

FRANZ ROSENZWEIG'S *HEGEL AND THE STATE*:

BIOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND TRAGEDY

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Title: Franz Rosenzweig's *Hegel and the State*: Biography, History and Tragedy

Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) is known today as one of the most influential German Jewish intellectuals of the twentieth century. His most celebrated work, *The Star of Redemption*, has earned him a reputation as a challenging religious thinker with increasing relevance for contemporary religious, philosophical and historical debates. However, this legacy has largely ignored his first published book, *Hegel and the State* (1920). My dissertation is the first English-language monograph to fully explore Rosenzweig's intellectual biography of Hegel, making a contribution to contemporary Hegel and Rosenzweig scholarship alike. I offer an analysis that draws on the formal characteristics of the work—such as the epigraph, the narrative and biographical structure, as well as the historical presuppositions of the foreword and the conclusion—to show how Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel's key texts, culminating in the *Philosophy of Right*, is informed by his own biographical development and the influence of thinkers such as Wilhelm Dilthey and Friedrich Meinecke. By recasting his critique of Hegel's political thinking into biographical and historical terms, I ultimately argue that Rosenzweig's narrative in *Hegel and the State* is a tragic foil for his own development as a German historian. In Rosenzweig's interpretation, the relationship between the individual and the state championed by Hegel ends in the tragic separation of the

individual from the reconciliatory promise of Idealist thought. By unearthing Rosenzweig's latent theory of tragedy in *Hegel and the State*—evidenced most clearly in how he situates the figures of Friedrich Hölderlin and Napoleon—I argue that the historical and philosophical crisis that marked the beginning of the twentieth century, and particularly Rosenzweig's own biographical crisis, shapes his work as the author of *Hegel and the State*. In addition to providing a critical commentary on the cultural, philosophical and literary history of the German nation, as well as providing the first English translation of many passages from *Hegel and the State*, my dissertation lays the necessary groundwork for a reinterpretation of Rosenzweig's critique of German Idealism in *The Star of Redemption*.

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Finally, I would like to thank my wife and best friend, Kirstin, whose faith in me is inestimable. Kirstin, this dissertation is as much yours as it is mine. Despite the difficulty of the work itself, I learned more from your own strength, wisdom and love than from all the books I could ever read. It is our shared life of love and the vision of our shared future—together with our daughter Iris—that inspired me to finish this work. I am lucky and blessed to have such a wonderful soul by my side.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCING *HEGEL AND THE STATE*

*Preface: A Letter to Wolfdietrich Schmied-Kowarzik*¹

Dear Wolfdietrich,

You once wrote that to approach Rosenzweig's Hegel and the State with other than philological eyes would be a high task.² Indeed, especially for those already familiar with Rosenzweig's later work—above all The Star of Redemption—the Hegel book seems not only to be written by another author entirely, but also to stem from a vastly different age. Rather than providing an end to this dialogue, your concern serves as the starting point for a now pressing renewed historical question: Why and how should one read Rosenzweig's Hegel and the State?

The most obvious answer, and the one given most recently by Axel Honneth in his afterword to the first Suhrkamp edition, is that this book is still highly relevant to contemporary Hegel scholarship.³ Indeed, this aspect cannot be overlooked and the present work, to which this letter serves as a preface, preserves this perspective by

¹ Professor Schmied-Kowarzik is the founding president of the International Rosenzweig Society (2004). I first met him on a research trip to Kassel in 2007. Although our project to digitalize the Rosenzweig archive and help better network Rosenzweig scholars was not funded, he provided me with immeasurable guidance and support. His friendship is an example of how the greatest joys in life sometimes grow from great struggles. He remains an inspiration for me, in this work and beyond.

² See Schmied-Kowarzik, *Franz Rosenzweig*.

³ Rosenzweig, Franz. *Hegel und der Staat*. Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2010. 556-82. Hereafter, *HS*. First edition published in 1920. All English quotations from *HS* by Josiah B. Simon.

reconstructing and translating—into English for the first time—a large selection of Rosenzweig's Hegel interpretations.

However, there is a larger question at play, one which transcends both the particular interest in Hegel and Rosenzweig alike, and points to a more universal concern: how and why should we write about the lives of others? Or to ask the same question differently: what is the relation between biography and history?

Given the countless number of biographies, autobiographies and memoirs that appear each year, it may seem like the perspective of biography may lead to the trivial examples we see on display in today's mass-market bookstores, far away from the more dignified paths set in motion by the lives of Augustine, Rousseau and Goethe. However, I am rather uninterested in such reproducible memoirs, which distract from the philosophical implications of biography for our understanding as historical beings.

This leads me to the figure of Franz Rosenzweig. Wolfdietrich, you more than any other should understand the frustrations (and joys!) of writing about an author and a book only very few in your audience can recognize. Indeed, it was first through your work that Rosenzweig became a common name in wider academic circles. My perspective is as follows: Rosenzweig is an exemplary figure for exploring the intersections of biography and history, of life and thought, a lens through which we can better observe these questions. And moreover, his book Hegel and the State, which is itself a biography of Hegel, represents a particular stage in Rosenzweig's own biography. Thus, my project has three levels of abstraction: 1) the life of Hegel, as told by Rosenzweig, 2) the life of Rosenzweig himself, especially the early Rosenzweig, and finally, 3) the significance of biographical history as it is reflected into philosophical

production. This final point is manifested in the work and letters both Rosenzweig and Hegel left behind as contributions to world history.

You wrote in passing in the introduction to your Kassel book, that in Hegel and the State, Hegel serves as a "Folie" (foil) for Rosenzweig.⁴ This phrase has remained with me since. Following upon your theatrical implication, I first began to think of Hegel as a "tragic" foil for Rosenzweig. It is clear from the "Frankfurt" and the "Napoleon" sections that our young historian had tragedy on his mind when writing this book. You may recall that while working on the Frankfurt chapter in particular, Rosenzweig composed a draft for a book entitled: "The Hero: A History of Tragic Individuality in Germany since Lessing". Like so many of his age, Rosenzweig was also caught up in the spirit of tragedy introduced by Nietzsche. The entire second volume of Hegel and the State is framed by Napoleon's historical, and according to Rosenzweig, tragic character. He even titles one of his sections "The Hero of the Trauerspiel." Because Rosenzweig does not offer a theory of tragedy until Part I of The Star of Redemption, in Hegel and the State he remains caught between the poles of tragedy and "Trauer" (mourning), painting a complex picture of Hegel that lacks the clear contours he gives tragedy in The Star. Hegel and the State proceeds by way of form and language, thus it is not through an external theory of tragedy, but only by means of these conceptual tools—language and form—that we can begin to understand Rosenzweig's own position as the author of the book. Thus, in the following work, I allow Rosenzweig's language and the form of his book to guide my own interpretation. This method also mirrors the method of biography implicit in Hegel and the State, namely that only by first looking at the work and production of individuals may we come to understand their personalities. By following

⁴ Schmied-Kowarzik, *Franz Rosenzweig. Religionsphilosoph aus Kassel.* 8-9.

Rosenzweig's language, not only do I offer a Hegel interpretation relevant to contemporary debates, but what emerges from this language is the complexity of Rosenzweig's own "lived-experience"—to borrow a term from Dilthey—as the author of Hegel and the State. It is nothing less than Rosenzweig's "lived-experience" as the author of Hegel and the State that fuels the heartbeat of my interpretation.

And finally a short note on method: by allowing the form and content of Rosenzweig's language to guide my interpretation, I understand my procedure as a type of phenomenological Epoché, which I briefly introduce in Chapter I. This is an attempt on my behalf to allow Rosenzweig's work to provide us with the content to understand his personality. I proceed towards this task by focusing on the form of the book as work of biography. It is my hope that this approach lends my work significance beyond the mere scope of the book, and helps point us towards questions of the art of biography for historical understanding. This is an approach not only inspired by Husserl's phenomenological attitude, but by my own first philosophical inspiration, Walter Benjamin.

In the “Erkenntniskritische Vorrede”, under the section “Mißachtung und Mißdeutung der Barocktragödie,” Benjamin writes that “[d]as Trauerspiel des deutschen Barock” appeared as the “Zerrbild der antiken Tragödie.”⁵ According to Benjamin, this occurred because previous scholars had overlooked the importance of “Formanalysis und Formgeschichte:”⁶

⁵ Benjamin, Walter. *Gesammelte Schriften. Erster Band, I.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1980 (1974). 230.

⁶ Benjamin, 230.

Die Idee einer Form ist nichts weniger Lebendiges als irgendeine konkrete Dichtung [...] Und so wie jede, auch die ungebräuchliche, die vereinzelte Sprachform gefaßt zu werden vermag nicht nur als Zeugnis dessen, der sie prägte, sondern als Dokument des Sprachlebens und seiner jeweiligen Möglichkeiten, enthält auch—and weit eigentlicher als jedes Einzelwerk—jedwede Kunstform den Index einer bestimmten objektiv notwendigen Gestaltung der Kunst.⁷

Within Rosenzweig scholarship, looking back one could certainly understand how Hegel and the State—as an "Einzelwerk"—was seen as the "Zerrbild" of The Star of Redemption, how it was "mißachtet und mißdeutet." Hegel and the State is often misrepresented as a work devoid of living force and as superseded by history. All too often it is put prematurely back into the bookshelf as a "testimony" to the "old thinking." But could we not, as Benjamin does with various texts from the Baroque, understand it rather as a "Dokument des Sprachlebens"? Is there not hidden in the form of the book as biography a "notwendige Gestaltung der Kunst," which makes the book into something lasting and living?

These are my preliminary answers to the question, why and how to read Hegel and the State. The language of the work itself will serve as the guide to its significance. Not only will the reader accompany me on a journey through Hegel's life, but this journey will also be a particular contribution to Rosenzweig's own understanding of history. What will be seen—however, only once the journey is complete—is that in writing Hegel and the State Rosenzweig saw in Hegel's life-course the tragic foil for his own personality as a German historian. Only by overcoming this moment in his biography, only by living through the tragic fate of the German people leading up to and

⁷ Benjamin, 230.

following the first World War, could Rosenzweig find the courage to follow his own life-path towards the significance of religious thinking for our contemporary age.

Hegel and the State represents the pre-history of Rosenzweig's legacy known to the world today. My work does not aim to undermine this legacy, but rather to show how deeply indebted Rosenzweig remained to the German people and their history throughout his life. Thus, Wolfdietrich, I offer you these words as a way of thanking you for helping to bring Rosenzweig into the wider academic and public consciousness of the world. What follows is my own contribution to our continued struggle to grasp the significance and force of history for understanding our own lives and the lives of others around us.

Sincerely Yours,

Josiah Simon

Introductory Remarks

Hegel and the State, most briefly, is an intellectual biography of the philosopher G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831). The book's author, Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929), uses the form of biographical narrative in order to develop a critical perspective on Hegel's conception of the state. The book grew out of Rosenzweig's dissertation, written from 1910-1912 under the German historian Friedrich Meinecke, and thus has a decidedly *historicist* tone and in this regard belongs to the tradition of German historiography beginning in the 19th century. In its finished form, however, it was not published until 1920, after the War and one year before *The Star of Redemption*—Rosenzweig's

religious-philosophical *magnum opus*. In the eight-year span leading up to these two publications, not only would the German nation undergo the shift from an empire to a democratic republic, but Rosenzweig's own personal life would so drastically change that he could write to Meinecke in a letter dated August 30, 1920: "The man who wrote *The Star of Redemption* to be published shortly by Kauffmann in Frankfurt—is of a very different caliber from the author of *Hegel and the State*."⁸ This letter, which, in the words of Stefan Moses, first introduced a dark abyss between Rosenzweig's two major works, was written in response to an offer by Meinecke to appoint Rosenzweig to the then prestigious position of a university lecturer. However, choosing rather to follow his awakening belief in Judaism, Rosenzweig rejected Meinecke's offer in favor of founding and directing the *Freie Jüdische Lehrhaus* in Frankfurt am Main.⁹ Like his cousin Hans Ehrenberg (1893-1958), his first philosophical teacher and friend,¹⁰ Rosenzweig's intellectual development led from German academic circles steeped in the traditions of the 19th and early 20th century to a life full of spiritual and religious practice.

Based on the account of this change, documented in numerous letters written by Rosenzweig during the War, many have come to hold the belief that in rejecting an academic future Rosenzweig also tore himself completely free from his academic past. But perhaps more importantly, it is on the basis of this belief that the majority of scholars have ignored or rejected *Hegel and the State* as the work of a mere student, in no way comparable to the more original and stunningly complex *The Star of Redemption*,

⁸ Glatzer, Nahum N. *Franz Rosenzweig*. New York: Schocken Books, 1970, 96. Hereafter, (Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*).

⁹ See here Meir, Ephraim. "Das Freie Jüdische Lehrhaus in Frankfurt am Main" in *Franz Rosenzweig: Religionsphilosoph aus Kassel*. Kassel: Euregioverlag, 2011. 76-85.

¹⁰ Schmied-Kowarzik, Wolfdietrich. *Rosenzweig im Gespräch mit Ehrenberg, Cohen und Buber*. Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2006. 62.

effectively placing Rosenzweig's work on Hegel deep into the shadows of his past. The above episode—the decision to reject an academic career in favor of a religious life—has since been used as a central argument to help navigate Rosenzweig's intellectual development. This has led to an unmistakable fact of Rosenzweig scholarship: common to almost all accounts of his *thought*, at least in some regard, is an interpretation of Rosenzweig's *life*. As will become clear over the course of this work, it is precisely this tension between *life* and *thought* that lies at the foundation of Rosenzweig's own interpretations in *Hegel and the State*.

In an essay by Reinhold Mayer and Inken Rühle dealing with the future of Rosenzweig studies, the authors state: “It is time to work out a biography for Rosenzweig, in order to fundamentally present the man and his work.”¹¹ This demand for a comprehensive biography hints towards the complexity of Rosenzweig's intellectual development, even more so seeing that it is still unmet almost a century after Rosenzweig's death. One may ask: why is there still no standard biography for a thinker such as Rosenzweig, who, although certainly no household name, has indeed become recognized as one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century? The present work aims to help answer this question. By providing the first English language exposition of *Hegel and the State* as a whole, I argue that by closely examining Rosenzweig's first book we will be able to more fully understand his own intellectual biography.

My investigation into Rosenzweig's intellectual development begins with a curious problem owing to scholarly reception. Rosenzweig's collected works were

¹¹ "Es gilt, eine Biographie Rosenzweigs zu erarbeiten, um den Menschen und sein Werk grundlegend vorzustellen." "Schwerpunkte zukünftiger Beschäftigung mit Franz Rosenzweig" in: Anckaert, L., and M. Brassier, and N. Samuelson, eds. *The Legacy of Franz Rosenzweig*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004, 81. Hereafter, (Anckaert, *The Legacy*).

published in four volumes between 1976 and 1984 under the title *Franz Rosenzweig, Der Mensch und sein Werk: Gesammelte Schriften*.¹² They stand today as the primary source on Rosenzweig's life and thought. But if one of the primary concerns of future scholarship on Rosenzweig is, as Mayer and Rühle state, to write a biography and accordingly to make Rosenzweig known to "a broader public,"¹³ then their essay must be accused of forgetting an important fact: *Hegel and the State* appears only marginally in Rosenzweig's collected works—all that is included is the foreword to the work. And yet, not only does this work stand on its own as an important contribution to German intellectual history, but it is also Rosenzweig's first venture into the world of authorship. Accordingly, if in the future *Hegel and the State* remains neglected within Rosenzweig scholarship, then the demand to reach a broader public and to provide a comprehensive biography of Rosenzweig's life will never reach its full fruition.

The clearest demand for reevaluating the role of *Hegel and the State* in the life of Rosenzweig comes from Otto Pöggler in his essay "Between Enlightenment and Romanticism: Rosenzweig and Hegel." To quote him at length:

If we separate Rosenzweig's book on Hegel from his essential work, we render the Hegel book a mere academic exercise; the questions Rosenzweig has to ask about Hegel do not come into play. Or to put it the other way around: if we do not integrate the book on Hegel into Rosenzweig's collected works, we cannot see how important the confrontation with Hegel was for Rosenzweig's own

¹² *Franz Rosenzweig, Der Mensch und sein Werk. Gesammelte Schriften*. Bde I-IV. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976-1984.

¹³ "einem breiteren Publikum bekannt zu machen." Anckaert, *The Legacy*, 79.

development. For clearly Rosenzweig's "philosophy" was developed in the wake of Hegel.¹⁴

Pöggler's thesis that *Hegel and the State* should not be understood as a "mere academic exercise," but rather as the stage for his confrontation with Hegel, is further underscored when he refers to *Hegel and the State* in another essay on the same theme as a "*Quelle*" (source).¹⁵ If we pause for a moment on this German word, then the depth of this statement comes into better focus. For a "*Quelle*" is not a mere textual source, as the word may imply, but rather, in regard to intellectual development, the source from which a life springs forth—even provoking the natural imagery of life-giving water. While this in no way implies that *Hegel and the State* is the *only* "*Quelle*" of Rosenzweig's development—for certainly it is not—it does imply that if we ignore this originating source, we are ignoring an essential component in understanding Rosenzweig's life and thought.

What is remarkable in such a line of interpretation is that it stands in direct contradiction to Rosenzweig own self-understanding—as it has been interpreted thus far.

¹⁴ Pöggeler, Otto. "Between Enlightenment and Romanticism: Rosenzweig and Hegel." In *The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig*. Mendes-Flohr, Paul, ed. Hannover: University Press of New England, 1988, 108. Hereafter: (Pöggeler, *The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig*). It is on the basis of this argument that one of the first interpretations of *Hegel and the State* in the English language was written: the second chapter of Peter Gordon's *Rosenzweig and Heidegger* (London: University of California Press, 2003) entitled "Hegel's Fate." In this chapter, Gordon argues that "*Hegel and the State* represents [Rosenzweig's] earliest sustained reflection on the philosophical themes that would predominate in his later work" (84). Gordon argues that Rosenzweig's emphasis on Hegel's concept of fate in *Hegel and the State* "would later inform Rosenzweig's reflections upon the nature of Jewish existence" (85). Yet while Gordon's chapter serves as an adequate introduction to *Hegel and the State* in terms of intellectual history, he unfortunately does not carry his thesis on this book's influence throughout the entirety of the book, in effect passing over far too much of *Hegel and the State* to serve as an authoritative statement on the book. Where the book does excel, however, is in pointing towards the central importance of Rosenzweig's chapter on Hegel's Frankfurt period. In this regard alone can my own work said to be a continuation of his.

¹⁵ Pöggeler, Otto. "Rosenzweig und Hegel." In *Der Philosoph Franz Rosenzweig, Bd. II*. München: Verlag Karl Alber, 1988, 842.

In a letter to his parents dated May 1, 1917, three years before the publication of *Hegel and the State*, Rosenzweig, almost comically, sums up his opinion of his earliest work: “I have always deplored the idea of losing my literary virginity with the fat Hegel book.”¹⁶ Already in 1913, Rosenzweig saw himself as a changed man. This now legendary year marks a great turning point in Rosenzweig’s life. To quote the Jewish philosopher and historian Norbert Samuelson: “Some scholars claim that Rosenzweig attended a Yom Kippur service in Berlin on October 11, 1913, and there had a religious experience that convinced him that he must become Jewish and not Christian.”¹⁷ This decision of Rosenzweig’s to “remain a Jew”¹⁸ has since been understood, by scholars and Rosenzweig alike, as the definitive move away from German Idealism towards Jewish Philosophy—and as interpreted within Rosenzweig’s own intellectual development, as the move away from *Hegel and the State* towards *The Star of Redemption*.

This, however, is a rather superficial interpretation of Rosenzweig’s development, one that only uses *Hegel and the State* negatively to underscore Rosenzweig’s critique of German Idealism in *The Star of Redemption*.¹⁹ In fact, as I will clearly show, Rosenzweig already distanced himself quite distinctly from German Idealism with his early critique of Hegel. In this sense, it is not towards Rosenzweig’s religious thinking

¹⁶ Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*. 55.

¹⁷ Samuelson, Norbert. *Jewish Philosophy: An Historical Introduction*. New York: Continuum, 2003, 298.

¹⁸ Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*. 28.

¹⁹ This is not the case, however, with Myriam Bienenstock’s short article, “Rosenzweig’s Hegel” (1992). In this article Bienenstock, a renowned Hegel scholar, focuses on Rosenzweig’s reading of Hegel in light of Meinecke’s understanding of the *Machtstaat*, or power-state. She is critical of Rosenzweig’s Hegel interpretation and makes the claim that Rosenzweig’s failure to adequately work through Hegel’s philosophy in his early years inhibited him from completely discarding Hegel later in his life. I touch upon this claim later. See Bienenstock, 177-82.

that we should turn as the "*Quelle*" of his move away from Idealism, but rather look within the "brilliant galaxy of German philosophy." This will lead us deep into heart of Rosenzweig's thinking: deep into the labyrinths of *Hegel and the State* itself.

Personality and Work

In a journal entry from 1906, Rosenzweig writes: "Why does one philosophize? For the same reason that one makes music or literature or art. Here too, in the last analysis, all that matters is the discovery of one's own personality."²⁰ The concept of "personality" would occupy Rosenzweig frequently throughout his life and work. Already in his "Notes on the Baroque," written in 1908 but published posthumously, in which Rosenzweig works out a typology of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, the concept of "personality" plays a crucial role. In discussing the young Goethe, for example, he argues that the 18th century was exemplified by a central problem in the life of the young writer: "the division between personality and life."²¹ "[A]ll his restless searching," he declares of Goethe, "was no searching at all [...] but rather an unceasing discovery; what must have appeared to him as failed attempts to harmonize the I and the world, were moreover positive stages upon the infinite path towards the realization of these two."²² Rosenzweig, who was already familiar with Goethe's writings as a young man, sees this

²⁰ Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*. 9.

²¹ "diese Getrenntheit von Persönlichkeit und Leben ist als Grundform des Rokokobewusstseins zugleich Wurzel seiner Problematik." "Notizen zum Barock". *Rosenzweig Jahrbuch* 4, (2009): 295.

²² "all sein rastloses Suchen war nicht, wofür er es hielt [...] sondern ein unaufhörliches Finden; was ihm fehlgeschlagene Versuche scheinen musste, Ich und Welt zu harmonisieren, waren vielmehr positive Etappen auf dem unendlichen Wege zur Realisierung dieser beiden." *Ibid.* 297.

division between "the I and the world" reflected in the "dual life-consciousness"²³ of the 20th century. This is a perspective developed in more detail by his older cousin Hans Ehrenberg in a pamphlet entitled "Die Geschichte des Menschen unserer Zeit."²⁴ Ehrenberg's task in this short piece, which Rosenzweig read while preparing to write his dissertation, was to show how the split between subjectivity and objectivity—an objectivity, or "*Sachlichkeit*", inherited from an overly historical 19th century and a subjectivity in search of a new spiritual home in the wake of Nietzsche's philosophy—became the defining tension in the lives of his generation. It was from out of this tension that Rosenzweig, much like Goethe before him, would soon embark on a journey of "unceasing discovery" to unite his emerging personality with the world.

But how are we to understand the concept of "personality"? And how does this concept relate to the "world" as such? As Theodor Adorno writes in his short essay, "Gloss on Personality": "If there existed a philosophical history of words, then it would have a worthy object in the expression 'personality' and in the changes its meaning has undergone."²⁵ Adorno locates the beginnings of the modern usage of this word in Kant's Second Critique: personality is

"the freedom and independence from the mechanism of nature regarded nevertheless as also a capacity of a being subject to special laws—namely pure practical laws given by his own reason, so that a persona as belonging to the sensible world is subject to his own personality insofar as he also belongs to the

²³ "*dualistisches Lebensbewusstsein*." *Ibid.* 298

²⁴ Hans Ehrenberg, "*Die Geschichte des Menschen unserer Zeit*". Heidelberg: A-Ω Verlag, 1911.

²⁵ Theodor Adorno, "Gloss on Personality," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. 161-62.

intelligible world; for it is then not to be wondered at that a human being, as belonging to both worlds, must regard his own nature in reference to his second and highest vocation only with reverence, and its laws with the highest respect."²⁶

Defined in this manner, personality is understood as a component of our "intelligible character" in opposition to our sensible or "empirical character"; in other words, in its most abstract sense, it is the *freedom* we have as individuals to distinguish ourselves from the worldly laws of nature. Personality and world will always stand distinct from each other—they represent the "two worlds" Kant so often sees us trapped between— yet neither one could exist without the other.

In *The Star of Redemption*, Rosenzweig distinguishes this concept of personality as "freedom" from the world by opposing to it a concept of the self he terms "metaethics": "The self is solitary man in the hardest sense of the word: the personality is the "political animal."²⁷ By "metaethics," Rosenzweig means a tragically isolated individual who stands outside all relations to other selves. Personality, in contrast, is a concept more in line with Hegel's own understanding of the term in his *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. There, the concept of personality first appears when consciousness enters into the "actual world" (*wirkliche Welt*).²⁸ Not to be confused with the self as such, personality is rather the "reality of the self" (*Wirklichkeit des Selbst*).²⁹ In this sense, personality is always bound to the actual world, whereas for the "metaethical" self there

²⁶ Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Practical Reason*. 5:87.

²⁷ Rosenzweig, *Stern* 71.

²⁸ Hegel, G.W.F. *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977. 356.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 359

is no world at all. But as personalities, we stand in direct relation to the "political" world around us, or as Rosenzweig expresses it in *The Star of Redemption*: "personality is man playing the role assigned to him by fate, one role among many in the polyphonic symphony of mankind."³⁰ As a young doctoral student, Rosenzweig struggled to identify himself as the author of *Hegel and the State*; it was not until he wrote *The Star of Redemption* that he felt his personality and his world could unite. Yet to understand Rosenzweig's role in the "symphony of mankind," to understand his fate as an individual, we must take more than just his *magnum opus* into account.

In his book *Werk und Persönlichkeit*, published in 1906—the same year Rosenzweig wrote so passionately of personality—Eduard Platzhoff-Lejeune argues that only in "the totality of works" may we find a "complete expression of a personality."³¹ Indeed, and especially when dealing with writers and intellectuals as we are here, it is first through a subject's *work* that their personality becomes known to the world.³² It cannot be overstated that we depend upon written documents left behind—books, manuscripts, letters, etc.—to tell the story of a person's life. But as Platzhoff-Lejeune argues, the goal is still to "penetrate *behind* the work, whose appearance gave notice to the personality."³³ And yet, before there can be any hope of going *behind* the work, we must use this very work to reveal the personality in question—in other words, the work is

³⁰ *The Star of Redemption*. 68 (Hereafter, *Star*).

³¹ "das Werk, oder die Gesamtheit der Werke, [ist] der völlige Ausdruck einer Persönlichkeit." Platzhoff-Lejeune, Eduard. *Werk und Persönlichkeit: Zu einer Theorie der Biographie*. Minden in Westf.: J.C.C. Bruns' Verlag, 1906. 7.

³² This approach to personality differentiates Rosenzweig from his predecessors in the 19th century. Again in the "Notizen zum Barock" he writes: "to understand personality in the 19th century means to study it directly, it is ungraspable in the work. But how Bismarck would have been misunderstood, if one could merely know him through his actions." ("Notizen zum Barock," 299)

³³ "hinter das Werk zu dringen, dessen Erscheinen auf die Persönlichkeit aufmerksam gemacht hat." *Ibid.* 9.

still *necessary*, even if it is merely a *mediating* factor between a personality and their world. With the above thoughts in mind, how are we to approach Rosenzweig's *Hegel and the State* and what does this work tell us about his personality?

On Historicism

In 1906, Rosenzweig began studying philosophy at Freiburg University with Professor Jonas Cohn. These early studies would lead Rosenzweig away from his interest in medicine towards a deeper appreciation of history. When in 1910 he began researching Hegel's manuscripts for his dissertation, Rosenzweig was already deep into the discovery of his own "personality." However, as expressed in the now famous letter to Meinecke from 1920, Rosenzweig had great trouble recognizing this same personality only a decade later. In that letter, in which, to remind, he rejected an offer for a university lectureship, Rosenzweig looks back upon the days of his youth:

I felt a horror of myself, quite similar to the horror [Siegfried] Kähler³⁴ felt in my company when we were studying in Freiburg: I remember how sinister my

³⁴ Siegfried Kähler (1885-1963) was a German historian who studied with Rosenzweig under Meinecke. Together with a small group of Meinecke's other students, they identified themselves as the "Freiburg Circle" (Freiburger Kreis). Kähler himself would go on to publish a book entitled *Wilhelm von Humboldt und der Staat*, a title unmistakably akin to Rosenzweig's own. However, their approach to the personalities treated in their works—Kähler to von Humboldt and Rosenzweig to Hegel—was less similar than one may assume. With Rosenzweig, only rarely do the personal details of Hegel's "life" arise in *Hegel and the State*: love relationships, emotional turmoil, and family relations are kept at a minimum. Rather, as I described above, it is through the *work* as a form of historical truth that Rosenzweig seeks to gain access to Hegel's life. Kähler proceeds in a similar manner, and yet it was not only the "forms" of history that were of interest to him, but the personal feelings of his subject, especially as expressed through letters: "*Nicht was er tat und leistete, vielmehr wie er es anlegte, um zu seiner Leistung zu gelangen [...] eine Anschauung zu gewinnen von der inneren Stellung dieses außerordentlichen Menschen zu seiner Zeit und Umwelt.*" (Kähler 4) Rosenzweig himself would not give his readers even that much insight into his method as a biographer. Rather, the method itself is hidden within the form of the book—so obsessed was Rosenzweig with the formal presentation of his work. The difference between these two historians, between Kähler and Rosenzweig, can be gleaned from a letter Meinecke wrote to Kähler, which Kähler then ironically includes

insatiable hunger for “forms” [Gestalten]—a hunger without goal or meaning, driven on solely by its own momentum—then appeared to him. The study of history would only have served to feed my hunger for forms, my insatiable receptivity; history to me was a purveyor of forms, no more.³⁵

When Rosenzweig writes that “[t]he study of history” would only have fed his “insatiable hunger for “forms”,” he is justifying to Meinecke why he chose not to accept his offer for a university position. But read closely, Rosenzweig does not reject his own hunger for forms outright, but rather the study of history for its own sake—a clear response to the “crisis of historicism” his generation was experiencing. This “crisis,” as Georg Iggers expresses it in his authoritative book *The German Conception of History*,³⁶ was based on the growing concern for “the limitations of human knowledge and the subjective character of all cognition in regard to human behavior and social processes.”³⁷ The ultimate result of this concern, within the context of a German historicism that “assumes that all values and all cognitions are historic and individual,”³⁸ leads to a “radically

in the preface to his book. Meinecke is critical of Kähler's approach to historical scholarship: “Aber Sie handeln wie jemand, der unzufrieden mit dem magischen Oberlicht, das ihn [von Humboldt] bisher beleuchtete, die Lampe—nicht etwa auf den Tisch, wo man Ober- und Unterkörper gleichmäßig übersehen kann—sondern gleich auf den Fußboden setzt und von da aus denn auch die Unterhose Humboldts entdeckt”(Kähler V). What horrified Rosenzweig years later as he reflected on his Hegel book, was not the content of the book itself, but the manner in which his own personal position was subsumed into the form of Hegel's works themselves. This is immediately apparent in the opening pages of *The Star of Redemption*, where the personal position of the author is reflected in the language of the text itself. But as for *Hegel and the State*, nowhere do we get a glimpse of Hegel's “Unterhose.”

³⁵ Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*. 95.

³⁶ Iggers, Georg. *The German Conception of History. The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1968 (1983).

³⁷ Iggers, 124.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 35.

relativistic position in regard to knowledge."³⁹ Rosenzweig was aware of this danger, distancing himself from history as a mere "purveyor of forms" and as a discipline that was unable to provide a sustainable foundation for his newly awakening Jewish belief. However, like his teacher Meinecke, throughout his development he still held to a "faith in the meaningfulness of history."⁴⁰ Thus, in the words of Paul Mendes-Flohr, it would "be erroneous to interpret Rosenzweig's moving letter to Meinecke as a rejection of history per se: rather he is passionately rejecting the then-prevailing modes of historical scholarship."⁴¹

Before turning to the question of "form," for it is Rosenzweig's "insatiable hunger" that we are still pursuing, I would like to briefly mention one mode of historicism that Rosenzweig was particularly sensitive to as the author of *Hegel and the State*: the historicist presupposition that Iggers identifies as "*the state as an end in itself*."⁴² From Meinecke's letter above, it could be falsely assumed that in rejecting the modes of historical scholarship Rosenzweig was also rejecting his work as the author of *Hegel and the State*. The subject matter of that book, no less than the intellectual development leading up to the Hegelian version of "the state as an end in itself," certainly aligns Rosenzweig with the historicist tradition. Within this tradition, "[s]tates have more than merely empirical existence [...] they each represent a higher spiritual principle."⁴³ And accordingly, "[f]or Meinecke, as for his teachers, belief in the central role of the

³⁹ *Ibid.* 125.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 127.

⁴¹ Mendes-Flohr, "Franz Rosenzweig and the Crisis of Historicism." 157.

⁴² Iggers, 7.

⁴³ Iggers, 8.

state in human culture and in the spiritual character of political power was not merely a question of scholarly approach, but a matter of profound religious conviction."⁴⁴ The same cannot be said of Rosenzweig. While *Hegel and the State* indeed follows and culminates in Hegel's ideal of the state, there is an unmistakably critical tone that accompanies Rosenzweig's narrative (to say nothing of his personal religious convictions). And although he is a *historicist* in the sense that his work assigns a central role to the state and to political history, in undermining these traditions he is also subtly undermining the tradition of historicism itself. Following this line of argument, it can be assumed that Rosenzweig was further along in his response to the "crisis of historicism" when he was working on *Hegel and the State* than some critics may have believed. And although he stuck to the central historicist principle that "[n]o individual, no institution, no historical deed can be judged by standards external to the situation in which it rises, but rather must be judged in terms of its own inherent values,"⁴⁵ it was the manner in which he chose to follow this principle, precisely his "insatiable hunger for 'forms,'" that distinguished him as an historian.

Biography as Form

As a literary form, biography has not received the sort of attention that poetry, the novel or even the essay, have been given. This is due in part to the very nature of the form itself; in the words of Helmut Koopmann: "*die Biographie [ist] keine eigenständige*

⁴⁴ Iggers, 198.

⁴⁵ Iggers, 8.

literarische Form [...] sondern angesiedelt zwischen Geschichtsschreibung und schöner Literatur, zwischen Wissenschaftlichkeit und Dichtung."⁴⁶ Although this character as a "Zwischenbereich"⁴⁷ prevents the form from being simply defined, the great "Spielraum"⁴⁸ of biography makes it a rich form nonetheless, capable of capturing the most complex and intriguing of lives in the written word. Indeed, the experience of life and the attempt at a "*literarische Wiederauferstehung*"⁴⁹ of the same, are what make the form of biography a necessary form when retelling the events of the past.

Biographical elements appear in almost all historical writing. Using the objective poles of birth and death—" [*d]ie Biographie kann objektiv nur dort sein, wo sie sich auf Daten beschränkt*"⁵⁰—biography functions under the assumption "*daß die Wirklichkeit in der Literatur restituierbar sei.*"⁵¹ However, once biography strays from its objective orientation towards an *interpretation* of reality, the form splinters off into fragmentary forms at best. There are popular biographies, bordering on memoirs, which appear by the dozens every year—and these are perhaps the furthest from what I have in mind here. Rather, we are in pursuit of what Koopmann calls the "*geistige Biographie:*" "*in der die Triebkräfte des Denkens und der Lebensansichten wichtiger sind als die tatsächlichen Handlungen.*"⁵² Here, biography may appear in the extremes of honoring the subject or

⁴⁶ Koopman, Helmut. "Die Biographie", in *Prosa Kunst ohne Erzählen. Die Gattung der nicht-fiktionalen Kunstprosa*. Hg. Klaus Weissenberger. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1985. (45-65). 45.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 59.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 47.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 49.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 51.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 46.

⁵² *Ibid.* 55.

of offering a devastating critique, or even warning. What lies at the foundation of all biography, however, is not only that it qualifies as "*Lebensdeutung*," but ultimately that it is "*eine interpretierende Darstellung*."⁵³ Thus, our question is something more than the form of biography as such. What drives this investigation into *Hegel and the State* is first and foremost the position of the *author*, Rosenzweig, with regard to his biographical subject, Hegel's life and thought.

In a short chapter on *Hegel and the State*, Wayne Cristaudo writes that Rosenzweig's Hegel book "is as revealing about its author as it is about its subject."⁵⁴ Koopmann agrees in principle on this point, defining biography as the form "*wo die Beschreibung eines anderen zur Selbstdarstellung geraten kann*."⁵⁵ This self-revealing character of biography—what Koopmann calls its "*Pygmalion-Aura*"⁵⁶—pushes the form towards its close cousin, the autobiography. Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* serves as an extreme example of a biography that is simultaneously autobiographical. Of course, *Hegel and the State* cannot be said to be autobiographical to that degree—the degree to which it collapses into one with biography. Rather, as the author of *Hegel and the State*, Rosenzweig's presentation is autobiographical on a more subtle level.

Ulrich Bieberich—the only scholar to offer a full account of Rosenzweig's relation to Hegel in both *Hegel and the State* and *The Star of Redemption*⁵⁷—sees a clue

⁵³ *Ibid.* 50.

⁵⁴ Cristaudo, Wayne. *Religion, Redemption, and Revolution*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012. 296.

⁵⁵ Koopmann, 48.

⁵⁶ Koopmann, 46.

⁵⁷ Bieberich, Ulrich. *Wenn die Geschichte göttlich wäre. Rosenzweigs Auseinandersetzung mit Hegel*. Erzabtei St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 1990.

to Rosenzweig's autobiographical moment in the letter to Meinecke from 1920. There, as we have already discussed, Rosenzweig spoke of his "hunger for forms" as the driving force behind his interest in history. Bieberich reads this statement as Rosenzweig's desire to satisfy this hunger "objectively": "*Noch versteckt sich Rosenzweig so hinter dem Objektiven, daß er Angst vor dem eigensten Selbst bekommt.*"⁵⁸ Without getting ahead of ourselves, if for the young Rosenzweig history was a "purveyor of forms, no more"—as he states in his letter to Meinecke—then it is to the form of *Hegel and the State* that we must turn in order to find the personality of the young Rosenzweig.

As Wayne Cristaudo correctly notes, it was first in the foreword to *Hegel and the State* that Rosenzweig "subtly alerted his readers"⁵⁹ to the self-revealing character of his book. Thus, providing a close reading of the foreword is the first step in revealing Rosenzweig's character as the author of his Hegel biography. Moreover, it will help us establish the theoretical foundations needed in order to illuminate Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel. The *form* of the work serves to mediate the personality of its author—and in the case of Rosenzweig, to uncover a remarkable personality beneath the "sinister" objectivity of his text.

Rosenzweig's "Vorwort"

Throughout my interpretation of *Hegel and the State*, I will be following the historicist precept of only allowing the material to "be judged in terms of its own inherent values." However, given the philosophical context I am working within, I prefer to

⁵⁸ Bieberich, 26.

⁵⁹ Cristaudo, 296.

understand this method as performing a playful literary variation on what Edmund Husserl called a philosophical *Epoché*. Instead of focusing on "consciousness" as Husserl does, I will be focusing on a textual object—the book *Hegel and the State*. Thus, while Husserl's *Epoché* calls for suspending all judgment of the "natural world" in order to bring the phenomena of consciousness into conceptual focus, I replace consciousness with the "spirit" of *Hegel and the State*—if books can be said to have a "spirit" at all—and for my part suspend all judgment that does not issue directly from this work as an historical and literary object. In this manner, a philosophical *Epoché*—when applied to a text—privileges the *form* of the object, which then functions to circumscribes the content from the outset. This is similar to the methodological procedure that Hegel calls for in the Preface to the *Phenomenology*, which produces a "self-originating, self-differentiating wealth of shapes."⁶⁰ Without such a critical approach—albeit a stretch from a Husserlian perspective—one could, for example, easily overlook the foreword to *Hegel and the State* as a mere gloss on Rosenzweig's predecessors, fulfilling more of what a standard historical introduction may require and lacking any rigorous methodological explanation. However, the foreword, when taken as a "self-originating" object, provides us with a methodological constellation, which, if deciphered correctly, reveals the theoretical underpinnings of the book (or what Husserl would call the "essence"). As the first "gesture"⁶¹ to give rise to the form of the book as whole, it serves as the initial key to Rosenzweig's Hegel interpretation.

⁶⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenologie*. 9: "der aus sich entspringende Reichtum und sich selbst bestimmende Unterschied der Gestalten."

⁶¹ See here: Mosès, "Hegel beim Wort genommen".

The foreword, now that I have made my case for it, is an introductory narrative that places the authors of three 'classic' Hegel biographies into an historical constellation.⁶² These authors—Karl Rosenkranz, Rudolf Haym and Wilhelm Dilthey—all made material contributions to the study of Hegel's life and thereby had a lasting impact upon Rosenzweig's generation. By introducing his book with the *personalities* who wrote Hegel's life, Rosenzweig shows that to understand the works of history we must take into account the historical lives of their authors. Moreover, by focusing on the respective distance or nearness of the biographers to the historical Hegel, Rosenzweig's foreword implicitly assumes that history is written from a relative standpoint and that the author's interpretations stem from the particular problems of their time. Without saying it, Rosenzweig subtly implies that the works of Rosenkranz, Haym and Dilthey reveal as much about their personalities as they do about Hegel. Of course, the same can be said of Rosenzweig.

Rosenzweig opens his book quite plainly: "The first to have written the life of Hegel was the Königsberg professor Karl Rosenkranz."⁶³ Still today, Rosenkranz' book *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegels Leben* (1844) is respected as a definitive source of information on Hegel's life. But it remains little more than that—a book of information. Rosenkranz was Hegel's student, and after Hegel's death he had the advantage of being able to consult many of Hegel's manuscripts that are no longer available today. In addition, Rosenkranz could talk to Hegel's friends and relatives to gain insight into Hegel's life. This alone makes his work one of lasting importance. However, Rosenzweig is quick to point towards the limitations of his predecessors work:

⁶² HS 11-19.

⁶³ "Der erste, der das Leben Hegels schrieb, war der Königsberg Professor Karl Rosenkranz. HS 11.

It could be the case that, in order to formulate a comprehensive and universal intellectual history, [Rosenkranz'] external and especially internal distance was still not great enough. He only knew how to situate his hero in terms of a history of philosophy; but here his hero had already done the decisive work—the pupil merely followed the master's lead.⁶⁴

For Rosenkranz, Hegel remained the master of his own story. It was especially the lack of "internal distance" that prevented Rosenkranz from breaking free from his master. In Rosenzweig's estimate, "Hegel's life story was made public as a supplementary-volume to his works."⁶⁵ Here it is implied that in order to "formulate a comprehensive and universal intellectual history" a critical perspective is necessary as well. Ultimately, it was the *personality* of Rosenkranz that was missing from his interpretation: "It would almost be possible to separate the author's independent remarks cleanly from the book; one would then be left with a collection of materials, which would indeed count as a biography for that time."⁶⁶ Rosenzweig's words, which impart a sense of irony as well, point towards what Herbert Schnädelbach, in his book *Philosophy in Germany 1831-1933*, calls positive historicism: "the value-free accumulation of material and facts

⁶⁴ "Für eine umfassendere, allgemein geistesgeschichtliche Fragestellung mag sein äußerer und vor allem sein innerer Abstand noch nicht weit genug gewesen sein; nur philosophiegeschichtlich weiß er seinen Helden bestimmt einzuordnen; hier aber hatte dieser selbst ihm schon kräftig vorgearbeitet; der Lehrling folgte nur des Meisters Spur." HS 12.

⁶⁵ "die Lebensgeschichte trat an die Öffentlichkeit als Ergänzungsband zu den Werken." HS 11.

⁶⁶ "Es wäre beinahe möglich, die selbstständigen Anmerkungen des Verfassers sauber aus dem Buche herauszutrennen; man behielte dann eine der Stoffsammlung übrig, die jene Zeit als Biographien wohl gelten ließ." HS 12.

without distinction between what is and what is not important.”⁶⁷ But it is not for the sake of distinguishing himself from Rosenkranz alone that Rosenzweig opens his book with Hegel's first biographer.

In a short section of the book entitled “*Hegel's Eigenheit*” Rosenkranz writes: “*Die Geschichte eines Philosophen ist die Geschichte seines Denkens, die Geschichte der Bildung seines Systems.*”⁶⁸ Like Rosenkranz, Rosenzweig follows the “history of [Hegel's] thought.” In line with the still present trend of philosophical biography, Rosenzweig agrees that it is primarily through Hegel's thought—which is to say his *work*—that we may come to know his life; however, this does not exclude some instances where it is the *life* that informs the thought. For Rosenzweig, and this will be underlined again and again throughout this work, the development of Hegel's thought does not culminate in his philosophical system, but rather in his ideal of the *state*—as he claims *ex negativo* about Rosenkranz: “all in all, the state rarely appears.”⁶⁹ Rather than abstracting Hegel's thought to the degree that his life can be judged to be “*ohne allen pikanten Schimmer von Intriguen und Geheimnissen*,”⁷⁰ Rosenzweig rather shows how Hegel's thought is bound to the political and social problems of his age. In stark contrast to Rosenkranz, he draws prominently on the “*Intriguen und Geheimnissen*” of Hegel's life in order to show the development of his thought.

⁶⁷ Schnädelbach, Herbert. *Philosophy in Germany 1831-1933*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, 35.

⁶⁸ Rosenkranz, Karl. *G.W.F Hegels Leben*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlich Buchgesellschaft, 1998, 21. Hereafter (Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben*).

⁶⁹ “*im ganzen tritt der Staat doch wenig hervor.*” HS 12.

⁷⁰ Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben*. XV.

Rosenkranz is introduced to show both the connection and the distance Rosenzweig's own work will take to the official Hegel reception. In some ways, he is certainly continuing the work Rosenkranz began. But it is first with the introduction of the second biographer, Rudolf Haym that Rosenzweig's own position begins to emerge more clearly. There is a clear shift in tone leading from Rosenkranz to Haym. Where Rosenzweig spoke with irony, but respect, of the former, there is a sense of genuine admiration present for the latter. In the end, it was Rudolf Haym's unique personality and how this personality was reflected in his work that proved a major inspiration for Rosenzweig's book.

Rudolf Haym and the Historical Hegel

Haym's biography, *Hegel und seine Zeit*, was written in 1857, twenty-six years after Hegel's death. With Haym, we witness the life of Hegel being lifted into the historical debate of the time. In opposition to Rosenkranz, Haym wished "von Systemfesseln losgebunden zu sein."⁷¹ His task was to oppose the orthodoxy of Hegel's system with a historical critique while still providing "*eine objektive Geschichte der Philosophie. Wohl beabsichtige ich, sie darzustellen, wohl, sie zu kritisieren: —aber den Boden zu Beidem will ich auf historischem Wege, durch eine Auseinandersetzung ihrer Entstehung und ihrer Entwicklung gewinnen.*"⁷² Critical of his contemporaries, Haym writes:

⁷¹ Haym, Rudolf. *Hegel und seine Zeit*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1962, 15. Hereafter (Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*).

⁷² Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*. 2.

Sie irren, wenn sie ein neues Uebel mit alten Mitteln heilen zu können meinen, wenn sie die Waffen zu Bekämpfung des Gegners einzig aus dem Arsenal einer Weltansicht und einer Dialektik entnehem, die, wie geschlossen in sich, wie durchgearbeitet auch immer, in einem anderen als in dem Boden unsrer heutigen sittlichen und geistigen Zustände ihre Wurzeln hat."⁷³

It is precisely the conditions of Haym's historical present that Rosenzweig draws out in his foreword. And here it becomes readily apparent that *Hegel und seine Zeit* is a mirror of Haym's own life. It is what is at stake for Haym *personally* and the personal undertone of the text that makes the book so intriguing to Rosenzweig—in Haym's own words: "*An die Stelle der Vernunft tritt uns der ganze Mensch, an die Stelle des allgemeinen der geschichtlich bestimmte Mensch.*"⁷⁴

There is a sense of urgency with Haym that is lacking in Rosenkranz. Haym's work is no mere "value-free accumulation of material and facts," but rather the personal struggle of an author to come to terms with his past. As Rosenzweig recognizes, "[o]nly rarely does the biography of a philosopher become such a work of political passion."⁷⁵ It was Haym's concern to establish "a conscious will towards actuality," and as such help place his generation "under the rule of the great goals of the state and a people."⁷⁶ In providing "as much a philosophical as a political polemic,"⁷⁷ Haym shows how Hegel's

⁷³ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*. 12.

⁷⁴ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*. 14.

⁷⁵ "Selten wohl ist die Biographie eines Philosophen so sehr das Werk politischer Leidenschaft gewesen." HS 13.

⁷⁶ HS 15.

⁷⁷ HS 14.

ideal of the state was merely carried on dogmatically after his death in the form of his system. Following Rosenkranz' lead, Haym attempts to give “*eine historische Analyse dieses Systems.*”⁷⁸ And like Rosenkranz, Haym sees the culmination of Hegel's thinking in his system. However, unlike Rosenkranz, Haym recognized that in the end Hegel “only appeared to exhaust the depth of life in order to sacrifice the elicited good upon the altar of the concept.”⁷⁹ Thus, focusing on the “remarkable opening and ending of Haym’s book,”⁸⁰ Rosenzweig was not only inspired by Haym's intention to establish a new historical understanding of Hegel’s thought for the sake of the present, but moreover mimics Haym's critical outlook on Hegel's thinking as a whole.

It is remarkable how closely Rosenzweig follows Haym's lead on this account. Not only does Haym call for “*eine vernunftsgemäÙere und sittlichere Gestaltung unseres Staatslebens,*”⁸¹ but he is critical of Hegel's entire metaphysical project:

"Sie [die Hegelsche Philosophie] ist, um Alles zu sagen, der mit List und Geschick zum Frieden formulierte Krieg von Allem wider Alles. Sie will sein eine absolute Versöhnung von Denken und Wirklichkeit: sie ist in Wahrheit eine spiritualistische Verflüchtung des Wirklichen und eine methodische Corruption des reinen Denkens. [...] sie treibt in Wahrheit nur ein betrügliches Spiel mit den Mächten der Freiheit und des Verstandes und des Subjektiven. [...] sie ist in Wahrheit nur die schlechthinige Zweideutigkeit, sich weder zu der einen noch zu der andern, sich sowohl zu jener wie zu dieser zu bekennen. [...] Im Ganzen wie

⁷⁸ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*. 464.

⁷⁹ “die Tiefe des Lebens doch nur auszuschöpfen schien, um das heraufgeförderte Gut auf dem Altare des Begriffs zu opfern.” HS 14.

⁸⁰ HS 15.

⁸¹ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*. 465.

*im Einzelnen ist ihr methodisches Vermitteln eine ästhetisch-formalistische Illusion.*⁸²

Rosenzweig directly takes up Haym's formulation that Hegel attempts "*eine absolute Versöhnung von Denken und Wirklichkeit.*" And it is precisely the "*Illusion*" of this wish for reconciliation that Haym emphasizes and which Rosenzweig uses as the basis for his own interpretation. Haym sees the task of his generation as the "*Auflösung*"⁸³ of this illusion into "*eine historische Analyse dieses Systems.*"⁸⁴ "*Was uns zu Gebote steht*" writes Haym, "*sind die wiederbefreiten Elemente, und ist der seiner vergänglichen Form entkleidete Geist jenes Systems.*"⁸⁵ In order to reach the "*entkleidete Geist*" of Hegel's system, Haym insists on a renewed "*Mitarbeit an der Geschichtsforschung.*"⁸⁶ While giving much less weight to Hegel's system as such, it is on the basis of this desire to work with and for history—and to uncover the illusion that reconciles thought with reality in Hegel's work—that Rosenzweig finds in Haym a lasting inspiration for his own work on Hegel.

This is alluded to nowhere more clearly than when Rosenzweig praises Haym's book as "a great biographical work of art."⁸⁷ What makes Haym's book more than a mere collection of materials stems in part from its character as a "testimony to his personal

⁸² *Ibid.* 461-62.

⁸³ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit.* 462.

⁸⁴ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit.* 464.

⁸⁵ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit.* 465.

⁸⁶ Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit.* 469.

⁸⁷ "*ein großes biographisches Kunstwerk.*" HS 13.

becoming and the passage of time.”⁸⁸ Hereby Rosenzweig implies that to understand and appreciate a *biographical work of art* we must take the personality of the author and his age to be as important as the subject of the biography itself. By drawing out Haym’s personality in his foreword, and in showing how *Hegel und seine Zeit* is a product of Haym’s engagement with the present, Rosenzweig thus makes an indirect and subtle reference to his own method of biographical analysis in *Hegel and the State*. Like Haym and Rosenkranz before him, Rosenzweig was certainly influenced by the historical conditions of his age. From the solemn respect of Karl Rosenkranz, to the impassioned polemic of Rudolf Haym, we now turn to these conditions. Wilhelm Dilthey, the last in the line of biographers and closest influence on Rosenzweig's own age, provided a new gateway through which Rosenzweig's generation learned to look upon the lives and events of the past.

The Hegel Renaissance of the Early 20th Century

Before lingering on Dilthey's influence upon Rosenzweig, any discussion of Hegel in the early 20th century must make at least brief mention of a speech delivered in 1910 by the neo-Kantian Wilhelm Windelband entitled "*Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus*."⁸⁹ Critical of what he saw as the renewed appropriation of Hegel's thought, Windelband observed around him a "*Hunger nach Weltanschauung, der unsere*

⁸⁸ "ein Zeugnis seines persönlichen Werdens und des Ganges der Zeit." HS 13.

⁸⁹ Wilhelm Windelband, *Präludien. Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*. Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr, 1921.

junge Generation ergriffen hat und der bei Hegel Sättigung sucht."⁹⁰ The young generation searching for a new "*Weltanschauung*" latched onto a few key components of Hegel's thinking: "*Gesamtsinn aller Wirklichkeit*"; "*ästhetische[r] Sinn*"; "*das Vertrauen in die Macht der Vernunft*."⁹¹ With his speech, Windelband, who ultimately calls for a return to Kant's philosophical position, managed to capture the new spirit influencing Rosenzweig's age. This "Hegel renaissance," as it has since come to be known—and indirectly the "*Hunger nach Weltanschauung*" as well—was to no small degree influenced by Wilhelm Dilthey and his biography *History of the Young Hegel*, published in 1905.⁹²

It was Dilthey, writes Rosenzweig, who “placed research into Hegel’s life on a new foundation.”⁹³ Rosenzweig’s generation had become “fed up and scornful with the sense of reality of the last half century,” and “so it came about that in the midst of a generation which sought the way back to the old Idealism through a newly fashioned longing, Dilthey was called to renew the historical remembrance of Hegel.”⁹⁴ The "sense of reality" (*Wirklichkeitssinn*) Rosenzweig speaks of, is akin to the "*Sachlichkeit*" Hans Ehrenberg saw as the task of his generation to overcome. This is a position indirectly drawn out by Norbert Waszek, who notes that Dilthey followed the "*methodische*

⁹⁰ "a hunger for world-views, which has seized our younger generation and which finds satisfaction in Hegel." Windelband, 278.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 278.

⁹² Wilhelm Dilthey, *Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels*.

⁹³ "*die Erforschung des Hegelschen Lebens auf eine neue Grundlage gestellt hat.*" HS 15. See also, Norbert Waszek, "Die Hegelforschung mit Wilhelm Dilthey beginnen?" in *Anfänge bei Hegel*. Schmied-Kowarzik and Eidam, ed., Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2008.

⁹⁴ HS 16.

Prämisse, möglichst kein Dokument, keine Quelle zu übergehen, die Hegels Entwicklung erhellen könnte."⁹⁵ In Rosenzweig's words, this commitment to "*Sachlichkeit*" placed Dilthey within "the true products of the new spirit, "positivism" and "empiricism".⁹⁶ Although Rosenzweig veils his own indebtedness to these new "deformities" with his critique of Dilthey, there was something akin to his own spirit that he found in his predecessor: "a deeply personal impulse within him to fix his vision on the image of the peak of 1800."⁹⁷ This historical moment, which Rosenzweig will later describe as a moment "*der sich ja ebenfalls um den Philosophen im Gegensatz zur Philosophie dreht*"⁹⁸—thereby showing his prolonged interest in philosophical personalities—is reconfigured in the work of both historians in order to show its influence upon their own generation. Not only did this task require a renewed engagement with German Idealism, Romanticism and the political conditions that led to the end of the Holy Roman Empire, but it also demanded, as Windelband's speech showed, rescuing Hegel from the neo-Kantian critique of the 19th century.

Dilthey's *History of the Young Hegel* was the first biography to focus exclusively on Hegel's formative years, and accordingly "it was now a totally new Hegel"⁹⁹ that confronted Rosenzweig's age. The last lines of Rosenzweig's foreword capture the debt Rosenzweig paid to his predecessor:

⁹⁵ Waszek, 20.

⁹⁶ "*die echten Ausgeburten des neuen Geistes, "Positivismus" und "Empirismus".*" HS 15.

⁹⁷ "*ein tief persönlicher Drang, das Bild des Gipfels von 1800 [...] im Auge festzuhalten.*" HS 15.

⁹⁸ Rosenzweig, "Urzelle", *Kleinere Schriften*. 370.

⁹⁹ "*Überhaupt aber war es nun ein ganz neuer Hegel, den Diltheys Buch hinstellte.*" HS 17.

It was [Dilthey] who first, with gentle hand, raised the veil and showed, how from the great rigid pictures of the historical Hegel, which remained just as soulless and untransparent in Rosenkranz's panegyric as in Haym's pamphlet, there poured forth a stream of hidden sorrows and hidden passions from those days of his youth."¹⁰⁰

For the first time, it was the "hidden sorrows and hidden passions"—previously undiscovered—that gave context to Hegel's life and thought. In the afterword to the second edition of Haym's biography, published in 1927, the editor Hans Rosenberg writes that it was thus Dilthey who first discovered the "irrational" Hegel.¹⁰¹ By focusing on the beginnings of Hegel's intellectual development, Dilthey aimed to uncover Hegel's living *personality* from the scattered writings of his oft-neglected student years:

It is not as if those beginnings, which show Hegel sharing paths with Hölderlin and the early Romantics, remained unnoticed by the older biographers [...] But Dilthey, a contemporary of Nietzsche, opposed the crude method of presentation of these two—for Rosenkranz, essentially a naïve wondering about the conceptuality of such historical detours, for Haym, a rashly judged insertion within the much too linear path of Hegel's biographical evolution—with a highly perceptive sense for soulful reality as such.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ "er zuerst hob mit zarter Hand die Schleier und zeigte, wie in dem starren Riesenbilde des historischen Hegel, das in Rosenkranzens Panegyrikus wie in Hayms Pamphlet gleich seelenlos und undurchsichtig blieb, von jenen Jugendtagen her ein Strom geheimen Leidens und geheimer Leidenschaft rauschte." HS 17.

¹⁰¹ Haym, 550.

¹⁰² "Nicht als ob jene Anfänge, die Hegel auf verwandten Wegen mit Hölderlin und den Frühromantikern zeigen, von den älteren Biographen unbeachtet geblieben wären [...] Aber den primitiven Darstellungsmitteln jener beiden—bei Rosenkranz hier wesentlich eine naive Verwunderung über solche begriffsgeschichtlichen Umwege, bei Haym ein vorschnell wertendes Einfügen in den eben doch sehr gradlinigen Gang der biographischen Eintwicklung—diesen Mitteln setzte nun der Zeitgenosse Nietzsches entgegen den positivistisch geschulten, höchst empfindlichen Sinn für seelische Wirklichkeit rein als solche." HS 17.

In Dilthey's Hegel biography, the years leading up to the "peak of 1800" would come to represent the *young Hegel* as such—that is to say, Hegel's *pre-systematic years*. Just as Dilthey was above all concerned with the "beginnings" of Hegel's life, Rosenzweig would follow the same path into the "soulful reality" of the young Hegel. However, Rosenzweig's position within the "Hegel renaissance" of his age was already much different than Dilthey's. Concerning Dilthey's historical position as a Hegel biographer Rosenzweig writes:

Already in 1887, when the collection of Hegel's letters appeared, Dilthey had stated that the time for fighting with Hegel was over and that that of his historical recognition had come. Although it still sounded similar to Haym, it was already something quite different. For Haym, the historical recognition itself was to end the fight, Dilthey pulled it out of the fight altogether.¹⁰³

When Rosenzweig writes that Dilthey pulled the "historical recognition" of Hegel "out of the fight altogether," he is offering his readers an important clue as to why he chose to publish his own biography of Hegel after Dilthey. For while Rosenzweig was certainly influenced by Dilthey's biographical method, as I show below, for the two historians something entirely different was at stake:

¹⁰³ "Schon 1887, als die Sammlung der Hegelschen Briefe erschien, hatte Dilthey ausgesprochen, daß nun die Zeit des Kampfs mit Hegel vorüber sei und die seiner historischen Erkenntnis gekommen. Das klang noch ähnlich wie bei Haym, war aber doch schon etwas ganz anderes: für Haym hatte die historische Erkenntnis selber den Kampf erst vollenden sollen, Dilthey hob sie aus dem Kampf heraus." HS 16.

It is characteristic of Dilthey's historical and personal context, that his book traced the development of the metaphysician in the first place, and only then the philosopher of history. For Rosenkranz, in accordance with the direction of that decade, it was the philosopher of religion, for Haym, the politician. That peculiar inner departure of German *Bildung* from the State, which occurred as a reaction to the close relationship of the two during the founding years of the empire, found its expression in Dilthey. For him, the political in Hegel was more of a piece than a founding force in his development.¹⁰⁴

For Dilthey, the political dimension of Hegel's thinking was not the "founding force" of his development, but merely a "piece." Dilthey's investigation into Hegel's youth aimed to uncover the overreaching *metaphysical* concern of his thought. In contrast, Rosenzweig situates Hegel's political thought—and *not* his metaphysics—as the "founding force" of his development. Thus, Rosenzweig's contribution to the "Hegel renaissance" of his age was to resist the allure of Hegel's metaphysics—in the words of Windelband, to resist the "*Gesamtsinn aller Wirklichkeit*" as the "*Vertrauen in der Macht der Vernunft*"—and place Hegel, following here more closely in the footsteps of Haym, back into the fight for historical recognition. Rosenzweig's rejection of Hegel's metaphysics should be kept close to mind, and I will return to it later in this work, as it offers one of the main reasons why Rosenzweig chose to write a new biography of Hegel.

Although Rosenzweig and Dilthey differ on this important point, the foreword to *Hegel and the State* is written in clear crescendo towards Dilthey—a gesture that should

¹⁰⁴ "Es bezeichnet Diltheys zeitgeschichtliche und persönliche Stellung, daß sein Buch in erster Linie dem Werden des Metaphysikers und in zweiter dem des Geschichtsphilosophen nachspürte; bei Rosenkranz war es, der Richtung des Jahrzehnts gemäß, der Religionsphilosoph gewesen, bei Haym der Politiker. Jene eigentümliche innere Abkehr der deutschen Bildung von Staat, die im Gegenschlag zu dem engen Verhältnis der beiden in den Reichsgründungsjahren die letzten Jahrzehnte gebracht hatten, fand bei Dilthey ihren Ausdruck. Das Politische in Hegel war ihm mehr ein Teil als eine Grundkraft seiner Entwicklung." HS 16-17.

not be ignored. Thus, in order to help set the theoretical foundations of our critical exposition of *Hegel and the State*, we must still linger with Dilthey's thought. For above all, it was his work that guided Rosenzweig into the "Hegel renaissance" of his age. This leads us to return to what I termed "biography as form" above. And in the case of Dilthey, towards a thinker who understood this form above all as a "work of art."

Wilhelm Dilthey and the Art of Biography

Dilthey's life's work revolves around the question of the "theoretical possibility of justifying historical knowledge."¹⁰⁵ His writing reflects how human beings are to come to terms with the essential fact that we are *historical* beings and how our productions stem from an understanding of our own historical consciousness and that of others as well. In the year 1910, the same year Rosenzweig began working on his dissertation, Dilthey published parts of *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences*, his uncompleted masterpiece, which attempts to lay a theoretical foundation for historical understanding within the human sciences. In the introduction to this work he writes:

The development of the human sciences must be accompanied by a logical-epistemological self-reflection, that is, by the philosophical consciousness of the way in which the intuitive-conceptual system of the human-socio-historical world is formed on the basis of the lived experience of what has happened.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Makkreel, Rudolf A. *Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Sciences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975, 3.

¹⁰⁶ Dilthey, Wilhelm. *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002, 24. Hereafter (Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*).

The category of "lived experience" (*Erlebnis*) represents Dilthey's starting point and primary conceptual tool for all investigation into our historical understanding. As he defines it, lived experience is "the structural unity of attitudes and contents" by way of which I become aware of objects of perception as "conscious and there for me."¹⁰⁷ However, any reflection upon our own lived experience simultaneously represents "*a transcendence for the experiencing consciousness*."¹⁰⁸ This "transcendence" of consciousness leads towards a reflection upon past lived-experiences, unified under the idea of the totality of the self. This unified idea of the self holds the possibility of becoming a "productive force" in history only through the creation of *work*—"a directedness at a goal, or the emergence of an *intention to actualize something* that was not already part of reality."¹⁰⁹ Thus, if historical understanding is based upon lived experience, then it is only by examining the *work* of individuals—in our context, the written manuscripts, letters and texts left behind—that an understanding of history may be gained. This leads above all towards the relation between the literary forms of autobiography and biography.

Dilthey introduces his reflections upon the form of biography with the provocative question: "Is biography possible?"¹¹⁰ If we understand biography, perhaps as Rosenkranz did, as a mere copy of the life in question, with only minimal personal inflection, then it seems impossible indeed—even if it remains unacknowledged, an

¹⁰⁷ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 46-47.

¹⁰⁸ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 50.

¹⁰⁹ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 224.

¹¹⁰ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 266.

insurmountable personal and temporal distance between the biographer and his object will always exist. However, at least at first glance, this distance seems bridged with the form of *autobiography*. Within the autobiographical form, understood as "the literary expression of the self-reflection of human beings on their life course,"¹¹¹ the author is reflecting on their own lived experience, to which they have the most immediate access. In this sense, we find that "[t]he work of historical narrative is already half done by itself."¹¹² The great historical examples of autobiography—represented by the writings of Augustine, Rousseau and Goethe—provide us with "the highest and most instructive form of the understanding of life."¹¹³ And yet in reflecting upon their own lives, the authors of autobiographies are always following their own plans or intentions with regard to the future. "Here," writes Dilthey, "lies the advantage of biography over autobiography."¹¹⁴ Whereas autobiography has the clear advantage of understanding the connectedness of *internal* events, a biography can show how these events intersect with an *external* historical reality. It can lend meaning to the plans and intentions of an author, whereas the author was merely swept along by the stream of their own life. Biography, as "the literary form of understanding other lives,"¹¹⁵ provides the critical distance needed for historical understanding. But as a literary form, biography is faced with its own set of limitations:

¹¹¹ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 222.

¹¹² Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 222.

¹¹³ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 221.

¹¹⁴ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 268.

¹¹⁵ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 266.

For biography to be a work of art, one has to locate the perspective from which the horizon of history in general opens up but for which the individual still remains the center of a productive or meaning system; no biography can perform this task with more than partial success.¹¹⁶

Whereas with *autobiography* the distance between the horizon of history and the life of the individual is collapsed into the internal consciousness of the individual, *biography* as a form of historical understanding is faced with the task of producing a narrative that allows these two extremes to coincide—in this sense it can be termed "a work of art." The *artistic* task of the biographer is thus to mediate the lived experience of the individual with the forces of history from and towards which this individual life emerges.

By designating biography as a "work of art," Dilthey shows not only the great potential of this historical form, but once again draws out its limitations:

The limit of biography lies in the fact that general movements find their point of transition in individuals. In order to understand individuals, we must investigate new foundations for understanding that are outside the individual. As such, biography does not have the potential of defining itself as a scientific work of art. *We must turn to new categories, configurations, and forms of life that do not appear in individual life.*¹¹⁷

As Dilthey states above, biography cannot be understood as a "scientific" work of art. Rather, biography is limited as a "literary" form, thereby implying its subjective

¹¹⁶ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 268-69.

¹¹⁷ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 269-70.

character. However, what separates biography as the “intersection”¹¹⁸ of life and history from other literary forms—the novel, for example—is that “the art form of biography can be applied only to historical figures. For they alone have the productive force to become such a central point of intersection.”¹¹⁹ Thus, as a work of art, biography is always bound the historical conditions of its object and to history itself.

As Rosenzweig's foreword to *Hegel and the State* shows, to return to our own investigation, when Hegel's life is taken as a "productive force" of history, this force is by necessity interpreted anew from the standpoint of the present. The respective biographies of Rosenkranz, Haym and Dilthey each balance the life and thought of Hegel with the forces of history by which they find themselves shaped. In this manner, by attempting to renew the life in question for the sake of the present, these biographers and biographers more generally necessarily betray their own lived experience within the very form of the biography itself. Following upon this necessity, it can be said that the form of biography reveals as much about its author as it does about the life in question. Or to put it slightly differently, we can begin to imagine how biography, as a literary work of art, reveals the personality of its author.

This is certainly the case with Dilthey himself and his book *History of the Young Hegel* (1906). As I showed above, Rosenzweig points to Dilthey's interest in Hegel's metaphysics in order to differentiate his own approach to Hegel's life. However, compared with Rosenkranz and Haym, even given his distaste for Hegel's metaphysics, Rosenzweig takes a similar biographical approach to Dilthey. In the introductory paragraphs to *History of the Young Hegel*, Dilthey presents the need for writing a new

¹¹⁸ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 270.

¹¹⁹ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 269.

biography on Hegel—a need Rosenzweig will soon turn to with his dissertation. Dilthey states that “*in der Beschäftigung mit [Hegel] hat sich mir ergeben, daß auch nach den Werken von Rosenkranz und Haym ohne eine erneute Durchforschung der Handschriften Hegels ein historisches Verständnis desselben nicht gewonnen werden kann.*”¹²⁰ The “*Handschriften*” that Dilthey focused on were those “*von Hegels frühesten Aufzeichnungen bis zu dem Beginn der uns erhaltenen ersten Darstellung seines Systems und zu seinen ersten Veröffentlichung im Philosophischen Journal.*”¹²¹ By focusing on the beginnings of Hegel's development, Dilthey hoped to better understand his later philosophy.¹²² This progression from early to later development through the use of unpublished manuscripts is the same approach Rosenzweig will take, albeit focusing on the political Hegel. However, the *manner* of this research is revealing for Dilthey and Rosenzweig alike.

In the introduction to Dilthey's biography on Hegel, Dilthey's colleague and friend Herman Nohl writes: “*Was Dilthey an Hegel rühmt, dieses gegenständliche Sichversenken in die Sache unter völliger Abstraktion von der eigenen Person, das war doch sein allereigenstes Wesen!*”¹²³ What Nohl claims of Dilthey, is that despite his objective fixation upon the matter at hand, he saw in Hegel's life an intellectual predecessor with that same personal impulse to justify historical knowledge. Thus, as Rosenzweig's foreword clearly showed for Rosenkranz and Haym as well, Dilthey's

¹²⁰ Dilthey, *Jugendgeschichte*. 3.

¹²¹ Dilthey, *Jugendgeschichte*. 3.

¹²² As I am attempting to show here with Rosenzweig, it is in the beginnings of a philosopher's life that it is most difficult to understand their struggles with the forces of history.

¹²³ Dilthey, Wilhelm. *Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels*, in *Gesammelte Schriften, IV. Band*. Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft, 1990, VI. Hereafter (Dilthey, *Jugendgeschichte*).

“renewal” of the life of Hegel cannot be understood apart from his own personality as a historian. What Rosenzweig leaves unmentioned, is that this same law of biography applies to his own work as well.

