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KARL AMERIKS

The legacy of idealism in the philosophy of Feuerbach, Marx, and Kierkegaard

The leading figures of the generation that came to philosophical maturity in the 1840s[1] stressed, from the start, their sharp disagreements with the systematic idealism of their predecessors. As Søren Kierkegaard's pseudonymous author Johannes de Silentio makes clear in *Fear and Trembling*, the one thing that he is *not* writing is "the System,"[2] that is, any version of Hegelian idealism. Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx could have said the same. Their followers, to this day, understandably emphasize those aspects of their heroes' work that take them so far away from German Idealism that they can appear to be an attempt to "leave philosophy"[3] altogether and to replace it with radical critique, revolutionary activism, and rigorous empirical science. In addition, all three thinkers agree on the charge that most of German Idealism, like much of modern philosophy in general, can be dismissed as little more than an alienating effort to carry out theology by other means. Their agreement on this point is all the more remarkable since it arose despite obvious and deep disagreements: Feuerbach and Marx came to bury all religion, whereas Kierkegaard aimed to rejuvenate it by calling for a return to Christian orthodoxy.

This standard self-portrait of the wholesale rejection of German Idealism by its immediate successors stands in need of correction now that we know much more about the genesis of these philosophies than was common knowledge earlier. Hegel's work in particular has come to be understood as a much more liberating influence than his immediate detractors would have us believe.[4] Similarly, Marx's earliest "philosophical and economic manuscripts," which became available only in the 1930s, reveal that even the most "realistic" of thinkers was very concerned with the abstract details of the idealist tradition.[5] Even if the main immediate effect of the philosophies of the 1840s was to reinforce the decline of idealism in general, one of the most remarkable strengths of German Idealism lies in the fact that so many of its ideas remain incorporated in the work of even its most vocal opponents.

I Feuerbach

Within the camp of Hegel's immediate successors, it was Feuerbach who developed the most influential philosophical reaction to idealism. The mainstream of German Idealism had long encouraged a dismantling of the orthodox attachment to a traditional and literal reading of Christian claims. In the vacuum created by Hegel's death this dismantling took on a feverish pace and involved the utilization of three major strategies. One strategy emphasized focusing critically on the *historical* details of religious statements and pointing out significant contradictions between the narratives provided in the Gospels. Another method (introduced by David Friedrich Strauss) involved denying the primary significance of overt literal claims in biblical accounts while suggesting that its narratives could be understood as representing a *covert* and more important "mythic" truth, a truth reflecting the collective aspirations of the early Christian communities. One could appreciate the kerygmatic value of a group committed to a life focused on "salvation stories" even if those stories might not correspond to any natural or supernatural facts.

The third and most radical approach was Feuerbach's. He argued directly that *even in its covert meaning* Christianity is a bundle of contradictions, and the logical conclusion of its unraveling is an exaltation of humanity. This process does not "save" religious consciousness as such but reveals it as ripe for replacement by anthropology and a "philosophy of the future" that inverts rather than appropriates theological doctrines. For a while, all radical thinkers in Germany became Feuerbachians and took his work to signify a dethroning of Hegelianism.[6] Ironically, however, it is precisely on the issue of religion that Feuerbach's philosophical doctrines remain most deeply influenced by Hegel. They can be understood as little more than a filling out of the details of Hegel's scathing account of orthodox Christianity as a form of "unhappy consciousness" in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.[7]

The enormous dependence of Feuerbach on Hegel was masked for a number of reasons. Hegel was directly familiar with the Atheism Controversy that occurred in Jena when Fichte lost his academic post in Jena in 1799 after brazenly presenting a version of "moral religion" that, unlike Kant's, savaged (as "contradictory") rather than salvaged the postulation of a supernatural personal God and an immortal human soul. What upset the German authorities (Goethe was Fichte's superior) was not the content of Fichte's view but the straightforwardness of his presentation of it. This scandal taught later idealists the importance of cloaking their radical humanistic doctrines in an esoteric form. Hegel's chapter on "unhappy consciousness" is a classic of this genre. In nearly impenetrable passages about the inner conflict of an "unalterable" and a "particular"

consciousness, "self-divided" and "gazing" into itself, Hegel pictured orthodox Christianity, especially in its medieval form, as the deepest alienation, as an internalizing of the master–slave relation within one's mind and throughout one's religious activity. In such religion, the individual imagines a perfect "unalterable" mind that reigns over humans in a *transcendent*, *contingent*, and *asymmetric* way. The underlying point of Hegel's dialectic is that the frustration at the heart of such religious experience, the humiliation of the self as it acknowledges its inferiority in the depths of its feeling, work, and thought (through the ideals of the vows of chastity, poverty, and total obedience), is grounded in a valid implicit thirst for individual satisfaction (reward in heaven). This pent-up demand eventually forces the reversal that occurs with the Reformation and brings about the acknowledgment of the sanctity of secular life. By turning the medieval world on its head and introducing new ideals of fulfillment in marriage, business, and the construction of a free state, heaven is brought down to earth "in the spiritual daylight of the present."[8] The church is demoted from its position as an absolute authority to a merely heuristic role as a factory of dialectical symbols for the appreciation of the world's thoroughgoing rational unity. The "unalterable" and previously hypostatized Divine Spirit becomes the self-realization of the human spirit in the *immanent* sphere of modern social institutions – institutions that provide (and are understood as providing) structures that are in a *necessary* and *symmetric* relation to the satisfaction of finite individuals. The old image of the gracious lowering of God the Father to an Incarnation in individual flesh becomes speculatively reinterpreted as an inverted anticipation of the modern liberation of individual human consciousness as such from its own alienating projections.

The general notion of self-alienation, and of the overcoming of alienation, is at the heart of the whole idealist story of the satisfaction of self-consciousness; its account of religion is merely the most notorious chapter in this story. For the idealists, the self's satisfaction is always a matter of achieving "unity in difference" in the form of a "freedom" that comes from "being at home" with oneself through an other, from experiencing the relation to the other as a way of finding and fulfilling rather than losing oneself. "Alienation" occurs when one still does not recognize that "the other" that is essential to oneself is also dependent on oneself; one treats that which is in part dependent on oneself as if it were independent. In this way people make a fetish of religious, economic, and political institutions, imagining that their structures have an independent authority – until they eventually realize that whatever authority these "universals" have is given to them by the basic needs of real individuals.

All these points are reiterated and their detailed implications made plain in Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity*. After having shown, in earlier work, the same recklessness as Fichte by openly declaring the falsity of a fundamental pos-

tulate of the old faith – human immortality – Feuerbach also suffered the same fate.[9] He lost his chance for an academic position, and, sensing that there was no more to lose, he chose to write down as directly as he could all the radical ideas he had absorbed from Hegel.

