

## INTERPRETATION OF THE GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER VII [THE RELIGION CHAPTER OF HEGEL'S *PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT*]<sup>1</sup>

Alexandre Kojève, translated by Ian Alexander Moore

### TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

*What follows is the first English translation of the fourth and fifth lectures of Alexandre Kojève's 1937-1938 course on Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit. These lectures, devoted to a close reading and interpretation of Hegel's introduction to the religion chapter of the Phenomenology, were not included in Allan Bloom's English edition of Kojève's famous, and famously attended,<sup>2</sup> lectures and essays on the Phenomenology, which the novelist and poet Raymond Queneau assembled from notes and transcriptions<sup>3</sup> under the title Introduction à la lecture de Hegel: Leçons sur la Phénoménologie de l'Esprit professées de 1933 à 1939 à l'École des Hautes Études.<sup>4</sup> Although mostly known as "Introduction to the Reading of Hegel," Kojève's courses on the Phenomenology were actually delivered under the title "La Philosophie religieuse de Hegel d'après 'La Phénoménologie de l'Esprit'" (The Religious Philosophy of Hegel according to The Phenomenology of Spirit).<sup>5</sup> The two lectures translated here help to explain the significance of religion in Kojève's reading of Hegel.*

*Moreover, in these two lectures, Kojève works out his anthropological/atheistic reading of Hegel by means of an analysis that is at once a close reading of less than ten pages of the Phenomenology and an interpretation of the entirety of Hegel's work. Kojève explains what Hegel means by religion, (pre-Hegelian) science, and philosophy, and how Hegel's system comes to replace all of them as absolute knowing. Additionally, he offers an explanation of why not only religion, but also art, will be impossible in Hegel's post-revolutionary state.*

*This importance of these lectures can be gleaned from Kojève's correspondence with Carl Schmitt. In 1955, Schmitt wrote to Kojève that*

*Everything crucial appears on page 215 of your Introduction à la lecture de Hegel. ... Many have portrayed Hegel as "atheist," and we certainly all know Bruno Bauer's amusing "Trumpet of the last*

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*Judgment.” But this point of yours on page 215 would have to change all present philosophy, if the philosophers who, in the course of the academic division of labor, administer the legal right to the firm “Philosophy” were really to interrogate you.*

*To which Kojève replied:*

*You are, of course, completely correct: everything essential appears on my page 215, as you cited. In my course I spoke of Hegel’s anthropo-theism, but I also emphasized that it has to do not only with a mortal but really with a dying (and perhaps already dead) God. But how few understood that!<sup>6</sup>*

### KOJÈVE’S LECTURES<sup>7</sup> [196]

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*Complete Text of the Fourth and Fifth Lectures of the Course from the 1937-1938 Academic Year*

After having read the first six chapters of the *Phenomenology*, one is surprised to find in it a seventh entitled “Religion.” After all, on the one hand, Hegel has spoken about religion on several occasions. On the other hand, the development of Chapter VI brings us to the end of the historical process, to Napoleon and to Hegel himself, more exactly, to his *Phenomenology*. What, then, does this chapter devoted to Religion mean? Hegel anticipates this question and answers it in the introduction to Chapter VII.

Hegel will tell us in the third section of Chapter VII that the succession of the chapters of the *Phenomenology* is not a temporal succession. That is, at any rate, evident. Chapter VI began with an analysis of ancient Greece and brought us to 1806. Chapter VII treats first of primitive religions, then of Greek religion, and finally of Christianity. Chapters VI and VII are therefore parallel: they complement one another. In Chapter VI, Hegel analyses the historical evolution in the proper sense of the term. In Chapter VII, he studies the Religions that were constituted in the course of this evolution. There is a gap, however.

The first section of Chapter VI treats of the Greco-Roman World; the second treats of the Christian World, from its origin to the French Revolution; the third treats of the post-revolutionary World, where German Philosophy develops. In contrast, the first section of Chapter VII is devoted to *Natürliche Religion*, that is to say, to the “primitive” Religions that “preceded”—at least logically—the Greco-Roman Religion. The latter is the subject of the second section. Finally, the third section treats of Christianity, and the end of the chapter is marked by the definitive elaboration of Protestant theology. The reason for this gap can be easily explained.

In Chapter VI, Hegel wanted to study the *social, political* side of human existence, the problem of the relation between the Particular and the State. That is why he begins his study with Greece, where, in his opinion, the *first State* properly [197] speaking, the first human *Society* in the strict sense of the term, was constituted. Yet in Religion, not only is the relation of Man with the *State*, with the *social* World, reflected, but also his relations with the *natural* World, with Nature, that is to say, with the environment in which Man lived *before* the construction of the State properly speaking. It is the Religion of this so to speak *pre-state* period that Hegel studies under the name *Natürliche Religion* in the first section of Chapter VII. This section therefore does not have an equivalent in Chapter VI. Regarding Sections 2 and 3 of Chapter VII, they correspond, roughly, to Sections 1 and 2 of Chapter VI. In contrast, Section 3 of this chapter does not have an equivalent in Chapter VII. This is explained by the fact that the post-revolutionary period, being post-Christian, is also, in general, post-religious. It is (German) Philosophy that takes the place of Religion there; and the Science of Hegel, to which this Philosophy leads, is called on to replace, once and for all, every sort of Religion in human existence.

We still need to answer the other question: why does Hegel devote a special chapter to Religion, given that he has already spoken about it previously? It is to this question that the first part of the introduction to Chapter VII responds.

The general answer is given in the first sentence.<sup>9</sup> There, Hegel says the following (p. 473, 1. 3-10):

It is true that *Religion*, {understood} as {external-}Consciousness of the *absolute essential-Reality* as such [*überhaupt*], also appeared in the concrete-formations [*Gestaltungen*] {that we have considered} up to now and that—in a general-manner—are distinguished {from one another} as {external-} *Consciousness* {Ch. I-III}, *Self-Consciousness* {Ch. IV}, *Reason* {Ch. V}, and *Spirit* {Ch. VI}. Only, {Religion appeared there} *from the point of view of* {external-} *Consciousness*, which becomes conscious of the absolute essential-Reality. It is therefore not the absolute essential-Reality *in and for itself*, it is not the Self-Consciousness of Spirit, that appeared in these concrete-formations.\*

This passage is intentionally ambiguous. It is one of those passages that the “Right” Hegelians have been able to cite in support of their theistic interpretation of Hegel’s thought.

Let us first look at the theistic—and at any rate, “heretical”—interpretation of the passage. Let us suppose that “*absolutes Wesen*” and “*Geist*” here signify God. This passage then means the following: up to now, we have spoken about the attitude that *man* takes with respect to God, the way in which *man* becomes conscious of the divine. But it was not yet a question of *God* himself, of the [198] manner in which *God* becomes conscious of *himself* in and through Religion, independently of his revelation to men. This passage would then imply the idea that there is a God, a Spirit that is *other* than the *human* spirit, a Spirit that reveals itself to itself in and through the different Religions that it engenders in human consciousness throughout the course of history. And it would be a matter of interpreting in Chapter VII these self-revelations of *God*.

But this theistic interpretation is absolutely impossible. If the *Phenomenology* has a point [*sens*], the *Geist* in question is nothing other than the *human* Spirit: there is no Spirit *outside* of the World, and the Spirit *in* the World—is Man, humanity, universal History.

Having said that, it is therefore necessary to give another interpretation of the passage in question.

What is the *absolute essential-Reality* (*absolutes Wesen*) for the author of the *Phenomenology*?

That which is truly *real* is not Nature, the natural World that is other than Man. For in fact, the real World *involves* [imply] Man. Inversely, Man outside of the World is but an abstraction. *Reality* is therefore the World that involves Man, Man that lives in the World. Now, what is the *essential-Reality* of this Real, its *Wesen*, its “essence,” its “entelechy,” its “idea”? It is Man insofar as he is *something other* than the World, while only being able to exist *in* the World. Man is the *essential-Reality* of the existing Real; for Hegel, as for every Judeo-Christian thinker, this is an axiom that one must accept without discussion: “*Der Geist ist höher als die Natur*,” he says somewhere.<sup>10</sup> But the *absolute essential-Reality* is not the human *individual* (the “Particular”). For isolated Man exists in reality just as little as Man-outside-the-World or the World-without-Man. The *essential-Reality* of the *Real*—this is *humanity* taken in its spatio-temporal whole. It is what Hegel calls “*objektiver Geist*,” “*Weltgeist*,” “*Volksgeist*,” but also “*Geschichte*” (History) or—in a more concrete manner—“*Staat*,” the State taken as State, Society taken as such.

And Hegel says that this *essential-Reality* was considered up to now “*vom Standpunkt des Bewusstseins aus*.” Now, *Bewusstsein* is the Consciousness-of-external-reality, of the *non-I* opposed to the I, of the *object* known opposed to the knowing *subject*. It therefore had to do with the attitude that the human *individual* (the Particular) took with respect to Man as such, taken as the *essential-Reality* of the Real in general, this *essential-Reality* being-for *this* Man—something *external, autonomous, opposed* to him. In fact, this *absolute essential-Reality*,

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 410 (§ 672): “In the structured forms hitherto considered which are distinguished in general as Consciousness, Self-consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, religion, too, as consciousness of *absolute Being* as such, has indeed made its appearance, although only from the *standpoint of the consciousness* that is conscious of absolute Being; but absolute Being in and for itself, the self-consciousness of Spirit, has not appeared in those ‘shapes.’”

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that is to say, the “entelechy” of the *whole* of the Real, is also the “entelechy” [199] of each human *individual*. Thus the State is only an integration of Citizens, and each Citizen is only what he is by participating in the State. But insofar as Man does not take this into account, insofar as the reality of the State, of political life, does not reveal this fact explicitly, Man *opposes* himself to the State and sees in the State an independent, autonomous entity. He is thus in the attitude of *Bewusstsein*. One can therefore say: up to now it was a question of the diverse attitudes that the individual who *opposes* himself to humanity, to the totality, to the State, takes with respect to them.

But from the point of view of the Man-of-*Bewusstsein*, the essential-Reality is not only the State. This Man also opposes the World to the I; there he sees an *autonomous* entity. For him, the essential-Reality of this World will therefore itself be an *autonomous* reality opposed to him. And thus it is for him a divine essential-Reality. For him, the *absolutes Wesen* is *God*, or—in a more general manner—the Divine.

Consequently, in speaking about the essential-Reality from the point of view of *Bewusstsein* (as he does in Chapters III and IV), Hegel had to speak about the attitude that Man takes with respect to his God: he had to speak about Religion. In other words, he spoke about the *attitude* that Man who opposes himself to God, who distinguishes himself from God, takes with respect to him. He therefore spoke about Religion in the broadest sense of the word.

The first part of the theistic interpretation was therefore correct. However, it is necessary to take the words “*Religion*” and “*absolutes Wesen*” in the sense that an atheist gives to them. And it is in this same atheistic sense that it is necessary to interpret the second part of the sentence.

There, it is a question of the “absolute essential-Reality” taken “in and for itself.” That is to say, there, it is a question of Man as such, of collective man living in the World, of the *Weltgeist*, of the *Volksgeist*, in the final analysis, of the State. But no longer from the point of view of *Bewusstsein*, of the individual who opposes himself to the State, and sees it from the outside. There, it is a question of the *Selbstbewusstsein des Geistes*. That is to say, in Chapter VII, it is a matter of showing and understanding how Spirit understands itself as *such*, and not only in and through the attitudes of *individuals* with respect to it. Yet, according to Hegel, this self-comprehension of Spirit—or of the *Volksgeist*—is brought about in and through *Religion* (in the broadest sense of the term). In Chapter VII, it will therefore be a question of the *content* of religious knowledge, that is to say, of *Theology*.

