

Jerzy Kochan
University of Szczecin
e-mail: jerzy_kochan@poczta.onet.pl

Freedom. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel¹

Keywords: Hegel, freedom, social structure, master and slave, state, fear

*I was young and proud, and it pleased my vanity
when I learned from Hegel that it was not the dear God
who lived in heaven that was God,
as my grandmother supposed,
but I myself here on earth.*

H. Heine
Mentem sacram spontanem²

Vous voulez mécaniser l'éducation – said a councilor Glayre to Johan Heinrich Pestalozzi, commenting on his pedagogical program. *Right to the point* – writes the delighted reformer. – *He just took the words out of my mouth³.*

That story by Pestalozzi – who lived over ten years longer than much younger Fichte, points out to the essence of transformations in occurrence of freedom in the developing bourgeois society.

Torture and flogging are replaced by the prison and the educational system, the knight and his minion are replaced by mass mobilization, craftsmanlike creation of

¹ This is another part of the work on freedom. Previous was *J.G. Fichte and Freedom*, NK 2018, no. 41, pp. 43–66.

² *Mentem sacram spontanem* – that is, “Sacred and free thought”, is the inscription which – according to Pestalozzi – was placed on stables by Swiss peasants”. J.H. Pestalozzi, *Pisma pedagogiczne*, Warszawa–Wrocław–Kraków–Gdańsk 1972, p. 473.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 233.

rudiments of ideology is replaced by a structure of ideological practices, by ideological apparatuses of the state – and the foundation of those transformations is constituted by coming to so-called machinism. The craft mode of production, shaped in medieval towns, based on strict rules of guild regulation of production, where the direct product of a craftsman is a finished object of consumption, is replaced firstly by a simple decomposition of the work process into particular elements subordinated to particular workers specialized in realization of subsequent stages of work constituting the complete process of production. That type of organization of work, manufacture, which is a simple combination of individual work, is somehow an accidental phenomenon regarding the level of socialization of production. The fact of performing work together usually results from a crisis of craftsmanship, using of cottage industry by a merchant and, finally, from organizing functions of the state, which must, for example, ensure itself supply of a proper number of uniforms. That subordination has an accidental character, although it is not without advantages in the form of increase in work efficiency and making production cheaper. It is accidental – or, in other words, formal – because it does not result from technological regime of production.

Machinism is a stage when the machine goes between the direct producer and the processed object, partial works constituting the whole production lose their autonomous sense and the division of labor changes former craftsmen and manufacture workers into factory workers. Their existence under command of capital does not seem accidental anymore; both elements, the worker and the capitalist, are already necessary for realization of the very process of work, they become a real prerequisite of production. The social process of capitalist production leads to socialization of the process of production, it is abolishment of “private property and private labor, even though in contradictory forms”⁴. The factory, being a product of machinism, constitutes a new quality in a sequence of historical forms of production, it determines the basic direction of social transformations and determines the success of bourgeois society⁵.

Machinism reflects those changes in the paradigm of production. However, in order to improve their description you can refer also to the paradigm of labor and characterize progressing division of labor, its specialization, professionalization of production, the distance between simple and complex, manual and mental labor, the process of intellectualization of labor and division of mental labor, growing independence of ownership from performing executive and managerial functions.

⁴ K. Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. III, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-III.pdf>.

⁵ Machinism and manufacture are described in an interesting way by E. Balibar. L. Althusser, E. Balibar, *Czytanie „Kapitału”*, Warszawa 1979, pp. 419–433.

Another form of description of the same, as a matter of fact, phenomenon refers to the paradigm of exchange. It was developed in, probably, the most brilliant way by Georg Simmel in *The Philosophy of Money*. Depersonalization of power relations, which is associated by Simmel with such an early process as coming from personal dependence in tributary relations to a possibility of changing it into payment in kind (instead of personal participation a representation or a compensation in kind) in Europe in the 13th century, is a function of development of exchange relations. Its higher form – which already refers to money – is connected with a new age of dependence. Money is a carrier of freedom to such a degree that there were attempts at preventing peasants from having money in England in the 14th and the 15th century. Changing of natural forms of a tribute (beer, poultry, grain, honey, definite kinds of work) into a money form not only abolishes a possibility of a direct influence on the course of economic activity, but it also creates a danger of liberation from the existing dependencies: using money for buying land elsewhere and leaving one's own lord⁶.