Following Dilthey’s own insistence to work with the manuscripts themselves, Rosenzweig spent many months poring over Hegel’s own handwritings. In a letter to his friend Hans Ehrenberg he writes:

You can imagine that my days are filled to the brim. I seem to have turned into a day laborer: I start theoretically at ten (actually a little later)—I hope in the future to make my theoretical start at nine. I work straight through in the manuscript room until three when it closes. I remain in the reading room until seven, spending quite a lot of time in the catalogue room; by that time I feel tired and stupid, go to the theater indiscriminately, with the single reservation: no music. Here you have the frame; the picture within, you will scarcely recognize. I’ve joined the philologists.¹²⁴

The above self-portrait of Rosenzweig should be kept in mind while reading *Hegel and the State*. The curious dictum “no music,” can be read as a testament to the selfless commitment Rosenzweig displayed in dedicating himself to his work as an historian. In joining the “philologists,” Rosenzweig—who was proficient at the violin at a young age and even considered a life of music—was not only aligning himself with Dilthey, and Rosenkranz and Haym as well, but above all with his teacher Friedrich Meinecke and the discipline of historiography. Like Dilthey, Meinecke was a great historian. But whereas in his quest for historical knowledge Dilthey often wrote using the biographical form, Meinecke, in line with the school of historicism, was more clearly committed to

¹²⁴ Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*. 20.

interpreting history as a political phenomenon—"the state as an end in itself." Thus, by committing himself, at least temporarily, to a life of "no music," this moment in Rosenzweig's own biography, his turn towards the authorship of *Hegel and the State*, marks the beginning of a fate that cannot be separated from Meinecke's guidance and inspiration. It is to the influence of this personality upon Rosenzweig that we now turn.

Rosenzweig's "Anstoß": Meinecke and the Personality of the State

What I have deliberately left unmentioned in my discussion until now, is the now famous note Rosenzweig appended to this foreword before its publication in 1920.¹²⁵ As far as Rosenzweig scholarship is concerned, this note has contributed more to the interpretation of *Hegel and the State* than the main text itself. A single line from this addendum has served to encompass Rosenzweig's own judgment of his book: "in the year 1919 the book could only be brought to an end; I would have never begun it today."¹²⁶ This line has unfortunately scared off most readers before they even begin the book. Why read *Hegel and the State*, when clearly the book that Rosenzweig *did* begin in 1919, namely, *The Star of Redemption*, was not subject to the now outdated pre-War conditions in Germany? Rosenzweig turned away from *Hegel and the State* for personal, historical and philosophical reasons. For one, he saw the hope of restoring a monarchical German state after the World War as a lost cause. But he had also begun to find a renewed faith

¹²⁵ It will become clear in the conclusion of my work why the addendum, which is of utmost importance to understanding *Hegel and the State*, was deliberately left unmentioned. It will be seen why I chose my starting point as Rosenzweig's foreword instead.

¹²⁶ "Denn der Leser hat ein Anrecht, schon auf der Schwelle zu erfahren, daß das Buch im Jahr 1919 nur noch abgeschlossen werden konnte; begonnen hätte ich es heute nimmermehr." HS 17.

in a personal understanding of Judaism—a faith that was lacking from his task as an historian. However, recalling Dilthey's theory of biography, while perhaps doing justice to an *autobiographical* understanding of Rosenzweig's life, taking his above comment as the only explanation of his life-course leaves behind the benefits of an external, or *biographical* understanding of his life. Just as Haym resisted Hegel's own self-interpretation of his work as absolute spirit, so too must we remain at a critical distance to Rosenzweig's own autobiographical understanding of his development.

The appended note to the foreword is also famous for another line, which at first glance seems to point directly to Rosenzweig's inspiration for writing *Hegel and the State*. He writes: "I received the first impetus [*Anstoß*] to write [*Hegel and the State*] from the eleventh chapter of the first book of [Meinecke's] *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*."¹²⁷ Indeed, Rosenzweig was so inspired by Meinecke's work that he could write to his mother in a letter from 1908: "I would give ten years of my life to write such a book [as *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*]."¹²⁸ Unbeknownst to him at the time, it would take Rosenzweig over ten years before the publication of *Hegel and the State* in 1920. However, years after the letter to his mother he could write to Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy: "You must have noticed in the Hegel that its real reason for being was not an interest in Hegel, but my wish to make *a book*."¹²⁹ Thus, while it is clear that Meinecke's book—qua book—remained the model for Rosenzweig throughout, we must keep his distance to Meinecke in mind and his own original contribution close to heart. While

¹²⁷ "von dem elften Kapitel des ersten Buchs seines *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat kam mir der erste Anstoß, es zu schreiben.*" HS 18.

¹²⁸ Mendes-Flohr, Paul. "Franz Rosenzweig and the Crisis of Historicism." In *The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig*. Hannover: University Press of New England, 1988, 141.

¹²⁹ See *Judaism Despite Christianity* (86).

Dilthey would prove the lasting inspiration for the form of the book as biography, it was indeed the inspiration he gained from Meinecke that led him to couple “Hegel” with “the state,” to couple biography with the political thinking of the historicist school. This path leads Rosenzweig away from Dilthey and towards the inspiration he gained from his living mentor. However, this path is not as direct as it may seem.

Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat, Meinecke’s first major work, was published in 1907. Shortly thereafter Rosenzweig began his studies with Meinecke at Freiburg University. In his book, Meinecke introduced a new type of historiography known today as *Ideengeschichte*, or “history of ideas.” In general, this method of interpreting history understands the individuals of the past and their ideas as the formative elements of the present. In the particular context of Meinecke’s book, this would come to mean that the German nation-state under Bismarck must be understood through the ideas of the historical individuals who helped guide Germany to up until this point. That Germany was not an official nation-state until 1871, and yet still understood itself as a united people, led to Meinecke’s famous distinction between a cultural and a political nation. The struggle of Germany as a cultural nation before 1871 characterizes the unique tension of Meinecke’s book, that is, the tension between the idea of the nation held by individuals and the actualization of this nation as a state.

Although distinct, Meinecke’s method of writing history overlaps with Dilthey’s theory of biography. For both historians, it is the living personality of individuals that form the basis of historical interpretation. Meinecke writes: “It is of particular importance that we trace thoughts and concepts back to what is more important than

thoughts and concepts, that is, to life and personality.”¹³⁰ However, the difference between the two historians is even more striking. Although the personality of the historical individual takes center stage for both thinkers, for Meinecke there is a greater personality in play, which becomes the focus of his life's work—the personality of the state. On this point Meinecke writes:

The lofty insight that the state is an ideal supra-individual personality—this insight that sustains and justifies all our thought and concern about the state—could only come to life when the political feelings and energies of individual citizens permeated the state and transformed it into a national state.¹³¹

In his book, Meinecke shows how political thinkers such as Wilhelm von Humboldt, Fichte and Hegel contributed in their own unique way to the formation of the German nation-state. “The nation,” he writes, “drank the blood of free personalities, as it were, to attain personality itself.”¹³²

It is important to keep Meinecke and Rosenzweig's understanding of personality distinct here. While Rosenzweig clearly follows from the inspiration of his teacher, he resists understanding the state as a personality itself. Rather, it is precisely by following Hegel as a historical personality that Rosenzweig shows that the state, and any ideal attached to it, can never fully transcend the particular lives of individuals. Thus, what

¹³⁰ Meinecke, Friedrich. *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. München: Verlag R. Oldenbourg, 1963, 22. (Hereafter: Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*).

¹³¹ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 15.

¹³² Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 15.

remains important for Rosenzweig is less the “supra-individual personality” of the state than Meinecke's emphasis on the nation as such. On this point Meinecke writes:

of all the great spheres of life that a man can enter, there is probably none that speaks so directly to the whole man as the nation, none that carries him so strongly, none that renders so faithfully his entire natural and intellectual being, none that can so readily be or become both macroanthropos and fully realized individual.¹³³

It was thus questions of the German nation—not the state as personality—that would help shape the underlying interests in Rosenzweig's book. Accordingly, as he states in the addendum to his foreword, when Rosenzweig began his book, his hope was that “the internal as well as external, breath-robbing narrowness of the Bismarckian state would expand itself outward to a free empire, breathing the air of the world.”¹³⁴ To gain this perspective, Rosenzweig had to distance himself from Dilthey's metaphysical biography of Hegel and focus on Meinecke's statement that “the ideal image of the nation is always the mirror of what stirs in individual souls.”¹³⁵ By focusing on the concept of the nation as it developed in historical individuals, Rosenzweig found in Meinecke's *Ideengeschichte* a method for excavating the concept of the state in Hegel's life. Yet, while Meinecke's broad investigation of the state gave Rosenzweig his contextual starting-point, Rosenzweig's central focus still remained on the life and personality of Hegel as an individual, not the personality of the state. Thus, although Meinecke's

¹³³ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 14-15.

¹³⁴ "daß die innere wie äußere atemversetzende Engigkeit des Bismarckischen Staats sich ausweiten werde zu einem freie Welthluft atmende Reich." HS 18.

¹³⁵ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 16.

influence cannot be overstated, the inspiration Rosenzweig gained from his teacher was rather limited. Indeed, it is more or less confined to one chapter in the history of the German nation.

As stated in the addendum, Rosenzweig received his "*Anstoß*," or first impetus, to write *Hegel and the State* from the eleventh chapter of the first book of *Cosmopolitanism and the national State*. This chapter is quaintly entitled "Hegel." In this chapter, Meinecke ranks Hegel, alongside Ranke and Bismarck, as one of the three "great liberators of the state."¹³⁶ While today Hegel's philosophy is often used as a scapegoat for the failure of German idealism to capture the truth of reality—a view that the later Rosenzweig adopts in the introduction to *The Star of Redemption*—Meinecke understood Hegel's philosophy as the first move "from ideal and speculative to realistic thinking."¹³⁷ According to Meinecke, Hegel's "theory of the state in particular was able to reach out in the most contradictory directions and distribute everywhere some of the permanently valid truths that it contained."¹³⁸ It was certainly Meinecke's insistence on the relevance of Hegel's theory of the state that led Rosenzweig towards an in-depth examination of the development of this theory in Hegel's life. Meinecke's chapter on Hegel is, as he states, merely a sketch of Hegel's influence on the German nation. It leaves so many open doors that it comes as no surprise that Rosenzweig found the impetus for his own book in these pages. A telling statement from Meinecke's chapter on Hegel justifies Rosenzweig's choice to excavate the concept of the state from Hegel's life:

¹³⁶ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 197.

¹³⁷ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 197.

¹³⁸ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 197-98.

the fact that the most varied elements were brought together under one roof in [Hegel's] thinking and that they were obliged to get along with each other there had, we might say, important pedagogical consequences for the future. Conservatives, liberals, and radicals, historical and doctrinaire thinkers, national and cosmopolitan thinkers could all learn from his system, exploit it for their own purposes, and yet still retain tenuous links with those elements of it that they had rejected in this process.¹³⁹

Well into the first volume of his work, Rosenzweig makes explicit his acceptance of Meinecke's understanding of Hegel. In a rare sentence pertaining to the aim of his book, Rosenzweig remarks: "an underground line of development runs from the picture of the state of [Hegel's] system through the *Paulskirche* to the 18th of January, 1871."¹⁴⁰ The concluding remarks of Rosenzweig's book are dedicated in part to a sketch of this development. In these pages he shows how Hegel's theory of the state led through Dahlmann, Stahl and Treitschke—all state-thinkers of the 19th century—to the idea of the present German nation-state. The aim of these remarks, and the greater aim of Rosenzweig's book, is to prove Meinecke's claim that "Hegel's ideas continued to bear fruit no matter what soil they fell on."¹⁴¹

The backdrop of Rosenzweig's Hegel biography was the German political state. He began his work in 1908 and was largely finished by 1913—that is, before the start of World War I. The peculiar fate of *Hegel and the State* is its publication in 1920. As Rosenzweig states in his addendum, it was his hope that his book would contribute to a

¹³⁹ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 197.

¹⁴⁰ "vom Staatsbild des Systems [Hegels] läuft durch die Paulskirche zum 18. Januar 1871 eine unterirdische Linie der Entwicklung." HS 140.

¹⁴¹ Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 197.

renewal of the German state. After 1918, for Rosenzweig, this was no longer possible. The last lines of his book, edited after the War, give a glimpse into Rosenzweig's lost hope: "When the structure of a world crashes down, the thoughts that thought it as well as the dreams which are woven through it are buried under the collapse" (HS, 246). While the world-historical path that Dilthey took in his book could outlive the War, and did so, Rosenzweig's book has been criticized from the date of its publication. Georg Lukács, albeit years later, criticized Rosenzweig for interpreting Hegel as "a precursor to Bismarckian politics."¹⁴² He even went so far as to call Rosenzweig's method "anti-historical."¹⁴³ However, this rash criticism merely identifies Rosenzweig's understanding of Hegel with that of Meinecke. In support of Rosenzweig, I would claim that although questions of the German state gave Rosenzweig the initial impulse for his book, these questions were coupled with the inspiration he gained from Dilthey, namely, to understand history through the form of biography. It was precisely the understanding of the state as a personality itself that led Rosenzweig to write such a sharp criticism of Hegel's political thought. By showing how Hegel's own biography was limited to the conditions of his particular life, Rosenzweig distanced himself from the work of his teacher and provided a critique of Hegel's development that is unique in itself. Not the state as personality, but the very personality of Hegel himself became the driving force of his interpretation.

¹⁴² Lukács, Georg. *The Young Hegel*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1975, 31. Hereafter (Lukács, *The Young Hegel*).

¹⁴³ Lukács, *The Young Hegel*. 31.

The Early Rosenzweig

I can now finally return to Rosenzweig's own assessment of *Hegel and the State* as a testament to his "insatiable hunger for "forms"." When Rosenzweig goes on to say that "history to me was a purveyor of forms, no more," he is addressing the failure of his book to contribute in a substantive way to the political drama of his time. What is left unaddressed, however, is the form of Rosenzweig's book itself. The trend in Rosenzweig scholarship to identify *Hegel and the State* as the work of a mere student leaves Rosenzweig's own creativity and artistic drive unspoken for. I must disagree with Rosenzweig's autobiographical claim—taken by Rosenzweig scholars as the final word on the matter—that *Hegel and the State* can now only be understood as "a testimony to the spirit of the pre-War years, not the spirit of 1919."¹⁴⁴ While it is certainly true that Rosenzweig's hope for the book was buried under the rubble of World War I, the book itself survived and moreover, the author of the book continued to struggle with the problems of representation. The book is thus no mere testament to "the spirit of the pre-War years," but a testament to the spirit of the early Rosenzweig. As a work of art, Rosenzweig's biographical narrative remains an expression of his own personality.

Two difficult questions come to mind here. First, why did Rosenzweig choose to write in the form of a biography, and second, why did he choose to publish *Hegel and the State* at all? Rosenzweig gives a clue to the second question when in the addendum he states that with the publication of *Hegel and the State* "a certain service would be done, if no longer to German life, then surely to science, which outlasts the destroyed life."¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ "ein Zeugnis des Geists der Vorkriegsjahre, nicht des "Geists" von 1919." HS 18.

¹⁴⁵ "wenn auch nicht mehr dem deutschen Leben, so doch der Wissenschaft, die ja das zerstörte noch überdauert, ein gewisser Dienst damit geschehe." HS 18.

And indeed, even the most recent of publications on Hegel pay their respect to *Hegel and the State*.¹⁴⁶ But perhaps a deeper reason why Rosenzweig chose to publish *Hegel and the State* lies in the form of the book itself. While historical science lays claim to an objective account of the past, Rosenzweig chose a form of writing that can be at best, as Dilthey states, only a “partial success.” Dilthey’s understanding of biography as a literary work of art places the author of a given biography in an artistic dilemma. How can a life be represented faithfully from the historical perspective of the other? This question stays in the biographer’s mind throughout the entire process of writing. And even when the author reaches the end of the book, his task is again always only a “partial success.” Thus, the form of biography presupposes a personal involvement on behalf of the author, an awareness of his own limitations. In writing a biography the author must constantly take into account these limits of interpretation and write their work accordingly. If we remember Rosenzweig’s question, “[w]hy does one philosophize?”, and his answer to that question, “[f]or the same reason that one makes music or literature or art [...] in the last analysis, all that matters is the discovery of one’s own personality,” then we can begin to understand why Rosenzweig chose the form of biography as the form of his book. *Hegel and the State* was not a mere academic exercise, but Rosenzweig's struggle as an author to come to terms with his own personality. He remarks in the addendum to the foreword that although he left the book largely unchanged, it was necessary "to mark the tragic moment of its appearance." This is a point I will return at the end of my work. For now, leaving the questions of tragedy

¹⁴⁶ See, for example, Frederick Beiser’s book *Hegel* (2005). In the section entitled “Further Reading” he states: “The best study of Hegel’s political philosophy is Franz Rosenzweig’s *Hegel und der Staat*” (Beiser, *Hegel*, 335).

untouched, I show how Rosenzweig's interpretation leads up to this point by drawing out his own "lived-experience" as the author of *Hegel and the State*.

Although Rosenzweig openly rejects *Hegel and the State* the time has come to reconcile his life with history, that is, the time of his biography has arrived. Over one hundred years after he began working on *Hegel and the State*, history now demands taking a closer look at the development of this work. For the purpose of better understanding Rosenzweig's life, *Hegel and the State* must be taken from Rosenzweig's grasp and released into the ocean of history. Rosenzweig's life is a contradiction he was brave enough to resolve. He saw his own shortcomings in *Hegel and the State* and the shortcomings of German Idealism in general as a path he could no longer follow. But the story of this contradiction should not discount that *Hegel and the State* is still a great gift he gave to the world. Furthermore, this gift must not remain in the shadow of *The Star of Redemption*. Rather, these works should be understood as two qualitatively different books. While *The Star* is a philosophical work of utmost originality and importance, *Hegel and the State* stands on its own as an original contribution to the history of the German *Geisteswissenschaften*. It is for this reason that I leave *The Star* relatively untouched in this work. Rosenzweig's Hegel biography should no longer be compared to *The Star* in terms of a failed metaphysics, but must now stand on its own as a biographical history of thought.¹⁴⁷

The foreword to *Hegel and the State*, as I have shown, holds the key to understanding Rosenzweig's intentions as an historian. If we merely identify

¹⁴⁷ I gained the inspiration for following this path from Julius Simon's understanding of Rosenzweig's life. In an encyclopedia article on Rosenzweig, Simon splits Rosenzweig's work into two distinct categories: a philosophy of history [*Hegel and the State*] and a philosophy of religion [*The Star of Redemption*] (Simon, "Rosenzweig"). Following this lead, my task has been to explore Rosenzweig's philosophy of history through the form of *Hegel and the State* and prove its worth in its own right.

Rosenzweig with the ideas of his teacher Meinecke—as the addendum would have us do—then not only will *Hegel and the State* be read as a failed political project, but the creative fruits of Rosenzweig as the author of *Hegel and the State* will never come to light. Thus the foreword, and not Rosenzweig’s rejection of the book in the addendum, must serve as the starting point for understanding its lasting worth.

Rosenzweig’s explicit choice to situate himself within a constellation of Hegel biographers implicitly shows his own position with regard to these writers. His philosophy of history proceeds from a philosophy of personal life. This is his undeniable link to Dilthey. His choice to write about the Hegel biographers who preceded him shows that he understands the personality of the authors as determining the historical value of their work. The foreword, the true introduction to *Hegel and the State*, shows that history can only be understood through the historical-standpoint of the author. To more fully understand Rosenzweig’s own life and thought would then imply grasping his personality as it is expressed in *Hegel and the State*. But alas, there is hardly any talk of an early Rosenzweig at all.

The above introduction attempts to provide a framework for reading *Hegel and the State* as a whole. By outlining the theoretical underpinnings of *Hegel and the State*, a window has been opened to work *out of* this book, and not merely back towards it. Indeed, if we can understand in what manner Rosenzweig wrote this book, perhaps it will help in understanding the questions of a philosophy of history more generally, and Rosenzweig’s own thought in particular. *Hegel and the State* was received as a testament to Hegelian philosophy and German history. In fact, this is the clear strength of the book. However, left out of this picture is Rosenzweig himself. Although Rosenzweig’s project

was inspired by Meinecke's focus on the German nation-state, he chose a more personal form of writing than Meinecke's *Ideengeschichte*. Rosenzweig's decision to write a biography of Hegel overlaps with his own impulse to develop his personality as an intellectual. By walking the artistic line that a biography demands, Rosenzweig proved himself a free personality. Working from within *Hegel and the State* itself, as I do in the following chapters, not only helps us understand the merits of the book, but also provides a perspective through which our struggles as humans to come to terms with history can be better understood. The early Rosenzweig should not be remembered as a mere student, but rather as that great author who dared to struggle against the tides of history. This legacy can then take root as a lasting source of inspiration for biographers, thinkers and readers alike.

A Letter to the Author

In the spirit of the letter, which helps so many of the interpretations found in the following pages and to which the form of biography is indebted, I would like to end this introduction with a hypothetical letter to Franz Rosenzweig himself. While this intention may come as a surprise, it seems necessary for me as a biographer of Rosenzweig and after reading so many of his countless letters, to put into external form one of the many conversations I have held with Rosenzweig over the years of laboring on this work. In doing so, I hope not only to reveal my own personal entanglement with the subject matter at hand, but to display in a playful manner the importance of letters for our biographical and historical understanding. As Dilthey writes: "Letters disclose momentary states of

mind, but they are also influenced by being directed to a recipient. They manifest life-relationships, but each life-relationship is only seen from one side."¹⁴⁸ The following letter is my brief attempt to offer readers a first glimpse into my own relationship with Rosenzweig's life and thought:

Dear Franz,

*In 1925, four years after the publication of *The Star of Redemption*, you published an essay entitled "The New Thinking," in which you offer valuable insight into your presuppositions for writing *The Star of Redemption* as a way of replying to your then small group of readers. Since its publication, your essay has served as a reference point not only for explaining the philosophical method of *The Star of Redemption*—the "new thinking" as you coined it there—but also as a primary source on your position regarding reading and authorship. Towards the end of the essay you write:*

I have experienced that it is difficult as an author to speak about one's own book. The author may hardly presume to say something authentic. For he himself stands no differently than anyone else with regard to that which is spirit in his work and hence transplantable into other spirits. The other, because he is an other, and precisely because he is an other, will be permitted to attempt time and time again—in Kant's bold assertion that really is not quite so bold—"to understand Plato better than he understood himself."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Dilthey, *Formation of the Historical World*. 268.

¹⁴⁹ Udoff, *The New Thinking*. 100-01.

Of course, when you speak on the difficulty of judging one's own book, you are referring to The Star of Redemption. What if I were to be so bold and take your words as they apply to Hegel and the State? The ethical impulse behind the above quote—"precisely because he is an other"—must be taken in the extreme sense of your intention. You would certainly agree that once a work has been completed, the author then stands side by side with his readers, perhaps looking upon the work as a part of their selves, but looking upon the book nevertheless—do you see your personality in the pages of Hegel and the State? The reader, as "an other," holds the possibility of giving new life to a forgotten work. In my interpretation of your early work on Hegel, you may be surprised at how brightly your own personality looks back at you. This is merely a testament to your life, as well as your thought. There has been enough delay—the spirit of your book beckons still!

CHAPTER II

THE STREAM OF PERSONAL LIFE

*"die Quelle kann nur gedacht werden,
insofern sie fließt."*

Goethe, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*

*"Mein Freund, die Zeiten der Vergangenheit
Sind uns ein Buch mit sieben Siegeln.
Was ihr den Geist der Zeiten heißt,
Das ist im Grund der Herren eigener Geist,
In dem die Zeiten sich bespiegeln."*

Goethe, *Faust I*

Introductory Remarks: On Method

Hegel and the State was originally published as two separate volumes: "Stations of Life" (*Lebensstationen*) and "Epochs of the World" (*Weltepochen*). In the newer German editions, these two volumes were combined into one. While this editorial decision aids the reader and may please the publisher, it also subtly masks one of Rosenzweig's original intentions, namely that these two separate volumes clearly represent two distinct halves of Hegel's life: *Lebensstationen* displays the development of Hegel's unique personality and his struggle to unite this personality with the age, while *Weltepochen* shows how later in life and in the realm of philosophy this same personality plays out on the stage of world history. I point out this division here to underscore one of the main assumptions of my own argument: namely that the content of Rosenzweig's Hegel interpretation is first and foremost hidden within the form of the book itself.

Accordingly, the following questions serve as touchpoints throughout: How does Rosenzweig conceptually organize *Hegel and the State* and what does this organization tell us about his understanding of Hegel's life and thought? What effect does the language of biography have on his overall argument?

As I will show, the biographical form exposes an internal division between Hegel's life and thought. This is the premise of Rosenzweig's *Hegel and the State*. However, this premise is presented in the form of a positive and external *unity* given shape through the content of Rosenzweig's interpretation as a biographer. It serves as my task to present this unspoken unity, which can only be found in the book as a whole, and show how this unity is based on the disjunction of Hegel's life and thought. Thus, two accounts run throughout my entire presentation: on the one hand, Hegel's life and thought as critically presented by Rosenzweig, and on the other, my own interpretation of the narrative and how this reveals a crucial stage in Rosenzweig's own biographical development.

The first and most obvious feature of Rosenzweig's narrative is a meticulous focus on the development of Hegel's concept of the state. This focus leads from Hegel's early writings on politics and religion, through the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, and finally culminates in a prolonged analysis of the *Rechtsphilosophie*, his last published work. Yet while navigating the content of this life-long development, Rosenzweig repeatedly explores one central tension in Hegel's thought: the relationship of the individual to the state. It can be argued that this is the central theme of the book. Accordingly, I ask how this relationship plays out throughout the various stages of Hegel's development and, more marginally, how this central theme foreshadows

Rosenzweig's own treatment of individuality in *The Star of Redemption*. In more philosophical terms, the relation between the individual and the state translates into the tensions between particular and universal, part and whole. The entirety of *Hegel und der Staat* is permeated by the possibility of unifying these tensions. It is thus telling that Rosenzweig gives both an *undialectical* account of Hegel's development and focuses little if at all on the method of "dialectics".¹⁵⁰ This shows that for Rosenzweig the progression of Hegel's biography does not culminate in a harmonious and unifying element, but rather reveals the ultimate impossibility of unifying opposing tensions within an Idealistic framework. Despite this central claim to my investigation, it proves quite difficult to discern Rosenzweig's position within *Hegel und der Staat*. This too is based on the form of the book, yet on the material as well.

Following the script of a philosophy of history inherited from his teacher Friedrich Meinecke, Rosenzweig plays the role of an observing historian. While composing *Lebensstationen*, the first volume of his book—and I will have more to say on the second volume later on—Rosenzweig was often working with manuscripts and notes and did not have the same overview that more modern editions of Hegel's work provide. In other words, he had to reconstruct the historical and philosophical perspective as he went along, often withholding his own position in favor of providing an accurate picture of both the content and chronology of Hegel's writings. Thus, the critical tone Rosenzweig will assign to Hegel's thought in *The Star of Redemption*—already in its introduction—is often so difficult to discern here that one may think one is reading two entirely separate authors. It was not only to the nature of archival work—where the

¹⁵⁰ Only in the final sections do we see the word "dialectic" creeping up, but much more often Rosenzweig simply uses "method" or later "ambiguity" (*Zweideutigkeit*) to describe Hegel's philosophical procedure.

researcher is often little more than the conduit through which the material flows—that Rosenzweig's rather reserved stance should be attributed, but also to the manifold interests of the young Hegel. Indeed, very often these interests stood in contradiction to each other, making it near impossible, even today, to unify them into one coherent view. In throwing himself wholeheartedly into this difficult work, it is apparent that Rosenzweig often struggled to free himself from the complexity of the materials at hand. The reader is left to tarry with Rosenzweig's language, searching, often with great struggle, to find the biographer's voice in a labyrinth of words and interpretations.

In his afterword to the Suhrkamp edition, Axel Honneth captures the above difficulties quite succinctly: "for the contemporary reader, engaging the study at hand first requires that one work through the crust of antiquated viewpoints and interpretive perspectives, before one can reach the actually productive, living kernel."¹⁵¹ But how exactly does one work through the "antiquated viewpoints and interpretive perspectives" of the book? And perhaps more importantly, what is the "living kernel" of the book that Honneth speaks of? On the surface, there are at least two ways of reading Rosenzweig's *Hegel und der Staat*: First, to read it in the context of its *contribution to Hegel scholarship*¹⁵²—however, this method treats Rosenzweig as an anonymous historian, who happened to write an important book on Hegel because of his emergence within the Hegel renaissance of the early 20th century in Germany and his access to some of Hegel's unpublished manuscripts, especially those from his youth. Second, to read it in the context of its *contribution to Rosenzweig scholarship*—and yet this method overlooks the

¹⁵¹ HS "Nachwort," 557.

¹⁵² This is more or less the perspective taken by Axel Honneth in his "Nachwort" to the Suhrkamp edition (2010) of *Hegel und der Staat*. See HS 556-82.

form of the book as a historiographical document and values the work for what it illuminates about Rosenzweig's later works—especially *The Star of Redemption*—thereby minimizing the importance of the Hegel interpretation. Both of these methods fall short.

Accordingly, my work proposes a third method: to combine these two approaches and find the importance of the book for Rosenzweig's spiritual biography in the substantive content and stylistic form of the whole of its Hegel interpretation. This requires treating the book itself as an historical object, which in the *form* of its Hegel interpretation is *revelatory* for Rosenzweig's own biography. This differs from the second method above, for instead of using Rosenzweig's later work as the locus of orientation, *Hegel und der Staat* itself serves as the point around which my own observations are organized. This method lends a particularly *Hegelian* tone to my work—and shows the depth at which Rosenzweig engaged Hegel's thought—as I never stray far from the trajectory of Hegel's development. However, as I claim above, *Hegel und der Staat* is a work filled with the tensions of divisions and unity. By providing an immanent critique of *Hegel und der Staat*, I show how the "living kernel" of the book emerges from the form and content of the work as a reflection of Rosenzweig's own struggle to unite his personal life and thought.

Lebensstationen, the volume where the "living kernel" of Rosenzweig's Hegel interpretation germinates, presents a series of problems particular to the biographical presentation of Hegel's early life and thought. As Otto Pöggeler points out, even in recent times Hegel's early development is still cause for much debate: "The young Hegel—each year brings us a range of works about him, yet he still remains largely

unknown: his work is overlaid with the various kinds of concealments that discoveries always bring in their train."¹⁵³ Rosenzweig is rightly credited as being one of the first explorers of the early Hegel, and his discoveries, as recorded in the first volume of *Hegel und der Staat*, are still praised as "indispensible" for scholarship.¹⁵⁴ However, although one must never lose sight of the fact that Rosenzweig is writing within the Hegelian tradition, as I have argued above, the first volume of his Hegel biography presents many difficulties, which at first may conceal, as Pöggeler's comment above implies, a clear view of the early Hegel.

Thus, in what follows, I attempt to show both what the first volume of *Hegel und der Staat* reveals about Hegel's life and thought, and also how the manner in which it is revealed reflects Rosenzweig's own particular position as a biographer and historian. As will be seen, I trace Rosenzweig's argument regarding Hegel's youth as it issues from Hegel's entanglement within an intellectual community and the historical events of the age towards his later thought and ultimate philosophical system. It can be seen from this sustained interest in Hegel's early development how Rosenzweig himself, who was a young doctoral student at the time he began the project, is working out his own ideas towards history and life. Without yet knowing his own future, Rosenzweig attempts to trace the formative experiences of Hegel's youth as they become determining forces in Hegel's life and thought. From these youthful experiences, and especially the French Revolution in 1789—when Hegel was an impressionable nineteen years old—Rosenzweig draws a striking contrast between Hegel's youth and his later thought. This contrast, which culminates in Frankfurt in proximity to Hölderlin, forms the basis of

¹⁵³ Quoted from David Farrell Krell, *The Tragic Absolute*. 21-22.

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, Joachim Ritter, *Hegel and the French Revolution*. 109.

Rosenzweig's argument and the contours of Hegel's early development—he will return again and again to this decisive phase. Ultimately, Hegel's path is inspired by what Rosenzweig calls the "riddles of personal life": it leads from a fascination with religion and Greek antiquity towards a growing interest in the defense of the rights of the individual—inspired by the neighboring revolution—to the riddles of personal life in Frankfurt and the emergence of the state as "fate," and finally culminates in a turn towards the state as "power" in Jena, the first full expression of Hegel's philosophy of history and his philosophical system. With Rosenzweig as our guide, we now turn to these first phases of Hegel's life. It will be our task to hold patiently, behind the formal and material shapes of Hegel's development, to the question of significance for Rosenzweig's own biography.

The Stream of Personal Life

To begin our investigation into the heart of Rosenzweig's *Hegel and the State*, a simple metaphor may be of use. Imagine one way of reading through a relatively unexplored and disregarded work like *Hegel and the State* to be similar to panning for gold in a stream: one aims to sift through all the sediment—the historical and philosophical details common to the age or what Rosenzweig calls "the pre-war spirit"¹⁵⁵—until all that remains are those valuable pieces for the future, approaching in our context the brightness of the ideas from *The Star of Redemption*, which they will one day help compose. However, this manner of approaching the text proves inadequate. For

¹⁵⁵ "Geist der Vorkriegsjahre." HS 18.

the sediment itself, this earth-like structure within the stream that supports the objects of value, has a story of its own to tell. By taking only what is of value from the flowing stream, one loses the story—the biographical drama—that gave these objects their original importance. And by doing away with the sediment and stream alike, one also risks doing away with the very source from which Rosenzweig's future thought, at least in part, springs forth.

Rosenzweig employs a similar metaphor when dealing with the context of Hegel's life and thought. Very early on in the book, while introducing the crux-point of Hegel's early development—the transition from the political philosophy of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century—Rosenzweig writes that this transition "did not play itself out in thinking as a dry, conceptual process, but was rather deeply embedded in the stream of personal life. In order to understand this development, one should not wish to pull it from the stream onto a dry embankment."¹⁵⁶ It is with this metaphor of a "stream of personal life" that Rosenzweig begins his narrative on Hegel's life and thought. In the words of Goethe: "*die Quelle kann nur gedacht werden, insofern sie fließt.*"¹⁵⁷

Rosenzweig's language often emerges from the work of his teacher, Friedrich Meinecke, in strikingly "Romantic"¹⁵⁸ terms. This is first expressed metaphorically in Rosenzweig's sustained use of the word "stream" in order to conceptualize time, yet also conceptually with through an emphasis on the central role of the "individual" in political philosophy. On this latter point, what Meinecke argues for as the central idea of Novalis'

¹⁵⁶ "Das Werden der neuen Anschauung vollzog sich zumeist nicht im Denken als ein trocken-begriffliches Geschehen, sondern es war tief eingebettet in den Strom des persönlichen Lebens; um dies Werden zu verstehen, darf man es nicht aus dem Strom heraus ans trockene Ufer tragen wollen." HS 25.

¹⁵⁷ Goethe, *Dichtung und Wahrheit* II. 17.

¹⁵⁸ See Ernest Rubenstein, *An Episode in Jewish Romanticism*.

political thought also remains crucial in Rosenzweig's investigation of Hegel: "*Alle Kultur entspringt aus den Verhältnissen eines Menschen mit dem Staate.*"¹⁵⁹

Rosenzweig, who was certainly familiar with the writings and life of Novalis from Dilthey's *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*, can be brought even closer to Novalis if we consider the following passage from "*Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*":

*"Wie wenige haben sich noch in die Geheimnisse des Flüssigen vertieft und manchem ist diese Ahnung des höchsten Genusses und Lebens wohl nie in der trunkenen Seele aufgegangen. Im Durste offenbaret sich diese Weltseele, diese gewaltige Sehnsucht nach dem Zerfließen. Die Berauschten fühlen nur zu gut diese überirdische Wonne des Flüssigen, und am Ende sind alle angenehme Empfindungen in uns mannigfache Zerfließungen, Regungen jener Urgewässer in uns."*¹⁶⁰

The importance of this "*Urgewässer in uns*" as it appears within *Hegel and the State* as a metaphor of time informing Rosenzweig's philosophy of history, remains central to his later thought as well. In *The Star of Redemption*, Rosenzweig will take a position in contrast to this Romantically inspired idea of the "stream" in *Hegel and the State*; however, the language remains the same. In *The Star of Redemption* Rosenzweig writes, commenting on his method of breaking apart the "elements" of God, World and Man from the unity of the "all": "We know of a living movement, a circuit in which these elements swim; now they have been torn from the current."¹⁶¹ Whether consciously or not, Rosenzweig is taking a position here against his own earlier work. Thus, in the sense

¹⁵⁹ Meinecke, 63.

¹⁶⁰ Novalis, "*Die Lehrlinge zu Sais.*" 93.

¹⁶¹ *Star* 83.

of this metaphorical language alone, his later work may be understood as a continuation of the first.

In order to understand Hegel's thought, Rosenzweig argues in *Hegel and the State* that one cannot do away with the personal life, the "stream" that gives this thought its context. This, of course, was already apparent in the foreword, where Rosenzweig credits Dilthey with first unveiling from Hegel's life "a stream of hidden sorrows and hidden passions" for Rosenzweig's age. In approaching the first volume of *Hegel and the State*, one does well to keep these words in mind. For central to Rosenzweig's exploration of the "relationship of the individual to the state" within Hegel's early thought, is not only the role of Hegel's personal life in general, but indeed these "hidden sorrows and hidden passions" of Hegel's youth. Already the tone of *tragedy* can be heard within Rosenzweig's voice, anticipating its first crescendo in Hegel's Frankfurt period. But before turning to this all-important chapter in Hegel's life, Rosenzweig proceeds quite conventionally, staying within the character of the dramatic historian and utilizing a chronological narrative. Beginning first with the historical context, Rosenzweig then moves on to Hegel's youth in Stuttgart, followed by his formative years in Tübingen and finally his first years of independence in Bern.

Janus-Face

Rosenzweig situates the beginnings of Hegel's life within the general context of the European reaction to the Reformation and Enlightenment as they played out in the eighteenth century, especially in Germany, England and France. Rosenzweig follows

quite closely the same historical context his teacher Meinecke introduces in the second chapter of his *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*.¹⁶² In that work, Meinecke's guiding thought revolves around the particular relationship between "national" and "universal" drives in the thoughts of individual thinkers. Following this approach, Rosenzweig's own introduction to Hegel's life places the "universal" tendencies of the eighteenth century—especially in France, England and Germany—against the backdrop of the emerging "national" sensibilities. In leading up to the nineteenth century, whose beginnings were to be largely mirrored in the emergence of Hegel's philosophy, Rosenzweig juxtaposes what he sees as the two dominating "universal" forces of the eighteenth century that would influence Hegel's life and thought: "concept" (*Begriff*) and "experience" (*Erfahrung*). Again using the metaphor of a stream to guide his readers, Rosenzweig writes that these two aspects of the eighteenth century were "two streams, which ran along side each other in this river."¹⁶³ Still far removed from associating this image of two streams with his own German and Jewish roots as he does in *Zweistromland*¹⁶⁴—his first collection of essays published in 1926—Rosenzweig introduces the "conceptual" stream leading up to the nineteenth century with Rousseau and warns of merely following this single path of "inspired rationality."¹⁶⁵ In contrast to Rousseau, we are reminded of the stream of Montesquieu; next to the "passionately fulfilled and coldly calculated" ideal of the state, we are reminded of the "the political museum of the other, a treasury of immeasurable materials of experience brought together with a true joy in collecting the multifarious, the

¹⁶² Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. 27-39.

¹⁶³ "zwei Strömungen, die in diesem Flusse nebeneinander herliefen." HS 23.

¹⁶⁴ Rosenzweig, *Zweistromland* (1926).

¹⁶⁵ "vernunftsfreudigen." HS 23

colorful, even the bizarre.”¹⁶⁶ Rosenzweig calls this the “double countenance”

(*Doppelantlitz*) of the eighteenth century and likens it to a Janus-face that never sees the same object:

The one, which looks out to the state for how it should act for the sake of rationality, prefers to see, or oversee, all reality of political life in the state with the eyes of a revolutionary; the other, in that its glance of this reality strays from here to there in curiosity, would rather not feel the historical rationality within this manifold life; rather, it only finds a confusion of strange things which long for that richly spiritual, enlightening inscription.¹⁶⁷

This image of two conflicting, yet complementary historical personalities—Rousseau and Montesquieu—introduces readers to Rosenzweig's central claim concerning Hegel's generation: “To unite this double countenance, to change the breaking apart of the two viewpoints into a joining together, became the project of the 19th century.”¹⁶⁸ Thus, in Rosenzweig view, Hegel's future task is ultimately the unification of “concept” and “experience.” Indeed, in terms of the biographical form and anticipatory tone of the book, the entirety of *Hegel and the State* is built around the dynamics of this division and the possibility of its reconciliation in Hegel's life and thought.

¹⁶⁶ “*leidenschaftlich erfüllten, bald kalt errechneten*”; “*das politische Museum des andren, Schatzkammer eines unermesslichen Erfahrungsstoffs, mit echter Sammlerfreude am Vielfältigen, Bunten, selbst Absonderlichen.*” HS 24.

¹⁶⁷ “*Das eine, das nach dem Staat ausschaut, wie er von Vernunft wegen sein soll, mag die Wirklichkeit staatlichen Lebens ringsum nur mit den Augen des Revolutionärs sehen oder übersehen; das andere, das seinen Blick durch diese Wirklichkeit neugierig hin und her schweifen läßt, vermag doch die innere geschichtliche Vernunft dieses mannigfaltigen Lebens nicht zu fühlen, es findet darin nur ein Durcheinander von Merkwürdigkeiten, die nach der geistreich erklärenden Aufschrift verlangen.*” HS 24.

¹⁶⁸ “*Das Doppelantlitz zu vereinigen, das Auseinanderlaufen der beiden Blickrichtungen in ein Miteinander zu verwandeln, wurde das Werk des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts.*” HS 24.

The importance of biographical form for Rosenzweig's argument is already evident in the epigraph to the "Preliminary Remarks." Here he quotes the famous line from the preface to the *Philosophy of Right*—"What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational"¹⁶⁹—but intentionally changes this statement by separating the two lines and inserting ellipses:

“What is rational...

“and what is actual...

This gesture is decisive and not to be overlooked. In writing that the task of the nineteenth century would be to unite "concept" and "experience," Rosenzweig sees in Hegel's statement from the *Philosophy of Right* the "guiding saying" (*Leitspruch*) of the political thinkers of the nineteenth century—including those who opposed Hegel himself.¹⁷⁰ Thus, if Hegel's philosophical path was to be the conjoining of the rational—the "concept" of Rousseau—and the actual—the "experience" of Montesquieu—then the above gesture by Rosenzweig, placed on the first pages of his book, is made in order to question the possibility of reconciling these opposites. This gesture thus slyly veils the critical tone with which Rosenzweig responds to Hegel's philosophy throughout.

In terms of Rosenzweig's biographical narrative, the two separate volumes represent a position suggesting an insurmountable division between life and thought. Hegel's struggle with personal life is transformed in the second volume into the

¹⁶⁹ Hegel, G.W.F. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. 20 (Hereafter: *PR*).

¹⁷⁰ *HS* 24.

philosophical struggle for the “unification with the age.”¹⁷¹ On the one hand, the division between the "rational" and the "actual" shows the personal struggle for unification, which at the height of the first volume reflects itself into the language of tragedy, as I argue in Chapter III. On the other hand, this division shows how Hegel's personal life is a "mirror"¹⁷² (*Spiegel*) to his age; how the life of this historical personality helps to reflect the historical epoch—rife with philosophical and political divisions—into which he was born.

The Hero and His Age: The Individual and the State in the Context of Hegel's Early Political Thought

When in 1908 Rosenzweig claimed that he would give "ten years"¹⁷³ of his life to write a book like his teacher Friedrich Meinecke's *Cosmopolitanism and Nation-state* he would in effect give future researchers one of the biggest clues for discerning the nature of his own book on Hegel. In a letter to Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy he wrote: "You must have noticed in the Hegel that its real reason for being was not an interest in Hegel, but my wish to make *a book*."¹⁷⁴ Despite the fact that Rosenzweig's Hegel book, in contrast to his own assessment, exposes a clear and lasting interest in Hegel's life and thought, Meinecke's book—qua book—remained the model for Rosenzweig throughout. Not only would Meinecke's short chapter on Hegel give Rosenzweig the first impulse to interpret

¹⁷¹ "Vereinigung mit der Zeit." HS 521.

¹⁷² HS 145.

¹⁷³ "Um so ein Buch geschrieben zu haben, würde ich wohl zehn Jahre meines Lebens geben." Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, (13.11.1908). 41.

¹⁷⁴ From *Judaism Despite Christianity*. 86.

Hegel's view of the state as one developing away from the rights of individuals towards a "power-state" (*Machtstaat*), but Rosenzweig would adopt his teacher's method of exploring the political history of Germany through the lives of its greatest individuals. To quote Meinecke: "*Die Untersuchung politischer Gedanken darf niemals losgelöst werden von den großen Persönlichkeiten, den schöpferischen Denkern.*"¹⁷⁵ But the inspiration Rosenzweig gained from Meinecke would also help set him free. In the foreword to the second edition of *Cosmopolitanism and Nation-state* of 1911, Meinecke writes:

*Mein Buch beruht auf der Meinung, daß die deutsche Geschichtsforschung, ohne auf die wertvolle Überlieferung ihres methodischen Betriebes zu verzichten, doch wiederum zu freier Regung und Fühlung mit den großen Mächten des Staats- und Kulturlebens sich erheben müsse [...] daß sie erst ihr eigenes Wesen entwickeln könne, universal und national zugleich zu sein.*¹⁷⁶

While Meinecke's influence cannot be ignored, and I will draw upon it again and again, it is equally obvious that Rosenzweig took his teacher's call for "freie[] Regung und Fühlung" to heart. With this in mind, I would like to suggest that although unacknowledged, it is Goethe who provides one of the fundamental impulses to Rosenzweig's treatment of Hegel's life. In the introduction to his *Dichtung und Wahrheit*—his "half-poetical, half-historical"¹⁷⁷ autobiography, which Rosenzweig had read already as a youth—Goethe writes that "the main task of biography seems to be to

¹⁷⁵ Meinecke, 24.

¹⁷⁶ Meinecke, 1-2.

¹⁷⁷ Goethe, *Dichtung und Wahrheit* I. 7.

present man in his relation to time, and to show to what extent the whole resists him, to what extent it favors him, how he forms a view of the world and humanity from this and how, if he is an artist, poet, or writer, he then reflects these views outwardly."¹⁷⁸ This passage captures the mood within which Rosenzweig sets the entirety of his work on Hegel. Accordingly, in order to understand Hegel's biography—and his philosophy of the state, which for Rosenzweig is the crowning achievement of his thought—we must again and again understand Hegel's relationship to the age he was living in.

Rosenzweig situates the emergence of Hegel's philosophy of the state within the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century in Europe. As discussed above, common to the European eighteenth century was the division between "concept" and "experience." This division, however, manifests itself differently when addressing political sensibilities on the one hand and the spiritual and cultural movements of science and art on the other.¹⁷⁹ In opposition to France, for example, where the political ideas of the nineteenth century seemed to flow with little resistance from the eighteenth century and those of art and science had to overcome a great distance "in order to join the Romantic movement of the new century,"¹⁸⁰ in Germany the

general spiritual evolution since the middle of the eighteenth century actually runs without a visible break right into the nineteenth. But for the state, and especially

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Also unacknowledged here is Rosenzweig's implicit adaptation of Meinecke's division of "*Kulturnation*" and "*Staatsnation*." See Meinecke, 9-26.

¹⁸⁰ "*um den Anschluß an die romantischen Bewegungen des neuen Jahrhunderts zu finden.*" HS 25.

for the ideas of the state, which means here for the relationship of man to the state, the distance between the centuries seems at first glance immeasurable.¹⁸¹

In Rosenzweig's reading, the particularity of the German political sensibility at the beginning of the nineteenth century is its entwinement with the science and art of the age. Thus, in Germany the Enlightenment was a "purely spiritual movement" (*rein geistigen Bewegung*) and it was not from a body of highly trained politicians that Germany's fledgling political philosophy arose, but from a "community of the educated" (*Gemeinschaft der Gebildeten*) or in other words, from within the circle of German Classicism.¹⁸² For Rosenzweig, Immanuel Kant characterizes this emergence of political consciousness within the sphere of science and art in his 1784 essay "*Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*" Rosenzweig points out the naiveté with which Kant explains the relationship between the individual and the state: "argue, but obey" (*räsonniert, aber gehorcht*). "This 'but,'" Rosenzweig continues, "this complete disjunction between "arguing" and "obeying," is expressed in this essay with a most unselfconscious brevity."¹⁸³ In Germany in particular, this "unselfconscious" relationship between the individual and the state reveals a deeper divide in their political sensibility: "the hostility or indifference of the individual person towards the state, the

¹⁸¹ "läuft gerade umgekehrt die allgemein-geistige Entwicklung seit der Mitte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts eigentlich ohne sichtbaren Bruch ins neunzehnte hinein; für den Staat aber und insbesondere für die Ideen vom Staat, und das will sagen: für das Verhältnis des Menschen zum Staat, scheint der Abstand der Jahrhunderte auf den ersten Blick fast unermesslich." HS 25.

¹⁸² HS 26.

¹⁸³ "Dieses 'aber,' diese völlige Unverbundenheit von 'Räsonnieren' und 'Gehorchen,' ist hier mit unbefangener Knappheit ausgesprochen." HS 27.

abyss between the personal life of morals and the public life of the state."¹⁸⁴ In Germany, not only would this "abyss" between individual and state become the defining problem of the century to come, but this division—as witnessed by Hegel's dictum to unite "rationality" and "actuality"—would cast a shadow of political homelessness—reaching well into the age of Napoleon and the Restoration—over the richly spiritual age of German Classicism. For Hegel in particular, this means that his political philosophy emerged as a highly personal experience mediated by the rich tradition of German science and art.

Only towards the end of *Hegel and the State* does Rosenzweig share his thought that the biographical dates of Hegel—who was born in 1770 and died in 1831—span the exact timeframe when Goethe began the first and finished the second volume of his tragic drama *Faust*.¹⁸⁵ Given the central importance of this tragedy for understanding the form and intention of *The Star of Redemption*, no reference to Goethe's *Faust* within *Hegel and the State* should be easily overlooked. However, whereas in *The Star of Redemption* Goethe's tragedy is used as a narrative device and primary example of the tragic figure within modernity, here, for Rosenzweig, Goethe's work both precedes and outlasts Hegel's influence and thus acts as a sort of litmus test on Hegel's historical personality. And yet only in the second volume of his book—"Epochs of the World"—does Rosenzweig begin to hint that Hegel is indeed living in the age of Goethe. Only here has Hegel's thought broken the shores of personal life and begun to take on a historical life of its own. During the days of his youth, however, Hegel is still so entwined in his personal

¹⁸⁴ "die Feindschaft oder Gleichgültigkeit des Einzelmenschen gegen den Staat, der Abgrund zwischen sittlichpersönlichem und staatlichöffentlichem Leben." HS 26.

¹⁸⁵ HS 526.

circles, that Rosenzweig hesitates to identify Hegel's notes and essays as a schoolboy—the content of the "Stuttgart" section—with any of his mature thoughts. He sees them rather as general influences of the age, as signs pointing towards Hegel's future thought. One of these signs in particular will return again and again in Hegel's thought and Rosenzweig's treatment of the same, which cannot be overlooked: the fascination of Hegel's age with ancient Greece.

In the first paragraph of the section "Stuttgart", Rosenzweig situates Hegel amongst the historical personalities—or the "community of the educated"—of his age. In the first line he writes: "Hegel was born in 1770, in the same year as Friedrich Wilhelm III and as Hölderlin."¹⁸⁶ These two figures—the first of which would go on to be the King of Prussia from 1797 until 1840, reigning while Hegel was the state-appointed philosopher in Berlin, the second to be Hegel's close friend as a young man and one of the greatest poets of the age—form the poles of Hegel's early development: his "national" interest in and devotion to the political fate of Germany on the one hand and his personal struggle with the "universal" concepts of fate and personality on the other. But it was Hölderlin in particular with whom Hegel held a common interest in the problems and tensions of the age. And no tension, even today, stands out more prominently than the obsessive fascination of Hegel's age with the culture and thought of ancient Greece. Both Hegel and Hölderlin, roommates at the Tübingen seminary along with Friedrich Schelling, shared "the common religion of Greek rapture."¹⁸⁷ For Rosenzweig himself, this

¹⁸⁶ "Hegel wurde 1770 geboren, im gleichen Jahr mit Friedrich Wilhelm III. und mit Hölderlin." HS 30.

¹⁸⁷ "der gemeinsamen Religion der Griechenbegeisterung." HS 42.

"religion of Greek rapture" would form the cornerstone of his future interpretation of the influence of pagan thought upon philosophy.¹⁸⁸

Already Herder and Schiller, two of the major influences upon the young Hegel, had seen in Greek culture the counter-model of understanding the cultural present in Europe. Directly drawing upon these writers, Hegel saw in the Greeks—and later the Romans as well—“the path of all nations” (*den Weg aller Nationen*).¹⁸⁹ In terms of his evolving philosophy of state, it was by comparing the political situation in Germany to that of antiquity, that Hegel saw the shortcomings of German political philosophy. Already in his youth and lasting into his maturity, the Greeks for Hegel would stand as a “warning voice for the German people” (*Mahner zur Deutscherheit*).¹⁹⁰ And although the image of the Greeks as the forefathers of European tradition was not entirely new to the late eighteenth century, “what is new is the measurement of the state of the present against the standard of the Polis.”¹⁹¹ Thus, throughout his life Hegel will again and again turn to the concept of the Greek "Polis" in order to measure the health of the German state, most notably in the preface to *Philosophy of Right*.¹⁹²

Consequently, there developed in Hegel's thinking a necessary link between the fate of the German state and the ideal of the ancient Polis. What drove Hegel to repeatedly make this comparison, however, was not a lifeless fascination with the past, but the very real political events turning his age on its head. For directly or indirectly

¹⁸⁸ See here Part I of *The Star of Redemption*.

¹⁸⁹ HS 37.

¹⁹⁰ HS 38.

¹⁹¹ "neu ist die Messung des Staats der Gegenwart am Maßstab der Polis." HS 28.

¹⁹² I deal with this reference in Chapter IX.

influencing all thinking about the political future of the German state at that time were the events and consequences of the French Revolution. Thus, looking to Greek antiquity was never a wish to return to that past for Hegel's generation, but stemmed from the desire to restore the ideals of humanity—albeit in a manner all their own and different from the French revolutionaries—into the unsure political present of the German people.

"The Ideas of 1789" and Hegel's Early Theological Writings: Politics and Religion

The role of the French Revolution in Hegel's thought reaches its peak and perhaps its most important expression in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. There, in the section entitled "Absolute Freedom and Terror," Hegel writes how the freedom won from the French Revolution as the "universal will" betrays itself when it becomes actual, ultimately negating the will of the individual, introducing "the sheer terror of the negative that contains nothing positive, nothing that fills it with content."¹⁹³ For Hegel, this turning point in world history marks the moment when "absolute freedom" abandons "its self-destroying reality" and passes over "into another land"¹⁹⁴—this land was of course Germany itself. But long before these considerations—written down in 1806 and which Rosenzweig will also use to mark Hegel's transition from the riddles of personal life to the "Epochs of the World"—Hegel, along with his Tübingen roommates Hölderlin and Schelling, experienced the Revolution at the height of the ideals of his youth. And here, rather than encountering a young man obsessed with the external events of the present,

¹⁹³ Hegel, *Phenomenology*. 362.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 363.

we find Hegel as a student, a young man driven by the "inner necessities" (*innere Notwendigkeiten*)¹⁹⁵ of learning and knowledge.

It was during this time that Hegel, along with Hölderlin, was exposed to Rousseau and his ideas of "reason and freedom," which would form the basis of Hegel's critique of "absolute freedom" in the *Phenomenology*. Additionally for Hegel, this interest in the events of his age was coupled with a deep concern for the history of religion in Europe. From Rosenzweig's presentation of Hegel's early development, it becomes clear that one of the major contributions of *Hegel and the State* is to show that the complexity of Hegel's early writings stems from the paradoxical coupling of a budding interest in "freedom" and the rights of the individual with a lasting fascination for world historical religion, especially Christianity. Emil Fackenheim, the 20th-century Jewish philosopher, preserves this perspective in his book *The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought* when he claims that "without the Christian dimension of modern life [Hegel's] own philosophy could not have reached its all-comprehensive goals."¹⁹⁶ Rosenzweig's treatment of the early Hegel shows that his earliest ideas on the relationship of the individual to the state emerge from an engagement with a philosophy of religion coupled with the political concerns of the age.

With these ideas in mind, we can understand the fascinated attention Rosenzweig pays to Hegel's early period in Tübingen and then Bern, which is marked not only by a passionate interest in antiquity and the Revolution in France, but also more specifically

¹⁹⁵ HS 40.

¹⁹⁶ Fackenheim, 8.

by "the relationship of man to religion."¹⁹⁷ As will become clear in Hegel's Frankfurt period, and later in Jena as well, the question of religion and its unfolding in history will play a central role in determining Hegel's early conception of the state. In the Tübingen period, however, Rosenzweig concentrates on a group of fragments—cataloged by Hermann Nohl as "*Volksreligion und Christentum*"—that count as the "first flames" (*erste Flamme*)¹⁹⁸ of Hegel's spirit. Here, Rosenzweig offers a close reading of these fragments and organizes them both as foreshadowing Hegel's intellectual development and as his philosophical response to the "ideas of 1789."

From within these fragments there first emerges the sign of a grouping of ideas within Hegel's political thought, which will ultimately determine Hegel's understanding of world history and form the central piece to his argument for the unity of "reason" and "actuality" in the *Philosophy of Right*: the conceptual constellation between Greek antiquity, Christianity and the state.¹⁹⁹ Looking back on this time, Hegel would later write to Schelling from Bern: "reason and freedom remain our slogan and our point of unity the invisible church."²⁰⁰ This notion of an "invisible church," borrowed from Immanuel Kant,²⁰¹ refers to the growing importance Hegel will come to assign to religious values as the underlying structures of cultural life and ultimately use to engage the riddles of his own personal life. Later, in "The Positivity of the Christian Religion,"

¹⁹⁷ "dem Verhältnis des Menschen zur Religion." HS 43.

¹⁹⁸ HS 42.

¹⁹⁹ HS 49.

²⁰⁰ "Vernunft und Freiheit bleiben unsere Losung und unser Vereinigungspunkt die unsichtbare Kirche." HS 42.

²⁰¹ Kant, *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* (1793).

he will write of those who adhere to this "invisible church": "he adopts no duties except the one imposed by himself, and he gives his society no rights over him except the one that he himself concedes."²⁰² Here, Hegel is speaking in the moral language of Kant and Fichte and responding to the problems addressed in Mendelssohn's *Jerusalem*.

Although one cannot overlook the influence of Mendelssohn's interpretation of church and state in *Jerusalem* when addressing Hegel's early theological writings,²⁰³ Rosenzweig at first does little more than mention this "literary influence" (*literarischer Einfluß*).²⁰⁴ The same can be said of the religious debate between Kant and Fichte, which Hegel was closely following.²⁰⁵ This constellation of thinkers, however, would come to dominate Hegel's thinking with his first sustained work written in Bern, "The Positivity of the Christian Religion." In Rosenzweig's reading, however, it is not from these sources that the "spirit of the whole" (*der Geist des Ganzen*)²⁰⁶ present in Hegel's Tübingen period is to be deduced. Rather, through reading Schiller's poetry on Greece, especially his poem "Die Götter Griechenlands," which Hölderlin knew as well, there arose for Hegel the concept of the "spirit of the people" (*Volksgeist*),²⁰⁷ which he defined in relation to Montesquieu's conception of "*Espirit général*" as the end "product"

²⁰² See here "The Positivity of the Christian Religion", trans. Knox, 100.

²⁰³ For an excellent treatment of the relation between Mendelssohn, Hegel and Rosenzweig, see: Bruce Rosenstock, *Philosophy and the Jewish Question*, esp. 205-243.

²⁰⁴ HS 43.

²⁰⁵ This debate centered around two texts: "*Versuch einer Kritik aller Offenbarung*" by Fichte in 1792 and "*Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*" by Kant in 1793, wherein the term "invisible church" is set against the "visible church" in order to contrast rational morality with institutionalized religious values.

²⁰⁶ HS 43.

²⁰⁷ Bienenstock calls Rosenzweig's emphasis on Hegel's "Volksgeist" "Romantic" (see Bienenstock, *Rosenzweig's Hegel*).

(*Ergebnis*) of the several things—such as climate, religion, laws, manners etc.—which make up a people.²⁰⁸ There is no doubt that in his youth Hegel saw the ideal manifestation of this "product" in the "beauty" of Greek cultural life. But drawing on the contemporary political and social context he found himself within, Hegel sought to unify this inspired concept of a "*Volksgeist*" under the banner of "universal reason:" "national culture, the spirit of the people, is measured according to the degree of universal reason it attains."²⁰⁹ It was with this concept of reason, writes Rosenzweig, "that religion gained its place" in Hegel's thinking: "next to the political relations, religion is the most important mediator between the roots of reason and the flowering of life."²¹⁰

In bringing out the significance of religious thought in Hegel's early period, Rosenzweig also notes that, initially at least, this had the effect of reducing the attention Hegel paid to his conception of the state in his "first socio-philosophical system" (*erstes sozialphilosophisches System*).²¹¹ In the fragments that make up this ideal, Hegel's conception of the state was reduced to the passive role of leaving the upbringing of the "*Volksgeist*" to "nature,"²¹² whereas religion, as a "religion of reason," had direct influence upon the "whole of national life" (*nationales Gesamtleben*).²¹³ Regarding the relationship of the individual to the state, in answering "the ideas of 1789" by focusing on

²⁰⁸ HS 44-45.

²⁰⁹ "je nach dem erreichten Grad der allgemeinen Vernunft bestimmt sich die nationale Kultur, der Volksgeist." HS 47.

²¹⁰ "Damit gewinnt die Religion ihre Stelle. Sie ist [...] neben den politischen Verhältnissen die wichtigste Vermittlerin zwischen der Wurzel Vernunft und er Blüte Leben." HS 47.

²¹¹ HS 47.

²¹² "der Erziehung der Natur." HS 48.

²¹³ HS 47.

the concept of "*Volksgeist*"—by way of man's relation to religion—for Rosenzweig "it is precisely the idea of the state that is undeveloped in this ideal of society."²¹⁴ This, however, was soon to change. From the days of "inner necessity" in Tübingen, there arose in Hegel a "new wave" (*neue Welle*) that drew his attention more closely towards the political events of his day.²¹⁵ This "new wave" was to give rise to the first expression of a thought that would occupy Hegel his entire life long: "the thought of the incompatibility of Christianity with the state."²¹⁶ With the further thought that "reason and freedom . . . had to establish themselves in the state for the sake of the 'invisible church'"²¹⁷ Hegel hinted at his main concern for the following years in Bern, namely, the ideal of the "inviolable internal and external freedom of man."²¹⁸ He would again first look for this ideal by turning to religion, and only later turn directly to the political events of his age. If in Tübingen Hegel blended his critical voice with an "ever stronger with personal experience"²¹⁹, then in Bern, this personal experience reached a new height in his demand for the "freedom of man." It would above all be Kant, "not the historical Kant in Königsberg [...] but rather a Kant who himself had already been taken up into the stream of history,"²²⁰ and especially Kant's notion of "the dignity of man" (*die Würde des*

²¹⁴ "So ist gerade die Staatsidee das Unentwickelte in diesem Gesellschaftsideal." HS 48.

²¹⁵ HS 49.

²¹⁶ "der Gedanke von der Unvereinbarkeit des Christentums mit dem Staat." HS 50.

²¹⁷ "Vernunft und Freiheit" [...] müssen sich im Staate durchsetzen um der 'unsichtbare Kirche' willen." HS 49.

²¹⁸ "Der Gedanke der unantastbaren inneren und äußeren Freiheit des Menschen." HS 51.

²¹⁹ "immer stärker mit persönlichem Erlebnis verschmolzen." HS 50.

²²⁰ "nicht der historische Kant in Königsberg [...] sondern ein Kant, der selber schon in den Strom der Geschichte eingegangen war." HS 58.

Menschen),²²¹ that would now fully consume Hegel. This would lead Hegel towards his highest defense of the individual against the state. For Rosenzweig, this is the last station before Hegel's conception of the state would gradually take a lasting hold upon his thought.

"The Dignity of Man": In Defense of the Individual

During the French Revolution, Hegel and his contemporaries had very selectively fixed their eyes upon the events in France. As Rosenzweig claims, "none saw the world-historical process that was taking place there behind the fog of phrases and steam of blood, the emergence of the new nation-state."²²² They saw only their own "well-trusted ideals," they saw "freedom, but not the state."²²³ But now in Bern, four years after the revolution, Hegel and his contemporaries gradually turned their eyes back to their own social and political conditions. What was immediately at stake for them was the "orthodoxy" (*Orthodoxie*)²²⁴ that the young philosophers saw taking over German academic life. Still infused with the spirit of the recent political events in France, they themselves now awaited a "revolution" from the "completion of the Kantian system."²²⁵ Remembering here Rosenzweig's claim in the first pages of *Hegel and the State* that the German political consciousness arose from the science and art of the age, one should not

²²¹ HS 59.

²²² "keins den welthistorischen Vorgang sah, der sich dort hinter Phrasennebel und Blutdampf vollzog, die Entstehung des neuen Nationalstaats." HS 48.

²²³ "der eignen wohlvertrauten Ideale; man sah die Freiheit, aber nicht den Staat." HS 48.

²²⁴ HS 58.

²²⁵ "von der Vollendung des Kantischen Systems eine 'Revolution'." HS 58.

be surprised that it was a thought from the likes of Schiller, Kant and Fichte that gave way to the primary focus of Hegel's new political thought: "the dignity of man." And like the Greek culture by which Hegel was presently so taken, he thought the "revolution" in Germany would come from the heights of philosophical speculation, understanding with the phrase "the dignity of man" not an empty ideal, but the politically charged notion of "the unconditional self-legislation of the individual."²²⁶ This is the first appearance of this notion of Kantian autonomy in Hegel's thought, which was to last well into his work on the *Phenomenology*.

Rosenzweig marks this shift in Hegel's thinking with an observation on Hegel's personal life, which helps give shape to his biographical interpretation and again recalls the division between "concept" and "experience" with which he introduced his book.²²⁷ While in Bern, Hegel lived and worked as a tutor with the Steiger family. However, he never fit in with the family or the town in which he was living. Accordingly, this period for Hegel was marked by the "feeling of opposition to his surroundings" and he fled "into the arms of good mother nature."²²⁸ This separation Hegel felt with the world is the first sign of the personal tragedy in Frankfurt, which in Rosenzweig's reading would permanently shift Hegel's conception of the state. In Frankfurt, the biographical "separation" (*Trennung*) from the world around him was cause enough for Hegel to reflect on the "tragedy" of Jesus' separation from life in general. This is carried out in

²²⁶ "die Lehre von der unbedingten Selbstgesetzlichkeit des Individuums." HS 60.

²²⁷ For a work of "biography," these personal episodes—such as living situation, marriage, death of family members etc.—play a considerably lessened role, in comparison to Pinkard's Hegel biography, for example. This shows that Rosenzweig's notion of biography is rooted more strongly in the *works* of the individual and accordingly it is only through the work that we may come to the personal life of the individual.

²²⁸ "im Gefühl des Gegensatzes zu seiner Umgebung"; "in die Arme der gütigen Mutter Natur" HS 60.

Hegel's "The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate." In Bern, however, rather than the tragic separation from life, Hegel's alienation from the world around him led him to write in defense of the individual and his rights all the more vehemently, and most importantly with "a sharp political turn."²²⁹

The major piece of writing from this period is an essay entitled "The Positivity of the Christian Religion." According to Rosenzweig, Hegel received the impetus, for both the manner and content, from Herder, especially from his "famous 17th book of the *Ideas*."²³⁰ Rosenzweig goes as far as saying that this is "the seed of Hegel's concept of historical development."²³¹ In the 17th book of the *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Herder lays out the various aspects of the teachings of Jesus and how they evolved over the course of Western history. Striking in our context is his use of the term "revolution"²³² to introduce the manner in which Christianity appeared in world history. Given the contemporary events in Germany, it is no surprise that this revolutionary character of Christianity corresponded to the mindset of the young philosopher. Commenting on the section "How a Moral or Religious Society Grows into a State,"²³³ Rosenzweig points to the influence of both Rousseau and Mendelssohn on Hegel's own interpretation of Christianity. With his interpretation, Hegel is under the spell of Rousseau's "contractual thought" (*Vertragsgedanken*),²³⁴ understood as the

²²⁹ "mit der scharf politischen Wendung." HS 67.

²³⁰ "berühmten 17. Buch der 'Ideen.'" HS 61.

²³¹ "Wir haben da den Keim von Hegels Begriff geschichtlicher Entwicklung." HS 61.

²³² Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 17. Buch.

²³³ Hegel, "The Positivity of the Christian Religion", trans. Knox, 95.

²³⁴ HS 62.

thought of a "contract of every individual with everyone else."²³⁵ With regard to the relationship between church and state, on the other hand, Hegel takes up Mendelssohn's distinction between a "free-willed society and a society of coercion."²³⁶ In order to have a free society the state may not have rights itself which it upholds over an individual.²³⁷ Resisting the mere "legality" (*Legalität*) of the state, Hegel calls upon religion to restore "morality" (*Moralität*) to society.²³⁸ In effect, Hegel is working out what actually happened with Christianity as it spread throughout history. The ideal relationship between church and state for Hegel would be that while religion inspires the "morality" of individuals, it remains separated from the "legality" of the state—a distinction central to the Kant's moral philosophy. Rosenzweig summarizes: "This is the relationship of church and state as it should be; but it came about differently in history; the church, the Protestant as well as the Catholic, became a state itself."²³⁹

In terms of Hegel's conception of the state, Rosenzweig anticipates here his own thesis, inspired by Meinecke, that Hegel's state is ultimately a "power-state." For in this discussion of church and state he sees again and again that Hegel already understands the relation as determined by the "absolute power of the state (*Allmacht des Staats*)."²⁴⁰ But at this juncture, this "power of the state" does not yet tower over the dignity of man, "but

²³⁵ "der Gedanke des Vertrags jedes einzelnen mit allen anderen." HS 62.

²³⁶ "Unterscheidung einer freiwilligen und einer Zwangsgesellschaft." HS 62.

²³⁷ HS 62.

²³⁸ HS 63.

²³⁹ "Dies ist das Verhältnis von Kirche und Staat, wie es sein sollte; in der Geschichte ist es aber anders gekommen; die Kirche, protestantische wie katholische, wurde selbst ein Staat." HS 63.

²⁴⁰ HS 64.

rather it finds in the natural rights of the individuals its task and its limit.”²⁴¹ With this interpretation, Rosenzweig is anticipating the shifting roles of the individual and the state. Here, Hegel is critical of both the state and the church in order to defend the rights of the individual. Rosenzweig thus remarks, again anticipating his own next move: “To such height Hegel’s belief in the autocracy of man has climbed here.”²⁴² Indeed, to a height at which Hegel could not remain forever.²⁴³

Schiller, History and the State

In order to summarize Hegel's conception of the state at this point in his development, Rosenzweig uses the occasion of Hegel's newly developed historical thinking to draw out a crucial connection between Hegel and Schiller in their understanding of history. As is well known to readers of *The Philosophy of Right*, Schiller's famous line "world history is the world's tribunal" (*Weltgeschichte ist das*

²⁴¹ "sie findet in den natürlichen Rechten des Einzelnes ihre Aufgabe und ihre Grenze." HS 64.

²⁴² "Zu solcher Höhe ist hier Hegels Glaube an die menschliche Selbstherrlichkeit gestiegen." HS 65.

²⁴³ Although Hegel begins to realize the "power of the state" during this time, a most important element is still missing for him: "the ethical (*Sittliche*) in the relation of man to the state" (HS 66). It is here that Rosenzweig draws on the "The Oldest System-program of German Idealism" (*Systemprogramm*) which he discovered and first published himself: "It must have come precisely in this summer, shortly after the piece just discussed, that Hegel copied the Systemprogramm of his friend Schelling, wherein it is said: that there is no idea of the state, because the state is something mechanical—just as little as there could be an idea of a machine. 'Thus, we must go above and beyond the state!—for every state must treat humans as mechanical wheelwork; and it shouldn't do that; so it should cease.' It is the same passionate accusation against the state that broke forth for Hegel. But for Hegel the dispute could not end here; for him, the hate for the state could not become the denial of the state." (HS 66). Commenting on the—still ongoing—debate as to the authorship of the "*Systemprogramm*," one can see from this quote alone why Rosenzweig, writing a book on the development of Hegel's conception of the state, could not attribute the "*Systemprogramm*" to Hegel himself. For how could a thinker who would continue to so adamantly legitimize and defend the state write that the state "should cease"!

Weltgericht) will form one of the most central claims in Hegel's understanding of the state in history. Rosenzweig shows his readers here that this lasting influence is already at work in Hegel's early years.