According to Hegel, Man understands himself as an *isolated* individual in and through *Philosophy*. And every pre-Hegelian philosophy was in this sense a philosophy of *Bewusstsein*, one that studied and revealed, on the one hand, the subject *opposed* to the object, the human individual opposed to the natural World, and, on the other hand, the autonomous *object* [200] that is external to the subject. As for man who *sides* [*fait bloc*] with the World, that is to say, *real*, collective, historical man, or, if you will, the State, he is revealed to himself in and through *Religion*. And that is why the (pre-Hegelian) *Philosophy* of *Bewusstsein* must *necessarily* be completed by a *Religion*. Inversely, every *Religion* engenders its *philosophical* complement. For in Religion, the *Wesen* is interpreted as *non-Man*, as being *external* to Man. The religious Man who wants to understand *himself* must therefore understand himself as *opposed* to the *Wesen*, that is to say, as *Bewusstsein*: he must consequently understand himself in and through a (pre-Hegelian) *Philosophy*.

It is only from the moment in which the State comes to be in such a way that the opposition between the Particular and the Universal is thereby “overcome [*supprimée*],” that the opposition between Philosophy and Religion can disappear. At the moment in which the State is a “*Tun Aller und Jeder*,” a universal integration of particular actions, in which the action of each is that of all and vice versa, Man will see that the *absolute* essential-Reality is also his own. As a result, it will cease to be opposed to him; it will cease to be *divine*. He will know it not in a *Theology*, but through an *Anthropology*. And this same Anthropology will also reveal to him his *own* essential-Reality: it will replace not only Religion, but also Philosophy. And this synthesis of Philosophy and Religion, made possible by the reality of the “absolute” State, is nothing other than the Science of Hegel,

that is to say as well and in particular, his *Phenomenology*. And it is this *Phenomenology* that is the “*Selbstbewusstsein des Geistes*” in the proper sense of the term, which is at issue in the sentence under consideration.

*This Selbstbewusstsein* is the absolute Knowing described in Chapter VIII. And the evolution described in Chapter VII explains the genesis of this Knowledge, which, being the synthesis of the Particular and the Universal, is born just as much from the former *Philosophies* of which it was a question in the first six chapters, as from the Religions described in Chapter VII.

That is the atheistic interpretation of the passage that is the only one compatible with the whole of the *Phenomenology*. But it suffices to read Chapter VII itself in order to see that it is necessary to reject the theistic interpretation.

Hegel speaks about Religion there; it is the theme of the chapter. But he takes this word in truly a *very* broad sense. Thus, in speaking about Greco-Roman “Religion,” he speaks much less about pagan *theology* than about ancient *art*: about sculpture, about the epic, about tragedy, and even about comedy. Now, to maintain that one speaks about *God* when one speaks about Aristophanes, to say that it is God who reveals himself to himself and becomes conscious-of-himself in revealing himself to the Greeks through *Lysistrata*, for example—this is above all to shock through too much common sense.

[201] In contrast, the content of Chapter VII fits extremely well with the atheistic interpretation. It has to do with the completely general process of the evolution of unconscious, symbolic, mythic anthropology: there, one sees Man speak about himself while believing that he speaks about something else. It has to do with myth in the proper sense of the word, and this myth is, in *our* terminology, just as much *art* as theology. It is therefore Religion and (primitive and ancient) *Art* that revealed to Man his (social, political,) *universal* reality, while the (“private,”) *particular* reality of the individual was revealed to him in and through Philosophy in the narrow sense of the word. (According to Hegel, in the post-revolutionary State, it will therefore be just as impossible to write a tragedy or construct a beautiful building, as it will be to create a Religion or devise [*faire*] a Philosophy of *Bewusstsein*.)

In order to remove *any* sort of doubt concerning this subject, I will cite a text that is just about contemporary with the *Phenomenology*, a text in which Hegel expresses himself in a much clearer manner.

In the (1803-1804) Jena Lectures, one finds the following passage (Vol. XIX, p. 232f.):

The absolute Spirit of a people is the absolute, universal element ...that absorbs all particular Consciousnesses into itself. {It is} the *absolute, simple-or-undivided substance*, living {and} *unique*. {And} this {substance} must also be the *acting substance*, and {it must} oppose itself to itself {taken} as {external-}Consciousness.... This act-of-becoming-other than itself consists in [*est*] {the fact} that Spirit, *as a passive-entity*, relates itself to itself {taken} as *an active-entity*, that {Spirit}, as an acting People—{that is to say, as} a consciously-existing-entity—passes into the product {of action}, {that is to say,} into the entity-equal-to-itself. And to-the-extent-to-which this work common to all is the work {that they produce} as {external-}Consciousness{es}, they are constituted for themselves in-this-work as an external-entity. But this external-entity is their action: it is only what they have done with it; it is they themselves as acting ...who are {this external-entity}. And in this externality of themselves ...they contemplate themselves as *a People*. And this work {that is} theirs is *in this very way* their own Spirit itself. They produce [*erzeugen*] this Spirit; but they venerate [*verehren*] it as an entity-that-exists-as-a-given-being [*Seiendes*] for itself. And this Spirit is {indeed} for itself: for their activity through which they produce it is the dialectical-overcoming [*suppression-dialectique*] [*Aufheben*] of themselves; and this dialectical-overcoming of themselves towards which they tend, is the universal Spirit existing-for-itself.\*

\* Cf. G. W. F. Hegel, *System of Ethical Life (1802/3) and First Philosophy of Spirit (Part III of the System of Speculative*

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The meaning is clear. –The People *act*, and in and through this [202] collective action, they establish themselves as a State or People that is *organized*, that is to say, *real* as a *People*. But the product of the action is *detached* from the action and from the agent. For the agent, this product becomes an autonomous, external reality that is a part of the real *World*, in which the agent or the agents live and act. Additionally, when the agent ceases to act and attempts to *understand* that which he has done, he necessarily becomes *Bewusstsein*, conscious of an *external* entity. (Necessarily, because it is only *action* that is the *hyphen* [*trait d'union*] between the I and the Non-I; in *contemplation*, Being is always an autonomous, *given non-I*.) It is in this way that the man who contemplates the State, the People, understands them as autonomous entities. And, Hegel says, “they *venerate* it as a given-static-Being {existing} for *it-self*.” And it is *this* understanding of the People as People that is carried out in mythical form and is translated by Art or by Theology.

Hegel himself puts it very clearly in another text, which is found in the *System der Sittlichkeit* (from 1802?<sup>11</sup>), in which one can read the following (Vol. VII, p. 462-63<sup>12</sup>):

The Universality that has in-an-absolute-manner united Particularity [*Besonderheit* {here used for *Einzelheit*}] with itself is the divinity of the People [*Göttlichkeit des Volkes*]. And this {same} Universality, contemplated in the ideal form of Particularity, is the God of the People [*Gott des Volkes*]: this God is the ideal manner of contemplating the People.\*

After having pointed out in the first sentence the theme of Chapter VII, Hegel rapidly reviews the religious themes of the six preceding chapters. We have just seen that, in a general manner, it was a question of the attitude that the human individual takes with respect to the absolute essential-Reality that he considers as being something *other* than himself.

This notion of the *Wesen* appeared for the first time in Chapter III, *Kraft und Verstand*, where it was a question of the Understanding and of “vulgar” Science, notably of Newtonian Physics. Here is how Hegel summarizes what he had said there (p. 473, 1. 11-16):

Already, {external-} *Consciousness*, to the extent to which it is *Understanding*, becomes {external-} consciousness of the *Supersensible*, that is to say, of the *Internal-or-inside* of the objective-or-thingly empirical-existence. But the Supersensible, the Eternal—the name that one gives to it is of little importance—is *deprived-of-the-personal-I* [*selbstlos*]. It is only the *universal-entity* that is still very far from being the Spirit that knows itself as Spirit.†

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*Philosophy 1803/4*), ed. and trans. H. S. Harris and T. M. Knox (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979), 242-43: “The absolute spirit of a people is the absolutely universal element ...which has absorbed all the single consciousnesses within itself, *the absolute, simple, living, unique substance*; it must likewise be *the active substance*; and it must oppose itself as consciousness.... This becoming other than itself consists in its connecting *itself as passive* with *itself as active*; as active people it is generally conscious of itself, and passes over into the product or to the self-identical; and since this common work of all is their work as conscious beings in principle, they come to be themselves outside of themselves in it, but this outward [being] is their deed, it is only what they have made it, it is themselves as active . . .; and in this outwardness of themselves ...they intuit themselves as one people; and this their work is their own spirit itself because it is theirs. They beget it, but they reverence it as something that is on its own account; and it is for itself, since the activity through which they beget it is the cancelling of themselves, [and] this cancelling of themselves at which they aim, is the universal spirit being for itself.”

\* Cf. Hegel, *System of Ethical Life (1802/3) and First Philosophy of Spirit (Part III of the System of Speculative Philosophy 1803/4)*, 144: “this universality which has flatly united the particular with itself is the divinity of the people, and this universal, intuited in the ideal form of particularity, is the God of the people. He is an ideal way of intuiting it.”

† Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 410 (§ 673): “Even Consciousness, in so far as it is the Understanding, is consciousness of the *supersensible* or the *inner side* of objective existence. But the supersensible, the eternal, or whatever else it may be called, is devoid of itself; it is only, to begin with, the universal, which is a long way yet from being Spirit that knows itself as Spirit.”



[203] Through his Work, the Slave is elevated to *Verstand*, to the creative Understanding of *abstract* notions. In that he himself transforms the World according to an idea, he is brought to believe that this World, and he as well, is driven by a moving, supersensible ideal. Behind the sensible phenomenon, Man-of-*Verstand* sees the *Wesen*, the super-sensible *essential-Reality*. It is the “*idea*” or the “*essence*” of the thing that is its “*entelechy*,” its *Inneres*. But the slave who works according to the will of the Master, the slave who executes the orders of the *Master*, lives in a World that is not yet *seine*.<sup>13</sup> And that is why he does not come to the idea that it is *he* who is the “*entelechy*” of the World, the supersensible *Wesen* that maintains itself in sensible reality. The *Wesen* of the World that he discovers appears to him to be just as transcendent, just as autonomous and independent of him, as the World itself, the World dominated by the Master. The *Wesen* is not only above the sensible *World*: it is also supra-*human*.

The Slave arrives at a transcendentalist conception of the *Wesen* because this *Wesen* is, for him, the *Wesen* of a World belonging to someone *other* than him, to the Master. And this origin of the notion is reflected in the determination of its content.

In a word, the *Wesen* is a sort of omnipotent Master: it is a *God* that creates, or, at the very least, *dominates* the World. It is thus that the Newtonian Physics of forces and laws has for a necessary complement a transcendentalist Theology, just as, inversely, this Theology engenders a “*mechanistic*” interpretation of the World. (It is therefore not by accident that Newton was also a theologian.)

However, the Understanding on its own does not come to be a *Theology* properly speaking. It constitutes only the conceptual *frameworks* in which the properly theological content will situate itself. But this content must come from elsewhere, since, for the Understanding, the *Wesen* is the *Wesen* of the natural *World*, of the *non-I*. This *Wesen* will therefore also be a non-I; it will not be a supersensible *I*, an essential-Reality *conscious* of itself; it will not be a *Geist*.

But all that is said about *Geist* in Theology, all that is said about the transcendent, *divine* Spirit in relation to man, the Spirit which is—with respect to the latter—an irresistible *force* and an implacable *law*—all this will come to be placed within the still empty frameworks formed by the notion of the transcendent Supersensible that has been elaborated by the Understanding of the Slave. In other words, in Chapter III, Hegel described the type of attitude that the human individual takes with respect to the *Wesen* that he opposes to himself, insofar as this attitude is purely cognitive, contemplative. He described the frameworks of any theology understood as knowledge.