This is not to say that Feuerbach's critique of religion depends entirely on Hegel. Feuerbach's philosophy employs three general and quite distinct epistemological strategies, and only the first overlaps with Hegel's own perspective. Feuerbach's first and best-known strategy is a psychological theory of "projection" that is developed along very simplified Hegelian lines and is offered as a causal account of the *origin* of religious belief. Feuerbach's second strategy involves the radical empiricist (and non-Hegelian) doctrine that the *justification* of statements in general has to derive from sensation. His third strategy involves the even more radical doctrine that the mere *meaning* of any statement transcending human experience has to be totally empty. The second and third doctrines might be intended as attempts to make up for the obvious philosophical insufficiency of the first doctrine. Although the "projection" theory continues to have considerable popular influence (e.g., in contemporary Freudian dismissals of religion), by itself it is little more than a crude version of the "genetic fallacy," a version that does not even bother to offer a genetic story with genuinely scientific credentials. Even if it were true (or it could somehow be shown to be at least likely) that projections like those alleged to occur on Feuerbach's psychological theory have been the causes of all our *actual* attachments to religious belief, it still would not follow that the statements expressed in such beliefs could have absolutely no truth or possible justification.

Feuerbach's radical empiricist doctrines of justification and meaning would "clinch the case" against religion, but they can be of philosophical use here only if they can be given a non-question-begging justification. It is unclear, however, whether doctrines making such strong claims as Feuerbach's can ever be established, and the strategy of relying on them suffers from the oddity of tying oneself down to enormously controversial general philosophical theses in order to challenge a few specific and rather extravagant claims. Hegel himself disparaged this overly ambitious kind of empiricism,[10] as did Marx, and so on this point Feuerbach was left with the company of crude positivists rather than dialecticians. In the end, Feuerbach is probably read most charitably on this issue if he is taken to be offering not a *philosophical refutation* of traditional religious belief but only a *popular diagnosis* of it for those who have already lost conviction. He appears to be presuming that most of his readers are already pre-theoretically inclined to be so suspicious in practice about taking religion literally that *they* are not looking for much more than some kind of natural psychological hypothesis about how the remarkable phenomenon of religious orthodoxy could ever have arisen.

Feuerbach realized that "fall back" positions are possible for defenders of religious claims. Right after using the projection theory to dismiss orthodox religion, Feuerbach discusses what he calls a "milder way," a strategy that retreats to a quasi-Kantian defense of religion. The "milder" or "transcendental" philosopher is described as holding on to a distinction between God "in himself" and "for us." Unlike negative theology, this position is not satisfied with allowing a simple absolute being that is a subject without positive properties. It concedes to common belief the idea that God should be thought of in terms of some predicates, but it also concedes to epistemological developments in modern philosophy that there are deep difficulties in warranting specific predications about God. Thus, it reserves divine properties for an unknowable characterization of God "in himself" as opposed to what he is "for us." At this point Feuerbach introduces his central notion of our "species being": "[I]f my conception is determined by the constitution of my species, the distinction between what an object is in itself, and what it is for me ceases; for this conception is an absolute one."[11]

Feuerbach appears to be presuming that if the "transcendentalist" tries to use the notion of an "in itself" to leave room for statements about God to have predicates that signify anything beyond the ideal properties of humanity as a species, such as perfect human love, power, intelligence, etc., then he must be dismissed for speaking nonsense.[12] There supposedly is not and cannot be anything beyond the "absolute" standard of the natural phenomenon of the human species, and all distinctions between what is "for us" and "in itself" must be understood as mere relative distinctions between how things actually appear to a particular individual and how they could be sensibly manifested to humanity in general. On this view, traditional religious language does not have to be totally discarded, but its talk about divine love and similar properties must be understood as an unhappy hypostatization of what are genuine predicates of humanity's capacities as a species. A proper understanding of our "species being" is thus the solution to unhappy consciousness. The notion of the human species itself is Feuerbach's epistemological, ontological, and ethical *substitute* for the absolute role that was previously played by the notion of God as traditionally understood.

Because Feuerbach realized that his analysis might be taken to be no more than a version of Hegel's own view expressed in clearer terms, he added a critique directed against Hegel, a critique alleging a "contradiction in the speculative [i.e., Hegelian] doctrine of God." Before criticizing Hegel, however, Feuerbach noted that the "speculative doctrine of God" should be understood as more than simply a clumsy modern replacement for Christianity. It can be regarded as the culmination of a long-standing mystical strand within Christianity itself, a strand that treats creation as an act needed for God's own sake. According to this view, "Only in the positing of what is other than himself, of the world, does God posit himself as God. Is God almighty without Creation? No! Omnipotence first

realizes, proves itself in creation."[13] In this way some pre-modern Christians can be understood as having already applied to God the general idealist notion that the satisfaction of self-consciousness requires a recognition of one's self by another self. But on Feuerbach's analysis, the "speculative" version of this notion ends in "contradiction": "God has his consciousness in man, and man has his being in God? Man's knowledge of God is *God's* knowledge of himself? What a divorcing and a contradiction! The true statement is this: man's knowledge of 'God' is *man's* knowledge of himself, of his own nature."[14]

It is easy enough to see what Feuerbach takes to be absurd here. He imagines Hegel to be postulating that "speculative religion" culminates in a pairing of divine consciousness and human consciousness: as human selves become aware of the world's perfection, God's self realizes itself precisely through this last perfection, the perfection in human consciousness. Just as lord and bondsman could overcome alienation through a genuinely equal mutual recognition, so religion might seem to require the overcoming of unhappy consciousness by God and humanity achieving a situation of mutual recognition. Feuerbach totally rejects such an idea, however, not merely because it must remain asymmetric in many ways, but more fundamentally because he takes anything posited beyond the human species to be meaningless. Hence there simply is no real "divine consciousness" that can recognize or be recognized.

There is a flaw in Feuerbach's interpretation. Although there is a symbolic sense in which Hegel believed that "God" is fulfilled through human consciousness, this is not to ascribe literal *consciousness* to God or to assume he is a separate being, let alone to say that humans have their fulfillment in their relation to such a consciousness. Consciousness (in the relevant higher "self-conscious" sense) is a term that Hegel, like other idealists from Fichte on, reserved for human beings.[15] It is obvious from his criticism of unhappy consciousness that Hegel would be the last to posit God as a separate transcendent individual. For the prudential reasons discussed earlier, as well as because of an allegiance to the "mystic" strand found within Christianity itself that Feuerbach notes, it is not surprising that Hegel speaks of "God" and of "God's self-realization" in the course of the development of humanity. Hegel can, and does, say similar things about nations and their "spirit" being realized in the course of the development of individual human beings and their institutions. Nonetheless, just as it is absurd to ascribe to Hegel for this reason a belief that there is an individual such as Germany that is itself literally in a *state* of self-consciousness, so too it is absurd to ascribe to him a belief in a literal, psychological "self-consciousness" of a separate divine being.

