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Freedom, Alienation and Identity
In Hegel's Theory of the Modern State

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June 2010

Abstract:

Hegel's thought in general and his political theory in particular is one of the most profound and complex philosophical works in the history of ideas. In addition to the depth of their philosophic method, Hegel's writings pose various difficulties to the student which tries to examine them, ranging from the variety of his works to the complex language in which his ideas are articulated. In this paper we try to critically examine Hegel's political philosophy in several of his works in the context of his philosophic ideas and the period in which he lived. Analyzing Hegel's works, even 150 years after they had been created, remains relevant to this day. As we will attempt to show in this paper, his thought stands at a central crossroad in the history of philosophy and is considered by all to have had an immense impact on the course of political philosophy in the nineteenth century. In addition, and in light of this impact, by examining Hegelian political thought one may illuminate something of the dilemma facing the Jewish people in the modern state.

Introduction:

Hegelian political philosophy stands out for its combination of ethics and politics, ideal thought and concrete historical reality. The attempt to find a place for man in the world, influenced by the winds of change brought by the French Revolution, led Hegel to develop his theory of the modern state. Human history according to Hegel is the story of man's struggle with the complexities of reality and his attempt to reconcile the contradictions inherent in that reality. But in an attempt to reconcile these contradictions in a rational manner through the modern state, Hegel's theory also contains the potential to alienate groups which define their identity by different criteria. Our paper discusses the relevancy of Hegel's theory of the modern state to contemporary Judaism and the Jewish national project.

Hegelian thought is constructed in an expressivist manner, meaning that there is an idea which is supposed to be realized in reality itself by a dialectic process.¹ The dialectic process is the process in which the idea is materialized in reality and thus changes from an ideal condition to part of the reality itself. In other

¹ Charles, Taylor. Hegel. Cambridge University Press, 1975, p. 13.

words, according to Hegel the dialectic process is the process in which the idea ceases to exist apart from the concrete material reality and becomes a part of that reality. By its realization the idea is empowered in the real world. Reality also changes during the process, as it now receives a transparent aspect—it is no longer shut to man's perception but becomes comprehensible. For example, the modern state is no longer impermeable to human perception as each of its aspects and institutions has a present explanation which accounts for why it operates in a particular manner. This is the dialectic process by which the world operates: an idea appears; it exists apart from reality, and then attempt to materialize in reality.

Historical Context:

Hegel's political philosophy cannot be understood apart from the political turmoil and changes of his time. His veneration for the modern Prussian state, which was established during his lifetime in response to the impact of the French Revolution, even caused some scholars to describe him as "the apologist of the Prussian state."² Hegel himself defined the historical role of philosophy as cultural ideology and felt his teaching to be "directly relevant to the most acutely felt and universally experienced existential needs and interests of man,"³ grounding his thought in the concrete historical events of his day. Thus to understand Hegel's political philosophy, one must first understand the historical and political context of his time.

The formative event of Hegel's generation was the French Revolution. The storming of the Bastille and the removal of the *ancien regime* signaled a new age in Europe marked by optimism and change. While not all German intellectuals were sympathetic to the political events in France, a significant number nonetheless embraced it as the beginning of a new and better era.⁴ Hegel was initially among the Revolution's most enthusiastic supporters, and much of his philosophic work was created in response to it. As Ritter notes, "Hegel's encounter with the Revolution and

²Weil, Eric. Hegel et l'Etat. Paris: J. Vrin, 1950, p. .11

³Toews, John Edward. Hegelianism : The Path Toward Dialectical Hhumanism, 1805-1841. Cambridge: Columbia University Press, 1980, pp. 4-5.

