

HEGEL AND A DOCTRINE OF GOD FOR THEISM

F. LaT. Godfrey has developed a concept of God on the basis of and moving from Hegel's *Logic*.¹ This formulation, which may be viewed as a rethinking of certain elements of an earlier "British Hegelianism," stands in notable contrast with some other recent formulations of the concept of God which self-consciously reflect moving from principles distinctly informed by Hegel and which have come to my attention. Most of these latter have reflected somewhat more prominently the influence of works more expressive of Hegel's philosophy of history, moving from the premise, it seems not too much to assume, that here lies the greatest affinity between Hegel's philosophy and the classical theological tradition.² History has perennially been a fundamental point of reference for theology and it was, after all, first in the philosophy of Hegel — at least within the modern tradition — that it became a vital concern to philosophy.

Despite a fundamental difficulty within Hegel's philosophy of religion to which the supposition of a common affinity with Christian theology with respect to history gives rise, I believe the presumption that such an affinity exists to be correct. My aim herein as to take note of this difficulty as one which Godfrey's formulation — strategically, I believe — averts, to criticize him primarily for having averted this difficulty at too high a price, and to indicate a direction in which, by a reconstruction moving from Hegel's philosophy of history, I find a more adequate solution to lie than has yet come to my attention.

The difficulty inherent in Hegel's philosophy of religion to which I refer follows from a representation of God as fully actual only in the world — more specifically, in the world as most comprehensively conceived — in history. It lies in answering the question: How does one construe the Divine Nature in this way and yet take account of the relativity of historical events constructed as manifestations of Him? By averting both the kind of appeal to history for the *conception* of God intrinsic to the Judeo-Christian

tradition and the kind of appeal to history as providing the (form and) content of the concept of God which lies at the center of Hegel's philosophy of religion, Godfrey has not found it necessary to confront this problem. By proposing to base his construction upon Hegel's Logical Idea purged of all temporal elements, which he then expounds as a transcendent Divine Creator, he has made the justification of the relation of God to the world secondary to the concept of God. This is with the result that the difficulty to which I have pointed is made extrinsic to the concept of God. A problem in the resulting formulation seems to lie in that the Logical Idea, on Hegel's account, probably cannot ultimately be derived apart from reference to history conceived as the actualization of this Idea.

His averting this problem appears strategic in that it is one which I believe has not to now been satisfactorily resolved within the Hegelian problematic. Apart from its resolution, the appropriation of Hegel's philosophy as a basis for a theistic concept of God must proceed in something like the way Godfrey proposes, that is, by drawing primarily upon the logical and ideal — in short the Platonic — elements within the system and setting aside or relegating to a secondary role the historical elements. I shall show what I see to be inherent weaknesses in — indeed the inconsistency and I should think untenability of — this approach in order to exhibit the importance of, and to set the stage for, at least going some way toward resolving the problem which it averts by a reformulation moving from Hegel but which remains generally and for the most part within the Hegelian problematic.

A notable weakness in Godfrey's position seems to lie in a failure to accord some proper philosophical significance to concrete historical events as expressive of the Divine Nature. I shall show an at least partial solution to the problem above noted, urged by this and other faults, to lie in an alternative construction moving from a specified sense in which a distinction between the form and content of dialectic is retained, that is, is not transcended in the dialectic. On the basis of this distinction 'history'³ and the historical consciousness retain their dialectical (and hence relative) character as spheres within which distinctions do not collapse into an all-embracing identity. These nonetheless are spheres which are con-

ditioned (an ever anew) by the conception of the unity comprehending and containing in their individual integrity all (contingent historically conditioned) discriminations within them.⁴ I shall enlarge and build out from these points. First, however, seeing that the problematic to which the construction to follow is a response will take shape in the critique of Godfrey's thesis, I must accord more particular consideration to this. He writes,

My thesis is that, if we read the *Logic* rightly, we must regard its content as the thoughts of a divine creator, who is distinct from the world but manifests his purpose in it. We will then have certain pure knowledge of the God of theism, as Absolute Personality and Providence, the Author of the world and eternally concerned with it. Hegel does, as we shall see, frequently speak of the Absolute in these terms, using the language of religion; but his strict doctrine as a philosopher is a metaphysic which finds the Absolute in a monistic pantheism, in which God is the world force or spirit immanent in the world and coming to self-consciousness only in the minds of men who are conscious of it as the Absolute.⁵ It is clear that such an Absolute cannot be identified with the God of theism, to whom we must attribute the attributes of an absolute Subject, whom we can know as not only present in the world but as the Divine Being distinct from it. I contend that this God, whom Hegel as philosopher relegates to religion, is the true and logical outcome of his *Logic*.⁶

Godfrey's position is based upon a flat rejection of Hegel's view of the thought content of the *Logic* as the self-actualizing, self-developing Absolute. He affirms, rather, that "We must look on it as the panorama of different levels of *thought* [ital. added] revealed to us in the process of the dialectic."⁷ In addition, we should not import what appears to imply temporal notions into the logical relations of the concepts of the *Logic*.

To suppose that we should think of this system of thought in the *Logic* as a self-actualizing universal seems to be a mistake and to confuse our developing view of the content with a supposed actual development of it.⁸

It may be noted that Godfrey here reflects recognition (of what may seem obvious) that a distinction must be maintained between subject (here, "our developing view of the content") and object (here, "an actual development of the content"). It is crucial to the construction to be proposed to note that Hegel *also* with some consistency retains this distinction, even where he *also* develops the concept of an over-arching and comprehending identity which conditions it and within which its polar elements are contained as moments of difference.⁹

It is also to be noted in the above citation that, in emphasizing the *Logic* as pure thought, Godfrey has been led to recommend the elimination of temporal notions from it. This, even while recognizing that this same *Logic* is the form of the world, and hence implicitly, at least, appearing to recognize with Hegel that pure thought is not something which can be arrived at merely as in itself and apart from intercourse with the world, in which, especially at the lower levels of the development of reason (prior to the level at which it gains significant increments of freedom) it is reflected.