As introduced above, after the revolution in France, Hegel and his contemporaries began to anticipate their very own historical “revolution” in Germany. And it was with none other than this future-oriented thinking that Schiller’s *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* clearly manifested for Hegel's age. While many relations can be drawn between Hegel and Schiller, for example from their aesthetic theories or from Schiller’s poem on the gods of Greece as I mentioned above, Rosenzweig draws out their relation in terms of a philosophy of history. It was from the 6th letter of Schiller's *Letters*, Rosenzweig claims, that Hegel drew the idea of dividing "the entire course of history up until now into the epoch of the Greeks and the following period."²⁴⁴ For Hegel, this underlined the thought that what was lost to his generation could only be found in the age of the Greeks, namely, that “beautiful fullness of the Greek people.”²⁴⁵ In reflecting on the "beautiful fullness" of the Greek age, Hegel was led to conclude that “[t]he pulse of the entire view of history from that time is thus, that such magnificence of Greek antiquity has become simply impossible in the Christian world.”²⁴⁶ Newly influenced and changed by these ideas drawn from Schiller, Hegel leaves Bern with a new ideal of the modern state:

²⁴⁴ "Teilung des ganzen bisherigen Geschichtsverlaufs in die Epoche der Griechen und die Folgezeit." HS 71.

²⁴⁵ "schönen Fülle des griechischen Menschen." HS 71.

²⁴⁶ "Der Nerv der ganzen damaligen Geschichtsanischt Hegels ist eben, daß jene Herrlichkeit des griechischen Altertums in der christlichen Welt schlechthin unmöglich geworden ist." HS 72.

The state can no longer be something divine, as it was back then when the Gods were not yet divine for the people. Rather it rests with the state in the modern world to protect the sacred relics of conviction, belief, human rights, which lie all together outside of its precinct; but after all, it is satisfied with its own unholy sphere of power.²⁴⁷

The state is still conceived as that force designed to serve the rights and beliefs of the individual, but the shift towards the "power of the state" has already been made. Whereas in antiquity the role of the individual in the state was "the crown of life," "for the post-Greek people the work in the actual state of the present is only the unconsciousness of the little wheel—to speak with Schelling—in the machine."²⁴⁸ Anticipating this shifting role of the state away from the rights of the individual and towards the "power-state" taken from Meinecke's interpretation, Rosenzweig warns his readers of the dangers to come:

the state is powerful, but is not power: it is not the independent being strolling about that could also use its right against the rights of the individual, that lives its own life, unconcerned if this individual perhaps unconsciously effects it as a little cog in a subordinated position of the machine or even at all. We are still far away from that Hegel who was destined to create the effective formula for the political thinking of the nineteenth century.²⁴⁹ (HS 73)

²⁴⁷ "Der Staat kann nun nichts Heiliges mehr sein, wie damals, als die Götter es dem Menschen noch nicht waren. Vielmehr obliegt dem Staat in der modernen Welt, die Heiligtümer der Überzeugung, des Glaubens, die Menschenrechte zu schützen, die allsamt außer seinem Bezirk liegen; übrigens aber hat er sich mit seinem eigenen unheiligen Machtgebiet zu begnügen." HS 72.

²⁴⁸ "Krone des Lebens [...] dem nachgriechischen Menschen aber ist die Arbeit im wirklichen Staat der Gegenwart nur die unbewußte des Rädchens in der—mit Schelling zu reden—Maschine." HS 73.

²⁴⁹ "der Staat ist mächtig, aber er ist nicht Macht: er ist nicht das selbstständig hinwandelnde Wesen, das sein Recht auch gegen die Rechte des einzelnen wenden könnte, das sein eigenes Leben lebt, unbekümmert ob dieser einzelne etwa bewußtlos als Rädchen an untergeordneter Stelle der Maschine oder auch überhaupt nicht an ihm wirke. Wir sind noch weit ab von dem Hegel, der dem politischen Denken des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts die wirksame Formel zu schöpfen bestimmt war." HS 73.

In Rosenzweig's critical reading, Hegel's state has not yet reached its all-powerful position within his thought—it is still tipped towards the side of the individual. This leads Hegel further into the political events of his age and it is this engagement with the present time that will ultimately lead to a "division" with the world. This "division," already hinting at elements of tragedy making their way into his personal life, was the result of the young Hegel's longing for "justice" and the resistance of the world—and as would later become clear, the course of history itself—against his political ideal.

The Transition to Frankfurt: The Division between Life and Thought

In dealing with Hegel's early theological manuscripts, Rosenzweig followed the evolution of Hegel's conception of the state as it appeared there within his discussion of religion. The central political idea to emerge for Hegel during that time was the "ethical relation of the individual to the state."²⁵⁰ Hegel used the historical development of Christianity to show how this relationship evolved against the interest of the individual. In doing so, Hegel's was following his own "invisible church" of "Greek rapture" and not subscribing to any institution of the present.²⁵¹ Thus, it was "from the perspective of the classical ideal"²⁵² that Hegel's idea of the state emerged. Here, Rosenzweig summarizes

²⁵⁰ "Das sittliche Verhältnis des einzelnen zum Staat." HS 69.

²⁵¹ As Lev Shestov points out in his book *Potestas Clavium*, Hegel replaced the idea of God with the idea of "the good" from Greek antiquity. Rosenzweig hints at this position without explicitly stating it. (See here Shestov, *Potestas Clavium*, "Sancta Superbia").

²⁵² "von Standpunkt des klassischen Ideals." HS 70.

Hegel early political ideal: "The idea of the state is the item (*das Gut*) for which the individual works, the ultimate purpose of his world in front of which his individuality disappears, that which survives him, his soul, something eternal."²⁵³ In his early writings, however, Hegel is not favoring the state over the individual, but both are there to serve each other. This was already expressed in Hegel's concept of "*Volksgeist*." But, as stated above, looking to the political reality surrounding him, Hegel realized that the "magnificence of Greek antiquity has become simply impossible in the Christian world." Thus, it was not with the aim to restore the past that Hegel confronted the political events of his time, but with a "picture of a better, more just age" and—with words Rosenzweig's echoes in the foreword to *Hegel and the State*—the "sighing for purer, freer conditions."²⁵⁴ In clear language, with a longing for "justice."

The section in *Hegel and the State* entitled "Two Political Writings" works as an interlude between "the sharp political turn of the Bern years"²⁵⁵ and the definitive "turning-point (*Wende*)"²⁵⁶ of Hegel's Frankfurt period. Rosenzweig's title for this section is the only one in the book to match up exactly with a chapter title from Dilthey's *History of the Young Hegel*.²⁵⁷ However, the contents of the sections differ for both authors. While both Rosenzweig and Dilthey focus on Hegel's critique of contemporary politics as it is expressed in Hegel's piece on the constitution of Württemberg, along with

²⁵³ "Die Idee des Staats ist das Gut, wofür der einzelne arbeitet, der Endzweck seiner Welt, vor dem seine Individualität verschwindet, das ihn überlebt, das seine Seele, ein Ewiges ist." HS 69.

²⁵⁴ "Das Bild besserer, gerechter Zeiten"; "ein Seufzen nach einem reineren, freieren Zustande." HS 87.

²⁵⁵ "der scharf politischen Wendung der Berner Jahre." HS 67.

²⁵⁶ HS 97.

²⁵⁷ See Dilthey, *Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels*, 122-137.

this polemical piece Dilthey addressed Hegel's important critique of the German constitution, known as the *Reichsverfassungsschrift*.²⁵⁸ Through the formal arrangement of his book, however, Rosenzweig argues that the *Reichsschrift* should be addressed apart from Hegel's "political writings" and, while certainly through and through "political" in nature, treated rather as the first example of the change in Hegel's view of the state mediated through the profound experiences of his personal life. In Rosenzweig's reading, this important piece of critique cannot be understood outside of the context of Hegel's relationship to Hölderlin. In place of the aforementioned piece, Rosenzweig's includes Hegel's translation of, and commentary on the Swiss politician Jean Jacques Cart's political polemic against his homeland of Wadtland, which is excluded by Dilthey.

Rosenzweig's explicit choice to order his texts differently than Dilthey is by no means a critique of his fellow Hegel biographer. Rather, what is at stake for both authors is the same: Hegel's political ideal. However, whereas Dilthey only touches upon the components of this ideal and points towards their possible connections to Hegel's developing thought, Rosenzweig unfolds them systematically within a biographical argument. But Hegel's ideal of the state can already to be found in Dilthey's presentation. It is composed, for Rosenzweig and Dilthey alike, by the influence of Greek antiquity as reflected through the revolutionary standards of the present as well as by a longing for justice and the emergence of the idea of the unity of life. For both authors, Hegel's engagement with the actual political events of his age point towards an even larger theme in Hegel's development: the separation of life and thought.

As I have argued, the division between "concept" and "experience" is a central theme in Rosenzweig's treatment of Hegel's political philosophy. Hegel's age is

²⁵⁸ "Writing on the Constitution of the Empire", hereafter *Reichsschrift*.

presented as a generation whose task it was to unite this division. Within Hegel's own personal biography, this division is first broadened into the general separation between life and thought. Only by acknowledging this tension as a central organizational theme in Hegel's life can the biographical origins of the division between "actuality" and "rationality" in *The Philosophy of Right* be understood. By focusing on two of Hegel's texts that deal directly with the politics of his age, Rosenzweig shows how the ideals of Hegel's youth rise up one last time in defiant cries for "justice," only in the end to remain unheard and estranged from the world. This is the beginning of a rift in Hegel's personal life, which will be the cause of the "turning-point" in his biographical development. In commenting on the sentiment of his own generation, as introduced above, Hegel himself was not unaware of this growing tension between personal life and political ideal: "The picture of a better, more just age has awakened in the souls of man, and a longing, a sighing for purer, freer conditions has moved all minds and divided them (*entzweit*) with actuality."²⁵⁹ However, Hegel's cry in his commentary on the Cart translation to "*Discite justiciam moniti*"²⁶⁰—"learn justice from this warning"—fell upon deaf ears, if it was even heard at all. As Rosenzweig concludes: "So Hegel experienced the backlash of external life against the ideas that determined his political thinking up until now."²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ "Das Bild besserer, gerechterer Zeiten ist lebhaft in die Seelen der Menschen gekommen, und eine Sehnsucht, ein Seufzen nach einem reineren, freieren Zustande hat alle Gemüther bewegt und mit der Wirklichkeit entzweit." HS 87.

²⁶⁰ HS 80.

²⁶¹ "So erfuhr Hegel den Rückschlag des äußeren Lebens gegen die Ideen, die sein politisches Denken bisher bestimmt hatten." HS 92.

While observing this period of Hegel's development, Dilthey was filled with "deep respect and a feeling of tragedy."²⁶² One can understand how in Rosenzweig's reading, these two emotions—"respect" and "tragedy"—also informed his ultimate interpretation of Hegel's life. That is, how through a close, thus respectful reading of his writings, Rosenzweig came to see the personal tragedy of Hegel's life. For Rosenzweig, the "feeling of tragedy" Dilthey read into Hegel's writings of the time came from Hegel's own personal life—his own "division" from "reality" ("*Entzweiung*" mit der "*Wirklichkeit*")—reflected more specifically into his relationship with Hölderlin. In this context, Rosenzweig credited Dilthey with first raising that all-important relationship between Hegel and Hölderlin to its proper level. For Hölderlin also shared this personal and tragic "division" from the world and this longing for a better future with his friend Hegel. While Hegel was writing about the political events of the age, Hölderlin had already begun working on his novel *Hyperion*. And Rosenzweig argues that it was precisely the "Hyperion-poet" Hölderlin who gave the sentiment of the age its "most pure artistic expression."²⁶³ By turning to a language of tragedy drawn from Hölderlin's writings, Rosenzweig introduces the great "turning-point" in Hegel's life: a turn from the ideals of his youth towards the powers of history and the state, and in terms of the individual, towards the tragic "fate" of personal life.

²⁶² Dilthey, *Hegel*. 123

²⁶³ "*den reinsten künstlerischen Ausdruck.*" HS 87.

CHAPTER III
THE UNITY OF PERSONAL LIFE:
HEGEL AND HÖLDERLIN IN FRANKFURT

*"Versöhnung ist mitten im Streit,
und alles Getrennte findet sich wieder"*

Hölderlin, *Hyperion*

Introductory Remarks: Hegel and Hölderlin

In a letter from 1911, Rosenzweig wrote to Gertrud Oppenheim—his cousin, childhood friend and lifelong intellectual confidant—that the section of his dissertation entitled "Frankfurt" was finished.²⁶⁴ He continues that of all the sections, this is the one that she should read, and characterizes it as the “main chapter” for which he had “long prepared himself.”²⁶⁵ In Rosenzweig's narrative, Hegel's Frankfurt period marks the "turning-point"²⁶⁶ of his views on the state.²⁶⁷ On the one hand, the relation between the individual and the state introduced in the previous chapter tips decidedly towards the state—a decisive change, which according to Rosenzweig would subsequently determine the character of Hegel's view of the state. On the other hand, this period was also decisive in facilitating a profound shift in Hegel's thinking as a whole: “The idea of the

²⁶⁴ See Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 28.9.11.

²⁶⁵ Rosenzweig, *Tagebücher und Briefe*, In *Franz Rosenzweig: Der Mensch und sein Werk*. 120.

²⁶⁶ "Wende." *HS* 97.

²⁶⁷ That Frankfurt represents the true turning-point in Hegel's development is disputed by Harris in *Hegel's Ladder*. He argues that Rosenzweig's overemphasizes this period and sees the turning-point rather with Hegel's *Phänomenologie*.

unity of all life gained force."²⁶⁸ The concept of "unity" (*Einheit*) plays a decisive role in Rosenzweig's treatment of Hegel's Frankfurt period, especially with regard to the division between life and thought that permeates the entire work. Moreover, what Rosenzweig critically presents as Hegel's notion of "the unity of all life" relates back to the division between "concept" and "experience" Hegel inherited from the eighteenth century. Finally, in *The Star of Redemption*, Rosenzweig argues that the unity of "being" and "thought" in Hegel's thinking is the fundamental assumption of all Idealism.²⁶⁹ Thus, when Rosenzweig writes that in Frankfurt Hegel's ideas "entered into the constellation, which would rule over his later system,"²⁷⁰ he is not only setting the stage for his critique of Hegel's political thought, but also anticipating his critique of German Idealism in *The Star of Redemption*.

This emergence of the "unity of all life" in Hegel's thought cannot be understood without underscoring his relation to Hölderlin in Frankfurt. In his essay "Hegel and Hölderlin," Dieter Henrich emphatically declares the importance of this relationship:

Before his encounter with Hölderlin in Frankfurt, Hegel was a critic of the church and a historical and political analyst with connections to the Gironde. Only in relation to Hölderlin, and by the latter's influence on him, was he to become the philosopher of the age."²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ "Die Idee der Einheit alles Lebens gewann Gewalt." HS 97.

²⁶⁹ "Die wißbare Welt wird wißbar durch das gleiche Denkgesetz, das auf der Höhe des Systems als oberstes Seinsgesetz widerkehrt." Stern, 7.

²⁷⁰ "sein Gedanken traten in die Konstellation, welche sein späteres System beherrschen sollte." HS 97.

²⁷¹ Dieter Henrich, "Hegel and Hölderlin" in *The Course of Remembrance*. 139.

When Rosenzweig began writing his dissertation towards the beginning of the 20th century, such strong affiliation between Hegel and Hölderlin was virtually unheard of. Through the work of Norbert von Hellingrath, Hölderlin was only then gradually emerging as the national poet he is known as today. However, before all others, Wilhelm Dilthey recognized that it was indeed Hölderlin who provided the impetus for Hegel to become the "philosopher of the age." What Dilthey began, Rosenzweig carries on in his own work.²⁷² This is already apparent in the foreword to *Hegel and the State*, where Rosenzweig ends this short, but critical piece of prose with a crescendo towards Dilthey's contribution to Hegel's legacy:

And so it was he [Dilthey] who first recognized how that connection between Hegel and Hölderlin was more than a biographical curiosity, and more than the sign or ground of an organic deformation; it was he who first, with gentle hand, raised the veil and showed, how from the great rigid pictures of the historical Hegel [...] there poured forth a stream of hidden sorrows and hidden passions from those days of his youth.²⁷³

Rosenzweig concludes the foreword to his book by emphatically emphasizing the importance of Hegel's relation to Hölderlin. And already here he introduces this relation in language familiar to us—as sorrow and hidden passions flowing into a "stream," the stream of personal life. As Henrich points out in the previous quote, the stations of Hegel's life leading up to Frankfurt show him as "a critic of the church and a historical

²⁷² See Dilthey, *Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels*. 40-42; 140-41.

²⁷³ "So erkannte er, und er zuerst, wie jener Zusammenhang zwischen Hegel und Hölderlin mehr war als eine biographische Merkwürdigkeit und mehr als das Zeichen oder der Grund einer organischen Verbildung; er zuerst hob mit zarter Hand die Schleier und zeigte, wie in dem starren Riesenbild des historischen Hegel [...] von jenen Jugendtagen her ein Strom geheimen Leidens und geheimer Leidenschaft rauschte." HS 17.

and political analyst." However, it was first in Frankfurt that the "hidden sorrows and hidden passions" of his youth are revealed. It is from these revealed passions of Hegel's personal life that Rosenzweig sees a shift issuing from Hegel's political thinking as well. As Rosenzweig will again emphasize on the last pages of his book, in Frankfurt "the new idea of the state arose for [Hegel] in the proximity of Hölderlin."²⁷⁴

In what follows, I will show how the "main chapter" of Rosenzweig's dissertation gains its momentum from a philosophical interpretation of Hölderlin's *Hyperion*—with additional evidence from one of Hegel's personal letters—and how through a rather creative reading of the notion of "fate" (*Schicksal*) in this novel Rosenzweig introduces one of the central points of his critique of Hegel's political philosophy: how from the "sorrows and hidden passions" of his youth, Hegel moves towards the idea of the "unity of all life" through the concept of the "state as a part of fate."

"The Riddles of Personal Life"

According to Rosenzweig, the philosophical questions during Hegel's Frankfurt period revolve around the "riddles of personal life."²⁷⁵ Before looking at Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, it is helpful to again immerse ourselves within the stream of Rosenzweig's interpretation, in order to give some context to our discussion. Rosenzweig describes the relationship between Hegel and Hölderlin in Frankfurt as "equal to equal" (*von Gleich zu*

²⁷⁴ "da ihm in Hölderlins Nähe die neue Staatsidee erwuchs." HS 531.

²⁷⁵ "die Rätsel des persönlichen Lebens." HS 102.

Gleich).²⁷⁶ However, as Dieter Henrich points out, "[i]n all of Hegel's work Hölderlin is not mentioned once."²⁷⁷ This makes Rosenzweig's emphasis on this relationship even more striking, especially given his own admission that Hölderlin's "actual influence can often only be proved with uncertainty."²⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the original arguments in Rosenzweig's "Frankfurt" section anticipate Henrich's future claim, namely, how from the "awkward Frankfurt texts" and Hegel's encounter with Hölderlin "the system emerged which subsequently became the world philosophy of the age."²⁷⁹

During their time in Frankfurt, both Hegel and Hölderlin were still on a very similar path of life. Not only had they once lived and studied together in Tübingen, but now reunited they were familiar with many of the same authors and texts: Greek philosophy, Kant, Schiller, Fichte, among others. For Hegel's emerging concept of "fate," one text in particular was of great significance: Schiller's *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*. As mentioned in Chapter II, this text had a great impact on Hegel's development, especially on his budding philosophy of history and his idea of the "beautiful fullness" of the Greek people. Rosenzweig again claims that it was from Schiller's philosophy of history that Hegel now found the origins of a new "ideal concept" (*Idealbegriff*), namely the concept of "totality" or "the unity of life, and namely of personal life."²⁸⁰ When discussing the first republics of ancient Greece, the decisive trait for Schiller was "the internal unity and wholeness of humanity," which is seen in

²⁷⁶ HS 100.

²⁷⁷ Henrich, 119.

²⁷⁸ "selbst abgesehen von der meist doch unsicheren Nachweisbarkeit eigentlichen Einflusses." HS 99.

²⁷⁹ Henrich, 127. However, the two authors come to this similar claim by different means.

²⁸⁰ "die 'Totalität,' die Einheit des Lebens, und zwar des persönlichen Lebens." HS 103.

contrast to “the work-dividing fragmentation in newer society.”²⁸¹ For the Tübingen friends, including Schelling, Schiller's demand "to renew that beautiful unity" now became "the task of the future."²⁸² Schelling in particular, who although the youngest, was the philosophically superior of the three, formulated this new battle cry in his "*Ichschrift*" as follows: "become simply one, elevate the plurality in yourself to a unity, that is, become a totality closed off in yourself."²⁸³ For Hegel, this idea of “unity” drawn from Schiller's ideal of Greek society and translated into more philosophical terms by Schelling became a “new power” for him during his Frankfurt period, one that now lay “scattered”²⁸⁴ throughout his writings. It is on the basis of this new concept of "unity" as an answer to the "riddles of personal life" that Rosenzweig presents his interpretation of Hölderlin's *Hyperion* as it relates to Hegel's emerging concept of fate.

Hölderlin's Hyperion and Hegel's Letter

What is at stake for Rosenzweig in the "Frankfurt" section is ultimately how a new conception of the state arises from Hegel's notion of "fate." However, over the three years Hegel spent in Frankfurt (1797-1800), this very notion went through considerable changes. Drawing on various manuscripts, but especially "The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate" (*Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal*), Rosenzweig juxtaposes

²⁸¹ "die innere Einheit und Ganzheit des Menschen gegenüberstellt der arbeitsteiligen Zersplitterung in der neueren Gesellschaft." HS 103.

²⁸² "jene schöne Einheit wieder zu erneuern"; "Aufgabe der Zukunft" HS 103.

²⁸³ "werde schlechthin Eines, erhebe die Vielheit in dir zur Einheit, d.h. werde eine in dir selbst beschlossene Totalität." HS 103.

²⁸⁴ "neue Kraft"; "versprengt" HS 103.

Hegel's ideas from this period to the earliest versions of Hölderlin's *Hyperion*—and to some fragments from his *Empedokles* as well—in order to trace Hegel's notion of fate in relation to his view on the state. Additionally, remaining within the "stream of personal life," Rosenzweig draws heavily upon a letter Hegel wrote in 1797—a "first class source"²⁸⁵—which for Rosenzweig shows the first signs of Hegel's turn away from the rights of the individual towards the power of the state. Hölderlin's *Hyperion* and Hegel's letter from 1797 provide Rosenzweig with an interpretive lens used to magnify Hegel's biographical and philosophical transition from youth to adulthood.

As I argued in Chapter I, *Hegel and the State* is best understood through its biographical form. This reading not only captures the particular manner in which Rosenzweig presents Hegel's philosophical development, but underscores Rosenzweig's struggle with the tensions of "life" and "thought" that can be traced throughout all of his work. It is also indirectly through the lens of biography that the importance of *Hyperion* within *Hegel and the State* should be understood. In his book *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*, Wilhelm Dilthey very tellingly characterizes *Hyperion* as a "*Bildungsroman*."²⁸⁶ Goethe, Jean Paul, Tieck and Novalis, along with Hölderlin, provided fine examples of the *Bildungsroman* for their time. All these authors, writes Dilthey, followed a similar form:

sie stellen alle den Jüngling jener Tage dar; wie er in glücklicher Dämmerung in das Leben eintritt, nach verwandten Seelen sucht, der Freundschaft begegnet

²⁸⁵ "eine Quelle ersten Ranges." HS 106.

²⁸⁶ Dilthey, Wilhelm. *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft, 1957. 249.

und der Liebe, wie er nun aber mit den harten Realitäten der Welt im Kampf gerät und so unter mannigfachen Lebenserfahrungen heranreift, sich selber findet und seiner Aufgabe in der Welt gewiß wird.²⁸⁷

From the above quote, one can easily see that the trajectory of the *Bildungsroman* and that of biography match up at many points. However, Dilthey goes on to distinguish between these two forms, stating that with the *Bildungsroman*, we have a literary form that presents "*das allgemein Menschliche an einem Lebenslaufe [...] bewußt und kunstvoll.*"²⁸⁸ Biography ultimately presents a *particular* life and lays claim to some form of objective reality. However, as Dilthey himself has argued, the problem of biography is that it can never completely grasp this external reality and thus must be understood as a work of art itself. Without delving further into a comparison of these two forms, suffice it to say that in the all-important Frankfurt chapter, Rosenzweig takes up some of the language and themes of Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, and in this manner momentarily combines this section of his Hegel biography with the form of the *Bildungsroman*. As Dilthey will go on to explain, however, *Hyperion* differs from other forms in this genre through its philosophical character. This "philosophical novel,"²⁸⁹ as Dilthey calls it, contains many of the same elements of biography and provides a useful tool for Rosenzweig's Hegel interpretation. While *Hegel and the State* is first and foremost an *historical* biography, overlooking Rosenzweig's philosophical—and at times poetic—gestures woven into the text, ignores the clues and the layer of complexity necessary for further integrating this work into Rosenzweig's life and thought.

²⁸⁷ Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 249.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 249.

²⁸⁹ Dilthey. *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 256.

Rosenzweig's use of a philosophical *Bildungsroman* to help shape the form of his Hegel biography is one of the most important gestures of his book.

Hyperion is the story of a young poet living in 18th century Greece, who writes a series of letters to a friend recollecting the struggle between his internal passions and desire to act in the world. It is difficult to separate the character Hyperion from Hölderlin's personal life—Rosenzweig even goes so far as referring to the pair as “Hölderlin-Hyperion”²⁹⁰ and Dilthey claims “*Hyperion ist Hölderlin selbst.*”²⁹¹ The character Hyperion's ultimate hope is for the unity of all life: “*Es wird nur Eine Schönheit sein; und Menschheit und Natur wird sich vereinen in Eine allumfassende Gottheit.*”²⁹² This hope,²⁹³ however, is manifested in the poet's own personal dilemma: how to reconcile the internal world of beauty (*Schönheit*) with the external world of action (*Tat*). This tension provides the content for Hyperion's “fate” (*Schicksal*). Torn between the poles of beauty and action, Hyperion must choose (or is it chosen for him?) between Diotima—his lover, muse and the epitome of beauty—and Alabanda—his friend who represents the epitome of action. Thus, in *Hyperion*, the concept of “fate” stands in tension between the internal pole of Hyperion's love for Diotima's beauty and the external pole of his love for Alabanda's friendship. At the turning point of the novel, Hyperion chooses to act in the world, and the same tension between internal and external becomes deeply rooted in the friendship between Hyperion and Alabanda. Hyperion represents the

²⁹⁰ HS 107.

²⁹¹ Dilthey. *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 253.

²⁹² Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. 101.

²⁹³ Dilthey interprets Hölderlin's hope in the character of Hyperion as the budding pantheistic feeling later found in Hegel as well. He claims that both Hölderlin and Hegel shared the desire for “a beautiful religion” (*schöne Religion*). *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 259.

internal poetical ideal, hoping to actualize that within him, and Alabanda represents the external consciousness, trapped within reality.²⁹⁴ For both these friends, this division between internal and external becomes a struggle with fate: "*So stehn wir da und ringen, das wandelnde Schicksal anzuhalten.*"²⁹⁵ And the only way to overcome this fate is through "love": "*Was ist alles, was in Jahrtausenden die Menschen taten und dachten, gegen Einen Augenblick der Liebe!*"²⁹⁶ Rosenzweig uses these characters and themes of the story as metaphors for the tension at play within Hegel's own thinking. He very cleverly juxtaposes the tension between the two friends in the novel to the developing life philosophies of the two friends in Frankfurt. For Hegel—Rosenzweig's "hero"²⁹⁷ at this juncture in the book—an emerging concept of "fate" is set within the terms of "internal" and "external," and the possibility of their ultimate "unity." It is through tarrying with these concepts inspired by Hölderlin that Hegel confronts the "totality" of "the riddles of personal life." This is the first peak of Rosenzweig's dramatic presentation of Hegel's life and thought. And at this peak, prior to seeing Hegel's great system take shape in the distance, Rosenzweig pauses to examine a document from Hegel's life containing an important hint on his earliest conception of fate: an unassuming personal letter from 1797.

In this letter, written to Nanette Endel on July 2nd, Hegel makes reference to his country life in Bern while describing his first days in Frankfurt:

²⁹⁴ *HS* 124.

²⁹⁵ *Hyperion* 33.

²⁹⁶ *Hyperion* 61.

²⁹⁷ Rosenzweig uses the very word "hero" in the Frankfurt section to describe Hegel—as in the "hero" of the story, like *Hyperion* is the "hero" of Hölderlin's novel.

from Frankfurt I am now always driven by the memory of those days lived in the country and how there, in the arms of nature, I always found peace with myself and with humanity, and so I often flee here to this faithful mother, so that I can again separate myself from the people with whom I live in peace and protect myself from their influence and counteract a union with them under her aegis."²⁹⁸

It is difficult to overlook the similarity between this letter and the concluding lines from the first letter of Hölderlin's *Hyperion*: "Ja, vergiß nur, daß es Menschen gibt, darbendes, angefochtenes, tausendfach geärgertes Herz! und kehre wieder dahin, wo du ausgingst, in die Arme der Natur, der wandellosen, stillen und schönen."²⁹⁹ Hegel's letter seems to be echoing Hyperion's cry to flee away from the people surrounding him into "the arms of nature" (*in die Arme der Natur*). For Rosenzweig, what is decisive here is the "separation" (*Entzweiung*) that remains between the self and the world. Dilthey puts this quite precisely when he claims: "Die Einheit mit der Natur hat hinter sich die Trennung von den Menschen."³⁰⁰ This separation is from people and unity with nature is again the theme of the very last pages of *Hyperion*, where in Dilthey's words the poet's principle has become "Flucht vor dem Leben und seinem Leiden."³⁰¹ At the beginning of his time in Frankfurt—based on this letter from 1797—Hegel seems to be in accord with the sentiments of Hölderlin's hero, with the notion of "separation" at the center of his

²⁹⁸ "aus Frankfurt treibt mich izt immer das Andenken an jene auf dem Lande verlebte Tage und sowie ich dort mich im Arme der Natur immer mit mir selbst, mit den Menschen mich aussöhnte, so flüchte ich mich hier oft zu dieser treuen Mutter, um bei ihr mich mit den Menschen, mit denen ich im Frieden lebe, wieder zu entzweyen, und mich unter ihrer Ägide von ihrem Einfluß zu bewahren, und einen Bund mit ihnen zu hintertreiben." HS 106.

²⁹⁹ *Hyperion* 8.

³⁰⁰ Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 256.

³⁰¹ Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 252.

thoughts. While in Bern, where this division between the self and the world—the division between life and thought—was first introduced owing to Hegel's ideals for justice and the dignity of man, it was the "world" itself that was guilty of this separation.³⁰² But now for the first time in Frankfurt, this division between the self and the world is no longer something external; rather, much like Hölderlin's Hyperion, "the feeling of the self had been internalized."³⁰³ Rosenzweig introduces this internalization using language very telling for our overall discussion: namely, as the "tragic knowledge" of the "necessary isolation of the inner person."³⁰⁴ Using Hegel's own formulation, Rosenzweig characterizes this tragic separation as "the highest subjectivity" (*die höchste Subjektivität*).³⁰⁵ At this juncture, there arises an unmistakable connection to Rosenzweig's own personal thoughts on tragedy.

On Rosenzweig's Language of Tragedy

In the same letter from 1911 to his cousin Gertrud Oppenheim quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Rosenzweig writes that while he was finishing the Frankfurt section he experienced one or two weeks of "condensed inspiration," wherein he outlined the conception of a new book project: *The Hero: A History of Tragic Individuality in*

³⁰² HS 106.

³⁰³ HS 107.

³⁰⁴ "zum tragischen Wissen um die über alle Zufälligkeit einer Umgebung hinaus notwendige Vereinsamung des inneren Menschen." HS 107.

³⁰⁵ HS 107.

Germany since Lessing.³⁰⁶ This is the only reference to this uncompleted work on tragedy in Rosenzweig's correspondence, but finding it together with Rosenzweig's description of his Frankfurt section is indeed significant. What was more loosely called "division" or "separation" between the individual and the state in earlier sections of the book, takes on a curious tone of *tragedy* in the Frankfurt section. It is curious, because Rosenzweig alludes to, but never explicitly spells out, the significance of tragedy for his Hegel interpretation. This is the case in the first pages of the Frankfurt section, where Rosenzweig summarizes the ethical views contained within "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate:"

Guilt and fate—so an ethic that summarizes personal life under the same concepts that art history tries to illuminate the essence of tragedy. Then still above guilt and fate, prevailing from them, dissolved and restored in them and through them, the unity of life.³⁰⁷

Although the categories of "guilt" (*Schuld*) and "fate" (*Schicksal*) fall broadly under the concept of tragedy, they are further subjugated under the idea of the unity of all life: "guilt" as the "separation of man from this unity,"³⁰⁸ and "fate" as the suffering under this separation and desire for reconciliation. Thus, in terms of our own discussion, tragedy and tragic thinking as they appear in the Frankfurt section are themselves contained within the form of biography. It is one of my central tasks to show to what degree and in

³⁰⁶ The manuscript is contained in the Leo Baeck archive in New York City.

³⁰⁷ "*Schuld und Schicksal—eine Ethik also, die das persönliche Leben unter die gleichen Begriffe faßte, mit denen die Kunstforschung das Wesen der Tragödie zu erhellen versucht. Noch über Schuld und Schicksal dann, vor ihnen bestehend, in ihnen und durch sie sich lösend und wiederherstellen, die Einheit des Lebens.*" HS 97.

³⁰⁸ "*Trennung des Menschen von dieser Einheit.*" HS 97.

what manner Rosenzweig's biographical interpretation is rooted in a tragic understanding of Hegel's personality and then point to possible ways this understanding is reflected in Rosenzweig's own biography. For example, if we read parts of *Hegel and the State* through the language of tragedy—as will be seen most clearly in the "Napoleon" section that begins the second volume—a light is shed upon Hegel's life and thought that helps to clarify Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel's failure to unite "concept" and "experience." Moreover, with Rosenzweig's language of tragedy in mind, the beginnings of a pathway are illuminated that leads from *Hegel and the State* to Rosenzweig's own conception of the self in *The Star of Redemption* as "metaethics."

A brief note on this relation between Rosenzweig's two main works proves useful here. When Rosenzweig claims, as we described above, that Hegel's first conception of "fate" led him to the "tragic knowledge" of the "necessary isolation of the inner person," designating it with Hegel as "the highest subjectivity," then it is apparent that a similar formulation is at the basis of his notion of "metaethics" in *The Star of Redemption*. There he writes that the "metaethical" man "has only himself, knows only himself, is known to no one, for no one exists but he."³⁰⁹ This is a strikingly similar moment of tragic isolation to the moment Rosenzweig observes in Hegel's letter at the beginning of his Frankfurt period. However, and without pursuing this juxtaposition much further here, compared to *The Star of Redemption*, where a theory of tragedy is worked out in some detail, it is clear that there are only *references* to drama and tragedy in *Hegel and the State*, but nowhere an explicit theory of dramatic or tragic form. Where the language of tragedy does appear it functions more along the lines of what Hayden White, in his book

³⁰⁹ *Star* 71.

Metahistory, calls "emplotment": "the way by which a sequence of events fashioned into a story is gradually revealed to be a story of a particular kind."³¹⁰

White's concept is useful to keep in mind when dealing with Rosenzweig's language of tragedy in *Hegel and the State*. This tragic "emplotment" first surfaces within the Frankfurt section and reaches a point of emphasis with the notion of "the highest subjectivity."³¹¹ In terms of Rosenzweig's biographical narrative, this moment of tragic isolation is the pivotal "turning-point" in Hegel's understanding of the individual's relation to the world, and by extension, the state: "[i]n Hegel's development this feeling of life is only a moment, but if I am not mistaken, the decisive one, from whose overcoming he emerged a matured person."³¹² This concept of "the highest subjectivity" not only anticipates Rosenzweig's own notion of "metaethics," but with regard to Hegel's understanding of the state is the pivotal and "decisive" notion by way of which his view of the state is permanently transformed. By following Rosenzweig and reading this transformation through the language of tragedy, we may come to a better understanding of why Hegel once again takes up an analysis of Christianity and the life of Jesus and how through this interpretation, as I show below, he develops his notion of "fate" as history itself. Turning for now from Hölderlin's *Hyperion* and Rosenzweig's language of tragedy, we can take a closer look at Hegel's own writings from this period, and how they helped determine his development.

³¹⁰ White, *Metahistory*. 7.

³¹¹ "die höchste Subjektivität." HS 107.

³¹² HS 107.

"The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate": Hegel's Turn from Personal Life

Dilthey summarizes Hegel's general development during his Frankfurt period quite nicely in the following long, but important quote, which I repeat in the original German:

Es war die Zeit, in welcher, in theologischen Verkleidungen, Hegels neue Philosophie sich entwickelte. Er trennte sich nun endgültig von der Denkweise Kants, Fichtes und Schillers. Deren Grundgedanke war die schöpferische Kraft der Persönlichkeit gewesen: sie bringt in unserem anschauenden und denkenden Verhalten die Welt hervor, die wir als von außen gegeben hinnehmen, und in der Sphäre unseres Willens erzeugt die das Ideal, das die Persönlichkeit in der so gegebenen Welt verwirklichen soll. Nun wurde diese in das Unendliche strebende Kraft seit Schellings Schrift vom Ich zum Absoluten erhoben. Die Entzweiung, die in diesem All-Einen vor sich geht, samt dem schmerzlichen Bewußtsein von ihr, und die Versöhnung, welche die Gegensätze aufhebt und doch bewahrt—das war Hegels Formel, in der ein neues pantheistisches Lebensgefühl zum Ausdruck gelangte. Inmitten der Gegensätze, in denen das Göttliche allein seine Realität haben kann, besitzt und behauptet es seine Einheit. Der Tiefsinn des Christentums liegt in dem Bewußtsein dieses Göttlichen, des Leides der Trennung in ihm und der Seligkeit der Versöhnung. Das ist nun auch das Grundgefühl Hegels, das immerfort schlagende Herz in seiner Philosophie.³¹³

I have included Dilthey's formulation of this period, because it captures quite precisely the spirit of Rosenzweig's interpretation. Here we have the transition from a philosophy based on "the force of personality" to one striving for reconciliation in the "absolute." However, in his biographical narrative, Rosenzweig presents Hegel as an historical personality, thereby showing the limits of absolute Idealism. Through the form of his

³¹³ Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 247.

narrative alone, he implies that Hegel never quite escapes the confines of individuality he attempted to overcome. But more important for the chapter at hand, is Dilthey's emphasis on "*Entzweiung*" (separation) during this period and how Hegel struggled to overcome this separation between his self and the world through the lens of Christianity. Rosenzweig is clearly following and expanding upon Dilthey's lead. However, what is missing from Dilthey's summary is Hegel's emerging notion of fate. This emphasis can be said to be the original contribution of Rosenzweig's Frankfurt section in general and his reading of "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" in particular.

In Rosenzweig's understanding, Hegel's Frankfurt period can be characterized as moving from the fate of personal life, through the thought of reconciliation in love, and finally towards the notion of fate as history itself. Rosenzweig follows these movements, as I show below, in order to understand the role of fate in Hegel's conception of the state. In order to do so, he first focuses on Hegel's text "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate." Although Hegel again takes up the Christian faith as he had earlier in "The Positivity of the Christian Religion," there the subject matter was the *doctrine* of the church, whereas here it is the *life* of Jesus himself.³¹⁴ As Erich Auerbach wisely points out in "The Idea of Man in Literature," the introductory essay to his book on Dante, it is precisely the story of Jesus Christ that reveals "the intensity of personal life."³¹⁵ Keeping in mind Hegel's early exposure to theology, it should come as no surprise that in exploring the "riddles of personal life," Hegel was drawn to the personal struggle found in the life of Jesus.

³¹⁴ As T.M. Knox remarks in the introduction to Hegel's *Early Theological Writings*: "The change of style from *The Positivity of the Christian Religion* [...] to *The Spirit of Christianity* is so radical as to be almost alarming. Hegel, "The Positivity of the Christian Religion," 8.

³¹⁵ Auerbach, 14.

Rosenzweig divides Hegel's "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" into two phases of development. Whereas the first phase deals with the relation of Jesus to the 'spirit of Judaism' and would later serve as an introduction to the final piece, the second phase deals with a more developed, and transformed, notion of the "fate" of Jesus and a new appropriation of the history of Christianity³¹⁶—this second phase would result in the main text of the completed work. With these two phases also come two different understandings of "fate" for Hegel.

Using what we have called a language of tragedy, Rosenzweig argues that Hegel's first concept of fate stems from his notion of "the highest subjectivity," which developed out of his personal relationship to Hölderlin as evidenced in the letter of 1797. When Hegel first applied this concept to the life of Jesus,³¹⁷ Jesus was still posited over and against the world: "he cannot unify himself with the objects about him."³¹⁸ This is still the idea of "the highest subjectivity" Rosenzweig saw portrayed in Hegel's letter: "This condition is namely perceived as suffering, but as a suffering for which there is no remedy, no fight, nor can there be, precisely because man wants suffering; he tries to keep himself pure of the world, to preserve his foreignness over and against it."³¹⁹ For Hegel's view of Jesus, this meant that he understood him as entirely isolated from the world, but for Hegel personally, this literally meant fleeing—like Hyperion—"into the arms of nature."

³¹⁶ This second phase was written in light of the newly published second edition of Kant's moral theory.

³¹⁷ In the essay "Life of Jesus."

³¹⁸ "mit den Objekten um ihn kann er sich nicht vereinigen." HS 106.

³¹⁹ "Als Leiden nämlich wird dieser Zustand empfunden, aber als ein Leiden, gegen das es kein Mittel, keinen Kampf gibt noch geben darf, eben weil der Mensch das Leiden will; er sucht sich von der Welt rein zu erhalten, seine Fremdheit gegen sie zu bewahren." HS 106.

In a short fragment “On Love,” Hegel attempted to solve what he understood as the fundamental dualism arising from this separation—between “internal” and “external” life—through a metaphysical reconciliation in love. But, as Rosenzweig notes, this reconciliation still took place “within the windowless four walls of the self.”³²⁰ This conception of fate, which posits the individual in his inner isolation as an “indivisible unity” (*unteilbare Einheit*) or as the “unity of life” (*Einheit des Lebens*),³²¹ was still far from the “turning-point” in Hegel’s development. For at this juncture—still in regard to “the relation of the individual to the state”³²²—“[m]an is still the measure of the state.”³²³ Thus, as Peter Gordon points out in his excellent chapter on this subject—cleverly titled “Hegel’s Fate”—with regard to Hegel’s emerging and new metaphysical understanding of fate, “the new unity of subject and world would then allow for the appearance of a new kind of state no longer confined to ‘the measure of man’.”³²⁴

For Rosenzweig, this new conception of the state emerges towards the end of Hegel’s Frankfurt period from a new concept of fate. Within the second phase of writing “The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate,” fate no longer remains isolated to the individual, but through the personal fate of Abraham expands to the Jewish people in their isolation from the world: “the spirit of Abraham is the unity, the soul, which rules over the fates of

³²⁰ “*in den gensterlosen vier Wänden des Ichs.*” HS 112; he continues on that man was hereby ultimately left with a “fear of one’s own” (*Furcht für das Eigene*), HS 111.

³²¹ HS 111.

³²² “*Verhältnis des Einzelmenschen zum Staat.*” HS 113-14.

³²³ “*Der Mensch ist noch das Maß des Staats.*” HS 111.

³²⁴ Peter Gordon, “Hegel’s Fate.” In *Rosenzweig and Heidegger*. 108.

all his descendants.”³²⁵ Rosenzweig concludes from this shift in Hegel’s position that the “concept of fate now grew into an historical life.”³²⁶ From this new conception of fate as a historically and not primarily individually based category, Hegel then moves to the “personal-ethical” (*persönlich-ethisch*)³²⁷ consequences of this transformation.

In the early stages of Hegel’s conception of fate, it was still understood as “a human act” (*menschlicher Tat*).³²⁸ As was expressed in the letter of 1797, Hegel at first believed that the fate of the individual and the fate of the world were separate, only to be reconciled through love. But now this division is overcome through a new notion of fate. Hegel now claims for the first time that fate can occur for man “also in suffering”: “fate comes about either through your own act or that of another.”³²⁹ For Rosenzweig this implies that even for the self of the letter of 1797, the self that “counteracts a union with the world”, “even in such suffering the “highest subjectivity” cannot escape the force of the world.”³³⁰ Hegel can now agree with Hölderlin’s Hyperion that only children and the gods are “fateless.”³³¹ This new conception of human fate applies to Jesus Christ as well. Whereas before the fate of Jesus was bound up with his personal inability to be unified with the world, now this inability itself, this “suffering” which he did not choose for himself, is the cause of his fate.

³²⁵ HS 112.

³²⁶ HS 114.

³²⁷ HS 114.

³²⁸ HS 116.

³²⁹ “auch im Leiden”; “das Schicksal ist entweder aus eigener oder anderer Tat entstanden.” HS 116.

³³⁰ “auch solche leidende “höchste Subjektivität” vermag der Gewalt der Welt nicht zu entgehen.” HS 117.

³³¹ “Schicksallos, wie der schlafende Säugling, atmen die Himmlischen.” Hyperion 160.

What Rosenzweig draws from these connections is profoundly significant for Hegel's development. Indeed, this new conception of fate is the "turning-point" he prepared his readers for at the beginning of the Frankfurt section. Rosenzweig comes across the necessary proof of Hegel's new view of the state in an unassuming series of lines from a draft of "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate":

The existence of Jesus was thus separation from the world and a fleeing from it into heaven [...] in part an activity of the divine and in this way a fight with fate, in part in the spreading of the empire of God [...] in part immediate reaction against individual parts of fate, as they affect him in the moment; except against the part of fate that immediately appeared as state and also came to consciousness in Jesus, against which he held himself passive.³³²

When Pontius Pilate, the head of the Roman state, sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion, he did not resist. This was the part of Jesus' fate against which he did not fight. Rosenzweig interprets these lines as the culmination of Hegel's new concept of fate: "[t]he state as a part of fate!"³³³ This development of fate from an isolated individual to an individual as part of a political and historical process, made way for a new conception of the state: "the whole of life as it confronted the individual, something unavoidable, from which he cannot escape."³³⁴ "This is the moment", writes

³³² *"Die Existenz des Jesus war also Trennung von der Welt und Flucht von ihr in den Himmel; [...] zum Teil Betätigung des Göttlichen und insofern Kampf mit dem Schicksal, teils in Verbreitung des Reiches Gottes [...] teils in unmittelbarer Reaktion gegen einzelne Teile des Schicksals, so wie sie ihn gerade anstießen; außer gegen den Teil des Schicksals, der unmittelbar als Staat erschien, und auch in Jesu zum Bewußtsein kam, gegen welchen er sich passive verhielt."* HS 119.

³³³ *"Der Staat als Teil des Schicksals."* HS 119.

³³⁴ *"das Ganze des Lebens, wie es dem einzelnen entgegentritt, ein Unvermeidbares, dem er sich nicht entziehen kann."* HS 119.

Rosenzweig, “where every view of the state that would place the individual before the whole has become an absurdity.”³³⁵ Regarding the question of the relation of the individual to the state, which in Bern favored the rights of the individual, the scales have now decisively tipped in favor of the state.

In concluding his interpretation of Hegel's new conception of fate, which, much like Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, now took on the qualities of "*die Todesgöttin, die Namenlose*,"³³⁶ Rosenzweig reveals his critical stance towards Hegel and his view that Hegel's philosophy ultimately favors the state over the individual:

It is unthinkable that what “fate” is in this awful sense could still be contract. There the state has grown above and beyond all dependency on individuals. And just like this the thinker will now find more and something different in the state than the citizens of human rights and will no longer submit himself to hold to the rules of justice as the highest measure.³³⁷

This new conception of fate, which places the state over the individual, points towards the end of the “winding paths” (*verschlungene Pfade*)³³⁸ of Hegel's personal life, where “life and idea [are] still entangled.”³³⁹ As we have been following the biographical and

³³⁵ "Das ist der Augenblick, wo jede Staatsansicht, die den einzelnen vor dem Ganzen sähe, *ein Unding geworden ist.*" HS 120.

³³⁶ *Hyperion* 119.

³³⁷ "Undenkbar, daß, was "Schicksal" in diesem ungeheuren Sinne ist, noch Vertrag sein könnte. Der Staat ist da über alle Abhängigkeit von Einzelmenschen hinausgewachsen. Und ebenso wird jetzt der Denker im Staat mehr und anderes finden als den Bürgern der Menschenrechte, und wird sich nicht mehre unterwinden, Gerechtigkeit als höchsten Maßstab an seine Ordnungen zu halten." HS 120.

³³⁸ HS 120.

³³⁹ "Leben und Idee noch ineinandergeknäuel." Rosenzweig, *Briefe* 28.9.11

philosophical division between life and thought, this is a most decisive moment in Rosenzweig's narration. For at the end of these "winding paths," the "whole" has finally won out over the "part."³⁴⁰ This critical formulation, which emphasizes the division between life and thought, whole and part, and their possible reconciliation in absolute unity, foreshadows Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel in the *Star* and presents readers with a first glimpse of the historical personality, who would come to dominate the political thinking of the nineteenth century. From the "hidden sorrows and passions" of personal life, the character of the great, historical Hegel now slowly begins to emerge.

While Rosenzweig does not prove that Hölderlin's *Hyperion* was in Hegel's heart and mind when he developed his notions of fate—or, for that matter, whether a scholar can explain the most pressing issues of development from personal letters—Rosenzweig's presentation of Hegel's Frankfurt period shows his own assumption, namely that by exploring the riddles of personal life one can locate the most pivotal points in an individual's philosophical and biographical development. For Hegel personally, this point was the turn from personal life to the life of the state—the turn from the feeling of tragic isolation towards "fate as history itself."

Hegel's Turn towards History as Fate

The new relation between the individual and the state that Rosenzweig extracted from the drafts of "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" was portrayed as the turning-point in Hegel's development. But towards what did he turn? In the following section, I show how through Hegel's new conception of fate, not only did the state win the upper

³⁴⁰ "Im Kampf zwischen Teil und Ganzem [...] hat jetzt [...] das Ganze endgültig gesiegt." HS 122.

hand against the individual, but it was above all Hegel's understanding of history that was dramatically transformed. This transformation in his conception of history soon became Hegel's new "belief" (*Glaube*).³⁴¹

Hegel's years in Bern, where he first wrote about the contemporary political events of his age, resulted in the first signs of that separation between life and thought which would come to dominate his Frankfurt period. Now armed with a new conception of fate, Hegel once again looked outward to the political events unfolding around him. From 1797 to 1799, a group of representatives from the German empire met with French delegates at what became known as the *Rastatter Kongress*. The purpose of the congress was to settle a land dispute with France, but this settlement was interrupted by the War of the Second Coalition and never concluded. For Hegel, this was occasion enough to turn from the riddles of personal life and philosophy of religion to an object of inquiry he could almost reach out and touch: "the German empire and its constitution."³⁴²

The results of these reflections are known today as Hegel's *Reichsschrift*. This critical piece of writing on the German constitution would occupy Hegel well into his life in Jena, where he moved after Frankfurt. To give a sense for the nature of these reflections, Rosenzweig notes a central theme in Hegel's thinking—one of Hegel's "favorite thoughts"—which would return again and again: "a revolution comes about

³⁴¹ HS 129. One should take pause at the use of the word "belief" here, given the importance of this term for Rosenzweig's later thought as a philosopher of religion. In the context of our discussion, however, while writing *Hegel and the State*, questions around the words "belief" and "history" would occupy Rosenzweig in a series of letters to his cousin Hans Ehrenberg (see for example, 26.9.20). During these discussions, where he writes that "[f]ür Hegel war die Geschichte göttlich," Rosenzweig is critical of those equating history with a divine purpose: "wenn die Geschichte göttlich wäre." This phrasing has unfortunately led to some misunderstanding of Rosenzweig's thought and an uncritical overemphasis on the a-historical nature of his thinking. Without further examination of this problem here, one can at least take from this discussion the critical tone with which one should read the word "belief" in the context of Hegel's development.

³⁴² "Das deutsche Reich und seine Verfassung." HS 120.

when the spirit has left a constitution."³⁴³ Although the idea of "revolution" now returned to Hegel's thinking, one must carefully distinguish it from the revolutionary "ideas of 1789." There, the notions of the dignity of man and justice stood to protect the individual against the state. Here, the individual and the state have switched roles and Hegel stands to protect "the right of the state over the individual."³⁴⁴ This is a direct result of the shift in his political thinking outlined above.

According to Hegel's observations, the German state now stood "isolated in the world from the spirit of the age."³⁴⁵ Hegel claimed his countrymen were living under "the legend of German freedom", where "the individual stood for himself, unbent by a universal" and "suffered nothing from the whole."³⁴⁶ Whereas in the early years in Frankfurt, this "whole" was the "unity of personal life," towards the end of the Frankfurt period it is the "universal" of the state. Hegel's emerging belief in history leads him to exclaim of this state: "The entire fate of more than a thousand years is contained within it."³⁴⁷ History itself has now become "the power of the universal over the particular, of state over man."³⁴⁸ These are the formulations that set the tone for Rosenzweig's first assessment of Hegel's *Reichsschrift*. And in turning to this political pamphlet, it is once again Hölderlin who serves as Rosenzweig's guide.

³⁴³ "Einen seiner Lieblingsgedanken"; "eine Revolution entsteht, wenn der Geist aus einer Verfassung gewichen ist." HS 121.

³⁴⁴ "das Recht des Staats über den einzelnen." HS 123.

³⁴⁵ "isoliert vom Geiste der Zeit in der Welt." HS 121.

³⁴⁶ "die Sage von der deutschen Freiheit"; "der einzelne ungebeugt von einem Allgemeinen für sich stand." HS 121.

³⁴⁷ "Das ganze Schicksal mehr als eines Jahrtausends ist in ihm enthalten." HS 121.

³⁴⁸ "diese Macht des Allgemeinen über das Einzelne, des Staats über den Menschen." HS 122.

Like the actual political reality he was observing, the subject of Hegel's political critique is the individual who no longer feels at home in the forms of the world about him. Hegel presents us with two opposing forces: on the one hand "the dull impulse of the stirred-up masses and individuals towards change" and on the other "the longing for "life" of minds meandering in the light of the idea."³⁴⁹ Rosenzweig translates these opposing forces into the contrasting characters of Hyperion and Alabanda's friends in the beginning of Hölderlin's novel: Alabanda's friends—with whom Alabanda at first associates, but then rejects—are represented as the "stirred-up masses" struggling to escape from their imprisonment within reality; Hyperion is represented as hoping to actualize that idea that is already within him.³⁵⁰ In response to those Hyperion-like individuals, Hegel writes that they "cannot live alone."³⁵¹ This is the moment when "the highest subjectivity" of the letter of 1797 is completely overcome. Earlier, it was indeed negated but no other way was posited, resulting in a separation with the world characterized by perpetual suffering. Now however, the move is made "towards joyfulness, towards a complete reconciliation of man with the world."³⁵²

³⁴⁹ "dem dumpfen Drang der aufgewühlten Massen und einzelnen nach Veränderung und der Sehnsucht der im Lichte der Idee wandelnden Geister nach 'Leben'." HS 124.

³⁵⁰ See HS 124.

³⁵¹ "Sie können nicht 'allein' leben!" HS 125.

³⁵² "der Schritt zur Freudigkeit, zur völligen Versöhnung des Menschen mit der Welt." HS 125.

man had here finally stopped to want to counter-act his union with the world, he no longer wants to “be alone”, he wants to find that which is presented in him, his own nature “worked into an idea also outside of himself, as something living.”³⁵³

What Hegel had described earlier as the highest ideal of personal life, namely to “counter-act a union with the world”, he now describes as “ever-enduring death” (*immerwährender Tod*).³⁵⁴ But, like the fate of Jesus, those of “Hyperion-nature” still “want their suffering” and are forced to confront this death. In contrast, those individuals with minds like Alabanda's friends have “namely no 'will' to suffer.”³⁵⁵ These people “act, and know the consequences of their actions.”³⁵⁶ They are “like the blind heroic revolutionary.”³⁵⁷ Certainly, this is not the path those of “Hyperion-nature” would like to take towards action. Yet what should they do, Rosenzweig asks with Hegel, those who live within the idea, and like Hyperion are filled with “*Tatenlust*,”³⁵⁸ but likewise see the futility in becoming blind revolutionaries? Here a paradox arises, for it seems they have no choice but to give themselves over to action, to the blind revolutionary impulses they see around them. Rosenzweig summarizes this paradox as follows: “the enthusiasm of one bound is a horrible moment, for he possesses the consciousness of his personality

³⁵³ “*der Mensch hat hier endlich aufgehört, seinen Bund mit der Welt hintertreiben zu wollen, er will nicht mehr "allein sein," er will das in sich Dargestellte, seine eigene "zur Idee hervorgearbeitete" Natur außer sich, als ein Lebendiges finden.*” HS 125.

³⁵⁴ HS 126.

³⁵⁵ “*ohne den Willen nämlich zum 'Leiden'.*” HS 126-27.

³⁵⁶ “*sie handeln, und wissen die Folgen ihres Handelns.*” HS 127.

³⁵⁷ “*wie dem blind heldenhaften Revolutionär.*” HS 127

³⁵⁸ *Hyperion* 116.

only in the limits of his fate, and so he would demolish his highest life along with it if he rebelled against these limits."³⁵⁹

The above quote refers exactly to what happens to Hyperion when he joins Alabanda in Greece's revolutionary war. After receiving a letter from his friend describing the urgency of the situation, he must choose between his desire to act in the world and his highest ideal, his love for Diotima. In the end, Hyperion decides to leave the life of the idea and follows his fate into action, giving himself up to the force of the state. Although Diotima dies before Hyperion can return, the two lovers are reconciled in the divine unity of nature after Diotima's death—"auch wir, auch wir sind nicht geschieden."³⁶⁰ Hegel at first takes up the solution of his friend: "fate must turn in on itself."³⁶¹ That is, rather than the actions of the individual reconciling individual and world, it is nature as fate itself that represents the unity of life. Yet whereas Hölderlin understands this inward-turning fate as the work of divine nature, Hegel sees another force at work. As Rosenzweig writes: "Fate is no longer reconciled by the I, no longer through love, but rather in itself and through itself fate becomes—history."³⁶²

While Rosenzweig does not provide a comparison between these varying views, he provides a needed dimension with his interpretation. As Dilthey has pointed out, one characteristic feature of the form of the *Bildungsroman* is that it expresses the "*Individualismus einer Kultur [...] die auf die Interessensphäre des Privatlebens*

³⁵⁹ "ein furchtbarer Moment ist die Begeisterung eines Gebundenen, denn der besitzt ja das Bewußtsein seiner Persönlichkeit nur in den Schranken des Schicksals, und so würde er sein höchstes Leben mitzertrümmern, wenn er sich gegen diese Schranken auflehnt." HS 128.

³⁶⁰ Hyperion 178.

³⁶¹ "das Schicksal muß sich in sich selber wandeln" HS 128.

³⁶² "Das Schicksal wird also nicht mehr vom Ich aus, nicht mehr durch die Liebe versöhnt, sondern in sich und durch sich selbst: das Schicksal wird zur—Geschichte." HS 128.

eingeschränkt ist."³⁶³ In *Hyperion*, although Hölderlin looks to nature in order to reconcile himself with the world, this occurs within the sphere of private life—"innig im Innersten".³⁶⁴ On the other hand, in Frankfurt Hegel moves from the solitary confines of personal life to find reconciliation in the grand historical march of the world as exemplified in the state. As Dilthey contends quite strongly of Hölderlin: "*Nicht um auf seine Nation zu wirken, sehnt er sich, ein großes Kunstwerk hervorzubringen, sondern um seine nach Vollendung dürstende Seele zu sättigen.*"³⁶⁵ On the surface, one could contend that an interest in political matters would ultimately separate Hegel from his friend Hölderlin.³⁶⁶ However, it must equally be admitted that when Hegel finally turns from personal life towards history, he is still functioning under that reconciliatory principle of "*das All-Eine*"³⁶⁷ that Dilthey sees reflected in the "individualism" of the Romantic age. Thus, it is ultimately the same drive that guides Hölderlin and Hegel's thought—the unity of all life—and in this manner a remnant of individualism remains within Hegel's new conception of the state. Rather than placing the fate of the private individual at the center of all life, the state itself now becomes the new manifestation of individual personality. Fate is no longer a private affair, but, as history itself, an urgent matter for the nations of the world.

³⁶³ Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 249

³⁶⁴ *Hyperion* 178.

³⁶⁵ Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 258. For most writers of this time, claims Dilthey, the interests of the state stood "*als fremde Gewalt gegenüber*" (See 258).

³⁶⁶ When a discussion of the state does arise in *Hyperion*, it is largely confined to the context of personal life. See for example *Hyperion* 35.

³⁶⁷ Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung*. 257.

Hegel's new answer to the "riddles of personal life," that fate is history itself, is the decisive result of the "turning-point" of Hegel's Frankfurt period—it is Hegel's new "belief" in history. The significance of this new belief cannot be underestimated in Hegel's political thought. Rosenzweig thus summarizes the great importance history now assumes for Hegel:

History acquires for Hegel in this moment the moral (sittliche), indeed nothing short of religious meaning, which it retained for him his entire life; it is the great basin, in which man is washed clean of all guilt, it is the stream into which the individual flows with both duty and bliss. The walls of fate, in which the spiritual man was himself hopelessly trapped, fall on their own. This Hegel's new and for him ultimate solution!³⁶⁸

Hegel's new belief is that fate is history itself. The "guilt" of separation is reconciled in the "stream" of historical thought. This transformation of Hegel's concept of fate from a "personal" fate clothed in the language of tragedy to the "universal" fate of world history is a key moment in Rosenzweig's subsequent understanding Hegel's philosophy of state, a moment he will draw upon again and again in his interpretation.

Hegel's development during his Frankfurt period can thus be characterized as moving from the fate of personal life through the thought of reconciliation in love and finally towards history itself as fate bound to the state. Throughout this biographical and philosophical transition, as Rosenzweig already stated at the beginning of the section,

³⁶⁸ *"Die Geschichte gewinnt in diesem Augenblick für Hegel die sittliche, ja geradezu religiöse Bedeutung, die sie ihm zeitlebens behalten hat; sie ist das große Becken, in welchem der Mensch von aller Schuld reingewaschen wird, sie ist der Strom, in den zu münden dem einzelnen Pflicht und Seligkeit zugleich ist. Die Mauern des Schicksals, in denen sich der geistige Mensch hoffnungslos gefangen sah, stürzen von selbst ein. Diese Hegels neue und ihm endgültige Lösung." HS 128.*

"[t]he idea of the unity of all life gained force."³⁶⁹ Within Rosenzweig's biographical narrative, the last years of Hegel's Frankfurt period are especially important, as they mark the final struggle with personal life before the beginnings of Hegel's "system." Indeed, in these final days in Frankfurt Rosenzweig's sees the "stream" of Hegel's personal development concentrated into the "stream" of his historical thought. When Hegel first joined Hölderlin in Frankfurt, this new phase of their friendship perhaps felt similar to the first meeting between Hyperion and Alabanda: "*Wir begegneten einander, wie zwei Bäche [...] vereint in Einen majestätischen Strom, die Wanderung ins weite Meer beginnen.*"³⁷⁰ However, Hegel and Hölderlin's personal lives would soon drift part. While Hölderlin's stream led him deeper into the solitary confinement of an internal unity, Hegel's stream of life would soon be infused with a fresh stream of thought, making its way towards the great basin of history without his friend by his side. This change is reflected in the first draft of Hegel's *Reichsschrift*, towards which Rosenzweig once again turns.

In the introduction to the first draft of the *Reichsschrift*, Hegel admits that he is witnessing an epoch in Germany in which the individual no longer feels satisfied with the old way of life. In terms of his view of the state, this translates for Hegel into the idea that "the Kaiser's power" is no longer the true "universal" of the state, but rather "isolates itself, has made itself into a particular" and so is "now present only as a thought, no

³⁶⁹ "*Die Idee der Einheit alles Lebens gewann Gewalt.*" HS 97.

³⁷⁰ *Hyperion* 29.

longer as a reality.”³⁷¹ Now almost free from the binds of personal life, Hegel’s emerging task—or as I hinted in Chapter II, Hegel’s future task—is to find a new unity between the realms of idea and world—a unity independent of Hölderlin’s Romantic views. This is the first sign of what later would become the unity of "actuality" and "reason" in his thought:

a movement enters into “fate”, the rigid metal begins to flow and to knowingly follow this flow is fulfillment for the longing of the people, thirsty for life, who are [residing in] the empire of the idea, the goal of their actions.³⁷²

From the stream of personal life, Hegel’s thought now enters as a "stream of thought" into that "great basin" of history. What Hegel’s friend Schelling had worked out in a scientific manner in his *System of Transcendental Idealism*, that is, “a new philosophical valuation of history,” Hegel had come upon only through “personal perils and doubts.”³⁷³ For the three friends from Tübingen—to now include Schelling—the "riddles of personal life" were worked out in different measures: Hölderlin channeled his energy into *Hyperion* and began to live the life of a poet; Schelling was recognized openly as a philosopher and systematically expressed his personal struggles. For Hegel on the other hand, who was still six years away from publishing *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, there was no poetic output or systematic conclusion, but pages and pages of manuscript drafts

³⁷¹ "daß etwa die kaiserliche Macht nicht mehr das wahre 'Allgemeine' des Staats ist, sondern 'sich isoliert, zum Besonderen gemacht hat' und so 'nur noch als Gedanke, nicht als Wirklichkeit mehr vorhanden' ist." HS 129.

³⁷² "im 'Schicksal' geht eine Bewegung vor, das starre Metall kommt in Fluß, und diesem Fluß erkennend zu folgen, ist dem aus dem Reich der Idee nach Leben dürstenden Menschen Erfüllung seiner Sehnsucht, Ziel seiner Tat." HS 129.

³⁷³ "die neue philosophische Wertung der Geschichte"; "aus ganz persönlichen Fährnissen und Zweifeln." HS 129.

and fragments. Thus, ever searching for clues on Hegel's emerging view of the state, Rosenzweig would find the full force of this period of Hegel's development and the final remnants of Hegel's personal life confined within a single line.³⁷⁴ In a draft of Hegel's "System Fragment of 1800," Rosenzweig presents the crowning ideal of Hegel's youth as the desire for "unity with the age."³⁷⁵

The Unity of Personal Life

The trajectory of Rosenzweig's chapter leads from division towards unity. Rosenzweig attempted to show how Hegel's biography and his philosophical development match up during this period, providing a new direction for Hegel's thought. As Hegel himself would write to Schelling in November, 1800, his new task was now to "return to an engagement with the life of the people."³⁷⁶ In stark contrast to the letter of 1797, where Hegel called for the "separation" (Entzweiung) of the individual from the world into the self, he now writes in an epigraph shortly after arriving in Jena: "break the peace with yourself."³⁷⁷ "The compass of the soul", concludes Rosenzweig,

has turned its point in the opposite direction, the "highest subjectivity" of the past has given way to the striving towards highest objectivity; the star towards which

³⁷⁴ This is an example of the style of citation that Stéphane Mosès believes links the "gestures" of Rosenzweig's Hegel book to the thought and style of Walter Benjamin.

³⁷⁵ "Vereinigung mit der Zeit." HS 130.

³⁷⁶ "Rückkehr zum Eingreifen in das Leben der Menschen zu finden." HS 131.

³⁷⁷ "Brich den Frieden mit dir." HS 131.

the needle now points is “the age”; “to be the best part of [it],” to unite oneself with it is the new magic word.³⁷⁸

Upon closer inspection, Rosenzweig's interpretation reveals a strong link to his own historical situation. As Rosenzweig argues above, Hegel's new task was to unify himself with the age. Thus, he would leave the 18th century behind—a century when great personalities, such as Montesquieu and Rousseau, began to shape the course of history—and embrace the "highest objectivity" of the dawning 19th century.

This opposition between "highest subjectivity" and "highest objectivity" is the same tension that reappears in Hans Ehrenberg's pamphlet "*Die Geschichte des Menschen unserer Zeit*"³⁷⁹ at the beginning of the 20th century. Rosenzweig had read his cousin's publication in 1911, the same year he was finishing up the Frankfurt chapter.³⁸⁰

Ehrenberg, a student of Wilhelm Windelband, was one of the first intellectuals to take the Hegel renaissance in Germany seriously. And although Ehrenberg, like Rosenzweig, is ultimately critical of Hegel, he adopts many Hegelian motifs in his thinking. This can be said of Rosenzweig as well. Most notably, both Ehrenberg and Rosenzweig would inherit the reconciliatory role Hegel assigned to history. Ehrenberg, for example, sees history as the critical tool necessary for overcoming that inherited opposition between subjectivity and objectivity: "*so wird diese Entzweiung durch die Macht der Geschichte*

³⁷⁸ "*Der Kompaß de Seele hat seine Spitze nach der entgegengesetzten Richtung gekehrt, die "höchste Subjektivität" von einst ist dem Streben nach höchster Sachlichkeit gewichen; der Stern, nach dem die Nadel jetzt weist, ist die "Zeit"; sie "aufs beste zu sein," sich mit ihr zu vereinigen, ist das neue Zauberwort.*" HS 131.

³⁷⁹ Hans Ehrenberg, "*Die Geschichte des Menschen unserer Zeit.*" A-Ω Verlag (1911). Unpaginated. I have added my own pagination beginning with the epigraph as page 1 and proceeding consecutively.

³⁸⁰ See a reference to this in a letter to Ehrenberg. Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 6.12.13.

sich schließen."³⁸¹ Not only does Ehrenberg understand history as that "power" able to unite oppositions, but he describes this unification using a term Rosenzweig would adopt in his Hegel book: "Nur in der höchsten Sachlichkeit unseres Strebens und Vollführens besitzen wir heute die Waffe und das Werkzeug unserer Schaffenslust."³⁸² Yet whereas Hegel assigns a metaphysical and almost religious importance to history, the cousins do not take it that far. At the beginning of the 20th century, both cousins were searching for a way from "*Objektivität zur Subjektivität*"³⁸³—this ultimately translated into the path from history towards religion. Thus, whereas Hegel, as a product of "1800", was shown to move from subjectivity towards objectivity, Rosenzweig, as a product of "1900," begins with the "highest objectivity" ultimately inherited from the 19th century and—in the form of historical analysis—looked to move towards a new unity of life and thought. It is difficult to determine how influential Ehrenberg's interpretation was for Rosenzweig's philosophical narrative of Hegel's Frankfurt period. But at the very least, giving pause at this connection emphasizes the overlap between Rosenzweig's Hegel interpretation and his own biography. It shows how his own riddles of his personal life were reflected into the form and content of his work on Hegel.

Only a few words remain to conclude my commentary on the Frankfurt section. As Rosenzweig's argument shows, Hegel's development during this period leads towards his desire for "unity with the age." This formulation is so central to Rosenzweig's interpretation that this same line will appear at the very end of the book.³⁸⁴ Hegel's

³⁸¹ Ehrenberg, *Geschichte*. 37.

³⁸² Ehrenberg, *Geschichte*. 45.

³⁸³ Rosenzweig, *Briefe* 21.12.09.

³⁸⁴ See *HS* 521.

subsequent failure to unify himself with his age ultimately reveals why Rosenzweig chose to add an undercurrent of tragic language to this period of development.

Furthermore, it is clear on the grounds of Rosenzweig's own admission that as the "main chapter" of his dissertation, the Frankfurt section deserves special attention. This justifies my lingering on the complexities of Rosenzweig's arguments, for the Frankfurt section provides some of the most decisive contours to the entire book.