⁴Mah, Harold. "The French Revolution and the Problem of German Modernity: Hegel, Heine and Marx." *New German Critique*, No. 50, p. 3.

his enthusiasm for it in his Tubingen period (1788-1793) stand at the beginning of his spiritual path."⁵ The French Revolution posed the problem of the political realization of freedom. In the *Philosophy of History*, Hegel refers to this promise of liberty as "a glorious mental dawn ... all thinking being shared in the jubilation of this epoch. Emotions of a lofty character stirred men's minds at that time; a spiritual enthusiasm thrilled through the world."⁶

But while the Revolution raised the problem of the political realization of freedom to "the intellectual principle of the state",⁷ it also failed to resolve it. This failure led to political instability and horrors brought by the despotism of the Terror. Hegel tried to resolve the problem posed by the French Revolution by developing a philosophy of freedom. Philosophy thus became the key by which Hegel tried to solve the paramount problem of world history of his day: philosophy "concerns itself ... with the glory of Idea mirroring itself in the History of the World ... that which interests it is the recognition of the process of development which the Idea has passed through its realizing itself—i.e., the Idea of Freedom."⁸

Key Terms in Hegel's Political Philosophy

Hegel's political philosophy is extensive in scope, expanding over many years of writing in which Hegel articulated his ideas. Despite that, it is still possible to point out a few key concepts, that while it is obvious that they do not exhaust the full scope of Hegelian philosophy, form an ideational thread which runs through the entirety of his thought and constitute the basis for any discussion of his work. In this part of the discussion we will attempt to explain four such key terms: spirit, freedom, rationality and the state. For the purpose of simplifying the discussion in these complex terms we will quote an allegory from one of Hegel's salient works, the *Philosophy of History*, which colorfully illustrates the above four terms.

The sun rises in the Orient. The sun is light, and light is universal and simple self relatedness, i.e. universality in itself. This light though

⁵ Ritter, Joachim. *Hegel and the French Revolution*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982, p. 44.

⁶ Ibid., p. 47.

⁷ Ibid., p. 47.

⁸ POH, p. 50.

universal in itself, exists in the sun as an individual or subject. We often imagine someone watching the moment of daybreak, the spreading of the light, and the rise of the sun in all its majesty. Descriptions of this kind tend to emphasize the rupture, astonishment, and infinite self oblivion which accompany this moment of clarity. But the sun has ascended further, the astonishment diminishes, and the eye is constrained to turn inside to nature and to the self; it will see by its own light, become conscious of itself and progress from its original state of astonishment and passive contemplation to activity, to independent creation. And by evening man has constructed a building, an inner sun, the sun of his own consciousness which he has produced by his own efforts; and he will value it more highly than the actual sun outside him as a result of his activity, he now stands in the same relationship to the spirit as he originally stood to the external sun, except that this new relationship is a free one: for his second object is his own spirit. Here, in a nutshell, is the course of the whole historical process, the great day of the spirit and the days work it accomplishes in the world history.⁹

The spirit (geist)

The spirit is the most difficult term to define in the system of terms of the present discussion. The term "spirit" is intuitively associated with mystic and religious connotations, and therefore its usage in Hegel's works calls for clarification.

The spirit for Hegel is the most general and all-encompassing principle. The spirit is not an element isolated from reality but the supreme principle in which the world of phenomena, with its contradictions and ambiguities, finds its unifying point. One may even say that the spirit is the actuality, the ontological foundation of the whole Hegelian discussion. In that manner, the

⁹ Ibid., p. 196.

spirit differs from divinity in its religious sense in the monotheistic religions. It does not command or observe the world, but is the idea that is realized in world history. Hegel himself employs the Christian religious imagery to illustrate his intention: in Judaism God is first and foremost creator, commander and external observer of the world. Christianity, in contrast, precisely because it had divided the divine persona and realized it in the world as a human subject, exposed the unifying principle—the holy spirit—what is external to man and internal to him,¹⁰ i.e. everything. In the above allegory the spirit is presented as the most abstract physical phenomena: light.

This idea, which constitutes the principle unifying the entire world, is found in the process of exposure, of fulfillment, on which we will elaborate further on. This dynamic is not an option that could be chosen by the spirit but a principle which necessarily guides it. The light in the above allegory begins to shine through the object of the sun and later lights the world and man, until before evening the same light shines through the subject itself. The light is revealed in the original historical situation through an objective reality which annuls man, who is left thrilled and excited by the sun. In the final historical phase the light is revealed within the reflexive consciousness of a thinking object, the sun shining through him. The spirit being the conscious subject and its object at the same time, one may say that it passes the same course of discovering the light as man. It begins by revelation through an external intermediary reality towards a reflexive revelation of itself. We understand therefore that the necessity of the movement in which the spirit is found leads it to a process of self consciousness. The spirit is the conscious entirety, and therefore the object of consciousness is the spirit itself as nothing is external to it. When it is conscious of something in reality, this reality is nothing but a part of it.