[204] But in order to *fill* these frameworks with a theological content, in order to transform the abstract *Wesen* into divine Spirit that is conscious of itself, one must have recourse to something still other than the Understanding and the contemplative or cognitive attitude in general. In order to understand the origin of Theology, one must analyze not only *thought*, the *notion*, but also the *feeling* of transcendence. The analysis of the cognitive attitude that the particular adopts with respect to the *Wesen* must be completed by an analysis of his emotional attitude. One must discover not only the frameworks of all theological thought, but also those of all religious psychology.

This is what Hegel did in Chapter IV. Here is the summary of it (p. 473, 1. 16-22):

Then, *Self-Consciousness*, which had its perfection-and-its-culmination in the concrete-form [*Gestalt*] of the *unhappy* Consciousness, was only the *pain* of Spirit that again makes-efforts-in-order-to-arrive at thingly-objectivity, but does not attain it. Consequently, the union of the *particular* Self-Consciousness and its immutable *essential-Reality*, towards which this Self-Consciousness conveys itself, remains a *Beyond* for this Self-Consciousness.\*

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 410 (§ 673): “Then there was the self-consciousness that reached its final ‘shape’ in the *Unhappy* Consciousness, that was only the *pain* of the Spirit that wrestled, but without success, to reach out into objectivity.

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The unhappy Consciousness is Christian consciousness; it is the psychology of the Christian who is, for Hegel, the most perfect type of the Religious man. What does the Christian want? Like every man, he wants to objectify himself, *to realize* his ideal, which—insofar as it is not realized—reveals itself to him in the feeling of insufficiency, of *Schmerz*, of pain. But insofar as he remains a Religious man, he does not succeed. Or—if one prefers—he remains a Religious man insofar as he does not succeed. Indeed, what is it *to realize*, to objectify, one's ideal, if not to have it be recognized by *others*, by *all* others? In other words, it is to realize *Individuality*, the synthesis of the Particular and the Universal. And it is precisely this Individuality that the Christian seeks in his religious feeling. If he imagines a Divinity and relates himself to a God, to an *absolute* external-reality, it is because he wants to be *recognized* by it, to be recognized by the Universal in his most particular Particularity. Only, he does not succeed.

Man imagines God because he wants to objectify himself. And he imagines a *transcendent* God because he does not succeed in objectifying himself in the World. But to want to realize Individuality by uniting with a *transcendent* God is to realize it in the transcendent, in the *Jenseits*, in what is *beyond* the World and oneself taken as Consciousness, as living in the World. It is therefore to renounce the realization of the ideal in the here-below. It is, consequently, to be and to know oneself as *unhappy* in this World.

[205] In other words, on the one hand, the religious, emotional attitude is born from the feeling of pain caused by the experience of the impossibility of realizing oneself in the World; on the other hand, it engenders and nourishes this feeling. And it is this nostalgia that is projected into the Beyond, that fills with a theological content the frameworks of the transcendence of the *Verstand*, situating the image of a personal God there, of a reality *conscious* of itself, of a *Geist* that—in fact—is only the projection of the unhappiness of the religious Consciousness into the Beyond.

Therefore, to nourish, to cultivate, nostalgia, the painful feeling of the insufficiency of the reality that one lives, is to find oneself in the religious, indeed Christian, attitude. Inversely, to place oneself in this attitude is to nourish and cultivate unhappiness and nostalgia.

To escape from religious psychology is therefore to overcome the unhappiness of Consciousness, the feeling of insufficiency. And one can do this either by realizing a real World, in which Man would be truly “satisfied,” or by overcoming transcendence through an abstract act and reconciling the ideal to reality. The first solution is the one brought about in and through the French Revolution, which made possible the absolute, atheistic science of Hegel. The second solution is that of the bourgeois Intellectual, about whom Hegel has spoken in Chapter V.

Here is what Hegel says about him (p. 473, l. 23-27):

The immediate empirical-existence of *Reason* that, for us, has arisen from that pain {of the unhappy Consciousness}, and the concrete-forms [*Gestalten*] that belong to it, do not have Religion, because their Self-Consciousness knows itself {to be}, or seeks itself in, the *immediate* real-presence.\*

“The *immediate* existence of Reason”—is the Intellectual of Chapter V. His existence is “*immediate*” because it is not “mediated” by the effort of Work and Struggle, which alone can *really* transform the World. The Intellectual finds himself, or more exactly, seeks himself, in the “*immediate*” present: it is not after his death, it is not in the beyond that he wants to be “satisfied”; he wants to be satisfied *hic et nunc*. He is therefore not religious: the thought and feeling of transcendence are lacking in him, just as the feeling of unhappiness is.

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The unity of the *individual* self-consciousness and its changeless *essence* to which the former attains, remains, therefore, a *beyond* for self-consciousness.”

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 410 (§ 673): “The immediate existence of *Reason* which, for us, issued from that pain, and its peculiar shapes, have no religion, because the self-consciousness of them knows or seeks *itself* in the *immediate* present.”



Nevertheless, he is not truly “satisfied.” And this is so precisely because of the “*immediacy*” of his attitude. He leaves the world as it is, and contents himself with *enjoying* [jouir] it, the same World in which the Religious man moped. Now if the depreciation of the *given* real characterizes the religious attitude, the positive appreciation of the *given* is typical for the artistic attitude. The *given* World, in ceasing to be considered as Evil, can be considered only as the [206] Beautiful. The Intellectual can therefore at the very most arrive at *Freude*, at the pure joy of the inactive and peaceful artist, which is something completely different from *Befriedigung*, the veritable satisfaction of the revolutionary who has succeeded. Moreover, Man who delights in the joy of pure knowledge or of artistic contemplation, can eternally remain an Intellectual or an Artist, just as Man who delights in unhappiness can eternally remain a Religious man or a Christian.

I do not insist on these questions. Being essentially a-religious, even atheistic, the Intellectual no longer comes up in Chapter VII. It is enough to mention that beside the subjective, theological, and religious attitude, there is still an areligious and aesthetic, *pre-revolutionary* attitude that has nothing to do with the *post-revolutionary* atheism of Hegel.

In the three paragraphs that follow (pp. 473-474), Hegel summarizes the three sections of Chapter VI.

In Chapters III and IV, it was a question of the attitude—the cognitive and emotional attitude—that *isolated* Man, the *Particular*, adopted with respect to the Universal conceived as a transcendent God. In Chapter VI, it is a question of the role that this conception, Religion properly speaking, plays in the *historical* evolution of *humanity*. There again, it thus has to do not with the content of the theological doctrines themselves (as in Ch. VII), but with the relations between these doctrines and the Particulars, insofar as these relations determine the course of the global, historical evolution that integrates the actions of these Particulars.

Having already given a summary of Chapter VI, I will not comment on the summary that Hegel gives of it here. The text, condensed to the extreme, is almost incomprehensible. In order to explain it, it would be necessary to give again the summary that I already gave. I therefore content myself with translating it.

First of all, here is the summary of Section A of Chapter VI, dedicated to the analysis of the pagan World (p. 473, l. 28, to p. 474, l. 15):

In contrast, in the World of customary-morals, we have seen a Religion. Namely, the Religion of the subterranean-Realm. This Religion is the faith in the terrifying, unfamiliar night of *Destiny*, and in the Eumenides of the *separated-or-deceased* Spirit. This night, {being} pure Negativity in the form of Universality, {and} the Eumenides—this same {Negativity} in the form of Particularity. In this latter form, the absolute, essential-Reality is therefore, to be sure, a personal-I [*Selbst*] and {it is} *really-present*, given that the personal-I does not exist otherwise {than as really present}. However, the *particular* personal-I is {here} *that* particular phantom {the dead ancestor} which has Universality, which is *Destiny*, {as} separated from itself. This phantom is, to be sure, a phantom, {that is to say,} a *dialectically-overcome This*, [207] and, consequently, {it is a} universal personal-I. But the negative-or-negating meaning-or-value {of the phantom} has not yet mutated [*umgeschlagen*] into this positive {meaning or value of the universal personal-I}. And it is because the dialectically-overcome personal-I still means at the same time, in an immediate-manner, a *This* and {a *This*} devoid-of-essential-reality. As for *Destiny*, it remains—{being} without the personal-I—the unconscious night that arrives neither at distinction-or-differentiation nor at the clarity of self-consciousness.\*

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 410-411 (§ 674): “On the other hand, in the ethical world we did see a religion of the *underworld*. It is the belief in the terrible, unknown night of Fate and in the Eumenides of the *departed spirit*: the former is pure negativity in the form of universality, the latter the same negativity in the form of individuality. Absolute Being is, in the latter form, indeed the *self* and *present*, since other than present the self cannot *be*. But the individual self is *this* individual shade which has separated from itself the universality which Fate is. True, it is a shade, a superseded particular self, and thus a universal self; but the negative significance of the shade has still not changed round into the positive significance of the

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The *Schicksal*, the Destiny of Paganism, is Christianity. And it is about Christianity, about the Religion of the bourgeois, Christian World, that Hegel speaks in the following paragraph.

There, he says the following (p. 473, 1. 16-28):

This faith in the nothingness of necessity {of Destiny} and in the subterranean-Realm becomes *faith* in *Heaven*, because the separated-or-deceased personal-I must be united with its Universality, must develop-and-spread-out in it that which the separated-or-deceased personal-I contains, and must therefore become clear to itself. But we have seen that this *Realm* of faith developed its content only in the element of thought—without the concept [*Begriff*]; and it is because {we have seen it} sink into its Destiny—namely, into the *Religion* of the *Age-of-Enlightenment*. In this Religion {of the *Aufklärung*}, the supersensible beyond of the Understanding is constituted again, but in such a way that Self-Consciousness, {being} satisfied, maintains itself in-the-here-below, and sees in the supersensible beyond, {now} *empty* {and} what one can {therefore} just as little know as fear, neither a personal-I nor a Power [*Macht*].\*

The *Schicksal*, the Destiny of Christianity, is atheism or Hegelian anthro-po-theism. There, one passes through the Religion of the *Aufklärung*, of the Age of Enlightenment, that is to say, through Deism. The frameworks of transcendentalist theology, elaborated by the *Verstand* and filled with a positive content by the unhappy Con-sciousness, are again emptied by the critique of the 18th century. And at the moment in which the ideology of the *Aufklärung* is brought about by the French Revolution, these already empty frameworks themselves, that is to say, the very notion of transcendence, are overcome. Man is now an atheist, he knows that it is *he* and not God who is the essential-Reality of the World.

Only, in the beginning, post-revolutionary Man does not take account of his atheism. He still continues (with Kant, with Fichte, etc.) to speak about God. But, in fact, he is no longer interested in anything but himself, and his “Theology” is thus essentially contradictory and impossible. And it is about this Religion or pseudo-Religion of *Moralität*, that is to say, about post-revolutionary, German Philosophy, that Hegel speaks in the paragraph that follows.

[208] There, he says the following (p. 474, 1. 29-38):

Finally, in the Religion of reflected-Morals, one has reestablished the situation in which the absolute essential-Reality is a positive content. But this {positive} content is united with the Negativity of the Age-of-Enlightenment. This content is a Given-Being [*Être-donné*] [*Sein*] that is just as much taken back into the personal-I and {that} remains enclosed therein; and it is a *distinguished-or-differentiated content*, the parts of which are negated in-a-manner just as immediate as they are posited. As for the Destiny into which this contradictory-and-contradicting dialectical-movement sinks—it is the personal-I that has become conscious of itself as of {that which the} Destiny of the *essential-Reality* [*Wesenheit*] and of the *objective-Reality* {are}.†

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universal self, and therefore the superseded self still has, at the same time, the immediate significance of this particular and essenceless being. But Fate devoid of self remains the unconscious night which does not attain to an immanent differentiation, nor to the clarity of self-knowledge.”