Although it is important to realize that for Hegel there is not actually a divine "consciousness" that determines human life, it turns out that Feuerbach is still correct in sensing a basic contrast between his own position and Hegel's. The key

difference is simply that for Hegel, unlike Feuerbach, the "species being" of humanity, as a mere part of nature, is not itself an absolute ground, an ultimate term; like anything in nature, it must be determined in its essence by the "activity" of the "Notion itself." This claim goes far beyond what Feuerbach would allow, but by itself it is not a "contradictory" or alienating view; it is just another variant of the traditional rationalist view that there is a philosophical and not merely natural necessity that ultimately underlies the pattern of human life. It is also a view that will turn out to have great relevance for the evaluation of Marx as an alternative to Hegel.

II Marx

Marx's immediate reaction to idealism is tied up entirely in his appropriation and radicalization of Feuerbach's approach. His early philosophical development can be divided into three phases: (1) early manuscripts that criticize Hegel and capitalism by extending to the economic sphere Feuerbach's use of Hegel's notion of alienation (1843–4); (2) a transitional phase of manifestoes that emphasize differences with Feuerbach (1845–6); and (3) a final phase summed up in his famous "Preface" outlining the doctrine of historical materialism (1859).

Marx's initial and most direct attacks on idealism occur in his "Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right.'" This critique is structured by a description of Hegel's philosophy as a form of "mystifying criticism."[16] The term "mystifying" is of course meant negatively, but in using the term "criticism" here Marx means to *praise* Hegel. Marx at first describes his own position as a critical form of "naturalism," rather than either "idealism" (orthodox Hegelianism) or "materialism,"[17] precisely because he wants to emphasize critical elements in Hegel that he believes Feuerbach neglected. "Materialism" at this point is Marx's term not for an ontological position but for what he takes to be Feuerbach's inadequately critical version of *epistemology*. This epistemology places too much emphasis on our passive sensibility (our mere response to the impact of matter) rather than on the three active features of human knowing that Hegel had stressed: (1) a fundamental dependence on stages of sociohistorical development; (2) a need to be developed through actual labor rather than mere thought; and (3) a dialectical pattern of progress that requires conflict and reversal (e.g., in the master/slave relation and what Hegel in general called "determinate negation").[18]

Marx's critique of Hegel as "mystifying" begins with the charge of what he calls the "double error" of idealism, but ultimately he presses three main objections to Hegel's system. One objection says that Hegel's idealism holds that all "is" thought; a second objection upbraids Hegel for holding that all "ends" in thought; and a third and most basic objection contends that Hegel's idealism is

committed to the thesis that all "rests" in thought, that is, that forms of consciousness are generally causes of forms of life rather than vice versa.[19] Each of these charges has some source in Hegel's writing, but most of them can be rebutted by a moderately charitable reading of Hegel's intentions. In the end, however, there remains an important and valid point that Marx brings against Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* – although even this point can be argued to rest largely on a difference in praxis. It depends on how some principles should be concretely applied in view of one's interpretation of complex historical facts, rather than on a philosophical difference in ultimate principles concerning a genuine disagreement on "idealism" as such.

Here is one way that Marx expresses the charge that for Hegel all *is* thought: "The whole of the *Encyclopedia* is nothing but the extended being of the philosophical mind, its self-objectification . . . In the *Phenomenology* . . . when Hegel conceives wealth, the power of the state, etc. as entities alienated from the human being, he conceives them only in their thought form."[20] The source of Marx's irritation is understandable. In his *Encyclopedia*, the summation of his philosophy of logic, nature, and spirit, Hegel's idealistic system does place everything, even the phenomena of nature, into relation with "philosophical mind"; it never means to discuss nature entirely "on its own." Similarly, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (or "mind," *Geist*) discusses phenomena such as the state in terms of how they figure in various attitudes of consciousness rather than, for example, as "concrete" historical, political, and military entities. But such an approach is hardly surprising in a book that has "spirit" in its title (and was also originally called "the experience of consciousness"), or in a system that places the structure of nature between abstract concepts and concrete features of mind (i.e., distinctively human activity) in order to map the interrelations of these three domains. Hegel's focus would be absurd *if* he actually thought that any of these phenomena could be discussed *only* in terms of consciousness, as if one could not do "real" history, economics, physics, etc. – but this is surely not his own view at all. (Marx suffered from the disadvantage of not having seen some of Hegel's most concrete works on these subjects, early essays that were not generally available in the 1840s.) Although Hegel calls himself an idealist, this fact – just like Marx's early rejection of what he calls "materialism" – should not be taken as an endorsement of the view that matter does not exist at all or that it cannot ever be studied on its own.[21] The genuine issue between Marx and Hegel's real view has to do not with a dispute about whether material nature exists but rather with the question of *how* philosophy should approach nature, an issue that leads into Marx's two other objections – the charges that in Hegel's system all "ends in" and "rests on" thought.

Like Marx's first objection, the charge that Hegel ends with thought has an understandable source in a fairly innocent feature of the structure of Hegel's

work. Since Hegel takes human thought to be the most complicated development in nature, it is no surprise that his *Encyclopedia* comes to it only after discussing the pre-human sphere. It is also true that Hegel ends his discussion of "spirit" as such not with "objective" spirit – the relatively concrete domain of social and economic interactions – but rather with thought in the relatively abstract sense of "absolute spirit," that is, the domains of art, religion, and (at the very end) philosophy. But here again the genuine issue between Marx and Hegel depends entirely on *how* this turn to thought is understood. In one sense Marx also holds that thought, especially philosophical thought, comes at the end, since it is an activity of what he calls (see below) the "superstructure." It arises, if it arises at all, when the "basis" allows for it, and the menial labor of the "day" is done. In his famous remark that "the owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk," Hegel reveals a deep agreement with not only this general idea found in Marx's view about the temporal relation of "base" and "superstructure," but also with the much stronger and even more Marxian idea that the very *content* of philosophy is "one's age gathered in thought," that is, a reflection of life's more concrete institutions.[22] Thus Hegel often stresses that the kind of alienated thought that comes at the end of a culture's "golden age" reflects the specific forms of real alienation within that culture. The problems of the Greek institution of slavery, for example, are reflected in Aristotle's philosophical treatment of inequality and in the contours of the doomed "absolute spirit" of the ancient world in general.

Marx goes on to specify his objection to Hegel's system for ending in thought by claiming that Hegel's philosophy "ends" as a "confirmation of illusory being,"[23] and therefore it is itself no more than another reflection in alienated thought of the real alienation of society. This point is significant, but it cannot serve as an objection to Hegel's *general descriptive* thesis that culture "ends" in thought. That thesis by itself does not always imply an unfortunate evaluative claim. Clearly, *if* a culture is *not* alienated, then, given the descriptive thesis, it would also end in thought, and in that case its non-alienated thought would be something to be praised – for both Hegel and Marx. In so far as Marx can have a relevant *objection* to Hegel here, it must have to do with the more specific question of whether our pre-socialist society is so fundamentally alienated that even its most advanced structures (and hence their reflection in thought) *must* be mere "illusory being," that is, a frustration of the true needs of humanity.