As stated in his thesis above cited, Godfrey finds that Hegel's *Logic*, rightly understood, must lead to the God of theism as Absolute personality. His reasoning in this matter moves from his understanding of Hegel's doctrine of pure thought content as the absolute selfdetermining ground of nature and mind, which he rejects. Thus he notes of Hegel's Absolute :

. . . [T]he Absolute is impersonal, unconscious thought, the system of the categories culminating in the idea of personality or spirit, and self-actualized in individual persons who consciously identify themselves with this universal Absolute Spirit. The religious consciousness is then transcended in the mind of the philosopher, and the idea of the personal God of theism must be regarded . . . as metaphorical language, for the Absolute as personality does not exist except in individual persons who as philosophers think the system of the categories as the Absolute.¹⁰

The problem which he finds with this view is that,

If thought-content implies a subject, then thought-content of the world which is not known by us and which has an

immediate existence relatively independent of us, implies an absolute Thinker or Subject; nature, as an object of possible thought for us, must be an actual thought-content prior to our thinking it, and is therefore thought by an absolute Subject.¹¹

Again,

We must be satisfied not only that the dialectic process is valid but also that these universal thoughts are objective and have real being prior to nature and to human subjects who are latecomers into the world.¹²

If we view the continuous system of the categories as a totality, that is, as the ultimate scheme of reality, it will be seen that they involve an Absolute Subject, whose thoughts they are, and not merely a human or finite thinker, as the immanentist doctrine supposes. We may call this Subject transcendent, but it is known by us as the Thinker of the categories, and hence is not externally related to them.¹³

God

is transcendent as eternally thinking this plan as that on which nature and mind depends. If we remember that his purpose is being continually and progressively realized, we shall see that He is also immanent in the world.¹⁴

I shall note several things about the position thus summarized by way of leading into a consideration to which I shall give more detailed attention. (1) It reflects a subjective idealism and in this respect a notable departure from Hegel (and Hegel's *Logic*), who deliberately moved beyond this standpoint if not beyond idealism as such. (2) Godfrey has, it seems to me, precisely located the source of Hegel's ambiguity with respect to a (philosophical) doctrine of transcendence. Having made out that God is actual only in the world and as the mediation of the Logical Idea, Hegel has difficulty (at least in the later *Lectures* within which this arises as a problem) in determining the appropriate degree and kind of reality to be accorded to transcendence — to God before creation or the Logical Idea prior to mediation. (3) I see a problem of con-

sistency in Godfrey's beginning by adopting Hegel's system of dialectical logic as such and then supplementing this by a not only pre-Hegelian but also pre-Kantian argument for a God adequate to think this thought, by a type of reasoning which on Hegel's principles belongs to the level of the mere understanding. If he is to be self-consistent, either his acceptance of the Logic should be qualified in a way adequate to meet this objection (if that is possible) or he must abandon the kind of non-dialectical argumentation which cannot be brought into consistency with it. (4) In this connection, a crucial qualification inherent in Godfrey's appropriation of Hegel's *Logic*, to which he has not called attention, may be seen by reference to the above citation documented by note 11. The supposition is here reflected that we cannot move beyond the point of view for which the duality of thought content and its subject remain unaccompanied by an identity of these polar elements which is seen to have conditioned the initial and continuing apprehension of the duality as such. It remains unclear to me how Godfrey, if he finds it impossible to move beyond this dualism, as his entire formulation evidences, can properly represent his position as having derived as much from Hegel's Logic as he seems to claim, seeing that moving beyond this standpoint is, in one manner of speaking, what the entire work is about. If he rejects this possibility only where it pertains to the concept of God, it is not clear how this selectivity is justified. Godfrey does not distinguish his position from Hegel's in just this way, I should add, since he does not accord recognition to what follows from the fact that Hegel's Identity contains all discriminations within it.¹⁵ If his presentation of what is taken to be the essence of Hegel's philosophy is thus simplified — a simplification which may evidence an inadequate understanding of the term, "*aufgehoben*" (sublated) — this simplification will not do.

I now come to my chief problem with Godfrey's position, which has to do with adequacy rather than with consistency. This is at the point at which it seems to me that — if the problem to which I earlier pointed in Hegel's philosophy can be resolved — Hegel might have a distinct contribution to make. Godfrey's position does not draw upon concrete historical events in the characterization of the Divine Nature. On this account his formulation falls short of reflecting philosophically the best of the Judeo-Christian prophetic

tradition, according to which, I maintain, an indispensable element, at least, of the concept of God is derived by reference to historical events regarded as His acts in history. This want can be corrected, however, only if the problem which I earlier indicated Godfrey's formulation everts at too high a price (measured in terms of the loss of reference to concreteness in his conception of God), can be resolved: How is one to construe the Divine Nature from that which is actual (His acts) in the world — 'history' — and yet take account of the relativity of historical events construed as manifesting Him?

Before turning to a formulation which is directed toward a solution to this problem, it is to be noted that, in excluding historical considerations from the concept of God, Godfrey is left to take up the relation of God (already "proven" to exist and to have certain attributes) to the world as a secondary matter. By this pre-Kantian turn the problem to which I point is not gotten rid of by this formulation, but only forstalled. Indeed it cannot be gotten rid of, since in one or another form it is intrinsic, if not to the formulation of the concept of God, at least to the philosophy of religion.

I indicated earlier that a more adequate solution to the problem above noted than is to be found in Hegel's formulation moves from the clear specification of a sense in which a distinction between the form and content of dialectic is not transcended but is retained.¹⁶ This must be even while the truth of this duality (and all others) is seen to be conditioned by the unity of the *Begriff* (here, inclusive philosophical concept) in which it is dialectically *aufgehoben*, not only as Logical Idea apprehended as a necessary condition of thought, but in actuality, i.e., as Logical Idea concretely reflected in 'history.' That it is necessary to specify such a sense is owing to the fact that the dialectic under consideration is an account of the sublation of dialectically discriminated opposites into an all-comprehending identity in the *Begriff*. Where the dialectic of history is under consideration, and not merely the dialectic of the Logical Idea, the emerging identity comprehends the most comprehensive opposites, being and thought, which identity is actuality. The specification of a sense in which the form and content of dialectic is not transcended necessarily entails the qualification of the sense in which this identity is held to be realized. What is to be

especially emphasized at this point is that it is not the dialectic of an abstract Logical Idea purified of all temporal elements (as for Godfrey), which is under consideration, but the dialectic of the mediation of this with nature, the natural world the issue of which is 'historical' actuality, i.e., nature apprehended in process, as with its own spiritual aim intrinsic to it.¹⁷

Stated in other terms, it is crucial to interpret the unity of Hegel's *actual* Begriff as having its actuality in the dialectical interplay with the plurality of moments which constitute it. The unity as such of the *Begriff* is not even conceivable except as an abstraction from this actual unity as thus constituted. Certainly some considerable basis for this construction is to be found in Hegel's works, but it does not receive uniform accent or consistent development and sometimes seems to be submerged in an emphasis upon a kind of immanent monism.