The individual's dependence on an increasing number of people – which was progressing as a result of socialization of exchange, was going hand in hand with decreasing dependence on a particular man. Increasing objectivization of life content in its trans-individual form (“books; art; ideal creations, such as fatherland; universal culture...”) facilitates an increasing feeling of individual exchangeability mediated by market. Increasing versatility of connections with others do not have, however, a personal character, but it is, on the one hand, just depersonalized, and, on the other hand, in the face of depersonalized versatility, anonymity of the social world, which is external in its relation to the individual, the awareness of one's own subjectivity intensifies. “Not a bond as such – Simmel writes – but an individual bond with a definite lord is the antipode of freedom”⁷. The factory, worker connected with the machine, with the production process, is dependent on a depersonalized technological process, on nature; his bonds with the entrepreneur are, from the historical viewpoint, incomparably looser. In the last instance he can quit work at his will, terminate his employment contract. Socialization of interpersonal relations, intensification of exchange relations, whose element is also social mobility (horizontal and vertical, but not “geographical”); finally, development of objective forms of mediatization of social relations – cause that freedom grows together with objectivization and depersonalization of the economic cosmos. As we read in *The Philosophy of Money*:

Only when it comes to the full development, complication of internal economic interactions, there appears a dependence between humans, which – by exclusion of personal elements – directs the individual towards himself making him aware

⁶ G. Simmel, *Filozofia pieniądza*, transl. by A. Przyłębski, Poznań 1997, p. 261.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 272.

of his freedom in a more positive sense than awareness of lack of bonds could do. Money is an absolutely suitable carrier of such a relation, because it creates connections between people, but it lets them stay outside of them; it is a precise equivalent of provisions in kind, but that what is individual and personal in them is measured by it very inadequately. Narrowness of material dependencies which is created by it – for a mind sensible to differences – is a background the personality and its freedom can be clearly visible against⁸.

The paradigm of production, the paradigm of labor, the paradigm of market – do not exhaust possibilities of interpretations, which are often complementary to each other and even more often competing with each other to a considerable degree. However, each of the three referred forms of analysis expresses an increasing social division of labor, whose result is simultaneously intensifying subordination of partial work, specialization, fragmentation of the labor process and a more and more ruthless bond between the producer and the necessity of the natural/technical aspect of the labor process as well as, seemingly contradictory to that trend, the process of autonomization, universalization of the individual: his growing independence from personalized forms of domination, which are increasingly mediatized by coming into being and developing social institutions.

Machinism in the realm of production is paralleled by mass education, universal mobilization, democracy, social and political forms of organization of civil society, popularization of various kinds of symbolic forms of social reproduction. Thus, the slogan proclaiming mechanization, machinization of teaching, which delighted Pestalozzi – a great reformer of pedagogy – so much, was a prophetic one and it rightly aroused admiration.

However, all the terms which are referred to, together with “mechanization of teaching”, refer rather to a general model of the bourgeois society than to early 19th-century Germany. The emphasized role of money was also going to increase only with development of the money-goods economy and it was going to achieve its high point almost two hundred years later in consumerist – or even post-consumerist – societies, where a citizen equipped with cash or, even better, with a credit card – was going to become a consumer. The Hegelian philosophy becomes a philosophy of freedom not as a result of universality of developed capitalist relations, but as a result of the explosion of the French Revolution. Without the revolution it would be hard to imagine not only the historical dimension of Hegel’s philosophy, but also the whole classic German philosophy. Dynamism of the phenomenology of spirit originates from sans-culottes songs. On the other hand, the idea of a privileged place of philosophy results from a necessity of stopping – to a considerable degree – at ideas of the

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 276.

revolution in the days of glory of triumphant Napoleon and, even more, in sad times of the Restoration⁹. Promulgation of the idea of freedom, also in the form of the state, and formulation of the philosophy of freedom desaturate the dynamism of history in Hegel's philosophy. The historical process, as it is described by Hegel, seems to undergo subjectivization and the closer we are to the contemporary times the more it loses its primary multidimensionality. The reconciliation with the bourgeois society is a reconciliation with its early hybrid form which was too hastily recognized as the end of history.