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 411 (§ 675): “This belief in the nothingness of necessity and in the underworld becomes belief in Heaven, because the departed self must unite with its universality, must explicate in this universality what it contains and thus become clear to itself. This *kingdom* of faith, however, we saw unfold its content only in the element of thought without the [concrete] Notion, and for that reason perish in its fate, viz. in the religion of the Enlightenment. In this religion, the supersensible beyond of the Understanding is reinstated, but in such a way that self-consciousness remains satisfied in *this* world; and the supersensible, *empty* beyond which is neither to be known nor feared it knows neither as a self nor as a power.”

† Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 411 (§ 676): “In the religion of morality, the fact that absolute Being is a positive content is at last again recognized; but the content is bound up with the negativity of the Enlightenment. It is a *being* that is at the same time taken back into the self, in which it remains shut up, and a *differentiated content* whose parts are just as immediately

In fact, in the post-revolutionary, German philosophies, Man is already put in the place of God. But this new atheistic conception of Man is still introduced in theistic, Christian frameworks. Whence a perpetual contradiction, the negation of that which one has posited, the positing of that which one has negated. And the Destiny, the *Schicksal*, of this unconscious atheism, is the radical and conscious atheism of Hegel. Or, more exactly, his *anthropo*-theism, his deification of Man, who, after the French Revolution, thanks to Napoleon, can finally with good reason say of *himself* all that which he attributed—wrongly—to diverse non-existent Gods, or diverse Gods existing only in the semi-conscious *thought* of men who created History through their *action*. The Destiny of the pseudo-Religion of the post-revolutionary, German philosophers, like the Destiny of all Religions in general, is the *Selbst*, the *human* personal-I, which *knows* itself to be—and which *is*—“*das Schicksal der Wesenheit und Wirklichkeit*,” the Destiny of the *essential*-Reality and of the *objective*-Reality.

It is this atheism that will be proclaimed in Chapter VIII, in the Conclusion of the *Phenomenology*. And in Chapter VII, Hegel will review all the *theological* ideas that are integrated in his *anthropology*.

This summary of the religious (theological) parts of the first six chapters constitutes the first part of the introduction to Chapter VII (pp. 473-474).<sup>14</sup> In the second and third parts of this introduction, Hegel brings up the essential characteristics of the Theologies that he is going to analyze in Chapter VII.

It is the atheistic Science of Hegel that is the “*sich selbst wissende Geist*” in the proper and strict sense of the term: in and through this Science, Spirit—read: the *human* Spirit, since there is no other, as this same philosophical Science shows—Spirit *understands* itself. But, in a broader sense, Religion, Theology, is also a self-knowledge, since—in fact—in believing that he speaks about God, Man [209] speaks only about himself. One can therefore say that the Spirit which manifests itself in Religions, the Spirit of which it is a question in Theologies, is also a Spirit which *knows itself*; one can say that Theology is a *Selbstbewusstsein*, a *Self-Consciousness* of Spirit.

And this is what Hegel says in the first sentence of the second part of the introduction, a part in which he indicates the essential characteristics of the phenomenon that it is a matter of studying in Chapter VII, that is to say, of Religion, or more exactly, of Theology.

He says the following (p. 474, l. 39-40):

In Religion, Spirit that knows itself is in-an-immediate-manner its own pure *Self-Consciousness*.\*

Therefore, in and through Theology—or: *theologies*—Spirit (read: *human* Spirit) becomes conscious of itself. And yet Theology is not a *Philosophy*—even less Hegel’s Science. The auto-consciousness that is brought to light in the Theologies is still insufficient. And it is this insufficiency that Hegel indicates by the sacramental word “*unmittelbar*”: in Theology, Spirit is already a *Self-Consciousness*, but it is still this only in an “*immediate*” manner.

In place of “*unmittelbar*,” one can also say “*an sich*,” in opposition to “*für sich*” or to “*an und für sich*.” In Theology, Spirit is self-conscious “*an sich*” (*in* itself), and not “*für sich*” (*for* itself). That is to say, it is only *in fact* that it becomes conscious of itself, because in fact, there is no Spirit other than the human Spirit. And “*an sich*” means also “*für uns*”: it is *we*, Hegel and his readers, who know that every Theology is in fact only an *anthropology*.

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negated as they are produced. The Fate, however, which engulfs this contradictory movement is the self which is conscious of itself as the Fate of what is *essential* and *actual*.”

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 411 (¶ 677): “The self-knowing Spirit is, in religion, immediately its own pure self-consciousness.”

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The Man himself who does Theology does *not* know what he is doing: *he* believes that he speaks about God, about a Spirit *other* than the human Spirit. *His* self-consciousness is therefore not “for itself,” “für sich”–self-consciousness; for him, it is only *Bewusstsein*, conscious of an entity external to Man, of a Beyond, of a transcendent, *extra-worldly, supra-human divinity*.

And this is what characterizes *every* Theology whatever it may be: “*an sich*” and “für uns,” it is always a matter of the Man-in-the-World who becomes conscious of *himself*, but “für sich,” for this Man himself, it is a question of something *other* than Man and the World in which Man lives.

And this is what Hegel says in the following sentence (p. 474, 1. 40–p. 475, 1. 4):

The concrete-forms [*Gestalten*] of Spirit that have been considered {in Chapter VI, that is}: true-or-veritable [210] [*wahre*] Spirit, {Spirit} that is alienated-or-has-become-foreign to itself [*sich entfremdete*], and Spirit that is subjectively-certain of itself [*seiner selbst gewisse*]–constitute as-a-whole Spirit in {*external-*}*Consciousness*, that *Consciousness* which, in opposing itself to its *World*, does not recognize itself in it.\*

*Der wahre Geist*–is Paganism; *der sich entfremdete Geist*–is Christianity; *der seiner selbst gewisse Geist*–is the pseudo-Religion of post-revolutionary, German, protestant Theology and Philosophy: of Kant, of Fichte, of Jacobi, of the Romantics, etc. (and also of Schleiermacher). Therefore, everywhere there is a *Theo*-logy, there is a miscomprehension, a misunderstanding on the part of Man; in believing that he becomes conscious of an *extra-worldly* and *supra-human*, spiritual being, Man-who-lives-in-the-World becomes self-conscious in a sort of *unconscious way*. And it is the *whole* of all the Theologies imagined by Man throughout the course of History that constitutes Spirit in its *Bewusstsein*, that is to say, Spirit that–in fact–becomes Self-Conscious in *believing* that it becomes conscious of something *other* than itself. *This Spirit opposes* itself to the real World and to the Spirit that is in this World, that is to say, to Man, and it does *not* recognize itself there. And it is of *this Spirit* that it will be a question in Chapter VII. It will be a question of the *anthropology* that presents itself in the form of a *Theology*.

However, in *Moralität*, that is to say, in the still theological Philosophy and in the already philosophical Theology of the post-revolutionary, German thinkers, of the immediate precursors of Hegel, the transformation of Theology into Anthropology is already announced. And the conscious, atheistic anthropology of Hegel is only the necessary result of the dialectical evolution of this third important historical period. Thus, in Chapter VII, Hegel no longer speaks about this German, pseudo-Religion. He does say a few words about it in the introduction, though.

Here is the text that refers to it (p. 475, 1. 5-20):

But in moral-*Consciousness* [*Gewissen*], Spirit submits to itself just as much its objective-or-thingly World as its re-presentation [*Vorstellung*] and determinate concepts, and {it} is now Self-*Consciousness* existing in itself [*bei sich*]. In this Self-*Consciousness*, Spirit, *re-presented* as *object-or-thing*, has for itself the meaning-or-value of being universal Spirit, which contains in itself all essential-Reality and all objective-Reality. But this Spirit is not in the form of free-or-autonomous objective-Reality, that is to say, {it is not in the form} of Nature appearing independently {of Spirit}. To be sure, insofar as Spirit is a *thingly-object* of its {external-}*Consciousness*, it has {a} concrete-form [*Gestalt*], that is to say, the form of Given-Being [*Sein*]. But since in Religion, {external-}*Consciousness* is posited in the essential determination of being *Self-Consciousness*, the concrete-form of Spirit is perfectly transparent for itself. And the objective-Reality that contains this Spirit is enclosed in it,

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\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 411 (§ 677): “Those forms of it which have been considered, viz. the true Spirit, the self-alienated Spirit, and the Spirit that is certain of itself, together constitute Spirit in its *consciousness* which, confronting its *world*, does not recognize itself therein.”

that is to say, dialectically-overcome in it precisely in the manner {in which this takes place} when we say: *all objective-Reality*; this objective-Reality is {therefore} universal objective-Reality that has been *thought*.\*

The romantic poets, Schelling, Jacobi, Kant himself, in fact deified man. For them, he is the supreme value, he is absolutely autonomous, etc.: they are therefore, in fact, atheists. Just as the Protestant theology of a Schleiermacher is also already one of atheism: God (for the latter) has meaning and reality only insofar as he is revealed in and through man; religion is reduced to religious *psychology*; etc. One is therefore quite close to Hegelian atheism or anthro-po-theism. And yet all these thinkers continue to speak about God. Why? Well, Hegel just said: because they did not manage to identify the Man-about-which-they-speak with *real, conscious* Man, who lives in the *World*. They spoke about the “*soul*,” about “*Spirit*,” about the “*knowing subject*,” etc., and not about *living, real, tangible* Man. They opposed—as do all the bourgeois Intellectuals—“*ideal*” Man, who lives in and through his *reasoning*, to real Man, who lives in and through his *action* in the World. They are therefore still Christians; they split Man in two and flee from the real one. And this idealistic dualism assumes necessarily a theistic form: the soul opposed to the body; empirical World in opposition to a “*pure*,” supersensible Spirit—to a God.

Man attributes to himself a supreme value. But he does not yet dare to attribute it to himself as living, that is to say, acting, in the concrete World: he does not dare to accept this *World* as an ideal. He attributes a value to that which is extra-worldly, that which is purely mental in him. He flees the *World*, he flees himself as “*worldly*”—and, in this flight, he finds necessarily a *supra-human* God, and he attributes to it the values that he wanted—in fact—to attribute to *himself*.

In the final analysis, it is therefore the refusal—of servile origin—to accept the real World, the desire to flee into the extra-worldly *ideal*, which is the basis of all Religion, of all *Theo-logy*. It is the dualism between the *ideal*, the ideal image that I make of myself, and the *reality* that I am, which is at the basis of the dualism between the World and Man-in-the-World on the one hand, and God and the Beyond on the other.

[212] It is the objectivization of this dualism in and through theological thought that Hegel will study in Chapter VII. And he tries to show how the evolution of Religions eliminates, little by little, this dualism, and results in post-revolutionary atheism, which, in realizing the ideal in the world, finally puts an equals sign between the human *ideal* and human *reality*. And it is in this way that Spirit-in-the-World, that is to say, *human* Spirit, becomes Spirit *tout court*; it is in this way that God ceases to be a supra-human being, that Man himself becomes God: in and through Hegel’s Science.

This is what Hegel says in the following passage (p. 475, 1. 21-36):

Since in Religion the determination of the proper-or-veritable {external-}Consciousness of Spirit does not have the form of free-or-autonomous *Being-other*, the *empirical-existence* [*Dasein*] of Spirit is distinguished {there} from its *Self-Consciousness*, and its proper-or-veritable objective-reality is placed outside of Religion. There is, it is true, {only} one Spirit of both; but the {external-}Consciousness of this Spirit does not embrace both at the same time, and Religion appears {only} as a part of {the} empirical-existence and active-life [*Tuns und Treibens*] {of Spirit}, the other part of which is life in the objectively-real World. {Now,} given that we now know {that is to say, after the

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 411-12 (§ 677): “But in conscience it brings itself, as well as its objective world in general, into subjection, as also its picture-thinking and its specific Notions, and is now a self-consciousness that communes with its own self. In this, Spirit conceived as object, has for itself the significance of being the universal Spirit that contains within itself all essence and all actuality; yet it is not in the form of free actuality or the apparent independence of Nature. True, it has ‘*shape*’ or the form of being, in that it is the *object* of its consciousness; but because in religion consciousness is posited essentially in the determination of *self-consciousness*, the shape is perfectly transparent to itself; and the reality it contains is shut up in it and superseded in it in just the same way as when we speak of ‘all reality’; it is universal reality as *thought*.”