The culmination of the historical process is therefore the spirit's consciousness of itself. Hegelian thought deliberately blurs the boundaries between the ontological and the epistemological in its attempt to transcend

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 51.

the dead end left by the Kantian assertion about the inability of human consciousness to perceive noumenal reality.¹¹

Freedom and Rationality

In order to clarify the term freedom as used by Hegel one must first deal with an accepted distinction in the discourse on freedom between positive and negative freedom. The origins of this distinction could be traced back to Hegel's own writings. Hegel posits that freedom in its true sense does not mean an expression of man's ability to materialize his arbitrary will, but acting according to reason (a term on which we shall later elaborate).

To clarify Hegel's position we use another allegory which appears in the Philosophy of History. The direction of movement of matter, Hegel claims, is towards a focus external to it. We could easily understand this if we think about a rock falling towards the earth because it is drawn to the center of the latter. The rock's desire, therefore, is to annul itself in an external reality. The movement towards an external element means enslavement and self-annulment. In exact opposite to that, the direction of movement of the spirit is towards its own internal center, and therefore the realization of this movement means an ongoing exposure of itself. As the spirit is not drawn to an external focus its movement does not lead to enslavement but to a constantly increasing degree of freedom. This is because as it moves towards itself it grows distant from any obstacle which slows down its consciousness of itself.

The tradition of the Enlightenment and classic liberalism assume an autonomous subject which stands independently from the world. Therefore the term "freedom" as conceived by this tradition constituted freedom as acting unhindered by external constraints which force the world on the subject. Kant may have epitomized this position in claiming that man's moral freedom results entirely from his rational, and therefore universal, decision, and not from knowledge he has of the world. Indeed Kant conditioned human freedom in its rationality but the mere fact that the ethical laws he had formulated were described only in a structural way

¹¹Russ, Jacqueline: Panorama des Idées Philosophiques. Armand Colin, Paris, 2000.

indicates that the space for maneuvering in which man makes his free decisions is extremely wide and maybe even infinite. Hegel formulated the space in which man does not act freely even if he appears to be doing so by saying that when man acts out of desire for an external object he is enslaved to that object, and in that sense acts no different than the animal, "for impulses are not conscious of themselves".¹² As a result the realization of desire, even if made autonomously, does not constitute any manner of free action for Hegel. What did cause the action was basically an enslavement of man to an external element and identical to the nature of matter, as has already been explained. A free action would only be considered one which results from man's elevation above his instinctual level to a reflexive consciousness which defines him as a human being. Reflexive reasoning means consciousness which constitutes its own focus. Any other type of consciousness is alienated from itself. The alienation is the attraction of man's consciousness to a focus external to it, and when the consciousness finds its direction of movement in itself it has overcome that alienation. We can see here a profound connection between the discovery of human freedom and the process of the exposure of the spirit. According to Hegel, the process of the reflexive exposure of the spirit is achieved here through the reflexive movement of the human consciousness. This means that the reflexive consciousness which heralds freedom is the exposure of the spirit, i.e. a consciousness of itself, and therefore the exposure of the spirit is freedom.

As discussed above, Kant and Hegel rejected the claim that action caused by instinctive impulses is a free action. Kant rejected it because instinctive motivation does not express universal legislation of the will and Hegel rejected it because instinct, by definition, expresses enslavement to an external object. From this we can understand how Kant conceptualized the principle of reason and freedom: the universal categorical imperative of the will. However, in the absence of this formal principle which is rejected in Hegelian thought because of its abstract structuralism, we must ask how Hegel sought to establish free and rational behavior. The answer to this question lies in the Hegelian criticism on Kant's formal morality: an action is not rational because it is the result of autonomous legislation but because it reflects

¹² POH, p. 49.

what the consciousness finds within itself as a moment in the concrete realization of the spirit in the world, that is to say, the state.