It does not mean, however, that Hegel's analysis of society of his times is amateurish and incompetent. Researchers on the German philosopher's writing discovered a long time ago his extensive studies on works of British and French economists¹⁰, and his analyses of the social structure, law and functioning of the state belong to the classic sociological and legal thought¹¹. However, a more detailed analysis of the way of understanding the social structure in Hegel's works is a good starting point for deeper understanding of historical relativity of the Hegelian philosophy and of its particular historical interpretation

Let us first of all come to a conclusion that in Hegel's views we have to do with an assumption about an estate division of society, an estate character of social differentiation. *Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft* includes estates – that is, groups of people which are different from each other on three levels: of their subsistence, of modes of work and of spiritual education with connected customs.

Hegel writes about the division of society in the following way:

But the concrete division of the general stock – which is also a general business (of the whole society) – into particular masses determined by the factors of the notion – masses each of which possesses its own basis of subsistence, and a cor-

⁹ Taking into account just the perspective of the Restoration, a separate place is occupied by Schelling's philosophy. His interpretation of freedom is – according to my opinion – derivative of Hegel's (as well as Fichte's) standpoint. I do not mean an imitative character, but rather logical derivativeness and decreased clarity, which is a function of the burnout of post-revolutionary optimism. "Darkness in man murmuring incessantly" is closer to the god and to existentialism, but we should also remember about interpreting Schelling's arguments as "crypto-materialist" ones (Habermas). All the more, the issue is extremely complicated and very interesting. It would require dealing with problems of religion and art in a way going much beyond my current intentions. Problems of freedom in Schelling's philosophy are interestingly described by J. Piórczyński in the book *Wolność człowieka i Bóg. Studium filozofii F.W.J. Schellinga*, Warszawa 1999.

¹⁰ For example, in Hegel's *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* you can find traces of reading *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) by A. Smith, *Traité d'économie politique* (1803) by J.B. Say and *On the Principle of Political Economy, and Taxation* (1817) by Adam Smith.

¹¹ The most interesting parts of Hegel's considerations concerning those problems are included in his *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* and *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*.

responding mode of labor, of needs, and of means for satisfying them, also of aims and interests, as well as of mental culture and habit – constitutes the difference of Estates (orders or ranks). Individuals apportion themselves to these according to natural talent, skill, option, and accident. As belonging to such a definite and stable sphere, they have their actual existence, which as existence is essentially a particular; and in it they have their social morality, which is honesty, their recognition and their honor. Where civil society, and with it the State, exists, there arise the several estates in their difference: for the universal substance, as vital, exists only so far as it organically particularizes itself. The history of constitutions is the history of the growth of these estates, of the legal relationships of individuals to them, and of these estates to one another and to their center¹².

As we can see, in Hegel's works the existence of estates is connected with coming into being of civil society and its coming into being is connected with coming into being of the state; moreover, it is possible to proclaim without addressing the problems connected with the term "civil society", that the whole state history is for Hegel a history of estate formation and of relations between estates, individuals and the state. At the same time, he finds estates' *raison d'être* in a general rule recognizing a necessity of existence of the specific between the universal and the individual.

The estates themselves, their existence, are grounded in a generally defined "subsistence" with other determinants of the estate status superimposed on; estate membership, although its roots go as low as to the economic level, is also connected with other dimensions of subsistence-determined existence: the kind of work, needs, aims, interest, spiritual culture and habits. The estate character of society includes its own kind of ethics, its honor, it determines a particular, separate world founded on the existing division of labor.