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analyses of Chapter VI} that Spirit in its World and Spirit conscious of itself as Spirit—that is to say, Spirit in Religion—are one-and-the-same-thing, {one can say that} the perfection-and-culmination [Vollendung] of Religion consists {in the fact} that both {things} become equal to one another; not only that the objective-reality of Spirit is embraced [befasst] by Religion, but on the contrary that Spirit as Spirit conscious of itself becomes for itself objectively-real and the *thingly-object of its {external-}Consciousness*.\*

Religion is born from the dualism, from the gap, between the ideal and reality, between the *idea* that man makes of himself—his *Selbst*—and his conscious life in the empirical World—his *Dasein*. As long as this gap subsists, there will always be a tendency to project the ideal *outside* of the World; that is to say, there will always be Religion, Theism, Theology. Inversely, in every Religion, there is a reflection of this dualism. On the one hand, within religious *thought*, within Theology, which—always—*opposes* the Divine to the worldly and human. On the other hand, there is a duality within religious *reality* itself. Religion never encompasses the *totality* of human existence: there is never a veritable *theo-cracy*. Religious existence unfolds *alongside of Dasein*, of life within the concrete World, and the Religious man is *always* more or less a monk, detached “from the world,” “from the age.”

Yet, Hegel says, given that the dualism (that is at the basis of [213] Religion and is engendered by Religion) is, in the final analysis, *illusory* (since the non-realized ideal and, consequently, its transposition into God do not exist), the dualism cannot be maintained *eternally* (for in that case it would be *real*); Religion is therefore a passing phenomenon. At the moment in which the ideal is *realized*, the dualism, and with it Religion and Theism, disappears. Now, the ideal is realized in and through negating, revolutionary Action. Thus every veritable, that is to say, fully successful, revolution necessarily leads to atheism. Inversely, it is only from the moment in which Man ceases to project the ideal into the Beyond that he could want to realize it through action in the World, that is to say, make a revolution. Thus a conscious atheism results necessarily in Revolution. Theism and Revolution are therefore mutually *exclusive*, and every attempt to synthesize them can lead only to a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding that would reveal itself as such as soon as one passed over into action properly speaking. However, one should not forget that Revolution realizes that *same* ideal which Religion projects into the Beyond. Revolution therefore *realizes* Religion in the World, but it does this by “overcoming [supprimant]” Religion as Religion. And Religion that is “overcome” as Religion or Theology through its realization in the World, is absolute Science. For Hegel, it has to do with Christian Religion, with its realization by the French Revolution, and with its “sublimation” in Hegelian Science. This Revolution is preceded by the atheism of the 18th century, where the nothingness of God was revealed to Man through the emptiness of Theology or “deistic” pseudo-Theology. It is therefore an atheistic Man who triggers revolutionary *action*. But this action realizes the *Christian* ideal. This realization transforms the ideal into *Wahrheit*, into truth, that is to say, into the revelation of a *reality*, that is to say, into absolute Science. Hegel’s Science therefore reveals nothing other than the complete reality of the Christian idea. But this idea, once realized in the *World*, *ceases* to be Christian, theistic, religious. For divine Spirit that is *realized* in the World is no longer *divine*, but human. And that is the very ground for Hegel’s absolute Science.

This is what Hegel says in the last three lines of the quoted passage. The aim of religious evolution is the complete *realization* of Religion (read: Christianity): Man must be “*befasst*” (embraced) by Religion in his “*Wirklichkeit*,” in his objective-reality, that is to say, as humanity living in the World, as a universal State. But, Hegel adds, this means atheism. For at that same moment, Man will be, and will understand himself as, objec-

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\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 412 (¶ 678): “Since, then, in religion the determination of the consciousness proper of Spirit does not have the form of free *otherness*, Spirit’s *existence* is distinct from its *self-consciousness*, and its reality proper falls outside of religion. There is indeed one Spirit of both, but its consciousness does not embrace both together, and religion appears as a part of existence, of conduct and activity, whose other part is the life lived in its real world. As we now know that Spirit in its own world and Spirit conscious of itself as Spirit, or Spirit in religion, are the same, the perfection of religion consists in the two becoming identical with each other: not only that religion concerns itself with Spirit’s reality but, conversely, that Spirit, as self-conscious Spirit, becomes actual to itself and *object of its consciousness*.”



tive and real *Geist*: he will say of himself that which he said previously of his God. In short—the “*Vollendung*” of Religion (its culmination) is its “*Aufhebung*” (its “overcoming [*suppression*]”) as Religion in and through Hegel’s anthropological Science. [214] (Let us remark that this passage is no longer ambiguous: “*der Geist in der Religion*,” that is to say, God, and “*der Geist in seiner Welt*,” that is to say, either Man or humanity, are “*dasselbe*.”)

These ideas are again developed in the passage that follows and that ends the second part of the introduction (p. 475, l. 36–p. 476, l. 13):

Insofar as, in Religion, Spirit *re-pre-sents* itself to itself, it is, to be sure, {external-}Consciousness; and the objective-reality contained in Religion is the concrete-form and the clothing [*Kleid*] of the re-pre-sentation of Spirit. But in this re-pre-sentation, objective-reality does not obtain the fullness of its right, namely, {of the right} to be not only clothing, but {on the contrary} free, autonomous, empirical-existence. Inversely, {precisely} because it lacks the perfection-or-culmination in itself, this objective-reality is a *determinate*, concrete-form that does not attain what it should represent, namely, Spirit conscious of itself. In order for the concrete-form of Spirit to express it on its own, it should also be nothing other than this Spirit, and this Spirit should appear to itself, that is to say, to be objectively-real, such as it is in its essential-reality. It is only in this way that what can seem to be a requirement of the opposite, namely, {the requirement} that the thingly-object of {external-} Consciousness of Spirit have at the same time the form of a free-or-autonomous objective-reality, would be likewise attained. But {there is no contradiction here. For} it is only Being that is for-itself a thingly-object as absolute Spirit, that for itself is just as must a free-or-autonomous objective-reality as it remains conscious of itself in-this-objective-reality.\*

As long as Man becomes conscious of himself, so to speak, *unconsciously*, that is to say, as long as he does *anthropology* in the guise of a *theology*, as long as he speaks about himself while he believes that he speaks about God, he will never understand himself fully and completely, he will never know what *Geist* is in reality. On the one hand, because, in Theology, he does not understand his own real existence in the World; if he assimilates himself to God, he will have to conceive of himself as being able and having to live *outside* of the World. On the other hand, and even on account of that, Spirit appears to him in a material, obsolete, imperfect form. Spirit that one *opposes*—in conceiving of it as a transcendent *God*—to the World and to concrete Man, is *not* total. It is a reality opposed to *another* reality. It is therefore a *particular* reality, a being alongside of *other* beings. The God of Theology is always an “ideal,” that is to say, a more or less complete “abstraction.” In order to give to divine Spirit the *fullness* of being, it is necessary to situate divine Spirit within the World, to conceive of it as the “entelechy” of the World. Now, to conceive of it [215] *in this way* is to conceive of it as *worldly*, that is to say, *human* Spirit, and no longer as God. In short, Man who seeks to understand himself fully and completely as *Spirit*, can be satisfied only by an *atheistic* anthropology. And this is why the *Schicksal*, the *Destiny* of every Theology, of every Religion, is, in the final analysis, atheism.

This passage contains the technical term of which Hegel avails himself when he speaks about Theology: this term is “*Vor-stellung*,” “re-pre-sentation.” In theism, Man becomes conscious of *himself*. But he does so in the mode of *Vor-stellung*. That is to say, he projects himself *outside* of himself, “*stellt sich vor*,” and no longer recognizes himself in this projection; he believes that he is in the presence of a transcendent *God*. And it is in

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 412 (§ 678): “So far as Spirit in religion *pictures* itself to itself, it is indeed consciousness, and the reality enclosed within religion is the shape and the guise of its picture-thinking. But, in this picture-thinking, reality does not receive its perfect due, viz. to be not merely a guise but an independent free existence; and, conversely, because it lacks perfection within itself it is a *specific* shape which does not attain to what it ought to show forth, viz. Spirit that is conscious of itself. If its shape is to express Spirit itself, it must be nothing else than Spirit, and Spirit must appear to itself, or be in actuality, what it is in its essence. Only by so doing would that also be obtained which may seem to be the demand for the opposite, viz. that the *object* of its consciousness have at the same time the form of free actuality; but only Spirit that is object to itself as absolute Spirit is conscious of itself as a free actuality to the extent that it is and remains conscious of itself therein.”

## INTERPRETATION OF THE GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER VII

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this way that Hegel will be able to say that the *only* difference between his Science and Christian Theology consists in the fact that the latter is a *Vorstellung*, while his Science is a *Begriff*, a developed concept. Indeed, it is enough to overcome the *Vorstellung*, it is enough to *be-greifen*, to *know* or understand that which one has *pro-jected*, it is enough to say about *Man* everything that the Christian says about his God, in order to have the atheistic anthropology that is at the basis of Hegel's Science.

◇

After having pointed out the essential characteristics of the phenomenon that it is a matter of describing in Chapter VII, that is to say, of Theology, and after having marked the outcome of the dialectical evolution of this phenomenon, that is to say, of the history of religious doctrines, Hegel moves onto the third and final part of the introduction.

It is now a matter of situating Chapter VII within the whole of the *Phenomenology*, and of pointing out its interior structure.

First of all, Hegel says the following (p. 476, 1. 14–p. 477, 1. 13):

Given that one initially distinguishes Self-Consciousness from {external-}Consciousness properly speaking, {or, in other words, that one distinguishes} *Religion* from Spirit in its World, that is to say, from the *empirical-existence* [*Dasein*] of Spirit, {it is necessary to say that} this {empirical-existence} consists in the whole-or-entirety of Spirit, insofar as the constitutive-elements [*Momente*] {of this whole} are represented as-separating-themselves-from-one-another and as each {presenting itself} for itself. Now, the constitutive-elements {in question} are: {external-}Consciousness {Ch. I-III}, *Self-Consciousness* {Ch. IV}, *Reason* {Ch. V}, and Spirit {Ch. VI}, namely, Spirit as immediate Spirit, which is not yet Consciousness [*Bewusstsein*] of Spirit. The *integrated* totality of these {four} constitutive-elements constitutes Spirit in its worldly empirical-existence as such. Spirit as Spirit contains the concrete-formations [*Gestaltungen*] {considered} up to now in their general, specific-determinations [216] [*Bestimmungen*], {that is to say,} in these {same four} constitutive-elements that have just been mentioned. Religion presupposes the complete passage {of the succession} of these {four} constitutive-elements; {it} is their *simple-or-undivided* totality, that is to say, their absolute, personal I. – Moreover, in relation to Religion, one must not represent the course-or-process of these {four} constitutive-elements as being carried out} in Time. Only Spirit that is entire-or-taken-as-a-whole is in time, and {only} the concrete-forms [*Gestalten*] that are concrete-forms of the entire-or-total Spirit {taken} as total, are represented in a consecutive-series. For it is only the whole-or-entirety that has an objective-reality properly speaking, and, consequently, the form of pure freedom regarding That-which-is-other, which form expresses itself as time. As for the *constitutive-elements* of Spirit{, which are external-}Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, {taken} as separated from one another, they do not have empirical existence, {precisely} because they are {only} constitutive-elements. Just as Spirit has been distinguished from its {four} constitutive-elements, it is necessary, thirdly, to distinguish from these constitutive-elements themselves their particular-or-isolated specific-determination. Indeed, we have seen {that} each of these {four} constitutive elements again distinguishes-or-differentiates itself in a course-or-process and forms-or-concretizes itself [*gestaltet*] differently therein: it is in this way that in {external-}Consciousness, for example, sensible subjective-Certainty {Ch. I} was distinguished from Perception {Ch. II}. These latter aspects separate themselves from one another in Time, and {they} belong to a *specific* [*besondern*] *whole-or-entirety*. – For Spirit descends from its *Universality* [*Allgemeinheit*] towards *Particularity* [*Einzelheit*] {in passing} through the *specific-determination* [*Bestimmung*]. The specific-determination, that is to say, the Middle-term, is {external-}Consciousness, *Self-Consciousness*, etc. Particularity, in contrast, is constituted by the concrete-forms of these constitutive-elements. Consequently, these concrete-forms represent Spirit in its Particularity, that is to say, in its

objective-*reality*, and {they} are distinguished in Time. But {they are distinguished there} in such a way that the concrete-form that follows retains-or-conserves within it those that precede it.\*