The State

"The spirit in history is an individual which is both universal in nature and at the same time determinate: in short it is the nation in general, and the spirit we are concerned with is the spirit of the nation."¹³

In order to understand the uniqueness of the Hegelian theory it would be useful to compare it to the tradition of political philosophy since Hobbes. If according to this tradition the state is perceived as the result of collective consent by individuals who delegate their sovereignty to a public body, then Hegel perceives the state in a completely different and even opposite manner. For Hegel, the state is the most concrete realization of the spirit in history. The mechanism by which the spirit operates and reveals itself is not that of individuals, as individuals *per se* cannot affect the course of history. In this section we would like to distinguish between two aspects of the state which appear in history: the state works as a historic moment to realize the spirit, and yet the state in its modern form is not a historic moment but the end of history due to its being a realization of reason. In our discussion we will address these two aspects of the state.

The nations, by forming states, create a historic moment of the revelation of universal reason at a given instant. Universal reason appears through a particular state until the stage in which the spirit would undergo another dialectical phase of exposure and appear in another particular state. The concept of the state is not sufficiently defined in Hegel's writings, despite its salient importance. Nonetheless, by examining his work one can infer that Hegel aims at the mechanism which impartially, and therefore optimally, executes the spirit of the nation which constituted it. The spirit of the nation includes "a conception of god such and such a religion or system of justice, and such and such views on ethics".¹⁴ Thus Hegel views

¹³ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 53.

the bureaucrat as the agent most suitable for grasping the state interest and materializing the solidarity of the different social classes in the nation.¹⁵

The Hegelian theory of the state is therefore idealist – the state is not the result of individual will but it constitutes their very ability to realize the nature of the collective to which they are organically linked.¹⁶ However, according to the dialectic method unique to Hegel, reason materializes precisely when the universal is internalized in the individual level: the citizen in the state is a man with rights. Thus freedom appears both at the collective and subjective existence.¹⁷

In his allegory, Hegel described different ways of man's exposure to light: at first by the rise of the sun, at noon by discovering the internal and external worlds which are filled with its light and in the evening by revealing the light from the subject within. These stages match the process of the realization of the spirit in history from the geographical space in the East towards Europe, with Germany at its center, from the freedom of the individual despot to the collective freedom of society. At first, the spirit appeared in patriarchal Persia in which the subject had a contingent role versus the authority of the despot: "the spirit and substance of the nation are objectively present to its individual members in the shape of a single individual (i.e. the despot), thus the subject has not yet produced the universal object within itself."¹⁸ The patriarch constitutes the sun against which the subject remains passive. The ascent of the sun at noon is allegorical to the revelation of the spirit through the history of the Greek *polis* and the Roman Empire. The Greek world is superior to Persia because within it freedom had been granted to a larger number of individuals: the citizens of the *polis*. But despite that, this freedom has in Greece two essential flaws: the freedom was expropriated from anyone who was not defined as a citizen, and therefore the concept of freedom in the Greek world did not forgo to its universal level. A second flaw was that the citizens' actions were greatly influenced by motives external to reason such as primitive customs and traditions which had nothing to do with the state interest. In the Roman world first

¹⁵ Droz, Jacques. Histoire des Doctrines Politiques en Allemagne. PUF, Paris, 1968, p. 53.

¹⁶ Cassirer, Ernst. The Myth of the State. Doubleday Anchor Books, New York, 1955, p. 38.

¹⁷ PR paragraph 260, PH p. 444.

¹⁸ POH, p. 199.

appeared the civil law which applied to all of the citizens, but this law was brutally enforced by the external might of the Empire. To the German world, the sun arrived towards dusk, when the light began to shine from within man. Here the ultimate synthesis was created when Protestantism purified the rational meaning from the personification of Jesus: "Jesus Christ was both a human being and the son of god. This teaches human that, though limited in some respects, they are at the same time made in the image of god and have between themselves an infinite value and eternal destiny."¹⁹ With the Reformation, emerged the understanding that the spirit which appears in man without any mediating element, "therefore all social institutions including law, property, social morality, government, constitutions and so on, must be made to conform to general principals of reason. Only then individuals freely chose to accept and support these institutions."²⁰ With the French Revolution, man as man received formal rights from the state because of their universal validity, and in that moment reason materialized in its complete form.²¹ Then the spirit of the world reached a full consciousness of itself, and because of that that stage in history marks its end: the rational state and the rational subject act in complete synchronization.