The inner logic of this section not only foreshadows Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel's life and thought, but the concluding words also reflect back upon the "Preliminary Remarks" and close the circle Rosenzweig opened with his description of the "Janus-face" of the 18th century. To quote Rosenzweig at length:

How Hegel sketches his personal necessity into the picture of the entire age, how he uncovered there a striving of mutual reconciliation between those hungry for life coming from the realm of the light of reason and those longing for spiritual consciousness from a dull imprisonment in the real, - to finally find in the "unification with the age" the most personal answer for the most personal necessity: this may remind us of the attempt at a description of the relationship between man and state in the German eighteenth century that preceded our story. There we tried to present the Janus-face of the conception of the state of the century, the divergence of reason-oriented and material-bound efforts of its thinkers around the state; we suggested that the leading together of the separate ways of viewing was the act of the great thinkers of the state of the German nineteenth century. If we remind ourselves of that, then it may certainly seem as if Hegel's questions and answers here, lifted out of the frame of the individual life, gained, above and beyond this, a general historical significance.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁵ "Wie Hegel zuletzt seine persönliche Not in das Bild des ganzen Zeitalters hineingezeichnet hatte, wie er da ein Streben gegenseitiger Annäherung aufdeckte zwischen den aus dem Lichtreich der Vernunft nach Leben Hungernden und denen, die aus dumpfer Gefangenschaft im Wirklichen nach geistiger Bewußtheit

These closing words reveal an interpretive continuity between the "Preliminary Remarks" and the "Frankfurt" section. One could even propose that this closed circle of personal life stemmed from the original conception of Rosenzweig's dissertation.³⁸⁶ At the end of this development, Rosenzweig presents Hegel for the first time as the historical philosopher of the 19th century who was to play his part in attempting to unite the realm of "reason" represented by Rousseau with the world of "actuality" described by Montesquieu—this is also a first hint towards Hegel's famous statement in *The Philosophy of Right*, "what is rational is actual, and what is actual is rational." What is now ultimately at stake for Hegel is the unity of life and thought.

With his "actual personal development [...] complete,"³⁸⁷ Hegel's thought slowly begins to lift itself "out of the frame of individual life" and to take on its own "historical significance". This flowing of personal life into the "great basin" of history through a new conception of fate is now the "firm stance" of Hegel's personality.³⁸⁸ It is not so

langen, um schließlich in der "Vereinigung mit der Zeit" für jene eigenste Not die eigenste Lösung zu finden: das mag uns gemahnen an den Versuch einer Schilderung des Verhältnisses von Mensch und Staat im deutschen achtzehnten Jahrhundert, der unsrer Erzählung voranging. Wir hatten da das Doppelantlitz der Staatsauffassung des Jahrhunderts abzubilden gesucht, das Auseinandergehen der vernunftgerichteten und der stoffgebundenen Bemühungen seiner Denker um den Staat; wir hatten angedeutet, wie das Ineinanderführen der getrennten Betrachtungsweisen die Tat der großen Staatsforscher des deutschen neunzehn Jahrhunderts gewesen sei. Erinnern wir uns dessen, so mag es wohl erscheinen, als ob Hegels Fragestellung und -lösung hier, herausgehoben aus dem Rahmen des einzelnen Lebens, darüber hinaus allgemeines geschichtliche Bedeutung gewönne." HS 132.

³⁸⁶ The final version of *Hegel and the State* was supposed to be Rosenzweig's *Habilitationsschrift*, which he never submitted. All that is known is that he did submit "a part of" this work to Meinecke for his dissertation. As was common in those days, there was perhaps no printed, formal version of Rosenzweig's dissertation, thus explaining the lack of sources on this account. What I propose is that the ideas developed in the "Frankfurt" chapter are both the goal and result of his original idea for the dissertation.

³⁸⁷ "eigentliche persönliche Entwicklung ist vollendet." HS 138.

³⁸⁸ "feste Haltung der Persönlichkeit" HS 131.

much that Rosenzweig lifts Hegel from the stream of personal life, but we now first encounter a kind of hardening or "*Erstarrung*" in his character. We could speak with Rosenzweig in *The Star of Redemption*, where he references Goethe's *Faust* in order to show that is by way of a "hardening" of character that an individual ultimately becomes a "self."³⁸⁹ Unfortunately for Hegel, this "hardening" would result in the equation of his personality, in Rosenzweig's time and still today, with the unforgiving form and language of his system. Although Hölderlin was subject to a much harsher fate during his lifetime, Rosenzweig and his contemporaries would remember him more kindly: along with Goethe, as the literary soul of the German nation. In stark contrast, after his Frankfurt period Hegel begins to take on the "rigid, monumental form"³⁹⁰ of world-historical significance.

In the following chapters, which lead from the first developments of Hegel's "system," through *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, and finally towards the "Epochs of the World", we will see how Hegel's youth is behind him. Regarding "the relation of the individual to the state," Hegel has reached his verdict: "the state is history." As the unity of life translates into this new philosophical knowledge, a deep surging current takes form for Hegel. When Rosenzweig first began his book, Hegel's "stream of thought" (*Strom der Ideen*)³⁹¹ in Jena was still a dark, unknown force in his development. Drawing extensively from the manuscripts of this period, Rosenzweig shows how Hegel's *experience* of personal life soon leads to the *knowledge* that "the state is power."³⁹²

³⁸⁹ *Star* 78.

³⁹⁰ "*starren Riesenbild des historischen Hegel*" HS 17.

³⁹¹ HS 138.

³⁹² "*der Staat ist Macht.*" HS 139.

CHAPTER IV
BIOGRAPHICAL INTERLUDE:
THE "27th" YEAR OF LIFE

Within scholarship on Rosenzweig, it is not uncommon to allude to the events of his life when exploring his philosophical thought. In many cases his biography directly influences his thought, and vice versa. This is reflected above all in Rosenzweig's prolific corpus of letters. His letters both reveal the turns and detours of his personal life and often chronicle the development of his philosophical thought. This has led to a broad understanding of Rosenzweig as a philosopher for whom life and thought cannot be separated.

In the United States in particular, this conjoining of Rosenzweig's life and thought has an important history. In 1953, before the first English translation of *The Star of Redemption*,³⁹³ Nahum N. Glatzer published his landmark introduction: *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*.³⁹⁴ In this book, Glatzer was the first to compile a biographical presentation of Rosenzweig's life in an ordered presentation using Rosenzweig's own letters, organized into subsections with sparse commentary. The result of Glatzer's work was both an introduction to the context of Rosenzweig's thought and a glimpse into the "stations" of his life: "A Student of Medicine, History, Philosophy"; "Between Church and Synagogue"; "The Jewish Thinker in the Trenches"; "The Sage of Frankfort"; "Paralysis. Fight Against Death"; "The Last Years". This

³⁹³ See *Star of Redemption* trans. William Hallo, 1971.

³⁹⁴ Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*. New York: Schocken Books, 1953.

biographical presentation is complemented in the second half of the book by a selection from his writings. Thus, for English readers at least, one first encountered the thought of Rosenzweig through a biographical account of his life.

This subordination of thought to life was a renewed issue when in Kassel in 1986, at the first International Rosenzweig Congress, Harold Stahmer revealed a collection of over 1,500 love letters written to Margarit Rosenstock-Huessy, or Gritli, who was the wife of Rosenzweig's cousin, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy. In these letters, Rosenzweig intimately detailed many aspects of his thinking, including his ongoing process of writing *The Star of Redemption*. These newly revealed letters further underscored the already existing scholarship, which argues that the life and thought of Rosenzweig are inseparable.³⁹⁵

But of all the biographical intrigues of Rosenzweig's development, one event still stands above the rest. In 1913, together with his cousins Rudolf Ehrenberg and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, it is believed Rosenzweig spent the night in Leipzig discussing the role of Christianity in modernity, centered on the question of socialism in the novel *The Miracles of Antichrist* by Selma Lagerlöf.³⁹⁶ This discussion led Rosenzweig to become convinced by his cousins that he should convert from Judaism to Christianity. But if he was to convert, so he claimed, he wanted to convert as a Jew. "Some scholars claim," writes the philosopher and Jewish historian Norbert Samuelson, "that Rosenzweig attended a Yom Kippur service in Berlin on October 11, 1913, and there had a religious

³⁹⁵ See here *Die "Gritli" Briefe*. Ed. Rühke and Mayer; also *Franz Rosenzweig's "The New Thinking"*. Ed. Udoff and Galli.

³⁹⁶ See also *HS* 471.

experience that convinced him that he must become Jewish and not Christian."³⁹⁷

According to this line of interpretation, this led to Rosenzweig's now famous reply to his cousins: "*Ich bleibe also Jude*"—"I will thus remain a Jew." In the narrative of Rosenzweig's life this is regarded as his own personal "turning-point," as Frankfurt was for Hegel. For at this critical juncture, so it is often told, Rosenzweig first fully embraced a vision of his Jewish self,³⁹⁸ which in writing *The Star of Redemption* and then moving to Frankfurt in order to found the "Freie Jüdische Lehrhaus," he was never to leave behind. The development of his personal life was complete; he was almost 27 years old.

In the above treatment of Hegel's Frankfurt period, I showed how Rosenzweig understood this period as Hegel's "turning-point" from personal life to a "belief" in history. In this critical year—and in the city of Frankfurt, nonetheless—Hegel was 27 years old. But this common "turning-point" around the 27th year of life is no mere chance observation on my part, but a fact Rosenzweig points out in the context of Hegel's own development. Thus, in the concluding passages of this biographical interlude, I would like to explore this biographical connection between Rosenzweig and Hegel within the context of my argument and thereby further underscore the indispensability of *Hegel and the State* not only as a stepping stone for Rosenzweig's development, but as containing the essential moments that would remain with him throughout his life and thought, especially in *The Star of Redemption*.

I argued above that with the end of the Frankfurt period, not only does Rosenzweig see the completion of Hegel's personal development, but this also closes the

³⁹⁷ Samuelson, 298.

³⁹⁸ In the language of *The Star of Redemption*, one could say it was at this juncture that he overcame his "daemon" and embraced his "inner conversion." See *Star* 213 and my discussion of the demonic in Chapter VII.

circle of personal development opened in the "Preliminary Remarks" with the discussion of the division between "concept" and "experience." Reading the conclusion of the "Frankfurt" section as the closed circle of Hegel's personal development is further supported by the introduction to the next section, "Jena (until 1803)." Here, Rosenzweig breaks his more or less chronological treatment of Hegel's development and talks about Hegel's later writings explicitly for the first time. The ground for this break in chronology is an explicit emphasis on the "passage from youth to adulthood,"³⁹⁹ which was already anticipated in the Frankfurt chapter. In talking about this transition to adulthood, Rosenzweig references the theme of a "philosophy of age" (*Philosophie der Lebensalter*) from Hegel's later lectures,⁴⁰⁰ by way of which Hegel locates a certain "empty subjectivity" or "hypochondria" around the 27th year of life.⁴⁰¹ In a letter from 1810 Hegel then goes on to call this "fight" (*Kampf*) with hypochondria a "turning-point in life" (*Wendungspunkt im Leben*).⁴⁰² In Rosenzweig's reading, this is further proof that the Frankfurt period, and more specifically the letter from 1797 and the proximity of Hölderlin at the age of 27, was the definitive turning-point in Hegel's own life. What comes after this turn is a new phase in Hegel's development. Indeed, "his personal development is complete":

³⁹⁹ "Übergang aus dem Jünglings- ins Mannesalter." HS 137.

⁴⁰⁰ The footnote from the Suhrkamp edition (*Hegel und der Staat*, 2010) referencing these lectures reads: Hegel GW 15, 231f.; HW II, 537f; *das ursprüngliche "in" ist dann in ein "um" verwandelt!*

⁴⁰¹ "leere[] Subjektivität"; "Hypochondrie"; HS 137. The appearance of the word "hypochondria" here certainly draws to mind the circumstances surrounding Rosenzweig's own paralyzing illness, especially in connection with his "little book" *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*.

⁴⁰² HS 137.

Lifted out from the forge of experience, the thought is now hammered into shape on the anvil of philosophical thinking. From now on there are no more reefs of internal experience through which the stream of ideas has to make its way; the obstacles that will still distract and divide him in the coming time are the difficulties of the matter itself.⁴⁰³

In this passage, Rosenzweig makes a subtle reference to the last verse of "*Hyperions Schicksalslied*,"⁴⁰⁴ thereby drawing Hölderlin and Hegel even closer together, only to show that Hegel has now left the "reefs" (*Klippen*) of personal life—including his youthful friendship with Hölderlin—behind. Hegel, in a not so subtle reference, is now free to pursue "*die Sache selbst*." This famous line from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*—which would later inspire a new rallying cry in Husserl's phenomenology—signals a shift in Rosenzweig's text from biographical thinking towards a philosophy of history. In terms of a "*geistige Biographie*," we now see how the philosopher's personality shapes into a "stream of thoughts" (*Strom der Ideen*) as they make their course through the events of world history. If Hegel's method in the *Phenomenology* is one of looking at "the result together with the process through which it came about,"⁴⁰⁵ then we must understand Rosenzweig's method as he combines the *content* of his narrative—the given historical "result"—with the *forms* of biography and history—the constructed "process". Rosenzweig's biographical method shows itself, in Hegel's 27th

⁴⁰³ "*Aus der Glühhitze des Erlebens herausgehoben wird der Gedanke jetzt auf dem Amboß des philosophischen Denkens zurechtgehämmert. Es sind fortan keine Klippen inneren Erlebens, durch die sich der Strom der Ideen Bahn machen muß; die Hemmnisse, die ihn in der nächsten Folgezeit noch ablenken und teilen sind die Schwierigkeiten der Sache selbst.*" HS 138.

⁴⁰⁴ See the last verse of the song, which Hyperion composed "*in glücklicher unverständiger Jugend*." The specific reference reads: "Wie Wasser von Klippe / Zu Klippe geworfen." *Hyperion* 160.

⁴⁰⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology* 2.

year, to be a philosophy of history. Thus, one key to the question of biography and history is how Rosenzweig transitions from "the stream of personal" to the "the stream of ideas." For what more is "*die Sache selbst*"—freed from the "reefs of internal experience"—than a life that has become consumed in its thought?

The 27th year of life was decisive for Rosenzweig as well. In the same letter to Gertrud Oppenheim, where Rosenzweig first describes his intentions in the Frankfurt chapter, he gives his cousin a glimpse into his own personal writing experience: "*Ich habe es nicht aus subjektiver Erfahrung schreiben können, denn ich glaube noch nicht so weit zu sein; wenn es gut ist, so ist es 'Antizipation' in dem Sinne wie in Dichtung und Wahrheit davon die Rede ist.*"⁴⁰⁶ Rosenzweig wrote this in 1911, when he was 24 years old. The sense of "*Antizipation*" drawn from Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* puts into focus what was at stake for Rosenzweig in writing *Hegel and the State*:

*Unsere Wünsche sind Vorgefühle der Fähigkeiten, die in uns liegen, Vorboten desjenigen, was wir zu leisten im Stande sein werden. Was wir können und möchten, stellt sich unserer Einbildungskraft außer uns und in der Zukunft dar; wir fühlen eine Sehnsucht nach dem, was wir schon im Stillen besitzen. So verwandelt ein leidenschaftliches Vorausergreifen das wahrhaft Mögliche in ein erträumtes Wirkliche.*⁴⁰⁷

Only two years after Rosenzweig used "*Antizipation*" in this sense, he underwent his own personal "turning-point": "I will thus remain a Jew." In this year, like Hegel in 1797, Rosenzweig would turn 27. In writing *Hegel and the State*, not only did Rosenzweig

⁴⁰⁶ See Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 28.9.11

⁴⁰⁷ Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit*. München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1985. 418.

anticipate his own connection to Hegel's particular "stream of personal life," but the experience of writing this book had a profound impact on his own "stream of thought." The concept of "anticipation" would soon take a new significance for him in *The Star of Redemption*. In that work it was no longer Goethe's sense understood in the context of personal development, but was brought to a new philosophical and now *messianic* level regarding our conception of time and the future: "For the future it is, in short, decisive that it can and must be anticipated."⁴⁰⁸ While writing *Hegel and the State* this thought was already implicit in his thinking, as the letter to Gertrud Oppenheim makes clear, but not yet an explicit part of his lived-experience.

Thus while writing his book on Hegel, Rosenzweig had not yet reached the full potential he would openly show in *The Star of Redemption*. To speak with Ulrich Bieberich, Rosenzweig was still caught up in the "*Spannung des Fertigwerdens*"⁴⁰⁹—the tension between "subjective" potential and "objective" completion—a tension, one could argue, he would overcome through writing *The Star of Redemption*. I argue here that Rosenzweig already anticipated this potential and anticipated his own future "turning-point" while approaching the age of 27 while writing *Hegel and the State*. It was not until his own "inner conversion" and decision "to remain a Jew," that Rosenzweig made the transition he describes for Hegel from personal life to the stream of thought. Or again, as Bieberich writes: "*die Übereinstimmung von Weltanschauung und Biographie*."⁴¹⁰

In reading *Hegel and the State* we are granted in the first place an original and still compelling, relevant account of Hegel's development. But if we read this book with

⁴⁰⁸ *Star* 234.

⁴⁰⁹ Bieberich, 16.

⁴¹⁰ Bieberich, 21.

a critical eye—that is, with an anticipatory glance towards the future—then not only is this the first and most important "harbinger" (*Vorbote*) of Rosenzweig's own messianic thinking, but we begin to make out the contours of what Rosenzweig longed for and fulfilled in *The Star of Redemption* and see that he had already quietly possessed these visions in *Hegel and the State*. It is the purpose of my project here to provide the substance for this claim and to show how in "anticipating" his own future—ultimately leading to the discussion of tragedy, religion and the state in *The Star of Redemption*—this future was already beginning to take shape in the form, content and language of *Hegel and the State* itself. As we now follow Hegel from the stream of personal life into the stream of thoughts, we will encounter a Rosenzweig who is still "under the spell" of his teacher Meinecke⁴¹¹—that is, still anticipating that "turning-point" in the 27th year of his own personal life. Nevertheless, it is Rosenzweig's emerging personality and his voice as an historian that is compelling here. And it is with compelling force that the beginnings of Hegel's system are now introduced: from the state as "fate" we now turn to the state as "power."

⁴¹¹ See here Bienstock, "Rosenzweig's Hegel."

CHAPTER V

THE STREAM OF PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

Introductory Remarks

As noted above, the break between the Frankfurt section and the following two sections of the book—"Jena (until 1803)" and "Jena (since 1804)"—marks Hegel's "passage from youth to adulthood."⁴¹² With this transition from the "stream of personal life" into the "stream of thoughts" Rosenzweig also introduces the beginnings of Hegel's mature system of thought. But while it may seem, especially in the following Jena sections, that Rosenzweig assembles his narrative as a progressive development towards Hegel's system as expressed in the *Wissenschaft der Logik* and *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, the discussion of these books find little space in his telling. Using the method of historicism, Rosenzweig's book breaks this system apart in order to *relativize* Hegel as an historical personality. Rosenzweig's thesis is that by focusing on the development of Hegel's conception of the state in particular, we can see how he remained bound to the thinking of the age, ultimately failing to reach the *metaphysical* heights Dilthey credits him with. Following in Haym's footsteps, Rosenzweig wishes to place Hegel *back into history*, with the ultimate goal of his narrative leading towards Hegel's view of the state in *The Philosophy of Right*. Thus, although language of Hegel's "system" makes its way into Rosenzweig's interpretation, we should keep in mind that Rosenzweig remains committed to presenting Hegel's

⁴¹² HS 137.

thought as bound to the historical and political life of an individual—Hegel himself. In this sense, it is not the systematic beginnings of Hegel's thought that is of lasting interest to Rosenzweig, but how in Jena Hegel irrevocably links his view of the state to the notion of "power."

When Myriam Bienenstock takes up *Hegel and the State* in her brief essay "Rosenzweig's Hegel," she points to the importance of this book not only for Rosenzweig's own thought—especially in *The Star of Redemption*—but also outlines some of the book's shortcomings. First, she implicitly agrees with Rosenzweig's own assessment that *Hegel and the State* was the work of "a mere student" when she writes that the book was written "under the spell of Meinecke."⁴¹³ In her reading, however, this does not belittle the importance of the book—indeed she agrees with Otto Pöggeler that it is the work of a "pioneer"—but merely points to the necessity of contextualizing the book in relation to Rosenzweig's teacher, thereby highlighting what she considers its shortcomings: "It is still fully dominated by Meinecke's concepts and ideas and therefore cannot do justice to Hegel's own conception."⁴¹⁴ For Bienenstock, a noted Hegel scholar herself, by remaining "under the spell of Meinecke," who would ultimately agree with Ranke that Hegel's state reduced all people to "shadows and specters,"⁴¹⁵ Rosenzweig's narrative of Hegel's political philosophy leads to an inadequate account. While I will touch on the particulars of Bienenstock's critique below and elsewhere—for example while addressing the role of Meinecke's "power-state" (*Machtstaat*) and later her claim that Rosenzweig fails to properly address Hegel's own conceptions of *Geist* and

⁴¹³ Bienenstock, "Rosenzweig's Hegel", 178.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.* 178.

⁴¹⁵ Meinecke, 241.

religion—one of the most important claims of her essay provides a telling interpretation of Rosenzweig's development: "It is precisely because Rosenzweig rejected Hegelianism without having ever really come to terms with it that Hegelian *motifs* kept reappearing in his later writings."⁴¹⁶ Bienenstock's claim, however, which she unfortunately does not elaborate on, overlooks our own approach to the book: namely that by turning to the form, content and language of *Hegel and the State*, we see precisely how deeply Rosenzweig's own stance as an historian emerges from his engagement with Hegel's life and thought. From this perspective, the "Hegelian *motifs*" in Rosenzweig's thought are not the remainder of an inadequate account, but the conscious continuation of Rosenzweig's own "stream of thoughts" leading up to *The Star of Redemption*.

In reading Rosenzweig's account of Hegel's Jena period, one must not only bear in mind the influence of his teacher Meinecke upon both the content and language of his reading, but also, as stated above, the fact that nowhere does he claim to treat Hegel's philosophy *systematically*. In focusing rather on the concept of the state, Rosenzweig's narrative bears fruit for his later thought as well. When he does come to speak explicitly of the state in the third part of *The Star of Redemption*, in comparison to *Hegel and the State*, he does so with brevity, but with force.⁴¹⁷ We do not find there a drawn out discussion of political philosophy, but rather a poetical condensation of the many years he labored on Hegel's view of the state. Above all, it is a state imbued with the features of power and force: "The state can at no moment lay down the sword."⁴¹⁸ Power not only in the sense of violence—as the metaphor implies—but moreover, imbued with the force

⁴¹⁶ Bienenstock, 177.

⁴¹⁷ See *Star*, 328-35.

⁴¹⁸ *Star* 334.

to shape history. In the context of *The Star of Redemption*, the discussion of history revolves around the Christian and Jewish conceptions of time and eternity. The Jewish people—as the "eternal" and "chosen" people—exist outside of the stream of history: "God withdrew the Jew from this life by arching the bridge of his law high above the current of time which henceforth and to all eternity rushes powerlessly along under its arches."⁴¹⁹ The Christian people, on the other hand, "take up the contest with the current."⁴²⁰ And within this current, it is the force of the state that is decisive: "it is the state which first introduces standstills, stations, epochs into the ceaseless sweep of this life."⁴²¹ When in *Hegel and the State* Rosenzweig turns from the stream of Hegel's personal life to the stream of Hegel's thought as it plays out in time—we could also call this *the stream of history*—he does not yet draw out this distinction between Christian and Jewish time. Working from what he himself would denote as a Christian conception of time, Rosenzweig enters into the "stream" of Hegel's thought as it now plays out upon history in Jena.

Hegel's Jena Period: Part I

Introducing the two sections on Hegel's Jena period—"Jena (until 1803)" and "Jena (since 1804)"—Rosenzweig had brought "the development of the Hegelian idea of

⁴¹⁹ *Star* 339.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.* 339.

⁴²¹ *Star* 334.

the state to a point where its individual details became clearly recognizable.”⁴²² In tracing the development of Hegel's view of the state in Jena up until 1803, Rosenzweig looked primarily at three texts: the *Reichsschrift*—or “pamphlet,” as Rosenzweig calls it—with its concept of the state first begun in Frankfurt, which was intended to be neither a philosophical ideal nor systematic; the manuscript of 1802 or the “System of Ethicality”; and finally the “Natural Right” essay. Regarding the years after 1804, Rosenzweig gives an account of what today is known as the *Jenaer Realphilosophie*,⁴²³ in which “the scientific foundation of the structure of the state” reaches a point “which from now on it will not leave.”⁴²⁴ (HS 230). What is at stake for Rosenzweig in these sections is to outline the early phases of the inner workings of Hegel's mature view of the state. Rosenzweig was the first researcher to work out Hegel's view of the state from the still unpublished manuscripts of the Jena period. In a letter to his cousin Hans Ehrenberg, he writes:

like Goethe's Wagner [I] am infatuated with the noble parchment [...] This feeling of being an eyewitness, a direct observer of Hegel's various attempts to formulate his ideas, is sublime. Besides I have the pleasant sensation of being at the ultimate source and not, as when one depends on books, of forging ahead with the uncomfortable feeling always that one look at the manuscript might bring my house of cards tumbling down.⁴²⁵

⁴²² “das Werden der Hegelschen Staatidee bis zu einem Punkt begleitet, wo zum erstenmal ihre Einzelzüge deutlich erkennbar wurden.” HS 221.

⁴²³ See Hegel: *Frühe Politische Systeme*, ed. Gerhard Göhler.

⁴²⁴ “die wissenschaftliche Grundlage seines Aufbaus des Staats”; “die er von nun an nicht mehr verlassen wird.” HS 229-230.

⁴²⁵ Glatzer, *Rosenzweig*. 20-21. (November 11, 1910).

However, even for readers of books and not manuscripts, Hegel's Jena period still holds some of the same fascination that captured Rosenzweig, alluding to Goethe's *Faust*, like the young assistant Wagner: "*Wie anders tragen uns die Geistesfreunden / Von Buch zu Buch, von Blatt zu Blatt [...] entrollst du gar ein würdig Pergamen, / So steigt der ganze Himmel zu dir nieder.*"⁴²⁶ This sentiment is echoed in an introduction to Hegel's early political writings by Gerhard Göhler, who includes large portions from Rosenzweig's *Hegel and the State* in his commentary: "*Vorarbeiten eines fertig ausgearbeiteten, damit aber auch endgültig abgeschlossenen Denkgebäudes haben den besonderen Reiz, daß sie gewissermaßen einen Blick in die Werkstatt dessen tun lassen, was schließlich in ausgefeilter Architektonik präsentiert wird.*"⁴²⁷ In what follows below, I contend that we are not presented with an account of Hegel's system, but rather a collection of emerging elements from Hegel's thinking which crystalize into Rosenzweig's understanding of Hegel's "power-state." Indeed, as I show below, during this "epoch of transition" (*Epoche des Übergangs*),⁴²⁸ which is crowned by Rosenzweig's reading of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel's "stream of thought" in Jena concentrates into the notions of "history" (*Geschichte*) and "power" (*Macht*), setting the trajectory for his subsequent development and showing the contours of Rosenzweig's own future as an author beyond the "sublime" sentiment of Goethe's Wagner.

⁴²⁶ Goethe, *Faust* I, 1104-09.

⁴²⁷ Göhler, 8.

⁴²⁸ HS 232.

The State as Power

In analyzing this notion of "power" in *Hegel and the State* Rosenzweig's relationship to his teacher Meinecke is key. Bienenstock's claim that Rosenzweig was "under the spell of Meinecke," is acknowledged on several occasions in letters by Rosenzweig himself, but also in the dedications to *Hegel and the State*. Not only does Rosenzweig proceed in a similar manner—following his teacher's method of a "history of ideas" by focusing on great historical individualities, in this case Hegel and his contemporaries—but already in the foreword one sees that he is following the lines of his teacher's interpretation of Hegel's political thought. There, Rosenzweig distinguishes Dilthey's book on Hegel from Meinecke's thought, writing that for Dilthey,

the political in Hegel was more of a piece than a founding force in his development. And characteristically, where he expressed it, less in the initial stages he hints at of a new sense of state power—stages which would soon be taken up by Meinecke—than in the early soundings of a wish for a cultured nation, a wish which had just recently awoken in the past decades.⁴²⁹

This thought expresses on the one hand Rosenzweig's belief that Hegel's political philosophy is the "founding force" of his development—and this helps explain Bienenstock's concern that Rosenzweig does not deal with the entirety of Hegel's philosophy, he doesn't—and also that Rosenzweig will interpret Hegel's development,

⁴²⁹ "Das Politische in Hegel war ihm mehr ein Teil als eine Grundkraft seiner Entwicklung. Und bezeichnenderweise faßte er es, wo er es faßte, weniger in den darin angelegten und von Meinecke bald hervorgearbeiteten Ansätzen eines neuen machstaatlichen Sinns als vielmehr in den Vorklängen kultureller Wünsche, die eben in den jüngst vergangenen Jahrzehnten wachgeworden waren." HS 17.

following Meinecke, in terms of the state as power. This first becomes apparent during Hegel's Jena period.

Hegel's time in Jena is defined by a turn from the internal world of personal life that found expression in his early theological writings, to an engagement with the political realities of Germany and its history. Hegel's first independent political writings were dominated, still under the spell of Kant, by the thought of the "dignity of man" (*Würde des Menschen*).⁴³⁰ After the turn from the tragedy of personal life to history in Frankfurt, Hegel's thought moved from a thinking based on the interests of the individual to one based on the state: "in 'the state as fate' the ground was laid for a new conception, which did not take its start from the individual, but rather from the state itself."⁴³¹ This new state-based thinking—itsself a "world-historical" (*weltgeschichtlich*) thinking inherited from Gibbon and Schiller⁴³²—led Hegel to "definitively" shift his thinking on the state and consequently also take a direct interest in the current German state: "the will towards the 'unification with the times,' which was based on rational governance of history, led to the reflective grasp of the actual state of the present."⁴³³

Hegel had already begun to engage the present German state while in Frankfurt with his *Reichsschrift* essay, which was in part inspired by the events of the Second Congress of Rastatt in 1797 (*Rastatter Kongress*). The writing of that political "pamphlet" was interrupted by the War of the Second Coalition (1798-1802)—also

⁴³⁰ HS 138.

⁴³¹ "im 'Staat als Schicksal' war der Grund gelegt für eine neue Anschauung, die nicht vom Einzelmenschen, sondern vom Staat selbst ausging." HS 138.

⁴³² HS 138.

⁴³³ "der auf den Glauben an das vernünftige Walten der Geschichte gegründete Wille zur 'Vereinigung mit der Zeit' trieb zu denkendem Erfassen des wirklichen Staats der Gegenwart." HS 138.

known as the First Napoleonic War—where an alliance of Russian, Austrian and English armies fought against revolutionary France. However, with a victory in Italy in 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte put an end to the war and the hopes of the alliance. In the wake of these events Hegel then realized that “the long prophesized end of the thousand-year Roman Empire of the German Nation was now really coming.”⁴³⁴ Rosenzweig does not fail to emphasize the grim political reality now surrounding Hegel. Indeed, Rosenzweig will later write that Hegel's mood in Jena was filled with such "apocalyptic consciousness for the present, the likes of which Nietzsche had hardly possessed."⁴³⁵ This rare comparison with Nietzsche is not, as it may seem, important in the context of the notions of "power" and "personal life," but for Rosenzweig is employed to point out the future-oriented thinking of both thinkers and their desire to philosophically overcome the conditions of the present. For Rosenzweig, it was with these apocalyptic thoughts of the present age in mind that Hegel finally rid his thought on the state of the last remnants of personal experience: “From the experience of the state as fate there comes the recognition: the state is power.”⁴³⁶

The showplace for this idea begins with the famous first lines of Hegel's *Reichsschrift*, which is now in its final version: “Germany is no longer a state”. A group of people can only be called a state, Rosenzweig explains in Hegel's words, “when they

⁴³⁴ "daß das so lang schon prophezeite Ende des tausendjährigen römischen Reiches deutscher Nation jetzt wirklich komme." HS 139.

⁴³⁵ "apokalyptischen Gegenwartsbewußtsein erfüllt gewesen, wie es gleich stark kaum noch Nietzsche besessen hat." HS 248.

⁴³⁶ "Aus dem Erlebnis des Staats als Schicksal wird die Erkenntnis: der Staat ist Macht." HS 139.

have unified in general in common defense of their property.”⁴³⁷ Hegel will call the organization of such defense “state power” (*Staatsmacht*). In the various drafts of the *Reichsschrift* Hegel was still tarrying with “the difficulty of the relationship of the individual to this state-purpose and to this state,”⁴³⁸ but by the final version Rosenzweig recognizes that “the state is power and initially only power.”⁴³⁹ Thus, Rosenzweig sees hidden here the “naked formulation of the concept of the power-state,” namely “the power of the state to preserve itself against other states,” or in Hegel's words, the “power of war and what goes together with this.”⁴⁴⁰

In a section coming much later in *Hegel and the State*, “Metaphysics of the State,” it is this notion of a “power-state” revolving around defense and war that still makes up the core of Hegel's state for Rosenzweig.⁴⁴¹ This reading of Hegel is one of the major influences inherited from Meinecke. In his chapter on Hegel in *Cosmopolitanism and the Nation-state*, Meinecke is critical of Hegel precisely on the grounds that the state be defined in terms of war. Well entrenched himself in the tradition of historicism, where the state is often understood as an individual “personality,” Meinecke draws heavily on the section at the end of *The Philosophy of Right* where Hegel follows the idea that each individual state is “a sovereign and independent entity in relation to others.”⁴⁴² This idea

⁴³⁷ “Eine Menschenmenge kann nur dann ein Staat genannt werden, wenn sie sich zur gemeinschaftlichen Verteidigung ihres Eigentums über haupt verbunden hat.” HS 143.

⁴³⁸ “ringt er in unserem Entwurf noch mit der Schwierigkeit des Verhältnisses des einzelnen zu diesem Staatszweck und zu diesem Staat.” HS 143.

⁴³⁹ “daß der Staat Macht und zunächst nur Macht sei.” HS 143.

⁴⁴⁰ “nackten Fassung des Machtbegriffs”; “der Macht des Staats, sich selbst gegen andere Staaten zu erhalten”; “Kriegsmacht und was damit zusammenhängt.” HS 143-44.

⁴⁴¹ See HS 438-442.

⁴⁴² Hegel, PR 366.

that states are "individualities" with rights of their own is then carried out in the final section of *The Philosophy of Right* in terms of world history and world-historical nations. Here nations are at the whim of "world spirit, around whose throne they stand as the agents of its actualization and as witnesses and ornaments of its splendor."⁴⁴³ For Meinecke, however, this power of the "world spirit" to determine the fate of nations leads to an unfortunate ending of Hegel's great thought: "*Hegels Anschauung führte konsequent dahin, alle Individualitäten der Geschichte ihres Eigenrechtes zu berauben, sie zu bloßen bewußtlosen Werkzeugen und Funktionären des Weltgeistes zu machen.*"⁴⁴⁴ For Meinecke, the state, as the "formal realization" of the world spirit in history, is thus nothing more than a state of power and force. However, according to both Bienenstock and Otto Pöggeler, Meinecke in this manner imbues Hegel with a Machiavellian sense that his thinking ultimately did not contain.⁴⁴⁵ Rosenzweig also distances himself from aligning Hegel and Machiavelli, as I show later on below.

Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel is much more subtle and thorough than Meinecke's. Rather than aligning Hegel's view of the state absolutely with that of a "power-state," he shows how although it contains the elements of "power", they were first exaggerated by political thinkers in the later half of the 19th century, following Hegel's

⁴⁴³ Hegel, *PR* §352.

⁴⁴⁴ Meinecke 241.

⁴⁴⁵ see here Bienenstock 178; Pöggeler, 120; also Pöggeler's reference to Meinecke's *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and Its Place in Modern History*, where Meinecke spells out his critique of Hegel's "power-state." Also, Ritter: "Morality and Ethical Life", 169, note 16: Meinecke suspected "the concept of ethical being" as "being the instrument of a philosophical "Machiavellianism," which Hegel uses to assert political power and force as something higher than moral selfhood to allow them to triumph over the impotence of the individual."

death.⁴⁴⁶ However, the principles of war and defense and how these play out upon the stage of world history still remain central in Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel's view of the state, especially in its final installment in *The Philosophy of Right*. Thus, in turning again to Hegel's Jena period, one must pay close attention to both the influence of Meinecke as well as the particular subtleties of Rosenzweig's interpretation of "power."

In Hegel's view of the state in Jena, it was not the inner unity of the state that took precedence, for example "customs, way of life, languages, etc.,"⁴⁴⁷ as was the case in the Greek Polis of antiquity—or as the examples of the Austrian, Russian, English monarchies showed at that time—but the notion of "defense" against other states. "Before us" writes Rosenzweig, "stands the state of the eighteenth century with its fresh will of power, with its indifference towards the task of a state unity [...] its underestimation of national drives and its lack of understanding for spiritual powers which unfold in national life."⁴⁴⁸ At this juncture in his development, Rosenzweig sees Hegel's conception of the state akin to the "absolutism" (*Absolutismus*)⁴⁴⁹ so prevalent in the 18th century. Indeed, Rosenzweig represents Hegel's Jena as "an epoch of transition from the deepest decline, the Roman Imperium and absolute monarchy, to a more beautiful future."⁴⁵⁰ But on the way to this future, Hegel constructs a state made up of

⁴⁴⁶ See HS 456-70.

⁴⁴⁷ "Sitten, Lebensart, Sprachen usw." HS 144.

⁴⁴⁸ "Vor uns steht der Staat des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts mit seinem frischen Machtwillen, mit seiner Gleichgültigkeit gegen die Aufgabe einer bis zu Ende durchgeführten Staatseinheit, seiner Unterschätzung der nationalen Triebe und seinem Mangel an Verständnis für die geistigen Mächte, die sich im nationalen Leben entfalten." HS 144.

⁴⁴⁹ HS 147.

⁴⁵⁰ "eine Epoche des Übergangs aus dem tiefsten Verfall, dem römischen Imperium und der absoluten Monarchie, zu einer schöneren Zukunft." HS 232.

those elements he wishes to overcome. And Rosenzweig can only see one thing written over the entrance of the doorway to the idea of the state from Jena: “Power, power and once again power” (*Macht, Macht und abermals Macht*).⁴⁵¹ In reproducing the essence of the state of the 18th century Hegel has in a sense reached his goal of “unification with the times.” However, with the dying out of the old and the coming of the new—as epitomized by the fall of German Empire—Rosenzweig reminds his readers that the times are not “unified” themselves: “Ununited as within the times themselves, the old and the demand for the new lay beside each other.”⁴⁵² Thus, Hegel, just now emerging into philosophical maturity, acts as a “faithful mirror of this unresolved situation.”⁴⁵³ Rosenzweig's description here not only again points to Hegel's future task in the 19th century of uniting reason with actuality—the trajectory he set out in the first section of the book—but also to the lasting importance the notion of “power” will have on Hegel's subsequent view of the state.

The Freedom of the Individual

Rosenzweig draws the description of Hegel's state as “power” in contrast to the urgency of the “protection of the rights of man”⁴⁵⁴ Hegel experienced in his youth. The “ideas of 1789,” while still present in Hegel's thinking, have been largely supplanted by

⁴⁵¹ HS 144.

⁴⁵² “Unvereint wie im Innern der Zeit selbst liegt das Alte und die Forderung des Neuen nebeneinander.” HS 145.

⁴⁵³ “als ein getreuer Spiegel dieses ungeklärten Zustands.” HS 145.

⁴⁵⁴ “den Schutz der Menschenrechte.” HS 145.

the emerging notion of the "power-state." However, in following "the relation of the individual to the state" during Hegel's Jena period, Rosenzweig still finds in this new conception of the state an undeniable emphasis on the "freedom" of the individual. It is important to explore the beginnings of the relationship between the power of the state and the freedom of the individual, for as Hegel himself will later claim in *The Philosophy of Right*, it is in the state itself that "freedom enters into its highest right."⁴⁵⁵ It was first in his essay "On the Difference between the Systems of Fichte and Schelling" (*Über die Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems*) that the seeds of Hegel's ultimate conception of the freedom of the individual can be found.

In that essay, which for Rosenzweig has only limited importance for Hegel's view of the state, Hegel comes to the conclusion that "[t]he highest community is the highest freedom."⁴⁵⁶ According to Rosenzweig, this will become the future motto of Hegel's philosophy of state. "Here" writes Rosenzweig, "the thought is captured in its seed, which in the future will attempt to ethicize the state which was fate, which became power."⁴⁵⁷ Fate, as Hegel's Frankfurt period showed, could not be overcome from the outside, thus it turned inward and became history. Now fate as history and thus history itself has become the "essence of freedom" (*Wesen der Freiheit*).⁴⁵⁸ Schelling, who in 1800 developed his own concept of freedom as "absolute," is overtaken here by Hegel: "where Schelling had only seen a relation between man and history, Hegel inserts in the

⁴⁵⁵ Hegel *PR* §258.

⁴⁵⁶ "Die höchste Gemeinschaft ist die höchste Freiheit." *HS* 150.

⁴⁵⁷ "Hier ist im Keim verschlossen der Gedanke, durch welchen Hegel fortan den Staat, der Schicksal gewesen, Macht geworden war, zu versittlichen sucht." *HS* 150.

⁴⁵⁸ *HS* 151.

middle the state.”⁴⁵⁹ Thus, Hegel sees the freedom of the individual as actualized in his “relation to the state” (*Verhältnis zum Staat*).⁴⁶⁰

Within this relationship of individual to state, there now enters a new concept during the Jena period: the concept of a “state-free zone” (*staatsfreier Bezirk*).⁴⁶¹ In introducing this concept, Rosenzweig immediately draws the comparison with Hegel’s contemporary, the young Wilhelm von Humboldt. For this historical personality, the freedom of the individual was of the highest priority. Meinecke himself describes Humboldt as a “*starke, freiheitsdurstige Individuum*”⁴⁶² and it was also these traits that separate the Hegel of Jena from the young Humboldt. In conceiving of a “state-free zone,” that is, a division of society where the freedom of the individual could manifest itself unhindered by the state, Hegel seems to overlook the “more ethical” (*mehr ethische*)⁴⁶³ side of freedom captured by Humboldt. Although Hegel’s own emphasis here may remind readers of his years in Bern and the call there for “justice,” the freedom of the individual is now “only the limitation of, no longer the purpose of the state.”⁴⁶⁴ While for Hegel the power of the state has gained precedence in his thinking, for Humboldt, as Meinecke points out, “[n]icht möglichst stark, sondern möglichst schwach soll der Staat sein.”⁴⁶⁵ In comparison, Hegel loses the “spiritual glimmer” (*des geistigen*

⁴⁵⁹ “wo Schelling nur ein Verhältnis zwischen Mensch und Geschichte gesehen hatte, da schiebt Hegel mittenhinein den Staat.” HS 151.

⁴⁶⁰ HS 151.

⁴⁶¹ HS 146.

⁴⁶² Meinecke, 49

⁴⁶³ HS 147.

⁴⁶⁴ “jetzt nur noch Einschränkung, nicht mehr Zweck des Staats.” HS 148.

⁴⁶⁵ Meinecke, 43.

Schimmers)⁴⁶⁶ that accompanies Humboldt's idea of freedom; his advantage, however, is that he does not view the state as a "necessary evil," but observes it rather with "great, calm recognition."⁴⁶⁷ No longer is Hegel consumed by the search for the "highest subjectivity" as he was in Frankfurt, wrapped up in the tragedy of the self, now "the pressure of the world no longer weighs upon his chest; he has learned selfless observation."⁴⁶⁸ This turn in Jena, as Rosenzweig remarked earlier, to the "highest objectivity," now moves Hegel even further from the ideals of his youth and for the first time, the freedom of the individual begins to find its permanent seat in the state. However, since "Germany is no longer a state", in order for this freedom to manifest itself—as it will in Hegel's concept of "*Sittlichkeit*" and Hegel's doctrine of the "*Stände*"—Hegel combines the notion of "power" with an emerging sense for the importance of individuality and the great historical individual. Leading many to later associate him with Machiavelli, as Rosenzweig's teacher will, Hegel will claim that in order for there to be a new German state, and thus the realization of the freedom of the individual, the "the force of a conqueror"⁴⁶⁹ is required.

⁴⁶⁶ HS 146.

⁴⁶⁷ "*nicht etwas als notwendiges Übel, betrachtet ihn vielmehr mit einer großen, ruhigen Anerkennung.*" HS 146.

⁴⁶⁸ "*So wälzt sich der Druck der Welt ihm nicht mehr auf seine Brust; er hat selbstlos schauen gelernt.*" HS 161.

⁴⁶⁹ "*Die Gewalt eines Eroberers.*" HS 157.

Theseus, Machiavelli and the Great Historical Personality

As noted above, Hegel wrote his *Reichsschrift* in response to the real political events surrounding him. Thus, throughout the essay there is a constant tension between his "considerations" (*Überlegungen*) and real political action. This corresponds on the one hand to the contrast between "concept" and "experience" in the eighteenth century. To recall, in introducing this "Janus-face," Rosenzweig claimed it would be the future task of the nineteenth century, and especially Hegel, to unite these two notions. However, this tension between theoretical considerations and actual experience also calls to mind Machiavelli and his piece of political prose, *The Prince*. Indeed, so present is this comparison between Hegel and Machiavelli, that it led Hegel's first biographer Karl Rosenkranz to claim that "Hegel wanted [...] to become the *Machiavelli of Germany*."⁴⁷⁰ In what follows, I show how Rosenzweig supports this claim and thereby aligns himself with his teacher Meinecke, yet at the same time does not fully accept such a plain oversimplification. While Hegel himself draws on Machiavelli in his *Reichsschrift*, as I show below, for Rosenzweig, this pairing of two great political minds stands contextualized within Hegel's development and does not rule over his thought in principle. In breaking from his teacher and also other biographers, Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel with regard to Machiavelli thus shows his original spirit as a "pioneer"⁴⁷¹—first as an historian and later a philosopher in his own right.

⁴⁷⁰ Rosenkranz, 236.

⁴⁷¹ This is the claim made by Bienenstock discussed above. However, neither she nor Pöggeler, whom she quotes, detail their claims regarding Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel and Machiavelli. The following section aims at a continuation of their conversation.

The end of Hegel's *Reichsschrift* is dedicated to the possibility of uniting Germany under one state. Underscoring the emphasis in his thinking in Jena on the "power" of the state, Hegel writes: "*Wenn alle Teile dadurch gewännen, daß Deutschland zu einem Staat würde, so ist eine solche Begebenheit nie die Frucht der Überlegung gewesen, sondern der Gewalt.*"⁴⁷² In order for Germany to once again become a state, he continues, and this time united under one banner, the mass of its people "*müßte durch die Gewalt eines Eroberers in Eine Masse versammelt, sie müßten gezwungen werden, sich zu Deutschland gehörig zu betrachten.*"⁴⁷³ Not only through force is Germany to become a state, but through the force of a *conqueror*. Here again, the concept of individuality in Hegel's thinking is decisive. For, as later his insistence on a constitutional monarchy in *The Philosophy of Right* will show, it is not enough for Hegel that the state mechanism alone with all its laws be set firmly in place, but at the top of this state there must stand an individual, a conquering personality.

In the concluding paragraphs of the *Reichsschrift*, Hegel draws a comparison for this personality to Theseus, the mythical conqueror who united Athens. That Hegel draws an example from classical antiquity is no surprise, given the fascination of his age with Greek culture and thought. The case of Theseus, who not only united Athens through force, but also carried out political reforms, fits the terms of Hegel's future-oriented thought quite precisely. But this comparison also provides a link to the thought of Machiavelli. Earlier in the *Reichsschrift*, when Hegel discusses the theory of the state in other European countries, he writes of *The Prince* that it remains "*ein großes Zeugnis*

⁴⁷² Hegel, *Politische Schriften*. 138.

⁴⁷³ Hegel, *Politische Schriften*. 138.

[...] daß das Schicksal eines Volks, das seinem politischen Untergange zueilt, durch Genie gerettet werden könne."⁴⁷⁴ When writing his political pamphlet, Hegel realized he was witnessing the downfall of the German empire. In Machiavelli, Hegel did not witness the "abscheuliche Mittel"⁴⁷⁵ (*Politische Schriften*, 115) a prince requires to come to power, but rather a more noble goal of the great political thinker: "Italien sollte ein Staat sein."⁴⁷⁶ Thus, not only is it clear that Hegel held Machiavelli's thought in high regard, but Hegel's historical circumstance draws the temptation to equate, as Karl Rosenzkrantz did, Machiavelli's "genius" with Hegel's own political thinking. Did Hegel wish to be the German Machiavelli? Rosenzweig himself presents them side-by-side when he writes that the voices of both thinkers "faded away without effect"⁴⁷⁷ and like Machiavelli and Italy, that "first a new generation, who saw the fulfillment with their own eyes, could honor [Hegel] as the prophet of the national unified state."⁴⁷⁸ This similarity to Machiavelli is further supported if we briefly examine the placement of the mythical Theseus within *The Prince* itself.

The name "Theseus" first appears in section six of *The Prince*: "About New Princedoms Acquired With One's Own Arms And Energy." This sections deals with rulers "who have become princes by their own powers."⁴⁷⁹ "When we look into their actions and their lives," writes Machiavelli, "we will find that fortune provided nothing

⁴⁷⁴ Hegel, *Politische Schriften*. 117.

⁴⁷⁵ Hegel, *Politische Schriften*. 115.

⁴⁷⁶ Hegel, *Politische Schriften*. 115.

⁴⁷⁷ "ohne Wirkung verhallt." HS 158.

⁴⁷⁸ "hätte erst ein nachwachsendes Geschlecht, das die Erfüllung mit Augen sah, als den Propheten des nationalen Einheitsstaats ehren können." HS 158.

⁴⁷⁹ *Prince*, 16.

for them but an opportunity."⁴⁸⁰ Theseus would have found no success "if he had not found the Athenians in confusion."⁴⁸¹ In comparison, the occasion for Hegel's *Reichsschrift* is precisely the political turmoil in Germany. In order to seize upon this opportunity, for Machiavelli and Hegel alike, "things must be arranged so that when [the people] no longer believe they can be compelled to believe by force."⁴⁸² In calling for "the force of a conqueror" (*Gewalt eines Eroberers*) Hegel is invoking "Theseus" in the same manner as Machiavelli. In doing so, Hegel is also heeding the advice of Machiavelli from the same section: "a prudent man should always follow the footsteps of the great and imitate those who have been supreme."⁴⁸³ Machiavelli, like Hegel after him, also invokes Theseus towards the end of his political essay, showing that greatness can arise from turmoil. But do these similarities prove that Hegel was intending to be a German Machiavelli himself?

Although Rosenzweig offers no direct answer to this question, his presentation points to the contrary. Most importantly, whereas Machiavelli's *The Prince* was directed towards nobles and rulers, Hegel's political pamphlet had a different audience: "Hegel directed his writing towards private citizens, not towards the leading men, not towards 'Theseus' himself, in this regard much different than his Florentine model."⁴⁸⁴ Thus, for Rosenzweig the comparison can only go so far. While Hegel saw in Machiavelli a model

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸¹ *Prince* 17.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*

⁴⁸³ *Prince* 15.

⁴⁸⁴ "An Privatleute also, nicht an die leitenden Männer, nicht an den 'Theseus' selber, richtet Hegel seine Schrift, darin sehr unterschieden von dem florentinischen Vorbild." HS 162.

for "*die erhabene Gewalt großer Menschen*,"⁴⁸⁵ for Hegel this leads beyond Machiavelli, in Rosenzweig's words, to "an unlimited trust in the course of history" or again in "history itself and the great historical personality."⁴⁸⁶ Even if Hegel saw similarities between himself and the great Italian political thinker, these common bonds were soon broken by the development of Hegel's own thinking within its own historical context.

Again looking beyond Hegel's time in Jena and anticipating his mature philosophy of state, Rosenzweig sees in the strong invocation of "Theseus" the concept of the historical personality arising in Hegel's thinking. In order for Germany to become a "unified state" (*Einheitsstaat*), Hegel has now found a "new solution" (*neue Lösung*): "The great man, whom the many, rather than agreeing themselves on the state contract, instead obey against their will, because he has their unconscious will, the will that they will once have, on his side."⁴⁸⁷ It was Dilthey, writes Rosenzweig, who first ventured to give a name to this "great man" that Hegel speaks of in the guise of "Theseus." Dilthey argued that it could be no other than Napoleon Bonaparte himself. This choice may seem natural given the importance Napoleon was soon to have for Hegel's thought (as I show in Chapter VI). But Rosenzweig objects and draws his argument from an earlier section in the *Reichsschrift*. There, when discussing the political future of Germany, Hegel explicitly sides with Austria in his choice among the four dominant political systems for

⁴⁸⁵ Rosenkranz 195.

⁴⁸⁶ "*ein unbegrenztes Vertrauen auf den Gang der Geschichte*"; "*der Geschichte selber und der großen geschichtlichen Persönlichkeit*." HS 163.

⁴⁸⁷ "*Der große Mann, dem die vielen, staat daß sie frei den Staatsvertrag miteinander schlossen, vielmehr wider Willen gehorchen, weil er ihren unbewußten Willen, den Willen, den einmal haben werden, auf seiner Seite hat*." HS 158.

the sake of its “representational body” (*repräsentierenden Körper*).⁴⁸⁸ If, as he implies, Hegel hopes that “Germany is in the future united under Austrian rule,”⁴⁸⁹ he would have never supported the “great man” (*große Mann*) Napoleon, who was shortly before at war with this same political power.⁴⁹⁰ Indeed, Rosenzweig sees only one man Hegel could have had in mind: the Archduke Charles of Austria (*Erzherzog Karl*). This line of thought leading from the inspiration of Machiavelli's *The Prince* to the historical Archduke Karl is a great sign for Rosenzweig that with a “firm hand” Hegel has now pushed the state “into the gears of history.”⁴⁹¹

Hegel's thought has now arrived at an “unlimited trust in the course of history, in its power to let something new emerge from its ground.”⁴⁹² It is not the genius of Hegel himself that had the power to make this change, but rather “history itself and the great historical personality.”⁴⁹³ In Rosenzweig's view, however, with the emergence of “history” (*Geschichte*) for Hegel the thoughts of a power state and of freedom were too easily grouped together in the first years in Jena. There was more work to be done than merely finding a “conqueror” (*Eroberer*) in order for the freedom of the individual to be preserved. This limitation proved that Hegel had “set his foot on the threshold of the

⁴⁸⁸ HS 156. The other three systems are that of the “emperor,” the “neutral,” and “Prussia.”

⁴⁸⁹ “*das zukünftige Deutschland unter österreichischer Führung vereint hofft.*” HS 159.

⁴⁹⁰ HS 159.

⁴⁹¹ “*Mit fester Hand rückt Hegel hier den Staat in das Getriebe der Geschichte.*” HS 160.

⁴⁹² “*ein unbegrenztes Vertrauen auf den Gang der Geschichte, auf ihre Kraft, von Grund Neues werden zu lassen.*” HS 163.

⁴⁹³ “*Der Geschichte selber und der großen geschichtlichen Persönlichkeit.*” HS 163.

political nineteenth century, without going over this threshold.”⁴⁹⁴ There were still some things missing from Hegel’s conception of the state, above all, the “ethical meaning of the union of state and individual” was at most only hinted at.⁴⁹⁵ This "union of state and individual," which was to find its ultimate conception in *The Philosophy of Right* under the banner of "*Sittlichkeit*," begins to take form in Jena with Hegel's emerging theory of the "estates" (*Stände*). The “ideal of the state” (*Staatsideal*) recorded in the *Reichsschrift* was soon “clouded over” (*umschleiert*)⁴⁹⁶ by a new historical reality. Namely, an “absolute state based on the foundation of a society of estates,”⁴⁹⁷ or in other words, Prussia. It is the reality of this state, writes Rosenzweig, “not the Polis, neither the historical nor the platonic [...] which shines through the dark and heavy thought-pictures of the “System of Ethicality.””⁴⁹⁸

The Individual in Society: "Sittlichkeit" and Hegel's Theory of the "Stände"

“The System of Ethicality”, written in the winter of 1802/1803, is recognized as Hegel's first systematic account of the concept of "*Sittlichkeit*" as it is to appear in his mature system. Within the system, this manuscript represents what later would be termed

⁴⁹⁴ "den Fuß auf die Schwelle des politischen neunzehnten Jahrhunderts setzte, ohne diese Schwelle zu überschreiten." HS 149.

⁴⁹⁵ "die sittliche Bedeutung des Bundes von Staat und Einzelmensch." HS 149.

⁴⁹⁶ HS 163.

⁴⁹⁷ "den absolutischen Staat auf der ständischen Gesellschaftsgrundlage." HS 163.

⁴⁹⁸ "Dieser Staat, und nicht, wie man meint, die Polis, weder die geschichtliche noch die platonische, ist die Wirklichkeit, die durch die dunklen und schweren Gedankenbilder des "Systems der Sittlichkeit" hindurchleuchtet." HS 163.

“objective spirit” (*objektiven Geist*).⁴⁹⁹ It is here that the “individual parts” (*Einzelzüge*) of Hegel’s mature idea of the state become “clearly recognizable” (*deutlich Erkennbar*) for the first time.⁵⁰⁰ As we witnessed the progression and ultimate closure of Hegel’s personal development in Frankfurt, the move away from personal life towards history with the concept of the “power-state” (*Machtstaat*), we are now dealing with the beginnings of Hegel’s system and the transition of his thinking to its ultimate significance for world history in general and 19th century political thought in particular.

“*Sittlichkeit*,” translated into English as either “ethicality” or “ethical life,” is divided in *The Philosophy of Right* into family, civil society and the state. In his essay “Morality and Ethical Life: Hegel’s Controversy with Kantian Ethics,” Joachim Ritter argues that Hegel’s mature concept of “*Sittlichkeit*” is developed as a critique of the Kantian division of legality and morality.⁵⁰¹ This division leads to the separation of the individual into an inner life of “virtue” and an outer reality of “law.” For Hegel, however, this separation creates a dualistic position where the freedom of the individual attained in inner life is never realized in reality and remains a mere “ought” without consequence. According to Ritter’s finely argued essay, however, Hegel aims to incorporate the inner life of the individual into the outer life of the state: “Ethical life [*Sittlichkeit*] is the institutional reality of human selfhood.”⁵⁰² Following Ritter, then, with the emergence of “*Sittlichkeit*,” Hegel is first attempting to incorporate the freedom of the individual into the power of the state.

⁴⁹⁹ HS 163.

⁵⁰⁰ HS 221.

⁵⁰¹ Ritter, “Morality and Ethical Life.” 171.

⁵⁰² Ritter, “Morality and Ethical Life.” 172.

This point underscores the overall tendency of Rosenzweig's *Hegel and the State* as well: namely, following Hegel's development towards the possibility of uniting the rational and the actual. In Hegel's early years, this possibility was expressed as the attempt to overcome the personal tragedy of inner and outer life. The manner in which Rosenzweig argues for this development will be preserved in his own theory of the tragic hero in *The Star of Redemption* under the notion of "metaethics." Following Hegel's move towards the "power-state" and the forces of history in Jena, Rosenzweig's own thinking was imbued with the difficulties of preserving the freedom of the individual within the institutions of society.

In "The System of Ethicality" Hegel's thought begins to take on the shape of the "totality" of the relations between individuals and the state that it will retain in his mature system and *The Philosophy of Right*. Still drawing on Montesquieu, as Rosenzweig will argue, the concept of "ethicality" is Hegel's answer to the former's "*esprit général*,"⁵⁰³ imbued however with the recent development in his own thought. For "just like in the critique of the *Reichsverfassung* this state is built up upon war."⁵⁰⁴ And although "war" is again at the center of Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's state, to this notion of conflict there is added the concept of the "family." It is on the basis of "family and war" (*Familie und Krieg*) that Hegel's "idea of absolute ethicality" (*Idee der absoluten Sittlichkeit*) is realized in the "people" (*Volk*).⁵⁰⁵ In order to capture the "form and sense" (*Form und Sinn*) of this idea of "people", Hegel draws upon a "division of estates"

⁵⁰³ HS 197.

⁵⁰⁴ "gleichwie in der Kritik der Reichsverfassung ist auch dieser Staat auf Waffen gestellt." HS 166.

⁵⁰⁵ HS 165.

(*Ständegliederung*) within the state.⁵⁰⁶ This can be seen as the first instance of his mature notion of "civil society," which in *The Philosophy of Right* is separated off from the state entirely.⁵⁰⁷

In "The System of Ethicality" Hegel divides the estates of the "people" into "noble" (*Adel*) "bourgeois" (*Bürger*) and "peasant" (*Bauern*).⁵⁰⁸ Each of these estates has its own virtue and also its own relation to freedom. The first of these, the "noble" estate, is the "absolute estate" (*absoluten Stand*), in Rosenzweig's words: "not the entirety of all virtues, but rather the sublime elevation above all particular virtues."⁵⁰⁹ This "sublime elevation" over all "particularity" finds its expression in the form of "bravery" (*Tapferkeit*).⁵¹⁰ In other words, "this nobility is the noble of war."⁵¹¹ The second estate is one of "relative ethicality" (*relativen Sittlichkeit*) and as the estate of the "bourgeois" its virtues appear under the form of "righteousness" (*Rechtschaffenheit*).⁵¹² The third estate is that of "raw ethicality" (*rohe Sittlichkeit*) and the virtues of the "peasant" appear under the form of "trust" (*Zutrauen*).⁵¹³ Each of these three estates is a "totality" (*Totalität*) and contains the others within it, and thus they stand in connection to the whole not merely as a "part" (*Teil*), but are connected to the whole "in all its

⁵⁰⁶ HS 168.

⁵⁰⁷ See HS 237.

⁵⁰⁸ HS 168.

⁵⁰⁹ "nicht die Gesamtheit aller Tugenden, sondern das Erhabensein über alle besonderen Tugenden." HS 168.

⁵¹⁰ HS 168.

⁵¹¹ "dieser Adel ist ein Kriegsadel." HS 168.

⁵¹² HS 169.

⁵¹³ HS 170.

richness" (*in all seinem Reichtum*): "only the manner and meaning, not the content of this connection is different for each estate."⁵¹⁴ Although there is a distinct hierarchy at work here, all three estates are necessary and their interaction makes up the levels of "society" (*Gesellschaft*) in Hegel's idea of the state.⁵¹⁵ The significance of this new ideal of the state for Hegel's development is great: Hegel has now "left the circle of thoughts of the eighteenth century completely behind him."⁵¹⁶

Central to understanding Hegel's "*Stände*" is not only their interaction in the "totality" of the state—for example, how the "noble" and "peasant" estate are connected through war as the officers on the one hand and the soldiers on the other, whereas the "bourgeois" class works and pays taxes, but does not fight in wars—but the question of "freedom" within Hegel's new conception of the state as "power-state." In line with the "individuality" of each class, Hegel writes that each has its own "coloring" (*Färbung*)⁵¹⁷ of freedom: the "noble estate" is free from all "fear of earthly things" (*Angst des Irdischen*); the "peasant estate" is granted the same "tenuous concept of freedom" (*zarte Freiheitsbegriff*) that all other classes are granted; and finally the estate of the "bourgeois," with its right to property, is granted the freedom of "empirical existence" (*empirischen Existenz*).⁵¹⁸ From these notions of freedom, Hegel proposes an "organic

⁵¹⁴ "nur die Art und Bedeutung, nicht der Inhalt dieser Beziehung, ist für jeden Stand verschieden." HS 167.

⁵¹⁵ HS 170.

⁵¹⁶ "daß in dem Sinn, mit dem er diese Gesellschaftsgliederung erfüllte, der Philosoph den Gedankenkreis des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts völlig hinter sich ließ." HS 170.

⁵¹⁷ HS 171.

⁵¹⁸ HS 172.

'totality' of the whole" (*organische 'Totalität' des Ganzen*).⁵¹⁹ To show that Hegel still has the ethical life of Greek antiquity in mind and has not yet reached his mature standpoint, Rosenzweig characterizes this new state as the "state of beauty of the system" (*der Schönstaat des Systems*).⁵²⁰

In comparing this new "System of Ethicality" to the *Reichsschrift* dealt with above, Rosenzweig provides his readers with a rare glimpse into the overall objective of his book as it relates to Hegel's influence upon the latter half of the nineteenth century and subsequently the life and work of Bismarck, the founder of the first united German state. His statement here provides a clue to the very thesis of his book:

Between the demands of the pamphlet [the *Reichsschrift*] and the work of Bismarck there exists at first glance a surprising and yet almost coincidental agreement, from the picture of the state of the system ["The System of Ethicality] there runs an underground line of development through the *Paulskirche* to the 18th of January, 1871.⁵²¹

In making this connection from Hegel's thought to the "*Paulskirche*," the now infamous meeting in 1848 in Frankfurt of the first freely elected parliament in Germany, and finally the founding of the unified German state in 1871, Rosenzweig is making the argument, here clearly influenced by Meinecke, that through the examination of Hegel's thought the historian may also gain insight into the development of the German nation. He thus

⁵¹⁹ HS 172.

⁵²⁰ HS 172.

⁵²¹ "Zwischen den Forderungen der Flugschrift und dem Werk Bismarcks besteht eine beim ersten Wahrnehmen überraschende und doch fast zufällige Übereinstimmung, vom Staatsbild des Systems läuft durch die Paulskirche zum 18. Januar 1871 eine unterirdische Linie der Entwicklung." HS 172-73.

implies that the elements of Hegel's political thinking—namely, his theory of "*Sittlichkeit*"—are those same elements that went into the history and founding of the German state.

In the *Reichsschrift* it was the simplicity of the “thought of power” (*Machtgedankens*)⁵²² that Rosenzweig saw as analogues, albeit almost by “coincidence,” to the work of Bismarck. Here in the “System of Ethicality” Rosenzweig sees much more than a coincidence. For not only does the “System” show the beginnings of Hegel’s lasting political philosophy through its notion of "*Sittlichkeit*," but although in content it is explaining “conditions which are dying off” (*absterbende Zustände*),⁵²³ Rosenzweig sees here in the “light” (*Licht*) that hit what was sinking, the “vitalizing powers of a rising political spirit, which working out into the future would prepare and accompany the work of Bismarck.”⁵²⁴ Thus, with the rising significance of his notion of "*Sittlichkeit*" and the subsequent division of the "people" into classes and the state into an "organic totality," Hegel's new ideal of the state now “shines beyond the narrow reality of German life”⁵²⁵ and points to a future history. The questions of individual and state then take a new turn towards this future-oriented thought in Hegel's “great essay” (*großen Aufsatz*) “On the Scientific Manner of Treating Natural Right.”⁵²⁶ Here again, new questions of the individual in society emerge.

⁵²² HS 172.

⁵²³ HS 172.

⁵²⁴ "die belebende Kräfte eines aufsteigenden politischen Geistes, die in die Zukunft hinauswirkend das Werk Bismarck vorbereiten und herbeigeföhren." HS 172.

⁵²⁵ "über die enge Wirklichkeit des deutschen Lebens wegstrahlt." HS 186.

⁵²⁶ Rosenzweig's treatment of this essay begins on HS 186.

Hegel's essay "On the Scientific Manner of Treating Natural Right" is split into three parts: the first deals with "empirical" right and the second with Kant's and Fichte's philosophy of right. But it is the third part, Hegel's own thoughts on the subject, which occupy Rosenzweig most intensely. Also within this essay is the first appearance in Hegel's writings of the "equation of what is actual and what is rational" (*Gleichung von Wirklich und Vernünftig*).⁵²⁷ This moment is fleeting in Hegel's essay, but if we remember how Rosenzweig splits "what is rational" from "what is actual" in the epigraph to his "Preliminary Remarks" and thus sets this question as a central concern within *Hegel and the State*, it is worth noting nonetheless. The equation of the rational and actual appears in Hegel's words as the possibility that a "great and pure intuition [...] in the pure architectonics of its presentation [...] express the truly ethical."⁵²⁸ This is the bridge between the subjective will on the one hand, and the objective reality of life on the other, or as expressed above, Hegel's notion of "*Sittlichkeit*." It is no coincidence that this language appears in proximity to Kant's thought, for as Ritter will later argue, it is on the basis of Kant's ethical philosophy that Hegel's theory of right is founded.⁵²⁹ The source of this argument can be found in Hegel's essay on natural right.

After Hegel distances himself from Hobbes' political thought and his idea of the "chaos of a natural condition" (*Chaos eines Naturzustands*), which Hegel rejects, wishing rather to preserve nature in the "idea of ethical nature" (*die Idee der sittlichen Natur*),

⁵²⁷ HS 187.

⁵²⁸ "Eine große und reine Anschauung vermag [...] in dem rein Architektonischen ihrer Darstellung [...] das wahrhaft Sittliche ausdrücken." HS 187.

⁵²⁹ Ritter, "Morality and Ethical Life."

Hegel rejects the idea that freedom can be preserved through force.⁵³⁰ Rather than separating “legality” (*Legalität*) and “morality” (*Moralität*) as both Kant and Fichte do, and thus leaving the ethical moment in the hands of the individual alone, Hegel sees “ethical freedom” as “beyond the possibility of such decisions.”⁵³¹ Ritter will later argue, however that it is on the basis of this separation of "legality" and "morality" that Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* is founded.⁵³² However, this is a separation, as I stated above, that ultimately leads to a dualism of self and society. In its full maturity, Hegel's theory of "*Sittlichkeit*" claims to preserve both the freedom of the individual and incorporates this individual into the institutions of society. The roots of this central relationship between the individual and society, and now the gradual exclusion of the state from this relationship, are again bound up with Hegel's theory of the "*Stände*."

The "*Stände*" of the “Natural Right” essay are the same as those of the “System”, writes Rosenzweig.⁵³³ However, in line with Hegel’s increasing dependence upon the category of history to help articulate his political thoughts, Rosenzweig emphasizes here the historical picture of Hegel’s thought. Ever since 1796, writes Rosenzweig, Hegel “placed the great break in world-history at the transition from the free-state to the Roman empire.”⁵³⁴ What resulted out of this break was that “private law became the ruling

⁵³⁰ HS 186-87.

⁵³¹ "*Sittliche Freiheit besteht nicht in einem Entschlusse, so oder so zu handeln; sondern sie ist jenseits der Möglichkeit solcher Entschlüsse.*" HS 188.

⁵³² Ritter, "Morality and Ethical Life." 152.

⁵³³ HS 188.

⁵³⁴ "*den großen Bruch in der Weltgeschichte setzte, am Übergang von Freistaat zum römischen Kaiserreich.*" HS 188.

power of life.”⁵³⁵ Hegel's task, rather than longing for a restoration of antiquity—again Ritter: Hegel "always opposed politically and intellectually every attempt of restoration to return to antiquity"⁵³⁶—is to look face-to-face at the necessity of history and “consciously take up this system [of private law]...and provide for it its own estate, as its empire.”⁵³⁷ Thus the estate of the “bourgeois” is brought into new relations with both the “Noble” and “peasant” estates, and becomes the center-point for Hegel’s renewed question of the freedom of the individual. This “world-historical foundation” (*weltgeschichtliche Unterbau*), as Rosenzweig calls it, and the role of the “bourgeois” within it now become the focus of Hegel’s thoughts, again clearly pointing towards the future importance of "civil society" (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) within his theory of "Sittlichkeit."⁵³⁸

Within the context of the “Natural Right” essay, however, the questions of the state have shifted from the relation of the individual and the state as such—which was the central relation of Hegel's early development—to the question of “the relation of political and economic man, state and property.”⁵³⁹ By turning to a central focus throughout the entirety of *Hegel and the State*, both in terms of its content and form—“the intellectual history of the individually great man”⁵⁴⁰—Rosenzweig addresses this new relation

⁵³⁵ "Privatrecht [wird] die herrschende Macht des Lebens." HS 189.

⁵³⁶ Ritter, "Morality and Ethical Life", 164.

⁵³⁷ "daß dieses System mit Bewußtsein aufgenommen [...] und ihm ein eigener Stand, als sein Reich eingeräumt sei." HS 189.

⁵³⁸ HS 189.

⁵³⁹ "in der Frage des Verhältnisses von politischem und wirtschaftlichem Menschen, Staat und Eigentum." HS 189.

⁵⁴⁰ "d[ie] Geistesgeschichte des einzelnen großen Menschen." HS 190.

between state and property in terms already familiar to us. Drawing on the language of tragedy in Frankfurt and anticipating Hegel's encounter with Napoleon in Jena, Rosenzweig again shapes his narrative around the dramatic content of Hegel's writing. And just as in Frankfurt, here too we see a clear instance of Rosenzweig's biographical interpretation taking shape.