This text first of all teaches us something that is, so to speak, self-evident. The succession of the sections, *Bewusstsein* (Ch. I-III), *Selbstbewusstsein* (Ch. IV), *Vernunft* (Ch. V), and *Geist* (Ch. VI), is not temporal. The succession of phenomena studied within each of these sections does, on the contrary, unfold in time. That is to say, Sensation (Ch. I) precedes Perception (Ch. II), which precedes Understanding (Ch. III). But this Understanding—vulgar science, etc.—is posterior to the Struggle and Work described in Chapter IV. Likewise, the Intellectual, as he is described in Chapter V, is found only [217] in the Christian World, which is analyzed in Section B of Chapter VI; he is therefore posterior to the pagan World described in Section A. But the succession of Sections A, B, and C of Chapter VI corresponds to the course of historical evolution: Greek City, Roman Empire, Feudalism, Absolutism, Revolution, Napoleon, German Philosophy, Hegel. (The temporal succession, Sensation, Perception, and Understanding, corresponds, moreover, not only to the development of the isolated individual, but also to the evolution of humanity, which is analyzed in Chapter VI.)

Religion *presupposes*—but in a logical, and not temporal, sense—the *whole* of the “constitutive elements” [*Momente*] described in the six preceding Chapters. That can only mean the following: it is real, *concrete* Man who is religious and who does theology; it is neither a “pure” Consciousness, nor a “pure” Desire, nor a “pure” Action, etc.; it is Man-conscious-of-himself-in-his-active-life-in-the-World. And Hegel says that Religion presupposes, *logically*, the *whole* of this life in the World, that is to say, *History*. That means: Religion is always an ideology, an ideal “super-structure,” founded on the “infra-structure” of real, active History, History realizing itself as Struggle and Work. Religion is only “*das absolute Selbst*” of this reality. That is to say, as I have said previously, in and through Theology, Man becomes conscious of *real* humanity, that is to say, of the People, of the State, of social, political, historical reality. It is necessary that a People first of all constitute itself through *Action*, in order that it can then *contemplate* itself—unconsciously—in a Religion, in its God.

But on the other hand, it is only in becoming *conscious* of itself that the People is truly a *People*, and not an animal “society.” Yet it becomes conscious of itself in Religion. It is therefore only in and through Religion that the people constitutes itself as *human* individuality. (At least insofar as religion is not replaced by Hegelian Science.) And this is what Hegel says in the passage that follows (p. 477, 1. 14–p. 478, 1. 9).

On the one hand, Religion is, consequently, the culmination-or-perfection of Spirit; {the culmination} to which the particular-and-isolated [*einzelnen*] constitutive-elements of Spirit, {which are} {external-}Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, return or have *returned* as to

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 412-13 (¶ 679): “When self-consciousness and consciousness proper, *religion* and Spirit in its world, or Spirit’s *existence*, are in the first instance distinguished from each other, the latter consists in the totality of Spirit so far as its moments exhibit themselves in separation, each on its own account. But the moments are *consciousness*, *self-consciousness*, *Reason*, and *Spirit*—Spirit, that is, as immediate Spirit, which is not yet consciousness of Spirit. Their totality, *taken together*, constitutes Spirit in its mundane existence generally; Spirit as such contains the previous structured shapes in universal determinations, in the moments just named. Religion presupposes that these have run their full course and is their *simple* totality or absolute self. The course traversed by these moments is, moreover, in relation to religion, not to be represented as occurring in Time. Only the totality of Spirit is in Time, and the ‘shapes,’ which are ‘shapes’ of the totality of *Spirit*, display themselves in a temporal succession; for only the whole has true actuality and therefore the form of pure freedom in the face of an ‘other,’ a form which expresses itself as Time. But the *moments* of the whole, consciousness, self-consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, just because they are moments, have no existence in separation from one another. Just as Spirit was distinguished from its moments, so we have further, in the third place, to distinguish from these moments themselves their individual determination. We saw that each of those moments was differentiated again in its own self into a process of its own, and assumed different ‘shapes’: as, e.g., in consciousness, sense-certainty and perception were distinct from each other. These latter shapes fall apart in Time and belong to a *particular totality*. For Spirit descends from its universality to individuality through determination. The determination, or middle term, is consciousness, self-consciousness, and so on. But *individuality* is constituted by the shapes assumed by these moments. These, therefore, exhibit Spirit in its individuality or *actuality*, and are distinguished from one another in Time, though in such a way that the later moment retains within it the preceding one.”

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their ground-or-basis. On the other hand, these constitutive-elements constitute as a whole the *empirically-existing objective-reality* of the entire-or-complete Spirit, which exists only as {dialectical-} movement{-movement} that distinguishes-or-differentiates {the aspects of Spirit} and returns to itself from its own aspects. The becoming of [218] *Religion as such* is implied in the {dialectical-} movement of the universal constitutive-elements. But insofar as each of these attributes has been represented not only as it determines-or-specifies itself in general, but also as it exists *in and for itself*, that is to say, as it unfolds [*verläuft*] within itself as a Whole, the aforementioned complete courses-or-processes of the particular-and-isolated aspects {of Spirit} entail at the same time the *specific-determinations* of *Religion* itself. Entire-or-complete Spirit, {that is to say,} Spirit in Religion is for its part the {dialectical-}movement {of Spirit by which the latter,} in leaving its immediacy, arrives at *knowing-or-at-the-knowledge-of* [*au savoir-ou-à-la-connaissance*] what it is *in itself*, that is to say, {of what it is} in an immediate-manner; {or again, the Spirit of Religion is the dialectical-movement by which Spirit} arrives at {the situation} in which the *concrete-form* in which it appears-or-reveals itself to its {external-}Consciousness, identifies itself [*gleiche*] perfectly with its essential-reality, and {in which} it contemplates itself as it {actually} is. – In this becoming, Spirit is therefore itself {situated} in the *specific-or-determinate* concrete-forms that constitute the distinctions-or-differences of this {dialectical-}movement. At the same time {and} thereby, determinate-or-specific Religion also possesses an *objectively-real, determinate-or-specific* Spirit. If, therefore, {external-}Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, and Spirit belong exclusively to Spirit as it knows-or-has-knowledge-of itself [*se sait-ou-se-connaît lui-même*], the *determinate-or-specific* concrete-forms that develop themselves within {external-}Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, belong, {by forming} each time {a} special {development}, exclusively to the determinate-or-specific concrete-forms of Spirit that knows-or-has-knowledge-of itself. The *determinate-or-specific* concrete-form of Religion chooses for its objectively-real Spirit among the concrete-forms of each of the constitutive-elements of this Spirit, that which corresponds to it {to the given Religion}. The *one-or-unique* specific-determination of Religion penetrates into all the aspects of its objectively-real empirical-existence, and {it} stamps them with their common seal.\*

Religious evolution is only a “constitutive-element” (*Moment*) of historical, real, active evolution. And it is this *real* process, the infra-structure, that determines the particular forms of different Religions. The aim of religious evolution is atheistic philosophy, in and through which Spirit contemplates itself as it *is* in reality: “*er sich anschau wie er ist.*” The stages of the becoming of this perfect self-comprehension are represented by the different Religions, each of which corresponds to a Society, to a determinate Spirit: “*einen bestimmten Geist.*” A given Religion or Theology reflects the specific characteristics of *real* Spirit, that is to say, of the *Volksg Geist*. It is [219] therefore indeed a projection into the beyond of the character of social reality that has already been formed. But, on the other hand, the People constitutes itself as a homogenous unity only by having worked out

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\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 413-14 (¶ 680): “If, therefore, religion is the perfection of Spirit into which its individual moments—consciousness, self-consciousness, Reason, and Spirit—return and have returned as into their ground, they together constitute the *existent* actuality of the totality of Spirit, which *is* only as the differentiating and self-returning movement of these its aspects. The genesis of religion *in general* is contained in the movement of the universal moments. But since each of these attributes was exhibited, not merely as it determines itself in general, but as it is in and for itself, i.e. as it runs its course as a totality within itself, therefore, what has come to be is not merely the genesis of religion *in general*: those complete processes of the *individual* aspects at the same time contain the *specific forms* of religion itself. The totality of Spirit, the Spirit of religion, is again the movement away from its immediacy towards the attainment of the *knowledge* of what it is *in itself* or immediately, the movement in which, finally, the ‘*shape*’ in which it appears for its consciousness will be perfectly identical with its essence, and it will behold itself as it is. In this genesis of religion, Spirit itself therefore assumes *specific* ‘*shapes*’ which constitute the different moments of this movement; at the same time, the specific religion has likewise a specific actual Spirit. Thus, if consciousness, self-consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, belong to self-knowing Spirit in general, similarly the specific ‘*shapes*’ which were specially developed within consciousness, self-consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, belong to specific ‘*shapes*’ of self-knowing Spirit. From the ‘*shapes*’ belonging to each of its moments, the *specific* ‘*shape*’ of religion picks out the one appropriate to it for its actual Spirit. The one distinctive feature which characterizes the religion penetrates every aspect of its actual existence and stamps them with this common character.”

a *Religion* common to all its members. Thus, for example, Christianity is the result of *real* transformations that shaped the bourgeois World in the Roman Empire. Without this Empire, Christianity would have remained a simple Galilean sect. But the new social unity, the *Christian World*, was constituted only because there was a projection into Christian *Religion*.

According to what Hegel just said, the analysis of the religious evolution given in Chapter VII should pass through the same stages that the analysis of the real evolution in Chapter VI did. However, the parallelism is in fact not maintained. And this is what Hegel is now going to explain.

