freedom, may and must become a law, and series of laws, unto himself, surrounding and providing for, not only his own personal control, but all his relations to other individuals, and to the state." Walt Whitman, *Democratic Vistas*, ed. Ed Folsom (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010), 313.

expression" and "secures an existence and actuality for itself" (*PR* §270).[260] The impact of Hegel's early and mature writings on love can be seen operating at number of different levels of Hegel's account of the state, one of which we have already considered above in our account of the mutual legislative process. At present, let us note the significance of Hegel's early discussion of the *pleroma* of the law as consisting of the dialectical alignment of particularity and universality in love. Recall that in the "Spirit" essay, love is conceived of as an inclination to act as the law commands so that the integrity of one's subjective particularity remains intact while the content of the law is rendered richer, fuller, and more determinate on account of the subject's irreducibly particular relation to it. "The inclination to act as the law may command, a virtue, is a synthesis in which the law…loses its universality and the subject its particularity; both lose their opposition..." (*SCF,* 214). In the *Philosophy of Right,* we witness a similar pleromatic logic at work in Hegel's discussion of the dialectical realignments of particularity and universality in the mutual revision and ratification of communal laws. For while does not explicitly name this ongoing process of dialectical realignment "love," it should be apparent that the logic of love is fundamentally guiding Hegel's analysis.

An even more significant impact of love on the *Philosophy of Right* can be found in Hegel's bold, often maligned, and often misunderstood claim that, "the state is the way of God in the world and its basis is the power of reason actualizing itself as will. In considering the idea of

[260] Cf. "The laws [of the state] are the development of the concept of freedom, and this concept…has as its foundation and truth the concept of freedom as it is grasped in religion" (*LPR* 1:453). Also see "The Idea of the state in modem times has the distinctive characteristic that the state is the actualization of freedom…in accordance with the concept of the will, i.e. in accordance with its universality and divinity" (*PR* §260).

the state…we should consider the Idea, this actual God, in its own right" (*PR* §258).[261] Many interpret Hegel's "deification of the state" as either smacking of a totalitarian theocracy or serving to justify the absolute supremacy of the Prussian monarchy of his day or some combination of the two, a position unsoundly supported by mistranslating Hegel to claim "the state is the march of God in the world."[262] This totalitarian theocratic reading, however, is one Hegel thoroughly debunks in *The Philosophy of Right* and in *The Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*.[263] My contention is that by highlighting the central importance that the representation of God as love plays in his account of God not only casts fresh light on Hegel's claim concerning the relation between God and the state but also opens up generative possibilities for thinking about the agonistic formation and preservation of an internally and essentially diverse yet symbiotic modern democratic "we."

We can begin to unpack this idea with the now apparent string of claims that because God is love and because the state is an expression of God in the world - *der Gang von Gottes in der Welt* – the state and its manner of uniting citizens through collectively determined laws is to be understood as a manifestation of divine love. It is in this sense, as the title of this chapter indicates, that love is at the heart of the state. The task that remains is to think through with

[261] Here I have deviated rather significantly from the translation offered by Nisbet and Knox, who render "Es is der Gang Gottes in der Welt, daß der Staat ist" as "the state is the march of God in the world." My rendering is closer to Gordon Kauffman's and Shlomo Avineri's rendering of the phrase "it is the way of God in the world that there is the state." See Walter Kauffman, *Hegel's Political Philosophy* (New York: Atherton Press, 1970), 279.Also see Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 176-177.

[262] Karl Popper is one of the most prominent anglo critics of Hegel in this regard. See Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 28-32.

[263] See especially *PR* §270

greater depth and precision the sort of democratic relationality that divine love promulgates. We already considered dimensions of this issue in our earlier discussion of the mutual articulation and endorsement of laws, a process which is both supported by and bears the structure of love. But what we have not yet directly considered is the way in which the agony [*Schmerz*] of divine love considered in chapter four factors into this process. There recall Hegel's claim that anguished love is precisely the concept of Spirit itself (*LPR* 3:240) in the sense that Spirit possesses the power to form a positive unity between selves in spite of the enduring presence of pain and strife (*LPR* 3:215, 306).[264] The unity forged through the divine love of the Spirit is thus not to be characterized in terms of a fixed and serene harmony, as Hegel thought was the case with Romantic and Enlightenment conceptions of love. And neither does this unity presuppose unanimous consensus as versions of classical liberalism would espouse. The unity of divine love does not entail the absence of discord and tension. Instead, the unique power of divine love consists in its ability to unite disparate elements in spite the persistence of strife and discord. What is more, as we have seen, the unity of divine love does not permit the relata to remain united merely from a cool distance but rather requires them to mutually traverse the gap between them and to enter into the self-determined movements of the other as if they were one's own. Divine love, in other words, does not permit the relata to remain at the level of sheer opposition – sheer over-and-againstness [*Jenseits*] – typical of the understanding [*Verstand*]. And yet, at the same time, it neither mandates nor assumes that opposition will simply be annulled as a result of the mutual ecstatic engagement of the relata. Although it does require that each party to the relation be willing to treat their own assumptions, claims, and practices as corrigible and the