Building out from Hegel's position with respect to this matter, process forms of the sort of which he renders an account and which may be found to contribute the phenomenology of contemporary consciousness and the universe may be viewed with regard to their given *connections* as exhibiting in their organic unity their own principle of order and comprehending aim in terms of which the significance of particular members of the series is construed. If such series as are constitutive of individual experience present themselves as ever varied in character and order, nevertheless the most general of these process forms fall into types and into a serial order as well, with the result that their philosophical elucidation as a progressive series can serve to direct attention to the process whereby selfconsciousness and the world determined (in part) by it arises. Hegel correctly saw this to be the case, but failed to call attention to the typical character of members of the series or, what comes to much the same, failed to note the representative character of his account of concreteness. In addition, he over-extended the range of discriminated moments to which a specific order is held to pertain. The knowledge of Hegel's Begriff as actual, even to be consistent with this concept, must ultimately arise from the self understanding itself in interaction with the world which determines it. This self is thus only guided in the right direction by a proximate philo-

sophical account.¹⁸ This matter is rendered less than clear in Hegel's account, which in fact is some way from being fully consistent with it.

In a discussion of Hegel's dialectic of sense perception as formulated by W. H. Werkmeister, I have taken note of phases of this dialectic which it would appear are passed over by some individuals, and others which may be exhibited in a differing order in the development of the self-consciousness of different individuals.¹⁹ As an example of the former, it would appear that some individuals exhibit the dialectic of mutually interacting parts immediately following the dialectic of form and matter with the several intervening developments as reported in Hegel's account as, at most, implicit within these or as variations of them. With respect to the latter, I have noted as an example, following Werkmeister in this general disposition, that there is no evidence that the dialectic of number must follow the dialectic of quality and quantity, which, in the case of a given individual, it may precede. I have also called attention to the fundamental alternation of dialectical definitions, and hence what is determined to be the character of language, which is implied to follow from a variation in the order of discovery of dialectical discriminations.

When we turn to history, the case is similar; if an irreversible movement from bondage to freedom may be taken as the hallmark of human progression and hence of history, as Hegel held, and if the order of certain sub-moments within this struggle are indeed irreversible, it is equally apparent that the order of certain of these as well as the manner in which they are exhibited is varied from culture to culture and from community to community.²⁰ Such variations of order may be expected to be accompanied by variations of conception determined in and by their order. This becomes especially apparent when it is born in mind that the analyses and syntheses which pertain are arrived at in large part by working back from the terms themselves. This forces the abandonment of Hegel's quest for the true order of dialectic, even though a given instance of concreteness will contain within it an implicit order of moments which reflects the uniqueness of the individual and his world, and even though, in the case of some dialectical develop-

ments, the order is unalterable from one instance to another. Thus, for example, there is no circumstance under which it would seem conceivable that the dialectic of subject first encountered as a duality would precede the dialectic of form and content, seeing that the latter must condition the possibility of the former.²¹

If proximate only, a philosophical account of the type under consideration, seeing that it reflects these dialectical forms of transition which characterize the community and which on this account have a determinative influence upon the development of the self-consciousness of the individual within that same community, is by no means arbitrary. It is to be noted that, in addition to having a determinative influence upon the development of the individual, shared dialectic is in turn subject to being continually determined by the dialectic of individual self-consciousness and world.

In such a dialectic, the identity of opposites remains the conditioning ground of discriminations, but the notion of a circularity of the dialectic vanishes with the thorough-going unalterability of order. Either this, or it becomes a circularity of certain more primary moments only, such as nature, as such, and self-consciousness, as such, which along with certain of the sub-moments of each, cannot be denied as constitutive of every instance of concreteness. The very notion of circularity, even as thus restricted, seems to be undermined by the fact that dialectical forms have no actuality except as forms of processes in concretion and the fact that concretion always has novel elements within it and is hence always novel in content. Hegel recognized that dialectical forms have no actuality except as forms of processes of concretion, although it seems to me that in not according recognition in a proper way to the plurality and variety of things — sometimes even regarding them as the mere sport of Spirit — he failed to press this with consistency. Where this principle is properly observed, the affirmation of the identity of opposites in particular instances does not diminish, but enhances, by inference, the status of opposites as such not yet mediated to unity, that is, not yet exhibited in their full concreteness and thus in unity with their determining ground. The point is crucial for the affirmation of the world viewed as contingent. Thus particular concrete opposites yet unmediated are placed in a process perspective.

From Hegel's oft repeated dictum that the *Begriff* contains all discriminations within it, it follows that various discriminated concepts, each equivalent to the form of the process whereby it was realized, retain their actuality—more properly (since form apart from concretization is not actual), are very actualized anew. The practical import of this is that dialectical realizations or developments, following their initial realization, are recapitulated in the sense that they are concretized anew in new temporal instances. This pertains alike to the case of the culture or to that of the individual. Thus, for example, external authority is not done away with for a given young person who may be seen to have attained a self-concept as a (relatively) free individual through the struggle and overcoming reflected in the dialectic of Lordship and Bondage. Such a person, possessed of this self-consciousness, as in the case of De Beauvoir asserting woman's rights, may later be reinforced in it by the successive confrontations of other authorities, with an ever increased courage and self-determination.²²

The present formulation is directed toward saving, through reformulation, the serial character of dialectic as a temporal phenomenon and as indispensable to the conceptualizing of temporality itself. Although not generally amenable to the methodologies of the particular sciences as they are practiced today, I wish to maintain this to be "empirically" demonstrable and to affirm anew its place within philosophical formulations. Excepting politicized Marxism as a somewhat special case,²³ this feature of Hegelian thought is typically omitted in recently formulated positions moving from Hegel. In typical forms of Marxism it is preserved in a form somewhat too simplified to be adequate to an account of the conditions of experience. I wish to exhibit the serial character of dialectical accounts of history as a means for reaffirming historical concreteness as a datum of self-consciousness, even if one which such accounts can only approximate. Only the concrete language of the person who is identified with concreteness in a particular instance can be adequate to it.