Marx discusses these structures in terms of Hegel's list of categories of "objective spirit," or practical life, in the *Philosophy of Right*: private right, morality, the family, civil society, the state.[24] It is hard not to be sympathetic to Marx's critique when one recalls that Hegel defends the modern instantiation of these categories in the form of institutions such as primogeniture, capital punishment, endless warfare, monarchy, and a class-based economic and political

structure that on Hegel's own account entails contradictory phenomena such as impoverishing overproduction, a humiliating and ineffective dole system, and a relentlessly exploitative drive to imperialism.[25] No wonder Marx complains, "In Hegel, therefore, the negation of the negation is not the confirmation of true being by the negation of illusory being. It is the confirmation of illusory being."[26] That is, modern civil society, which negates the immediacy of nature while codifying itself in alienating institutions, is not itself "negated," or transcended, in a practical rather than merely speculative way, but is simply reflected and reinforced by the *Philosophy of Right*. Hegel is to be condemned for not working for the destruction of these questionable institutions and for being content with "reconciling" people in the absolute spirit of the age that accompanies them. This complaint has its justification, but it should not be taken to show that Hegel would ever want any objective structure to be "confirmed" in absolute spirit, rather than concretely "negated," *if* he saw that the structure of objective spirit really is thoroughly "illusory" and alienating.

Marx's understandable complaint turns into a misunderstanding in so far as he fails to appreciate this last point and goes on to suggest that all Hegel is *interested* in are satisfactions of mere thought rather than "true" forms of objective being: "[T]he supercession (*Aufhebung*) of objectivity in the form of alienation . . . signifies for Hegel also, or primarily, the supercession of *objectivity*, since it is not the determinate character of the object but its *objective* character which is the scandal of alienation for self-consciousness."[27] The mistake here is to suggest that Hegel wants to do away with objectivity altogether, rather than simply to overcome bad forms of objectivity. Aside from strictly polemical intentions, the only source for this influential but implausible reading by Marx must be Hegel's overly colorful way of speaking about *how* his system ends in thought. Hegel does speak about how, in the culmination of absolute spirit – which is the philosophy of his own system – an "end" is reached in which nature's objectivity "as such" is "canceled," and the concept "returns" to itself.[28] But the "canceling" that Hegel has in mind here is nothing more than the formal "negation" that is involved in placing objective structures into explicit and maximally clear thought forms; it has nothing to do with literally destroying objectivity or nature, or pretending that we could ever do without objectivity *altogether*. Presumably, Marx's own ideal society would "end" similarly with some economic-philosophic attempt at a comprehension of its situation, and this would also "transcend" mere objectivity, that is, it would accomplish a stage of reflection that brings us beyond our unreflective practices.

Marx's third objection to Hegel's idealism is similar to Feuerbach's charge of a "contradiction" in the "speculative doctrine of God." Whereas Feuerbach attacks the mere thought of an existent divine consciousness, Marx stresses the problem of what he takes to be its alleged role as an efficient and final cause:

"[T]his movement [the dialectic of human life] . . . is regarded as a *divine process* . . . This process must have a bearer, a subject; but the subject first emerges as a result. This result, the subject knowing itself as absolute self-consciousness, is *therefore God, absolute spirit, the self-knowing and self-manifesting Idea*."[29] It might seem that this objection, like Feuerbach's, is entirely inappropriate because, as was noted above, Hegel's "owl" represents the view that philosophic thought has its "base" precisely in society, rather than vice versa. In other words, Hegel need not be taken to mean that, even in the higher achievements of spirit, "consciousness determines life," rather than the other way, let alone that the whole process is directed by God as an actual self-consciousness.[30] Nonetheless, there remains a deep disagreement here between Marx and Hegel.

The difference lies in the fact that, even though Hegel does stress many ways in which "life determines consciousness," he also believes (as was noted above in the contrast with Feuerbach's notion of species being) that "life" is not an ultimate term, that there is something that determines it in turn. In Hegel's three-part system, there is an ultimate source for *both* life (nature) and consciousness (spirit), namely the domain of Notions (treated in the *Logic*), which fulfills itself as what Hegel calls the "Idea." This is not a mental entity, but rather the rational realization of the Notion in *actuality* (for Hegel, basic Notions are essentially self-actualizing, very much like the concept of God in traditional ontological arguments). Unfortunately, the term "Idea" often has a psychological connotation in modern thought, and hence Marx understandably, but improperly, presumes that it implies Hegel is taking it to be *literally* a property of God in the traditional sense as a "subject" and "self-conscious" being. Clearly, *if* Marx's objection to Hegel rests simply on this unnecessary presumption, then it can be judged to remain unfair and inadequate.[31] In fact, however, even if this mistaken interpretive presumption is entirely dismissed, there remains, as with Feuerbach, a different and more fundamental objection to Hegel. This objection consists simply in pointing out that "life" may not need anything more ultimate than itself – not even a "Notion." That is, even if Hegel's "Idea" should not be assumed to involve a commitment to a personal God, it does *seem* to signify something quite extraordinary, something that is not mere nature, and something that Hegel's naturalist successors would understandably reject.

Matters are not so simple, however, because Marx is not just any kind of naturalist. It was noted above that Marx accepts and emphasizes Hegel's "critical" perspective. This point can be expanded by showing in some detail (see below) that Marx allows that Hegel's "dialectic" – the intricate pattern of philosophical forms underlying both the *Logic* and *Phenomenology* – is not merely a helpful fiction but is an essential key to uncovering necessities more basic than any structures that can be found by mere empiricism. In this way it turns out that Marx himself, like Hegel, is committed to something that is much more than

"mere nature." As with Hegel, this something is not a ghostly guiding "consciousness" – and yet its effects are exactly *as if* there is such a guide. In so far as Marx can be read as accepting this much, it becomes difficult to distinguish his most basic philosophical perspective from Hegel's idealism after all. We have just examined Marx's objections to the view that everything supposedly "is," or "ends," or "rests" in what is only "thought," and this examination has not revealed any *philosophical* points that apply clearly against *Hegel's idealism* as such. If this idealism is not a straw man position, and not the opposite of all realism or materialism, but rather the notion that there are deeply necessary, rational, and (ultimately) extremely progressive ("ideal") structures governing human life and society[32] – then idealism turns out to have a very tenacious legacy. Philosophically speaking, it may be best understood as not the opposite of left wing Hegelianism but rather its underlying and moving "spirit."

Three brief and central texts illustrate this point. The first two are from Marx's transitional period, his remarks against "ideology in general and German ideology in particular," and his "Theses on Feuerbach," and the third is from his mature period, the famous "Preface" to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*.