The above historical account is essentially diachronic. To this portrayal Hegel adds a synchronic description which is fully developed in his work *Philosophy of Right*. Here, the state is the culmination of the appearance of freedom and reason in the relationships which man always has with those who surround him. Hegel distinguishes between three levels of social interactions: the family, the civil society and the state. These three levels differ by the level of reason which characterize the interactions in each, and as a result in the level of freedom reflected in them. The diachronic description depicted the elevation of the spirit from its external appearance to the world of the subject with the constitution of the modern state. The synchronic description reveals a different dialectical move in which reason is elevated above the immediate level of man's associations to the level of his interactions with the public.

¹⁹ Singer Per, *Hegel*, Oxford University Press 1983 p. 17.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

²¹ PH p. 447.

The Family

In the family man realizes himself in the most emotional and primordial sense. In the family, man is not a rational individual but a being which is included in a larger framework through an emotional bond: the spouses' love for one another and for their children.²² This love leads man beyond his private and partial place to a larger framework which mediates between the past and the future, between the local and the universal needs of the family and between the internal content of love and the formal external expression of the family. The family in this sense is the most particular framework as it starts in man's feelings, despite the fact that here man becomes cut off from himself in favor of the other.²³

Man also has a utilitarian side to him which leads him to communication with other people through mutual social acknowledgement of rights and contracts. We will now continue to this side in our discussion about the civil society.

The Civil Society

Unlike the level of the family, where the interaction is instinctively altruistic and therefore not free, in the civil society the interaction is based on the rational maximization of personal profit.²⁴ Hegel interprets human society of his time much like prominent economical thinkers of his day such as Adam Smith and Ricardo and perceptions of modern political thinkers such as Rousseau, Locke and Hobbes. But they, in Hegel's eyes, did not conceptualize a state but an economical corporation in which every individual sees himself as the endpoint of every process and discounts the importance of the others. But the individual is capable of realizing his selfish goals only by cooperating with the others,²⁵ conditioned that the others acknowledge his own rights.²⁶

²² PR paragraph 158.

²³ PR paragraph 168, Pelczynski ZA. Edit. The State and Civil Society, Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984, p. 47.

²⁴ PR paragraph 15.

²⁵ Avineri (אבינרי שלמה): תורת המדינה של הגל, ספריית הפועלים בע"מ 1975 ת"א) p. 153

²⁶ PR paragraph 41, look also on Avineri p. 101.

By establishing the concept of rights and the sanctity of contract, the man in civil society does not achieve a sufficient level of freedom. Man only creates a list of preferences with which he turns to the market and realizes them within the framework of his rights. Man has yet to create the moral consciousness caused by his general reason which applies to any human being. Only within the state this consciousness can materialize.

The State

According to Avineri, "Hegel sees the general world of man as saturated with the spirit of reason. But only in the state does reason appear for the first time as existing in its own right. In the family, it is still influenced by emotion and feeling, while in the civil society it is used as an instrument for the realization of private interest. Only in the framework of the state does reason become conscious of itself."²⁷

The state appears when the individual abandons his contingent needs and begins to become conscious of his reason.²⁸ The individual starts to realize that reason is universal and therefore is reflected by all individuals in society. This interest of man takes him out of the framework of the market and transfers him to the framework of the state as the embodiment of the concept of general freedom. This general freedom is expressed by creating universal laws for all men in society.²⁹ The spirit that sought its profound self-expression in history finds itself in its most complete and realized form in the modern rational state. By expressing a general will, the modern state infuses necessary forms of reason (such as duties) to the contingent system of the civil society.³⁰ By constituting a law the state sets the order in society, and by that corrects what had been caused by the market in a

²⁷ Avineri, p. 189-190.

²⁸ PR paragraph 104, PH p.442.

²⁹ This is the difference between Kant morality which stay as private interest and Hegel ethical life which are embodiment in the universal frame of the state. On this subject look PR paragraphs 126,132 and Avineri p. 130.