From Tragedy to Comedy

Karl Marx, whom towards the end of *Hegel and the State* Rosenzweig calls the "fanatical herald of the future of man"⁵⁴¹—showing thereby both a critical distance and respect for the "founder of social democracy"⁵⁴²—wrote in the first lines of his political pamphlet "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte": "Hegel remarks somewhere that all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce."⁵⁴³ Marx' quaint phrase, in which he alludes to a discussion of history from Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*,⁵⁴⁴ has made its way firmly into contemporary thought.⁵⁴⁵ It is important to note, however, that Rosenzweig picked up on this same dramatic repetition in Hegel's thought, and gave it a context lacking in Marx within Hegel's Natural Right essay from 1802, almost twenty years before his lectures on history. In

⁵⁴¹ "dieser fanatische Verkünder menschheitlicher Zukunft." HS 470.

⁵⁴² "des Stifters der Sozialdemokratie." HS 467.

⁵⁴³ Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte." London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1984.

⁵⁴⁴ See Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Part III, Section II.

⁵⁴⁵ See for example, Slavoj Žižek's book *First as Tragedy, then as Farce* (2009).

what follows, I will again touch upon the tragedy of Hegel's personal life experienced in Frankfurt and show how in developing Hegel's theory of the state in dramatic terms, Rosenzweig argues that what was once "tragedy" in Hegel's thinking, that is, the fate of the individual, has now become "comedy."

Hegel did not begin to develop a complete theory of the drama until his lectures on aesthetics, first delivered in Heidelberg in 1818. However, long before these lectures, Hegel often leaned on drama and its language in order to draw lasting distinctions in his thought. This was the case, for example, with Hegel's now famous treatment of Sophocles' *Antigone* in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. It was in commenting on this drama that Hegel most clearly made the separation between the ethical life of the family—represented by Antigone—and the ethical life of the state—as embodied by Creon. This contrast, and in turn *collision* of opposing forces, is carried well into *The Philosophy of Right* and shows how the form of tragedy gained a significance far beyond the aesthetic sphere for Hegel. This comes as no surprise if we take his mature theory of the drama into account: "*Das Drama muß [...] als die höchste Stufe der Poesie und der Kunst überhaupt angesehen werden.*"⁵⁴⁶ As the "highest art," drama does not remain closed off from the world of actuality, it is not a passing amusement for the masses, but rather quite profoundly reveals itself "*in der Weltgeschichte.*"⁵⁴⁷ It is this pairing of *drama* and *world history* that is of interest to us here. For not only does Hegel learn to see the events of world history unfolding dramatically before him—as his future encounter with Napoleon most clearly shows—but Rosenzweig himself, in pairing the

⁵⁴⁶ Hegel, *Ästhetik III*, 512.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 586.

internal conflicts of Hegel's individuality with the external events of his life and thought, plays his historian's role as the dramatic poet of Hegel's life.

Rosenzweig first introduced dramatic language into his biography in his treatment of Hegel's Frankfurt period. There, under the notion of "the highest subjectivity" and in the proximity to his friend Hölderlin, Hegel struggled to portray the fate of the life of Jesus in philosophical terms. This led first to a tragic notion of personal life, in which the individual's fate was composed of the complete separation from the world. According to Rosenzweig, this was Hegel's own position in Frankfurt. However, in the picture of the life of Jesus, this isolation from the "powers" of the world would soon become a new fate for the individual: "Jesus' fate grew precisely from these powers from which he fled."⁵⁴⁸ In doing so, his "fatelessness" (*Schicksalslosigkeit*) was his highest fate and personal tragedy. Finally, in the context of the development of Hegel's conception of the state, this led to Rosenzweig's conclusion: "[t]he state as a part of fate!"⁵⁴⁹ This movement from the tragedy of personal life through the state led to Hegel's own formulation: "fate as history itself." In this moment history took on the tragic undertone once reserved for the individual, that is, history was now endowed with the "fate" of personal life. Now in Jena, as I have shown, Hegel's thoughts shifted to the "fate" of this history and the political world around him. "It becomes noticeable," writes Rosenzweig, "how closely the emergence of the new historical world and view of the state in Germany was connected with the drama of the sinking empire."⁵⁵⁰ It is from the viewpoint of this "drama" that

⁵⁴⁸ "eben in diesen Mächten, vor denen er flüchtete, war ihm so sein 'Schicksal' erwachsen." HS 240.

⁵⁴⁹ HS 119.

⁵⁵⁰ "es wird spürbar, wie eng das Aufkommen der neuen geschichtlichen Welt- und Staatsanschauung in Deutschland mit dem Schauspiel des untergehenden Reichs verbunden war." HS 198.

Rosenzweig again turns his attention to Hegel's language of tragedy. However, to this "tragedy" now comes the notion of "comedy," and both of these revolve around Hegel's understanding of the concept of "property" (*Eigentum*) in Jena. One may thus ask, how does Hegel come to associate dramatic language with the concept of "property"?

In introducing this term, the full range of the concept of "property" for Hegel's thought should be noted from the outset. Indeed, Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* is founded upon a wide-ranging notion of what it means to 'take possession' of something.⁵⁵¹ Accordingly, Hegel defines "property" in *The Philosophy of Right* as "the absolute *right of appropriation* which human beings have over all things (*Sachen*)."⁵⁵² However, in the first introduction to the *Reichsschrift* from 1799, Hegel still saw the concept of property as "something without relation" (*ein Beziehungsloses*).⁵⁵³ It was this "disconnectedness of private property" that Hegel saw as the "root of German suffering."⁵⁵⁴ Rather than a simple "orderly dominance over his property,"⁵⁵⁵ Hegel now sees the relation of the individual to "property" in the same light as the state: "both are fate for us, from both we cannot and are not allowed to think ourselves as separated."⁵⁵⁶ Hegel already presents this pairing of state and property under "the idea of fate" (*die Idee des Schicksals*)⁵⁵⁷ in the third introduction to the *Reichsschrift*: "A group of people [...] can then only be called

⁵⁵¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Part One, Section One.

⁵⁵² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 75.

⁵⁵³ HS 191.

⁵⁵⁴ "'Beziehungslosigkeit' des Privateigentums"; "die Wurzel des deutschen Elends." HS 191.

⁵⁵⁵ "ordnungsvolle Herrschaft über sein Eigentum." HS 191.

⁵⁵⁶ "beide sind uns Schicksal, von beiden können und dürfen wir uns nicht getrennt denken." HS 191.

⁵⁵⁷ HS 191.

a state, if they have united themselves to a common defense of their property in general.”⁵⁵⁸ With this statement property “receives its entrance into the conceptual determination of the state itself.”⁵⁵⁹ State and property are intertwined as concepts and it is no longer merely the duty of the state to protect the private property of the individual.

The state developed in the Natural Right essay is still understood by Rosenzweig as a “power-state” (*Machtstaat*) and as a “war-state” (*Kriegsstaat*).⁵⁶⁰ Given this view of the state, the question of the relation of the individual to this very inhuman-like picture is constant in both Rosenzweig and Hegel’s ideas. In the Natural Right essay Hegel attempts to “reconcile” (*aussöhnen*) what before appeared to Rosenzweig as the “indifference” (*Gleichgültigkeit*) of the state towards the individual with the “great thought of the ‘identity’ of state and man.”⁵⁶¹ Again it is the “division of estates” (*Ständegliederung*) in general that is central to this thought. And here it is the relation of the state to the “economic individual” (*wirtschaftende Einzelmensch*)—a new formulation of the “bourgeois”—that comes into question.⁵⁶²

The thought of “tragedy” again makes an appearance with the relation of the “economic man” and “property” to the state. For Hegel, “the division of estates is ‘nothing other than the performance of tragedy in ethical life that the absolute eternally

⁵⁵⁸ “Eine Menschenmenge [...] kann nur dann ein Staat genannt werden, wenn sie sich zur gemeinschaftlichen Verteidigung ihres Eigentums überhaupt verbunden hat.” HS 192.

⁵⁵⁹ “[...] hält seinen Einzug in die Begriffsbestimmung des Staats selbst.” HS 192.

⁵⁶⁰ HS 193.

⁵⁶¹ “mit dem großen Gedanken der ‘Identität’ von Staat und Mensch.” HS 193.

⁵⁶² “Die Frage, wie sich der wirtschaftende Einzelmensch zum Staate finde, beherrscht jetzt den ganzen Aufbau.” HS 193.

plays with itself."⁵⁶³ Such a sweeping dramatic claim is quite common for Hegel, as we already noted in his treatment of Sophocles' *Antigone* to help describe a modern political relation. In the above context, Hegel draws on Aeschylus' tragic trilogy *Oresteia*, which concludes in the *Eumenides* with the trial of Orestes for the murder of his mother, in order to show how the concept of "property" is caught up in tragic relations. *Eumenides* revolves around Apollo's command that Orestes avenge the murder of his father at his mother's hands, thereby throwing mankind into "act and guilt" and allowing the furies (*Eumeniden*) to rule with the "force" of "rigid law."⁵⁶⁴ Athena, the ruler of Athens and thus the godhead of the state, was thus given to mankind to reconcile the "rigid law" of the furies with the law of the state. Although she and her court proclaim Orestes innocent, she appeases the furies by giving them an altar of their own within the city of Athens: "The way / is free for you to be a landholder here, / enjoying honor justly and forever."⁵⁶⁵ In this manner "ethicality" (*Sittlichkeit*), understood here as the state itself, sacrificed a part of its "inorganic nature" to the "furies," who previously lived outside the law of the state, thereby placing a piece of its property—the altar— over and against itself as "fate."⁵⁶⁶ With the trial of Orestes in mind, Hegel can write that this fate is "now

⁵⁶³ "Die ständische Gliederung ist 'nichts anders als die Aufführung der Tragödie im Sittlichen, welche das Absolute ewig mit sich selber spielt.'" HS 194.

⁵⁶⁴ "Tat und Schuld"; "Gewalt"; "starren Rechts". HS 194.

⁵⁶⁵ Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 1036.

⁵⁶⁶ "So opfert die Sittlichkeit einen Teil ihrer selbst auf, indem sie ihre unorganische Natur, 'damit sie sich nicht mit ihr verwickelt, als ein Schicksal von sich abtrennt und sich gegenüberstellt.'" HS 194.

no longer that of man, but that of the state”⁵⁶⁷—indeed, "property has become the fate of the state.”⁵⁶⁸

What Rosenzweig sees happening here is a reversion to the concept of fate of 1798/99 in Frankfurt, but now it is the state and no longer man himself who has something “objective” over and against itself. This new idea of fate as it relates to state and property is termed by Rosenzweig as “one definitive side of the Hegelian thought of freedom.”⁵⁶⁹ For in holding the sphere of private right (*Privatrecht*) over and against itself as fate, the state now maintains a “state-free zone” (*staatsfreien Bezirk*) where the freedom of the individual is possible.⁵⁷⁰ Thus, it is with “private right” or what Hegel defines as the sphere of “property,” where “freedom” plays itself out in Hegel’s thinking. This process is what Hegel terms the "tragedy in ethical life" (*Tragödie im Sittlichen*).⁵⁷¹

We have reached a point where the “relation of the individual to the state” is maturing towards its definitive form in Hegel’s thinking. The above relation has increasingly played out within the question of “freedom” and its possibility in what Rosenzweig sees as a “power-state” (*Machtstaat*). This finally leads Rosenzweig back to talk of the “great men” of history, a thought which points the way from tragedy to comedy. It again occupies Hegel here and will form one of the essential aspects of his mature political philosophy in the form of the monarch. In the “Natural Right” essay, however, the “great statesman” constitutes the fourth kind of individual and thereby a

⁵⁶⁷ "Schicksal nun nicht mehr des Menschen, sondern des Staats." HS 195.

⁵⁶⁸ "Das Eigentum ist zum Schicksal des Staats geworden." HS 194.

⁵⁶⁹ "eine Seite des Hegelschen Freiheitsgedankens." HS 195.

⁵⁷⁰ HS 195.

⁵⁷¹ HS 194.

fourth kind of freedom. Rosenzweig briefly outlines the first three individuals and their relation to “freedom” as follows:

There was the freedom of the economic “bourgeois” foreign to the state, the carriers of the “morality” of Kant and Fichte; the freedom of the fighting class from all those earthly shackles of possession and righteousness, which make up the content of freedom for the “bourgeois”; the freedom of the individual to drink from the breast of universal ethicality.⁵⁷²

To these three forms now comes “the freedom of the great statesman” (*die Freiheit des großen Staatsmannes*).⁵⁷³ But this individual, honored by Hegel only because it is “wrapped up in fate,” does not have its “principle of right” (*Rechtsgrund*) in itself, “but rather solely in the overarching whole, in the state and its history.”⁵⁷⁴

Hegel’s emphasis on the “great statesman” is fascinating for Rosenzweig in many ways. The concept of the individual is also the starting point for Rosenzweig’s *Star of Redemption* and Rosenzweig’s concept of “metaethics” (*Metaethik*) is colored with the same “heroic solitariness” (*heldischer Einsamkeit*)⁵⁷⁵ that appears in the great men of the Natural Right essay. But this tendency towards the “historical personality” (*historische Persönlichkeit*) is also what ruled over the nineteenth century—“Ranke’s century”⁵⁷⁶—in

⁵⁷² "Es waren die staatsfremde Freiheit des wirtschaftende 'bourgeois,' des Trägers der 'Moralität' Kants und Fichtes; die Freiheit des Kriegerstandes von allen jenen irdischen Fesseln des Besitzes und der Rechtschaffenheit, die dem 'bourgeois' den Inhalt der Freiheit ausmachen; die Freiheit des einzelnen, an der Brust der allgemeinen Sittlichkeit zu trinken." HS 200.

⁵⁷³ HS 200.

⁵⁷⁴ "in das Schicksal hineingeflochten"; "sondern einzig im übergreifenden Ganzen, im Staat und seiner Geschichte." HS 201.

⁵⁷⁵ HS 201.

⁵⁷⁶ "Jahrhundert Rankes" HS 201.

two distinct ways:⁵⁷⁷ first, it was groups of individuals who in themselves were morally outstanding “parts” (*Glieder*) of a “group” (*Menge*); and second the great man who uniquely related to these same groups as an historical personality.⁵⁷⁸ Hegel, however, introduces a third type of individual who embodies the “feeling of personal particularity” (*Gefühl der persönlichen Eigentümlichkeit*), which was of waning interest to the coming century.⁵⁷⁹ The way this happens, writes Rosenzweig, is “infinitely telling” (*unendlich bezeichnend*).⁵⁸⁰ For with the introduction of this character and also the rounding out of the concept of “property” as embodied in an individual, Rosenzweig sees the transition from Hegel's struggles with personal life in Frankfurt to his mature stance as complete. Part of this transition, and the one of interest to us here, is the transition of the concept of fate from “tragedy” to that of “comedy”:

If the philosopher represented the relation of the state to the freedom of civic trade and the independence of the subjects as the tragedy in the ethical, then the relation of the state to the men resting in their personal particularity, lifted above and beyond the state in the highest, internal sense [is represented] as—'comedy.'⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁷ This is probably a reference by Rosenzweig to the “bitter controversy” between Ranke and Heinrich Leo on the subject of historical personalities, especially Machiavelli. See here Iggers, *The German Conception of History*. 66-69.

⁵⁷⁸ HS 201.

⁵⁷⁹ HS 201.

⁵⁸⁰ HS 201.

⁵⁸¹ “*Versinnbildlichte das Verhältnis des Staats zur bürgerlich gewerblichen Freiheit und Selbstständigkeit der Untertanen sich dem Philosophen als die Tragödie im Sittlichen, so das Verhältnis des Staats zu dem in seiner persönlichen Eigentümlichkeit ruhenden, im höchsten, innerlichen Sinn über den Staat hinaus gehobene Menschen als—'Komödie'.*” HS 201.

Already in the Natural Right essay, before his great lectures on aesthetics, Hegel discusses ethical life in terms of tragedy and comedy. With regard to tragedy, as we described above using the final scene from Aeschylus' drama, Hegel writes that "ethical nature segregates its inorganic nature [...] as a fate, and places it outside itself." Comedy, on the other hand, "will generally come down on the side of absence of fate."⁵⁸² In modern comedy, which is Hegel's focus here, man takes himself seriously, but the spectator "takes him comically" (*nimmt ihn komisch*).⁵⁸³ He holds his "small coincidental own being in bitter seriousness for absolute" and thus falls into that type of order, which corresponds to this, "the world of private right."⁵⁸⁴ In this sense, with Rosenzweig playing the role of the historian as "witness" and "spectator" to Hegel's development, this comic individual is "a picture of life of these times."⁵⁸⁵ A picture in which individuals are endowed with nothing more than an "invalidity" (*Nichtigkeit*)⁵⁸⁶ with regard to their own fate. It is this "invalidity" of individuality that leads Rosenzweig to make one last connection to the *Reichsschrift*, which puts the "infinitely telling" and significant aspect of this comic individual into clear relief for Hegel's political thought:

It was like this in the *Reichsverfassungsschrift* that Hegel described the powers that move the human race—politics, religion, necessity, virtue, force, reason, cunning—each of which carries itself as an absolutely free and independent

⁵⁸² Hegel, *Natural Law*, 105.

⁵⁸³ *HS* 203.

⁵⁸⁴ "er selber hingegen hält sein kleines zufälliges Eigenwesen in bitterem Ernst für absolut, und fällt so ganz von selbst derjenigen Ordnung in die Hände, in der das Zufällige unbedingte Geltung beansprucht, der Welt des privaten Rechts." *HS* 203.

⁵⁸⁵ "ein Bild des Lebens dieser Zeit." *HS* 203.

⁵⁸⁶ *HS* 203.

power, 'unaware that they are all tools in the hands of higher powers, of primal fate and all-conquering time, which laugh at such freedom and independence.⁵⁸⁷

This “laugh,” continues Rosenzweig, is the same sound that now echoes through the comedy of “the world of private right.” We thus have before us the picture of the “comedy of the ethical” (*Komödie des Sittlichen*).⁵⁸⁸

In terms of Hegel’s development, which reached its personal peak in Frankfurt and is now slowly giving way to Hegel’s own system, this conception of “the comedy of the ethical” shows for Rosenzweig the distance Hegel has come since the days of his own “most personal tragedy” (*persönlichste Tragik*). What for Hegel four years ago was “tragedy” and was represented in the life of Jesus, “the self-entrapment in the I,” “the fear for one’s own,”⁵⁸⁹ has now become “comedy” for him. The concept of “fatelessness,” which he once saw with Hölderlin as the “entire weakness of the times” and also as the peak of the problem of “tragedy,”⁵⁹⁰ in Rosenzweig’s words this notion of “fatelessness” has now become “the title of the comedy of the ethical.”⁵⁹¹ Thus, with this “revaluation” (*Umwertung*) of the constellation of fate—and this proto-Nietzschean term is not surprising if we remember the “apocalyptic” sense which filled Hegel at this time—Hegel has now come to view what he once saw as “tragic”—the “highest subjectivity” and the

⁵⁸⁷ “So hatte Hegel in der Reichsschrift die Mächte, welche das menschliche Geschlecht bewegen—Politik, Religion, Not, Tugend, Gewalt, Vernunft, List—geschildert, die sich jede als absolut freie und selbstständige Macht betragen, 'bewußtlos, daß sie alle Werkzeuge in der Hand höherer Mächte, des uranfänglichen Schicksals und der alles besiegende Zeit, sind, die jener Freiheit und Selbstständigkeit lachen.” HS 203.

⁵⁸⁸ HS 204.

⁵⁸⁹ HS 203.

⁵⁹⁰ HS 204.

⁵⁹¹ “Überschrift der Komödie des Sittlichen.” HS 204.

separation from the world—as the "comedy" of ethical life. The individual, who was once at the center of Hegel's state, now gives way to the powers of history resulting in a "crazy grandiose view of the invalidity of the individual."⁵⁹² Hegel now stands at the door of the new century, in both “acknowledgment and dismissal” (*Anerkennung und Verwerfung*),⁵⁹³ and with this new relation of the individual to the state we play spectator with Rosenzweig to the dramatic turns of his development.

Hegel's Jena Period: Part II

Rosenzweig's treatment of the conclusion of Hegel's Jena period, "Jena (since 1804)," will again address the essay on Natural Right in light of a new version and then continues on to explicate what would later become known as the *Jenaer Realphilosophie*—Hegel's first complete systematic account of "Geist" or spirit. The Jena period, which saw the life of the individual give way to the power of the state, finally culminates for Hegel in his now famous *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In Rosenzweig's narrative, the conclusion of Hegel's Jena period is the continuation and systematic solidification of the relationship between the individual and the state. Up to this period in Hegel's development—in 1804—Rosenzweig recognized two ideals of the state standing in tension with one another. He categorizes these two ideals as that of the “individual” (*Einzelmensch*) and the “whole of the state” (*Staatganzes*), or more particularly, as an “ethics of personality” (*Persönlichkeitsethik*) represented by the

⁵⁹² "Eine verrucht großartige Anschauung von der Nichtigkeit der Individualität." HS 203.

⁵⁹³ HS 204.

problem of a “state-free zone” and an “ethics of community” (*Gemeinschaftsethik*) encompassed by the idea of “life in the state.”⁵⁹⁴ This tension between "personality" and "community" in Hegel's thinking correspond to our chosen terms "individual" and "state." As we have seen, Hegel's philosophy of "personality" emerged in tandem with the tragedy of his own personal life in Frankfurt. Mediated by a new conception of "fate," Hegel's political thinking was shown to correspond with his biography, moving steadily away from a focus on the individual towards an interest in the powers of the state and history. This double-treatment of Hegel's thought along with his life outlines a basic trend in Rosenzweig's Hegel book. With the turn in Jena to "*die Sache selbst*,"⁵⁹⁵ we are now greeted by the rise of the philosophy of history in Hegel's thinking. As he himself enters into the political events surrounding him, so too does his thought adapt from the riddles of personal life to the fate of the individual in history.

The relationship between the individual and the state takes a new turn in the next version of the Natural Right essay with Hegel's first attempt to develop a “middle realm between the state and man before-the-state.”⁵⁹⁶ In the *Philosophy of Right* this "middle realm" will be termed “civil society”⁵⁹⁷ (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*).⁵⁹⁸ What is most distinct for Rosenzweig in the development of this central concept is the change to the

⁵⁹⁴ HS 221.

⁵⁹⁵ corresponding in this way to what Rosenzweig had called the "Sachlichkeit" of the nineteenth-century in his Baroque notes, here in dialogue with his cousin Hans Ehrenberg who uses this same term to describe the challenge facing the early twentieth-century "*Geschichte der Menschen unserer Zeit*." See Rosenzweig *Jahrbuch*, "Paulus und die Politik" (Verlag Karl Alber).

⁵⁹⁶ "*das Zwischenreich zwischen Staat und vorstaatlichem Mensch*." HS 224.

⁵⁹⁷ This is of course a reference to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*.

⁵⁹⁸ HS 224.

doctrine of the estates (*Ständelehre*) discussed above under Hegel's growing interest for a philosophy of history. This shift in the importance of the philosophy of history in Hegel's thought is not only important for understanding Hegel's theory of "*Sittlichkeit*," but central to the entirety of the *Jenaer Realphilosophie*.

Hegel's philosophy of history in Jena once again takes flight from the Greek ideal. In observing the historical world around him, Hegel believed that along the "historical path from the Polis to the modern state" the "unity" of the Greeks was destroyed.⁵⁹⁹ This created a "higher diremption" (*Entzweiung*) where the "universal" (*Allgemeine*) was "free from the knowledge of all" (*frei von dem Wissen aller*).⁶⁰⁰ Although in this manner the modern individual lost his "external freedom" (*äußere Freiheit*) he nevertheless maintains the internal freedom, "the freedom of thought" (*die Freiheit des Gedankens*).⁶⁰¹ The now separated "universal," on the other hand, stands juxtaposed to the individual in history as "hereditary monarchy" (*Erbmonarchie*).⁶⁰² In this manner, Hegel is already attempting to do what he carries out in *The Philosophy of Right*, namely to reconcile the particular "will" of the individual, with the general "will" of the monarchical state. Although the idea of monarchy as the "true guarantee of personal freedom"⁶⁰³ was already present in the "pamphlet" of 1802, here in these final days in Jena monarchy itself, and in this manner a telling philosophy of history, is now taken up "without

⁵⁹⁹ "*Der geschichtliche Gang von der Polis zum modernen Staat hat die schöne 'genialische' Einheit des griechischen Menschen zertrümmert.*" HS 234.

⁶⁰⁰ HS 234.

⁶⁰¹ HS 234.

⁶⁰² HS 234.

⁶⁰³ "*die wahre Bürgerschaft der persönlichen Freiheit.*" HS 232.

digression or restriction into the ideal of the state.”⁶⁰⁴ Hegel's view of monarchy in Jena leads Rosenzweig to find the “spiritual element of Hegel’s doctrine of state as power”.⁶⁰⁵

'physical strength' does not explain the success of great men of power, he has “something in his outline, which the others would like to call their master; they obey him against their will; against their will his will is their will; their *immediate* will is his will, but their conscious will is other; the great man has the former on his side, and they must, even if they do not want to. This is the preordained of great men, to know the absolute will, to speak it; everyone collects themselves under his banner; he is their God.”⁶⁰⁶

Opposed to this idea of the monarch, which individuals must obey "even if they do not want to," is the pole of “freedom of thought.”⁶⁰⁷ From this tension between the authority of the monarch and the freedom of the individual Hegel, in the spirit of Kant's "What is Enlightenment?," outlines the necessity of “public opinion” (*öffentliche Meinung*). But in contrast to Kant, who in his essay wrote "*räsonniert, aber gehorcht*"⁶⁰⁸ thereby leaving the gap between public opinion and the state unaccounted for, Hegel adopts it into his idea of the state. This new “organ” of the state also changed Hegel's division of estates; we now encounter the estate of “officialdom” (*Beamtentum*) for the first time in his

⁶⁰⁴ "ohne Umschweif und Vorbehalt ins Staatsideal aufgenommen." HS 232.

⁶⁰⁵ "Das geistige Element in Hegels Lehre vom Staat als Macht." HS 230.

⁶⁰⁶ "'nicht physische Stärke' erklärt den Erfolg des großen Machtmenschen, sondern er hat 'etwas in seinen Zügen, das die andern ihren Herrn nennen mögen; die gehorchen ihm wider Willen; wider ihren Willen ist sein Wille ihr Willen; ihr unmittelbar Willen ist sein Willen, aber ihr bewußter Willen ist anders; der große Mensch hat jenen auf seiner Seite, und sie müssen, ob sie schon nicht wollen. Dies ist das Voraus des großen Menschen, den absoluten Willen zu wissen, auszusprechen; es sammeln sich alle um sein Panier; er ist ihr Gott.'" HS 230-31.

⁶⁰⁷ "mit der ungewöhnlich starken Betonung der persönlichen Gedankenfreiheit." HS 237.

⁶⁰⁸ See HS 27.

thought. Thus, based on Hegel's understanding of history in Jena, from the "System of 1802" with its aristocratic and estate-based picture of the state (*aristokratisch-ständische Staatsbild*) there now develops a picture based on this new monarchical-bureaucratic ideal.⁶⁰⁹

Rosenzweig points out that this is a change "in the sense of the changing times"⁶¹⁰ and that Hegel's system has now become "externally more many-sided, less monumental."⁶¹¹ In coming up with the estate (*Stand*) of "officialdom" as the "estate of the universal" (*Stand der Allgemeinheit*) Hegel was using the "social reality of the times" (*soziale Wirklichkeit der Zeit*) as his model.⁶¹² What is new to his system is the emergence here of a "moral-psychological systematic" (*moralpsychologische Systematik*) wherein the "dispositions" (*Gesinnungen*) of the estates are analyzed.⁶¹³ This leads Hegel to classify the "officialdom" for example, with the "disposition" of "machine work" (*Maschinenarbeit*).⁶¹⁴ This shift from the "impersonal ethicality" (*unpersönlichen Sittlichkeit*) to "true 'moral disposition'" (*wahrer 'moralischer Gesinnung'*) is worth noting, because it represents for Rosenzweig that Hegel was beginning to push the division of estates (*Ständegliederung*) "entirely out of the state into society."⁶¹⁵ This move, which is a prelude to the final form of Hegel's division of estates in the *Philosophy*

⁶⁰⁹ HS 234.

⁶¹⁰ "eine Wandlung im Sinne der sich wandelnden Zeit." HS 234.

⁶¹¹ "äußerlich vielseitiger, weniger monumental." HS 235.

⁶¹² HS 235. Rosenzweig is commenting here on the middle section of the division "Konstitution" in the *Jenaer Realphilosophie*.

⁶¹³ HS 236.

⁶¹⁴ HS 236.

⁶¹⁵ "aus dem Staat ganz heraus in die Gesellschaft." HS 237.

of *Right* is in Rosenzweig's words, essential “for understanding the political content of his next great work [*The Phenomenology of Spirit*] and above all for Hegel’s placement to Napoleon.”⁶¹⁶ For as Rosenzweig claims in explicating these changes to Hegel's thought, with the introduction of the “officialdom” the previously so important “Noble” estate is replaced and “the air of the Napoleonic age is noticeable here.”⁶¹⁷

In general, Rosenzweig’s role as historian in his dramatic narrative rarely allows the reader to guess his position with regard to the subject matter. I have argued that along with the *content*, one must look at the *form* and *language* of the book, and in this manner draw clues as to Rosenzweig's own philosophical position. With this in mind, the last five pages—the final and third section—of the largest Jena manuscript, “Art, Religion, Philosophy,” is fascinating. One can discern in Rosenzweig's words and the following discussion an uncommon interest in these pages. In introducing them Rosenzweig writes: “and so, in order to answer the previously postponed question, how the philosopher thought about the relation of the state to the ultimate things at that time, finally valuable material comes into our hands.”⁶¹⁸ This interest in the “ultimate things”, that is, in “art, religion and philosophy,” has the tone of the philosopher we will come to know in *The Star of Redemption*. Indeed, all three of these themes will be woven into Rosenzweig's later thought. However in treating Hegel's Jena period, it is the question of "religion" that

⁶¹⁶ "den politischen Gehalt des nächsten großen Werkes und vor allem um Hegels Stellung zu Napoleon zu verstehen." HS 237.

⁶¹⁷ "die Luft des napoleonischen Zeitalters wird hier [...] spürbar." HS 238. Left to the side here was Rosenzweig’s discussion of the “officialdom” as “learned” (*Gelehrte*) and how, on the one hand, this allows this estate the “freedom” to know the “universal,” but also provides another link to Napoleon and the Italian Republic, where “official” and “learned” were incorporated into the concept of a “*dotti*.”

⁶¹⁸ "und so kommt uns hier endlich vollwertiges Material in die Hände zur Beantwortung der bisher aufgeschobene Frage, wie sich der Philosoph damals das Verhältnis des Staats zu den letzten Dingen gedacht hat." HS 239.

becomes especially important. In leading up to a discussion of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which concludes the entire first volume of the book, subtle changes in Rosenzweig's language and choice of content can now be discerned. For example, as the following pages show, we see how Rosenzweig shares a lasting interest with Hegel in the world-historical question of the emergence of Christianity from its pagan roots. Thus, in following Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel's religious thought as expressed in a budding philosophy of history in Jena, we are also able to gather important clues that point beyond *Hegel and the State* itself into Rosenzweig's own future as a religious thinker.

Religion and Philosophy of History in Jena

The final section of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, "World History," culminates in questions regarding the relation of the spiritual and secular realm,⁶¹⁹ thereby linking political and religious philosophy at the highest level of Hegel's thought. For Rosenzweig himself, the question of religion—and especially of the relation between paganism and the Jewish and Christian faiths—would become the central problem for the majority of his mature life. There is certainly a connection to be made between Hegel and Rosenzweig with regard to religion, but what form does this connection take? One can gain perspective on this topic by again drawing upon Bienenstock's article "Rosenzweig's Hegel," where she remarks that in *Hegel and the State* Rosenzweig

⁶¹⁹ "In the hard struggle between these two realms [...] the spiritual realm brings the existence of its heaven down to earth in this world, to the ordinary secularity of actuality and representational thought." Hegel, *PR* 380.

"neglects the religious dimension of Hegel's thought."⁶²⁰ After making such a striking claim, Bienenstock concludes her essay with the following thoughts and questions:

It is true, I think, that the way in which, in *The Star of Redemption*, Rosenzweig tries to relate faith and knowledge, the attempts he made at understanding the different religious traditions in conceptual terms and at developing an interpretation of history on their basis, are hardly conceivable without Hegel's influence. But they are far from being Hegelian. Indeed, one may perhaps see in them an outcome of the way in which, in his first book, Rosenzweig related to religion: Is it mere coincidence if the very religious dimension, still repressed in *Hegel und der Staat*, reappears later in a Hegelian clothing? Can one not suppose that, had Rosenzweig adequately evaluated Hegel's attitude toward religion in his first work, he himself would have elaborated, in the *Star of Redemption*, a very different attitude toward Hegel's idealism and perhaps, thereby, toward religion itself?⁶²¹

It is a harsh reading of *Hegel and the State* that results, as Bienenstock seems to suggest, in the judgment that the treatment of Hegel's religious thought there is inadequate. For again and again, Rosenzweig points to and discusses the role of religion in Hegel's political thought. Perhaps Bienenstock is correct in claiming that his treatment is "non-Hegelian" and "repressed"⁶²² and indeed, Rosenzweig does not integrate Hegel's "Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion" into his narrative. However, I would like to

⁶²⁰ Bienenstock, 181.

⁶²¹ Bienenstock, 182.

⁶²² Bienenstock, 181.

argue that the question of religion, while not as central as that of individuality, is one of the guiding thoughts of *Hegel and the State*.

Throughout Hegel's development, Rosenzweig draws upon the question of religion as it appears in Hegel's writings to help show the limits of Hegel's political thought. Additionally, the questions raised around religion in *Hegel and the State*, as Bienenstock points out, indirectly lead to Rosenzweig's own mature thinking. As I will show below, when Rosenzweig addresses religion in *Hegel and the State*, he does so in combination with a discussion of Hegel's philosophy of history. As he will later claim in discussing the "metaphysics" of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*: "The particular history of religion has the same division as general world history, because—world history has the same division as the history of religion."⁶²³ This interdependence of religion and philosophy of history also provides the method for the introduction to Part II of *The Star of Redemption*, "On the Possibility of Experiencing Miracles." There, Rosenzweig uses an historical analysis—one would almost like to say "historicist" method—to construct an argument for the necessity of a middle ground between the "extreme subjectivity" of philosophy and the "infinite objectivity" of theology.⁶²⁴ While Rosenzweig's treatment of religion in *Hegel and the State* falls short of the creative conclusions he will come to draw in *The Star of Redemption*—there, forging that very "bridge" (*Brücke*) between philosophy and theology with his own work—the preconditions for this content and historical method are already at hand in *Hegel and the State*—for the first time most clearly in the description of Hegel's Jena period. Thus, Hegel's conjoining of religion and

⁶²³ "Die spezielle Religionsgeschichte hat die gleiche Gliederung wie die allgemeine Weltgeschichte, weil—die Weltgeschichte die gleiche Gliederung hat wie die Religionsgeschichte." HS 451.

⁶²⁴ See *Star* 106.

history offers a glimpse not only into the future of Hegel's own thought, but into the very problematic that earned Rosenzweig the title "philosopher of religion."⁶²⁵

It was in Jena, as stated above, that a "new force" in Hegel's thought emerged. Along with his ongoing systematic attempt to "to unite the ideal with the 'age',"⁶²⁶ Hegel's thinking during this period began to revolve around a "picture of the present based on a philosophy of history."⁶²⁷ Again drawing on the deep fascination for Greek culture sweeping through Germany at that time, Hegel believed himself to witness in the Christian epoch of world history before him a "downfall" (*Niedergang*) from the Greek Polis.⁶²⁸ What for Rosenzweig was a "highly surprising" (*höchst überraschend*)⁶²⁹ observation, led Hegel to connect Christianity and Greek culture in this manner: no longer does Hegel find the "predecessor" (*Vorfrucht*) of Christianity in Judaism—as he had in his youth—but rather in the "imagination" (*Phantasie*) of Greek sculpture.⁶³⁰ According to Hegel, in making statues of their gods, the Greeks were the first to separate the "ethical from the natural" (*Sittlichen vom Natürlichen*).⁶³¹ This was essentially the same "becoming human of God" (*Menschwerdung Gottes*) that would arise and become

⁶²⁵ See here *Franz Rosenzweig: Religionsphilosoph aus Kassel*. For the Rosenzweig's views on religion before the *Star*, see *Judaism Despite Christianity* (ed. Rosenstock-Huussy).

⁶²⁶ "das Ideal mit der 'Zeit' zu vereinigen." HS 243.

⁶²⁷ "das geschichtsphilosophische Bild der Gegenwart." HS 241.

⁶²⁸ HS 242. This "downfall" of Christianity is the subject of "a few pages" recorded by Karl Rosenkranz (see Rosenkranz 133-141).

⁶²⁹ HS 245.

⁶³⁰ HS 245. For the connection here of art and religion to Rosenzweig's *Star*, see the chapter on *Hegel und der Staat* in Else Freund's *Die Existenzphilosophie Franz Rosenzweigs*.

⁶³¹ HS 245.

“absolute” in Christianity with the death of Christ.⁶³² Thus, it was on the basis of a new valuation of history—infused with a budding interest in philosophy of art—that Hegel's philosophy of religion merged with the historical world.

In Jena, Hegel divides the world-historical path of religion into three stages. First there was the “religion of nature” (*Naturreligion*) of Paganism—the Greek culture described above—which reaches its peak in a “beautiful mythology” (*schönen Mythologie*).⁶³³ After the Romans hunted off these people and took away the home of their religion within “living nature” (*lebendigen Natur*), an “infinite pain” (*unendlichen Schmerz*) was created which gave rise to a second religion. Christianity thus grew out of the “infinite pain” of the “de-deification of nature” (*Entgötterung der Natur*) and there grew within this new religion the belief that man nevertheless “carried the assurance of being one with the absolute within him.”⁶³⁴ The history of Christianity, which reached its peak in the Catholicism of the Middle Ages—as the “beautiful religion”—was moved by the two powers of “the feeling of separation and the belief in reconciliation.”⁶³⁵ It was then within Protestantism, with its “poetry of consecration” (*Poesie der Weihe*), that “the essence of Christianity, as the religion of separation and pain” is first unveiled.⁶³⁶ Beyond the history of paganism and Christianity “the third religion, the religion of the

⁶³² HS 245.

⁶³³ HS 246.

⁶³⁴ “ein Mensch die Zuversicht des Einsseins mit dem Absolute in sich trug.” HS 246.

⁶³⁵ “das Gefühl der Trennung und der Glaube an die Versöhnung.” HS 246.

⁶³⁶ “das Wesen des Christentums, als der Religion der Trennung und des Schmerzes.” HS 247.

future, announces itself.”⁶³⁷ The moment when this new religion will come coincides, in Rosenzweig's reading, with the time “when the ideal of the state of the system has become reality.”⁶³⁸ For Hegel, this is the beginning of the “third age of the world” (*dritte Weltalter*) and in order to unite politics and religion, state and church, it is “philosophy” which rises to the task and “stands at its doorstep.”⁶³⁹ For this “future-oriented” (*zukunftsgerichtet*) Hegel, now armed with the tools of the philosopher, there arose the idea of the “unity of the state with the 'divine'” (*die Einheit von Staat und 'Göttlichem'*),⁶⁴⁰ whereby religion and state “were to internally grow together in the coming age of the world and thereby become 'absolute'.”⁶⁴¹ This is the theme of the section “Art, Religion, Philosophy” within the *Jenaer Realphilosophie*.

Here, in the final moments before the appearance of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, we are faced with a juxtaposition of “state and church, and in connection with this a change in the place of the state in the system.”⁶⁴² For from the outset “the connection to the state, to the “people”, is now visibly no longer the only noticeable goal of the observation.”⁶⁴³ This is the first step towards “independence” (*Selbstständigkeit*) of the

⁶³⁷ "die dritte Religion, die Religion der Zukunft, sich ankündigt." HS 247. Rosenzweig coolly notes on the next line “that no bridge leads from the soon beginning flight of the romantics into the lap of the old church to these ideas of the Privatdozent in Jena”; "Von der bald beginnenden Flucht der Romantiker in den Schoß der alten Kirche führt keine Brücke zu diesen Ideen des jungen Jenenser Privatdozenten."

⁶³⁸ "wenn das Staatsideal des Systems Wirklichkeit geworden sein wird." HS 247.

⁶³⁹ "die Philosophie steht an seiner Pforte." HS 247.

⁶⁴⁰ HS 248.

⁶⁴¹ "im kommenden Weltalter innerlich zusammenwachsen und damit 'absolut' werden sollten." HS 248.

⁶⁴² "Nebeneinanderstehens von Staat und Kirche und ein im Zusammenhang damit beginnender Wandel der Stellung des Staats im System." HS 249.

⁶⁴³ "daß die Beziehung zum Staate, zum 'Volk,' jetzt sichtlich nicht mehr das einzige Merkziel der Betrachtung bildet." HS 249.

various “areas” (*Gebiete*)—art, religion, philosophy—which will later be classified as “absolute spirit” in Hegel’s mature system. However, what is above all of concern for Rosenzweig is the “independence of religion” (*Selbständigkeit der Religion*).⁶⁴⁴ The starting-point of Hegel's investigation into religious life here—and an idea soon to be the starting-point for Rosenzweig's own philosophy of religion in *The Star of Redemption*—is no longer the individual solely as a “political being,” but the “believing individual soul” (*gläubigen Einzelseele*): “What the state possesses only in government, the unconditional moral self-determination, the sublimity over every limited ethicality of the estates, the individual man as such possesses that in religion.”⁶⁴⁵ Rosenzweig characterizes this move towards the isolation of religion within the “believing individual soul” by Hegel as the “absolutizing of Christianity” (*Verabsolutierung des Christentums*) at the hands of Protestantism.⁶⁴⁶ In this movement Hegel has “made his honest, from now on unbroken peace with the present,” but only as “philosopher of religion.”⁶⁴⁷ Above all, however, and here we come to the conclusion of this section, this new idea of the relation of the individual to political life impacted Hegel’s treatment of the relation of the state to the church.

⁶⁴⁴ HS 250.

⁶⁴⁵ “*Was im Staat nur die Regierung als solche besitzt, die unbedingte moralische Selbstbestimmung, die Erhabenheit über jede beschränkte Standessittlichkeit, das besitzt der Einzelmensch als solcher in der Religion.*” HS 250.

⁶⁴⁶ HS 250.

⁶⁴⁷ “*jedenfalls hat der Religionsphilosoph damals schon seinen ehrlichen, fürderhin nicht mehr gebrochenen Frieden mit der Gegenwart geschlossen. Aber nur der Religionsphilosoph.*” HS 250.

Hegel begins his observation on this subject here with a statement echoing Kant: “man lives in two worlds” (*der Mensch lebt in zwei Welten*).⁶⁴⁸ But in distinction to Kant, these “two worlds” are in the end “of the same essence” (*Weseneinheit*): in Hegel's thinking, “[religion] is [*the state*], lifted into thought”—“man has his 'reality' in the state, his 'essence' in the church.”⁶⁴⁹ “However” writes Rosenzweig, summarizing Hegel, “the eternal, which he wants to obtain in the church in his conscious turning-away from the state, it has 'its being,' its earthly reality, in the state, in the 'spirit of the people'.”⁶⁵⁰ In this sense the state is “right” (*hat Recht*) because it holds the “essence of reality” (*Wirklichkeitswesen*), but the church is also “right,” because the man of the church is “willing to die for their thoughts.”⁶⁵¹ Thus, although these “two worlds” are opposed to each other, he now entertains the possibility of their “reconciliation” (*Versöhnung*), no longer as something in the future, but as a “possibility of the present” and from now on something which will exert “a determinative power on Hegel’s views.”⁶⁵² In Hegel’s view of this reconciliation, however, the church cannot wish to bring the “kingdom of heaven” (*Himmelreich*) down to earth—this view will change with the *Phenomenology*—for “this reality of heaven on earth is supposed to be the state.”⁶⁵³ It is thus the “great work” (*große Werk*) of the church “to bring about the reconciliation of the state and the

⁶⁴⁸ HS 251.

⁶⁴⁹ “*sie ist er, erhoben in den Gedanken*”; “*Im Staat hat der Mensch 'seine Wirklichkeit,' in der Kirche 'sein Wesen'.*” HS 251.

⁶⁵⁰ “*Aber das Ewige, das er durch seine bewußte Abkehr von Staat in der Kirche erwerben will, hat doch 'sein Dasein,' seine irdische Wirklichkeit, im Staat, im 'Volksgeist'.*” HS 251.

⁶⁵¹ “*für seinen Gedanken zu sterben bereit ist.*” HS 252. Also see here Napoleon’s church politics on the same page.

⁶⁵² “*nicht mehr als ein Zukunftsgesicht, sondern als eine Gegenwartsmöglichkeit [...] der von da ab eine bestimmende Macht auf Hegels Anschauungen ausgeübt hat.*” HS 252.

⁶⁵³ “*weil diese Wirklichkeit des Himmelreichs auf Erden der Staat sein soll.*” HS 252.

kingdom of heaven 'in thought'.⁶⁵⁴ We have again reached a decisive point in the development of Hegel's thought: "Hegel's state has become Christian."⁶⁵⁵ This, however, in an "internal sense" (*innerlichem Sinne*): "man no longer fulfills his duty to the state in the limited ethical disposition of the estates, but rather through a kind of 'self-thinking' —'through religion'."⁶⁵⁶ At this point "religion [...] has in fact stepped out of the state."⁶⁵⁷ With this new idea of religion Hegel believed to have worked out the "self-release of the spirit from the 'life of a people,' thus from the state."⁶⁵⁸ And it was from this vantage point, the perspective of "philosophy" now lifted beyond the state, that Hegel could now take up "developing the picture of world history and deciphering the nebulous countenance of the present."⁶⁵⁹ This was the task of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "a work of its own species" (*ein Werk eigener Gattung*).⁶⁶⁰ In the year of its completion—1806—as Hegel saw Napoleon march triumphantly into Jena, "he knew, that the fate of this man, the rise and fall, was already recorded in his manuscript."⁶⁶¹ With these words, anticipating the epoch of Napoleon to come—and the tragic fate of this great historical individual—Rosenzweig turns to a work of philosophy that would leave a great

⁶⁵⁴ "die Versöhnung von Staat und Himmelreich 'im Denken' hervorzubringen." HS 252.

⁶⁵⁵ "Hegels Staat ist christlich geworden." HS 252.

⁶⁵⁶ "der Mensch erfüllt nun seine staatliche Pflicht nicht mehr in beschränkter sittlicher Standesgesinnung, sondern aus einer Art 'Selbstdenken' heraus—'aus Religion'." HS 252.

⁶⁵⁷ "tatsächlich über den Staat hinaus." HS 252.

⁶⁵⁸ "Selbstbefreiung des Geistes vom 'Leben eines Volkes,' vom Staat also." HS 253.

⁶⁵⁹ "das Bild der Weltgeschichte zu entwickeln und das verworrene Antlitz der Gegenwart zu enträtseln." HS 253.

⁶⁶⁰ HS 253.

⁶⁶¹ "daß das Schicksal dieses Mannes, Aufstieg und Niedergang, in seinem Manuskript verzeichnet stand." HS 253.

impression upon him as a young historian. And although Hegel's *Phenomenology* is only briefly touched upon, in terms of biographical *form*, Rosenzweig shows the great importance he bestows upon the work with its deliberate placement as the bridge between the "Stations of Life" and the "Epochs of the World."

CHAPTER VI
PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY:
ROSENZWEIG ON HEGEL'S *PHENOMENOLOGY*

Introductory Remarks

At first glance—and from the perspective of the 21st-century—there seems nothing extraordinary about Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*. It occupies only a few brief pages and is anything but exhaustive. The *Phenomenology* is indeed shown to be decisive within the development of Hegel's ideas of the individual and the state, but nowhere does it take on the almost mythic proportions attributed to it after Rosenzweig's death. Since the publication in 1947 of Kojève's *Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*,⁶⁶² not only has Hegel's thought been widely interpreted as the direct predecessor to Marx's revolutionary philosophy—gaining in this way prestige for influencing some of the most important events of the 20th century—but the *Phenomenology* itself has come to be seen as Hegel's "signature," his *magnum opus*, or at the very least, to again use Rosenzweig's words: as "a work of its own species." Although this is not the place for a detailed analysis, in the context of Rosenzweig scholarship, this idiosyncratic nature of the *Phenomenology* has led some, most notably Heinz-Jürgen Görtz,⁶⁶³ to see an affinity here between Hegel's *Phenomenology* and

⁶⁶² Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* (1947).

⁶⁶³ Görtz, Heinz-Jürgen. *Tod und Erfahrung: Rosenzweigs "erfahrende Philosophie" und Hegels "Wissenschaft der Erfahrung"* (1984). In his book *Wenn die Geschichte göttlich wäre*, Ulrich Bieberich takes issue with Görtz' ultimate position and claims that it was not the *Star* as a whole that was influenced

Rosenzweig's own "signature," *The Star of Redemption*. With his detailed work, Görtz' was the first to attempt to build "the bridge from Rosenzweig to Hegel."⁶⁶⁴ That is, by *looking back* from the elements of *The Star of Redemption* and only then towards associations with Hegel's *Phenomenology*, Görtz argues that "the "new thinking" of the *Star*" is to be understood "as a dialectically renewing thought of the thinking of the *Phenomenology*."⁶⁶⁵ In the present work, however, I am looking the other direction—from Rosenzweig's past to his future—and, beginning from *Hegel and the State* itself, attempting to build the bridge *from Hegel* to Rosenzweig; that is, to set the foundation for an understanding of the early Rosenzweig through an immanent reading of *Hegel and the State*, thereby shedding new light upon his later work.

First, by providing an analysis of Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, I believe one can further reveal the importance of "form" in Rosenzweig's biography, that is, where he places the *Phenomenology* within Hegel's development and why. Second, through a commentary on Rosenzweig's very brief selection from the work—he again focuses on Hegel's philosophy of history—and the language with which he casts his interpretation, we can come to a better understanding of the goals and limits of *Hegel and the State* as a whole. Finally, a close analysis of Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology* allows us to recognize some striking similarities regarding the origins of *The Star of Redemption* itself.

by Hegel's *Phenomenology*, but rather the three introductions to each part: "The three introductions show how the individual is not dissolved into the All of philosophical knowledge." 87.

⁶⁶⁴ Görtz, 39. A phrase he uses while commenting on the groundbreaking dissertation of Else Freund.

⁶⁶⁵ Görtz, 20.

Stages of World History

In Rosenzweig's view, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "a difficult, but very beautiful work,"⁶⁶⁶ falls outside of the phases of the development of his system.⁶⁶⁷ It was conceived, according to Rosenzweig, "as a kind of introduction to the system."⁶⁶⁸ Rosenzweig's treatment of the work as the placeholder between "Stations of Life" and "Epochs of the World" is thus telling. Although the relation of the individual to the state is still drawn into focus, the transition in Hegel's thinking towards a more dominant philosophy of history now takes center stage. In biographical terms, the *Phenomenology* represents Hegel's transition from the "riddles of personal life" to the ultimate questions of world history.

Rosenzweig first offers a summary of the work as the "collecting place" (*Sammelplatz*) of the various "configurations" (*Gestalten*) of "inner life" (*im inneren Leben*), which then culminate in the idea of "absolute knowledge" (*absolute Wissen*) as philosophy itself.⁶⁶⁹ He cautiously sidesteps Hegel's "dark and heavy remarks" (*dunklen und schweren Ausführungen*)⁶⁷⁰ regarding the "inner life" of the individual and avoids any fixation on the dialectical method at work.⁶⁷¹ Rather, he limits his scope and stays

⁶⁶⁶ Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 11.10.08.

⁶⁶⁷ See *HS* 253.

⁶⁶⁸ "als eine Art Einleitung zum System." *HS* 253.

⁶⁶⁹ *HS* 253-54.

⁶⁷⁰ *HS* 258.

⁶⁷¹ Rosenzweig's approach to Hegel here and in the work as a whole—his ability to interpret Hegel without falling into the complexities of Hegel's own language—has gained him the posthumous support of a sympathetic reviewer: "The author manages to do justice to the historico-political conditioning of Hegel's metaphysics of the state without allowing himself to fall into the simplistic "sociology of knowledge" practiced with so much zeal by more modern, especially Marxist, authors. The book is written in the characteristically beautiful German prose of Rosenzweig, untouched by the sorry obscurities of so many

true to the trajectory of his own project, taking up a discussion of the section entitled "Spirit" (*Geist*): "here, and nowhere before, the *Phenomenology* becomes for a stretch a philosophy of history."⁶⁷² This is relevant for Hegel's understanding of the state, for within this philosophy of history Hegel addresses "actual realities" (*eigentliche Wirklichkeiten*) by means of the "configuration of a world" (*Gestalten einer Welt*).⁶⁷³ And "in knowing the names of these spirits," writes Rosenzweig, "—the ethical world, the world torn into this life and beyond and the moral world view—we immediately recognize that Hegel's new philosophy of history will again stand under the influence of his earliest consciousness of time, supported by Schiller's aesthetic letters."⁶⁷⁴ For Hegel "does not begin with the Orient" as he will in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, but rather with the "'ethical world' of the Greek polis."⁶⁷⁵

What is now new for Hegel is "the treatment of the individual."⁶⁷⁶ The "individual" in the context of the *Phenomenology* is no longer the "individual" who stands in opposition to the Polis, "but man as a member of a family."⁶⁷⁷ This new placement of the individual in relation to the state leads to Hegel's now famous treatment

"learned" interpreters of Hegel's system." (M.J.V. Review of Metaphysics, Vol. 22, No. 3 (March, 1969) (p. 578).

⁶⁷² "In diesem Abschnitt also, nirgends vorher, wird die *Phänomenologie* eine Strecke weit zur *Geschichtsphilosophie*." HS 255.

⁶⁷³ HS 255.

⁶⁷⁴ "Indem wir die Namen dieser Geister genannt bekommen—'die sittliche Welt, die in das Diesseits und Jenseits zerrissene Welt und die moralische Weltanschauung'—erkennen wir sogleich, daß auch diese *Geschichtsphilosophie* Hegels wieder unter dem Bann seines frühesten, an Schillers ästhetischen Briefen aufgerankten Zeitbewußtseins stehen wird." HS 255.

⁶⁷⁵ "nicht in der Welt des Orients"; "in der 'sittlichen Welt' der griechischen Polis." HS 255.

⁶⁷⁶ "die Behandlung des Individuums." HS 255.

⁶⁷⁷ "sondern der Mensch als Glied der Familie." HS 255.

of Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*, with its divine and human laws. Already in Rosenzweig's time the reading of this Greek tragedy could hardly be separated from Hegel's own interpretation.⁶⁷⁸ The individual understood as a member of a family, and now not merely in opposition to the state, also clearly points to Hegel's mature view of the family in *The Philosophy of Right*: a community, which brings forth individuals for the sake of civil society.

However, the above ideas merely introduce Rosenzweig's main concern here, namely, Hegel's understanding of the three stages of world history inspired by the 6th letter of Schiller's *Letters*: "Enough, the beautiful world of ethicality had to go under, because it was beautiful, because, one would like to say, it led a plant-like natural existence."⁶⁷⁹ This "beautiful world of ethicality," represented by the Greek people and religion, is the first stage of world history here. In Schiller's words, "instead of rising to a higher animal life, it sank down into a base and vile mechanic."⁶⁸⁰ This second stage of world history is represented by the world of the Roman Imperium "with its civil law (*mit seinem bürgerlichen Recht*)."⁶⁸¹ With this stage, which also witnesses the emergence of what Hegel characterizes as a type of proto-monarch,⁶⁸² "a break has entered into the

⁶⁷⁸ See HS 255.

⁶⁷⁹ "Genug, die schöne Welt der Sittlichkeit mußte untergehen, weil sie schön war, weil sie ein, man möchte sagen, pflanzenhaft natürliches Dasein führte." HS 255-56.

⁶⁸⁰ Schiller, 6th letter, 173.

⁶⁸¹ HS 256.

⁶⁸² The name "Heliogabal" occurs here, the same Emperor the German poet Stefan Georg would write about (in his poem "Algabal") around the same time Rosenzweig was composing his book. Rosenzweig argues here that Hegel could not place monarchy within the Roman Imperium anymore, for it was now recognized as the form of "the present and future" (*Gegenwart und Zukunft*) (See HS 256).

world.”⁶⁸³ Again Schiller: "state and church, custom and law were now torn from each other [...] instead of developing humankind in its nature, it becomes a mere expression of its work, its science."⁶⁸⁴ Although with the emergence of “civil law” (*bürgerliches Recht*) the individual as such enters into the world—“the collective personality of the Polis had to fall in order for the individual person to come into being”⁶⁸⁵—this individual has now lost its “ethical home” (*sittliche Heimat*) in the world and is “internally empty” (*innerlich leer*).⁶⁸⁶ This leads then to the name of the second stage of world history: “The Self-Alienated Spirit: *Bildung*.”⁶⁸⁷

This second stage of world history is split into “a de-deified empire of reality and a reality-less world of faith, in the beyond.”⁶⁸⁸ We thus again encounter here Hegel's "two worlds." The first of these worlds, “on the side of life” (*Diesseits*), leads through “*Bildung*” (education), which was missing from both the “world of ethicality”, Greece, and the “condition of law” (*Rechtzustand*), Rome: from the former, which did not recognize the individual as such, and from the latter, in which the individual was recognized, but merely as the “empty person in terms of law.”⁶⁸⁹ In the concluding act of the second age of the world, which then led to the events of the French Revolution,

⁶⁸³ "So ist ein Bruch in die Welt gekommen." HS 256.

⁶⁸⁴ Schiller, 6th letter, 173.

⁶⁸⁵ "die lebendige Gesamtpersönlichkeit der Polis hatte untergehen müssen, damit die Einzelperson werden konnte." HS 256.

⁶⁸⁶ HS 256.

⁶⁸⁷ "der sich entfremdete Geist: *Bildung*" HS 256.

⁶⁸⁸ "ein entgöttertes Reich der Wirklichkeit und in eine wirklichkeitslose jenseitige Welt des Glaubens." HS 257.

⁶⁸⁹ "als die leere Person im Rechtssinn." HS 257.

“*Bildung*” is the stage of the new opposition of both the “state-power” (*Staatsmacht*) and “wealth” (*Reichtum*). These are the same in Hegel's thinking, writes Rosenzweig, as “state” (*Staat*) and “property” (*Eigentum*) and later “state” (*Staat*) and “society” (*Gesellschaft*).⁶⁹⁰ They were not recognized by either of the two previous ages of the world. These two elements of “state-power” and “wealth” then lead up to the “absolute monarchy of France” (*absolute Monarchie Frankreichs*)⁶⁹¹ and its eventual demise.

With this discussion of the "two worlds," Hegel's philosophy of history is moving its way towards the world-historical significance of the French Revolution. The other "world" opposing “*Bildung*”, that represented by “belief” (*Glaube*), reaches its peak and thus also its demise with the concept of “pure insight” (*reine Einsicht*). This concept emerged out of the rationalism of the 18th century with the notion of “universal usefulness” (*allgemeine Nützlichkeit*).⁶⁹² It was in “usefulness” that both the “godless real-world of *Bildung*” and “reality-less pure thinking and belief” were to be reconciled.⁶⁹³ Here, writes Hegel, “both worlds are reconciled, and heaven is planted down upon earth.”⁶⁹⁴ And with this “bright trumpet cry” (*hellen Trompetenstoß*) we have once again returned with Hegel's new philosophy of history to the old “magnificent sunrise” (*herrlichen Sonnenaufgangs*)⁶⁹⁵ of 1789 and the perhaps most enduring section

⁶⁹⁰ HS 257.

⁶⁹¹ HS 258.

⁶⁹² HS 259.

⁶⁹³ "der gottlosen Wirklichkeitswelt der Bildung und des wirklichkeitslosen reinen Denkens und Glaubens." HS 259.

⁶⁹⁴ "Beide Welten [...] sind versöhnt, und der Himmel auf die Erde herunter verpflanzt." HS 259.

⁶⁹⁵ HS 259.

of the *Phenomenology*: “Absolute Freedom and the Terror” (*Die absolute Freiheit und der Schrecken*).

“The Magnificent Sunrise”: Towards the Self-Legislation of the I

The section “Absolute Freedom and the Terror” is composed of a critique of Rousseau’s concept of the “general” or “universal will,” understood as “the will of all *individuals* as such.”⁶⁹⁶ Rosenzweig’s reading of this section is consistent with the content of the first volume of *Hegel and the State*, and this is most apparent when he again focuses on Hegel’s view of the “estates.” The political consequence of Rousseau’s “universal will” is that within society it can only do “whole work” (*ganze Arbeit*), that is, in its “absolute freedom” all estates, which are the spiritual essences into which the whole separates itself, are extinguished.”⁶⁹⁷ However for Hegel, the ultimate result of the revolution was not the abolishment of all “estates,” but rather that these estates remained and were filled with a new “spirit” (*Geist*).⁶⁹⁸ Although the “world-historical spirit” has reached a new “reconciliation” with itself, the attempted abolishment of all estates led to nothing less than the “terror” which erupted in France during the revolution—the reign of Robespierre. For Hegel, the “universal will” could “make nothing positive, because it always had to be something determinate.”⁶⁹⁹ This central critique of Rousseau’s concept of “universal will” is explained by the fact that this will is supposed to represent the will

⁶⁹⁶ “*Willen aller Einzelner als solcher.*” HS 259.

⁶⁹⁷ “*sind 'all Stände, welche die geistigen Wesen sind, worein sich das Ganze gliedert, getilgt.*” HS 259.

⁶⁹⁸ See HS 262-63.

⁶⁹⁹ “*nichts Positives schaffen, weil das immer etwas bestimmtes Einzelnes sein müßte.*” HS 259.

of “all individuals,” but as soon as it attempted to act in the world as the will of all, as was the case with the revolution in France, the will of the individual was immediately negated. This then led to Hegel's damning conclusion, absent with Rousseau, that the “universal will” (*allgemeine Wille*) is “not only the summary of the individual will, but rather at the same time its destruction.”⁷⁰⁰ The result of this “destruction” has come to be known as the “Reign of Terror.”⁷⁰¹ However, regarding the state, the revolution also resulted—quite contrary to its aims—in the reorganization of the “spiritual masses” (*der geistigen Massen*) into the “estates” of old.⁷⁰² Thus, for Hegel, the state with its still essential organizing principle of the “divisions of estates” (*Ständegliederung*) was anything but destroyed. Rather a “new monarchy” (*neue Monarchie*)⁷⁰³—Napoleon's reign—was set in place.

For Rosenzweig, the conclusion of Hegel's treatment of the French Revolution is the “decisive point of this entire philosophy of history: here it first grasps its present.”⁷⁰⁴ For what resulted from this “entire uproar” (*ganze Tumult*) was something new in the world: “the self-referencing consciousness purely tied to itself.”⁷⁰⁵ What replaced Rousseau's “universal will” was the Kantian “free self-legislation of the I” (*die freie*

⁷⁰⁰ “daß er nämlich nicht bloß Zusammenfassung der Einzelwillen ist, sondern zugleich ihre Vernichtung.” HS 260.

⁷⁰¹ The internal paradox of the revolution and the madness that resulted in the “Reign of Terror” is perhaps best captured in literary terms by George Büchner in his drama *Dantons Tod*.

⁷⁰² HS 260.

⁷⁰³ HS 260.

⁷⁰⁴ “Hier erst stehen wir am entscheidenden Punkt dieser ganzen Geschichtsphilosophie: hier erst ergreift sie ihre Gegenwart.” HS 260.

⁷⁰⁵ “das rein an sich Selbst gebundene, auf sich selbst verwiesene Bewußtsein.” HS 261.

Selbstgesetzlichkeit des Ichs).⁷⁰⁶ From the ethical world of antiquity, through the Roman world of law with its split into the two worlds of “*Bildung*” and “belief,” the world-historical spirit has now finally arrived—on the threshold of the “third empire” (*des dritten Reichs*)⁷⁰⁷—at the “corner-stone” (*Grundstein*)⁷⁰⁸ of critical philosophy, in Kant's own words: “The concept of each rational being as a being that must regard itself as giving universal law through all the maxims of its will.”⁷⁰⁹ Within Kant's thinking, this “self-legislation of the I” is identified with what he calls the “intelligible character” of mankind: the aspect of man not bound by the natural necessity of the world and “determinable only through the laws that he gives himself by reason.”⁷¹⁰ This “intelligible character” is distinct from our “empirical character,” which Kant defines as “the determinations of a thing which stands under the conditions of time.”⁷¹¹ Kant established this dual character of the self—the “phenomenal” (sensible) and “noumenal” (intelligible)—in order to preserve the freedom of the individual in face of the necessity of the natural laws of the world. The universal will is no longer something outside of the individual, which in its most extreme case—for Hegel, the “Reign of Terror”—completely negates that very same individual, but is now understood as the moral law

⁷⁰⁶ *HS* 261.

⁷⁰⁷ Rosenzweig's use of this term predates the implication attached to this notion since the rise of National Socialism in Germany after 1933.

⁷⁰⁸ *HS* 261.

⁷⁰⁹ Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. 51.

⁷¹⁰ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*. 5:98.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.* 5:98.

within the individual himself.⁷¹² In light of Kant's philosophy, the individual has cast aside the universal will as the highest of all knowledge, and now, in Hegel's own words, "knows that will to be itself, and knows itself to be essential being."⁷¹³

But what can be said of the state? In France, Rousseau's "universal will" "destroyed itself, and there out of the cauldron of the revolution the old state and the old life emerged again renewed and rejuvenated."⁷¹⁴ The consequence of the revolution for Hegel was that "Kantian-Fichtian philosophy and early Romanticism" (*Kantisch-Fichtischen Philosophie, der jungen Romantik*) armed with the notion of the "free self-legislation of the I," now took over the world-historical spirit from France: "its ground is Germany" (*sein Boden ist Deutschland*).⁷¹⁵ This is the grand conclusion of Hegel's philosophy of history in the *Phenomenology*. The world-historical spirit now passed from the "Reign of Terror" into "the absolute religion of Christianity, which is one with absolute philosophy."⁷¹⁶

Rosenzweig understands the above philosophy of history—which ultimately leads away from the political realm into religion and philosophy—as nothing less than the greatest distance Hegel takes from the "nationalization of ethicality" (*Verstaatlichung des*

⁷¹² Kant bridges the gap between the individual and the universal with a regulatory function of the will as "a law of duty" (5:82): "Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law."

⁷¹³ Hegel, *Phenomenology*. 363.

⁷¹⁴ "hat sich [...] selbst zerstört, und aus dem Revolutionskessel ist dort der alte Staat und das alte Leben erfrischt und verjüngt wieder hervorgetaucht." HS 261.

⁷¹⁵ HS 261.

⁷¹⁶ "seine Vollendung die absolute Religion des Christentums, welche eins ist mit der absoluten Philosophie." HS 261.

Sittlichen).⁷¹⁷ But this by no means implies that Hegel “now suddenly imagined this third world-historical epoch without a state as purely individualistic, as something solely fulfilled by religious and philosophical powers.”⁷¹⁸ For Hegel, the state after the revolution still contains a “universal will embodied in the person of the monarch, which internally holds or reestablished the prerevolutionary society's division of estates.”⁷¹⁹ As Rosenzweig points out, anticipating his upcoming pairing of Hegel and Napoleon, “Hegel believed himself to see in Napoleon’s monarchy a restoration of the old division of society (*Gesellschaftsgliederung*) coming into being.”⁷²⁰ What then follows for Rosenzweig from the *Phenomenology*, is that “the state of the future, the third epoch of the world, would at least according to its body be the same as the state of the second, prerevolutionary epoch, and only the spirit, which animates this body, would be another.”⁷²¹ In Rosenzweig's reading, the importance of this new state for the “whole of life” (*Gesamtleben*) has indeed become “very narrow” (*eine ganz geringe*).⁷²² In the passing of the “spirit of history” over to Germany in the form of a “moral spirit”—again, epitomized in Kant's “free self-legislation of the I”—the “ultimate” task is now that of

⁷¹⁷ HS 262.

⁷¹⁸ “Das ist nicht so zu verstehen, als ob sich Hegel die dritte weltgeschichtliche Epoche nun plötzlich ohne Staat als eine rein individualistische, einzig von religiösen und philosophischen Kräften erfüllte vorgestellt hätte.” HS 262.

⁷¹⁹ “ihren allgemeinen Willen in der Person des Monarchen verkörpernd die vorrevolutionäre ständische Gliederung der Gesellschaft in seinem Innern erhält oder wiederherstellt.” HS 262.

⁷²⁰ The historical event that led Hegel to believe this, according to Rosenzweig's reading, was Napoleon’s Italian constitution (HS 262).

⁷²¹ HS 262-63.

⁷²² HS 263.

“absolute religion, absolute science.”⁷²³ This “absolute religion”, as the “melting-together” of the “natural religion” of the morning-land and the “religion of art” (*Kunstreligion*) of the Hellenic people (*Hellenen*) is “already prepared—one only has to reach out his hand to it.”⁷²⁴ And “absolute knowledge” is “speculative philosophy” itself, claims Hegel in a lecture to his colleagues, “the beginning of philosophizing, which you are to carry on.”⁷²⁵ This is Hegel's view of the "magnificent sunrise" of 1789 from the vantage point of 1806.

Excursus: A View Towards the Star

Before moving on to the concluding words of "Stations of Life," I would like to make a brief excursus into Rosenzweig's own intellectual biography. My approach to *Hegel and the State* thus far has been grounded in the attempt to give an immanent reading of the text in order to show how this text remains influential in Rosenzweig's later thought. By avoiding the method of subjugating the language and form of *Hegel and the State* to the philosophical and theological language of *The Star of Redemption*, my aim has been to provide a more complete picture of Rosenzweig's early work on Hegel—one lacking in contemporary scholarship—in order to be able to better situate this work in comparison to Rosenzweig's accomplishments as a whole. By focusing first on the biographical form of *Hegel and the State* an interpretive pathway is opened, which leads not only to the *autobiographical* dimensions of Rosenzweig's thought, but to a

⁷²³ HS 263.

⁷²⁴ HS 263.

⁷²⁵ HS 263.

closer appreciation of "personality" (*Persönlichkeit*) in general within this thought. By extension, Rosenzweig's critique of the relation of the individual to the state in Hegel's thinking is mirrored in his own appraisal of "individuality" in *The Star of Redemption*, most notably in his notion of "metaethics." Finally, with the emergence in Hegel's thinking of a philosophy of history, we witness the lasting impression this had on the young Rosenzweig and how similar questions of history will continue to occupy Rosenzweig, especially with regard to religion.

With Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology* we have not only come to the halfway point of the book—the halfway point of Hegel's life—but now Rosenzweig's own position as a philosopher begins to take more recognizable shape. Rosenzweig's intellectual biography, however, as my project as a whole aims to show, does not begin with *The Star of Redemption*, but with *Hegel and the State* itself. To recognize these beginnings means not only understanding the content of the book, as we have been pursuing, but its fate within Rosenzweig's biography as well. And here a noteworthy connection between Hegel's life and Rosenzweig's own can be made. Hegel finished writing his *Phenomenology* in 1806, presumably quite shortly before Napoleon himself—"this world soul" (*diese Weltseele*)⁷²⁶—rode through Jena, thus announcing to Hegel the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire. In a lecture to his colleagues from 1806, quoted by Rosenzweig, Hegel writes: "The entire mass of ideas and concepts up until now, the fetters of the world, are dissolved and fall in upon themselves like a dream."⁷²⁷ Within his philosophy of history, Hegel is describing here the collapse of the second stage of

⁷²⁶ HS 274.

⁷²⁷ "Die ganze Masse der bisherigen Vorstellungen, Begriffe, die Bande der Welt, sind aufgelöst und fallen wie ein Traumbild in sich zusammen." HS 263.

world history. Over one hundred years later, in 1920, after witnessing defeat in the first World War and the collapse of the German empire, Rosenzweig looks back to the beginning of the new age around 1800, where for Hölderlin and his friend Hegel "the mountains of the German lands" were to become "mountains of the muses."⁷²⁸ "This dream," writes Rosenzweig,

already remained unfulfilled on the way from the fall of the old Empire to the founding of the new—from Hegel until Bismarck. As this book was begun it could have nevertheless remained a true dream, one of those that remain living precisely as a dream, in order to one day become that which dreams may become: history-creating power. Today, with the appearance of the book [...] that dream appears to irretrievably dissolve in the foam of the waves, which flow over all of life. When the structure of a world crashes in, the thoughts that thought it, the dreams interwoven in it are also buried under its collapse.⁷²⁹

The similarity of Rosenzweig and Hegel is not only reflected in these similar historical upheavals—the fall of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 and the fall of the German Empire in 1918—but around this time both thinkers produced what would become known as their philosophical "signatures"—*The Phenomenology of Spirit* and *The Star of Redemption*. But was all of *Hegel and the State* really buried under the rubble of the German Empire? One could also ask, were all of Hegel's early writings on religion and

⁷²⁸ "und die Berge des deutschen / Landes Berge der Musen sind." HS 531, quoted from Hölderlin's "An die Deutschen."