An identity only loses its timeless character when something is discovered outside of it, i.e., when it is thus actualized and temporalized, or better, constitutive of temporality, which occasions

further meditation. It is thus that the serial character of dialectic is constituted.

This perspective also provides for the affirmation of the world viewed as non-contingent, or, what comes to the same thing, for the affirmation of God's action in the world, *Heilsgeschichte*. This affirmation is one which is made at the moment at which self-consciousness and the world constituted by this self-consciousness are seen as identical and in which this identity encloses within itself the dialectical actuality which in the case of the particular individual necessarily conditions it and which, practically speaking, can never be more than proximately represented in a philosophical historical account. This limitation, however, is not owing to the individual's supposed irrationality — seeing that he is the model of what we should mean by rationality — but to his unique character. What he expresses in concrete language is not grasped without loss by another.

Rationality in the spiritual individual is ever and continuingly the mediation of 'rationality' and immediacy, i.e., 'irrationality.'

The transcendence of God is also identity as the mediation of identity and non-identity, but with the notable additional feature that this identity indifferently reflects as its 'concrete content' all phases of the dialectic of 'history' in their unity and completeness. In God as transcendent, to the notion of God as immanent is added the outworking of human destiny and the Divine Plan commensurate with this Nature. From the standpoint of philosophy, this functions as a limiting concept — as a regulative but non-constitutive item. From the standpoint of religion, it is actively posited as constitutive in moments of decision and action from freedom, and in the eternal 'now' made constitutive. Philosophy has as a principal task the derivation of an account of such newly constituted unities of discriminated elements. As for Hegel, as oriented toward this task, the content of philosophy is exclusively that of religion. Hegel neglected to note, however, that the language of philosophy by which the concreteness of the 'now' is represented is not itself concrete.

The philosophical-dialectical account of 'history' interpreted as God's action in the world, *Heilsgeschichte*, may thus be seen to be

relative in the following ways — (1) It is relative in that it represents an approximation by overlapping of what the individual finds to be his own self-consciousness and historical actuality by reflecting that which he shares with a spiritual community. (2) It is relative to the period of history to which it belongs. (3) As a representation, it is temporally relative in that it presents only the past and this with only relative adequacy. (4) Within roughly specifiable limits, it is relative with respect to the degree to which dialectical forms of transition are subdivided.

With the recognition of the relativities of a philosophical account of 'historical' dialectic thus outlined, the foregoing reconstruction moving from Hegel permits the affirmation that the dialectical self-concept within the context of (dialectical) 'history' which contributes indispensably to this self-concept is reconstituted in the moment of free decision and action. Also, God's acts in history are constituted of such moments of free decision and action. A theoretical conception of the self defined within the context of its environing world — 'history' — is in this moment of decision and action made one with the self as willing agent. Seeing that the self thus conscious of itself as a determination of 'history' — which is thus reconstituted in this moment — there is here exhibited a unity of self-consciousness and this 'history', which priorly was perceived as the world (or history) viewed as a contingent process — that is, merely in an objective and passive way. This self-concept as thus reconstituted in this moment exhibits the unity of the determinations of what is willed from freedom and of God's action in the world.

I shall take note, in turn, of each of three aspects of the identity which may be seen to constitute this moment — the ethical, the ontological and the theological — and in such a way as to exhibit this as itself dialectical in character. This is to say, it is just this — a moment — and except with respect to the themes treated, not the culmination of a dialectical process. This is to allow that dialectical form may be actualized anew on subsequent occasions. The three aspects of identity are interrelated in such a way that the consideration of one involves each of the others. Treating these as *aspects* of one dialectical moment rather than as a series of such

with cumulative import, in addition to making a simplified exposition adequate to my present purpose, renders it unnecessary to take up an issue which it would not serve my purpose to treat : in the case of the second and third of these, at least, a variation of the order of a cumulative serial development might, I think, be more adequately representative of the phenomenology of the self-consciousness of some individuals than of others, so that to introduce a determinative order would be unnecessarily to place a limitation upon the universality of the account.²⁴

The Ethical Aspect of Identity :

The phenomenon has often enough been reported in which, in moments of what appear to be crises and decisions of life and death import, memories of the series of significantly shaping events from the past, and particularly such as reflect past confrontations as have been most significantly constitutive of the self-concept, in the case of a given individual, flash before the mind in rapid succession. The philosophical significance of the shaping power of trauma and related phenomena has been so amply developed in the literature of philosophy, particularly in the decades following the Second World War, that for present purpose it will only be necessary to note its ethical dimension within the present context.

The "I" as agent — which in crises must discover itself to be what it implicitly is, willing from freedom — confronts a world (perhaps in the form of contingent history), at first as merely negatively related to it — which in crises must be discovered to be what it implicitly is — the determining ground of the "I" as willing from freedom and hence as 'history' with its own rational aim within it. In the moment of identity, viewed with respect to this aspect, each becomes explicitly what it was only implicitly : the self willing from freedom knows itself as determined by the sequence of moments of confrontation and decision which in this encounter it finds to be constitutive of its essence. The environing world which has posed as a threat is known to be essentially constituted as such moments of confrontation and decision as the individual has brought to the occasion. He brings these out of the distillation and recon-

stitution of his own experience, including that shared with a community as trans-personal historical antecedents.

The ethical ought, in the manner of Kant, is thus intrinsic to the individual's decision in the moment of commitment, at which point, in the final analysis, no rule of prudence or utility may be introduced from sources external to his self-concept. The consequence that, for example, Arab and Israeli may equally actualize their respective ends in fatal confrontation with one another is accepted, along with the possibility that a United Nations soldier, in confronting both, might with equal zeal one day actualize another "right." That rules of prudence and utility must enter into such self-concepts is to be assumed. Two additional considerations are here to be noted.