Hegel distinguishes three estates:

- a) the substantial, natural estate – has "a natural and stable capital" supplied by "the fruitful soil and ground";
- b) the reflected estate – "has as its allotment the social capital, the medium created by the action of middlemen, of mere agents, and an ensemble of contingencies";
- c) the thinking estate – "has for its business the general interests"¹³.

Although in the first moment these three estates can arise associations with the three estates of the feudal society (gentry, clergy and the underprivileged third estate), as a matter of fact they do not have much in common with that division, because reading various Hegel's statements leads us to a conclusion that the first estate was

¹² G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind: Part Three of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, transl. by W. Wallace, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ee1d/605d5aaa800a060aa07562c3a-eeed33a6f9bd.pdf>.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

distinguished because of its way of developing subsistence and its connection with land, and it includes both peasants as bigger landowners. In *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* that estate is called also the agricultural estate¹⁴. However, the distinction between “soil” and “ground” seems also to suggest richer forms of bonds with earth – namely, those connected with excavation of minerals. On the other hand, it is worth remembering that in another place Hegel describes that estate as the landowner estate and on that occasion he divides it into the educated part and the peasant estate¹⁵. That estate’s subsistence is connected with nature and one’s own activity of the natural estate’s members is not of the primary importance: “the most important thing is done by nature”. Subordination to nature to such a great degree makes that estate – according to Hegel’s opinion – especially submissive and patient, but also conservative and inclined to maintaining patriarchal relations.

Let us turn attention to the fact that such a description of the natural estate places it almost beyond the realm of market economy mechanisms, laws of demand and supply, dependence on movement of capital. Hegel emphasizes independence of that estate’s property both from the state and from mechanisms of capitalist economy.

The second estate, the reflected one, is the estate of industrial occupations or just the industrial estate. The above-mentioned description of that estate stresses as its constitutive moment the mediation of production in a complex system of social division of labor. Here we have to do with activity whose space is created by social – and not natural – potential. Activity of that kind has a spontaneous character and it is dependent to a great degree on individual “concept”, but also on accidental “coincidences”. The second estate – unlike the first one – presupposes the existence of money-goods economy and a relatively high level of socialization of production; in that social area simple fulfillment of one’s own needs which is not mediated by the market of money-goods exchange and a complex combination of partial activities is not possible anymore. The term “reflected estate” which is used by Hegel stresses the significance of mind, reason, talent, individual spiritual premises of doing work connected with that estate.

However, development of socialization of work revealed in Hegel’s arguments is not much advanced in this case too. It becomes clearly visible on the occasion of making a division of the reflected estate.

There are three estates distinguished: the craft estate, the estate of manufacturers and the merchant estate. Craftsmen working on a direct individual order are treated with the same attention as the estate of manufacturers producing mass products for

¹⁴ G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, transl. by H.B. Nisbet, https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/students/modules/hi2a5/timetable/constitutionalism/hegel_phil_of_right_ed_wood.pdf.

¹⁵ G.W.F. Hegel, *Encyklopedia nauk filozoficznych*, transl. by Ś.F. Nowicki, Warszawa 1990, p. 431.

anonymous consumers. Craftsmen, merchants and the factory estate do not undergo further differentiation; Hegel deals neither with divisions inside a craft enterprise – which, after all, usually consists of more than one person – nor with making a distinction between the factory worker and the capitalist or the entrepreneur (they are classified together as belonging to “manufacturers” or “the factory estate”), nor with looking for analogous complexities among merchants. Autonomy of members of the reflected estate facilitates – according to Hegel’s opinion – their inclination towards freedom and reluctance for subordination.