⁷²⁹ "Dieser Traum blieb schon auf dem Weg vom Untergang des alten zur Gründung des neuen Reichs—von Hegel zu Bismarck—unerfüllt. Als dies Buch beginnen wurde, konnte er gleichwohl ein Wahrtraum scheinen, einer von jenen, die gerade als Träume lebendig bleiben, um einst noch zu werden, was Träume werden können: Geschichte schaffende Macht. Heute, da das Buch herauskommt [...] scheint jener Traum unwiederbringlich sich aufzulösen in den Schaum der Wellen, die alles Leben überfluten." HS 532.

politics buried under the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire? Just as Rosenzweig looks into Hegel's past in order to help better understand his mature thought, I am looking into Rosenzweig's past with the aim of restoring what was once thought lost. And indeed, it is precisely in Rosenzweig's reading of the *Phenomenology* as leading to the Kantian "self-legislation of the I" that the remains of Rosenzweig *qua* historian make their way into the edifice of Rosenzweig *qua* philosopher.

In a letter to Hans Ehrenberg from 1908, Rosenzweig writes that he has been occupied reading Hegel's *Phenomenology*: "a difficult, but very beautiful work." He then goes on to report, that "beginning tomorrow I will penitently begin again with "Practical Reason,"⁷³⁰ meaning of course Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*. What this letter shows is not only that Rosenzweig was interested in Hegel's *Phenomenology* already at the beginning of his studies, but that while he was reading Hegel's work he was reading Kant as well. This pairing of Kant and Hegel is then readily apparent in his reading of the *Phenomenology* within *Hegel and the State*, as shown above. But from the letter to Hans Ehrenberg we also get the sense of a more personal interest in these thinkers, one that falls outside of Rosenzweig's official duties as a student and remains with him as an original thinker. Indeed, what for Hegel was the "corner-stone" of the "Third Empire"—Kant's "self-legislation of the I"—is for Rosenzweig nothing other than what he will call the "free personality" (*freie Persönlichkeit*)⁷³¹ in the "Urzelle" to his *Star of Redemption*.

In the *Urzelle*, which functions as a philosophical skeleton showing for the first time what would later become the inner workings of *The Star of Redemption*, Kant is

⁷³⁰ Rosenzweig, *Briefe* 11.10.08.

⁷³¹ See "'Germ Cell' of the *Star*" (*Urzelle*) in *Franz Rosenzweig's "New Thinking."* 52.

lauded as "personally the greatest of all philosophers" for discovering that "freedom is the 'miracle in the world of appearance'."⁷³² This "freedom" is the same "self-legislation of the I" within Rosenzweig's reading of the *Phenomenology*. There, Rosenzweig already shows a similar reverence for Kant when introducing this new notion of the self. He writes that we may now "finally use the Kantian words for the Kantian subject matter."⁷³³ This "finally" implies a very high regard for Kant himself in introducing the Kantian "corner-stone" of the new age: "the denial of the empirical character for the sake of the intelligible."⁷³⁴ In *The Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant uses the term "personality" to further define his notion of this "intelligible character":

"personality, that is freedom and independence from the mechanism of the whole of nature, regarded nevertheless as also a capacity of a being subject to special laws—namely pure practical laws given by his own reason, so that a person as belonging to the sensible world is subject to his own personality insofar as he also belongs to the intelligible world; for it is then not to be wondered at that a human being, as belonging to both worlds, must regard his own nature in reference to his second and highest vocation only with reverence, and its laws with the highest respect."⁷³⁵

It is from this Kantian sense of "personality" that Rosenzweig will find inspiration in the *Urzelle* for his own idea of "free personality." This "free personality" along with Kant's

⁷³² Rosenzweig, *Urzelle*. 52.

⁷³³ "um einmal für die kantische Sache auch die kantischen Worte zu gebrauchen." HS 261.

⁷³⁴ "die Verleugnung des empirischen Charakters um des intelligibelen willen." HS 261.

⁷³⁵ Kant, *The Critique of Practical Reason*. 5:87.

notion of the self as "belonging to both worlds" will inspire Rosenzweig's formulation of "metaethics," albeit with significant changes, in *The Star of Redemption* as capturing the true nature of man, in contrast to "metalogic," which captures that other world of nature. Thus, already in *Hegel and the State* Rosenzweig's sets up a trajectory that leads from his reading of the *Phenomenology* through the *Urzelle* to *The Star of Redemption*.

In *The Star of Redemption* Rosenzweig's praise for Kant continues when first introducing his concept of "metaethics." In this context he writes: "Kant, alone among all thinkers of the past, showed the way which we are now to follow."⁷³⁶ Thus, rather than being completely buried in the rubble of the past, Rosenzweig's work in *Hegel and the State* lays the foundation upon which he will erect one of the three main pillars of his thought—the "metaethical" self. The origins of this concept are to be found not only within the general emphasis on biography, individuality and personality in *Hegel and the State*, but already in Rosenzweig's particular reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*.

Hegel, the Philosophical World Ruler

As was argued above, Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology* reveals one of the key elements of Rosenzweig's own thought in *The Star of Redemption*. However, whereas within *Hegel and the State* itself this reading is limited to an overview and a brief account of Hegel's philosophy of history, the *Phenomenology* holds a decisive place for Rosenzweig within the form of the book as a whole. It is the work that caps off the entirety of the first volume. With the completion of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel now

⁷³⁶ Rosenzweig, *Star*. 21.

stands "eye to eye" with the age, his "self-consciousness" has "swelled so high" that he is prepared "to be" the age itself.⁷³⁷ What in the Frankfurt period was the tragic division from the world, seems to have been overcome; his task in Jena to unite his thought with the age seems to have been accomplished. But can things really remain so good for Hegel? Given the tone of his text throughout, one could argue that Rosenzweig is setting up his readers for the tragic fall of his hero Hegel in the following volume, "Epochs of the World." And even a glance ahead to the first section of that volume, "Napoleon" will guarantee that there is more tragedy in store. But once again we encounter Rosenzweig's dramatic language and its meaning is at first not entirely clear: Hegel "has crossed the Dantean middle of our lives."⁷³⁸

With the introduction of Dante into the picture, who is best known for his *Divine Comedy*, this tragic view of Hegel's life is further complicated. Hegel himself writes of Dante's *Divine Comedy*—the first book of which begins with words echoed by Rosenzweig, "Midway upon the journey of our life"—that unlike tragedy, "it is without fate and without a genuine struggle, because absolute confidence and assurance of the reality of the Absolute exists in it without opposition."⁷³⁹ Has Hegel, who in the *Phenomenology* places philosophy on the "throne" of "absolute knowledge," now transformed for Rosenzweig from the tragic figure of the Frankfurt years to a dramatic figure of comedy? Is "absolute knowledge" in the *Phenomenology*, which in

⁷³⁷ "So hochgeschwellt ist jetzt das Selbstbewußtsein des Denkers. Er steht Auge in Auge mit der Zeit. Mehr noch: er redet mit ihr und sie spricht zu ihm. Er ist wirklich bereit und fähig geworden, in sie einzugehen: sie 'zu sein'." HS 264.

⁷³⁸ "Er hat die Dantesche Mitte unsres Lebenswegs überschritten." HS 264.

⁷³⁹ Hegel, *Natural Law*. 105.

Rosenzweig's words 'watches the procession of history from its throne,'⁷⁴⁰ the same as this comedic "reality of the Absolute [...] without opposition"?

Although one could question if Rosenzweig sees Hegel's life as a tragedy, comedy, or both, I believe the reference to Dante here is more rhetorical and less philosophical. As Erich Auerbach writes describing Dante's own *giovinanza*, it is "the summit of our life."⁷⁴¹ And his description of the peak of Dante's personal life could apply to Rosenzweig's Hegel as well: "his vitality and inner sense of measure had so matured that, almost simultaneously it would seem, he turned to public life and philosophical doctrines, combining the two and beginning to shape them to his cast of mind."⁷⁴² With the *Phenomenology*, so we can at least conclude from Rosenzweig's placement of the text within his narrative, Hegel has reached the zenith of his stations of life. What lies before him is no longer to be found solely in the "stream" of his life or thought: "The stations of life change for him into the epochs of the world. The stream of thought broke the barriers of its shore and watered the thirsting fields of the age."⁷⁴³ Whereas in "Stations of Life" the reader was often caught up in the sometimes bewildering internal development or "stream" of Hegel's personal life and thought, this "stream"—which flowed from personal tragedy, through the reconciliation of the individual and the world in the thought of the power-state and finally into a powerful philosophy of history—has now too broken free of Hegel's stations of life. In

⁷⁴⁰ "sie nimmt Platz auf dem Thron, der ihr bereitet ist, und läßt den Zug, der sich jetzt in Bewegung setzt, an ihrem Sitze vorbeiziehen." HS 253.

⁷⁴¹ Auerbach, 69.

⁷⁴² Auerbach, 69.

⁷⁴³ "Die Stationen des Lebens wandeln sich ihm in Epochen der Welt. Der Strom des Denkens brach die Schranken seiner Ufer und tränkt die dürstenden Äcker der Zeit." HS 264.

Rosenzweig's reading of the *Phenomenology*, he now characterizes Hegel as "a philosophical world ruler" who "allows the essences of the heavens and earth to pass before his eyes in long, well-ordered processions."⁷⁴⁴ Hegel's personal life and thought, filled with elements of both tragedy and comedy, have given way to the forces of world history and the epochs of the world: "Leaving the stream of a life-course behind, we become caught up in an infinite ocean."⁷⁴⁵ Through the tragedy of youth and the defiance of early manhood, Hegel himself has now become a world historical personality.

⁷⁴⁴ "die Wesen des Himmels und der Erde als philosophischer Weltherrscher an seinem Auge in langem, wohlgeordnetem Zuge vorüberwallen läßt." HS 253.

⁷⁴⁵ Dilthey, *Formation*. 252.

CHAPTER VII

"IN THE STYLE OF TRAGEDY"

*"Man ist eben kein regulierter Strom;
sondern ein vielarmiger."*

Rosenzweig to Martin Buber, 1927

*"Es ist das Schicksal großer Zeiten, großer Bewegungen,
daß sie in ihrer eigenen Leidenschaft befangen sein müssen.
So wachsen sie über ihr Maß hinaus, um überhaupt nur
in Erscheinung treten zu können.
Es ist der tragische Akzent alles Großen."*

Hans Ehrenberg, *Disputation III: Hegel*

Introductory Remarks on "Epochs of the World"

As in the first volume, biographical form is still one of the central organizing principles in the second volume of Rosenzweig's work. Yet whereas in "Stations of Life" one could only separate Rosenzweig's philosophy of history from Hegel's own with difficulty, in the "Epochs of the World" Rosenzweig himself emerges as a philosopher of history. In "Stations of Life" the reader and author were bound to the particularity of the "stream" of Hegel's development; with the "Epochs of the World" this stream now flows into the broad sea of history and Rosenzweig must accordingly chart his own course through the waves of time. Hegel is now no longer treated only as an individual struggling with the particulars of personal life, but more pronouncedly as a world-historical figure in conflict with the forces of history. In this manner, the relation of the

individual to the state, while still central to Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel, has been transformed into the broader relation of the individual to history. For Hegel, the state will ultimately play the central mediating role between the individual and history. However, the second half of his life shows Hegel breaking free from the shadows of the age—already begun with *The Phenomenology of Spirit*—into the full daylight of world history. In this manner Hegel is himself subject to the same laws of history he so expertly discerns. In following this stream into the broad expanse of time, Rosenzweig now treats Hegel more distinctly as a particular individual set in relation to a higher universal—the "Epochs of the World."

Within Rosenzweig's own personal development the relation and biographical trajectory he sets up for Hegel can be seen as reverse. With the publication of *Hegel and the State* in 1920 Rosenzweig was qualified for life as a professor within Germany, a well-established position within the state. Just as Hegel's thought became closely intertwined with the Prussian state, so Rosenzweig could have made a career as a state-philosopher, like his teacher Meinecke. But at this juncture, Rosenzweig chose to delve deeper into the "riddles" of his own personal life, his German Jewish identity. Rather than bringing him closer to German political life, Rosenzweig's retreat—or perhaps return—into Jewish religious life took him even further from the state. If Hegel's biographical trajectory can be understood as one leading from the ideals of the French Revolution and the vehement defense of the individual, leading through a philosophy of history and finally reaching a fully developed political philosophy, Rosenzweig's path is the reverse. He begins with a broad political critique of his epoch, only to end up within his own stream of personal life. This equates Rosenzweig much more closely with the

picture of Hegel we are given during his Frankfurt years, when Hegel lived and thought in proximity to Hölderlin. Accordingly, after showing how his development through the political Restoration in Germany following Napoleon's defeat leads to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* and his role as the "state philosopher" of Prussia, Rosenzweig ends his biographical drama—ends the entirety of *Hegel and the State*—by again aligning Hegel with Hölderlin. Thus, it proves productive to keep in mind that even after traversing the broad expanse of the "Epochs of the World," Rosenzweig will ultimately claim that we are faced with the same Hegel he "discovered" in Frankfurt. It is in terms of this discovery—still drawing indirectly on a language of tragedy—that Rosenzweig will judge Hegel's contribution to both world-history and more narrowly, to the history of the German nation-state. As we join Rosenzweig in confronting two titans of Hegel's age—Napoleon the conqueror and Goethe the poet—we must acknowledge Rosenzweig's own role as an interpretive historian. This will show above all that Rosenzweig's account of Hegel's early development in Frankfurt, tinged with the color of personal experience, continues to permeate his interpretation of Hegel's biography. It is this personal investment in his narrative—again as reflected in the form and language of the text—that remains our central concern. In what manner does the "Epochs of the World" reveal Rosenzweig's own struggle to come to terms with his German past?

Goethe and Napoleon: On the Demonic

Goethe and Napoleon most famously met in Erfurt, in October of 1808. All accounts of this meeting dwell upon Napoleon's assessment of Goethe's *Die Leiden des*

jungen Werthers, a book they supposedly discussed at that time and with which Napoleon took issue—but I will not go into these debates here.⁷⁴⁶ Rather, I would like to allude to the line of interpretation taken by Hans Blumenberg in his book *Work on Myth*, in order to show how Goethe's confrontation with Napoleon takes on a specifically "demonic" dimension.⁷⁴⁷ By introducing the "demonic" here, and by this I would agree with Blumenberg in classifying it as a force that "breaks in, as something foreign, from outside,"⁷⁴⁸ which then in turn unceasingly affects the fate of the individual, I will forgo an outright analysis in favor of hinting at the implications of this term for Rosenzweig's narrative. One may ask at the outset, in the drama that unfolds for Hegel during his "Napoleonic period,"⁷⁴⁹ why does Rosenzweig begin with an excerpt from one of Goethe's letters—in which he overtly alludes to the "daemons" (*Dämonen*)⁷⁵⁰—and thus places Goethe in the most prominent position at the beginning of the second volume of *Hegel and the State*?

Goethe wrote the letter in question to his friend Friedrich Schiller in 1802—before he had ever met Napoleon. The excerpt at hand pertains to the German assessment of the French Revolution in the years leading up to Napoleon's invasion of Germany. In this passage, Goethe alludes to the French Revolution as a "natural necessity" (*Naturnotwendigkeit*): "One sees in this monstrous empirical evidence nothing

⁷⁴⁶ For a newer account of these debates see: Seiler, Bernd W. "Goethe, Napoleon, und der 'junge Werther'." *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 3/2009. 396.

⁷⁴⁷ Blumenberg, *Work on Myth*. See 465-522.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 490.

⁷⁴⁹ "napoleonischen Periode." HS 296.

⁷⁵⁰ HS 273.

other than nature, and nothing of what we philosophers would so gladly like to call freedom.”⁷⁵¹ In beginning this section with such an open "gesture" towards Goethe and placing the question of "freedom" at the center of discussion, Rosenzweig is emphasizing two central points of concern. On the one hand, the question of freedom comes out of the already developed relationship between the individual and the state in volume one. This development reached its peak with Hegel's concept of a "state-free zone" (*staatsfreier Bezirk*) within the state itself, thereby providing the seed for Hegel's view of religion and the state in *The Philosophy of Right*. But perhaps more importantly for our account, the authoritative placement of Goethe's letter shows that the concept of the 'world historical individual'—and here Hegel is implied no less than Goethe and Napoleon—is once again brought to the fore. More specifically, it is through a series of intellectual relationships—Goethe and Napoleon, Napoleon and Hegel and finally Hegel and Rosenzweig—that this specific biographical focus is reflected into the *autobiographical* dimensions of Rosenzweig's work. Thus, one may ask, what is the significance of the specific pairing Goethe and Napoleon at the outset of volume two?

In his book *Work on Myth*, Hans Blumenberg expertly situates Goethe's relationship to Napoleon Bonaparte in terms of the "demonic" influence of the Corsican. Forgoing an outright definition, Blumenberg alternatively characterizes the "demonic" as a force—and here Goethe's own assessment of the French Revolution should come to mind—which holds "power over the elements, in others words, over nature;"⁷⁵² and, as stated above, as something—or more pointedly *someone*—that "breaks in, as something

⁷⁵¹ "Man sieht in dieser ungeheuren Empirie nichts als Natur und nichts von dem, was wir Philosophen so gern Freiheit nennen möchten." HS 273.

⁷⁵² Blumenberg, 480.

foreign, from outside."⁷⁵³ Already in 1906, presaging Blumenberg's position, Rosenzweig would write in his diary: "I don't think that the daemon is congenital with us; rather it comes to visit us one day and stays for good." He continues with the following entry: "What I call daemon is destiny become man, character incarnate."⁷⁵⁴ As Blumenberg states, Goethe's confrontation with Napoleon would take a similar form, namely in working out Napoleon's famous statement that "politics is destiny."⁷⁵⁵ For Napoleon, as we shall see below, the pairing of "politics" and "destiny" would ultimately result in a tragic fall, and thus show how the fate of individual life gives way to the fate of history—in Goethe's understanding, a modern Prometheus. Yet as Blumenberg's claims, when Goethe and Napoleon met in Erfurt, it was Goethe's own demiurgic drives that rose to the surface: "Goethe himself is always the point of reference—either openly or covertly—when he speaks of Napoleon."⁷⁵⁶ Thus, we should understand Goethe's demonic encounter with Napoleon as a reflection of his own struggle in coming to terms with his world-historical significance. Napoleon's "politics as destiny" transforms for Goethe into the renewed search for "aesthetic self-mastery."⁷⁵⁷

Before he had met Napoleon in person, Goethe wonders aloud in his letter to Schiller "if Bonaparte's personality will then further delight us with this glorious and

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.* 490.

⁷⁵⁴ *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought.* 12.

⁷⁵⁵ Blumenberg, 486-87.

⁷⁵⁶ Blumenberg, 483.

⁷⁵⁷ Blumenberg, 499.

reigning appearance.”⁷⁵⁸ This “appearance” is the “freedom” that Goethe, as Rosenzweig's leading voice of the epoch, found lacking in the “natural necessity” of the French Revolution. However, much later in life, as Rosenzweig relates, Goethe reveals his underlying fascination with Napoleon in striking terms: “Napoleon no longer appeared to the old man as the carrier of historical life, but rather, detached from his particular work, as a symbol of that which man is capable of; there he names him along with the others, which the daemons provided in order to tempt us: with Shakespeare, Rafael, Mozart.”⁷⁵⁹ That Rosenzweig includes himself with those tempted by these great historical figures, that he subtly inserts the pronoun “us,” begs the question: with what demonic force is Rosenzweig struggling while writing *Hegel and the State*?

Hegel's confrontation with Napoleon would remain more closely tied to the historical events of the present. With the section at hand, starkly entitled “Napoleon,” Rosenzweig broadly summarizes the years 1806-1818 in Hegel's life. It was now during this Napoleonic period, “and only now—that we find with the systematizer Hegel the morally free individual.”⁷⁶⁰ Following from this, the “mark” (*Kennzeichen*) of Hegel's Napoleonic period was thus, unique to Hegel's development, the “superordination of the spiritual over the state, that degradation of the state to a mere caretaker of a spiritual

⁷⁵⁸ “ob uns Bonapartes Persönlichkeit noch ferner mit dieser herrlichen und herrschenden Erscheinung erfreuen wird.” HS 273.

⁷⁵⁹ “nicht mehr als Träger geschichtlichen Lebens erschien Napoleon dem Greise, sondern, losgelöst von seinem besonderen Werk, ein Zeichen dessen was der Mensch vermag; da nennt er ihn wohl zusammen mit den andern, welche die Dämonen hingestellt haben, uns zu verlocken: mit Shakespeare, Rafael, Mozart.” HS 273.

⁷⁶⁰ “und nur jetzt—bei dem Systematiker Hegel den moralisch freien Einzelmensch.” HS 288.

life."⁷⁶¹ This is the most concise and oft repeated summary that Rosenzweig makes of Hegel's philosophy of state during this period. What explanation does Rosenzweig offer for the revaluation of "spiritual life" over the state? For Hegel it was the "tragic figure" of Napoleon who came to represent the freedom of the individual—including his tragic fall—and thus the limits of spiritual life itself. Indeed, Hegel's conception of history does not remain unchanged in wake of Napoleon's drama. We now see the last sparks of the "revolutionary-radical beginnings of the student and tutor"⁷⁶² and the first hints of the "sullen" (*grämlich*)⁷⁶³ old man. However, at the beginning of this period, "Napoleon's sun stands at a zenith above Hegel's system."⁷⁶⁴ Both Hegel and Goethe were under the spell of Napoleon's free personality. Yet before we turn to Hegel's Napoleon, and the picture of tragedy offered there, let us linger with Rosenzweig's Goethe. For it is under the arch of this other great personality that Rosenzweig encloses his own picture of Hegel.

The biographical significance of Goethe for Rosenzweig's own life is still largely underrepresented. One great exception is Ulrich Bieberich, who in his book *Wenn die Geschichte göttlich wäre: Rosenzweigs Auseinandersetzung mit Hegel* argues that it is precisely with the figure of Goethe that any understanding of Rosenzweigs biographical development must begin.⁷⁶⁵ Not only does Bieberich point out that the young

⁷⁶¹ "Überordnung des Geistigen über den Staat, jene Herabsetzung des Staats zum bloßen Pfleger eines geistigen Lebens." HS 296.

⁷⁶² "revolutionär-radikalen Anfänge des Studenten und Hofmeisters." HS 296.

⁷⁶³ HS 299.

⁷⁶⁴ "Die Sonne Napoleons steht im Zenith über Hegels System." HS 288.

⁷⁶⁵ Here as well as below, see Bieberich, *Wenn die Geschichte göttlich wäre*. 15-25.

Rosenzweig knew Goethe "from front to back" while still a schoolboy and that he was compared with "the young Goethe himself" but he is most convincing when he argues that it was in Goethe's own life that Rosenzweig saw a model for personal fulfillment.⁷⁶⁶ As previously noted, when Rosenzweig read the book *Cosmopolitanism and Nation-State* by his teacher Meinecke, he remarked that he would gladly give ten years of his life to write such a book.⁷⁶⁷ When Rosenzweig thus embarked on that quest with the writing of *Hegel and the State*, according to Bieberich his life entered into a sort "tension of finishing" (*Spannung des Fertigwerdens*).⁷⁶⁸ This is then interpreted to be equivalent with uniting the "subjective and the objective," or in other words, as the agreement between "biography and worldview."⁷⁶⁹ These same *autobiographical* problems centered on the life of Goethe make their way into Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel's *biographical* development.

Of all German writers, with the exception of Hölderlin, Rosenzweig gives Goethe the most prominent place in his book on Hegel, but in an explicitly *formal* sense, that is, well-placed to help orient his reader in his interpretation. Not only does Goethe serve as the introduction to the "Epochs of the World," but we encounter Goethe once again in the final section entitled "Concluding Remarks." One cannot help seeing Goethe as the 'bookends' of the entire second volume. The importance of Goethe in Rosenzweig's conception of Germany's history is revealed when he writes in his "Concluding Remarks"

⁷⁶⁶ Bieberich, 16. See also, Hans Ehrenberg's chapter on his youthful friendship with Rosenzweig in *Autobiographie*.

⁷⁶⁷ See here Chapter I.

⁷⁶⁸ From the early notebooks; quoted by Bieberich, 16.

⁷⁶⁹ Bieberich, 16-17.

that compared with Goethe, Hegel "can be framed more narrowly, at least with respect to his national-historical relevance—but not his world-historical relevance."⁷⁷⁰ Goethe's historical arch of influence spans not only above Hegel's own life and the nineteenth century, but into Rosenzweig's century as well. When Blumenberg writes that in confronting Napoleon Goethe was forced to come face to face with his own "renunciation of the light of day" and was thrust further into "an unrelenting hard life of demiurgic concentration,"⁷⁷¹ this can be extended to Rosenzweig as well. Continuing the concerns of *Hegel and the State*, Rosenzweig will write in *The Star of Redemption* that "[o]nce man is possessed by his *daemon*, he has received "direction" for his whole life."⁷⁷² Not only would Rosenzweig's "direction" include overcoming what Blumenberg calls, referring to Goethe, the pitfalls of "aesthetic self-mastery"—similar in content to what Rosenzweig refers to as his "insatiable hunger for forms"—but Rosenzweig's overcoming could not side-step the demonic influence of both Goethe and Hegel upon his own development. Yet Hegel, this 'force from without', and more specifically Hegel's collision with Napoleon, stand under the influence of the earliest biographical model for the young Rosenzweig, "the greatest German of that epoch," Goethe. As we turn towards the question of tragedy, we must keep in mind Rosenzweig's own collision, however subtle, with the great historical figures in the "drama" he sees unfold at the turn of the 19th century. Only then can we understand what is at stake for Rosenzweig and his own subordination to the tragic laws of history he unfolds for Hegel.

⁷⁷⁰ "Hegel darf, nach seiner nationalgeschichtlichen Bedeutung wenigstens—nicht nach seiner weltgeschichtlichen—in engerem Rahmen gefaßt werden." HS 526.

⁷⁷¹ Blumenberg, 504.

⁷⁷² Rosenzweig, *Star*. 213.

"The Hero of the Tragic Drama"

Rosenzweig gives the very last part of the "Napoleon" chapter, referring to Napoleon himself, the somewhat striking title "The Hero of the Tragic Drama" (*Der Held des Trauerspiels*). The title of this sub-section is striking, for while it may be common to hear the words Napoleon and tragedy mentioned in the same breath, it is less common to read about Hegel's own opinion of his "tragic" contemporary, and certainly telling that Rosenzweig categorizes Hegel's picture of Napoleon in aesthetic terms. One is reminded here of Hayden White's treatment of Hegel in his book *Metahistory*, where he claims that in order to best understand Hegel's historiography, that is, his own understanding of history, one should look not at his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, but at his *Lectures on Aesthetics*.⁷⁷³ With the move towards Napoleon and aesthetic language Rosenzweig is also temporarily breaking his own narrative of Hegel's life and concentrating for the first time since his treatment of Hölderlin on an "individual" other than Hegel himself. And yet given Hegel's extensive analysis of tragic drama in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, years after his confrontation with the figure of Napoleon, one must admit that Rosenzweig leaves his readers here wanting a clearer understanding of the sense in which Hegel characterizes Napoleon as a "tragic" figure. Again much like Rosenzweig's questionable use of the word "tragic" to categorize Hölderlin's *Hyperion* and Hegel's "turning-point" during his Frankfurt years, it is not entirely clear here what either Hegel or Rosenzweig mean with the word "tragedy." In order to help clarify this question it is justified to look briefly outside the lines of Hegel's chronological development. Thus, still using Rosenzweig's text as a guide and Hegel's own thoughts

⁷⁷³ White, 85.

on the difference between ancient and modern tragedy as outlined in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, this section will bring to light what kind of tragic figure Napoleon was and why, even within Hegel's terms, Rosenzweig's understanding of Napoleon's "tragic" character is in need of further explanation. This brief excursus will deepen our own understanding of Hegel's personality and changing conception of history. But moreover, again using a term from White's *Metahistory*, what follows will attempt to show how Rosenzweig's "emplotment," or the "kind of story"⁷⁷⁴ he tells, again points towards the important role of "tragedy" in Hegel's biography.

Bracketing for the moment the historical context within which Hegel encounters the "shadow" of Napoleon—a context that begins in the *Phenomenology* and is then carried out over the years when Hegel was a newspaper editor in Bamberg and a school director in Nürnberg, his own years of "mediocrity" (*Mittelmässigkeit*) as will become clear below—let us begin with an excerpt from the letter Hegel wrote to his friend Niethammer on April 29th, 1814, with which Rosenzweig's chapter on Napoleon reaches its peak:

Great things are happening around us. It is like a monstrous play, to see an enormous genius destroy himself. That is the τραγικωτατογ [tragikotaton]⁷⁷⁵ that there is; the entire mass of mediocrity with its absolute leaden weight, presses continuously without rest or reconciliation, until it has that which is higher on the same niveau or beneath itself; the turning-point of the whole, the reason that this mass has force and that it remains as chorus over and above, is that the great

⁷⁷⁴ White, 7.

⁷⁷⁵ 'most tragic thing.'

individuality has to grant this right himself, and in doing so destroys himself.⁷⁷⁶

Hegel is talking here of the fall of Napoleon's empire in the years 1813/14. The first thing that catches Rosenzweig attention is Hegel's description of Napoleon's fall as entirely "dramatic" (*dramatisch*).⁷⁷⁷ As emphasized above with reference to Goethe, for Rosenzweig, it was not the "acting man" (*handelnde Mensch*) that Hegel and his contemporaries saw in Napoleon, but rather "the picture [...] not of the giant himself, but rather the shadow of this genius."⁷⁷⁸ This "picture" of Napoleon perhaps explains why Hegel could see the unfolding of history before his eyes as a dramatic event.⁷⁷⁹ And when reading the constellation in which Hegel viewed this dramatic event—"individual and mass, hero and chorus"⁷⁸⁰—one must agree with Rosenzweig that Hegel saw Napoleon's fall in the moment of its unfolding "in the style of tragedy" (*im Stil der Tragödie*).⁷⁸¹

⁷⁷⁶ "Es sind große Dinge um uns geschehen; es ist ein ungeheures Schauspiel, ein enormes Genie sich selbst zerstören zu sehen; das ist das tragikotaton, das es gibt; die ganze Masse des Mittelmäßigen mit seiner absoluten bleiernen Schwere, drückt ohne Rast und Versöhnung, so lang bleiern fort, bis es das Höhere herunter, auf gleichem Niveau oder unter sich hat; der Wendepunkt des Ganzen, der Grund, daß diese Masse Gewalt hat und als Chor übrig und obenauf bleibt, ist, daß die große Individualität selbst das Recht dazu geben muß, und somit sich selbst zugrunde richtet." HS 298.

⁷⁷⁷ HS 298.

⁷⁷⁸ "das Bild [...] nicht der Riese selbst, sondern der Schatten des Riesen." HS 273.

⁷⁷⁹ Or, as Franco Moretti put it in his book *Signs taken for Wonders*, not the tragic, but "tragedy... a particular form of representing that history." Moretti, 55.

⁷⁸⁰ "Einzelner und Masse, Held and Chor." HS 298.

⁷⁸¹ HS 299.

But what is most astounding about the passage above is the role that Hegel assigns to the “*Chor*” in Napoleon’s fall.⁷⁸² In his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, which he was to hold years later,⁷⁸³ the chorus plays an essential and distinguishing role between what Hegel outlines as ancient and modern tragedy.⁷⁸⁴ In the passage above we see Napoleon, the “*Held*,” placed in a certain relationship to the chorus, “*die Masse*.” With Hegel’s mature theory of tragedy in mind, however, this relationship seems entirely odd. Thus, before going further in this direction and into the consequences it will have for the tragic character of Napoleon himself, let us first look at Hegel’s *Lectures on Aesthetics* and the notion of the “chorus” as it is presented there.

The tragic moment for Hegel is always defined in terms of a “*Kollision*.”⁷⁸⁵ In ancient tragedy—that is, Greek tragedy—this collision occurs between two powers of the ethical order (*Sittlichkeit*), which are each entitled in themselves to “*Berechtigung*.”⁷⁸⁶ Hegel understands these ethical powers, as he will often say throughout, as powers such as the state and family.⁷⁸⁷ The chorus in ancient tragedy, however, is neither one of these ethical powers nor a character as the cause of their collision. It is rather there “*als das substantielle, höhere, von falschen Konflikten abmahnende, den Ausgang bedenkende*

⁷⁸² In quoting the letter to Niethammer in his book *Hegel*, Terry Pinkard places an ellipsis where the word “*Chor*” stands in the original. One would like to think that he was thereby avoiding the complication this raises for Hegel’s theory of tragedy.

⁷⁸³ The first of these was in Heidelberg in 1818.

⁷⁸⁴ Although it is not the place for it here, the concept of the “chorus” plays an important role in Rosenzweig’s own understanding of redemption the second book of the *Star of Redemption*. There, however, the chorus does not represent “history” as it will for Hegel in this section, but the coming together of separate voices in the song of redemption.

⁷⁸⁵ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 547.

⁷⁸⁶ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 549.

⁷⁸⁷ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 564.

Bewußtsein.” (562).⁷⁸⁸ The chorus stands above the tragic collision as the “*Gleichmaß unbewegten Lebens*” and “*greift deshalb in die Handlung nicht tatsächlich ein.*”⁷⁸⁹ It does not actually intervene in the action!⁷⁹⁰ Before moving on to this point, which will prove decisive for our discussion, there is one final image of the chorus that Hegel provides, which must be quoted in full:

*Wie das Theater selbst seinen äußeren Boden, seine Szene und Umgebung hat, so ist der Chor, das Volk, gleichsam die geistige Szene, und man kann ihn dem Tempel der Architektur vergleichen, welcher das Götterbild, das hier zum handelnden Helden wird, umgibt.*⁷⁹¹

What a picture Hegel provides us with. The chorus as the temple that surrounds and protects the hero. But what may go unnoticed in this passage is the apparent association of the chorus with “*das Volk.*” This strikes a note of truth if we remember that according to Hegel Napoleon’s tragic chorus was composed of the people, the “*Masse des Mittelmäßigen.*” In talking about the difference between ancient and modern tragedy Hegel writes that the chorus belongs “*wesentlich zur dramatischen Handlung selbst [...]* und ihr so notwendig ist, das der Verfall der Tragödie sich hauptsächlich auch an der

⁷⁸⁸ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 562. One can think here on the chorus of sea-nymphs from Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound*, who warn Prometheus not to prolong his suffering and wonder aloud what his actions will bring.

⁷⁸⁹ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 562.

⁷⁹⁰ In *Prometheus Bound*, the sea-nymphs even go as far as being swept under the sea of Zeus’ wrath along with Prometheus in the end.

⁷⁹¹ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 563.

*Verschlechterung der Chöre dartut.*⁷⁹² In modern tragedy, which for Hegel was also “*der Verfall der Tragödie*,” it is no longer one justified power pitted against another. The once essential role of the chorus is relegated to a “deterioration” (*Verschlechterung*) and the tragic hero is left alone with his “*subjektive Innerlichkeit des Charakters.*”⁷⁹³ But the chorus of Napoleon’s fall as presented by Hegel seems to escape these definitions. For it is neither entirely deteriorated, as is witnessed by the “*Gewalt*” it possesses, nor does it refrain from intervening in the action. If in using the chorus to locate the difference between ancient and modern tragedy we come upon these points, what does that say for Napoleon’s tragic character? Was his tragic personality more aligned with the heroes of the ancient world or do his actions fit better with Hegel’s conception of the modern?

With this question in mind let us now return to our discussion. Given the image of the temple of architecture above, one would certainly like to see Napoleon as the “*Götterbild*” which was surrounded by “*das Volk*” as his temple! And this was perhaps indeed how Hegel saw Napoleon in 1806, before the battle of Jena: “the Kaiser, this world soul” (*den Kaiser, diese Weltseele*).⁷⁹⁴ But, following the same path as Goethe, this would change with Napoleon’s fall in 1814. For although Napoleon was perhaps once unified with the ethical power of the state, fully supported by his chorus—the people of France and beyond—this very chorus, according to Hegel, now turned against the hero himself. Thus, one is apt to say that Napoleon, according to Hegel’s notion of ancient tragedy, was not a tragic hero of old. This is affirmed by Rosenzweig when he

⁷⁹² Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 563.

⁷⁹³ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 573.

⁷⁹⁴ *HS* 274.

writes of Hegel that he placed the "the emphasis of the events in the individual,"⁷⁹⁵ that is, "tragedy" is here associated with the "*Innerlichkeit*" of Napoleon's personality. For it was not the 'mass of mediocrity' that brought Napoleon to his fall, but rather "the great individual himself" (*die große Individualität selbst*). But why, then, one could ask, mention of a chorus at all? Would not Hegel have been better off and in turn more consistent with his later view of tragedy if he would have simply ascribed Napoleon's fall to the "*äußere Zufall der Umstände*,"⁷⁹⁶ thus affirming his point that modern tragedy lies "*wesentlich in dem Charakter*"⁷⁹⁷ and not in the ethical powers of the world?

The chorus as it appears in Hegel's letter to Niethammer thus throws an odd light on Hegel's assessment of Napoleon as a tragic figure and Rosenzweig's emphasis of the same. Nowhere in his *Lectures on Aesthetics* do we find the chorus described in such a way. Whereas the chorus in ancient tragedy does not intervene in the action, here we find an entirely different image. The chorus is associated with a lead weight that pulls Napoleon's genius down to its own level and even reigns over it. One can only conclude, with Hegel, that it was necessarily Napoleon's own internal flaw that brought about his fall. Does this, then, mean that Napoleon himself could be described as a *modern* tragic hero? Although the modern hero is not essentially unified with a certain justified ethical power, such as the state—here one can think of Creon in Sophocles' *Antigone*—Hegel does write that "*die substantiellen Zwecke, Vaterland, Familie, Krone und Reich usf. [...]*"

⁷⁹⁵ "*Schwerpunkt des Geschehenen wieder ins Individuum.*" HS 299

⁷⁹⁶ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 573.

⁷⁹⁷ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 576.

*in keiner Weise entfernt zu halten [sind].*⁷⁹⁸ So, one could believe for the moment that even as an emperor intimately united with his empire Napoleon still fit the role of the modern tragic hero. For, he was the cause of his own fall. The "mass of mediocrity" (*Masse des Mittelmäßigen*) did not stand opposed to him justified in their stance, but were first given the "right" (*Recht*) to bring down the "genius" (*Genius*) by that very genius himself. If this all holds and Napoleon is a modern tragic figure, than why does the chorus play such a decisive role for Hegel in his letter if in modern tragedy it is all but absent?

A possible answer to these questions lies in Rosenzweig's own interpretation of Hegel's "*Kollision*" with Napoleon. For Rosenzweig, Napoleon's tragic fall is outweighed for Hegel by a much different drama, the drama of history itself. According to Rosenzweig, Hegel comes to see the choir less as a dramatic feature of Napoleon's own fate and more as "the power of history" (*die Macht der Geschichte*).⁷⁹⁹ Thus, the importance of this episode with Napoleon is already coming to light with regard to Hegel's development. In the same letter to Niethammer quoted above Hegel writes, looking back on his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "[d]ie ganze Umwälzung habe ich übrigens, wie ich mich rühmen will, vorausgesagt."⁸⁰⁰ What he predicted was—remembering the summary of this chapter at the end of "Stations of Life"—the "triumph of spirit over power" (*Triumph des Geistes über die Macht*).⁸⁰¹ This was Germany's victory over France. But although he had earlier predicted the turn of events, his beliefs

⁷⁹⁸ Hegel, *Ästhetik*. 559.

⁷⁹⁹ HS 299.

⁸⁰⁰ Hegel, *Briefe II*. 28.

⁸⁰¹ HS 298.

had now changed. Whereas in 1806 Hegel could still see Napoleon as the “*Weltseele*” and thus the “*Kaiser*” of the world, all that remained now was "the belief in the power of history" (*der Glaube an die Macht der Geschichte*).⁸⁰² In the end, Napoleon’s tragic fate was overshadowed by the "the tragic law of history" (*tragische Gesetz der Geschichte*)⁸⁰³ itself and Napoleon was left to suffer, forgotten below the lead weight of history, the "chorus" (*Chor*) in Hegel’s letter. Hegel, try as he might, could not capture Napoleon’s tragic character in dramatic terms. For, while sharing qualities of both, he was neither a tragic figure in the ancient or modern sense. Already at the beginning of the "Napoleon" chapter, Rosenzweig—both alluding to and yet refraining from expounding upon the point—suggests that perhaps Hegel should have listened to the lyrical advice of his friend Hölderlin, when already in 1797 in his poem “*Buonaparte*” he warned of the dangers one faces when trying to capture an individual as great as Napoleon in poetic language:

*Der Dichter laß ihn unberührt wie der Geist der Natur,
An solchem Stoffe wird zum Knaben der Meister*

*Er kann im Gedichte nicht leben und bleiben
Er lebt und bleibt in der Welt.”*

By trying to explain Napoleon’s tragic fate in dramatic terms—thereby replacing historical description with a lyrically infused prose—Hegel ignores his friend's warning and, despite his attempts to understand, plays servant to Napoleon's world-historical figure. After Napoleon's fall, all that was left for Hegel was his "conviction in the right

⁸⁰² HS 299.

⁸⁰³ HS 298.

of the chorus" (*Überzeugung vom Recht des Chors*).⁸⁰⁴ Yet years later, this chorus—"das Volk"—the "power of history" Hegel had come to believe in, would remember Napoleon not as "the tyrant" (*der Tyrann*),⁸⁰⁵ but—much like Prometheus—and in Goethe's understanding "Shakespeare, Rafael, Mozart," as that great daemonic hero who suffered alone for the good of all mankind.

"The Tragic Law of History"

In the previous section, the attempt was made to work out Hegel's position with regards to Napoleon as it is presented within the first section of the second volume of *Hegel and the State*. However, we were left with the somewhat uncomfortable claim that although Hegel portrays Napoleon as partaking in a sort of tragedy in his letter of 1814 to Niethammer, the description of Napoleon as a tragic hero and especially the role of the chorus in this description were at odds with Hegel's formal, aesthetic theory of tragedy. Rosenzweig concludes that Napoleon's fate fell very broadly under the "the tragic law of history" (*tragische Gesetz der Geschichte*).⁸⁰⁶ But how can we understand this, again, very broad and unexamined phrase by Rosenzweig, especially given Hegel's own growing commitment to the "power of history"? Alongside Rosenzweig and Hegel's work, Peter Szondi's book *Versuch über das Tragische* is a helpful touchstone here. In this section, which is an extension of the previous, it will be shown how the question of

⁸⁰⁴ HS 306.

⁸⁰⁵ HS 299.

⁸⁰⁶ HS 298.

Napoleon's fate within Hegel's spiritual biography touches on the relationship between life and tragedy itself, and that for this reason it is important both for Hegel's development and Rosenzweig's own life and thought.

It is very telling for Hegel's development that Rosenzweig chose to begin the second volume of his biography with a chapter on Napoleon. As we have already shown, "Stations of Life" examined how Hegel's philosophy developed out of his personal life and struggles, predominately his years in Frankfurt. The closing words of the first half are repeated here: "The stations of life change for him into the epochs of the world. The stream of thought broke the barriers of its shore and watered the thirsting fields of the age."⁸⁰⁷ Paradoxically, Hegel is here both the carrier of this stream and yet also belongs to the "fields" (*Äcker*) newly soaked with his thinking. This is clear from Rosenzweig's portrayal of Hegel in the following Napoleon chapter. From the outset, Rosenzweig characterizes Hegel along with his contemporaries as belonging to the "thirsting generation" (*dürstenden Geschlecht*).⁸⁰⁸ It was none other than the "picture" (*Bild*) of Napoleon, which was to fill the "void" (*Lücke*) of this generation's thirst.⁸⁰⁹ The importance of Hegel's double-character, which is implied by Rosenzweig within this transition from "personal life" to "epoch," will only become clear once we have laid some introductory groundwork.

⁸⁰⁷ "Der Strom des Denkens brach die Schranken seiner Ufer und tränkt die dürstenden Äcker der Zeit." HS 264.

⁸⁰⁸ HS 273.

⁸⁰⁹ HS 273.

When Napoleon rode into Jena in 1806, Hegel famously hailed him as the "world soul" (*Weltseele*).⁸¹⁰ Looking back on that time, in the same letter of 1814 to Niethammer, Hegel prided himself in correctly predicting the fall and fate of Napoleon in the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. The lines he was referring to and the same lines which Rosenzweig claims as the ground upon which his Napoleon chapter was written,⁸¹¹ read as follows:

*Wie das Reich der wirklichen Welt in das Reich des Glaubens und der Einsicht übergeht, so geht die absolute Freiheit aus ihrer sich selbst zerstörenden Wirklichkeit in ein anderes Land des selbstbewussten Geistes über.*⁸¹²

Here, this "übergehen" is understood by thinkers such as Szondi as a decisive moment within Hegel's dialectical thinking and decisive for understanding his dialectic in general. Rosenzweig, however, noticeably ignoring the development of the dialectic as a theory of knowledge as such, situates his observations on this passage within the biographical and historical flow of his argument as they reflect upon Hegel's philosophical personality.

For Rosenzweig, Hegel had indeed predicted the turn of events: "'spirit' has migrated from this side (*Diesseits*) to the beyond (*Jenseits*), from the state to philosophy, from France to Germany."⁸¹³ But what he did not and could not predict in the

⁸¹⁰ HS 274.

⁸¹¹ See HS 298.

⁸¹² Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. 441.

⁸¹³ "der 'Geist' ist aus dem Diesseits ins Jenseits, aus dem Staat in die Philosophie, von Frankreich nach Deutschland übergesiedelt." HS 275.

Phänomenologie, "was his own disposition, with which he would process the events."⁸¹⁴

As was stated before, in the language of the *Phänomenologie*, Hegel had seen the movement of "spirit" (*Geist*) from France to Germany—before the actual fall of Napoleon and before his reflective glance in 1814—as the "necessity of a triumph of spirit over power."⁸¹⁵ This "triumph" was indeed affirmed with the fall of Napoleon in 1813, yet although Hegel had predicted the necessity of this event, he had by no means predicted the manner. In his letter of 1814 to Niethammer, Hegel's conception of tragedy was thrown into question through his description of the chorus as "mass of mediocrity." Rather than understanding the fall of Napoleon as the triumph of spirit, Hegel was forced to concede this triumph to the "right of the chorus" (*Recht des Chors*).⁸¹⁶ And what will become decisive for Rosenzweig is that this chorus, far from being the inactive chorus of ancient tragedy, represented here "the power of history" (*die Macht der Geschichte*).⁸¹⁷ But how are we to understand this "power of history" at this decisive point in Hegel's biography and why does Rosenzweig continue to present Hegel's life in the ambiguous language of tragedy?

Without straying too far from Rosenzweig's text, I wish here to lean on Szondi's insightful attempt to illuminate Hegel's theory of tragedy. In Szondi's book *Versuch über das Tragische* (1961) Hegel is only one among many German philosophers represented. But it is Hegel's philosophy and in particular his dialectical theory that play the decisive role for Szondi throughout. This emphasis on Hegel's dialectic already sets

⁸¹⁴ "war seine eigene Stimmung, mit der er die Ereignisse aufnehmen würde." HS 298.

⁸¹⁵ "Notwendigkeit eines Triumphes des Geistes über die Macht." HS 298.

⁸¹⁶ HS 306.

⁸¹⁷ HS 299.

him apart from Rosenzweig and thus provides us with an adequate counterpoint to Rosenzweig's view. Within Szondi's first investigation—on Schelling—he foreshadows what he will later reveal as the thesis of his book: “*die These von der dialektischen Struktur des Tragischen.*”⁸¹⁸ And although he reads in all philosophers the tendency to join tragedy with dialectical thinking, he writes that “*bei Hegel [fallen] Tragik und Dialektik zusammen.*”⁸¹⁹ According to Szondi, here echoing Rosenzweig's emphasis in the "Frankfurt" chapter, Hegel first developed his theory of tragedy around the concept of fate. Here is the passage that Szondi quotes from Hegel's "Natural Right" essay, which, according to Rosenzweig, "concludes the movement that began in Frankfurt":⁸²⁰

*Die Tragödie [ist] darin, daß die sittliche Natur ihre unorganische, damit sie sich nicht mit ihr verwickelt, als ein Schicksal von sich abtrennt und sich gegenüber stellt, und, durch die Anerkennung desselben in dem Kampfe, mit dem göttlichen Wesen, als der Einheit von beidem, versöhnt.*⁸²¹

As “*Schicksal*,” or fate, tragedy is simultaneously a “*Selbstentzweiung*” and a “*Selbstversöhnung.*”⁸²² Because the subject as “*sittliche Natur*” splits *itself*, that is, is the agent of its own fate, it can then be “*versöhnt*” and described as an “*Einheit.*” In this basic movement—overly simplified here for the sake of brevity—Szondi sees the

⁸¹⁸ Szondi, 61.

⁸¹⁹ Szondi, 22.

⁸²⁰ “*So ebbt die Bewegung, die in Frankfurt begonnen hatte, ab.*” HS 194.

⁸²¹ Szondi, 20. Quoted from Hegel, *Über die wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten des Naturrechts.*

⁸²² Szondi, 23.

beginnings of the famous Hegelian dialectic.⁸²³ Rosenzweig on the other hand, emphasizes how this movement connects to Hegel's political thinking, and accordingly sees the "inorganic" (*unorganische*) as the "property" (*Eigentum*) of the state, and how in this moment "property" has become the "fate" (*Schicksal*) of the state.⁸²⁴ For Szondi, whose glance is not restricted by the development of the concept of the state, Hegel's dialectic unfolds in its full glory from these early roots. Later Szondi will describe this dialectic as both "*Weltgesetz*" and "*Methode der Erkenntnis*."⁸²⁵ Given these two descriptions, then, and keeping Rosenzweig's own treatment in mind as we return to the "Napoleon" section, it is but a short leap to the concept of the "tragic law of history."

Associating tragedy with the concept of fate lines up well with the common description of the tragic hero, here using the example of Hegel's Napoleon, "that the great individuality must himself grant the right to its own destruction."⁸²⁶ The discrepancy between the terms "reconciliation" (*Versöhnung*) and "destruction" (*Vernichtung*), however, becomes decisive for us in consideration of Hegel's letter of 1814. When Hegel described Napoleon in 1806 as the "worldsoul," he could still say later—in 1814—that he saw in him "an enormous genius" (*ein enormes Genie*).⁸²⁷ But, as Rosenzweig decisively points out, what Hegel predicted in the *Phänomenologie*,

⁸²³ See Szondi, 21.

⁸²⁴ HS 194-95.

⁸²⁵ Szondi, 27.

⁸²⁶ "daß die große Individualität selbst das Recht zu ihrer eigenen Vernichtung geben muss." HS 298.

⁸²⁷ HS 298.

although correct "in broad strokes" (*in den größten Zügen*),⁸²⁸ was not what Hegel had expected. Rather than a "Versöhnung" of one moment of history with the next, Hegel witnessed something he did not foresee. In Rosenzweig's words:

that Napoleon's destruction would not come about internally, through the spirit, but rather, as it appeared to him, through the mass of mediocrity with its leaden weight, this now made him sullen and gave him, as he is trying to figure things out, the feeling of having lived through a tragedy.⁸²⁹

Napoleon's fate, and in turn the fate of history, does not stem here from an internal "unity" (*Einheit*), but rather a force from without—similar to what we introduced as the "demonic" above. The spirit that Hegel had hoped to see emerge from Napoleon, the "world soul" (*die Weltseele*), emerged rather from what Hegel identified himself as the chorus, "the mass of mediocrity" (*die Masse des Mittelmäßigen*). Thus it was not the triumph Hegel had hoped for, yet still a triumph indeed: "a victory of mediocrity over genius."⁸³⁰ To speak here of a "reconciliation" (*Versöhnung*) on behalf of Napoleon would be misplaced. The "reconciliation" (*Versöhnung*)—the dialectical movement of the world spirit from France to Germany—had indeed taken place. But for Napoleon himself, "destruction" (*Vernichtung*) is the finer word. In Rosenzweig's final flourish, he

⁸²⁸ HS 298. This point is summarized earlier by Rosenzweig: "Napoleon's greatness was that he preserved the state; but precisely in this moment the state ceased to be the middle-point of human history" (*Das er den Staat erhielt, was Napoleons Grösse; aber eben in diesem Augenblick hörte der Staat auf, Mittelpunkt der Menschengeschichte zu sein*). HS 276. One may ask here, for Hegel, or for human history as a whole?

⁸²⁹ "daß die Vernichtung Napoleons eine Vernichtung nicht von innen heraus, nicht durch den Geist, sondern, wie ihm schien, durch die Masse des Mittelmäßigen mit seiner bleiernen Schwere sein würde, das hatte er nimmermehr 1806 geweissagt, das macht ihn jetzt grämlich und das gibt ihm, als er sich mit den Dingen abzufinden sucht, das Gefühl, ein Trauerspiel erlebt zu haben." HS 299. From the context of Rosenzweig's text, he seems to make no distinction between "Trauerspiel" and "Tragödie," allowing these terms, as well as Hegel's own use of "Schauspiel" to freely interchange.

⁸³⁰ "einen Sieg des Mittelmäßigen über das Genie." HS 299.

describes that this "tragedy" (*Trauerspiel*) had led Hegel to resign himself to believe only in "the power of history" (*die Macht der Geschichte*).⁸³¹ Here, Napoleon sank into the choir and merged with the movement of history and thus Napoleon's great individuality was sacrificed to the tragic law of history. Where once the battle of Jena was for Hegel the decisive moment of history, the present, that is, 1814, "could now again shift into earthly daylight from the apocalyptic lighting of the first hours of a third empire."⁸³² In consequence of this change in Hegel's perception of historical development, Rosenzweig concludes: "the great turning-point of world-history could no longer be found here."⁸³³ As we will see in the *Philosophy of Right*, this "turning-point" (*Wendepunkt*) will be located much earlier, already with the advent of Christianity.

Before ending this section, I would like to return to the notion of Hegel's double-character. What was only hinted at before has now been unfolded from Rosenzweig's text. The final lines of the first volume, which I would like to draw upon again, give us a concise glimpse of how biography and history come together in Rosenzweig's text within his picture of Hegel's personality:

so swelled up has the self-consciousness of the thinker now become. He stands eye to eye with the age. Even more: he is speaking to it and it speaks to him. He is has really become prepared and able to enter into it: 'to be' it. He has passed the Dantean middle of our lives. The stations of life change for him into the epochs

⁸³¹ HS 299.

⁸³² "konnte ihm nun aus der apokalyptischen Beleuchtung der Geburtsstunde eines dritten Reichs wieder ins irdische Tageslicht rücken." HS 299. Rosenzweig's use of the phrase "dritte Reich" predates the term as introduced by the National Socialists.

⁸³³ "der große Wendepunkt der Weltgeschichte konnte hier nicht mehr liegen." HS 299.

of the world. The stream of thought broke the barriers of its shore and watered the thirsting fields of the age.⁸³⁴

Yet what perhaps reads like the identification of Hegel with history is already called into question in the first paragraphs of the next volume. Hegel brings both the "stream of thought" (*Strom des Denkens*) and is, as quoted before, one of the "thirsting generation" (*dürstende Geschlecht*). It is this disjunction that becomes the centerpiece of Rosenzweig's chapter, foreshadowing the pulse of the entire second volume. For much later in his book Rosenzweig will write of Hegel that "the unity with the age is torn" (*die Vereinigung mit der Zeit ist zerissen*);⁸³⁵ this bold and tragic statement already begins to germinate here. Although Hegel had predicted the turn of events surrounding Napoleon, they came about much differently than he had thought and it consequently changed his entire view of history. Napoleon, once the "Kaiser," the hero, could later only be seen as the fallen, tragic genius—Hegel at once in tune and at odds with his own thought. Rosenzweig's choice to begin the second book of his biography with this tale of tragedy was no mere chance. As the stream of personal life breaks the narrow confines of Hegel's "Stations of Life," we now face the moving seas of the "Epochs of the World." Hegel's life is given over not to the command of reason alone, but rather to the "tragic law of history," an aesthetic law where "actuality" triumphs over "reason." And in Rosenzweig's telling, it will be under this tragic law of history that Hegel himself, a "world-historical" figure like Napoleon before him, will perish from his world.

⁸³⁴ "So hochgeschwellt ist jetzt das Selbstbewusstsein des Denkers. Er steht Auge in Auge mit der Zeit. Mehr noch: er redet mit ihr und sie spricht zu ihm. Er ist wirklich bereit und fähig worden, in sie einzugehen: sie 'zu sein'. Er hat die Dantesche Mitte unsres Lebensweges überschritten. Die Stationen des Lebens wandeln sich ihm in Epochen der Welt. Der Strom des Denkens brach die Schranken seiner Ufer und trinkt die dürstenden Acker der Zeit." HS 264.

⁸³⁵ HS 521.

CHAPTER VIII

FROM RESTORATION TO PRUSSIA

Introductory Remarks

In his essay "Hegel and the French Revolution" Joachim Ritter, who according to Axel Honneth is one of those directly responsible for inspiring the most recent edition of *Hegel und the State*,⁸³⁶ makes the important claim that within "the discussion of concrete political relations and events in his political essays [...] in his letters, and elsewhere, Hegel comes to grips again and again, sometimes ardently, with the political restoration."⁸³⁷ In Ritter's reading, Hegel's political works all in some way or another engage the concept of "restoration" in light of Hegel's ongoing consideration of the effects of the French Revolution. Already in the *Phenomenology*, the highest point of this engagement for Ritter and Rosenzweig alike—the moment when political change stood at the doorstep of Germany—Hegel found it necessary "to come to grips with the Revolution's emancipatory self-determination in the immediate relation to this its positive world-historical content."⁸³⁸ While Hegel reserves talk of "positive world-historical content" for his more strictly political texts, as will be shown below, the section of the

⁸³⁶ See "Nachwort," HS 582.

⁸³⁷ Ritter, 53. The essays listed by Ritter and omitted above are: "On the Recent Domestic Affairs of Wurtemberg, especially on the Inadequacy of the Municipal Constitution of 1798, The German Constitution of 1800/3, the critical discussion of the *Proceedings of the Estates Assembly in the Kingdom of Wurtemberg* in the years 1815 and 1816, published in 1817 in the *Heidelberger Jahrbüchern*, and finally the essay *On the English Reform Bill* of 1830." It is his essay on Wurtemberg from the years 1815-1817 that is the central focus of Rosenzweig's "Restoration" chapter, and also our focus here. The essay on the English Reform Bill will prove critical for Rosenzweig and is touched upon later.

⁸³⁸ Ritter, 52.

Phenomenology entitled "Terror" already showed that with the advancing "self-determination" of Spirit "there is politically no longer any possibility of turning back from the Revolution and what it has achieved."⁸³⁹ Its achievement, according to Ritter, was that "[e]very present and future legal and political order must presuppose and proceed from the Revolution's universal principle of freedom."⁸⁴⁰

While Rosenzweig certainly agrees, as he states numerous times about the importance of the French Revolution for Hegel, in his section "Restoration," immediately following the "tragic drama" of Napoleon, contrary to Ritter he already sees the Revolution transformed in Hegel's thought into his "belief in history," his "conviction for the right of the chorus."⁸⁴¹ Thus, where Ritter talks of the French Revolution and the "universal principle of freedom," Rosenzweig casts this period of Hegel's development in more world-historical language as the "fall of the empire" (*Untergang des Reichs*)⁸⁴² and the rise of history as "the ruling force over the entire will of the individual."⁸⁴³ Thus for Rosenzweig, it was in the atmosphere of the Vienna Congress of 1814, where observers including Hegel could "hope for everything or also fear everything,"⁸⁴⁴ that Hegel's political thinking begins to slowly emerge from its hiatus in "spiritual life" during the Napoleonic period. It does not develop, as Ritter claims, into an ever-increasing understanding of "the principle of freedom," but to an "implementation of the thought of

⁸³⁹ Ritter, 52.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴¹ HS 306.

⁸⁴² HS 314.

⁸⁴³ "die herrschende Gewalt über allem Willen der einzelnen." HS 307.

⁸⁴⁴ "daß man je nach Stimmung alles hoffen oder auch alles fürchten konnte." HS 306.

unity in the state."⁸⁴⁵ This emphasis upon the character and consequently unified "individuality" of the state and people as opposed to the freedom of the individual in Rosenzweig's reading also leads to the new formula for Hegel's political thought: "to the power also the will of the state."⁸⁴⁶

"Hegel's Homecoming to the State"

Rosenzweig comes to the above formulation in his considerations of Hegel's first political piece in some years, *Proceedings of the Estates Assembly in the Kingdom of Württemberg*, written during the years 1815 and 1816 and published in 1817 in the *Heidelberger Jahrbüchern*. In terms of Rosenzweig's presentation, the examination of this piece represents a return to the chapter "Stuttgart" where Rosenzweig first situated Hegel in his home province of Württemberg. But whereas in "Stuttgart" the reader was still wrapped up in the journals and notes of a school boy, and in this sense placed *within* the stream of Hegel's personal life, here during the German restoration we are looking with Hegel from *without*, "eye to eye" with history itself.

The main point of contention in Hegel's essay is the conflict between the "estates" (*Stände*) and the new constitution set up by the monarchy. With the invasion of Napoleon in 1806 the power of the estates as a governing body was entirely removed and now, after Napoleon's fall, they wanted that power back. Hegel, who once worked to

⁸⁴⁵ "Durchführung des Einheitsgedankens im Staat." HS 317.

⁸⁴⁶ "zur Macht auch der Wille des Staats." HS 317. Later, Rosenzweig writes regarding the concept of the will in Hegel's thought: "that power of the will, that [Hegel] did not want to acknowledge over his thinking and over thinking in general" (*jene Macht des Willens, die [Hegel] über seinem Denken und über dem Denken überhaupt nicht anerkennen mochte*) HS 358. This quote explains Rosenzweig's constant emphasis on Hegel's concept of the will and that the state as power essentially means the state as will, which in turn implies that the will of the individual is subsumed under the will of the state.

carve out more space for the estates in his political theory however, now sided with the monarchy. For in his view, "[t]he empire has ceased to exist, the highest judge between prince and subject, government and estates is missing."⁸⁴⁷ This "highest judge" was the "higher judicial authority" (*einem höheren Gericht*)⁸⁴⁸ of the empire whose previous task it was to resolve disputes between the estates and the ruling powers. But with the fall of the empire, Württemberg "is now forced to be a state, a sovereign state, which cannot internally rest upon contracts of two independent forces, but rather must be one internally as well as externally."⁸⁴⁹ What first reemerges here is the thought from Hegel's Frankfurt period of "the unity of all life," which is then taken as the "implementation of the thought of unity in the state." This move to cast the state itself in terms of unity leads, as was stated above, to what Rosenzweig sees as the new formula for Hegel's political thought: "to the power also the will of the state."

In terms of the overall development of the relationship of the individual to the state—which, as Rosenzweig's tragic "emplotment" continues, reveals itself more and more to be the guiding thought of the narrative—it becomes clear at the end of this narrative that it is precisely this "will of the state," which first emerges here, that is given precedence over the "will" of the individual. When the estates argued, based on "historical right" (*geschichtliches Recht*),⁸⁵⁰ that their power should be restored, Hegel

⁸⁴⁷ "Das Reich ist nicht mehr, es fehlt der oberste Richter zwischen Fürst und Untertan, Regierung und Ständen." HS 315.

⁸⁴⁸ HS 315.

⁸⁴⁹ "gezwungen, ein Staat zu sein, ein souveräner Staat, der nicht beruhen kann auf Verträgen zweier selbstständiger Gewalten in seinem Innern, sondern der nach innen eins sein muß so gut wie nach außen." HS 315.

⁸⁵⁰ HS 321.

responded with the "last and deepest" (*der letzte und tiefste*)⁸⁵¹ thought of this writing on Württemberg. In Rosenzweig's words:

Württemberg first became a state through the fall of the empire; only now does its history as the history of a state begin; now everything must become new, and what is old does not have the right of history, as it may seem, on its side, but against it. A people's history first begins when it becomes a state.⁸⁵²

This thought combining the idea of "history" and "state", which Rosenzweig also notes was systematically worked out during this time into Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, must be understood within the context of what was described in the previous chapter as the "fall" of Napoleon as an historical individuality and the rise of "history" as the chorus. For here, we are no longer talking of the "will" of the individual, but the "will" of history as the state itself. Hegel's general view as a philosopher of the state is then summed up by Rosenzweig a few lines later: "a people without a state have no history."⁸⁵³

Thus, it is with these stark words that Hegel finds his way back to the state and into the age of restoration. However, his writing on Württemberg, which was discussed above, once again failed to bridge the gap between "reason" and "actuality," and although Rosenzweig does work out the details of the piece, in the end "it was the unfortunate

⁸⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵² "*Württemberg ist erst durch den Fall des Reichs ein Staat geworden; erst jetzt hebt seine Geschichte als die Geschichte eines Staats an; da muß alles neu werden, und das Alte hat hier das Recht der Geschichte nicht wie es scheint für, sondern gegen sich.*" HS 322.

⁸⁵³ "*ein Volk ohne Staat hat keine Geschichte.*" HS 323. It seems obvious that Hegel's claim made a deep impact upon Rosenzweig, for as we witness in the third book of *The Star of Redemption*, it is precisely the significance of the Jewish people as a people without a state that allows them to retain the redemptive fire that is lost in the course of history. While Rosenzweig would not make the absolute claim that the Jewish people, because they have no state, have no history, he does understand the Jewish people—as opposed to the historical Christian religion—as the holders of the eternal messianic hope between humans and God.

thing that he now transferred his new or actually pre-Napoleonic ideal of the state upon a state, that was not a state."⁸⁵⁴ With the appearance here of the "will of the state" and the further coupling of "history" with the "state," we are again merely passing from one period to the next. From the tragic fall of Napoleon Hegel's eyes now turn to Berlin and the state of Prussia. Whereas Hegel's engagement with Wurtemberg was based on "the threefold coincidence of descent, the moment, contact with the small state," Hegel would now turn to an "actual" state with his thoughts of a "constitutional monarchy" (*verfassungsmässigen Königtum*).⁸⁵⁵ From the epoch of "Restoration" we now turn to "Prussia" as well as the questions of that great work, *The Philosophy of Right*. But before encountering what happens when the state becomes "a thought of philosophy" (*ein Gedanke der Philosophie*)⁸⁵⁶ (HS 438) Rosenzweig's attention is once again fixed upon the "personality" of Hegel himself.

On Hegel's "Personality" in Berlin

Rosenzweig's biography of Hegel is much more than a biography as such.⁸⁵⁷ And even classifying his book using a term coined by his teacher Meinecke, as a work in the

⁸⁵⁴ "Daß er sein neues oder eigentlich sein vornapoleonisches Staatsideal nun auf einen Staat, der kein Staat war, übertrug, war das Mißliche." HS 335.

⁸⁵⁵ "der dreifache Zufall der Herkunft, des Augenblicks, des Umgangs auf den Kleinstaat." HS 335.

⁸⁵⁶ HS 438.

⁸⁵⁷ A comparison, for example, with Terry Pinkard's *Hegel* would show not only that Rosenzweig is much more narrow with his focus on the development of the state, but also philosophically superior with his "subtle argumentation" (*subtile Argumentation*; see here Axel Honneth's "Nachwort", HS 581, where he also claims "that there could hardly be a second book that could succeed at doing something comparable on the same niveau of language and with the same clarity" (*es dürfte, so viel ist sicher, kaum ein zweites Buch geben, dem Vergleichbares auf demselben sprachlichen Niveau und mit derselben Übersichtlichkeit*

"history of ideas" (*Ideengeschichte*) only partially captures the complexity here. Axel Honneth, whose "*Nachwort*" to the newest German edition of *Hegel and the State* is perhaps the best existing essay on the book as whole, claims that "[w]ith all his talent at narrative presentation the systematically oriented philosopher still holds the upper hand over the historian of ideas."⁸⁵⁸ This statement strikes at the heart of the book, especially knowing what an influential thinker Rosenzweig was to become, and yet one cannot overlook the centrality Rosenzweig gives to Hegel's biography in his book, not only for the sake of telling a "life" itself, as is clear already from the foreword, but for interpreting the most important changes in Hegel's development, as the chapter on Frankfurt clearly showed. And here in the longest and most involved section of the book, "Prussia," with Hegel's "stations of life" changing once again from Nürnberg, to Heidelberg and finally to the city where he would reach the end of his life, Berlin, Rosenzweig once again draws upon biographical elements to both situate his "hero" in his development, but moreover to help explain one of the most important philosophical questions surrounding Hegel, even today: Hegel's relation to the Prussian state and his status as the "official" philosopher of Prussia.⁸⁵⁹

"In the twenties", writes Rosenzweig, and he is speaking here of the 1820s in Berlin, "Hegel became one of the personalities without which life in Berlin could not be

gelingen wäre) (HS 573). Pinkard makes no mention of Rosenzweig's interpretation and only lists *Hegel and the State* in his bibliography.

⁸⁵⁸ "*Bei allem Talent zur erzählerischen Darstellung behält bei Rosenzweig doch immer der systematisch orientierte Philosoph die Oberhand über den Ideenhistoriker.*" "*Nachwort*," HS 574.

⁸⁵⁹ See here the chapters in "The Myth of Hegel as a Totalitarian Theorist or Prussian Apologist" in *The Hegel Myths and Legends* ed. by Jon Bartley Stewart (1996).

thought."⁸⁶⁰ Not only was Hegel's appointment in 1818 by Prussia's minister of culture to the chair of philosophy previously held by Fichte decisive, but also Hegel's lectures on aesthetics and history, which still serve today as fitting introductions to his thought, helped Hegel grow beyond the university and gain recognition in Berlin.⁸⁶¹ Indeed, with Hegel's death in 1831 it was declared that "the learned world of Berlin and even more so the unlearned, had lost their philosopher."⁸⁶² This turn of phrase, borrowed from Adelheit Zunz, emphasizing that even the "unlearned [] had lost their philosopher," shows that while in Berlin, it was the aura of Hegel's "personality," and only then the content of his thought, that gave him such prestige and influence alike.

The term "personality" itself is at work on many different levels within the entirety of *Hegel and the State*. First, "personality" is not only at the center of Hegel's early biographical development, but significantly overlaps with Rosenzweig's autobiography as well. As was shown, Rosenzweig located the "turning-point" of Hegel's development—the point where the state became part of the "fate" of mankind—within Hegel's tarrying with his personal life around the age of 27 in Frankfurt. The 27th year of Rosenzweig's own life was also seen as his own personal "turning-point": the now famous "*Leipziger Nachtgespräche*" after which Rosenzweig later decided against converting to Christianity and declared "I will thus remain a Jew" (*Ich bleibe also Jude*). This overlap of both Hegel and Rosenzweig's development in terms of "personality" was further supported by Rosenzweig's early claim in his journals: "Why does one

⁸⁶⁰ "Hegel war in den zwanziger Jahren eine der Persönlichkeiten geworden, ohne die das Berliner Leben nicht gedacht werden konnte." HS 347.

⁸⁶¹ See here HS 347-8.

⁸⁶² "die Berliner gelehrte Welt, und fast noch mehr die ungelehrte, habe ihren Philosophen verloren." HS 347.

philosophize? For the same reason that one makes music or literature or art. Here too, in the last analysis, all that matters is the discovery of one's own personality."⁸⁶³ This early emphasis on "personality" creates the autobiographical continuity which leads from Rosenzweig's youth, through his biography of Hegel and the very choice to write a *biography*, and into his more mature analysis of "personality" and "character" in the *Star of Redemption*, especially surrounding his concept of "metaethics."