(1) Consider the case of an individual who as a member of an "advanced" spiritual community self-consciously shares a well-developed historical tradition. This tradition reflects the dialectical character, including the rational aim, exhibited in the ethical aspect of identity. This individual identifies himself with this community. As a consequence he will undergo the radical self-negation accompanying the discovery of his freedom and response-ability more readily than one whose community, or such group life as he has, is less developed. The progress of occidental man, particularly as nurtured in the Judeo-Christian tradition, exhibited in his first engineering the scientific-technological revolution and industrial economy of modern times, may be viewed as a manifestation of this, as may also the probable success of the (as yet somewhat doubtful, at this writing) modern "State of Israel," in consideration of the "long" and homogeneous historical consciousness of the Zionist movement, to establish and consolidate itself. So proximate is the history to confrontations and decisions of individual "citizens," in the latter case, that a kind of historical consciousness is here at work which reflects the necessity and actuality of both the sacrifice and the established State before the fact. Such is the character of 'historical' events prefigured as urgent within a historical tradition by those who share it.

(2) The reconstituted 'history' which the historical conscious-

ness brings from this identity, at least in principle and potentially in fact, in turn contributes to the historical account shared by the community.²⁵ This contribution may be more than additive. It may lead to a historical account being reconstituted. Fulfillment inevitably leads to a reconstruction commensurate with the reorientation of aim which must follow.

An issue to which these considerations point is that concerning how dialectical history is written. Within the present context it can only be noted that this requires the proximate possible reconstruction of determinative events in the life of a people. It approximates these not in content only but in that its dialectical form follows that exhibited in the phenomenology of self-consciousness, in the culture and time in which it is written, conditioned by the moment of identity achieved through self and other negation. Hence a historical account is expressive of a cultural aim actualized in the self-consciousness of certain individuals, at least, which is its organizing principle. A further development of this theme would show this form to be embodied, in greater or lesser degree and with greater or lesser self-consciousness on the part of the historian, in well developed historical traditions.

From the foregoing it may be noted that this perspective does not appeal to ethical norms which are left extrinsic to human experience. Neither does it appeal to arbitrarily chosen norms within experience, which it may seem unproblematical at a given moment to presuppose apart from their ontological basis having been established, made absolute.²⁶ Consequently it will not be likely to appeal to persons who are content with philosophical formulations which are out-workings from 18th century presuppositions long disproven decisively but still defensible to (very) common sense, such as the existence of external objects which stand independent of thought and which can nonetheless by some mysterious and never explained process be known.²⁷ Rather, it calls attention to such standards as have their origin in the outworking of the problematic of the relation of mutual determination and constitution of subjectivity and objectivity, in the process form of this mutual determination and constitution.

The Ontological Aspect of Identity :

Actuality in the "logically" (not physically) most inclusive sense in which man can lay hold upon it is the universe with a past which displays its own aim as inherent within it. The concept of a universe which stands over against the subject as (merely) objectively related to it, to be passively regarded in the name of objectivity, is prior to an included within this comprehending concept.²⁸

Self-consciousness at first stands over against 'history' regarded as merely objective. If this self has attained to consciousness of itself — and hence to a certain degree of freedom commensurate with having experienced a series of (perhaps uniquely constituted and ordered) self — and other-negations in confrontation with actualities yet construed with respect to 'history' it is still enclosed within itself and unconscious of what it implicitly is. This individual may view 'history' in a "scientific" manner as something detached and/or he may be unconsciously disposed by in-built dispositions which have been 'historically' conditioned. Neither of these factors can more than accidentally affect the self-consciousness of the detached observer. This standpoint, moreover, can account neither for the phenomenon of the self aware of itself as essentially a freely constitutive participant in 'history' as this may be evident to others, nor for the comprehension of this self, viewed as a phenomenon.

If this self-consciousness is detached from 'history,' it is evident that 'history' is detached from it, whose actions only accidentally affect history. Particularly in the case of the "historian" who wishes to be "scientific," this mutual detachment may be held to be a virtue — and indeed it has its place within a more comprehensive methodology which takes into account other kinds of interests of the historian — but this standpoint of itself can account neither for the phenomenon 'history' nor for its comprehension, viewed as such.

If this self has attained to consciousness of itself through acting from its own self-preservation (the phenomenon of which Hegel provides a representative account under "Lordship and Bondage") and by working through other moments of self-negation in the unique form in which they constitute aspects of ethical maturing in the

relation of dependence upon other persons, but does not yet know himself as conditioned by "history" insofar as he is thus determined, this determination can at first only be represented as a blind "other," as transcendent power over him. On the side of the subject, this blind "other" presents itself as the collection of fixated and repressed archaic dispositions which effect their sway at first only by indirect means such as are routinely reported in the analysis of analytical psychology, such as the distortion of dream contents from waking life or from the repressed (individual) unconscious by the insinuation of archetypal imageries.²⁹ If these have a positive value in disposing the individual to meet threats of the past of the sort which have gone into their formation, as the dark side of the soul they are denied direct access to self-consciousness. Their content, rather, from the standpoint of (as yet unachieved) actuality, is by projection made constitutive of Divine Transcendence. This is a "bad infinity." It is thus that God as transcendent gets a bad name — that of Lucifer — who is representative of what the individual has denied admittance to, or dismissed from, consciousness. The elaboration of Him and His angels finally serves the assimilation process it forstalls. Later these archetypes may find their reflection in art and be assimilated more or less completely to consciousness.

On the side of the object, this dismissal takes the form of a failure to understand, or the suppression out of memory of, historical happenings. This is most commonly where the events or what they symbolize to the individual are most proximate to him.