³⁰ Hegel does not see the market as a chaotic and irrational element as Marx did, but he does see it as a contingent and accidental element which involves random elements such as talent, geographic location and social status, and improves the condition of one person at the expense of another. The question whether the market corrects some of these elements is an important one, but it is beyond the scope of the present discussion.

random and unconscious manner. By acting as an element external to the interest system of civil society, the government bureaucracy also restrains the civil society.³¹ That expresses the general public will which exceeds the particular private will. Once again we see that reason is no longer a foreign element occasionally appearing as in the old despotic state, but an imminent element which is realized in society and releases it. The modern man in this sense is freed from the restraints of despotism and lives with a complete identification with the universality of the state, finding himself in the modern state in the most complete and therefore unbound sense.³²

The Jewish Dilemma In The Face of The Modern State

Hegel was not only the greatest theoretician of the modern state but also its greatest prophet. Since for him reason is revealed through a historic dialectical process which is promoted by states, Hegel has no empathy for national and ethnical groups which do not fulfill themselves through the framework of the state. Since the world spirit materializes necessarily through a historical moment which is constituted by a particular state, then a people without a state cannot even theoretically be a display of reason. This may lead one to understand Hegel's deep perplexity and antagonism towards the continuation of the Jewish existence.³³ For him, the role of the Jews ended for two essential reasons: they do no longer appear on the stage of history as an organized nation within a state, and their religion was dialectically bypassed by Christianity.

Following the same principle according to which Hegel perceived the spirit of the world realized at a certain point in time in one particular state, he justified the oppression of any inferior form of existence by that state. The revelation of the spirit of the world justifies the oppression of pre-modern societies by those who are organized in modern states. The Jewish people are no different in that aspect. Since the end of the eighteenth century with the start of the process of Emancipation,

³¹PR paragraphs 245-248.

³² PR paragraph 257.

³³. יובל, ירמיהו. חידה אפלה: הגל, ניטשה והיהודים. הוצאת שוקן, תל אביב 1996, עמ' 67-38.

Jewish society found itself under growing pressure to adapt itself to the modern state. With the Emancipation, legal autonomy was deprived from the Jews, which led to a tragic break in the Jews' ability to realize themselves as a society which draws from within itself its own sources of self-definition.

"It is part of education, of thinking as the consciousness of the single in the form of universality, that the ego comes to be apprehended as a universal in which all are identical. A man counts as a man in virtue of his manhood alone, not because he is Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian etc."³⁴ This is an extremely sharp articulation of the modern state's attitude towards its subject unit: man, who is because of his humanity a citizen. This is perhaps the modern state's greatest invention. In the Middle Ages, man was identified by his belonging to his social group because the pre-modern state allowed the preservation of original social identities.

To fully understand the identity crisis of the Jews in modern times, one could use a distinction offered by Leo Strauss. According to Strauss, there are two sources which can allow man to grasp the foundations of the law which orders his universe: revelation and reason. While this distinction was already common in the Middle Ages, Strauss employs it in a new way. Revelation and reason are not only two separate sources of knowledge, but also distinct sources of identity. The modern world, whose political manifestation is the modern state, seeks, as Hegel wants, to endow man with the consciousness that he is the product of reason. For the Jews until the modern age, however, the foundation of identity was anchored in the belonging to a people whose tradition was based on revelation.³⁵ It is therefore obvious why the adoption of a universal identity meant extinction of that separate identity. In Strauss's words, since the earliest generations the Jew had learned to see himself as the son of revelation and only later as a man, while in the modern world the state demanded that he first and foremost see himself as a man and only secondly as a Jew.³⁶

³⁴ PR section 209 see also PR 168-270.

³⁵ כ"ץ, יעקב. *מסורת ומשבר: החברה היהודית במוצאי ימי-הביניים*. מוסד ביאליק, תשמ"ו, עמ' 15-3.

³⁶ Strauss, Leo. *Jewish Philosophy and the Crises of Modernity*, Albany State University of N.Y. 1997, p. 320, on the traditional reaction to this process see שז"ר ירושלים תשס"ב on the culture aspect see p. 261 קורצווייל ברוך: "במאבק על ערכי היהדות" עמ' 261 הוצאת שוקן ירושלים תש"ל.