In the *German Ideology* Marx moves beyond an appropriation of Feuerbach to a critique of Feuerbach's own critical approach as one "that has never quitted the realm of philosophy."[33] This is a striking claim because Marx's own earlier work, even his notes on alienated labor, were themselves still an instance of Feuerbachian philosophy. It is true that he begins "from a *contemporary* economic fact. The worker becomes poorer the more wealth he produces."[34] Marx does not stay at the economic level, however, but moves from this fact to explain how it displays the structure of human alienation as such. Just as Feuerbach made Hegel's notion of alienation more concrete by adding details to the *Phenomenology*'s critique of orthodox religion, Marx makes the phenomenon of contemporary alienation more concrete by adding philosophical points about the alienation of modern economic life. Feuerbach's key term, "species being," turns out to be central to Marx's analysis, but it is now defined, in more activist terms, as our distinctive capacity for producing "free from physical need."[35] As German Idealism had already stressed, alienation is fundamentally a matter of our treating as independent something that is of our own making. Marx appropriates this point by turning to economics in a Feuerbachian way: in losing control over the concrete *products* of our labor, as well as over the very *activity* and value of our own work and thus, simultaneously, over our relation to *other persons* (class colleagues and class enemies) as well as *ourselves*, we are above all alienated in our species being. We have turned the "freedom" of our own non-necessitated activity into something taken to be necessary.

In his "Theses on Feuerbach" Marx makes his most famous announcement:

"[P]hilosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways, the point is to change it" (final Thesis, XI; cf. Theses II, IV, VIII). Obviously, however, some people have "only changed the world in different ways" as well, so the point now must be to change it in a *correct* way. Hence it is fortunate that Marx did some philosophy on his own before he criticized Feuerbach. Marx can not only charge Feuerbach (and, later, "ideology in general") with not being genuinely active at all; he can also (with the benefit of appreciating Hegel's more critical philosophy) criticize him for not having the right perspective for moving into correct action. Feuerbach's philosophy suffers in general from having a much too passive ("old materialist") epistemology (Theses I and V); hence it carries out its critical reflection (the exposure of religion as alienation) in a much too abstract, non-historical manner (Theses VI and VII); and so, when it moves on even to think about becoming activist, it forgets "that the educator must himself be educated" (Thesis III), and its plans for change remain infected by its armchair, individualist orientation (Theses IX and X). Feuerbach forgets the thoroughly social nature of our "species being" and the fact that it is more than just a manifestation of something we have distinctively in common as a species. Our "free production" is also a function that concerns the species as such, for the concrete capacities of the species as a society are its source and end.

The "Theses on Feuerbach" raises a general issue that Marx confronts most directly in the *German Ideology*. The issue concerns the question of how any philosophical position can be critiqued once philosophy is regarded – as Marx explicitly regards it – as "mere criticism" and "ideology," that is, as a mere reflection of more basic forces.[36] Once this position is taken seriously it would seem that whatever Marx, or anyone else, might have to *say* against a particular view would itself also be subject to the suspicion of being mere ideology. The "educator himself must be educated" – but who, especially in the current alienated world, can point the way to a non-question-begging education? Marx offers an answer: "The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises."[37] The Archimedian point here is alleged to be "hard" science – the "real" truths of economic analysis as opposed to philosophical speculation. Or so it may seem. Just as Marx is not just any kind of naturalist, he is also not a sheer positivist. He is not naïve enough to assume that the "facts" that reveal the basic structures of concrete alienation, let alone the clues to overcoming it, can be found by just any glance at history: "This method is not devoid of premises . . . On the contrary, our difficulties only begin when we set about the observation and the arrangement – the real depiction of our historical material."[38]

This concession leads to a further problem: where does Marx get his crucial structural clues for properly "arranging" historical material? On this question there is no better guide than his own summary in his "Preface" of 1859:

> The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once reached, continued to serve as the guiding thread of my studies, may be formulated briefly as follows: In the social production which men carry out they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to definite stages of their material powers of production. [1] The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society – the real foundation, on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production determines the [2a] general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but, on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness. [3] At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or – what is but a legal expression for the same thing – with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into fetters. Then occurs a period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. [2b] In considering such transformations the distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophical – in short ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. [4] Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must rather be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production. [5] No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society. Therefore, mankind always sets for itself only such problems as it can solve; since, on closer examination, it will always be found that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation. [6] In broad outline we can designate the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois modes of production as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society. [7] The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production; not in the sense of individual antagonisms, but of conflict arising from conditions surrounding the life of individuals in society. At the same time the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeois society create the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism. With this social formation, therefore, the prehistory of human society has come to an end.[39]

There are at least seven fundamental philosophical points in this passage that can be understood as a direct "economic" application of Hegel's account of the

"pathway of consciousness." Although the enormous practical significance of Marx's revolutionary emphasis on specific economic factors cannot be denied, the structural features of Marx's "historical materialism" clearly reflect Hegel's "idealistic" system in its central doctrine that history has (1) basic levels, (2) limits, (3) dialectical structure, (4) opacity, (5) fullness of development, (6) stages, and (7) finality.

(1) Like Hegel, Marx regards higher conscious achievements, the "superstructure" of art, religion, and philosophy, as based in more concrete social institutions. Unlike Hegel, he is primarily interested in tracing the level of "objective spirit" itself (which is the immediate basis for absolute spirit) to an underlying basis not only in "relations of production" but also in more fundamental "powers of production."[40]

(2) Like Hegel, Marx emphasizes that it is only "the general character" of mental life that can be explained and, in some very rough way, predicted. Details at the level of "material transformation" cannot be mechanically projected on to details at the level of "ideological forms."

(3) Like Hegel, Marx stresses that fundamental transformations involve the dialectic of "determinate negation." Economic developments mirror the "unhappy" pattern of the projection of an infinite God, reigning over all, which involves "forms of development" that "turn into their fetters." Oppressed people lift themselves internally by exalting something external at the cost of themselves, and then they develop under this alienation to a point at which they reverse it externally, having nothing to lose but their own "fetters." What is negated, however, is not the entire content of one's earlier projects but only its alienating form.

(4) Like Hegel (and Kant), Marx stresses that these transformations happen "behind the back of consciousness,"[41] through a cunning of nature and reason. We "cannot judge" an age by its "own consciousness," that is, by the participants who are going through the "contradictions" whose resolution they have yet to appreciate. There is, nonetheless, a necessary external explanation of these contradictions, one that Marx finds in economic relations, while Hegel is concerned with tracing them to even deeper conceptual relations.

(5) Like Hegel, Marx insists that there are no shortcuts in dialectical development; no older order "ever disappears" until all the developments and contradictions of the previous order have been worked through.[42] It is no accident that the *Phenomenology* and world history are both long stories.

(6) Like Hegel, Marx distinguishes four basic periods of history: "Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and modern." These are the very periods that Hegel distinguished in terms of their attitudes to freedom;[43] Marx stresses in more detail how their attitudes are rooted in specific economic structures concerning the possibility of "free production."