The specificity of Hegel’s standpoint consists, among others, in the fact that – as a matter of fact – he brackets property relations within the second estate. The difference between “craftsmen” and “manufacturers”, on the one hand, and “merchants”, on the other hand, is here a function of the difference between production and circulation; the distance between “the craftsman”, on the one hand, and “the manufacturer” as well as “the merchant”, on the other hand, reflects the level of socialization of production. Land ownership, which is basic for the natural estate, has not its equivalent in that case. It is not a coincidence. For Hegel differentiations within the reflected estate are not significant, because they are included in its reflexivity – what means that everybody, thanks to their own activity, work, smartness, good luck, can determine their own social status. Now, coming back to the natural estate, we can come to a conclusion that property understood as a source of intra-estate differentiation does not play there any role, either.

Seemingly we have to do with a situation analogous to that in the case of *The Closed Commercial State* by J.G. Fichte, because the basis for differentiations – using the language of contemporary sociology – seems to be individual, private ownership of labor power, *ergodynamis*. A similarity to Fichte’s interpretation indubitably exists, but it is only an apparent one. The difference consists in the context of application of a similar interpretation. In Hegel’s case, it constitutes an element of analysis of the existing contemporaneity; thus, quite naturally, it is a form of a basic simplification of the picture of social relations and of their mystification. On the other hand, in the work by the author of *The Science of Knowledge* that individual dimension of property becomes an element of construction of a desired social reality, the basic module of a structural and radical negation of the *status quo*. It is a very significant moment for understanding the general difference between Fichte and Hegel, and because of that we are going to come back to it in a broader context.

The third estate – the thinking one or the general one – deals with “general interests”; it is, in a way, the middle estate, because it presupposes “its own skill” – similarly as the reflected estate – and “like the first a certain subsistence [...] guaranteed

through the whole society¹⁶. That whole society resembles nature appearing in the case of the first estate, and only in that sense we have to do with a similarity. The subsistence depends on individual skill, but its nature is society mediated by the state, because the discussed estate includes people in state service: military men, lawyers, civil servants and representatives of other occupations if they are characterized by “political consciousness” and “conspicuous education”¹⁷.

The estate structure presented in such a way constitutes, as a matter of fact, an analysis of class relations of the early capitalist society expressed with a language characteristic for the feudal society¹⁸. It is the source of its untransparency and hybridity. It is also the reason why its usefulness for contemporary sociology is limited. It is, however, of crucial importance for us when we try to reveal methodological premises of Hegel’s philosophy, but also for understanding the Hegelian picture of social reality, which plays a basic role in the totality of his views¹⁹.

First of all let us turn attention to the – already stressed – early capitalist character of the described society. It is expressed by the basic division into the natural estate and the reflective estate: the first of them, naturally fixed and distanced from the reflective world of the capitalist economy and including various and – from the contemporary viewpoint – basically different parts of society, constitutes from Hegel’s point of view, firstly, a peaceful whole and, secondly, a being which is qualitatively different from the reflected estate and impenetrable for capitalism. The natural estate’s unassailable social status is based on its “natural” bond with nature, its “unreflectiveness” reflects a low level of capitalization of that sphere of economic activity in Hegel’s times.

Separateness of the natural estate corresponds with the separateness of the reflected estate. Contradictions which are constitutive for “manufacturers” remain unrecognized also in that case and the whole estate is characterized by inoffensive particularity, similarly as relations between parts of the reflective state. It seems also that there is free vertical social mobility in it, between its sections, which is determined only by individual reflectivity.

¹⁶ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy Of Mind: Part Three of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Science*, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy...*

¹⁸ It is pointed out by Stanisław Kozyr-Kowalski when he compares Hegel’s and Weber’s conceptions of social estates. He uses on that occasion a phrase “basically already the capitalist society”. S. Kozyr-Kowalski, *Max Weber a współczesne teorie stratyfikacji społecznej*, Warszawa 1979, p. 207. About Hegel’s vision of the social structure, also in the context of contemporary sociology, you can read in: *idem*, *Socjologia, społeczeństwo obywatelskie i państwo*, Poznań 1999, pp. 48–92; see also: *idem*, *Max Weber a Karol Marks*, Warszawa 1967.

¹⁹ “Thus, today almost everybody – M.J. Siemek writes – agrees that: 1. What constitutes the basic core of Hegel’s thought is just social philosophy”. M.J. Siemek, *Hegel i filozofia*, Warszawa 1998, p. 108.