During the last hundred years, the origins of the Jewish people have been dramatically influenced by its national movement, Zionism. The supreme project of Zionism was eventually the normalization of the Jewish people in the framework of their own nation state.³⁷ This means that Zionism does not seek to return the foundations of Jewish identity to its origins. Indeed, it may be seen as an attempt to preserve the Hegelian idealization which sees in the state—i.e. the political—the foundations of the collective identity. The mainstream of Zionism saw in the Jewish existence in the Diaspora a perverted national existence. Although since the beginning of the exile the Jews saw their existence in the Diaspora as lacking in essence. But they had never thought that the loss of political freedom is enough to cause the disintegration of their national identity. The mainstream of Zionism, on the other hand, inherited the Hegelian conditioning of the rational national identity in the nation state. The majority of Zionists seek to exist as part of a Jewish public based on an acceptance of Hegel's ideal framework. Exactly in the quest to realize the Zionist ideal there is a clear expression of the dramatic influence of the Hegelian position that a people does not have a rational existence until he is realized through the nation state.

From the distance of over one hundred years since the beginning of the Zionist project and more than sixty years since the realization of its main project, it may be appropriate to wonder about the prices which were exacted as a result of the success of the project, precisely because we do not seek to cast in doubt its unprecedented vital successes. In the Israeli reality an evident conflict has surfaced between the Israeli and Jewish identities, a process that clearly indicates to the failure and inability of the civilian Israeli identity to include in full the Jewish identity.

At last, it is possible to ask whether the problem we have just discussed is of interest only to a religious sector which sees its pre-modern foundations of identity or also relevant to every Jew as such? Finally, does this question not pertain to us all: is it really possible to realize a non-modern identity with an internal conditioning of its own by the impersonal mechanism of the state which Hegel idealizes, precisely because of its impersonal nature? Is it appropriate to ask over one hundred and fifty

³⁷ ברזיאר יצחק: מורית, מוסד הרב קוק תשמ"ב ירושלים, עמ' 12-17.

years after Hegel's death whether the disrespect towards immediate human relations such as the family and community does not lead to the alienation of man from what defines him as human? Is this not the source to all of the later debate about the alienation of man from the state which Kafka is perhaps its foremost cultural embodiment?

Conclusion

Hegel's thought is one of the most profound in political science in particular and the social sciences and the humanities in general. On the one hand it proposes a new and complete theory of the modern state and its various aspects, while on the other hand it locates the modern state in a whole historical process which includes political economy, theology and history. All these components come into play in the Hegelian thought and its attempt to find a place for man in the world. The modern state as theorized by Hegel does not exist in isolation from reality, but includes in its various components the different aspects which we had described. The political economy of Ricardo and Say appears in Hegel's portrayal of civil society; history appears in the description of the processes of the French Revolution which led the establishment of the modern state; theology appears in the self-perception of man in the new political reality which was created in the post-Revolution era. All of these aspects are included by Hegel in one high synthesis which expresses the spirit of the nation and the period.

However, as we have argued in this paper, the Hegelian theory also allows for the blurring of cultural ethnical identity within the framework of the nation state. This was Hegel's basic theory by which he had justified the various methods of enforcement, which led to the dismantling of historical Judaism from its institutional historical resources by the modern bureaucratic state. This process led to the secularization of religious Jewish society and its historical collapse in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and Judaism's near extinction as a historical phenomenon. The emergence of the Zionist movement and the establishment of the State of Israel did little to change this. The Jewish state attempted to give Jews a place in the sun but because it embraced the Hegelian premises about the state, first and foremost

the bond between man and the state as a primary factor and the monopoly of the state on the legal system, Judaism had remained in the same strait in which it had found itself since the start of the processes of Emancipation in the eighteenth century.

In this paper we attempted to briefly examine the relevance of Hegelian theory to modern-day Judaism in general and to Judaism in Israel in particular. We tried to examine whether the Hegelian claim to realize the human spirit exclusively through the modern state is not exceedingly pretentious.

Hegel's political thought is fascinating in its attempt to formulate a complete solution to man's desire for a place in the world through the theory of the modern state. The research we had been required to do for this paper offered us an opportunity to engage this thought and draw from it ideas for our future development as researchers in the discipline of political science. We also hope that we had managed to present a small sample of what Hegel's political philosophy offers us. Despite the limited scope of our discussion we hope that our analysis may have yielded valuable insights about the present-day meaning of Hegelian thought.

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