(7) Like Hegel, Marx thinks that in his own time we see human development coming to "an end," that is, approaching a culmination that represents a first stage of genuinely rational organization. Of course, unlike Hegel, Marx identifies this stage with the future socialist reorganization of advanced European societies, rather than with the high point of the bourgeois state in the nineteenth century.

In sum, there is no mystery about where Marx looked to find his orientation in "arranging" the facts of history so that he could dissolve "ideology" from a standpoint with "real premises." Even though he hardly justified the (just noted) seven basic features of history by arguments of the kind found in Hegel's *Phenomenology* and *Logic*, the remarkable overlap of his conclusions with Hegel's must be much more than a coincidence. Whether or not Marx himself would be open in principle to an orthodox Hegelian derivation of these features, he and many of his followers certainly seemed to regard them not as mere hypotheses but as an ultimate and unrevisable ground, an expression of necessities that any future science and society would have to accommodate. To this extent, his philosophy can be read as taking over the most fundamental philosophical project of German Idealism: the glorification of human history as having a thoroughly dialectical shape in its development as the complete and immanent fulfillment of self-consciousness.

III Kierkegaard

The standard way of approaching Hegel's legacy is to make a sharp distinction between the left ("old") Hegelian and right ("young") Hegelian schools that emerged soon after his death.[44] The position represented by Kierkegaard requires that a further distinction be made. By arguing that the "essence" of religion is the development of "human morality," and that this eventually leaves modern institutions free from any literal commitment to the supernatural ontological claims of traditional Christianity,[45] Hegel forced a choice between a number of quite different options. Right Hegelians tended to combine relatively conservative social inclinations with a theoretical background in the speculative liberal traditions of enlightened Protestant theology (somewhat like their contemporaneous "Transcendentalist" cousins in early liberated circles in New England).[46] They were eager to protect the status quo by embracing a reading of Christianity that freed it entirely from the threats of modern historical and scientific research. The "conflict between science and theology,"[47] which many intellectuals liked to think was the great crisis of the century, was no problem at all for these Hegelians. If the Christian story is simply a symbol of, and a historical catalyst for, the appreciation of what are essentially speculative and moral doctrines rather than factual claims, then the latest findings of physics, geology,

biology, psychology, etc., need not be the slightest embarrassment to Christianity. At the same time, however, left Hegelians, such as Feuerbach, argued that precisely because religion could now be understood (by the most advanced philosophy of the time) as nothing more than a vehicle for human liberation, there was no longer a need for institutions designated specifically as religious. On their reading of the facts, the moral education that traditional religion might at one time have encouraged could now be replaced by explicitly secular organizations.

Kierkegaard presents a third option that goes beyond both these left and right wing Hegelian responses. He agrees with the right wing in praising Christianity, but, more fundamentally, he agrees with the left wing that *if* Christianity plays a merely authoritarian or dispensable educational role, then, as institutional "Christendom," it should be rejected.[48] His most fundamental point, however, is a vigorous denial of the general Hegelian reduction of Christianity to little more than an instrument of rationalistic morality, and in this way he undercuts the basic supposition common to the right and the left wing schools.

Kierkegaard's relation to idealism is not the confrontation of one "system" with another, or the attempted substitution for philosophy of an anthropological science or a program for necessary social liberation. Nonetheless, he borrows more from German Idealism than his relentless campaign against Hegel would lead one to expect. This background is indicated in the title of one of his major works, *Stages on Life's Way*, as well as in the subtitle he chose for his classic *Fear and Trembling: A Dialectical Lyric*.[49] At the center of Kierkegaard's thought is a project that parallels the plot of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, namely, a philosophical outline of the ideal "pathway of consciousness." Whereas Hegel describes four main stages in the social history of "freedom," Kierkegaard focuses on four "stages on life's way" in the development of individual freedom. These stages are deeply Hegelian because they are ordered dialectically in a series of determinate negations, and they exhibit a progression of stages that employs – and then reorders – the key phases of Hegel's "objective" and "absolute" spirit. In place of Hegel's sequence – ethics, aesthetics, religion, philosophy – Kierkegaard uses the ascending order: aesthetics, ethics, philosophical religion, orthodox religion.

The first stage in Kierkegaard's account, the aesthetic, is defined by the attitude of giving primacy to the individual self. This primacy can be exhibited in a fairly crude and immediate life of feeling, but its adult form (see the first set of chapters of *Either/Or*) is a highly reflective set of attitudes, "aesthetic life" in a broadly philosophical sense. Its ultimate focus is not pleasure or beauty as such, but ironic satisfactions of the kind favored by German romanticism: the endless pursuit of "the interesting," as the subject discovers its capacity to reflect and to "see through" all objective structures.[50]

In the second stage, the ethical, the priorities are reversed. Ethical persons are

defined by having tamed subjective reflection by objective reason, and by having learned to put others above themselves. This stage can be manifested in merely following the common duties of everyday life (see the second set of chapters of *Either/Or*) and Hegelian *Sittlichkeit*, but it can also take the extreme form of tragic sacrifice in giving one's own life, or that of an individual very close to oneself (as in the example of Brutus, who must authorize his own son's death to preserve the law[51]), so that the "universal," the community as such, can be protected. (Kierkegaard also holds, like Kant, that a full appreciation of the ethical involves a recognition of radical evil.)

The third stage, the religious, brings another dialectical reversal: satisfaction is sought no longer in the "finite" realm, individual or social, but rather in something literally infinite, God. It is possible to present matters as if there are only these basic three stages for Kierkegaard, but he makes such a deep distinction between two types of religious attitudes, "A" and "B," that it is more accurate to speak of four main stages on life's way.

"Religiousness A," which parallels an attitude called "infinite resignation" in *Fear and Trembling*, is taken by Kierkegaard to be the highest stage that can be reached by reason as such. One might think of this stage as exemplified by those who accept the classical arguments for God in rationalist philosophy, but Kierkegaard introduces this attitude in terms of a natural development within any self that seeks a truly deep form of satisfaction, something that the lower stages cannot provide. The aesthetic person is too immature to know the lasting value of commitment to others, while the ethical person remains vulnerable to the pain of sacrifice and to the alienating sense that, in the end, its own satisfaction as an individual is of paltry value. In devoting oneself to something infinite, one finally gains something for oneself beyond the limits of "finite" life, be it aesthetic or ethical. Kierkegaard specifies a threefold advantage gained by the "knight of resignation." Its constant focus on the infinite "beyond" provides it for the first time with a thoroughly deep and personal *unity* as a focus of its intentions; this unity in turn first reveals the "eternal validity" of one's true *self*, the free and unbounded and, in part, essentially rational self that can alone be the source of such a focus; and the object of the focus, a necessarily transcendent item, leaves the self for the first time "*resilient*": nothing that can happen at the finite level can "shake" such a self, since it has "resigned" itself from literally "putting its self into" finite and transient goods.[52]