This dismissal from consciousness (by anamnesis) of both types of historical determination unacknowledged as such, where accomplished, even where the "God beyond God" comes to be held as an object of radical belief — or even faith — leads to a relative hopelessness and helplessness all too familiar in the present day. This dismissal is not merely a subversion of finite aims but a robbing of energy (for Freud, *Libido*) from the *Psyche*, with the result of a relative apathy. Where not accompanied by radical faith in some form — whether supported by theological or some other symbolism, conceptuality, or mode of action — this dismissal leads to a more total anamnesis. The various "solutions" to this dilemma, including psychosis, account for several of the most notable manifestations of

what is the most central theological-philosophical problem of the present time.³⁰

Where it comes to have only the status of a sublated "moment" in self-consciousness — even a moment continually made actual — what may be regarded as the distorting effects of the bad infinity upon the presentation of Divine Transcendence are in principle overcome and in practice in the course of being diminished. The outcome of this process is ideally the practical assimilation of this which was mistakenly construed to be Divine transcendence which, as assimilated, is perceived by the self-consciousness as having in fact been the dark side of Divine Immanence. The counter-part of this process, which has its ideal outcome as the evacuation of the repressed collective unconscious, is thus a commensurate evacuation of the content of what has been perceived to be the transcendence of God. The environment of this ideal as fulfilled is the end of a primitive form of monotheism, which end (*commensurate* with the "continuing" actuality of *aufgehoben* dialectical moments) is ever with us.

In actuality, a standpoint not yet here entered upon, this double evacuation, to the degree achieved, may be seen to consist in a removal of certain distortion, a removal of the veil of Maya, as it were, whereby 'history' and self-consciousness may first come to mutual actualization, each in the other, in the moment of identity. But from the present perspective it is finite aim(s) being brought to self-consciousness. This process must go a certain way before some sense of it is grasped and the standpoint of freedom and actuality can be entered upon. This dialectic has its own series of typical or at least typical contingent moments within it, which I shall not here consider, a notion of the content of which was provided by C. G. Jung in his delineation of the archetypes of the collective unconscious.

The first negation of the self by historical determination presented as a blind "other," whether or to what degree accompanied by the delaying by-play of the anamnesis and more gradual assimilation to consciousness, yield the awareness that there are definite contents of (perhaps fixated) predispositions there to be incorporated in some manner into rational self-consciousness. What it is up

against is not just a rigid boundary, but one beyond which lie determinable contents and over which there is intercourse. The contents found to lie here pertain to a future, not merely of the individual but of the culture (including the individual as its cutting edge) to which the history pertains, and by inference to universal history. In the case of such of this content as is assimilated directly and apart from this by-play to save the "I" from being overwhelmed by the collective, this is taken to have Divine Immanence as its source. Ultimately, in the course of the process by which it is a reflection, the former point of view is corrected to correspond to the latter. The standpoint which is here referred to has not yet exhibited self-consciousness of nature made concretely actual as 'history.' On this account it has not yet entered upon a standpoint from which a faith affirmation of Divine transcendence as the ground of 'history'³¹ might be made, nor has it attained to a theological-philosophical self-consciousness of this actuality as Divine Immanence. Divine Transcendence as the ground of 'history' is no projection of the sort above considered, nor is it subject to the sort of reduction to Divine Immanence to which this was noted to be subject.

Without proposing to discriminate further stages of this development to which it seems plausible to accord universality within the phenomenology of self-consciousness and its objectivities, the results of which, in any case (following dialectical principles) are summarized in the culminating identity, I proceed to the reconsideration of this moment in respect to its ontological aspect.

Self-consciousness as thought which has attained to in-itselfness stands over against being-in-itself, the 'historical' process dimension of which, while it lies there *for* self-consciousness to apprehend in a passive way, has not yet entered into the determination of what constitutes this self-consciousness. This is to say, this relation of "being-for" has not been made internal to self-consciousness, which in this respect is not yet *in-and-for-itself*, not yet fully actual.

If this is true of thought, 'history'-in-itself from this perspective is a process but only a contingent one, incomplete in itself, its end being given in thought and not in its own element. Hence it is not yet what it implicitly is. Its being-*for* is not internalized. It is not yet *in-and-for-itself*, not yet fully actual.

In other words, if self-consciousness is (not only in but) *for* itself, as, for example, with respect to static nature, other conscious beings, or 'history' as contingent process, which have already entered into its determination, it is not *for-itself* with respect to 'history' as non-contingent process. 'History' as non-contingent process has not been made internal to it. In this relation, thought has no content commensurate with its aim and being-in-itself as 'history' has no aim commensurate with its content.

The moment of their identity is the grasping of this situation of mutual dependence and the following out of the inherent disposition of thought and actuality each to incorporate into itself that which lies at hand.

The philosophical understanding of these terms in their interrelation, for example, as logical correlatives, as a mere representation of the situation (and partial at that) is something quite different than the situation-in-itself here to be presented. Identity cannot be represented adequately, but only pointed to as something which is foundational to self-consciousness and the actuality with which it finds itself one in this moment. This pointing serves the need to conceptualize and render sharable this uniquely human dimension of experience — its dynamic center — which all too often remains private, unacknowledged, and covered over by every-day discourse.

Identity is only a recurring 'moment' and not something knowable as in-and-for-itself apart from the reactualized process of which it is a kind of culmination.

In the moment of identity each of the polar elements — thought and being — is the completion of the other, and hence an aspect of the identity, which is actuality. It is thus that, in the moment of decision and action from freedom, thought as thought about, or *Theorie*, is equally the action which it conditions. The actual is equally thought and being, where these are perspectival names for actuality — that is, where each is conceived in respect to its necessary inclusion of the other — and action.

The outworking of the aim given to 'history' in identity, in the case of a given individual, is not merely that history as previously understood by the abstract understanding is now comprehended as a

rational process. It is also the reconstitution of the series of decisive historical moments as they constitute 'history' for this particular historical self-consciousness.

The Theological Aspect of Identity :

For the purpose at hand it will principally be required to consider the concept of God which self-consciousness brings from the moment of identity, which it is a task of theology to approximately represent, forgoing further development of the truncated account of how he is brought, and what he brings, to this moment. I shall consider Divine Immanence and Divine Transcendence in turn.