[264] Cf. "The life of Spirit is not a life that is fearing death and austerely saving itself from ruin; rather, it bears death calmly, and in death, it sustains itself. Spirit only wins its truth by finding its feet in its absolute disruption" (*PhS*, ¶32).

assumptions, claims, and practices of the other as potentially possessing reasons for altering their own established ways of being in the world.[265] Indeed, for Hegel, this is what it means to be modern. For what distinguishes modernity from other epochs is its endless capacity for self-transformation in light of its ongoing internalization of otherness.[266] To this extent, we can say that divine love is the dynamism that fuels modernity's constant capacity for renewal. This recognition of corrigibility and openness to the other makes this a difficult and agonistic process of coming to comprehend ourselves, others, and the structures of power in which we are embedded participants. For it requires recognizing the suffering of the other and structures of unfreedom and reflecting upon what such suffering and unfreedom mean for extant laws and institutions. But the acknowledgement of the suffering of the other and corrigibility of one's settled norms opens the door to the possibility of something novel emerging from the interaction of differences, opens the door for "us" to "live again" – to be resurrected – despite the various unfreedoms that have characterized the past. To jointly and steadfastly occupy this tumultuous and contested space and to remain open to being unsettled by other without simply losing oneself is what it means to endure the anguish of divine love and to be united by it. And, at the same time, it also reflects what it means to be a member of a rational state. To achieve and recognize this agonistic unity in the face of ongoing difference and discord is, as Hegel memorably notes in the preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, "to recognize reason as the rose in the cross of the

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[265] Molly Farneth, *Hegel's Social Ethics: Religion, Conflict, and Rituals of Reconciliation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 125.

[266] This view of modernity is argued for in detail by several contemporary scholars. See Terry Pinkard, "Subjects, Objects, and Normativity: What Is It Like To Be an Agent?," *International Yearbook of German Idealism* 1, eds. Karl Ameriks and Jurgen Stolzenberg (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003), 201-219; Frederick Neuhouser, *Foundations of Hegel's Social Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

present." As this imagery suggests, Hegel is asking us to find ways of creating unity amidst past and ongoing suffering and strife. He is not, to be sure, asking us to resign ourselves to these grim realities. Nor is he asking us to overlook them or assume that they can readily be solved by the dialectical advance of reason.[267] But he is urging us to be reshaped in light of them and beckoning us to find ways to unite with each other in light of these transformations.

Applied to the question of political relationality, we can begin to see that the unity forged through divine love harbors a deeply agonistic-democratic edge, Hegel's explicit critiques of ancient forms of democracy notwithstanding.[268] As a school of thought, democratic agonism emerged out a growing dissatisfaction with predominant strands of political liberalism that placed an undue emphasis on unanimous consensus and neutrality at the expense of political conflict and pluralism. As Chantal Mouffe, one of the earliest and most influential proponents of this line of thought, notes of John Rawls's brand of political liberalism, "it tends to erase the very

[267] Hegel's discussion of the production of poverty and its associated dispositions – which Hegel refers to as the rabble [*Pöbel*] – from out of civil society is a prime example of such intractability (*PR,* §244) As many commentators have noted, the rabble signifies an unmediated otherness, within Hegel's system, the enduring presence of which signals that the development of universal freedom and ethical life is incomplete. See Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel s Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 70-83; Michael Hardimon, *Hegel's Social Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 240-245; Frederick Neuhouser, *Foundations of Hegel's Social Theory,* 172-175, 318-322.