From our perspective, this kind of resignation might at first appear to parallel what Hegel had in mind – and deplored – in "unhappy consciousness." The remarkable fact is that Kierkegaard seems to be presenting this stage as something that should appear as sane, rather than alienated, and as clearly meeting Hegel's own most important standards. Unlike the lower stages, it is presented as satisfying the individual self as such in both a rational and eternal form. Like

the other stages, resignation can be exemplified in a number of ways, but all of these maintain the special virtues of thorough unity, enhanced self-consciousness, and resilience. Kierkegaard introduces it with a story about a poor lad devoted to a princess he could never expect to marry in this life. This story can easily be taken to point to a purer type of fully "infinite" resignation that focuses entirely on God and takes what Kierkegaard calls the "monastic" turn. Perhaps Kierkegaard would allow that somewhere between an ideal princess and a genuinely transcendent and personal God, Hegel's absolute rational system might also serve as an understandable object of something like infinite resignation.[53]

Fully specifying the content of Religiousness A is not Kierkegaard's highest concern because his main point is that this level is still far from genuinely satisfying the self. Like the ethical hero, the knight of resignation remains frustrated in a fundamental way. Each can take pride in its own heroic attitude, and each can savor the value of something enormous – either the finite but quite immense realm of ethics, or the transcendent and literally infinite object of resignation. In either case, however, one's self as a finite and passionate being remains condemned. Precisely in order to be a hero at these stages, one dare not hold on with full force to one's interest in one's ordinary individuality as such.

Hegel has a short-cut solution for this problem that Kierkegaard must have considered. In *Fear and Trembling*, Kierkegaard treats Hegel as the philosopher who makes the ethical "the absolute."[54] This strategy does justice to the fact, noted earlier, that in Hegel's idealism, it is objective spirit, social life in all its concrete dimensions, that appears to be the fundamental area of human fulfillment. Art, religion, and philosophy merely express in their more reflective ways the basic structures that spirit manifests in objective self-satisfaction. Central to this satisfaction is the value that Hegel calls "freedom," the "being at home" with oneself through being related to others in a mutually satisfying manner, and in particular through participating in structures that link individuals and the "universal" (the rational society of the *Philosophy of Right*) in a deeply symmetric, necessary, and immanent way. Hegel equates this kind of "freedom" with the achievement of "infinitude."[55] He is, of course, using neither of these terms in their traditional meaning. By a "free" self he does not mean one with a known power of absolute choice, of uncaused causality, as in the philosophy of Augustine, Kant, or Kierkegaard. "Freedom" for Hegel is rather a state of self-relation, of rational "self-determination" in a formal rather than absolute efficient sense.[56] "Infinity" is another Hegelian term for the same property, since, as he uses the word, an "in-finite" being is one that has no limits in the sense of an external bound but is rationally fulfilled in an endless reflexive and symmetric relation to itself and other selves. It is not literally uncaused, or without end in space or time, but rather "concrete," that is, "substantive" and "subjective" at once. By being a developed individual, at home in a particular rational society,

and appreciating this society's place in the rational scheme of reality in general, the Hegelian self is simultaneously finite and "infinite," reconciled and in balance.[57]

Kierkegaard cannot believe that the self (especially any self alive to Western history) can be fully satisfied in such a purported reconciliation. He would say this, no doubt, even if he were made fully aware of all the difficulties in modern society that Marx stresses *and also* believed in all the improvements in society that Marx anticipates. Kierkegaard's ultimate problem with the value of the social domain has nothing to do with the specific structures of Hegelian ethical and political theory; it has to do with his own belief that the individual self as such has a dimension to which no such structure can do full justice – and that it is this dimension alone that properly deserves the term "infinite."[58] Following the German romantics, whom Hegel castigated as hopelessly eccentric,[59] Kierkegaard takes the notion of the infinite in this sense to have a not to be denied vertiginous pull on the self, and to have a meaning that can never be captured by the new definitions Hegel had manufactured (in this way even the aesthetic stage reveals a value that is dialectically satisfied in the final, and only the final, stage of life). Here Kierkegaard lays the groundwork for later existentialism by emphasizing two traditional notions in a way that parallels not Hegel but Schelling (and, earlier, Kant).[60] The two most basic truths in Kierkegaard's philosophy uncannily correspond to precisely the two main departures from early idealism that Schelling came to emphasize in his late work: the "positive," or underivable, facts of our absolute freedom and the existence of God (as an individual) – facts that cannot be equated with either a "reconciled" part or the all-inclusive whole of Hegel's thoroughly rational theoretical system.

It is only in the final stage on life's way, Religiousness B, that the self can face its infinite aspirations in a satisfied way. Unlike the knight of resignation, the Kierkegaardian knight of faith is devoted to both the finite and the infinite. The God it worships is not the abstract "philosopher's God," infinite and aloof, but a being whose Incarnation paradoxically combines infinitude and finitude both in itself and in its promise of satisfaction for the believer. Kierkegaard reads the story of Abraham as an anticipation of this paradox. Abraham does not simply resign himself in obedience; he makes a "double movement," believing that he is serving a transcendent, infinite God, a partner of his own infinite self, and also that this God will allow him, in some way that reason cannot foresee or explain, to retain satisfaction in a finite way, among his people and the generations to come. Abraham's story is used by Kierkegaard to illustrate how each Christian believer must commit to a paradoxical double movement. First, there is the long but "strictly human" step toward appreciating the full force of the ethical as well as the need to respect a value beyond the finite altogether. Secondly, "by virtue of the absurd," there is the return to oneself as forgiven and as anticipating

salvation, a satisfaction of one's passion and finitude. This step is not merely free, in an absolute sense, as all the individual stages are; it is the only one that in principle lacks any rational foundation and thus can never be justified to others. This is why Kierkegaard called his work a dialectical *lyric*. The key transition is a "leap of faith," and it cannot be made or grounded by any logic, not even that of speculative idealism. Moreover, as Kierkegaard emphasizes in his even bleaker late work, the *Sickness unto Death*, the failure to take this last step does not leave us "fairly well off," three quarters of the way toward satisfaction. On the contrary, it leaves us in a perpetual disequilibrium between the finite and infinite sides of our own self, in an ever deepening despair, with all the pervasive patterns of deception of self and others that Sartre eventually catalogued in his marvelous Kierkegaardian epitaph to idealism, *Being and Nothingness*.