'History' as the succession of moments determinative of action from freedom on the part of the individual constitutes at one and the same time for this individual non-contingent history, or actuality, and God's action in the world. This being a reconstitution of 'history' which he more or less shares with a community — which he now grasps as actual for the first time — this individual recognizes that other individuals not only participate in this 'history' but in like manner contribute to its reconstitution. In worship (as the celebration of worth) and through the medium of religious symbols, by means of which the limitations of the understanding with respect to the presentation of 'historical' actuality are in some degree given recognition and overcome,³² he shares and reifies this 'history.' In piety he anticipates its further extension in virtue of which past moments of identity are rendered relative. For this self-consciousness,

That man knows of God is in accordance with the essential community [of God and man], a community of knowing, that is, man knows God only insofar as God knows Himself in man; this knowledge is the self-consciousness of God, but just so it is His knowledge of man, and this knowledge of man by God is man's knowledge of God.³³

Faith that the world will be "reconciled," the principle of which reconciliation is given in the moment of identity, at least where this has been approached from the standpoint of a sufficiently well-developed historical tradition which exhibits the form of his own

self-consciousness, constitutes this individual's sense of Divine providence. God as adequate to this reconciliation, the instantiation of which adequacy he has found to be his own self-consciousness in moments of identity, now conceived as an eternal moment, is the Divine Subject-Object of his faith.

Just here, however, an insurmountable problem is encountered. An identity which comprehends all time and space is suggested by Hegel's Logical Idea. Could one legitimately move from the affirmation of such an Idea to regarding it as constitutive and not merely as regulative — an outside limit of abstract thought — the doctrine of Divine Transcendence set forth in the preceding paragraph could be justified by moving from the methodological basis of the present perspective. But to make this Idea constitutive exceeds the limits of post-Kantian philosophy and, perhaps even more notably, those somewhat different limits which are dominant in Hegel's own thought.³⁴ Such modifications of dialectical method as are embodied in the foregoing account, which are directed by an interest in stricter adherence to principles exhibited in phenomena than I find consistently exhibited in Hegel, moreover, in no wise remove this limitation. The problem, as in the case of Hegel's apparent attempt to provide a doctrine of transcendence in his later lectures, comes to this: If one construes God as actual only in the world and makes identity the touchstone of actuality, God as transcendent is not actual and God as actual is not transcendent.

If it should be felt that the inclusion of the statement in question can be justified without appeal to such a Logical Idea regarded as constitutive, there remains a problem in the way of its philosophical justification. This lies in that the present perspective, in common with Hegel, provides no basis for saying anything specific about a future which has not yet arrived or for construing a future in which there will be other instances of identity.

Perhaps philosophy should in any case stop here, even if by so doing, in the present case, it may be felt to render defective the solution which has been proposed to the problem with reference to Hegel, "How can one construe the Divine Nature as fully actual only in the world and yet take account of the relativity of historical events construed as manifestations of Him." I submit, nevertheless,

that the limitation above noted being acknowledged, the perspective thus set forth in truncated form resolves this problem and, in doing so, renders plausible a conception of God for theism on Hegelian lines which draws upon those aspects of his thought relating to history which have an inherent affinity to the Judeo-Christian theological tradition.

The perspective outlined, moreover, renders a basis for a theistic concept of God which is not apologetic in character. Divine Transcendence as a faith affirmation is rendered unproblematical on grounds intrinsic to the formulation. A historically relevant concept of Divine immanence provides a basis for taking account both of what is shared by a religious community and what is unique to particular historical contexts and individual religious experience.

The formulation has involved a fairly thorough-going revision of Hegel.³⁵ This is despite the fact that more of his terminology has been retained than would have been had it not been my intent to render maximally evident what use was being made of his conceptuality. In the further development of what has thus been outlined, a terminology more commensurate with the perspective and with current usage will at points be introduced, thus rendering more explicit post-Hegel and perhaps post-Hegelian elements.

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NOTES

- 1 F. LaT. Godfrey, "Hegel's Absolute and Theism," Warren E. Steinkraus (Ed.), *New Studies in Hegel's Philosophy* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), pp. 167-86.
- 2 Fackenheim and Theunissen, each in his own way, stand as examples of interpreters who reflect recognition of this affinity in Hegel. Emil L. Fackenheim, *The Religious Dimensions of Hegel's Thought* (London: Indiana University Press, 1967.) Michael Theunissen, *Hegel's Lehre vom absoluten Geist als theologisch-politischer Traktat* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1970.) For my review article on the latter work, see *The Owl of Minerva*, Sept., 1973.

- 3 See footnote 28 and its context.
- 4 The neglect of the sense of this "containment" has been a primary root of grosser caricatures of Hegel, including that by Bertrand Russell. A helpful treatment of the matter, to which Hegel accorded frequent attention, is found in the remark on the expression "to sublimate" in the final couple of pages of Chapter I of the *Logic*.
- 5 *Godfrey*, p. 168.
- 6 *Godfrey*, p. 169.
- 7 *Godfrey*, p. 174.
- 8 *Godfrey*, p. 175.
- 9 This point has been developed and worked out from in the following papers : "Hegel's Altar to the Known God," presented to the Hegel Jubiläumskongress sponsored by the Internationale Hegel-Vereinigung, Stuttgart, July 12-15, 1970, to appear in *Hegel-Studien*; "Hegel's Justification of Christianity : Serious or Sophistry," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XIV, No. 4 (Winter, 1976-77) pp. 413-30.
- 10 *Godfrey*, p. 179.
- 11 *Godfrey*, p. 180.
- 12 *Godfrey*, pp.182f.
- 13 *Godfrey*, p. 179.
- 14 *Godfrey*, p. 186.
- 15 See the latter third of "Hegel's Justification of Christianity . . ."
- 16 "Form" of dialectic in this context is intended to be equivalent to dialectical method. I have elsewhere concluded, following an analysis of this issue : ". . . while recognizing the need for a distinction between method and Notion [*Begriff*], Hegel failed to define his method in such a way as to maintain unambiguously such a distinction as would be required were a dialectical account to be falsifiable. In the Notion all distinctions are overcome and contained as discriminations, including the discrimination between method and the subjective and objective contents to which it pertains." *Hegel and the Philosophy of Religion* (The Hague : Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), "'Authenticity' and 'Warranted Belief' in Hegel's Dialectic of Religion," p. 224. In subsequent reflection on this matter, in part prompted by helpful criticism by Fritz Marti, I have noted that the outcome of my two-fold (formal and material) test to render historical dialectic corrigible is one which Hegel anticipated. "My insistence that dialectical method must be maintained distinct from existence . . . — a distinction blurred by Hegel himself in his effort to justify the notion of dialectical progression he proposed — is in order that the commensurability of method and existence with one another can ultimately be determined, that is, so that the very dialectical progression may be realized by which the finality of this distinction is done away with." "Das Problem