[268] Molly Farneth has recently argued that an agonistic democratic model of political community emerges from Hegel's treatment of the tragic nature of human action and the necessity of practices of forgiveness and reconciliation in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. See Molly Farneth, *Hegel's Social Ethics: Religion, Conflict, and Rituals of Reconciliation,* 101-133. I agree with Farneth's conclusion concerning the agonistic democratic model that emerges from Hegel's thinking in the *Phenomenology* on the question of political community, but Farneth's exclusive focus on the *Phenomenology* and her lack of attention to how the practice of love vitally informs the democratic dimensions of Hegel's thinking on the question of political community render her account incomplete.

place of the adversary, thereby expelling any legitimate opposition from the public sphere."[269] In contrast to Rawls's approach, Mouffe insists that "democracy requires accepting that conflict and division are inherent to politics and that there is no place where reconciliation could be definitively achieved as the full actualization of the unity of 'the people.'"[270] For Mouffe, conflict and struggle are ineliminable elements of political life. Far from jeopardizing a democratic society, conflict and struggle are the conditions of its existence, its lifeblood. The task, then, as she envisions it, is to develop institutional arenas in which these struggles can be genuinely played out without spilling over into violence and anarchy, a task which she pursues on the basis of her rethinking of the Carl Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction.[271] Mouffe's move is to recommend that we view the conflictual space of democratic politics in terms of relations between worthy adversaries to be engaged with rather than as relations with enemies.[272] For viewing the political "other" as adversary instead of enemy helps ensure "that some kind of common bond [will] exist between the parties in conflict…[that] conflict…does not destroy the political association…that one will not treat their opponents as enemies to be eradicated, seeing their demands as illegitimate, which is precisely what happens with the antagonistic friend/enemy relation."[273] Mouffe's contention is that fostering these sorts of contests between worthy political adversaries will unlock the "integrative role that conflict plays in modern

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[269] Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso Books, 2000), 14.

[270] Ibid., 15-16

[271] Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political* (London: Routledge, 2005), 20-21.

[272] Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox,* 30

[273] Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political,* 20.

democracy."[274] For citizens will enter into mutual "debate about possible alternatives" to pressing issues of concern to all, a debate in which neither side can be thought to possess an incorrigible truth on the matter at hand.

> An agonistic conception of democracy acknowledges the contingent character of the hegemonic politico-economic articulations which determine the specific configuration of a society at a given moment. They are precarious and pragmatic constructions which can be disarticulated and transformed as a result of the agonistic struggle among adversaries.[275]

Crucially, however, Mouffe does not understand the integrative potential of agonistic democracy to be synonymous with the absence of conflict and disagreement or the presence of some kind of harmonious reconciliation between political opponents. "The democratic society cannot be conceived any more as a society that would have realized the dream of a perfect harmony in social relations."[276] Mouffe's agonistic vision of democracy is thus one which seeks to preserve a fluid unity in and through the honest and open negotiation of potentially corrigible differences.

With the basic contours of Mouffe's position on the table, we are better able to discern how the presence of divine anguished love within Hegel's conception of the state lends his political vision a deeply agonistic-democratic edge. For this conception of love does not seek to mediate away all otherness and the struggles that it may engender. But, at the same time, it does not allow self and other to remain at perpetual and distant loggerheads. It does not allow them to remain wholly other to each other. It requires mutual free acts of agonistic and agonizing circular ecstasis, wherein one strives to comprehend the other by immersing oneself into the self-

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[274] Ibid., 30-31.

[275] Ibid., *On the Political,* 33.

[276] Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox,* 21-22.

determined life of the other and returns back to oneself *other* than one was before the journey. It requires, as Hegel often says, learning "to be at home with oneself in one's other" (*in seinem Anderen bei sich selbst zu sein*). It requires, in other words, love, in the distinctive sense of the term developed across Hegel's writings on religion. Through these mutual acts of circular ecstasis, the relation between self and other is progressively negotiated such that divisive social forces can gradually be integrated into complex and sophisticated forms of free heterogeneous unity – free unity amidst irreducible plurality – can arise. Gillian Rose's notion of "diremption" comes close to what Hegel is driving at. "Diremption…implies…a unity without positing any substantial pre-existent unity, original or final…Diremption draws attention to the trauma of separation of that which was…*not* originally united.[277] Hegel's efforts at articulating a political form of unity capable of continually adapting to the enduring presence of conflictual otherness in the public sphere thus brings his thought into proximity with that of Mouffe's. But that Hegel develops this vision of political unity on the basis of his account of anguished divine love sets him apart for Mouffe by uniquely offering a vision of agonistic democracy rooted in distinctively religious ideas and practices.[278]

To be sure, Hegel recognizes that the circular ecstasis that forms and sustains this free heterogenous unity forged in law is a constant and challenging work (one which he thinks no extant or extinct state has fully actualized). This is why he claims that it is only through turning

[277] Gillian Rose, *The Broken Middle*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 236.