Second, the writing of history itself, as Rosenzweig saw first hand from his teacher Meinecke and observed in Dilthey's writings, deals with the instantiation of this history in the lives of individuals. As Bieberich writes of Rosenzweig's teacher: "*Für Meinecke ist nun der Ausbau der sittlichen und geistigen Welt auch der Aufbau der eigenen Persönlichkeit.*"⁸⁶⁴ As Bieberich rightly notes, Rosenzweig is leaning heavily on Meinecke's insistence on the importance of "personality" throughout his entire biography. Indeed, even beyond Hegel's own personal development we encounter many other individuals: Hölderlin and Schelling, Goethe and Napoleon, and foreshadowing Rosenzweig's own analysis of Hegel's legacy, even the socialist Marx. These "historical personalities" are the preconditions for historical thought in the first place, a claim not only Dilthey and Meinecke, but Hegel himself would agree with.⁸⁶⁵

Finally, the concept of "personality" finds its way to the peak of Hegel's philosophy of state. In bridging the gap from the "will of the individual" to the "will of the state," for Hegel there needs to be a natural "carrier of the reign" (*Träger der*

⁸⁶³ Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, April 1, 1906.

⁸⁶⁴ Bieberich, 21.

⁸⁶⁵ See here Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (quoted in Avineri, 230).

Herrschaft)⁸⁶⁶ and "in order that also here the personal will receives its due, personality as such receives a place in the world of institutions."⁸⁶⁷ This place is held by the "ruler" (*Fürst*) who for Hegel is "first and foremost personality" (*vor allem Persönlichkeit*).⁸⁶⁸ For these reasons alone, one should not quickly overlook the appearance of Hegel's "personality" within Rosenzweig's narrative, and especially not in regard to the question of Hegel's relation to the Prussia state. Indeed, Hegel's "personality" should again and again be brought to the fore, as Rosenzweig himself does, however subtly.

Upon moving to Berlin Hegel had published his *Logic* (1816) and the *Outline to the System* (1818) and with these works shifted into the "foremost rank of German philosophers."⁸⁶⁹ Echoing Hegel's own leanings towards a state of "power"—a state which Rosenzweig, again continuing what he began with Napoleon, would later classify as "the chorus-leader in a dance of worlds"⁸⁷⁰—Hegel entered Berlin "with the promise of philosophical rule."⁸⁷¹ In his inaugural address, Hegel claimed he was to bring about the "science of the middle-point" (*Wissenschaft des Mittelpunkts*),⁸⁷² meaning thereby that in the city which stood in the "middle," namely Berlin, Hegel would centralize all of philosophy for his age. Rosenzweig, drawing upon another "historical personality" to give credence to Hegel's thoughts, quotes here a letter to Hegel from Goethe, who in his

⁸⁶⁶ HS 415.

⁸⁶⁷ "damit auch hier dem persönlichen Willen sein Recht werde, die Persönlichkeit als solche in der Welt der Institutionen eine Stelle bekommen." HS 413.

⁸⁶⁸ HS 412.

⁸⁶⁹ "in die vorderste Reihe der deutschen Philosophen." HS 346.

⁸⁷⁰ "Chorführer in einem Reigen von Welten." HS 373.

⁸⁷¹ "mit dem Anspruch auf philosophische Herrschaft." HS 346.

⁸⁷² HS 346.

"*Über Kunst und Altertum*" had also recently used the notion of "middle-point." In that letter Goethe openly gives Hegel his support in "spreading a doctrine, wherefrom a life can be theoretically and practically fostered."⁸⁷³ Thus, with the blessings of the Prussian minister of culture and "the greatest German of the epoch," Hegel took his seat at the top of German philosophical thought.

But it was not only what Hegel would bring to and achieve in Berlin that shaped his personality there, rather the historical events that surrounded his life. In 1819, just one year before Hegel would publish his *Philosophy of Right*, Karl Ludwig Sand, a student and member of a nationalist student fraternity (*Burschenschaft*), would assassinate the conservative dramatist August von Kotzebue upon nationalist grounds. Sand would soon thereafter be executed for his crime and through this execution was seen by the student fraternities and some professors as a martyr for the nationalist cause. In particular, Sand would receive the public support of the professors De Wette and Jacob Fries, both of whom were thereafter released from their duties as professors. Along with a sharp increase in suspicion of "demagogy" in the university—and this explains the title of Rosenzweig's section here: "Demagogues"—this brought "the fight for academic freedom all at once to a focal point of political oppositions."⁸⁷⁴ When Hegel, seemingly against his own beliefs,⁸⁷⁵ famously sided amongst company with the right of the

⁸⁷³ "eine Lehre sich verbreite, woraus theoretisch und praktisch ein Leben zu fördern sei." HS 346-47.

⁸⁷⁴ "So wurde mit einem Male der Kampf um Freiheit der Lehre zu einem Brennpunkt der politischen Gegensätze." HS 350.

⁸⁷⁵ According to Rosenzweig he had recently participated in celebration honoring Sand and De Wette (see here HS 350).

government to lay off a professor, according to Rosenzweig it was "the beginning of his emphatic political opinion in general."⁸⁷⁶

In his book *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*, Shlomo Avineri also highlights these events in Hegel's life as decisive for his historical legacy. But unlike Rosenzweig, Avineri, himself a Jewish thinker, paints a much more damning picture of the student fraternities. He emphasizes that although Hegel did show some support for the fraternities⁸⁷⁷ they were overall "the most chauvinistic element in German society."⁸⁷⁸ Rosenzweig leaves unmentioned that many student fraternities were anti-Semitic and had even burned books at one of their recent gatherings.⁸⁷⁹ Jacob Fries, whom in the Preface to *The Philosophy of Right* Hegel calls a "leader of this superficial brigade of so-called philosophers,"⁸⁸⁰ would be denounced by Hegel (even using a quote by Goethe's Mephistopheles to do so!) for what Avineri calls his "moral subjectivism."⁸⁸¹ In rewriting his Preface to *The Philosophy of Right*—and we are finally approaching here with Rosenzweig the content of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* itself—he was soon to make a decision that would influence not only his own life, but his legacy as well: he choose to openly polemicize in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right* directly against Fries:

⁸⁷⁶ "der Anfang seiner entschiedenen politischen Stellungnahme überhaupt." HS 350.

⁸⁷⁷ See here Avineri, 130-31. Avineri provides a brief list of examples where Hegel showed his support for the student fraternities in order to help clear up the false assertion that "Hegel appeared in the context of his time on the side of the police against freedom of expression."

⁸⁷⁸ Avineri, 119.

⁸⁷⁹ Avineri goes as far as aligning the student fraternities with the rise of Nazism in Germany more than a century later (122).

⁸⁸⁰ Hegel, *PR*. 15.

⁸⁸¹ Avineri, 121.

And so [Hegel] came to that political move, which already during his lifetime stuck with him more than any other and which drove him through its consequences more closely and unconditionally than he himself had even originally thought into the arms of the Prussian government.⁸⁸²

This quite fatal move on the part of Hegel resulted in his being identified, by biographers as early as Haym, with the Prussian state and later, in quite contradictory fashion, even German nationalism.⁸⁸³ And yet Rosenzweig reminds his readers even before introducing these decisive events, "[o]ne should by no means forget how much more "Prussian" Prussia first became since 1848 and how precisely at that time the scarce outlines of the sharp and dry market still seemed dispersed in the serene air of humane *Bildung*, which drifted over from Weimar."⁸⁸⁴ Avineri adds to this the quite obvious, yet still overlooked fact that Hegel had already worked out much of what he wrote in *The Philosophy of Right* in Heidelberg, even before coming into direct contact with the Prussian state.⁸⁸⁵ Thus, although Hegel's "reign" as philosopher in Berlin seemed undisputed, the "personality" of this "man from Stuttgart who spoke more with himself

⁸⁸² "So kam er zu jenem politischen Schritt, der ihm mehr als irgendein anderer schon zu Lebzeiten nachgehangen und der ihn in seinen Folgen enger und bedingungsloser, als er wohl selbst ursprünglich meinte, der preußischen Regierung in die Arme getrieben hat." HS 351.

⁸⁸³ See here the excellent contextualization by Avineri which I have been drawing on in pieces, which also takes into account texts published after Rosenzweig's book: "The Owl of Minerva and the Critical Mind" (Avineri, 115-31).

⁸⁸⁴ "Man darf ja überhaupt nicht vergessen, wieviel 'preußischer' Preußen erst seit 1848 geworden ist und wie gerade zu jener Zeit noch die knappen Umriss des scharfen und trockenen Märkertums aufgelöst erschienen in der heiteren Luft humaner Bildung, die aus Weimar herüberwehte." HS 348. How much Rosenzweig's book is indeed a relic of the "pre-World War years" is painfully apparent here, through no fault of his own. After the unfortunate coupling of Buchenwald and Weimar one can now hardly speak of the "serene air" drifting over from Weimar to Berlin.

⁸⁸⁵ Avineri, 116.

than with his audience"⁸⁸⁶ was already being taken up into the stream of history and "scattered" (*sprengen*)⁸⁸⁷ about. In the same sense in which Hegel would later claim that the works of great individuals are separate from the individuals themselves,⁸⁸⁸ Hegel's philosophy was already being taken up into the stream of history: "The changing role of Prussia in the context of German nationalism created [...] a new image of Hegel's political thought."⁸⁸⁹ Hegel's mistake was not polemicizing against Fries alone, as Rosenzweig nicely points out, but again in Avineri's words "in his ultimately naïve belief that these forces of nationalism and subjective romanticism were merely a carry-over from the past."⁸⁹⁰ Indeed, as Rosenzweig will point out in connection with Bismarck and also his teacher Meinecke and even decades before the rise of National Socialism, the role of the "nation" in Germany would define its history more than that of the "state."⁸⁹¹ Thus with this public emergence of Hegel's "personality" in Berlin, like Kant and Fichte before him, and similar to Napoleon as well, Hegel himself was becoming that which he knew all too well: a world-historical personality. It was in the full awareness of his significance as an historical individual that Hegel presented the culmination of his political philosophy to the world.

⁸⁸⁶ "*mehr mit sich selber als zur Hörschaft redenden Stuttgarter.*" HS 348.

⁸⁸⁷ HS 456.

⁸⁸⁸ See here Avineri, 230.

⁸⁸⁹ Avineri, 122.

⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹¹ See Chapter XII.

CHAPTER IX
HEGEL'S "METAPHYSICS OF THE STATE":
INDIVIDUAL, HISTORY AND RELIGION

Introductory Remarks: On Hegel's Double-Thought

After leading his readers through the sometimes bewildering personal development of Hegel's individuality and then pitting this individuality against the forces of the world around it—Napoleon, Restoration, Prussia—Rosenzweig finally comes to rest with a sustained analysis of the *Philosophy of Right* itself. How does Rosenzweig, who in the first half of the book took his readers on an architectural journey through the various "buildings" of Hegel's state,⁸⁹² now paint this final "picture"? Or, to continue the metaphor, is this then too a "building"? As Wayne Cristaudo points out in his recent study on Rosenzweig in a chapter on Hegel, the idea of a "building" in this context is "something where the ends are forced into union as they become servants to the whole."⁸⁹³ Rosenzweig has taken his readers through many "buildings" before: there was the building in Tübingen, with the actual inscription above its door: "*Aedes Deo et Musis sacrae*"⁸⁹⁴; there was the metaphorical building of Hegel's first ideal of the state with the inscription "*Discite justiciam moniti*"⁸⁹⁵ (HS 80); and finally the building of Hegel's

⁸⁹² HS 143.

⁸⁹³ Cristaudo, 307.

⁸⁹⁴ HS 38; "House of God and Sacred Music."

⁸⁹⁵ HS 80; "Learn Justice from this Warning."

"power-state" with its inscription "power, power and again power" (HS 144).⁸⁹⁶ If we are now indeed entering a new "building" of Hegel's thought, then the inscription for this doorway must certainly be: "what is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational."

After the Second World War, Hegel's name came to be commonly associated with two things: his dialectical method and his statement from *The Philosophy of Right* that "what is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational". These are also the two points where the most misunderstanding surrounding Hegel arises.⁸⁹⁷ Rosenzweig distances himself from Hegel and clearly avoids Hegelian language focusing little if at all on the method of "dialectics".⁸⁹⁸ In some senses, Rosenzweig's Hegel seems to be quite foreign from the one made popular in the wake of Marx and later the Frankfurt School. Unlike Szondi, for example, Rosenzweig does not see the gradual emergence of the dialectic in Hegel's development, but a life-long tarrying with "actuality" itself. This struggle with "actuality" was mirrored in the various stages of Hegel's personal life in the first volume of *Hegel and the State*. What first began as the separation of "concept" and "experience" towards the end of the 18th century—and the desire to unite these two—resulted for Hegel in the tragic separation of life and thought experienced in Frankfurt. The reconciliation of this tragic moment was found in the idea of the "fate of the state," and by way of this new association of fate with the political life of a people Hegel came to adopt the idea of a "power-state." Finally, seen through the lens of an increasingly important philosophy of history, this "power-state" gave way to the "power" of history

⁸⁹⁶ HS 144; "*Macht, Macht und abermals Macht.*"

⁸⁹⁷ See here *The Hegel Myths and Legends*.

⁸⁹⁸ Only in the final sections do we see the word "dialectic" creeping up, but much more often Rosenzweig simply uses "method" or later "ambiguity" (*Zweideutigkeit*) to describe Hegel's philosophical procedure.

itself, as was made manifest in the *Phenomenology*. This development, which Rosenzweig has shown to lead from the *private* stream of personal life to the *public* epochs of the world, culminates in Hegel's famous line from the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right*: "what is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational."⁸⁹⁹

When Rosenzweig finally comes to speak of the famous line from the *Philosophy of Right*, he begins his analysis by claiming that it would be mistaken to think that Hegel is merely claiming thereby "the identification of nature and spirit" (*Gleichsetzung von Natur und Geist*).⁹⁰⁰ Instead, Rosenzweig offers a close and critical reading of what early on he claimed would become the "motto" (*Leitspruch*)⁹⁰¹ of the nineteenth century. As Hegel himself claims, the task of the *Philosophy of Right* "is nothing other than an attempt to comprehend and portray the state as an inherently rational entity."⁹⁰² Because philosophy is "exploration of the rational," it is, as Rosenzweig points out, for that very reason and "not despite this,"⁹⁰³ "the comprehension of the present and the actual."⁹⁰⁴ Rosenzweig emphasizes here not only the logical connection between "reason" and what is "actual," but also, as will be explained shortly, the very *direction* of this relationship. That is, while both philosophy and the world are rational, the rationality of philosophy *precedes* the rationality of the world. Rosenzweig explains the importance of this

⁸⁹⁹ Hegel *PR*. 20.

⁹⁰⁰ *HS* 352.

⁹⁰¹ *HS* 24.

⁹⁰² Hegel, *PR*. 21.

⁹⁰³ "das Ergründen des Vernünftigen"; "nicht trotzdem." *HS* 354.

⁹⁰⁴ Hegel, *PR*. 20.

relation by looking at the context of Hegel's famous line and, once again, by drawing on Hegel's understanding and privileging of historical understanding.

Rosenzweig's account of Hegel's "motto" begins with a close reading of Hegel's allusion to Plato and Plato's conception of the state as encountered within the context of *The Philosophy of Right* in the lines leading up to Hegel's famous statement. In those lines Hegel states that Plato—who in his *Republic* famously called for a philosopher king to rule over the state—has stood with his state for an "empty ideal" in political thinking, but in truth it represents "nothing other than the nature of Greek ethics [*Sittlichkeit*]." ⁹⁰⁵ With Plato then, so Rosenzweig, we have "a purified likeness of the Polis," a "Polis" for which "slavery" (*Sklaverei*) was a precondition and thus in terms of freedom only a "few" (*einige*) and not "all" (*aller*) could be free. ⁹⁰⁶ Hegel continues, that

Plato, aware that the ethics of his time were being penetrated by a deeper principle which, within this context, could appear immediately only as an as yet unsatisfied longing and hence only as a destructive force, was obliged, in order to counteract it, to seek the help of that very longing itself. ⁹⁰⁷

Rosenzweig focuses on this "deeper principle" that "penetrated" Plato's state as the key to unlocking Hegel's "motto," stating that for Hegel this "principle" was "doubtlessly the autocracy of the rational I tied to Socrates and the Sophists." ⁹⁰⁸ Plato's "unsatisfied

⁹⁰⁵ Hegel, *PR*. 20.

⁹⁰⁶ "ein gereinigtes Abbild also der Polis"; *HS* 354.

⁹⁰⁷ Hegel, *PR*. 20.

⁹⁰⁸ "Das 'tiefere Prinzip,' das in die Sittlichkeit der Polis 'einbrach,' ist für Hegel zweifellos die an Sokrates und die Sophisten geknüpfte Selbstherrlichkeit des vernünftigen Ichs." *HS* 354.

longing" (*unbefriedigte Sehnsucht*) for precisely this "rational I" obliged him to seek the help of a philosopher king who would "protect the endangered Greek state from the upheaval of critical reason."⁹⁰⁹ In this sense for Hegel, Plato's state, in which he recognized that reason was the "measure and guide of reality,"⁹¹⁰ contained a "*substantial* truth" and was thus not an empty "ideal".⁹¹¹ But Plato's mistake was in seeking this rational principle "outside"⁹¹² of the state itself, namely, as Hegel will write in the body of the *Philosophy of Right*, by excluding "private property" and "family" and doing away with the freedom to choose one's own class [*Stand*].⁹¹³ By taking away these rights, the latter of which stands as one of the major sources of freedom in Hegel's state, Rosenzweig observes that Plato "nullifies [...] even the existing freedom of the few in the actual Greek state."⁹¹⁴ Thus, in reaching outside of the Greek state to forms of ethical life not contained within Greek life itself in order to overcome the "destructive force" of reason, Plato—despite the insistence on a philosopher king—"thereby inflicted the gravest damage on the deeper drive behind [this force], namely free infinite personality."⁹¹⁵ In order for this freedom to extend to "all" and not merely a "few" individuals, the truth had to come "from above" [*aus der Höhe*].⁹¹⁶

⁹⁰⁹ "für den vom Aufruhr der kritisierenden Vernunft bedrohten griechischen Staat." HS 354.

⁹¹⁰ "daß die Vernunft Maß und Wegweiser der Wirklichkeit zu sein habe." HS 354.

⁹¹¹ Hegel, *PR*. 223.

⁹¹² Hegel, *PR*. 20.

⁹¹³ Hegel, *PR*. 223.

⁹¹⁴ "wo selbst die im wirklichen griechischen Staat vorhandene Freiheit der wenigen [...] vernichtet ist." HS 354.

⁹¹⁵ Hegel *PR*. 20.

⁹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

With the next move in his interpretation, Rosenzweig puts to use all of the painstaking attention he paid to the development not only of Hegel's political, but his religious thought as well. For what was needed and for Hegel did indeed come "from above"—"the truth that 'all' should be free"⁹¹⁷—"had to be revealed in the world of Christianity, before a new world-historical people, the Germanic, could take it up and actualize it."⁹¹⁸ Hegel himself writes that the principle of "subjective freedom [...]" is historically later than the Greek world, and the philosophical reflection which can fathom these depths is likewise later than the substantial Idea of Greek philosophy."⁹¹⁹ In interpreting this passage, using language which he would later develop abstractly in his *Star* and then more concretely in *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*, Rosenzweig writes that Plato "did not find the means to cure the sick world," but what he and the Sophists alike recognized was "the sickness" (*die Krankheit*).⁹²⁰ Plato, however, stood alone in "calling the correct doctor to the bed."⁹²¹ For according to Hegel, he was the first to discover "the pivot upon which the impending world revolution turned"⁹²²—in

⁹¹⁷ "die Wahrheit, daß 'alle' frei sein sollten." HS 355.

⁹¹⁸ "sie mußte der Welt im Christentum offenbart werden, ehe sie von einem neuen weltgeschichtlichen Volk, dem germanischen, aufgenommen und verwirklicht werden konnte." HS 355.

⁹¹⁹ Hegel, PR. 223.

⁹²⁰ "Was Plato also nicht fand, war das Mittel zur Heilung der kranken Welt." HS 355. The language of sickness and health is important to point out here, for in Hegel's "motto" Rosenzweig recognizes the *central* argument in Hegel's metaphysics. In *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*, which was supposed to serve as an introduction for the layman to the ideas explored in the *Star*, the entire argument is built around the metaphor of sickness. Rosenzweig's own actual paralyzing sickness aside, the language of interpretation here at such a central point of argument for Rosenzweig points towards the centrality in his thinking as well as to the role of "reason" in understanding "actuality."

⁹²¹ "daß er den richtigen Arzt ans Krankenbett rief." HS 355.

⁹²² Hegel, PR. 20.

Rosenzweig's words, "the thought that reason is to configure reality."⁹²³ With this line of argument Rosenzweig reaches the first half of Hegel's "motto": "what is rational is actual."

Emil Fackenheim, notable for his work on both Hegel and Rosenzweig, saw in this section of Rosenzweig's work a clarification of Hegel's thinking rare in contemporary scholarship.⁹²⁴ Rosenzweig's main contributions to the understanding of Hegel's often misused "motto" are first, his emphasis on the two separate parts of the statement and his explication of their relation to each other and second, in showing how the thought arises out of Hegel's own philosophy of history and religion. Rosenzweig points out that critics of Hegel, and according to Fackenheim this also carries past the publication of *Hegel and the State* in 1920, take the second half of the "motto" —"and what is actual is rational"— as the "core" (*Kern*) of the thought and criticize Hegel on these grounds for naively equating reality with rationality. However, in order to understand Hegel's thinking here, one must proceed in the proper *direction*: before the world was rational, reason came "from above" and subsequently made the world a rational place. This occurred for Hegel precisely when Christianity entered into the ancient world "with the thought of heaven on earth," making the words "what is rational is actual" into "an ethical demand and into the measure of all human features."⁹²⁵ Thus, Hegel's thought on the rationality of the world is preceded by reason itself entering this world and therefore this two-part thought cannot be understood to have counted "in general and for eternity" (*nicht überhaupt und seit*

⁹²³ "der Gedanke, daß die Vernunft die Wirklichkeit zu gestalten habe." HS 355.

⁹²⁴ See here "On the Actuality of the Rational and the Rationality of the Actual" in *The Hegel Myths and Legends* (42-49).

⁹²⁵ "seit es durch das Christentum im Gedanken des Gottesreichs auf Erden zur sittlichen Forderung und zum Maßstab aller menschlichen Einrichtungen wurde." HS 355.

ewig).⁹²⁶ It rather arose, or better *descended*, with the first "act" (*Tat*) of Christianity: namely, with the embodiment of divinity in the figure of Christ. Rosenzweig writes, quite brilliantly simplifying Hegel's thought and banishing any misunderstanding of tautology: "Only because the rational has become actual—the principle of the act—only therefore is now—the principle of knowing—the actual rational."⁹²⁷ Thus, the two parts of Hegel's "motto" can be understood as follows: the first, the actuality of reason, is associated with the "act," or the beginning, and only since its appearance with Christianity is reason destined to work itself out upon the world; the second part, the rationality of what is actual, is a result of reason having entered into the world and functions now as a "principle of knowing," that is, as the way "to investigate how reason has worked itself out in [actuality]."⁹²⁸ Rosenzweig designates Hegel's recognition of the actuality of reason as an "innermost revolutionary thought,"⁹²⁹ whereas the result that actuality is rational "shows, how the state of our age should be recognized."⁹³⁰ In summary he writes: "Only since Christianity entered the world did reason become the foundation of the spiritual world and this rationality the principle for knowing this world."⁹³¹ This is the new "*Wendepunkt*" in Hegel's thought, which he had been searching for since the tragic fall of Napoleon.

⁹²⁶ HS 355.

⁹²⁷ "Nur weil das Vernünftige wirklich geworden ist—Grundsatz der Tat—, nur deshalb ist nun—Grundsatz des Erkennens—das Wirkliche vernünftig." HS 355.

⁹²⁸ "zu untersuchen, wie die Vernunft sich in ihr [Wirklichkeit] ausgewirkt habe." HS 355.

⁹²⁹ "innerst revolutionären Gedankens." HS 355.

⁹³⁰ "zeigt, wie der Staat unsres Weltalters erkannt werden soll." HS 356.

⁹³¹ "Erst seit das Christentum in die Welt trat, ist die Vernunft der Grund der geistigen Welt und diese Vernünftigkeit Grundsatz für das Erkennen dieser Welt geworden." HS 356.

We first encountered Hegel's famous line from *The Philosophy of Right* —"*Was vernünftig ist, das ist wirklich; und was wirklich ist, das ist vernünftig*"—shortened as the epigraph to the "Preliminary Remarks" of *Hegel and the State* as two lines separated by ellipses.⁹³² This separation had the twofold effect of both explicitly showing the gap between "reason" and "actuality" in Hegel's early development, leading up to the Frankfurt ideal of "a unity with the age" (*Vereinigung mit der Zeit*),⁹³³ which was then realized with the completion of the *Phenomenology*.⁹³⁴ Yet on the other hand the epigraph, with its explicit separation of the two forces Hegel's tried his entire life to bring together, foreshadows the pulse of the entire book.

Images from the "Preface"—and a "Film"

In the previous section we entered into the newest "building" of Hegel's thought and presented Rosenzweig's explanation of the inscription—"what is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational"—above its doorway. And yet, how do these words now play out within this building of thought itself? What does this ideal of the state, which Rosenzweig has been anticipating throughout the entirety of *Hegel and the State* as the crowning achievement of Hegel's development, finally have to offer?

A critical tone, more or less veiled throughout, now begins to come to light with Rosenzweig's introductory comments on *The Philosophy of Right*. This is most evident in his treatment of two images Hegel uses to describe the task of his political philosophy.

⁹³² See here *HS* 23.

⁹³³ See *HS* 130.

⁹³⁴ *HS* 264.

Both images—one of a rose in a cross, the other of the owl of Minerva—are used by Hegel to underscore the *metaphysical* intentions of his work.

With the first image Hegel recognizes "reason as the rose in the cross of the present."⁹³⁵ Rosenzweig's explains the meaning of this cryptic image: "in the harsh wood of earthly suffering, the beautiful bloom of divine life."⁹³⁶ For Rosenzweig however, this image, which now sits "at the top of his [Hegel's] work"⁹³⁷ represents the culmination of the trajectory Hegel began in Frankfurt. There, he vowed to "be not better than the age [...] but to be the best of it."⁹³⁸ Here, with the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel does not want to be "the cross of the present," but has rather set out to know "the rose in it."⁹³⁹ Rosenzweig's critical response to this seemingly beautiful image is unmistakable: "To know! Nothing more."⁹⁴⁰ Veiled in this exclamation is what Wayne Cristaudo calls Rosenzweig's "exasperation"⁹⁴¹ with Hegel—and with philosophy in general—which he would fully unfold in *The Star*. Is merely "knowing" enough to unite the rational with the actual?

In last lines of the foreword to the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel famously comments that philosophy, as a critique of the present world around it, always comes too late, after the "owl of Minerva" has already flown: Rosenzweig leaves this poetical and striking

⁹³⁵ Hegel, *PR*. 22. See here footnote 27 (*PR* 391) for additional notes on Hegel's understanding of this image.

⁹³⁶ "in dem harten Holz des irdischen Leidens die schöne Blüte göttlichen Lebens." *HS* 357.

⁹³⁷ "an die Spitze des Werks." *HS* 358.

⁹³⁸ "besseres nicht als die Zeit [...] aber 'aufs beste.'" *HS* 358.

⁹³⁹ "nicht das Kreuz der Gegenwart, sondern die Rose darin hat er sich vorgesetzt zu erkennen." *HS* 358.

⁹⁴⁰ "Zu erkennen! Nichts weiter." *HS* 358.

⁹⁴¹ Cristaudo, 300.

statement more or less untouched, repeating it word for word in his text.⁹⁴² For Hegel, this now famous image was meant to show that philosophy does not proclaim how the world "ought" to be, but rather "that it is only when actuality has reached maturity that the ideal appears opposite the real and reconstructs this real world, which it has grasped in its substance, in the shape of an intellectual realm."⁹⁴³ Thus, as with the image of the rose in the cross above, Hegel claims that rather than being prescriptive, his philosophy is descriptive: that is, in strikingly *metaphysical* terms, it proclaims it is philosophy's task to know what *is*. Again in an unmistakable critical tone, Rosenzweig takes a clear position:

Our task will now then be to uncover to what extent Hegel really submits to this sentiment and purpose in his execution and to what extent that power of the will, which he does not wish to acknowledge as ruling his thinking and thinking in general, nevertheless still overwhelms him.⁹⁴⁴

The "power of the will" (*Macht des Willens*) which he claims is "overwhelming" Hegel, is both the "will" of the state that Rosenzweig has observed creeping into Hegel's thinking as a power over the individual, but also, and just as significantly for our observation, the power of Hegel's own will,⁹⁴⁵ his own individuality. In this critical introduction to the *Philosophy of Right*, where Rosenzweig, most clearly for the first time

⁹⁴² HS 358.

⁹⁴³ Hegel, *PR*. 23.

⁹⁴⁴ "Unsere Aufgabe aber wird nun zunächst sein, aufzudecken, wieweit Hegel in der Durchführung sich wirklich unter der Herrschaft dieser Stimmung und Absicht gehalten und wieweit etwa jene Macht des Willens, die er über seinem Denken und über dem Denken überhaupt nicht anerkennen mochte, ihn selber dennoch übermannt hat." HS 358.

⁹⁴⁵ HS 356.

in the book, is openly questioning Hegel's claims, we can observe Rosenzweig's method of subtly mixing his *biographical* argument with his *philosophical* analysis of Hegel as an historical figure. And again, it was especially the personality developed in the wake of the personal tragedy in Frankfurt that according to Rosenzweig still dominates Hegel's views.⁹⁴⁶ Is Rosenzweig preparing his readers for the tragic fall of Hegel, much like Hegel himself witnessed the fall of Napoleon? It is with this question in mind that one should approach Rosenzweig's sustained analysis of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*.

In a letter to his cousin Hans Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig calls the section "The Development of the Systematic" (*Das Werden der Systematik*) a "film" inside the larger narrative.⁹⁴⁷ This "film," a 'moving image' in contrast to the architectural language used until now and which frames and introduces Rosenzweig's analysis, shows to what extent Hegel's own "will," and not the objective "spirit" of history, is at work in the development of his system leading up to the *Philosophy of Right*. It would exceed the limits of this project to follow all the various categories and moments within Hegel's text that the "film" introduces. Accordingly, instead of following every historical and philosophical moment Rosenzweig articulates, I would instead like to isolate three categories, which I hope crystallize at least in part some of the major themes in both Hegel's thought and Rosenzweig's interpretation.

These categories are drawn from the section entitled "Metaphysics of the State."⁹⁴⁸ This section, where the question of the state as "a thought of philosophy" (*ein*

⁹⁴⁶ HS 358.

⁹⁴⁷ Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 16.6.14.

⁹⁴⁸ "Metaphysik des Staats." HS 438-456.

Gedanke der Philosophie)⁹⁴⁹ is finally taken up, is unique within *Hegel and the State*. For the first time Rosenzweig noticeably switches from the role of an *historian* with philosophical intentions, as was best displayed in "Stations of Life" and also the first half of the second book, into the character of the *philosopher* himself. Remembering Rosenzweig's famous letter to Meinecke here, where he makes the distinction between "student" and "philosopher,"⁹⁵⁰ this section on the metaphysics of the state can also be said to point beyond the text of *Hegel and the State* itself. Already in the first section, "The Essence of the State," Rosenzweig aims to understand what is at stake "without making such an immediate use of Hegelian language."⁹⁵¹ In what follows below, I would like to briefly look at the following themes, which summarize Hegel's picture of the state in the *Philosophy of Right* and, read with a critical eye, already foreshadow some of the elements that remained from *Hegel and the State* in Rosenzweig's thinking. The themes to be discussed, which appear intertwined and certainly compliment each other, are: the individual, history and religion.

The Individual: Or the "Essence of the State"

The concept of the "individual" provides the most common thread throughout the entirety of *Hegel and the State*. Already in the foreword Rosenzweig presented a group of individuals—Hegel's biographers Rosenkranz, Haym and Dilthey—to show how historical knowledge is dependent on the individual's perspective upon his present age.

⁹⁴⁹ HS 438.

⁹⁵⁰ See Chapter I.

⁹⁵¹ "ohne allzu unmittelbaren Anschluß an das Hegelsche Wort." HS 439.

This insight applies—autobiographically—to Rosenzweig as the "fourth biographer" in this line, a role he was well aware of. On a second level, as I showed in Chapter II, Rosenzweig followed the intricate development of the relation of the individual to the state from Hegel's youth onward and argued thereby for a gradual shift away from the rights of the individual towards the power of the state. Finally, Rosenzweig applies the concept of the "individual" to Hegel himself as a biographical subject. This is especially clear in the second volume of the book, where Rosenzweig presents Hegel's development in terms of the fate of a "world-historical" hero. To these historical and biographical usages of "individuality" Rosenzweig now adds the important distinction of *the state* as an individual itself.

Towards the end of the sub-section entitled the "Essence of the State", which appears in the section "Metaphysics of the State," Rosenzweig quite unexpectedly lays out the underlying thesis of his entire book in succinct terms: namely, "that which we have followed from the beginning of [Hegel's] thinking: the origin of the idea of the power-state through the mediation of the concept of fate from the spirit of a most taut individualism."⁹⁵² It is with this thesis in the backdrop that he offers his encapsulating assessment of *The Philosophy of Right*. This assessment in volume two follows from the groundwork Rosenzweig laid in volume one. As we already saw, the "power-state" emerged with the *Reichsschrift* within Hegel's development in combination with the concept of fate he gained in Frankfurt. We are familiar with Rosenzweig's summary: "The experience of the state as fate becomes the knowledge: the state is power."⁹⁵³ What

⁹⁵² "das, was wir von den Anfängen seines Denkens her verfolgten: der Ursprung der Machtstaatsidee durch Vermittlung des Schicksalsbegriff aus dem Geiste eines gespanntesten Individualismus." HS 442.

⁹⁵³ HS 139.

came out of this combination of personal fate and state-power was Hegel's new task: "to meld together the internal fullness of personality with the power-nature of the state."⁹⁵⁴ And what began simply as "the relation of the individual to the state" and made its way through the *Reichsschrift* and into the beginnings of Hegel's system in Jena, has finally merged as the "most taut individualism" into the completed thought of the *Philosophy of Right*. What is the nature of this "individualism" and what is the nature of Hegel's state?

The state as it appears in the *Philosophy of Right* must be understood as a *philosophy* of state, whose aim it was to help teach its readers to "grasp" (*begreifen*) the "ethical world" (*Sittlichkeit*),⁹⁵⁵ as discussed above. Its lasting contribution, for Rosenzweig at the beginning of the 20th century as well as for readers today at the beginning of the 21st century, is to help orient thinking individuals in the basic relation of man to the political world. In the section "Metaphysics of the State," whose title is all the more striking given the complete disinterest in Hegel's "metaphysics" as outlined in the *Encyclopedia*, Rosenzweig's guiding question is what happens when the state becomes "a thought of philosophy"?

"The peculiarity of the state," writes Rosenzweig, "is that it is indeed something ultimate for man, who in a certain sense cannot see beyond it, but that it is likewise 'individuality' and thus really nothing ultimate at all."⁹⁵⁶ This double-nature of the state, it's being both ultimate and universal while remaining individual and particular, is what Rosenzweig unfolds in relation and opposition to individual man in his critique of *The*

⁹⁵⁴ "innere Fülle der Persönlichkeit mit der Machtnatur des Staats zu verschmelzen." HS 167.

⁹⁵⁵ See Hegel, *PR*. 22.

⁹⁵⁶ "es ist die Eigentümlichkeit des Staats, daß er zwar dem Menschen gegenüber ein Letztes bedeutet, worüber dieser gewissermaßen nicht hinausgehen kann, daß er aber gleichwohl 'Individualität' und also doch wieder kein Letztes ist" HS 439.

Philosophy of Right. In general, the culmination of Hegel's political philosophy is a play of particular to whole. According to Rosenzweig's reading, this play, or dialectic, must result for Hegel in "something ultimate" (*ein Letztes*). That Hegel's political thinking aims at an "ultimate" underscores Rosenzweig's interpretation that we are dealing here with a *metaphysics* that assumes an "unconditional" end. This end in itself, the unconditional relation of man to the state, is mediated by a series of "conditional" relations. By following these relations, Rosenzweig argues that in the end the state is indeed *not* something ultimate and unconditional, but subject to the laws of individuality itself.

The main body of *The Philosophy of Right*, which Rosenzweig summarizes in his own words as much as possible in order to create critical distance, is split into three distinct parts: "Right," "Morality" and "Ethicality." In part one—"Right"—the individual is defined in terms of his will and his acknowledgement that there are other individuals surrounding him with wills of their own. The wills that make up this collection, aligned for Hegel with Roman civil law (*Privatrecht*), are conditioned by the other wills surrounding them and thereby together form a plurality, but not yet a community (*Gemeinschaft*). In order to become part of a community as opposed to a mere plurality, the individual will must have a sense of right and wrong, or *morality*. Accordingly, in part two, "Morality," in order to gain a moral law that is not arbitrarily based on the will of other people, the individual turns in on himself—the Kantian self-legislation of moral law as was already introduced in the *Phenomenology*. But now, rather than being surrounded by actually existing wills, the individual is set in relation to an *ideal*

community. Thus, morality is not an unconditional end in itself, but in need of an *actual* community existing outside of it: this is the realm of "Ethicality," part three.

This section sets up the relation between individual and society. Here the individual moves from family life into civil society and is finally taken up into the state. The individual's relation to the state, however, is at first mediated by a particular community (*Gemeinschaft*). The community an individual becomes part of is determined by the freedom to choose one's own occupation.⁹⁵⁷ Thus, here the *freedom* of individuality is combined with the *necessity* of belonging to a greater whole. For both the individual and the community, the other establishes an ultimate end: first, there could be no community without individuals, but likewise, in order for the individual to emerge from its self-enclosed legislation, he or she must necessarily become part of a community. Although this relation is final for the individual—"the individual no longer leaves it"⁹⁵⁸—it is not yet the ultimate relation.

The individual belongs to *society* as part of community. But society itself has "no relation to something like an epitome of humanity."⁹⁵⁹ It is merely the "gathering place for all communities."⁹⁶⁰ Thus, since the individual determines its place in society through the "arbitrary"⁹⁶¹ inclusion in an occupational community, rather than establishing a *necessary* and *unconditional* link between the individual and society, Hegel's concept of civil society is always based on a conditional relation. This conditional dialectic of part

⁹⁵⁷ Hegel, *PR*. § 206.

⁹⁵⁸ "aus dieser tritt nun der einzelne nicht mehr heraus." HS 440.

⁹⁵⁹ "hat daher auch keinerlei Beziehung etwas zu einem Inbegriff der Menschheit." HS 440.

⁹⁶⁰ "nur Sammelplatz für allerlei Gemeinschaften." HS 440.

⁹⁶¹ *PR* § 206; HS 441.

to whole, however, must come to an end for Hegel with the state. Society as a whole belongs within the sphere of the state. Without the state, there could be no society. Thus, by extension, the individual, as part of a community within society, necessarily belongs to the state as well. As Rosenzweig writes: "he is not allowed to separate between the 'chance' of his particular placement and the 'necessity' of belonging to a state."⁹⁶² (HS 441). This necessary relation of individual to state is the unconditional end Hegel's political thought aims towards.

But here Rosenzweig interjects in terms that foreshadow his "relational" thinking in *The Star*.⁹⁶³ "This unconditionality," he writes, "is the unconditionality of a relation."⁹⁶⁴ He continues: "Something truly unconditional has to be a single unity."⁹⁶⁵ That Hegel's political philosophy does not result in a "single unity" for Rosenzweig is based on the problem that both the state and man must *presuppose* the other. In order for the state to exist, he argues, philosophy must presuppose the real existence of man.⁹⁶⁶ However, it can only prove this existence *philosophically* if it again presupposes that man is part of the state, for otherwise the presupposition would remain groundless. The state, on the other hand, is the *result* of the thought-process and cannot be proved until the end: "the system can only be represented in one direction."⁹⁶⁷ Thus, the problem with these

⁹⁶² "er darf zwischen dem 'Zufall' seiner besonderen Stellung und der 'Notwendigkeit,' einem Staate überhaupt anzugehören, nicht scheiden." HS 441.

⁹⁶³ See here Jules Simon, *Rosenzweig's Relational Ethics*.

⁹⁶⁴ "diese Unbedingtheit ist die Unbedingtheit eines Verhältnisses." HS 441.

⁹⁶⁵ "Das wahrhafte Unbedingte muß ein Eines sein." HS 441.

⁹⁶⁶ HS 441.

⁹⁶⁷ "da ebendas System nur in einer Richtung dargestellt werden kann." HS 441.

presuppositions, which can only be noticed at the final stage of the book with the state, is that they never result in an "unconditional relation" as Rosenzweig claims is Hegel's goal, but merely a series of assumptions, which can never be proved. The ultimate result of Hegel's political thought is thus not the necessary relation of man to the state, but the necessity that the state itself is always stuck in a relation. Because Hegel's philosophy begins with the presupposition of a free individual will, it can never fully escape the "reality" of its task: namely, that it, too, is defined not by totality, as an unconditional relation would imply, but by *individuality*. Thus, the state is not an end in itself, but will always remain, as individuality, a "state among states" (*Staat unter Staaten*).⁹⁶⁸

As Hegel believed already in Jena with his understanding of a *power-state*, one of the predominant factors that make up a state is the ability of its citizens to defend themselves. This then presupposes that the totality of a state is defined in terms of its borders, indeed, its borders separating it from another state. With this central idea of Hegel's power-state in mind, it is not a far leap to the claim that the state is defined in terms of individuality as a "state among states." This emphasis on behalf of Rosenzweig not only undermines Hegel's claim to the necessity and unconditional nature of the state, but also shows one of the defining features of the essence of Hegel's state: as an "individual" it is, despite Hegel's insistence, "unconcerned about the wills of individuals."⁹⁶⁹ Rather, the true essence of the state cannot be separated from its fate: that it is and will always remain *historically* determined.

⁹⁶⁸ HS 442.

⁹⁶⁹ "ein um diesen Willen der Individuen unbekümmertes Individuum." HS 442.

History: Or the "Fate of the State"

We have already seen how in the first half of the book the concept of "history" became the determinate character for Hegel's picture of the state. It was during what Rosenzweig later calls Hegel's "romantic Epoch" (*romantische Epoche*),⁹⁷⁰ that is, his time in Frankfurt when he was closest to Hölderlin, that history rose to its prominent height in Hegel's thinking with the concept of "fate." Drawing on Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, Rosenzweig emphasized how Hegel's new conception of the state as part of the historical fate of the individual, and the resulting configuration of the state as "power," undermines the very freedom of the individual himself. The consequence of the coupling of history and the state led Rosenzweig to a conception of "fate" as "the whole of life as it confronted the individual, something unavoidable, which he cannot escape from."⁹⁷¹ In Hegel's "Napoleonic period," this same thought was expressed with Rosenzweig's exposition of the "right of the chorus," or history as the formative force of the present. Through his experience of the "tragedy" of Napoleon's fall, Hegel's conception of fate shifted from the individual to history itself. In now turning to the completed *Philosophy of Right*, this "whole of life," the "fate" of the individual as history itself, becomes the "actuality" of the state in the world as a "state among states." Here too, as in "practical life," the state is conceived as "individuality." But whereas the individual of practical life was confronted with "history" of which the state was a part, the fate of the state itself is

⁹⁷⁰ HS 386.

⁹⁷¹ HS 119.

bound to Hegel's conception of "world history."⁹⁷² This is also the title of the last section of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*.⁹⁷³

In engaging Hegel's conception of history as world history Rosenzweig once again takes up a single thought from Hegel's text in order to help illustrate its significance for the state: "world history is the world court."⁹⁷⁴ This line, taken from Schiller's poem "Resignation" (1786), is interpreted by Rosenzweig as a continuation and consequently "metaphysical" completion of the famous double-thought, or "motto," from Hegel's Preface. Here too, the question is one of a *relation*, namely, between "substantial reason and subjective actuality,"⁹⁷⁵ or more generally phrased, between "nature" (*Natur*) and "spirit" (*Geist*). In explicating Hegel's "double-thought" from the Preface, Rosenzweig, keeping in mind the image of the "owl of Minerva," concluded that this thought only leads one to "cognition" (*Erkennen*) of the world, but takes "the movement from living things."⁹⁷⁶ With Schiller's line this becomes all the more clear for Rosenzweig. "If world history is the world court" he writes, "then as a result the present is judged in that it becomes past."⁹⁷⁷ In becoming past the present ceases to be actual. Since for Hegel what is *rational* must necessarily be *actual* as well, when the present is judged and "becomes past," it thus "renders itself as abandoned by reason."⁹⁷⁸

⁹⁷² HS 444.

⁹⁷³ Hegel, *PR*. §341.

⁹⁷⁴ "die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht." HS 444.

⁹⁷⁵ "substanzieller Vernunft und subjektiver Wirklichkeit." HS 444.

⁹⁷⁶ "den lebendigen Dingen die Bewegung nehmen will." HS 444.

⁹⁷⁷ "Ist die Weltgeschichte das Weltgericht, so empfängt das Gegenwärtige sein Urteil dadurch, daß es Vergangenheit wird." HS 444.

⁹⁷⁸ "erweist es sich als von der Vernunft verlassen." HS 444.

How this process plays out whereby a people is first enveloped and then judged and abandoned by world history provides the "factor" (*Grösse*) that was explicitly missing from Hegel's "motto" in the foreword: "time" (*Zeit*).⁹⁷⁹ By inserting "time," and we are speaking here of *historical* time captured in a philosophy of history, as the relational link between "what is rational" and "what is actual," the central role of Hegel's philosophy of history is once again brought to the fore. As was explained above, actuality only became rational for Hegel after the appearance of Christianity and the figure of Christ. But this recognition itself was already imbedded in a philosophy of history or a way of looking at, or *judging*, the past. When Christianity entered the world, all that came before it then became "past," that is, was abandoned by reason and ceased to be actual. Thus, with the notion that history is the judge of the people and events of the world in mind, Rosenzweig can conclude that "only because world history is the world court [...] only therefore can what is actual be rational."⁹⁸⁰ Rosenzweig is hereby not only claiming the central importance of history for Hegel's thought. Since time "only goes in one direction and does not run backwards,"⁹⁸¹ through the emphasis on this concept Rosenzweig is bringing out the *particular* and *irreversible* appearance of a people within history as *fate*. We have already encountered Hegel's personal fate, which led him in part to the thought of the fate of the individual in history; now this individuality has been subsumed into the "individuality" of the state. And, as a "state among states" within the court of world history, this state is to be understood as a "willing" individual with a fate of its own. However, this fate is not merely the "reasonless necessity of a blind fate," like

⁹⁷⁹ HS 444.

⁹⁸⁰ "Nur weil die Weltgeschichte das Weltgericht ist [...] nur deshalb ist das Wirkliche vernünftig." HS 445.

⁹⁸¹ "da die Zeit nur in einer Richtung und nicht rückwärts läuft." HS 444.

that of a practical individual, but the "exposition and *actualization of the universal spirit*."⁹⁸²

In laying out the relation of the state to history in terms of fate as a process, Rosenzweig reminds his readers that "the actual being [of the state] as a willing 'individual' is the immediate appearance of the rational world order."⁹⁸³ While this "rational world order" remains "immediate" and thus recognizable to reason, the "appearance" of the peoples of the world in the configuration of a state changes with time. The state is thus merely "a step in the process" of the "development" or "becoming conscious" of the "universal spirit" (*allgemeiner Geist*).⁹⁸⁴ Echoing Herder's own "natural" language of history, Hegel sees the "blossoming" of a people in the moment where what is essential to world history proceeds from them and their "fall" when they "persevere" in this moment and world history moves on without them. Perhaps the best example for this is the central passage in Rosenzweig's treatment of Hegel's *Phenomenology*: the "blossoming" of freedom in the French Revolution and the "fall" of the free individual with the concluding "terror" of the Robespierre reign.

This process whereby reason as "universal spirit" first *actualizes* and then *abandons* a people, a process which can be said to guide the entirety of Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, also applies in the first place to the "destiny of the great man,"⁹⁸⁵ and for this there is no better example than Napoleon. In working out the role of

⁹⁸² "vernunftlose Notwendigkeit eines blinden Schicksals"; *Auslegung und Verwirklichung des allgemeinen Geists.* HS 445-46.

⁹⁸³ "sein wirkliches Dasein als wollendes 'Individuum' sei die unmittelbare Erscheinung der vernünftigen Weltordnung." HS 444.

⁹⁸⁴ See HS 446.

⁹⁸⁵ "Des großen Mannes Geschick." HS 446.

the state within world history, Hegel himself writes that "at the forefront of all actions, including world-historical actions, are *individuals* as the subjectivities by which the substantial is actualized."⁹⁸⁶ In terms of the state within world history, these individuals are the "visible external side" (*sichtbare Außenseite*).⁹⁸⁷ If the people is a world historical people, as the French certainly were with the rise of Napoleon, then the individuals at the "forefront of all actions" also follow the "necessities of world history,"⁹⁸⁸ similar to the ebb and flow of the world historical people and their states. Thus, the individuals himself, as a world historical "hero" (*Heros*),⁹⁸⁹ is also bound to what Rosenzweig earlier called the "tragic fate of history."⁹⁹⁰

When Rosenzweig deals with Hegel's conception of "the fate of the state," the close reader cannot ignore the prominent placement of the theme of "personality" within the discussion. This is most clear with Rosenzweig's interjection when discussing the fate of the state: "Nevertheless, for the third time the reciprocal penetration of 'subjectivity' and 'substantiality,' which rules over the entire doctrine of 'objective spirit,' consolidates itself into human personality."⁹⁹¹ Thus, Rosenzweig emphasizes that even

⁹⁸⁶ Hegel, *PR*, 375. Rosenzweig notes here that this emphasis on the individual in history is also the secret of Hegel's conception of the "cunning of history" (*List der Vernunft*). See *HS* 445.

⁹⁸⁷ *HS* 445.

⁹⁸⁸ "*den Notwendigkeiten der Weltgeschichte*." *HS* 446.

⁹⁸⁹ *HS* 446.

⁹⁹⁰ *HS* 298.

⁹⁹¹ "*Immerhin, zum dritten Mal verdichtet sich die wechselseitige Durchdringung von 'Subjektivität' und 'Substantialität,' welche die ganze Lehre von 'objektiven Geist' beherrscht, zur menschlichen Persönlichkeit*." On the three times: first the "bourgeois," then the "ruler" (*Fürst*) and now the "hero." *HS* 446.

from the heights of world history and the fate of the state, we are again brought down into the world of the "individual" and "personality".

To summarize: for Hegel, the fate of the state is inevitably bound to the fate of history. This history, however, is controlled by the actions of individuals. And to repeat Hegel's phrase: "At the forefront of all actions, including world-historical actions, are *individuals* as the subjectivities by which the substantial is actualized."⁹⁹² This claim by Hegel is made within the context of "World History" towards the very end of the *Philosophy of Right*. But if we have again ended up with the fate of the individual beginning with the fate of the state, we must momentarily step away from Hegel and world history and closer to Rosenzweig's own philosophy of history. For readers of the *Star*, it is already evident within the first few pages that this strikingly personal book, compared to *Hegel and the State*, begins with an account of history controlled by the fates of individuals. Whereas for Hegel individuality is ultimately in service of the state, for Rosenzweig the state has receded into the background and the *philosophers* and their work take center stage. This brief detour is necessary to remind readers that *Hegel and the State*, as much as it follows the political history leading up to the founding of the German nation state, is a book about an individual philosopher. Thus, woven into Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel's political philosophy, and this is most apparent when contrasted with the fate of the state within history, is always the fate of the particular individual George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Implicit in Rosenzweig's argument is that an essential part of this fate is Hegel's thinking on the state and relation to the political world around him. But another, indeed substantial part of Hegel's fate,

⁹⁹² Hegel, *PR*. §348.

equally present in Rosenzweig's interpretation, and yet always falling into the shadows of his analysis of state power, is Hegel's relation to religion.

Religion: Or "Beyond the State"

As we already saw in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, and just above with the discussion the "fate of the state," Hegel's changing relation to religion helps to determine the exact character of his state. Of course, given Rosenzweig's own philosophical legacy as a philosopher of religion, this aspect cannot be overlooked in any reading of *Hegel and the State*. But even so, Hegel's relation to religion is so central to his political philosophy and philosophy of history that it can be followed without break from his earliest days in Tübingen. Peter Gordon is correct to point out that Rosenzweig, given his stature as a Jewish philosopher later in life, rather curiously omits any real discussion of Judaism in his interpretation of Hegel.⁹⁹³ But it would be a mistake to read *Hegel and the State* as if there were no relevant philosophy of religion to be found here. On the contrary, the emphasis upon Hegel's religious thought becomes ever stronger as the book proceeds, to the point that at times, one may believe to be reading the Rosenzweig of *The Star*.

In his book *Hegel*, Frederick Beiser begins his introduction with a reference to Rosenzweig, whom he calls "one of the greatest Hegel scholars."⁹⁹⁴ He states that

⁹⁹³ See Gordon, "Hegel's Fate." In *Rosenzweig and Heidegger* (2003).

⁹⁹⁴ Beiser, 1.

Rosenzweig "declared he lived in an age *post Hegel mortum*."⁹⁹⁵ That is, in an age which had outgrown the concerns of Hegel himself. While it is a fitting introduction to his own concerns, namely the question as to why read Hegel today at all,⁹⁹⁶ in our context an equally provocative and famous quote from Rosenzweig is perhaps better suited. In a letter to his cousin Hans Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig writes: "The fight against history in the 19th-century sense [...] is for us the fight for religion in the sense of the 20th."⁹⁹⁷ For Rosenzweig, his own age cannot be considered *post Hegel mortum* in the sense that it excludes Hegel himself—and by extension the work Rosenzweig put into *Hegel and the State*—it is rather the philosophical *inversion* of Hegel's century of historical thought into a century of religious thought. Within the 20th century Rosenzweig became known as a philosopher of religion at the expense of his historical thought.⁹⁹⁸ By revisiting Rosenzweig's interpretation of Hegel's religious thought—albeit, as it is addressed within his political thinking—one can witness how the beginnings of Rosenzweig's own religious thought are rooted in his historical understanding and interpretation of Hegel. This is nowhere more evident than in the passages leading up to and encompassing the section "Beyond the State" (*Jenseits des Staats*).

We have already witnessed the important role religion played for Hegel in his early development. What first began as an infatuation with the Christian response to Greek culture and how this was manifested into historical and political communities, then

⁹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁶ Beiser responds that "despite his damnable obscurity, [Hegel] is still an interesting interlocuter to contemporary philosophical discussion." Beiser, 3.

⁹⁹⁷ Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 9.26.1910.

⁹⁹⁸ This is mostly due to the interpretation of his thought as a *Jewish* philosophy of history, which understands the Jewish people as existing beyond the confines of time, and thus outside of history, leading to the belief that Rosenzweig saw little value in world history at all.

culminated in the *Phenomenology* with religion, "as consciousness of *absolute Being* as such,"⁹⁹⁹ which Hegel places above the political state. This view of religion as a realm beyond the state was carried over into Hegel's own biography during his Napoleonic period, when "spirit," which religion alone could access, maintained its place above the state. It was not until Hegel's "Homecoming" to the state that religion regained its decisive place as the historical mediator of the political present. The "Preface" to the *Philosophy of Right*, as I have shown above, leaves no doubt as to the central role of religion in Hegel's political thought.

The development of Hegel's thought culminates with religion "lifted out of the sphere of history."¹⁰⁰⁰ As was certainly still the case with the *Phenomenology*—"[u]ntil 1806 world history was itself the absolute"¹⁰⁰¹—Hegel's conception of history around the time of the *Philosophy of Right* no longer placed history as the highest order. Rather, history—the "development towards 'freedom'"¹⁰⁰²—now served Hegel as a mediator between "completed ethical organization" (*vollendeten sittlichen Organisation*) and "life within 'absolute spirit'" (*des Lebens im 'absoluten Geist'*).¹⁰⁰³ This lowering of history allowed Hegel to unfold a conception of religion that was independent from the state. However, Hegel's state is "not an external and soulless mechanism"¹⁰⁰⁴ and at the very least through the concept of "political sentiment" (*politischen Gesinnung*) which is

⁹⁹⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology*. 410.

¹⁰⁰⁰ "über die Sphäre des Historischen hinausgehoben." HS 447.

¹⁰⁰¹ "Bis 1806 war die Weltgeschichte das Absolute selber gewesen." HS 448.

¹⁰⁰² "Entwicklung zur 'Freiheit'." HS 448.

¹⁰⁰³ HS 448.

¹⁰⁰⁴ "Der Staat ist ja eben kein äußere und seelenloser Mechanismus." HS 453.

nothing less than "patriotism" (*Patriotismus*),¹⁰⁰⁵ the state and religion meet on similar ground. But the conflict between the two arises when religion—"rightfully so" (*mit Recht*) adds Rosenzweig—claims to contain "the absolute truth" (*die absolute Wahrheit*).¹⁰⁰⁶ But how can religion make this claim to truth when "it is only through being a member of the state that the individual himself has objectivity, truth, and ethical life"?¹⁰⁰⁷ In other words, how does Hegel reconcile religion and the state? Hegel's preliminary answer is that the state and religion are different manifestations "of the same spiritual content" (*des gleichen geistigen Inhalts*).¹⁰⁰⁸ As Rosenzweig points out, for Hegel, the state "also has a doctrine."¹⁰⁰⁹ However, ultimately, although Hegel may seem to reconcile the state with religion, Rosenzweig argues that the doctrine of the state wins out over the doctrine of the church.

Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel's philosophy of religion is again bound up with his critique of Hegel from the first pages of the *Star* as a thinker of totality. As we already saw, Rosenzweig characterized the most pivotal shift in Hegel's Frankfurt period with the following words: "The idea of the unity of all life gained force."¹⁰¹⁰ Although we encounter Hegel now years later, what was begun in Frankfurt has again reached another peak. Without explicitly stating it, Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel's presupposition of the "unity of all life" (*Einheit alles Lebens*) looms in the background of his presentation of

¹⁰⁰⁵ HS 452.

¹⁰⁰⁶ HS 453.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Hegel, *PR*. §258.

¹⁰⁰⁸ HS 453.

¹⁰⁰⁹ "auch der Staat hat eine Lehre." HS 453.

¹⁰¹⁰ "Die Idee der Einheit alles Lebens gewann Gewalt." HS 97.

the reconciliation of religion and the state. The crucial point in Hegel's later thought is the Protestant break from the Catholic Church. In order for Hegel's state to retain the "universality" necessary for its authority over the individual, Hegel must accept and embrace the split in the church that resulted in Protestantism: "only so, over the *particular* churches, does the state maintain the *universality* of thought."¹⁰¹¹ This understanding of religion as broken into different churches allows the state and religion to coexist: on the one hand, the individual can still live freely in an "ultimate empire" (*letztes Reich*)¹⁰¹²—that is, a realm of "loneliness," which Rosenzweig very tellingly designates as the "being-alone of the soul" (*Beisichselbersein der Seele*).¹⁰¹³ But in order that this realm does not rob the state of its authority, Hegel removes it from the clutches of the one Catholic Church—which by its very nature still made claims to totality—and placed into the religious world of Protestantism—the world of the one church broken into many.

With this move towards the reconciliation of the state with Protestant Christianity, writes Rosenzweig, "[a]ll the driving forces of the Hegelian thought on the state"¹⁰¹⁴ come together: the self-sufficiency of the state; the unconditional relation of the individual to the state; and the spirit of world history, which, because it remains unseen, does not destroy the self-contained nature of the state.¹⁰¹⁵ Religion is allowed to exist, indeed it *must* exist in order for the individual to maintain its particular freedom and not

¹⁰¹¹ "nur so, über den besonderen Kirchen, hat der Staat die Allgemeinheit des Gedankens." HS 455.

¹⁰¹² HS 447.

¹⁰¹³ HS 447.

¹⁰¹⁴ "Alle Triebkräfte des Hegelschen Staatsgedankens." HS 455-56.

¹⁰¹⁵ See HS 456.

be completely subsumed into the state, but one could say that this religion has become a *personal* or "individualistic" (*individualistisch*)¹⁰¹⁶ religion, which is ultimately powerless against the state. If one pauses for a moment to consider the central position religion would soon take in Rosenzweig's own thought, one can certainly agree with Wayne Cristaudo when he writes that for Rosenzweig "Hegel's Protestantism was but a thin veneer for philosophy itself usurping the role of religion."¹⁰¹⁷ This perspective gains even more importance when it is noted that Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel's philosophy on religious grounds, however subtle, comes at the very end of his analysis of the *Philosophy of Right*. Here the relation of the individual to the state, which we have followed from the beginning, reaches its culmination. And once again, as we reach such a significant mark in the book, Rosenzweig draws his readers back to Hegel's days in Frankfurt.

"The cornerstones of the entire, Hegelian System," writes Rosenzweig in the concluding words of the "Metaphysics of the State," "the absoluteness of the individual and the absoluteness of the whole, mutually support each other."¹⁰¹⁸ Beginning in Hegel's Frankfurt period, Rosenzweig argued that the individual no longer stood above or even equal to the whole beyond him, but that at that time Hegel began to understand the state as a part of the individual's fate. This elevation of the state above the individual soon resulted in the state itself taking on traits of individuality, eventually defining itself in terms of *power*. We saw how through the tragic law of history, which Hegel witnessed

¹⁰¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹⁷ Cristaudo, 304.

¹⁰¹⁸ "Die Eckpfeiler des ganzen, Hegelschen Systems, die Absolutheit des einzelnen und die Absolutheit des Ganzen, stützen sich gegenseitig." HS 456.

first hand with the fall of Napoleon, world history itself became the commanding force of the state, removing the individual even more from the freedom he once enjoyed in Hegel's earlier thought. Now in Berlin, Hegel believes himself to have reconciled the freedom of the individual through a conception of religion, which allows for religion to exist beyond the state. However, according to Rosenzweig's increasingly critical view, "the will towards the religious salvation of the individual soul beset with the world and fate demands the concept of the self-legislating and self-ethicizing state."¹⁰¹⁹ Thus, in Hegel's thinking the state replaces religion as the redemptive force in the world. We saw the beginnings of this idea—which ultimately would transform into Hegel's notion of a "power-state"—in Frankfurt. Thus, Rosenzweig can write that "what once happened in Frankfurt [...] what was once blood and life, has now become completed work."¹⁰²⁰ For our purposes here we could say that with this final discussion of the role of religion in Hegel's political thought, the state is finally victorious over the individual. It is with this ultimately critical view of Hegel's conception of individuality in mind that Rosenzweig writes these concluding words:

The process of a becoming closes into the ring of being. In the beginning stood the growing pains of a human soul, at the end stands Hegel's philosophy of the state.¹⁰²¹

¹⁰¹⁹ "*der Wille zur religiösen Rettung der von der Welt und Schicksal bedrängten Einzelseele fordert den Begriff des selbstherrlich-selbstsittlichen Staats.*" HS 456.

¹⁰²⁰ "[w]as einst in Frankfurt geschah [...] das ist, einst Blut und Leben, nun gewirktes Werk geworden." HS 456.

¹⁰²¹ "*Der Prozeß eines Werdens schließt sich zum Ring des Seins. Am Anfang standen die Entwicklungswehen einer Menschenseele, am Ende steht Hegel's Staatsphilosophie.*" HS 456.

These final words of the section "Metaphysics of the State" conclude the broad critique of the relation of the individual to the state begun in Frankfurt. They also show the trajectory of Rosenzweig's own biographical interpretation of Hegel: from the "growing pains" of Hegel's youth, which put him side-by-side with Hölderlin and which more or less showed him to be a passionate protector of individuality, we end with Hegel the systematizer, whose own personality is replaced by his system in thought. We can further observe in these words the kernel of Rosenzweig's critique of German Idealism for ultimately raising philosophy above the life of the individual. In the context of Hegel's development, Rosenzweig implies here that from the struggles of a human soul we are left nothing but a "work." Is this all an individual can hope for? Are we nothing more than the work we put into the world? And can this work ever escape the "tragic law of history"?

It is with these unasked but certainly implied questions that Rosenzweig turns from Hegel's biography as a completed work to his final years and the beginnings of his philosophical legacy. This break in the narrative is located within the "Prussia" section, but is curiously presented without its own title.¹⁰²² However, the shift is clear. Indeed, of all the passages in the book, this one most clearly lets Rosenzweig's own voice break through. From the powers of history and their tragic law, we now move towards the call so familiar to readers of Rosenzweig: "Into life."

¹⁰²² See *HS* 456.

CHAPTER X
PHILOSOPHICAL INTERLUDE:
"INTO LIFE"

"Into life" (*Ins Leben*)—these are the now famous last words of *The Star of Redemption*. In an early review of the book, Hans Ehrenberg writes that "[t]he only thing I regret about the book [...] is the unnecessary last word with which the author, who surely does not need to speak in this way, concludes, paying tribute to our times by suddenly joining in the call: 'from philosophy to life'."¹⁰²³ The "unnecessary" ending Ehrenberg refers to, is a reference to the philosophy of life (*Lebensphilosophie*) movement that was so prevalent in Europe in the early 20th century. We have already touched upon this movement in relation to Dilthey, for whom "lived experience" was the necessary beginning to all philosophical and historical reflection. Rosenzweig certainly falls into this broad movement, as do many other thinkers of the time. This is apparent in *Hegel and the State*, as was pointed out in Chapter II, from the frequent use of a "stream of life" to capture biographical meaning. But, as Ehrenberg's comment implies in the context of the *Star*, limiting Rosenzweig to the classification as a philosopher of life undermines much of his originality. For, as Ehrenberg goes on to conclude in his review, it is not the reflection upon life as a philosophical topic that differentiates Rosenzweig from his generation, but that he is one of the few chosen ones, who is "granted to gaze

¹⁰²³ Ehrenberg, Hans. Review from *Die Frankfurter Zeitung*, 29 December, 1921. Quoted in: *Franz Rosenzweig's "The New Thinking"*. Ed. Udoff and Galli, Syracuse University Presse, New York: 1999. 119.

upon the blossom [of life] in the moment of its fullest splendor."¹⁰²⁴ He continues to claim that "[n]ew epochs and new series of works can take their point of departure only from such individuals."¹⁰²⁵

If *The Star of Redemption* is understood as the beginning of a "new epoch," the same cannot be said of *Hegel and the State*. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of the book is its entanglement in its age and if anything, its fateful appearance at the *end* of an epoch. Nevertheless, both works are indebted to the philosophy of life of the age. Despite Ehrenberg's misgivings that Rosenzweig openly linked *The Star of Redemption* to one of the popular movements of the day, the command to go from the confines of a book "Into life" has imbued Rosenzweig's legacy with a wide range of practical applications—ranging from psychoanalysis¹⁰²⁶ to the interfaith discourse.¹⁰²⁷ However, in contrast to the *Star*, the philosophy of life on display within *Hegel and the State* must be limited to what Otto Bollnow calls "historical philosophy of life" (*geschichtliche Lebensphilosophie*).¹⁰²⁸ This division of the philosophy of life championed by Dilthey acts under the principle that "man only knows himself within history" (*daß sich der Mensch nur in der Geschichte erkennt*)¹⁰²⁹ and is accordingly the assumption by which *Hegel and the State* proceeds.

¹⁰²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰²⁵ Ehrenberg (1921), 120.

¹⁰²⁶ See Eric Santner, *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

¹⁰²⁷ See here the recently published book by Wayne Cristaudo, *Religion, Redemption, and Revolution*.

¹⁰²⁸ See Otto Bollnow, *Die Lebensphilosophie*.

¹⁰²⁹ Bollnow, 41.

The most obvious manifestation of "historical philosophy of life" within *Hegel and the State* is its biographical form. In line with this form of inquiry, which follows the "life" of an individual along the trajectory of birth to death, Rosenzweig's book would seem to deal with the "life" of Hegel. However, underlying this trajectory is another notion of "life," which Rosenzweig implements without elaborating on conceptually. This is not the personal or even *autobiographical* notion of life found within *The Star*—the call to move away from the book itself "Into life"—but life understood as "historical life." Chapter I has already put forth the terms by which Rosenzweig's Hegel should be understood as an "historical Hegel." Within the body of *Hegel and the State*, the notion of "historical life" is synonymous with the "stream of history," into which and out of which the personal lives of individuals flow. This is markedly different from the notion of "life" in *The Star*, where "life" is something that falls outside of historical progress and comes to its highest realization in "God's truth."¹⁰³⁰ In *The Star*, the words "to walk humbly with thy God" are "written over the gate [...] which leads out of the mysterious-miraculous light of the divine sanctuary in which no man can remain alive."¹⁰³¹ Whereas "to live" in *The Star* means to enter into "eternity" of the present moment, the notion of "life" in *Hegel and the State* is still bound to the stream of history and time.

This is nowhere more apparent than in the break leading from Hegel's "Metaphysics of the State" to what I entitle below the beginnings of "Hegel's Historical Life." Here, shortly after Rosenzweig has closed another circle leading from and returning to Frankfurt, he writes the following words, which leave no doubt that the

¹⁰³⁰ *Star* 423.

¹⁰³¹ *Star* 424.

authors of *The Star of Redemption* and *Hegel and the State* are writing in the same spirit, however contrasted the perspectives remain:

Being falls into the history from which it emerged, and it dissolves it again into becoming. As a whole, Hegel's Natural Right only worked in school, not in life. Life first had to spring the unity of thought in order to newly reassemble the scattered pieces.¹⁰³²

These lines, which show such similarity to the primacy of "life" in *The Star*, certainly seem to have been written during the second revision of the book in 1918 and not earlier.¹⁰³³ If we juxtapose the last line quoted above with a central idea from Part One of *The Star*, leaving the quotes in the original German, the similarity is striking:

Hegel and the State:

*"Das Leben mußte erst die Einheit des Gedankens sprengen, um die versprengten Stücke neu einzubauen."*¹⁰³⁴

The Star of Redemption:

*"Wir haben das All zerschlagen, jedes Stück ist nun ein All für sich [...] das Zusammenwachsen des Stückwerks zum vollkommenen des neuen All, wird erst später kommen."*¹⁰³⁵

¹⁰³² "Das Sein fällt in die Geschichte, aus der es entstanden, und die löst es wieder auf in Werden. Hegels Naturrecht hat als Ganzes nur in die Schule, nicht ins Leben gewirkt. Das Leben mußte erst die Einheit des Gedankens sprengen, um die versprengten Stücke neu einzubauen." HS 456.

¹⁰³³ See here the *Gritli Briefe*.

¹⁰³⁴ "Life first had to spring the unity of thought in order to newly reassemble the scattered pieces." HS 456.

¹⁰³⁵ "We have destroyed the All, every piece is now an All for itself [...] the growing-together of the pieces into the completedness of the new All will first come later." *Stern der Erlösung* 28.

It is quite obvious from this juxtaposition that in both books, Rosenzweig is critical of a simple unity of knowledge. The concept of the "All" that is "zerschlagen" in *The Star* is the philosophical result of Hegel's "unity of thought" in *Hegel and the State*. In *Hegel and the State*, however, Rosenzweig is still "under the spell of Meinecke" and thus under the spell of historical power. In this early work "life" is still equated with history and it is history that has the power to both destroy and reassemble Hegel's unity of thought. Thus, whereas we can speak of "life" in *The Star* when we come face to face with "God's truth," in *Hegel and the State* we must limit ourselves to life as it appears within the stream of history. It is finally with this break in his narrative, which so reminds us of what is at stake in *The Star* but could be easily missed in *Hegel and the State*, that Rosenzweig moves from the "powers of history" as they influenced Hegel's thought as a world-historical hero, to the beginnings of Hegel's own legacy and his fate as expressed in the language of "historical life."

CHAPTER XI

HEGEL'S HISTORICAL LIFE

Introductory Remarks

When Rosenzweig first began to conceptualize his dissertation project, he intended to engage with German cultural history, but in a different manner than the finished product shows. Rosenzweig's earliest dissertation plans are recorded in a letter to his cousin Hans Ehrenberg from 1909. There he remarks that he is interested in the "prehistory" of German "imperialism," leading from the beginning of the 19th century up until the founding of the new empire in 1871. He expresses his research plans to Hans Ehrenberg as follows:

Ich werde im Winter 1870 anfangen und mich so allmählich rückwärts fressen, also zuerst Wagner (der mir deshalb so interessant ist, weil hier der Zusammenhang der modernen Germanizisten mit dem Vormärz durch eine Persönlichkeit hergestellt wird; dann die Partei der "Preußischen Jahrbücher," die rückwärts auf die Partei der "Deutschen Zeitung" hinweisen. Und so allmählich—mit der nötigen Oberflächlichkeit—rückwärts. Du kannst dir denken, wie schön ich das 19. scl. dabei kennen lernen werden.¹⁰³⁶

In the finished product that lays before us, the period leading from the *Vormärz*—a designation for the period of German history generally spanning from Napoleon's fall in

¹⁰³⁶ Rosenzweig, *Briefe* 6.8.1909.