- der Verifikation historischer Dialektik," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft*, Vol. 84, Jahrgang 1977, 1. Holbbond, pp. 126-34.
- 17 The most common misrepresentation of Hegel follows from the assumption that he maintained that the identity of being and thought (as actuality and not merely as Idea) as achieved without qualification, and not merely concretely achieved as an outcome of the dialectical process which he found to be mutually determinative of the spiritual individual of his time, and the world construed and further determined by this individual. This leads inevitably not to the more proper conclusion that the dialectic is directed towards the exhibition of the concretely exemplified conditions of historically contingent existence, but to the heady conclusion that historical contingency has been transcended in a sense tantamount to being done away with.
 - 18 As I have elsewhere taken pains to show, accounts of this sort are at "the moment of difference" corrigible. See sources cited in Note 16.
 - 19 See Part II of "Die phänomenologische Methode Hegels und das Unbewußte," *Wiener Jahrbuch für Philosophie* 1973, pp. 178-207.
 - 20 Readers may recall several contemporary examples of the dialectic of Lordship and Bondage cited by Howard P. Kainz, in "A non-Marxian Application of the Hegelian Master-slave Dialectic to some Modern Political-social Developments," pp. 285-302.
 - 21 The dialectic of form and content may be seen to be necessary to arriving at a concept of an at first unknown sense object. See Part II of "Die Phänomenologische Methode Hegels und das Unbewußte."
 - 22 Kainz, in drawing upon De Beauvoir's struggle for woman's rights as one of several exemplifications of Hegel's account of Lordship and Bondage, has noted that this case is peculiar in that she has already attained to self-consciousness of herself as a free individual (pp. 295f). This case exemplifies what I have referred to as recapitulation.
 - 23 This is apart from considerations of the historical rightness or historical contingency of the Marxist account of history.
 - 24 This departure from Hegel is not intended as a rejection, but as a qualification, of the notion that the respective aspects of the phenomena considered under these heads may sequentially (with their sub-moments) be exhibited in history, if the (at least practical) difficulties in the way of exhibiting such a sequence as constitutive of history, as critics of Hegel's attempts have shown, are notable. In its own way, the present perspective appeals to the serial view of dialectical "historical" moments, i.e., as constituted in individual self-consciousness in the moment of identity. The serially given contents of such moments are regarded as non-contingent "history" but with respect to a historical account they are made relative to those of other individuals, including the historian, and in this sense are made contingent. This contingency is an especially important factor in non-homogeneous

- cultures. Owing to this element of contingency, temporally sequential dialectical accounts which have this serial character, it would seem, may best be left to historians.
- 25 In the case of a community of philosophers, this will be an 'historical' account.
 - 26 Heintel's discussion and employment of Hegel's *spekulative Satz* as a formula for criticizing presuppositions may be found clarifying. Erich Heintel, *Die Beiden Labyrinthe der Philosophie*, Band I (Wien : Verlag R. Oldenbourg, 1968), pp. 312f and context. For Hegel's initial account, see *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, "Einleitung."
 - 27 See Errol E. Harris, *Nature, Mind, and Modern Science* (New York : Macmillan, 1954), p. 181; and *The Foundations of Metaphysics in Science* (New York : Humanities Press, 1965), p. 430.
 - 28 Nature as processes of space-time events is ultimately and for purposes of ontology to be included within history, although this inclusion is to be construed as having little bearing upon sciences, or aspects of sciences, in which there is no need to be concerned with concreteness in something like Hegel's sense or with the exposition of objectivity as such and the context within which this phenomenon arises.
 - 29 In "Hegel's Phenomenological Analysis and Freud's Psychoanalysis" (*International Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, Sept., 1968, pp. 356-78), I compared Hegel and Freud with respect to the following themes pertaining to alienation : anxiety, guilt, repression, dreams, transference, and the typology of mental diseases. Some indications will be found therein of sources and interpretations of which aspects of the above account are reminiscent. With respect to repression, I noted, "we do not find in Hegel's account a forcing of content into the unconscious as a result of trauma and a given anxiety threshold, as in Freud, but a holding down of an unmediated, and therefore alien content of the mind, 'the evil genius of man' . . ." (p. 369.) For "Der böse Genius der Menschen," see G. W. F. Hegel, *System der Philosophie*, dritten Teil, *Die Philosophie des Geistes* (Stuttgart : Fr. Frommanns Verlag, 1958), p. 206.

Later in the treatment of this theme, I note that C. G. Jung combined the essential elements of this aspect of Hegel's theory with Freud's theory of repression. "Some of the contents of his 'collective unconscious' are not products of repression, at least not repression that has occurred within the lifespan of the patient, but [nonetheless] built-in predispositions." (p. 371, Note 30). Insofar as Jung's collective unconscious is constituted by dispositions pertaining to natural functions, some aspects, at least, of this repression as a "holding under" with respect to built-in dispositions are expressed in Hegel's account of the soul as one with all nature. "Through this, its organic embodiment, the soul participates in the planetary life of the earth; moods are in tune with changes of climates, seasons, and hours of the day." etc.

- Gustav Emil Müller, *Hegel's Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York : Philosophical Library, 1959), p. 200. In all of this, Hegel's account, as in the case of my own, is generally restricted to phenomena which have ontological significance, with respect to which the (meta-)psychological dimension is incidental.
- 30 The present perspective imports an alternative to faith being made too radical by being too remotely or too narrowly related to the historical ground which conditions individual self-consciousness.
 - 31 Or, for the religious consciousness, perhaps only as the ground of history.
 - 32 as, for example, in the drama of the Mass.
 - 33 G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion* (Stuttgart : Fr. Prommanns Verlag, 1959), zweiter Band, p. 496.
 - 34 For a recent treatment of Hegel's method, see Eric Well, "The Hegelian Dialectic," J. J. O'Malley, Algezin, Kainz, and Rice (Editors), *The Legacy of Hegel* (The Hague : Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), pp. 49-64. For remarks relating to Hegel's treatment of the thing-in-itself, see pp. 52f.
 - 35 Of previous Hegel-studies published or to appear, those cited in Note 8 will contribute most directly to assisting the reader to distinguish more nearly, and with respect to the theme, what I construe to be the line between Hegel interpretation and my own reconstruction.