He says the following (p. 478, l. 10–p. 479, l. 9):

In this way, the concrete-forms that have been presented {to us} up to now {in Chapters I–VI}, are now ordered {in Chapter VII} in a different way than {they were ordered when} they appeared in their consecutive-series [*Reihe*]. Before {going further,} it is necessary to make some brief, essential remarks about this subject. – In the consecutive-series considered {in Chapters I–VI}, each constitutive-element, in going deeper into itself, was elaborated {in order to become} a Whole in its original [*eigentümlichen*] principle. And the act-of-knowing was the Depth or Spirit, in which these constitutive-elements, which have no permanent-maintenance in themselves, had their substance. Yet now {in Chapter VII}, this substance has risen-to-the-surface; it is the depth of Spirit subjectively-certain of itself, {the depth} that does not permit the particular-and-isolated principle to {actually} isolate itself and to constitute itself into a Whole within itself. On the contrary, in collecting in it all these constitutive-elements, in holding them together, this substance progresses into that total richness of its objectively-real Spirit, and all the determinate-or-specific constitutive-elements of this Spirit take and receive, in common, into themselves the same [*gleiche*] specific-determination, {which is that} of the Whole. – This Spirit that is subjectively-certain of itself, like its {dialectical-}movement, is the true-or-veritable objective-reality and the Being-*in and for-itself* of these constitutive-elements, {the Being in and for itself} that falls to each particular-and-isolated-entity. In its process, the one-and-only consecutive-series {that we have considered} up to now therefore designated through knots the regressions {that were carried out} in it; but starting from these knots, it was prolonged again in a single line [*Länge*]. In contrast, now {in Chapter VII} this consecutive-series is, so to speak, broken into these knots, {that is to say,} into these universal constitutive-elements, and {it is} decomposed into many lines that, {being} [220] assembled in a single bundle, at the same time unite themselves in a symmetrical manner so that the analogous distinctions-or-differences, in which each specific [*besondere*] {line} took-concrete-form [*gestaltete*] within itself, come to coincide. – Moreover, the manner in which the co-ordination of the general directions must be understood, {the manner} that has been represented here, arises of its own accord from the whole of {our} exposition. It is therefore superfluous to remark that these distinctions-or-differences must essentially be understood only as constitutive-elements of becoming, {and} not as parts {of a static Whole}. In objectively-real Spirit, they are attributes of its substance; but in Religion, they are on the contrary only predicates of the subject. – Likewise, *in itself* or *for us*, all the forms are as such in Spirit, and {they are such} in each Spirit. But the only thing that matters in every case [*überhaupt*] in the objective-reality of Spirit—is {the choice} of the specific-determination that exists for itself {for this Spirit} in its {own external-} Consciousness, {of the determination} with respect to which it knows-or-has-knowledge that it is within it that its personal-I is expressed, that is to say, {the choice} of the concrete-form with respect to which it knows-or-has-knowledge that it is within it that its essential-reality is.\*

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 414–15 (§ 681): “In this way, the arrangement of the ‘shapes’ which have hitherto appeared differs from the way they appeared in their own order. On this point we shall observe briefly at the start what is necessary. In the series we considered, each moment, exploring its own depths, formed itself into a totality within its own peculiar principle; and cognition was the depth, or the Spirit, wherein the moments which have no other subsistence of their own possessed their substance. But this substance is now manifest; it is the depth of Spirit that is certain of itself, which does not allow the principle of each individual moment to become isolated and to make itself a totality within itself; on the contrary, gathering and

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In the preceding Chapters, Hegel analyzed, one after the other, the constitutive elements of the human being: Sensation, Perception, Understanding, Desire, etc., etc.... But all these elements are *real* only in concrete Man, and concrete Man *exists* only in the heart of Society, of the *Volk*, of the State. Now the People becomes—unconsciously—conscious of itself in its Religion. It is therefore *Theology* that reflects human *reality*, and not sensible experience, physics, psychology, etc.... Each Theology gives a *global* vision of human reality, in which the “attributes of substance,” this substance being Society as such (People, State), appear in the guise of “predicates” that one attributes to the “subject,” that is to say, to God. Thus the different Religions are stages of the becoming of *the* Self-Consciousness of humanity, and not fragments of this Consciousness, which would have been added in order to form the whole. *Each* Religion is a *total* vision of human reality, and there is a *becoming* of Religion only because there is a becoming of this reality.

However, if “in itself or for us,” each Religion reflects the totality, this is not the case for those who profess it. Each given Religion accentuates a “constitutive-element” more than the others, that which presupposes and conditions the *real* predominance of this element in the historic life of the People that has this Religion. Consequently, the *current* [actuelle] totality is an *integration* of the “constitutive-elements” that have been partially actualized in the different Religions. One can therefore nevertheless say that complete Self-Consciousness [221] is a summation or integration of those things that have partially come to consciousness in and through Religions.

Moreover, we know that *perfect* Self-Consciousness is areligious, atheistic: Man knows, then, that it is of *himself* that he becomes conscious, and not of God. As for those things that have come to consciousness *partially*, they are theological: in imagining a particular form of divinity, Man becomes partially conscious of his human reality.

Hegel has already insisted on this difference. But he returns to it again in the passage that follows.

First of all, he says the following (p. 479, l. 10-15):

The difference-or-distinction that has been established between *objectively-real* Spirit and {this same} Spirit that knows-or-has-knowledge-of itself [*se sait-ou-se-connaît*] as Spirit, that is to say, {the distinction} between itself {taken} as {external-}Consciousness and {itself taken} as Self-Consciousness, {this difference-or-distinction} is dialectically-overcome in Spirit that knows-or-has-knowledge-of itself according to its {objective} truth: the {external-}Consciousness and the Self-Consciousness of this Spirit are made equal.\*

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holding together all these moments within itself, it advances within this total wealth of its actual Spirit, and all its particular moments take and receive in common into themselves the like determinateness of the whole. This self-certain Spirit and its movement is their true actuality and the *being-in-and-for-self* which belongs to each moment. Thus while the previous single series in its advance marked the retrogressive steps in it by nodes, but continued itself again from them in a single line, it is now, as it were, broken at these nodes, at these universal moments, and falls apart into many lines which, gathered up into a single bundle, at the same time combine symmetrically so that the similar differences in which each particular moment took shape within itself meet together.

However, it is self-evident from the whole exposition how this co-ordination of the general directions here represented is to be understood; so that it is superfluous to remark that these differences are to be grasped essentially only as moments of the development, not as parts. In actual Spirit, they are attributes of its substance, but in religion, on the other hand, they are only predicates of the Subject. Similarly, all forms in general are certainly *in themselves* or *for us* contained in Spirit and in each Spirit, but as regards Spirit’s actuality, the main point is solely which determinateness is explicit for it in its *consciousness*, in which determinateness it has expressed its self, or in which ‘shape’ it knows its essence.

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 415 (§ 682): “The distinction which was made between *actual* Spirit and Spirit that knows itself as Spirit, or between itself, *qua* consciousness, and *qua* self-consciousness, is superseded in the Spirit that knows itself in its truth; its consciousness and its self-consciousness are on the same level.”



“Spirit that has knowledge of itself [*se connaît*] in its *truth*” (or *reality*—that has been revealed), is the Hegelian Spirit of absolute Knowing [*Savoir*], of which it will be a question in Chapter VIII. In Chapter VII, it is a question of Spirit that has knowledge of itself in and through Religion. And here is how Hegel opposes this religious or theological knowledge [*connaissance*] to the areligious and atheistic knowledge of absolute Knowing [*Savoir*] (p. 479, l. 15–p. 480, l. 9):

But given that here {that is to say, as it is considered in Chapter VII,} Religion still exists only *in-an-immediate-manner*, the difference-or-distinction {in question} has not yet been re-absorbed into Spirit. It is only the *abstract-notion* [*nur der Begriff*] of Religion that is posited. In this {abstract-notion,} essential-reality is *Self-Consciousness*, which is for itself all {objective-}truth, and which within this {truth} entails all objective-reality. This Self-Consciousness, {insofar as it is religious, that is to say, insofar as it is taken} as {external-}Consciousness, has itself for its thingly-object. Therefore: Spirit that still knows-or-has-knowledge-of itself only *in-an-immediate-manner* is for itself Spirit in the *form of immediacy*, and the specific-determination of the concrete-form in which it appears-or-reveals-itself to itself, is that of *static-Being* {=God}. To be sure, this static-Being is filled-or-accomplished [*erfüllt*] neither by sensation nor by multiform [*mannigfaltigen*] material, nor by other [*sonstigen*] constitutive-elements, aims and unilateral specifying-determinations; on the contrary, {it is filled} by Spirit, and {it} is of itself known [*su-ou-connu*] as [222] {being} all {objective-}truth and {all} objective-reality. {But brought about} in this way, this *filling-or-accomplishing* is not equal to its *concrete-form*; Spirit {taken} as essential-reality {is not equal} to its {external} Consciousness. Spirit is objectively-real only {at the moment in which it exists} as absolute Spirit, {that is to say,} insofar as it, as it is in the *subjective-certainty of itself*, also exists for itself in its {objective-}truth; or {in other words, insofar as} the extreme terms, in which it divides itself {when it is taken} as {external-}Consciousness, exist for-one-another in the concrete-form-of-Spirit. The concrete-formation that Spirit {taken} as the thingly-object of its {external}Consciousness assumes, remains filled-or-accomplished by the subjective-certainty of Spirit, as by a substance; {and} thanks to this content, there disappears {the danger} that the thingly-object would lower {itself} down [*herabsänke*] into pure-or-abstract [*reinen*] thingly-objectivity, {that is to say,} into the form of the negating-negativity of Self-Consciousness. The immediate union of Spirit with itself is the basis or the pure-or-abstract {external-}Consciousness, *within* which {external-}Consciousness separates itself {into knowing subject and object known}. Being thus contained within its pure-or-abstract Self-Consciousness, Spirit does not exist in Religion as the creator of a *Nature* as such. That which it produces in this {religious, dialectical-}movement are its {own} concrete-forms {known} as {divine} Spirits, which as a whole form the integrity [*Vollständigkeit*] of its appearance-or-revelation. And this {dialectical-}movement itself is the becoming of the perfect objective-reality of Spirit through the particular-and-isolated aspects of this {perfect objective-reality}, that is to say, {through} the imperfect objective-realities of Spirit.\*

\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 415-16 (§ 682): “But, as religion here is, to begin with, *immediate*, this distinction has not yet returned into Spirit. What is posited is only the *Notion* of religion; in this the essence is self-consciousness, which is conscious of being all truth and contains all reality within that truth. This self-consciousness has, as consciousness, itself for object. Spirit which, to begin with, has an *immediate* knowledge of itself is thus to itself Spirit in the *form of immediacy*, and the determinateness of the form in which it appears to itself is that of [mere] *being*. This being, it is true, is *filled* neither with sensation nor a manifold material, nor with any other kind of one-sided moments, purposes, and determinations: it is filled with Spirit and is known by itself to be all truth and reality. Such *filling* is not identical with its *shape*, Spirit *qua* essence is not identical with its consciousness. Spirit is actual as absolute Spirit only when it is also for itself in its *truth* as it is *certainty of itself*, or when the extremes into which, as consciousness, it parts itself are explicitly for each other in the shape of Spirit. The shape which Spirit assumes as object of its consciousness remains filled by the certainty of Spirit as by its substance; through this content, the object is saved from being degraded to pure objectivity, to the form of negativity of self-consciousness. Spirit’s immediate unity with itself is the basis, or pure consciousness, *within* which consciousness parts asunder [into the duality of subject and object]. In this way Spirit, shut up within its pure self-consciousness, does not exist in religion as the creator of a *Nature* in general; what is does create in this movement are its shapes *qua* Spirits, which together constitute the completeness of its manifestation. And this movement itself is the genesis of its complete reality through its

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Religion is “*unmittelbar*” in Chapter VII: that is to say, it has to do with Religion in the proper sense of the word, with *Theology*. This Theology is the “immediate” form of “Science,” it is anthropology that is *not* mediated by the *negation* of God (which presupposes mediation by the *nothingness* of death, realized in and through the Terror of Robespierre). “Science” that is *not* mediated by Negation is *non*-dialectical, pre-Hegelian philosophy. It is “*positive*” in the sense that it substantializes Spirit, understanding it as a *Sein*, as a Given-Being, a Being that is, in fact, *natural*, non-human, but one that is conceived here as a *divine*, all-powerful, eternal Being that is identical to itself. Spirit conceived as such a *Sein*—is God. “Immediate” philosophy is therefore indeed *theology* and not *anthropo*-logy.

God is therefore a *Sein*, but a *spiritual Sein*: he is *Spirit* materialized. And *this* Spirit, Hegel says, creates not Nature, the *sensible* World, but spiritual concrete-forms, *Gestalten als Geister*, that is to say, *Gods*. In other words: as a religious being, Man, or (human) Spirit, creates not [223] forms and natural laws, not real, empirical *Worlds*, but Theologies, *myths* with anthropo-logical *content* and theo-logical *form*.