1815 until the "revolution" in 1848—up until the founding of the empire in 1871 takes up only a small portion at the end of the book. Indeed, striking in our connection is Rosenzweig's open desire in this letter to link the epochs of German history by means of a "personality." In the same letter, Rosenzweig writes that all ways lead first through Wagner, but then eventually to Hegel. It would be this second "personality," to the complete exclusion of the first, that would dominate Rosenzweig's dissertation. And rather than showing the "prehistory" of German Imperialism, *Hegel and the State* functions more along the lines of a philosophical biography, leaving Hegel's influence upon his age mostly for the two concluding chapters. This shift from a "superficial" and sweeping analysis of the German 19th century to the more narrow approach of philosophical biography, betray Rosenzweig's desire to work first within the conceptual frame of "individuality" and only then expand his thinking into world-historical terms. And although Rosenzweig will pay tribute to his original dissertation conception in the concluding chapter of *Hegel and the State*, as I will show below, it is again an "individual" who acts as the placeholder of history and also the figure who for Rosenzweig best exemplifies the beginning of Hegel's legacy: none other than the infamous Karl Marx himself.

Marx: The Secular Prophet

The relationship between Rosenzweig and Marx is largely unexplored¹⁰³⁷ because Rosenzweig himself hardly mentions him in his writings. However, one glance towards

¹⁰³⁷ For an exception see, Cristaudo, *Religion, Redemption, and Revolution*. Chapter 13: "Beyond the Prophets of Modernity: Rosenstock-Huussy and Rosenzweig on Nietzsche and Marx."

Germany at the beginning of the 20th century shows an age where "Marx" and "Marxism" seemed to be daily words in the political world—for good or for bad. But Rosenzweig himself, unlike the thinkers of the Frankfurt school for example,¹⁰³⁸ would not give in to the "materialist" leanings of his age. For him, as he expressed it quite directly in *Hegel and the State*, Marx would remain the "fanatical herald of the human future."¹⁰³⁹

With the appearance of Marx within the pages of *Hegel and the State*, we are once again reminded of one of Rosenzweig's unspoken methodical principles: the inclusion of an individual personality to help explain the progress of history. Although Marx's appearance in the book is rather brief, he stands as the last personality discussed in the section "Prussia," and in this manner is given a privileged position within the formal make-up of the book. In terms of content, there are two aspects by way of which Rosenzweig contrasts Hegel and Marx: one political and one religious.

Marx's contribution to Hegel's political thought leads us back to the discussion of the "estates" (*Stände*). Rosenzweig credits Marx with discovering and championing an estate Hegel had missed: the "fourth estate" (*Vierte Stand*) or the class of the "proletariat."¹⁰⁴⁰ So important was this class for Marx, that he no longer believed the state to be the place of "human destiny" (*Geschick der Menschheit*),¹⁰⁴¹ but the battleground of this class alone. This led to a major shift in his appropriation of Hegel's

¹⁰³⁸ See Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1973.

¹⁰³⁹ "fanatische Verkünder menschheitlicher Zukunft." HS 470.

¹⁰⁴⁰ HS 468.

¹⁰⁴¹ HS 468.

thought: "At the point that the state held for Hegel, Marx places society."¹⁰⁴² This shift from "state" to "society," which then allowed Marx alone to observe "the face of the proletariat climbing up from the darkness,"¹⁰⁴³ placed upon the shoulders of "society" what Hegel had seen for the "state": "it, society, now appeared as the carrier of the world-historical course towards the consciousness of freedom."¹⁰⁴⁴ With "freedom" now to be found in "society" and not the state—to recall, for Hegel, society remains a moment lodged within the unfolding whole of the state—the individual was no longer bound to the limits of his relation to the state alone, but could find freedom anywhere there was a society—and this meant anywhere in the world.¹⁰⁴⁵ Rosenzweig emphasizes that with the recognition of the proletarian "fourth estate" and the new reign of "society" above the state, Marx really had in mind an "actual world-spanning community" (*eine wirklich weltumspannende Gemeinschaft*).¹⁰⁴⁶ With his idea of a "world-spanning community," wherein the individual was to find "the highest ethicality" (*höchste Sittlichkeit*), there was thus no need for the ethicality of any other "earthly community" (*irdischen Gemeinschaft*), including the church.¹⁰⁴⁷ And here, and in only a few brief lines, we move from Rosenzweig's *political* to his *religious* critique of Marx.

¹⁰⁴² "An die Stelle, die bei Hegel der Staat einnahm, tritt bei Marx die Gesellschaft." HS 469.

¹⁰⁴³ "das Gesicht von dem aus Dunkel aufsteigenden Proletariat." HS 469.

¹⁰⁴⁴ "sie, die Gesellschaft, erschien nun als Trägerin des weltgeschichtlichen Ganges zum Bewußtsein der Freiheit." HS 469.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Cristaudo comments that Rosenzweig is critical of the notion of society here, because Marx "failed to grasp the power and meaning of the nation." (Cristaudo, 374).

¹⁰⁴⁶ HS 470.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

For Marx, the church did not have to be denied, "its superficiality was apparent (*ihre Überflüssigkeit lag zutage*).¹⁰⁴⁸ Nothing on earth could stand above "society" and its claim to the freedom of the individual. If "society" was the future gathering-place of "human destiny," then there was no need in the world for the church:

But of course, at the point where Marx left the matter, with the cosmopolitan society, now, according to the profound comparison of the great Christian poet of the North, the imitated picture, whose empire is only of this world, could be brought home in the church to the true one, whose empire is not of this world.¹⁰⁴⁹

The "great Christian poet of the North" that Rosenzweig speaks of above is Selma Lagerlöf, the same writer whom Rosenzweig and his cousins were discussing on that fateful evening in 1913.¹⁰⁵⁰ Rosenzweig is making a reference here to her book *Die Wunder des Antichrist* (The Miracles of Anti-Christ), where she deals with the relation of socialism to Christianity in the contrasting language of day and night, worldly and otherworldly.¹⁰⁵¹ The argument against Marx that Rosenzweig so subtly inserts, is that by placing "society" and the needs of the proletariat above all other earthly things, Marx, as Wayne Cristaudo correctly points out, "left matters as a mere imitation of the

¹⁰⁴⁸ HS 471.

¹⁰⁴⁹ "Aber freilich, an der Stelle, wo Marx die Sache ließ, bei der weltbürgerlichen Gesellschaft, könnte nun, nach dem tiefsinnigen Gleichnis der großen christlichen Dichterin des Nordens, das nachgeamte Bild, dessen Reich nur von dieser Welt ist, in die Kirche zu dem echten, des Reich nicht von dieser Welt ist, heimgebracht werden." HS 471.

¹⁰⁵⁰ This is the famous "Abendgespräch" discussed in Chapter I, where Rosenzweig was convinced by his cousins, albeit only temporarily, to convert to Christianity.

¹⁰⁵¹ Selma Lagerlöf. *Die Wunder des Antichrist*. München: Nymphenburger, 1985 (1897).

Church."¹⁰⁵² By attempting to undermine the church by denying it a place in history, Marx's "cosmopolitan society" unwittingly proved Lagerlöf's point, namely that precisely because the church is "not from this world" does it maintain its role as the true place of human freedom. This argument underscores Rosenzweig's view that Marx's ideal of society is linked more closely with an otherworldly realm and therefore surrenders to the idealist traps he wanted to avoid and not the material world he had hoped to redeem.

The significant, yet brief appearance of Marx in *Hegel and the State*—and this is the most pronounced treatment of Marx anywhere in Rosenzweig's works¹⁰⁵³—is significant because it shows an important instance of Rosenzweig's philosophy of history—following Dilthey and Meinecke by interpreting the past through the lives of historical individuals—but also shows the continued undercurrent of *religion* in the book. In terms of Hegel's effect upon Rosenzweig's own age,¹⁰⁵⁴ Marx represents the figure in whose thinking the unity of Hegel's system was preserved, but not in the form Hegel had given it, rather one chosen by Hegel's "historical life" instead. Thus, despite his critique, Rosenzweig acknowledges that Marx was the first to really carry out the "the great thought of immanence" (*großen Gedanken der Immanenz*),¹⁰⁵⁵ a phrase Rosenzweig attributes to Treitschke, but which could equally have come from his cousin Hans

¹⁰⁵² Cristaudo, 374.

¹⁰⁵³ See here Cristaudo, 373.

¹⁰⁵⁴ As Ritter notes: "In more recent literature, it is true that the significance of civil society for Hegel's philosophy first begins to get fully disclosed in that literature's consideration of Marx in his relation to Hegel [...] In this connection, the treatment of the relationship of "lordship and bondage" in the *Phenomenology* [...] has attained nothing short of classic meaning for Marx and the Marxist school." Ritter's comment relates to my section on Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, where I argue that it is primarily through the *Phenomenology* that Hegel has been passed on to the 20th century.

¹⁰⁵⁵ HS 471.

Ehrenberg, who classifies Hegel's thought as "*absolute[] Immanenzphilosophie*."¹⁰⁵⁶ Additionally, and more important for our argument here, Rosenzweig writes that Marx was the only one in the Hegelian School to keep the most "original" aspect of Hegel's political thought: "the power of Hegelian quietism, of belief in fate,"¹⁰⁵⁷ which Rosenzweig had followed from Frankfurt to Berlin. Hegel's result, the "fate of the state," becomes the "fate" of "society" for Marx and leads him, "and only him," in terms undeniably Christian, to see "where and how and in what form the end of days gathered in the sky of history."¹⁰⁵⁸ Running parallel to this portrait that Rosenzweig paints of the secular prophet and his visions for the future of mankind, is the "fate" of Hegel's life as it is taken up into historical knowledge: the end of the biographical life and the beginning of Hegel's "historical life" stand in tension as two sides of the same face.

A Revolutionary Epoch

Although the beginnings of Hegel's legacy are most pronounced in the figure of Marx, before Rosenzweig lets the force of "historical life" completely take hold of the biographical life, he lingers again on Hegel as an historical individual, showing that his task as a *biographer* is not yet complete: "The one spirit of the thinker still held the empire together, he was still the master of the whole and ruled over it in proud

¹⁰⁵⁶ Ehrenberg, *Parteiung*. 55.

¹⁰⁵⁷ "*die Kraft des Hegelschen 'Quietismus,' des Schicksalsglaubens.*" HS 470.

¹⁰⁵⁸ "*wo und wie und in welcher Gestalt die Endzeit am Himmel der Geschichte heraufzog*" HS 470.

repose."¹⁰⁵⁹ It is once again in terms of a unified personality, an individuality—"the one spirit of the thinker"—that Rosenzweig's narrative proceeds. The quote above again reveals the *tragic anticipation* found so often throughout the book. As we reach the end of Hegel's life, the necessary precondition within the logic of his double thought, "*die Vernunftsimmanenz des Wirklichen*,"¹⁰⁶⁰ is called all the more into question. With this emerging division between thought and reality Rosenzweig shows how Hegel's individual life is reflected in the very epoch he is trying to rationally grasp—how the acts and thoughts of his "station of life" are coming up against the "actuality" (*Wirklichkeit*) of the "epochs of the world." There is one historical event in particular that stands out towards the very end of the epochs of Hegel's life. With the last lines of the section on Prussia—"Then came the July Revolution"¹⁰⁶¹—Rosenzweig leaves his readers in suspense of this epoch making event, gradually building his historical narrative to its "dramatic" peak. In the year 1830, one year before his death, the unified stream of Hegel's personal life begins to break apart, and he is thrust unrelentingly into the ultimately *tragic* expanse of "historical life."

It cannot be denied that beginning with the French Revolution in 1789, the epoch of Hegel's life and legacy was the result of many historical upheavals. We have already seen how the French Revolution played a large role in shaping Hegel's early development and how Napoleon's invasion of Germany and the subsequent collapse of the Holy Roman Empire was a catalyst for Hegel's understanding of the tragic character of history.

¹⁰⁵⁹ "Noch hielt der eine Geist des Denkers das Reich beisammen, noch beherrschte er das Ganze und thronte darüber in stolzer Ruhe." HS 471.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Ehrenberg, *Parteiung*. 56.

¹⁰⁶¹ "Da kam die Julirevolutuion." HS 471.

But in 1830, just one year before Hegel's death, another revolution would again threaten the fragile stability of Hegel's epoch.

The "July Revolution" was a three-day uprising in Paris in the summer of 1830 that saw the fall of the Bourbon Monarchy and the rise of what became known as the July Monarchy. In his book *Europe in 1830* Clive H. Church, who convincingly argues for reexamining the July Revolution within a broader European context, writes that these experiences of 1830 "amounted to the most significant attempt to reverse the Restoration and return to the kind of political life which the Revolutionary and Napoleonic upheavals had previously brought to the peoples of Europe."¹⁰⁶² For Hegel and his generation, who for the last fifteen years had seen "the devil of the revolution painted upon the wall,"¹⁰⁶³ the July Revolution was an ominous sign that signified the collapse of "the elaborate building of European freedom."¹⁰⁶⁴ Hegel himself was deeply shaken:

After three and a half decades of war and upheaval, which he had experienced since his youth, he was counting on quiet, external quiet at least, that would allow the world-spirit, which, as he expressed it in 1816, was so busy with actuality, to again turn inward and to internally collect itself. And now everything became newly uncertain.¹⁰⁶⁵

¹⁰⁶² Clive H. Church. *Europe in 1830*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983.

¹⁰⁶³ "den Teufel der Revolution so oft an die Wand gemalt." HS 489.

¹⁰⁶⁴ "[d]as kunstreiche Gebäude des europäischen Friedens." HS 489.

¹⁰⁶⁵ "Nach den dritthalb Jahrzehnten kriegerischer Umwälzung, die er seit seinen Jünglingsjahren miterlebt hatte, mochte er auf Ruhe gerechnet haben, äußere Ruhe wenigstens, die dem Weltgeist, der, wie er es 1816 ausdrückte, in der Wirklichkeit so sehr beschäftigt gewesen, es verstaten würde, sich wieder nach innen zu kehren und sich in sich selber zu sammeln. Und nun wurde das alles aufs neue ungewiß." HS 490.

Rosenzweig's formulation of Hegel's sentiment above, shows not only that Hegel still very much believed in the truth of the "world spirit"—the rational spirit of history—but that he thought that this spirit was still in tune with the "actuality" of the historical present. Or in other words, as we already heard in Rosenzweig's commentary on *The Phenomenology*, at this juncture Hegel was—albeit now more than ever in the spirit of his "quietism" or "belief in fate"—still of the mind that he was standing "eye to eye with the age."¹⁰⁶⁶ But, just like after the fall of Napoleon, Hegel was now once again forced to witness a break between his thinking and the reality it was supposed to represent. Hegel, as Rosenzweig reads it from his letters after 1830, lived the last of his days in "fear of revolution" (*Revolutionsfurcht*).¹⁰⁶⁷

Thus the "July Revolution," which is also the title of the penultimate section of *Hegel and the State*, not only presented the threat, as the German historian Niebuhr wrote, of "a return to barbarism" (*Rückfall in die Barbarei*) within what Rosenzweig saw as an "anti-Goethean generation" (*goethefeindliche Geschlecht*),¹⁰⁶⁸ but for Hegel the Catholic leanings of the French state threatened to end the "Protestant epoch" (*protestantische Epoche*)¹⁰⁶⁹ he was living in, which began with the Napoleonic upheavals, and subsequently to make his ideal of the state impossible. As Rosenzweig argued and I showed above, in 1820, in order for Hegel's concept of the state to reign absolute, it required a plurality of churches to rule over, not just one to stand in conflict with. In the years before the July Revolution, writes Rosenzweig, "the 'Catholic

¹⁰⁶⁶ "Auge in Auge mit der Zeit." HS 264.

¹⁰⁶⁷ HS 502.

¹⁰⁶⁸ HS 489.

¹⁰⁶⁹ HS 500.

principle' remained the unanswered question for [Hegel], the 'break' in France's constitutional future."¹⁰⁷⁰ This led Hegel to further underscore the Protestant character of his political thinking and even modify his thinking, thereby transforming his ideal of the state to conform to the political reality of his day.

Hegel's Religious Thought—in Political Context

In "The Metaphysics of the State" we saw how Hegel attempted to reconcile religion and with the state by arguing for the necessity of Protestant Christianity and its break with the unity of the Catholic Church. Within Protestantism, the state could have absolute authority while allowing the authority of the various churches to exist by its side—or even above it—but never threaten its worldly position. However, this position was indeed being threatened by the rise of clericalism—the support of the interest of the Catholic clergy in political matters—throughout Europe.¹⁰⁷¹ And for Hegel, in March of 1826 a "personal" experience brought "the problem of state and catholicism" to "the middle of his political interests."¹⁰⁷²

As we saw already saw, Hegel was a public figure in Berlin, and with the publication of *The Philosophy of Right* in 1820 he had already made as many enemies as friends. One can only imagine that for the following decade, the public expressions of Hegel's philosophy were scrutinized and even seen as dangerous. This was indeed the

¹⁰⁷⁰ "das 'katholische Prinzip' bleibt ihm die ungelöste Frage, der 'Bruch' in Frankreichs konstitutioneller Zukunft." HS 508.

¹⁰⁷¹ See HS 496.

¹⁰⁷² "persönliche"; "das Problem Staat und Katholizismus"; "die Mitte seines politischen Interessenkreises." HS 495.

case with a lecture on the philosophy of history he gave in March of 1826. The subject was the place of Catholicism within history. As early as Jena, Hegel relegated Catholicism within his philosophy of history to a particular stage of Christianity, which was essentially overcome with the emergence of Protestantism. In his lecture in Berlin, this position apparently upset a local Catholic chaplain in the audience, who reported Hegel to the Minister of religion for "public slander of the Catholic religion."¹⁰⁷³ Hegel defended himself by replying that while lecturing at an Protestant university and under a more or less Protestant government, he was justified to point out the "papal idolatry and superstition"¹⁰⁷⁴ of the Catholic Church. Although this incident was resolved without punitive consequence for Hegel, what he saw in France as "the political emancipation of the Catholics in the until now purely Protestant state"¹⁰⁷⁵ was enough for him to revisit his picture of the state developed in *The Philosophy of Right*. The occasion came in 1827 with the publication of the second edition of his *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften (Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences)*.¹⁰⁷⁶

Rosenzweig's interest in the *Encyclopedia* is purely for its relation to the development of Hegel's picture of the state. What begins as the general task of adding "amendments to the great work of philosophy and right," transforms itself with the discussion of state and religion less into the desire to expound upon this discussion in the

¹⁰⁷³ "öffentlicher Verunglimpfung der katholischen Religion." HS 496.

¹⁰⁷⁴ "papistischen Götzendienst und Aberglauben." HS 496.

¹⁰⁷⁵ "die politische Emanzipation der Katholiken im bisher rein protestantischen Staat." HS 496.

¹⁰⁷⁶ The first edition was published in 1817.

great political work, "than in a certain sense to replace it."¹⁰⁷⁷ In his treatment of the Preface to *The Philosophy of Right*, Rosenzweig argued that Hegel's motto to the book—the famous line on "reason" and "actuality"—could only be understood by drawing on Hegel's philosophy of history. Accordingly, although Plato recognized in his state ideal that reason was the "measure and guide of reality,"¹⁰⁷⁸ it was not until the world-historical event of the birth of Christianity that reason became "the foundation of the spiritual world."¹⁰⁷⁹ In terms of his philosophy of history, this implied for Hegel that historically, religion followed the state. But in 1827, this relation was reversed. What was missing from Plato's state, the "free self-conscious will" (*freien selbstbewußten Einzelwillen*),¹⁰⁸⁰ could not have been predicted by Plato. For according to Hegel, it was first with Christianity that the concept of a "free self-conscious will" came into existence. Since for Hegel "freedom enters into its highest right"¹⁰⁸¹ in the state, and in this manner individual freedom is a *prerequisite* for the state in general, now in 1827, "the state must necessarily come later than religion."¹⁰⁸² This reversal of the role of religion and the state—placing religion *before* the state in his philosophy of history—runs not only counter to Hegel's philosophy of history in 1820, but ultimately introduces a new conception of the state, which according to Rosenzweig is designed precisely to resist the

¹⁰⁷⁷ "Ergänzungen zu dem großen rechtsphilosophischen Werk"; "als in gewisser Beziehung zu ersetzen." HS 497.

¹⁰⁷⁸ "Maß und Wegweiser der Wirklichkeit." HS 354.

¹⁰⁷⁹ "Grund der geistigen Welt." HS 356.

¹⁰⁸⁰ HS 498.

¹⁰⁸¹ Hegel PR. §258.

¹⁰⁸² "der Staat müsse notwendig später kommen als die Religion" HS 499.

Catholic forces gaining political ground in Hegel's age. In Rosenzweig's words, Hegel's critique of Catholicism has now shifted to the center of his new state ideal:

Catholicism is also unable to carry this true state for the same reason that Plato could not know the true state. The construction of history that in 1820 was the foundation of the basic thought of the entire philosophy of right, is now being used for the single purpose of showing the incompatibility of Catholicism and the state.¹⁰⁸³

In *The Philosophy of Right*, Hegel's conception of the state depended on a juxtaposition of the state against a multiplicity of churches: "only so, above the *particular* churches, does the state have the *universality* of thought."¹⁰⁸⁴ In 1827, Hegel took religion from its relegated place as "internal" (*innerlich*) and "lonely" (*einsam*) and placed it more prominently as a determining factor of the state: "no longer could belief remain in the recess of the internal and be closed off from the acts and order of life."¹⁰⁸⁵ On the contrary, Hegel now believed that "only upon the ground of religious freedom could the freedom of the state thrive."¹⁰⁸⁶ And it was only in the religious freedom of Protestantism, not in Catholicism, "which separates the divine and the worldly,"¹⁰⁸⁷ that

¹⁰⁸³ "aus dem gleichen Grund, aus dem Platon nicht den wahrhaften Staat erkennen konnte, ist auch der Katholizismus unfähig, diesen wahrhaften Staat zu ertragen. Die 1820 dem Grundgedanken der ganzen Rechtsphilosophie untergebaute Geschichtskonstruktion wird jetzt schon zu dem einen Einzelzwecke errichtet, die Unverträglichkeit von Katholizismus und Staat zu erweisen." HS 499.

¹⁰⁸⁴ "nur so, über den besonderen Kirchen, hat der Staat die Allgemeinheit des Gedankens." HS 455.

¹⁰⁸⁵ "nimmer könne der Glaube im Winkel des Innern verbleiben und abgeschlossen werden von Tat und Ordnung des Lebens" HS 501.

¹⁰⁸⁶ "nur auf dem Boden der religiösen Freiheit die staatliche gedeihen könne." HS 501.

¹⁰⁸⁷ "die Heiliges und Weltliches trennt." HS 507.

Hegel thought "true political freedom" (*wahre politische Freiheit*)¹⁰⁸⁸ was possible.

Thus, while in 1820 Hegel's state was based on the juxtaposition of the one state to many churches, Hegel now based his ideal of the state "upon the one Protestant faith."¹⁰⁸⁹

According to Rosenzweig, this change in thinking was not a mere detail within Hegel's philosophy of state, but rather showed that a force was at stake here that Hegel had been trying to reckon with for his entire life: "actuality" (*Wirklichkeit*)¹⁰⁹⁰ itself. Beginning with the July Revolution in 1830, the very "actuality" that until now Hegel had learned to rationally grasp, was visibly falling out of his grip. We are again confronted with Rosenzweig's unspoken thesis that Hegel's life—mirrored in his generation—was constantly in tension between "concept" and "experience." Hegel would indeed try to incorporate the July Revolution into his lectures on the philosophy of history, arguing that the fall of the Bourbons in 1792 and again in 1830 only prove his point, first recalled by Marx and later by Rosenzweig, "that great decisions, in order to legitimate themselves as irrevocable for human consciousness, must occur twice."¹⁰⁹¹ This 'doubling' of history, which Marx had called the move from tragedy to comedy, also shows that in the reversal of state and religion in Hegel's philosophy of history Rosenzweig saw Hegel's move as a comedic—in Hegel's own words, taking his "small coincidental own being in bitter seriousness for absolute"¹⁰⁹²—reconciliation of religion with the state. However,

¹⁰⁸⁸ HS 505.

¹⁰⁸⁹ "auf die eine protestantische Gläubigkeit." HS 501.

¹⁰⁹⁰ HS 502.

¹⁰⁹¹ "daß große Entscheidungen, um sich dem menschlichen Bewußtsein als unumstößlich zu legitimieren, doppelt eintreten müssten." HS 507.

¹⁰⁹² Hegel, *Natural Law*. 105.

this penultimate section in "Epochs of the World" was designed by Rosenzweig to show what his book claimed already in the epigraph to the first section of the book:¹⁰⁹³ namely, that despite his "world-historical" efforts, Hegel's fate remained irreconciled, as he could never fully accomplish the unity of rationality and reason he so desired. This "fate" comes to its tragic climax in the last political work Hegel was to write: "On the English Reform Bill."

The "Fate" of Hegel's "On the English Reform Bill"

Rosenzweig's presentation of Hegel's last political writing—"On the English Reform Bill"—is subtly cloaked in the language of tragedy. In 1831, the year the essay was published and the same year of Hegel's death, Rosenzweig observes a new mood in Hegel's writings and letters: "A trace of Hamlet, otherwise foreign to him, is present in his demeanor."¹⁰⁹⁴ How are we to understand this language of tragedy in the context of Hegel's biography? Although the reference to Hamlet, which Rosenzweig does not elaborate on, should not be overemphasized, it does point towards the general emphasis on tragedy within Rosenzweig's book. After briefly outlining the context of Hegel's last political writing, I argue in the following section that Rosenzweig's treatment of this essay reveals his view that Hegel's life is ultimately imbued with a tragic sense—a sense which is then reflected in Rosenzweig's own personal and political situation.

¹⁰⁹³ See here the epigraph, *HS* 23.

¹⁰⁹⁴ "Ein hamletischer Zug, ihm sonst fremd, liegt über seinem Verhalten." *HS* 519.

Hegel's essay was written in response to the proposal of a bill that would grant English landowners greater participation in electing future members of English Parliament. While Hegel had always kept a watchful eye on English politics, his essay did not address England so much as the "political problem of liberalism in France and especially in Prussia."¹⁰⁹⁵ Although Rosenzweig nicely situates Hegel's criticism of these new European liberal tendencies within a broader context of Hegel's writings, our interest lies in the *manner* in which Rosenzweig presents this piece and what that says about his overarching view of Hegel's life and thought. It is again by focusing on the *form* of Rosenzweig's writing that his deeper views on Hegel emerge. As stated above, by comparing Hegel to Hamlet, Rosenzweig evokes images of the tragic, without going as far as explicitly saying that Hegel was a tragic figure himself. However, his life—and especially the end of his life—are filled with tragic moments. Indeed, there are two tragic moments to be discussed here. First, the "fate" of the work itself, which was censored and not published in its entirety. Second, how the fate of this work played out upon the fate of Hegel himself. In conclusion I would like to show how these two "fates" also mirror Rosenzweig as the author of *Hegel and the State*.

For Rosenzweig, Hegel's "On the English Reform Bill" is significant for the manner in which it reflects Hegel's changing relation—and final stance—towards the world as such. It has been Rosenzweig's interest throughout to show how Hegel's thought was either at odds with his environment—the days of turmoil in Frankfurt—or how Hegel tried to reconcile his thinking with the unfolding of historical reality around him—Jena and Napoleon; Prussia. But now, approaching the end of *Hegel and the State* and Hegel's biography alike, Rosenzweig's concluding argument on Hegel's life begins to

¹⁰⁹⁵ "politische Problem des Liberalismus in Frankreich und besonders in Preußen." HS 513.

shine through: "For the first time there happens to him what in forty years had never occurred: he cannot respond to the mute question of actuality with the clear and specific answer of the spirit."¹⁰⁹⁶ The significance of Hegel's last political essay for Rosenzweig is that it clearly shows the break between reason and reality that has been anticipated throughout the entirety of *Hegel and the State*. What happened, asks Rosenzweig, to the "philosophical Alexander"¹⁰⁹⁷ we had come to know? Hegel no longer has a grasp on the reality facing him and cannot find an answer for the call of the world. Rather than the great Alexander, we are presented with an image of Hamlet: Hegel, alone at the end of his days, is faced with the fear of an impending revolution, and like Hamlet, he can only resort to *silence*.¹⁰⁹⁸ We already know from examining Rosenzweig's notion of "metaethics" in *The Star*, that silence is a prerequisite and indeed the defining characteristic for a tragic hero. Accordingly, when Hegel's students ask him to say the "correct word" (*rechte Wort*)¹⁰⁹⁹ in order to clarify the political situation unfolding around them, Hegel is no longer certain that a verbal response is adequate. Rosenzweig formulates Hegel's position rhetorically: "Yet, will a not word that falls into this whirlpool only increase the calamity, which exists precisely because everyone only wants to hear themselves?"¹¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁹⁶ "Zum ersten Mal geschieht ihm, was ihm in vierzig Jahren nie geschah: er muß der Wirklichkeit auf ihre stumme Frage die klare und bestimmte Antwort des Geistes versagen." HS 519.

¹⁰⁹⁷ "philosophischer Alexander." HS 519.

¹⁰⁹⁸ See Hamlet, Act V.2, 341.

¹⁰⁹⁹ HS 520.

¹¹⁰⁰ "Doch wird ein Wort, das in diesen Strudel fällt, das Unheil, das ja gerade darin besteht, daß jeder nur sich selber hören will, nicht noch mehr?" HS 520.

The power of words to change the political and historical world is one of the underlying themes of *Hegel and the State*. This is clearly reflected in the choice to use Hölderlin's verse from "*An die Deutschen*" as an epigraph, which I elaborate on in my final chapter. Thus, there is a clear parallel between the manner in which Rosenzweig's ends his narrative of Hegel's life and the questions Rosenzweig is asking himself almost one hundred years later about the unfolding of his own biography. While the lives of these two philosophers are certainly very different, the *historical life* of Hegel as Rosenzweig represents it is written in terms that reveal Rosenzweig's own spiritual biography. At the end of Hegel's life and the end of *Hegel and the State*, all that remains for both individuals is "hope" (*Hoffnung*).¹¹⁰¹ This parallel between Hegel and Rosenzweig lends even more significance to the presentation of Hegel's last published work.

Hegel's essay was published as a series of newspaper articles. It was ultimately critical of the English monarchy, praising instead the Prussian political model Hegel had before him. However, since at that time Prussia was trying to walk amicably with its powerful neighbor, the final sections of Hegel's critique were censored and never published. Rosenzweig notes that this failure of Hegel's political thought to reach the public it was addressing was a typical fate of Hegel's political writings: "Hegels stärkste Verherrlichung des preußischen Königtums fand in dem Regierungsblatte Preußens keinen Platz. Es ist ein eigenes Geschick, das über Hegels politischen Flugschriften und Zeitungsaufsätzen waltete. (HS 518)."

One must take pause here and wonder about the notion that a work can have a "fate" of its own. There is something very modern about this idea: the notion that the

¹¹⁰¹ See *HS 521*; *HS 532*.

work has become a "thing", something independent of its author. One can only wonder aloud at the fate of *Hegel and the State* itself, which until recently has lived a life quite separate from its author. But nonetheless, if these works do indeed belong to the authors who wrote them, if the author's "personality" is revealed through their "work," then the fate of their work reflects the fate of their personality. Thus, I argue that the fate of *Hegel and the State* reveals the fate of Rosenzweig's relationship to Germany and his personal identification with and towards the German people. In *Hegel and the State* we do not see the failed attempt of a young student to carry out a sustained philosophical reflection, but the battlefield upon which Rosenzweig worked out his relationship to his spiritual biography and thus the prerequisite for understanding in what manner he transformed himself from a German academic into a *German-Jewish* philosopher.

In the case of Hegel himself, the fate of "On the English Reform Bill"—that it was not published in its entirety and cut short of its purpose—is reflected in Hegel's own personal fate: that although with the publication of the *Phenomenology* Hegel rose to unite with his age, in the end his thinking remained disjointed from reality. With the rise of liberalism in Europe, Hegel sees both the necessity of such a movement, but fears its consequences. And although Hegel praised the French Revolution as long as he lived, he was now, especially after July 1830, filled with a "fear of revolution" (*Revolutionsfurcht*). This "fear of revolution" coupled with the rise of liberalism goes back to Hegel's Napoleon period, where he witnessed the "mass of mediocrity" (*Masse des Mittelmäßigen*) pull the genius of Napoleon into its clutches. Now, faced with very real possibility of revolution, Hegel's once powerful thought seems helpless in the face of reality. The fate of his essay "On the English Reform Bill" parallels the fate of his own

personal life: "All the difficulties of his internal position were expressed."¹¹⁰² At the end of Rosenzweig's biography we do not find a defiant self—that quality of the tragic hero that Rosenzweig emphasizes in the *Star*—but rather, something less tragic and simply *sad*: "an old heart" (*ein altes Herz*).¹¹⁰³ In this sense Rosenzweig writes in the *style* of tragedy, but does not write a tragedy itself. The seeds of Rosenzweig's theory of the tragic are scattered about *Hegel and the State*, but not until *The Star* do we see his tragic flower in full bloom.

A Biographical Death

In a letter to Hans Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig makes a rare comment on biographical method: "*Die biografische Methode scheint mir in der Biografie nur dadurch gerechtfertigt, weil der Mensch geboren wird und stirbt, —also eine Darstellung, die ihn sozusagen zwischen zwei Nichtse ausspannt, dadurch wenigstens möglich ist.*"¹¹⁰⁴ Dilthey already addressed the *possibility* of biography. With Dilthey we came to the conclusion that biography must of necessity be constructed like a work of art. That is, even though it can still lay claim to some objectivity, it remains the *construction* of the author. In the quote above we see how the birth and death of the biographical subject make this construction at least possible. Birth and death give the life in question limits and it is from within these limits that the contours of the life can be defined. Even if a biography

¹¹⁰² "Die ganze Schwierigkeiten seiner inneren Stellung war in ihr zum Ausdruck gekommen." HS 518.

¹¹⁰³ HS 519.

¹¹⁰⁴ Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 6.12.13.

fails to capture its subject with complete accuracy, in this very failure it can be said to be operating within the realm of objectivity. The alternative to this biographical thinking is writing *world history* (*Weltgeschichte*). This type of history writing, Rosenzweig goes on to comment in the same letter, "*ist eben absoluter Anfang und absolutes Ende.*"¹¹⁰⁵ Thus, the *biographical* writing of history makes no claims to be *absolute*, but remains fixed within the particularity of its subject matter. Moreover, it is a form of history writing that Rosenzweig can stay committed to, despite his misgivings about history in *The Star*. Thus, Rosenzweig's *Hegel and the State* makes a stronger claim as a work of biography than as a work of world history. Indeed, following the guidelines of the letter above, Rosenzweig begins with Hegel's birth in Stuttgart, and ends his presentation with his death in Berlin: the two nothings of Hegel's birth and death enclose the fullness of his life. With his birth in 1770, Hegel was destined to mature around the greatest personalities of the nineteenth century. But what can be said of his death?

A biographical death is an ending and not a beginning. It does not anticipate like birth, but concludes. With Hegel's death Rosenzweig has reached the conclusion of his biography, but not quite the conclusion of his book. The "Foreword," "Prefatory Remarks" and "Concluding Remarks" all fall outside the trajectory of birth to death, and thus teach us something about the *world historical context* of Rosenzweig's biography. With Hegel's biographical death, however, we come to the end of the life story. And it is again *how* this story is told that reveals the unspoken thoughts that give shape to its character. Hegel's death is partly tragic, partly sad, partly a reflection of his philosophical legacy and partly the inevitable human stamp on his often seemingly larger-than-life philosophy. But more than any of these, Hegel's death completes the biographical circle

¹¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

of Rosenzweig's book. And, like Hegel expressed in the Preface to his *Phenomenology*, it is often only at the end that we can understand the beginning.

The trajectory of Hegel's life as told in *Hegel and the State* has reached its end. Rosenzweig so strongly emphasized Hegel's Frankfurt period because it was here that he was struggling with notions of fate, which would both determine his ultimate conception of the state, but also form his self-identity as a philosopher. With the publication of the *Phenomenology* Hegel had risen from the turmoil of inner life—a turmoil Rosenzweig likens to personal *tragedy*—and greets the age "eye to eye." While during Napoleon's reign Hegel's confidence is shaken, it is not broken. It is during this time that "fate" is firmly wedded with history for Hegel. It is only at the end of Hegel's life that his unity with the age is broken. With the threat of revolution and his own death on the horizon, Hegel's ability to grasp reality rationally is slipping: "the unity with the age is torn" (*die Vereingung mit der Zeit ist zerrissen*).¹¹⁰⁶ What comes now for Hegel is "the harbinger from Hades" (*der Bote aus dem Hades*).¹¹⁰⁷ He has reached the point "where the internal ground of life of man, won from the harsh storms of development and previously declared in all turns of fate, has slipped from under the feet."¹¹⁰⁸ Hegel's final thought is if there is still a place in this world "for participation in the passionless quite of solely thinking knowledge."¹¹⁰⁹ Hegel, the great thinker of his age, ends his life in tragic isolation from the reality he once thought to have mastered.

¹¹⁰⁶ *HS* 521.

¹¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰⁸ "wo der in harten Entwicklungsstürmen erkämpfte und in allen Schicksalswendungen bisher behauptete innere Lebensboden dem Menschen unter den Füßen weggleitet." *HS* 521.

¹¹⁰⁹ "für die Teilnahme an der leidenschaftslosen Stille der nur denkenden Erkenntnis." *HS* 521.

This is the concluding thought of Rosenzweig's presentation of Hegel's biography, but not yet the concluding thought of the book. Hegel's fate was foreshadowed throughout the entire book through the use of tragic language. Now, that tragedy, which is really more a profound sadness and isolation than tragedy in the classic or modern sense, has reached its end. We soon see how the way Hegel's end is described is reflected in Rosenzweig's own failed "unification with the age." In the final pages of *Hegel and the State* to come, we are slowly guided from Hegel's biography and development of his view of the state into the historical age that followed. The end of *Hegel and the State* not only wraps up the historical life of Hegel, but gives us a glimpse into Rosenzweig's own historical life. In the concluding gestures of the book, we see how Rosenzweig's tragic "emplotment" of Hegel's life is reflected in the tragedy of his own identity as a German intellectual. Thus, Hegel's biographical death is a foil for the death of Rosenzweig's German self and provides the occasion for the birth of his German-Jewish soul—a claim I elaborate on below.

CHAPTER XII

"A GLIMMER OF HOPE"

Concluding Remarks

The final section of *Hegel and the State*, "Concluding Remarks," is one of its most intriguing. In this short conclusion to the entire book, Rosenzweig puts the final touches on his picture of Hegel's development and legacy, gives his readers a clearer picture of the thesis of the book as whole and lastly, connects the contents of the book to his own historical present. We can learn a great deal from these concluding gestures, not only about Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel, but about Rosenzweig himself as an author.

As touched on earlier, with the publication of the *Gritli-Briefe*, the correspondence of Rosenzweig's love affair with Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy, many once unknown facts of his biography came to light for the first time. Included in these letters is Rosenzweig's sparse, yet important commentary on the period of revision he undertook for the Hegel book in the years 1919 and 1920, shortly before its publication. The significance of these comments, which contain Rosenzweig's reaction after revisiting *Hegel and the State* for the first time in many years, are amplified by another historical coincidence: while editing *Hegel and the State*, Rosenzweig was editing *The Star of Redemption* for publication as well, the book for which he is best remembered today. As Stéphane Mosès phrased it, despite being edited for publication virtually simultaneously, there is "a true abyss" (*ein wahrer Abgrund*)¹¹¹⁰ between the two books. Nevertheless,

¹¹¹⁰ Mosès, "Rosenzweig und Hölderlin." 354.

within the *Gritli-Briefe* we are at least offered a glimpse onto both sides of this abyss, and perhaps something more.

The view towards *Hegel and the State* that stands out from these letters is Rosenzweig's changing attitude towards his book as the revision process goes on. What began as boredom and doubt—"I have the feeling like I am reading someone else's work"; "A book for old men"—slowly transforms into a renewed interest and self-respect:

The Hegel book is in parts very nice. After reading it again, the Frankfurt chapter even took hold of me a little. How there, as a 24-year-old I told the life-crisis of a 26-year-old with all philological accuracy and yet with the prophetic feeling "*et de me fabula narratur*," precisely with the holy respect of "you will have your turn"—that gave the chapter a funny, at the same time festive and awkward tone, like a first kiss between children. And later on some things are written very masterfully. Thus it is now a bearable work for me. Nevertheless, I could only work on it for a few hours at a time, and then doubt tore me away again.¹¹¹¹

A few weeks later he will add: "The Hegel book is really not a bad book, the Heidelberg Academy was entirely correct from their point of view."¹¹¹² The above quotes show that Rosenzweig's own damning claim in the forward that he "never would have begun it

¹¹¹¹ "Das Hegelbuch ist streckenweise sehr schön. Das Frankfurt-Kapitel hat mich beim Wiederlesen jetzt sogar ein bisschen ergriffen. Wie ich da als 24-jähriger mit aller philologischen Akuratessse und doch mit dem profetischen Gefühl "*et de me fabula narratur*" die Lebenskrise eines 26-jährigen erzählt habe, eben mit dem heiligen Respekt "du kommst auch noch dran"—das hat dem Kapitel einen komisch zugleich feierlichen und verlegenen Ton gegeben, so wie ein erster Kuss in einer Kinderliebe. Und im späteren ist manches sehr souverän hingeschrieben. So ist eine erträgliche Arbeit jetzt für mich [emphasis mine] Allerdings habe ich nur immer stundenweis dran arbeiten können, dann riss mich die Verzweiflung wieder auf." Rosenzweig, *Gritli-Briefe*, 29.11.1919.

¹¹¹² "Der Hegel ist wirklich kein schlechtes Buch, die Heidelb. Akademie hat von ihrem Standpunkt aus ganz recht gehabt." *Gritli-Briefe*, 15.12.1919.

today" is not to be taken as a condemnation of the entire book. The Heidelberg Academy, who funded its publication, made the claim that *Hegel and the State* would prove a lasting source for scholarship. But there is something more here, and it is again in the Frankfurt chapter, the time of Hegel's life when he lived in proximity to Hölderlin, that Rosenzweig saw his own life-story reflected into the work—"et de me fabula narratur" (it is of me the story is told). Even if Rosenzweig is fondly looking back upon himself as a man looks back at a boy, the author of *The Star of Redemption* was satisfied enough with his work to risk publishing his Hegel book alongside his great religious-philosophical masterpiece. In other words, he could still find himself in his work.

Another reference to *Hegel and the State* in the *Gritli-Briefe* shows that at least at one point, the perspectives of the boy and the man converge—and this happens nowhere else but in the final version of the "Concluding Remarks" we now have before us:

I actually have to rewrite the entire concluding chapter, not just because it was written before 1914, but in this case really because it comes before 1913. Here Eugen is correct when he says that "before him" I could not even write at all. It was written in February 1913. I was personally satisfied with it, read it aloud to Eugen, who immediately rejected it,—"such murmuring." That occurred to me as I now reread it and I felt terribly ashamed. I will now perhaps leave it out entirely.¹¹¹³

At present, it is uncertain what the original form of the concluding remarks was, and if it is still available to us. However, we can be assured that the final version that lies before

¹¹¹³ "das ganze Schlusskapitel muss ich eigentlich neuschreiben, nicht bloss weil es vor 1914 ist, sondern in diesem Fall wirklich einmal weil es vor 1913 ist. Hier hat Eugen recht, wenn er meint, ich hatte "vor ihm" überhaupt nicht schreiben können. Es ist vom Februar 13. Ich war selbst sehr zufrieden damit, las es Eugen vor, der es gleich ablehnte, —"so säuselnd". Das fiel mir ein, als ich es jetzt wieder las und mich ensetzlich schämte. Ich lasse es nun vielleicht ganz weg." Rosenzweig, *Gritli-Briefe*, 21.12.1919.

us was severely edited or perhaps even written anew towards the end of 1919. This is worth lingering on, because if it is indeed the case, then it significantly shortens the apparent abyss between Rosenzweig's two major works—and more tellingly, as I will argue later, the abyss between Rosenzweig as *German* and Rosenzweig as *Jewish*. Accordingly, we may read the "Concluding Remarks" to *Hegel and the State* not only as the final gesture of the entire book, but as Rosenzweig's own assessment of his work *after* he had written *The Star of Redemption*. Seen in this light, these passages take on a significance that cannot be claimed of many other passages in the book. Before returning to Hölderlin, who is the surprising protagonist of these final pages, we should linger on the opening words of this section—they reveal a great deal about the historical and intellectual world of Rosenzweig himself and ultimately point towards the tragic impulse he gives to Hegel's biography.

"From Hegel to Bismarck"

Rosenzweig prefaces his "Concluding Remarks" with the epigraph ". . . *aus Gedanken die Tat . . .*" (from thoughts the act).¹¹¹⁴ This line from Hölderlin's poem "*An die Deutschen*" has served as a point of orientation for Rosenzweig throughout the entire book. The tension between "thoughts" and the "act" serves as a parallel to the fissure between "reason" and "actuality" in Rosenzweig's critique of Hegel's political thought. Moreover, this break into opposing tensions displays how Hegel's influence upon German nationality of the nineteenth century is reflected into Hegel's biography in a tragic light. It is this irreconcilability of a particular, individual life with a universal,

¹¹¹⁴ HS 526.

national history—and the glimmer of hope for the reconciliation of the two—that fills the final pages of Rosenzweig's book.

On the first pages of "The Epochs of the World," Rosenzweig already hinted that Goethe was the authoritative voice of Hegel's age. Goethe's "demonic" presence resurfaces in the "Concluding Remarks" when Rosenzweig contrasts him the the life and influence of that other German personality, Hegel. The following quote from the "Concluding Remarks" shows how Rosenzweig values Hegel's historical legacy only in contrast to Goethe:

If we bring to mind that [Hegel's] life spans the exact time in which Goethe's Faust came to be—1770-1831—it would become evident how much more truly the life itself and its work should be fixed within the history of the 19th century than the life and work of the greatest German of that epoch [...] in truth, the arc of Hegel's historical influence played out with much more shallowness and therefore more briefly than that of the poet two decades his elder [...] The fruitful expanses of [Goethe's] life were spread equally broad on both sides of the great epochal divide that counts for us as the classical moment of modern German intellectual history.¹¹¹⁵

Portrayed in the manner, Hegel was merely a "narrow" figure in Goethe's "broad" epoch.¹¹¹⁶ Although Hegel's philosophical contributions express "a leitmotif of the

¹¹¹⁵ "Vergegenwärtigen wir uns, wie dies Leben genau die Zeit umspannt, in der Goethes Faust wurde—1770 bis 1831—, so wird deutlich, wie viel genauer es selber und sein Werk in die Geschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts eingespannt sein mußte als etwa Leben und Werk des größten Deutschen der Epoche [...] in Wahrheit verläuft doch der Flugbogen der geschichtlichen Wirkung bei Hegel viel flacher und darum kürzer als bei dem zwei Jahrzehnte älteren Dichter [...] gleich breit liegen die fruchtbaren Gefilde seines Lebens zu beiden Seiten der großen Epochenscheide verteilt, die uns als der klassischen Augenblick der neueren deutschen Geistesgeschichte gilt." HS 526.

¹¹¹⁶ This quote thus already foreshadows Rosenzweig's quite broad inclusion of Goethe—and particularly Goethe's *Faust* as a metaphor for his method at the end of the introduction to Book I—within *The Star of*

German nineteenth century," in his "national-historical significance"¹¹¹⁷ the whole of political doctrine never managed to make it out of the nineteenth century intact. And although Hegel provided the "thoughts" that opened the path towards Bismarck's "act"—the founding of the German nation in 1871—these thoughts remained so wrapped up in the idea of that *state* that they failed to becoming manifest in the German *nation*.

Goethe's life, in contrast, reached deeply enough into the eighteenth century—"into the pre-revolutionary and pre-Kantian world"¹¹¹⁸—that his influence could arc above the nineteenth century into the twentieth. The final words of the "Concluding Remarks" give testament to Goethe's influence upon Rosenzweig as well.

The stated purpose of Rosenzweig's "Concluding Remarks" is to show "where the thoughts of the politician Hegel remained behind the acts of the century of Bismarck," and moreover to allow its readers to feel "how also in this his remaining-behind there was a necessity, precisely the necessity of his dwelling in the fountain-well of time."¹¹¹⁹ In order to explore what he terms the "necessity" of Hegel becoming trapped within his own age, Rosenzweig's again follows the path already laid down by his teacher Meinecke. This path, "the path from Hegel to Bismarck"¹¹²⁰ was first laid out by Meinecke in his book *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. Rosenzweig does no more than touch upon its major moments. However, within these few paragraphs, which were most likely written

Redemption, whereas Hegel, at least explicitly, is assigned the narrow role of representing the philosophy of Idealism, which the "new thinking" aims to overcome.

¹¹¹⁷ "ein Leitgedanke des deutschen neunzehnten Jahrhunderts"; "nationengeschichtlichen Bedeutung." HS 526-27.

¹¹¹⁸ "in der vorrevolutionären und vorkantischen Welt." HS 526.

¹¹¹⁹ "wo die Gedanken des Politikers Hegel hinter den Taten des Jahrhunderts Bismarcks zurückbleiben"; "wie auch in diesem seinem Zurückbleiben Notwendigkeit lag, eben die Notwendigkeit seines Hausens in den Brunnenkammer der Zeit." HS 527.

¹¹²⁰ "der Weg von Hegel zu Bismarck." HS 527.

as late as 1920, Rosenzweig is able to look back upon the trajectory of his work with fresh eyes and thus offer his readers a brief but informative gloss on his reading of Hegel's political thought.

Rosenzweig focuses on the doctrines of three political thinkers who laid the intellectual foundations of Bismarck's German nation and how they diverged from Hegel's thinking. These thinkers are Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann (1785-1860), Friedrich Julius Stahl (1802-1861) and Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896). For all three thinkers, what is new in contrast to Hegel is the inclusion of the concept of the "nation" in their political thought. For Dahlmann, the state is "an all-powerful order above humans."¹¹²¹ Thus the starting-point of Hegel's political theory, the freedom of the human will, is removed from its prominence and replaced with a state embodying a being of its own. On the other hand, Stahl acknowledges the importance of the human will within the state, but on grounds of religious freedom keeps the two separate, which like Dahlmann allows the state to come forward as a power of its own. In contrast, Treitschke follows Hegel's idea that "the state is power and belongs to the world of the will."¹¹²² For him, however, the state properly understood is "a people unified by law."¹¹²³ According to Rosenzweig, what drove Treitschke, and "unconsciously" (*unbewußt*)¹¹²⁴ Dahlmann and Stahl as well, was that unlike Hegel, who understood the state as the totality of the actualization of the human will, for these three thinkers there was something external to the state: they were driven "towards the founding of the state not merely upon its own

¹¹²¹ "übermächtige, übermenschliche Ordnung." HS 528.

¹¹²² "der Staat Macht ist und der Welt des Willens angehört." HS 528.

¹¹²³ "das rechtlich geeinte Volk." HS 529.

¹¹²⁴ HS 529.

will, but rather upon the nation standing external and before him."¹¹²⁵ Rosenzweig goes on to claim that this reveals the true reason Hegel was not adopted as the national philosopher of the state: "that derivation held onto by Hegel of the state from the will."¹¹²⁶

Rosenzweig's underlying critique of Hegel's political thought is based on what happens to the individual will when subsumed into the universal state: "Thus, the individual was only called forth so that he could enter into the state."¹¹²⁷ As we have already seen, although Hegel begins his intellectual voyage holding the freedom of the individual in highest regard—so much so that his students could still say that "the master's doctrine of the state flowed from the metal of freedom"¹¹²⁸—this highest place in his political thought was soon taken over by the state. But the situation is no better with Treitschke, who replaces the individual will with the will of the nation: "both, the individual and the nation, are thus in a certain sense sacrificed to the state."¹¹²⁹ When Bismarck founded the first unified German state in 1871 he would follow the lead of Treitschke and found this state upon a national platform. This led to a separation of the state from the nation, or what now became evident to Rosenzweig's generation after the First World War, "the separation of state and culture."¹¹³⁰ As early as 1914, the German people no longer felt that the state embodied the national culture: "The harsh necessity of

¹¹²⁵ *"zur Begründung des Staats nicht schlechthin auf seinen eigenen Willen, sondern auf die außer ihm und vor ihm bestehende Nation."* HS 529.

¹¹²⁶ *"jene bei Hegel festgehaltene Herleitung des Staats aus dem Willen."* HS 529.

¹¹²⁷ *"So wurde der Einzelmensch nur hervorgerufen, damit er in den Staat eingehe."* HS 529.

¹¹²⁸ *"die Staatslehre des Meisters aus dem Metall der Freiheit gegossen sei."* HS 529.

¹¹²⁹ *"beide, Einzelmensch und Nation, sind so in gewissem Sinne dem Staat zu opfern"* HS 530.

¹¹³⁰ *"die Trennung von Staat und Kultur."* HS 530.

external history hindered the state from growing with internal necessity from the life of the nation for the Germans; just as before, the individual could not find enough room in this state."¹¹³¹

With the above argumentation, Rosenzweig sets up the opposition between the individual and the nation. Hegel's generation, "gone mad with the I" (*irre geworden am Ich*)¹¹³²—equally influenced by Rousseau and the French Revolution—sought to preserve the freedom of the individual in the establishment of the state. However, what Rosenzweig now sees here are "the traces not of a state, but of a nation."¹¹³³ Hegel never gave the nation a place in his thinking. Nevertheless, with Bismarck's founding act in 1871, the nation came to substitute the individual in the fulfillment of the state. Rosenzweig, hinting here at his devastating critique of the individualism of German Idealism within the first few pages of *The Star*, writes that perhaps because Hegel was a "lonely man" (*einsamer Mensch*) filled with "personal longing and searching" (*persönlichen Sehnen und Suchen*) that he overlooked the importance of the nation in favor of "the gratification of his will" (*die Befriedigung seines Willens*).¹¹³⁴ While the above words are certainly damning towards Hegel, Rosenzweig by no means praises Bismarck's state. On the contrary, the ideal of a "national moral community" (*nationalen Gesittungsgemeinschaft*) which the generation of 1770 had cloaked in the form of the

¹¹³¹ "Die harte Notwendigkeit der äußeren Geschichte hatte es gehindert, daß der Staat dem Deutschen mit innerer Notwendigkeit aus dem Leben der Nation hervorwuchs; wieder wie einst fand der Mensch in diesem Staat nicht mehr recht Raum." HS 530. To challenge the idea of 'not having enough room,' of the state oppressing the free air of individuals, was one reason Rosenzweig wrote his book to begin with. See HS 18.

¹¹³² HS 530.

¹¹³³ "die Züge nicht eines Staats, sondern einer Nation." HS 531.

¹¹³⁴ HS 531.

state, remained "only a hope even after Bismarck's act (*auch nach Bismarcks Tat nur Hoffnung*)." ¹¹³⁵ For Rosenzweig, neither the individual nor the nation were enough to resist the "harsh necessity of external history."

What does Rosenzweig offer us against this necessity of history? Is there a way from "thoughts" (*Gedanken*) to the "act" (*Tat*)? One of the most important underlying questions of *Hegel and the State* is the possibility of "hope" (*Hoffnung*) in the face of history. In classifying the historical progression "from Hegel to Bismarck" as one from "thought" to "act," Rosenzweig is leaning heavily on the visions of Hölderlin's poem and the hope for a "national moral community" contained therein. However, he must also acknowledge both the naivety of his own youth and the irreconcilability of the present with that past when he writes: "not 'as the bolt comes from the clouds' did this act spring forth from these thoughts; the path of history was longer and more gradual than the poet's longing had dreamed it." ¹¹³⁶ Hölderlin's longing for a German nation mirrors the young Rosenzweig's own longing for a renewed political state. However, as the quote above reveals, in 1919, Rosenzweig now sees in history a "long" and "gradual" path, one imbued with less of the "lonely" (*einsame*) fire of the poet's soul, which he could perhaps still associate with when he began writing his book on Hegel. The necessity of the age has forced Rosenzweig to admit to the limits of Hegel's idea of the state as a political ideal. Indeed, looking back on Hegel's life he can now see that these limits were set when in Frankfurt Hegel first developed his idea of the state as fate "in proximity to

¹¹³⁵ HS 531.

¹¹³⁶ "nicht 'wie der Blitz aus dem Gewölke kommt,' ist jene [Tat] aus diesem [Gedanken] gesprungen; der Weg der Geschichte was länger und allmählicher, als die Sehnsucht des Dichters ihn träumte." HS 528.

Hölderlin."¹¹³⁷ Already then, the will of the individual far outweighed the will of the nation. In the following pages, we can now again turn towards Rosenzweig's reading of Hegel's life and, with the book behind us, see how this tragic vision is reflected in Rosenzweig's own personal biography.

"An die Deutschen": Rosenzweig's Hölderlin

Understanding how Rosenzweig makes use of Hölderlin's poem "An die Deutschen" is the final key to unlocking *Hegel and the State*. In the following section I offer an analysis of several verses from the poem. These verses appear within the context of the main epigraph to *Hegel and the State* and within the conclusion as well. I argue that an analysis of Hölderlin's "An die Deutschen" is indispensable for coming to terms with both the content of the book—Rosenzweig's critical narrative of Hegel's life—and also Rosenzweig's own biographical relation to *Hegel and the State* when he published it in 1920. In short, in what follows I show how Rosenzweig's motives for writing *Hegel and the State* as well as the reasons he would eventually move beyond the book are hidden within his formal use of Hölderlin's "An die Deutschen."

"An die Deutschen" was written in the year 1800. The significance of this date was no coincidence for Rosenzweig. Throughout his life, following in the footsteps of his elder Dilthey, Rosenzweig remained fixated upon this moment of German history. Rosenzweig's cousin Hans Ehrenberg, in a striking passage from his *Autobiography*, summarizes the height of spiritual life around the year 1800 and how it related to the emerging hopes for a renewed national life:

¹¹³⁷ "in Hölderlins Nähe." HS 532.

Politicians, poets and scholars tried in vain during the first decade of the nineteenth century to provide Germany with an all-around healthy foundation for her national life and to breathe into her the power to develop a new national tradition. Their failure to achieve this was a tragedy.¹¹³⁸

Ehrenberg's words, although quite broadly stated, may serve as a paraphrase of Rosenzweig's thesis in *Hegel and the State*: how did the hopes for a new national life find their champion in Hegel and his contemporaries and more importantly, in what manner did these hopes fall short? While Ehrenberg's use of the word "tragedy," written in exile in the year 1943, carries a much stronger implication than anywhere the word appears in *Hegel and the State*, juxtaposing this usage with Rosenzweig's text nevertheless underscores how in *Hegel and the State* the tragedy of German history is embedded within the life of one particular personality—Hegel. And although today this German tragedy could take on many historical forms—ranging from the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire in the year 1806; the fall of German Imperialism in 1918 and of course, beyond Rosenzweig's own life time, the rise of National Socialism—regarding the year "1800," Rosenzweig had a more particular tragedy in mind. As he would later write in a letter that would be termed the *Urzelle* or "germ cell" of *The Star of Redemption*, what captivated him above all in the year 1800 was "the *philosopher* as opposed to the philosophy."¹¹³⁹ This overtly existential tone shows that for Rosenzweig it was within the individual lives of the "[p]oliticians, poets and scholars" that the riddles of Germany's tragedy could to be unearthed. As expressed in Hegel's biography, it was first during his

¹¹³⁸ Ehrenberg, *Autobiography*. 104.

¹¹³⁹ Rosenzweig, "*Urzelle*." 370 (my emphasis).

friendship with the poet Hölderlin in Frankfurt that the notions of history and fate, the unity and separation of life were thrown into collision. The significance of Hölderlin's "An die Deutschen" is how it reveals the tragic undercurrent of German intellectual life in general and how even in a much different age Rosenzweig in particular could see his own German nationality reflected in the verses of this poem.

"An die Deutschen"¹¹⁴⁰ begins with a warning, "*Spottet nimmer des Kindes*" and continues with a humbling admission: "*auch wir sind / Tatenarm und gedankenvoll.*" The "*wir*" (we) of this first verse includes the poet amongst what must be assumed as the German people, "*Tatenarm und gedankenvoll.*" This central tension of the entire poem applies equally to the spheres of practical politics as well as poetical reflection. Indeed the failure to unite "*Gedanke*" (thought) and "*Tat*" (act) is the "tragedy" that Ehrenberg spoke of in his autobiography. In Hölderlin's poem this assumed result is still in question: "*Aber kommt, wie der Strahl aus dem Gewolke kommt / Aus Gedanken vielleicht, geistig und reif die Tat?*" What is at stake here, according to Stépfane Mosès in his essay "Rosenzweig und Hölderlin," is nothing less than the possibility of "an ideal community of the people, infused with the spirit of poetry."¹¹⁴¹ This ideal, which echoes the vision of community contained in the *Systemprogramm* that Rosenzweig first discovered, corresponds to Rosenzweig's vision for his own age as a cosmopolitan German state, a *Kulturstaat*, at least when he first began his book on Hegel in the year 1910.

¹¹⁴⁰ For all quotes from this poem, see Hölderlin, *Gesammelte Werke*.

¹¹⁴¹ "*idealen, vom Geist der Poesie durchdrungenen Volksgemeinschaft.*" Mosès, "Rosenzweig und Hölderlin." 358.

After establishing the frame of inquiry, the poem then shifts to the personal struggles of the poet himself: "*Schon zu lange, zu lang irr ich, dem Laien gleich / In des bildenden Geists werdender Werkstatt hier.*" The verses transform into a personal longing, a cry towards the creative spirit of the people: "*Schöpferischer, o wann, Genius unsers Volk / Wann erscheinst du ganz, Seele des Vaterlands.*" This longing for wholeness was the sentiment shared by Hölderlin and Hegel when they lived together in Frankfurt—there, in the language of Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, it was called "the unity of all life." When Hölderlin resummons this longing and those he longed with—"mit denen ich / *Vormals trauerte*"—it is once again by making comparison to the poets and artists not of Germany, but of Greece:

*Wenn unsere Städte nun
Hell und offen und wach, reineren Feuers voll,
Und die Berge des deutschen
Landes Berge der Musen sind,*

*Wie die herrlichen einst, Pindus und Helikon
Und Parnassos, und rings unter des Vaterlands
Goldnem Himmel die freie,
Klare, geistige Freude glänzt.*

This vision of the "golden skies of the Fatherland" remains precisely that, a vision. It would never be realized in its utopian ideal, not by Hölderlin himself nor for the generation to follow. Rather, the final words of the poem anticipate the struggles of the German people to give a poetical reality to their vision: "*Klanglos . . . ists in der Halle*

längst / Armer Seher! bei dir, sehrend verlischt dein Aug / Und du schlummerst hinunter / Ohne Namen und unbeweint." The use of the pronoun "du" (you), after the poem has shifted through the "wir" and "ich," removes the impersonal generality of the collective people, but inserts an ambiguity as to exactly who this "you" is. The "Armer Seher" at the end of the poem is at once the poet himself, but also all who still hold a vision of hope for the future of the German people. With the publication of his book on Hegel, Rosenzweig could still feel called by this "you." So much so, that he would choose to frame *Hegel and the State* with two verses from Hölderlin's "An die Deutschen." It is to these verses that I now turn.

The manner in which Rosenzweig integrates "An die Deutschen" into his text must be noted from the outset. Far from giving a critical reading of the poem, Rosenzweig selects certain verses that appear as direct *questions*; questions Hölderlin posed to his age, and which Rosenzweig now poses to his own. The first of these questions, taken from an older version of the second verse of the poem, was the original epigraph to *Hegel and the State* in 1909:

*Aber kommt, wie der Strahl aus dem Gewölke kommt
Aus Gedanken vielleicht, geistig und reif die Tat?
Folgt der Schrift, wie des Haines
Dunklem Blatte, die goldene Frucht?*

The choice of this epigraph for *Hegel and the State* appears at first to be quite practical. The movement from "Gedanken" (thoughts) to "Tat" (act) that the poem questions, mirrors the movement of German history in the nineteenth century as the *thoughts* of

politicians, poets and scholars, which leads to the *act* of the founding of the German nation-state by Bismarck. The fact that it is a question and not a statement shows the uncertainty Rosenzweig still sees in this progression. Indeed, it is the break between "*Gedanken*" and "*Tat*," like the break between "*Vernunft*" and "*Wirklichkeit*" that adds to the tragic undertones of the entirety of *Hegel and the State*.

However, the epigraph is also a cunning choice, which reflects on Rosenzweig's own biography. For in choosing this verse, Rosenzweig is also questioning the possibility of a written work, "*der Schrift*"—in this case *Hegel and the State*—to change the course of history. With his poem, Hölderlin proposes a vision of German unity, which Rosenzweig could still dream of before the collapse of the Wilhelmian Empire in 1918. This dream that Hölderlin and Hegel longed for in their youth, was pronounced as a longing towards the "genius of our people." However, looking back on his work in 1919, after living through the First World War and writing *The Star of Redemption*, Rosenzweig must soberly judge the course of history and the original dream of his work:

On the way from the collapse of the old empire to the foundation of the new— from Hegel to Bismarck—this dream remained unfulfilled. When this book was begun, it could have just as well seemed like a waking dream, one of those which precisely as dream could remain living in order to once become what dreams could become: history-creating power.¹¹⁴²

¹¹⁴² "Dieser Traum blieb schon auf dem Weg vom Untergang des alten zur Gründung des neuen Reichs— von Hegel zu Bismarck—unerfüllt. Als dies Buch begonnen wurde, konnte er gleichwohl ein Wahrtraum scheinen, einer von jenen, die gerade als Träume lebendig bleiben, um einst noch zu werden, was Träume werden können: Geschichte schaffende Macht." HS 532.

The dream Rosenzweig held to be possible when he first began his book on Hegel now seems to him "to dissolve irretrievably into the foam of the waves that engulf all of life."¹¹⁴³ As he stated in the addendum to the Foreword, his original task with *Hegel and the State* was to provide a critique of Hegel's political philosophy in order to help make room for a new sense of German nationality. By presenting Hegel's political thought in the form of a biography, Rosenzweig aimed to give his readers a living glimpse into their own political history and in this way reanimate their engagement with German national history and the contemporary political community. That Rosenzweig casts his project using Hölderlin's poetic question—"folgt der Schrift [...] die goldene Frucht?"—shows that he aimed to achieve this dream not through a call to political action, but through *Bildung*, or the shared culture of language and thought.

All that is left for Rosenzweig in 1919 is "a glimmer of hope" (*ein Schimmer von Hoffnung*),¹¹⁴⁴ and yet, as he writes making subtle reference to Goethe's Faust, "the prisoner in the dungeon is not prohibited from casting his glance upon it."¹¹⁴⁵ It is this "glimmer of hope" that Rosenzweig found in the second epigraph to his book and which now serves as the last lines of *Hegel and the State*:

*Wohl ist enge begrenzt unsere Lebenszeit
Unserer Jahre Zahl sehen und zählen wir,
Doch die Jahre der Völker,
Sah ein sterbliches Auge sie?*

¹¹⁴³ "unwiederbringlich sich aufzulösen in den Schaum der Wellen, die alles Leben überfluten." HS 532.

¹¹⁴⁴ HS 532.

¹¹⁴⁵ "doch dem Gefangenen im Kerker bleibt es unverwehrt, den Blick auf ihn zu werfen." HS 532. If Rosenzweig is indeed referencing *Faust* here, and I strongly believe he is, then the proper translation of "sein Blick", owing to the character Margarete, would have to be "her glance."

This second question, added as the second epigraph in 1919, was asked by the author of both *Hegel and the State* and *The Star of Redemption*. Even though from a stylistic perspective there is an abyss between these two works, with this second epigraph Rosenzweig's work on history and his work of philosophy briefly come together. The first lines of the verse, *Wohl ist enge begrenzt unsere Lebenszeit / Unserer Jahre Zahl sehen und zählen wir*, represent the work Rosenzweig did as an historian: the limits of a particular life are ordered by years and events. It is a kind of quantifying of life, an organization of the past. The second part of the verse on the other hand, *Doch die Jahre der Völker / Sah ein sterbliches Auge sie?* points towards the future and almost becomes a theological question. Taken together, this verse answers the question posed by the first epigraph—albeit with another question. Whether it is possible for written works to change the course of history, remains unanswered for Hölderlin and Rosenzweig alike. There is no knowing the limits of the history of a people. And yet, one could imagine that Rosenzweig saw something else in these verses, something closer to his heart as the author of *The Star of Redemption*. If a "mortal eye" cannot see the future and must cast his glance towards the past, what is this "glimmer of hope" Rosenzweig preserves? Is it the "genius of the people" that Hölderlin longs for? Or perhaps the power of history to transform the present? Or in Rosenzweig's case, if we again recall his allusion to *Faust*, is it perhaps a longing for the redemptive power of God?

As I showed above, Rosenzweig had just finished writing *The Star of Redemption* while he was working on revision to *Hegel and the State*. In this context, the phrase "the years of the people" (*die Jahre der Völker*) merits special attention. For readers of *The*

Star of Redemption, it is well known that Rosenzweig identifies himself as Jewish in this work. The entirety of Part III, which deals with the relation between Christianity and Judaism, is written using the pronoun "we" to denote Rosenzweig's belonging to the Jewish people (*jüdisches Volk*). But this same "we" in the context of *Hegel and the State* refers to Rosenzweig's belonging to the German people. Thus, with the addition of this second epigraph we have arrived at the crux of the German Jewish problem for Rosenzweig. This verse shows that Rosenzweig is at heart both German *and* Jewish, a pairing he struggled with his entire life. With the publication of *Hegel and the State* Rosenzweig bid farewell to his German past, only to embrace a Jewish future.

Rosenzweig chose to make the questions from Hölderlin's "An die Deutschen" emblematic for *Hegel and the State* because he conceived of his book as a gift "to the Germans." However, like the title to the poem, it would be foolish to see only this one side. Rosenzweig resurrects Hegel's biography in order to show how Hegel's political ideals diverted the vision of utopia he once shared with Hölderlin. In this manner, *Hegel and the State* was also written as a warning—not merely to the neo-Kantians who mocked Hegel's name at the beginning of the twentieth century—but to the German people as a whole: "*Spottet nimmer des Kindes [...] auch wir sind / Tatenarm und gedankenvoll.*" Today, Rosenzweig, rightly remembered as one of the most important Jewish thinkers of the twentieth century, is recognized for a more considerable gift to the German people—the translation of the Hebrew Bible into German with Martin Buber. His own relation to his past as a German historian, however, is one of tragedy: a life lived in the solitude of discipline and hopeful longing, only to be broken by the external forces of history. Thus, the verse following the second epigraph from Hölderlin's "An die

Deutschen," a verse Rosenzweig leaves unmentioned, provides a fitting picture for the undercurrent of tragedy we have been following throughout *Hegel and the State*:

*Wenn die Seele dir auch über die eigene Zeit
Sich die sehrende schwingt, trauernd verweilst du
Dann am kalten Gestade
Bei den Deinen und kennst sie nie*

This picture would remain all the more tragic, had Rosenzweig not found his soul renewed in the Jewish faith. However, part of Rosenzweig, even if a vision of his younger self, would always remain on the "*kalte Gestade*" he was forced to inhabit while writing Hegel's biography. In Part I of *The Star of Redemption* Rosenzweig takes up this isolated world of the tragic individual, in order to show how this tragedy may be overcome through language, love and faith. But as he writes there, "[w]ithout the storms of defiance in the self, the silence of the sea in the faithfulness of the soul would be impossible."¹¹⁴⁶ Thus, the tragic individual that Rosenzweig preserves within his narrative of *Hegel and the State*—to show through Hegel's life the impossibility of unifying the individual with the state—is captured in the same notion of individuality in *The Star of Redemption*. The "glimmer of hope" Rosenzweig draws from Hölderlin—*Doch die Jahre der Völker, sah ein sterbliches Auge sie?*—contains the same hope for redemption Rosenzweig would seek throughout his life. And as the ones-to-come—the "*Künftigen*" from Hölderlin's poem—is it not our task to brave the forceful waves of history and preserve this glimmer for those future souls still unknown?

¹¹⁴⁶ *Star* 170.

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