[278] For this reason, I believe the account offered here could fruitfully be brought into conversation with recent debates about religion and democracy. I have Luke Bretherton's recent work *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2019).

this act into a habit that the process of mutual ratification and revision of law can be sustained over time. Hegel calls this habit patriotism.

> Patriotism…is in general…a volition that has become habitual. It is the consciousness that my substantial and particular interest is preserved and contained in the interest and end of an other…Here this other immediately ceases to be an other for me, and my consciousness of this, I am free (*PR* §268).

Hegel's insistence that the development of a habit is essential for the development of mutual freedom may initially strike us as puzzling in light of the fact that he elsewhere claims that "what one does out of habit, one does without thought, mechanically, it proceeds on its own as compared to our conscious will, like a necessity."[279] Hegel raises for us a deeply Kantian question – how can something that operates according to mechanical necessity contribute to the cultivation of freedom? But Hegel's answer reflects his deep disagreement with Kant's largely dichotomous understanding of the relation between nature and freedom. Rather than position habit (which Hegel often refers to as second nature) and freedom as in locked opposition, Hegel insists that habit is what makes freedom in the fullest sense possible. For habit liberates us from subservience to natural determinations, such as sensations and feelings, which, as we have seen, Hegel considers to be largely absent at the level of political relationality, freeing us to pursue more complex, demanding, and spiritual [*geistig*] projects. As Hegel states in the *Encyclopedia*, "The essential determination is the liberation from affecting feelings, which the human being wins through habit" (*EL* §410). Over time, the repetition of an action or behavior turns it into second nature, part of my disposition, or character, in the ancient Greek sense of *hexis* or the Latin *habitus*, which connote a sense of "having" or "possessing" a certain tendency of mind and

[279] G.W.F. Hegel, Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des Geistes, Vol. 13, ed. Franz Hespe and Burkhard Tuschling, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1994), 130. Cited from Thomas A. Lewis, "Speaking of Habits: The Role of Language in Moving from Habit to Freedom," *The Owl of Minerva* 39, no.1+2 (2007/2008), 30.

practice, a tendency to act in a consistent manner in many different circumstances. In this sense, developing the habit of patriotism – in which – citizens must become disposed and sensitized to ecstatic ways of inhabiting the public world – ultimately facilitates concrete mutual freedom.

Hegel thinks that the various institutions of ethical life facilitate the development of patriotic habits. For, as we have seen, institutions like the family, estates, education, and religion structure and direct social activity in certain ways and not others. Specifically, we saw that these institutions train and prepare their members to engage in acts of circular ecstasis at varying levels of universality. These intermediary forms of association thus prepare individuals for habitual patriotic behavior in the state by acclimating them to the general practice in other domains of social life. But the state, too, must foster its own distinctive institutions so as to reinforce this ecstatic pattern of behavior at a maximally universal level. Beyond the institutions of ethical life highlighted above, Hegel remains relatively silent on what other sorts of public practices and institutions might facilitate this pattern of behavior and the mode of unity it engender, leaving us to ask how and what institutions can be formed and reconstituted so as to more fully and stably actualize an idea of democratic freedom as collective self-government.

CONCLUSION

What are we to make of the fate of reason in modernity in the wake of postmodernity? This dissertation approached this question through a topic that is at once classical and contemporary – how we think about and relate to alterity, to what is "other" than "us." The postmodern critique of rational cognition – most prominently voiced in this work by Emmanuel Levinas – as an essentially totalizing vehicle incapable of encountering alterity by and large dominates the theoretical landscape for thinking about alterity today. For it is said by man that there is no place for a totalizing conception of rational cognition that absorbs all otherness into itself in a world marked by the increasing proliferation of irreducible plurality. For many, this criticism deals a fatal blow to the philosophical ambitions of modernity. This dissertation has attempted to show that proclamations of the demise of modernity on the basis of its totalizing tendencies are premature and that the writings of Hegel offer valuable and innovative resources for addressing quintessential postmodern problematics in distinctively modern register.