It is the becoming of this Spirit that creates Gods, it is the evolution of religious thought, it is the logico-temporal succession of diverse *Theologies* elaborated throughout the course of history that Hegel is going to describe in Chapter VII. And, in the passage that concludes the introduction, he lays out the general structure of this chapter.

He says that in the first section (A), it will be a question of primitive, pre-historical Religion, which he calls “*natürliche Religion*.” In the second section (B), he will speak about “*Kunst-Religion*,” that is to say, about Greco-Roman Religion. Finally, a third and final section (C) will be devoted to studying “*absolute Religion*,” that is to say, Christianity.

Here is how he determines the essential features of these three important stages of the religious evolution of humanity (p. 480, l. 10-35):

The first objective-reality of Spirit {in Religion} is the abstract-notion {*Begriff* in the sense of: *nur Begriff*} of Religion itself, that is to say, Religion {taken} as {an} *immediate* and, consequently, *natural* Religion. In this {natural Religion,} Spirit knows-or-has-knowledge-of itself as it knows its thingly-object, in a natural, that is to say, immediate, concrete-form. As for the *second* {objective-reality of Spirit in Religion}, it is necessarily that {in which Spirit comes} to know-or-have-knowledge-of itself in the concrete-form of the *dialectically-overcome* natural-state [*Natürlichkeit*], that is to say, {in the concrete-form} of the personal-I. This {second objective-reality} is, consequently, *artificial-or-artistic* Religion. For the concrete-form is elevated to the form of the *personal-I* through the *creative production* [*Hervorbringen*] of {external-}Consciousness, as a result of which the latter contemplates its Action, that is to say {precisely} the personal-I, in its thingly-object. Finally, the *third* {objective-reality of Spirit in Religion} dialectically-overcomes the unilateral character of the first two: {there,} the *personal-I* is just as much an *immediate* {personal-I} as the *immediacy* is *personal-I*. If in the first {religious objective-reality,} Spirit as such is in the form of {external-} Consciousness, {and,} in the second, it is {in the form} of Self-Consciousness, it is in the third {objective reality} in the form of the union of both, {that is to say, of external-Consciousness and of Self-Consciousness}. {There,} it has the concrete-form of *Being-in* and *for-itself*. And insofar as Spirit is re-presented-and-externalized [*vorgestellt*] {there} as it is in and for itself—it is *revealed-or-manifest Religion*. However, although it is true that in this {revealed Religion}, Spirit has attained its true-or-veritable *concrete-form*, this *concrete-form* itself and the externalizing-re-presentation are still precisely the non-overcome aspect though which Spirit must pass into the concept in order completely to dissolve within the concept the form of thingly-objectivity—the concept that contains within itself just as much its opposite {which is the thingly-object}. In this moment{—and this is the absolute Knowing of Chapter VIII—}Spirit has {itself} grasped the Concept of itself {in the same manner}

individual aspects, or through its incomplete shapes.”

in which we {that is to say, Hegel and his reader} have just seen it done; and the concrete-form of this Spirit, that is to say, the element of its empirical-existence, insofar as it {the concrete-form} is Concept, is this Spirit itself.\*

Now, this last “concrete-form” of Spirit, which itself *is* Spirit—is the Sage in his empirical existence, is Hegel.

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\* Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 416 (§ 683): “The first reality of Spirit is the Notion of religion itself, or religion as *immediate*, and therefore Natural Religion. In this, Spirit knows itself as its object in a natural or immediate shape. The second reality, however, is necessarily that in which Spirit knows itself in the shape of a *superseded* natural existence, or of the self. This, therefore, is the Religion of Art; for the shape raises itself to the form of the self through the creative activity of consciousness whereby this beholds in its object its act or the self. Finally, the third reality overcomes the one-sidedness of the first two; the self is just as much an immediacy, as the immediacy is the self. If, in the first reality, Spirit in general is in the form of consciousness, and in the second, in that of self-consciousness, in the third it is in the form of the unity of both. It has the shape of being-in-and-for-itself; and when it is thus conceived as it is in and for itself, this is Revealed Religion. But although in this, Spirit has indeed attained its true *shape*, yet the shape itself and the picture-thought are still the unvanquished aspect from which Spirit must pass over into the Notion, in order wholly to resolve therein the form of objectivity, in the Notion which equally embraces within itself its own opposite. It is then that Spirit has grasped the Notion of itself, just as we now have first grasped it; and its shape or the element of its existence, being the Notion, is Spirit itself.”

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### NOTES

1. The translator would like to thank Professor Elizabeth Rottenberg of DePaul University, as well as the participants of the Spring 2011 DePaul Hegel Translation Group—Erik Beranek, Tristan Fischl, Owen Glyn-Williams, Anna Johnson, and Daniel Rosiak—for their support and helpful comments on an earlier draft of this translation.

2. An incomplete list of attendees over the years can be found in Michael S. Roth, *Knowing and History: Appropriations of Hegel in Twentieth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 225-27. These include Georges Bataille, Henri Corbin, Gaston Fessard, Jacques Lacan, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Raymond Queneau, and Eric Weil. To these one may add Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, André Breton, Roger Caillois, and Pierre Klossowski, among others. Evidence for the latter group can be found in *Schmittiana: Beiträge zu Leben und Werk Carl Schmitts*, vol. VI, ed. Piet Tommissen (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1998), 79-87. Cf. also the discussion in the standard biography of Kojève by Dominique Auffret, *Alexandre Kojève: La philosophie, l'État, la fin de l'Histoire* (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 1990), 253-63.

3. Stefanos Geroulanos notes that “Queneau supplanted Kojève’s scripted lectures with his own summaries (which are not always dependable), thus obliterating the bulk of Kojève’s elaborate interpretation,” an interpretation which can be found in part in the “770 folios of scripted lectures from the Hegel courses” in the Kojève archive. See Stefanos Geroulanos, *An Atheism That Is Not Humanist Emerges in French Thought* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 135; cf. 354n14. The present translation, however, is based on a stenographic version made available to Queneau while he was editing Kojève’s text. Geroulanos discusses some of the unpublished material from the 1937-1938 course in *ibid.*, Ch. 3 (pp. 130-72).

4. *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* was first published in Gallimard’s *Classiques de la Philosophie* series in 1947, with a second edition appearing in 1962. It was then reprinted by Gallimard in 1968 as a part of the *Bibliothèque des Idées* series, and again by Gallimard in 1979 as a part of *Collection Tel*. The present translation derives from the 1979 reprint, pp. 196-224. The translator and *Parrhesia* would like to express their gratitude to Gallimard and in particular to Alexandre Lemasson for generously granting us the right to publish the translation.

Bloom’s edition can be found under Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980; originally published by Basic Books in 1969). The second appendix to Kojève’s *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*, entitled “L’idée de la mort dans la philosophie de Hegel,” was also not included in Nichols’ translation, though a translation of it by Joseph J. Carpino can be found under the title “The Idea of Death in the Philosophy of Hegel,” in *Hegel and Contemporary Continental Philosophy*, ed. Dennis King Keenan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 27-74; originally published in *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy* 3:2-3 (1973): 114-56.

In addition to Nichols’ partial translation of *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*, recent English translations of other works by Kojève include *The Concept, Time, and Discourse*, trans. Robert B. Williamson (South Bend, IN: Saint Augustine’s, forthcoming), *The Notion of Authority: (A Brief Presentation)*, trans. Hager Weslati (London: Verso, 2014); and *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*, ed. Bryan-Paul Frost, trans. Bryan-Paul Frost and Robert Howse (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007). A new edition of Leo Strauss’ *On Tyranny*, which includes a review essay by Kojève and their correspondence, appeared with the University of Chicago Press in 2013, ed. Victor Gourevitch and Michael S. Roth. Finally, several articles and letters by Kojève have been translated into English over the years in *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy*.

The growing international interest in Kojève is attested to by the variety of books on his work that have appeared in the past decade, including Laurent Bibard, *La sagesse et le féminin: Science, politique et religion selon Kojève et Strauss* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2005); Henk de Berg, *Das Ende der Geschichte und der bürgerliche Rechtsstaat: Hegel - Kojève - Fukuyama* (Tübingen: Francke, 2007); Roger F. Devlin, *Alexandre Kojève and the Outcome of Modern Thought* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004); Marco Filoni, *Il filosofo della domenica: La vita e il pensiero di Alexandre Kojève* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2008), translated into French by Gérald Larché as *Le philosophe du dimanche: La vie et la pensée d’Alexandre Kojève* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010); Marco Filoni, *Kojève mon ami* (Savigliano: Aragno, 2013); James H. Nichols, Jr., *Alexandre Kojève: Wisdom at the End of History* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007); Dominique Pirotte, *Alexandre Kojève: Un système anthropologique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France 2005); Günther Rösch, *Philosophie und Selbstbeschreibung: Kojève, Heidegger* (Berlin: Merve, 2010); and Aakash Singh, *Eros Turannos: Leo Strauss & Alexandre Kojève Debate on Tyranny* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005).

5. Kojève did not initially choose the topic “Hegel’s Religious Philosophy.” Alexandre Koyré had been lecturing on Hegel’s religious philosophy, and Kojève had been one of the attendees. When Koyré left to lecture at Cairo University, Kojève took over the continuation of the course, the topic of which he nevertheless retained in his title for the next six years. See *Schmittiana*, vol. VI, pp. 78 and 79n14; as well as Roth, *Knowing and History*, 95.

6. “Der Briefwechsel Kojève-Schmitt,” in *Schmittiana*, vol. VI, pp. 101, 103; “Alexandre Kojève and Carl Schmitt Correspondence and Alexandre Kojève, ‘Colonialism from a European Perspective,’” ed. and trans. Erik De Vries, *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy* 29:1 (Fall 2001): 95-97.

7. In what follows, interpolations of German words are Kojève’s and have been put in brackets; interpolations of French

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words are the translator's and have also been put in brackets; interpolated English phrases are translations of Kojève's French interpolations and have been put in curly brackets. Kojève's unitalicized German citations have been italicized, and his italicized German citations have been underlined as well. The pagination of the French edition has been interpolated in brackets and boldfaced. All footnotes and endnotes are the translator's.

8. Cf. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 410-16 (§§ 672-83). When no other information is provided, page numbers in parentheses in the body of the text refer to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 2, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1907). Roman numerals in parentheses indicate other volumes of the Lasson-Hoffmeister edition (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1905-).

9. Sc., of the German.

10. "Spirit is higher than nature." Cf. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Ueber die wissenschaftlichen Behandlungsarten des Naturrechts, seine Stelle in der praktischen Philosophie, und sein Verhältniss zu den positiven Rechtswissenschaften," Volume 2, Part Two of the *Kritische Journal der Philosophie*, in Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 4, *Jaener kritische Schriften*, ed. Hartmut Buchner and Otto Pöggeler (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1968), 464: "Deßwegen, wenn das Absolute das ist, daß es sich selbst anschaut, und zwar als sich selbst, und jene absolute Anschauung, und dieses Selbsterkennen, jene unendliche Expansion, und dieses unendliche Zurücknehmen derselben in sich selbst, schlechthin Eins ist, so ist, wenn beydes als Attribute reell sind, der Geist höher als die Natur . . ."; G. W. F. Hegel, *Natural Law: The Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law, Its Place in Moral Philosophy, and Its Relation to The Positive Sciences of Law*, trans. T. M. Knox (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), 111: "The Absolute is that which intuits itself as itself, and that absolute intuition and this self-knowing, that infinite expansion and this infinite recovery into itself, are simply one. But on this account, if both, as attributes, are real, spirit is higher than nature."

11. Hegel's text is from 1802-1803.

12. Kojève's French original has 467, which does not contain the following passage. It has been changed accordingly. Other such typos, of which there are many, will be changed without further comment.

13. The French has *sine*, which appears to be a typo for the German feminine nominative possessive adjective *seine*, i.e., 'his (world).' The text has been changed accordingly.

14. Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 410-11 (§§ 672-76).