If, in our own time, most reflective intellectuals are defined, above all else, by a rejection of the traditional philosopher's optimistic attitude toward rationalism (a rejection reinforced by Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, the post-modernists and many others working in Kierkegaard's wake), then – whether or not we can follow Kierkegaard's leap of faith – we are, in our non-rationalism, still much closer to him than to Hegel, or Feuerbach, or Marx. In that case, unless something like "rational faith" (itself a seemingly paradoxical term) can be resurrected with integrity, it can appear that the end of the idealist era brings us back to the fundamental choices presented by Hamann and Jacobi at the birth of German Idealism: the either/or of traditional faith or despair.[61]

NOTES

1 After Hegel died in 1831, important post-Hegelian works appeared as early as the 1830s, notably D. F. Strauss, *Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (1835), trans. G. Eliot (London: Sonnenschein, 1906) and L. Feuerbach, "Towards a Critique of Hegelian Philosophy" (1839), in L. S. Stepelevich, ed., *The Young Hegelians: An Anthology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 95–128. But the main works of the period, and my main focus, are: L. Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (1841), trans. G. Eliot (New York: Harper, 1957), and *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future* (1843), trans. M. Vogel (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986); K. Marx, "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'"(1843), in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 195–219, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts" (1844), in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 61–194, "Theses on Feuerbach" (1845), in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy*, trans. and ed. T. Bottomore (London: C. A. Watts & Co., 1956), 67–9, and *The German Ideology* (1846), ed. R. Pascal (New York: International Publishers, 1947); S. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* (1843), trans. H. V. and E. H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), and *The Sickness unto Death* (1849), trans. H. V. and E. H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

2 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 8.

3 See Daniel Brudney, *Marx's Attempt to Leave Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).
4 On Hegel's early manuscripts and concrete political interests, see Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. J. Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974), chs. 3–5; and G. Lukacs, *The Young Hegel*, trans. R. Livingstone (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1975).
5 See Marx, "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right.'"
6 See Robert Nola, "The Young Hegelians, Feuerbach and Marx," in Robert M. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins, eds., *The Age of German Idealism* (London: Routledge, 1993), 305.
7 See Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), sec. 207–16, and cf. *Hegel's Early Theological Writings*, trans. T. M. Knox (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).
8 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, sec. 177.
9 See Marx Wartofsky, *Feuerbach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), xviii.
10 See Merold Westphal, *History and Truth in Hegel's Phenomenology*, 3rd edn. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 72–80.
11 Feuerbach, *Essence of Christianity*, 16; cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, sec. 85.
12 This objection denies Kant's own attempt to provide general meanings for possible predications about God on the basis of a theory of pure categories supplemented by a form of justification that relies on pure moral considerations.
13 Feuerbach, *Essence of Christianity*, 227.
14 Feuerbach, *Essence of Christianity*, 230. I have added the single quotes and emphasis. "Speculation" is a term Hegel used to describe his own philosophy in a positive way.
15 See Fichte, "On the Foundation of our Belief in a Divine Government of the Universe," in Patrick Gardiner, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Philosophy* (New York: Free Press, 1969), 26: "The concept of God as a separate substance is impossible and contradictory." Trans. Paul Edwards, from *Philosophisches Journal*, 8 (1798), ed. F. Niethammer. See above, my Introduction to this volume, at n. 10.
16 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 202. Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Introduction.
17 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 206.
18 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 202–3.
19 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 200.
20 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 200.
21 This issue has been complicated by old English translations of Hegel that ascribe to him statements such as "the being which the world has is only semblance, not real being," when what Hegel really says is "the world does indeed have being, but only the being of appearance," i.e., appearances are grounded and not themselves self-caused. Original translation from Hegel's "Lesser Logic," *The Logic of Hegel*, trans. W. Wallace (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), §50.
22 *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), 13.
23 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 211.
24 *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, §§243–8.
25 See Michael Hardimon, *Hegel's Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
26 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 211.
27 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 209.

28 E.g., *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, trans. W. Wallace and A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), §381: "Rather it is nature which is posited by mind."
29 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 214. Cf. at n. 14 above.
30 Cf. Marx, *The German Ideology*, 15: "life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."
31 See e.g., the discussion of Spinoza in *The Logic of Hegel* §50, where Hegel carefully distances himself from a personalist conception of God.
32 For a general discussion of "idealism," see above at n. 7 in my Introduction to this volume.
33 Marx, *The German Ideology*, 4.
34 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 122: "It is just the same as in religion. The more of himself that man attributes to God, the less he has left in himself."
35 *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, 128.
36 Marx, *The German Ideology*, 5–6.
37 Marx, *The German Ideology*, 6.
38 Marx, *The German Ideology*, 15.
39 Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. N. I. Stone (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Co., 1904), 11–12.
40 This point is stressed in G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).
41 See Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, sec. 87, on the idea that the dialectic is "not known to the consciousness we are observing."
42 See Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, sec. 89, on the need to go through "nothing less than the entire system."
43 See the phases distinguished in Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (New York: Wiley, 1956).
44 See John Edward Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805–1841* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
45 See e.g., *Hegel's Early Theological Writings*, 68: "The aim and essence of all true religion, our religion included, is human morality."
46 I am indebted to a vivid account of these parallels developed in a paper by Nicholas Boyle, "'Art,' Literature, and Theology: Learning from Germany" (forthcoming from University of Notre Dame Press).
47 See e.g., Andrew Dickson White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1978, repr. of 1st edn., 1896).
48 *Kierkegaard's Attack upon "Christendom," 1854–1855*, trans. W. Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944).
49 Many of Kierkegaard's other titles are also obviously directed against Hegel's systematic approach, e.g., *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, and *Philosophical Fragments*. There are also many ironic dimensions to Kierkegaard's pseudonymous approach, and the notion of "lyric," which I cannot due justice to here.
50 See Karsten Harries, *The Meaning of Modern Art: A Philosophical Interpretation* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), ch. 5; and cf. Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990), ch. 7.
51 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 59.
52 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 44.
53 Kierkegaard discusses as one of the first forms of the despair of "infinitude" the "fantastic" attitude in which one identifies with "inhuman knowledge" (*Sickness unto Death*, 31).

54 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 54.
55 See *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, §§4–24, esp. §13, on thinking rather than mere will as "infinite," and §22: "it is the will whose potentialities have become fully explicit which is truly infinite because its object has become itself."
56 *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, §23: "only in freedom of this kind is the will by itself without qualification, because then it is related to nothing but itself."
57 See *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, p. 12: "we recognize reason as the rose of the cross in the present, this is the rational insight that reconciles us to the actual . . . to comprehend, not only to dwell in what is substantive."
58 As Kierkegaard makes clear in *Sickness unto Death*, the infinite dimension is in fact present at all stages of life, and so there is a kind of infinity in the aesthetic and ethical dimensions as well, but it does not have the literal transcendent dimension that is discovered only with resignation.
59 See Otto Pöggeler, *Hegels Kritik der Romantik*, rev. ed. (Munich: Fink, 1998).
60 On Kierkegaard's education and his attendance at Schelling's 1841 Berlin lectures, see James Collins, *The Mind of Kierkegaard* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953); cf. Sturma, ch. 11 above.
61 See above, Beiser, ch. 1; Dahlstrom, ch. 4; and Franks, ch. 5.