We saw that in the wake of their criticisms, postmodern thinkers developed an array of approaches and ideas that attempt to wrest alterity free from the totalizing clutches of reason in its various guises. Most prominent in this work was the radical hospitality approach to alterity, which received its programmatic formulation in the writings of Emmanuel Levinas before being variously adopted by many of his critical inheritors. However, despite Levinas's and his critical inheritors' sophisticated arguments, innovative ideas, and noble intentions, it was argued that in their efforts to safeguard alterity from the totalizing violence of rational cognition they ultimately offer anemic accounts of ethics and politics. For in the case of the former, the account of intersubjectivity that emerged was one that remains trapped at a level abstraction and anonymity, as selves and others relate to each other as – *and only as* – wholly other. Rather than taking up

the difficult task of engaging with the other, selves and others are kept at a distance from each other – remain unknown to each other – and are thus unable to meet each other's concrete and particular needs. And in the case of the latter, politics is seen as irremediably bound to rationally determined laws and institutions and hence as bound to do violence to alterity. Politics and the rule of law thus comes to be viewed as harboring an essentially antagonistic relation to alterity. The possibility that politics and the rule of law could be an agonistic ally of alterity rather than a sheerly oppressive or destructive force is dismissed, leaving an anarchic and anti-political ethics to do the work of forging social bonds between selves and others. By abandoning rational cognition in favor of radical openness to an extra-conceptual alterity, postmoderns thus risking abandoning the possibility of ethical and political transformation that results from the generative friction that results when disparate selves and others endeavor to understand each other.

The crux of this dissertation was to argue that the writings of Hegel offer a viable and, in many ways, attractive alternative to the postmodern celebration of an extra-conceptual alterity and denigration of law and reason as inherently totalizing mechanisms of relating to alterity. For Hegel offers us conceptions of law and reason that entail agonistic yet mutually generative and non-totalizing interactions with alterity. At the heart of my reading of Hegel is his conception of love as developed across his early and mature writings on religion. It was argued that his conception of love undergirds his conception of rational cognition in varying ways throughout his corpus. Specifically, it was argued not only that love functions as the structural and phenomenological basis for understanding what it means to engage in rational cognition but also that the practice of love trains and prepares one to engage in rational cognition, that the practice of love is a vital propaedeutic for learning to cognize rationally. By foregrounding the multifaceted impact of love on rational cognition, we find that the latter, far from being a

totalizing vehicle, involves ongoing, ecstatic, and upbuilding immersions of the self into the self-determined movements of other selves, an act of self-expropriation that facilitates identification with the other, such that the self is transformed – becomes *other* – as result.

Rethinking reason on the basis of love provided a robust platform for rethinking Hegel's political philosophy in the concluding chapter of this work. For many thinkers – postmodern and otherwise – Hegel's articulation of a fully rational state in which universal freedom prevails epitomizes the problematic totalizing tendencies of Western philosophical modernity. For it is claimed that the universal freedom, vouchsafed by reason, is but a veil for parochial interests and domination. Foregrounding the significance of Hegel's account of love to his account of reason gives the lie to this line of interpretation of the Hegelian state as totalizing and totalitarian, revealing instead a deeply agonistic vision of democracy, in which conflicting interests and constituencies are brought into close contact in the cautious hope that divisiveness can be transformed into symbiotic integration. For a polity rooted in love – in Hegel distinctive employment of the term – is one in which citizens must be mutually ready and able to let go of their firmly held assumptions, entrenched positions, and established senses of individual and collective self-identity via a dynamic movement of ecstasis into the free movements of an other and to be transformed as a result. The Hegelian state is thus neither totalizing nor totalitarian but rather is an essentially contested site whose laws and institutions remain perpetually open to revision in light of the agonistic interactions that occur between its various members. That the Hegelian state – the actuality of reason in the world – persistently problematizes and revises its own normative categories through citizens' recognition of and responses to the one-sided deficiencies in its existing laws and institutions is indicative of the self-perpetuating nature

modernity and its deep relevance for we think the political today, despite the antimodern protestations of many postmodern thinkers.

In conclusion, with Hegel, alterity is never an absolute alterity, as rational cognition is always at work endeavoring to better know its other but without doing violence to it. For an emphatically postmodern sensibility for whom alterity must remain a radical alterity, an alterity that is wholly other, Hegel's approach will no doubt be unsatisfactory. But, as I have argued, the postmodern celebration of radical alterity brings with it some rather severe limitations when it comes to thinking and practicing ethics, politics, and religion. Hegel's agonistic approach to alterity leaves open the possibility that these limitations can be overcome so that what first appears as radical differences can be symbiotically integrated into something greater but without committing the totalizing violence for which his thought is so often maligned. To this extent, Hegel – the quintessential modern thinker – offers us timely and generative resources for addressing the distinctively postmodern preoccupation with welcoming the other.

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