The description of both estates seems to presuppose the static character of relations between particular distinguished estates and their sections. Thus, the process of capitalization of agriculture and development of money-goods relations are not taken into account, there is no awareness of dynamism of relations between “manufacturers”, between them as a whole and other parts of the reflective state.

The general estate has an essentially different character. It is connected with existence of the state and its general functions surpassing particularity of both estates and its sections as well as particular individuals. What is extremely important for the right interpretation of Hegel’s views is understanding the conception of the state correctly. That question is already shrouded in a great amount of literature and there is no time for a detailed analysis of that issue. It is only important for us to proclaim here that – unlike in the case of class interpretations of the essence of the state – Hegel’s standpoint should be interpreted as representing such a kind of attitude which assumes that the state is a representative of the general interest, which is reducible neither to articulation of the will of the privileged, nor to expressing “the will of the people”, nor to a simple reflection of the universal. “In civil society – writes the author of *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* – the sole end is to satisfy want – and that, because it is man’s want, in a uniform general way, so as to secure this satisfaction”²⁰, but it is not about “securing the satisfaction of individuals”, those individuals – Hegel writes cautiously and briefly – “here the individuals are the morally justifiable end” *for themselves*. Looking closer at the general estate makes it possible to form a more detailed opinion about a possible meaning of those quotations.

The supra-estate *logos* finds its carrier in the general estate. The general estate is the subject of the state put above society by its social function, its connection with the general, mediatization and creation of a higher-order rationality. That “creation of a higher-order rationality” presupposes special individual qualifications enabling to deal with general and common questions, serving reason and common good, education connected with knowledge of broadly understood philosophy. Only education gained in universities, confirmed by diplomas and a special exam can constitute a basis for performing functions of public servants.

Uneducated representatives of common people cannot be public servants, but rich citizens only because of their wealth or aristocrats only because of being well-born cannot be them either. Character, past merits, political or ideological beliefs cannot make you eligible to the category of public servants. At the same time the discussed education cannot have a mechanical character. It must become something authentic, the second nature, civility, which assumes autonomous thinking, respect for truth, ability to get to truth and serving it.

²⁰ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind...*

There is no doubt that in those Hegel's characteristics of civil servants' qualifications we find something close to Fichte's spirit. However, philosophy as a subjective premise of the human vocation in Hegel's case changes into a civil servant's exam of ability to serve truth within state structures. Thus, detailed considerations concerning good performance of clerical functions consist in that case in constructing theoretical and practical premises of the historical rational subject. Hegel considers types of an "errant knight public servant" and of a "state's valet", significance of public opinion, the degree of state interference with mechanisms of uncontrolled market economy, the danger of mass poverty changing masses into a mob, which does not work and hates every authority.

These, of course, are not the only premises, but they are very important and significant for Hegel. The general estate is a philosophically certified equivalent of the Fichtean Ephors Council, and – if we look backward – we probably see Plato sold to pirates and his *Republic* somewhere in the distance. I do not belong, of course, to the enemies of Plato's *Republic*, *The Closed Commercial State* or all social utopias. More, Bacon, Campanella always moved me with their power and courage. Their proclamations demonstrate – independently from the very text – some basic declaration, as if those dreamers told us: "Now I, some human with a name dusting himself off the middle ages' dirt, will create a project of a happy humankind by power of my own reason, just like a shoemaker makes shoes or a baker bakes bread. Behold, I am stepping after a call for a new reality and I say: here I am!"

The question, as I have already mentioned, does not come down to an act of courage. Simultaneously it is opening up to a new age of the humankind's self-cognition, the beginning of the process of discovering the continent of history and society for scientific cognition. However, it is hard to treat considerations conducted by Hegel on the occasion of description of the general estate's functioning simply in the same way as earlier utopias; contemporarily they are very inspiring for many sociologists and economists; subtlety and dialectical character of introduced distinctions, as well as discovered mediations and complexities, is an excellent antidote to contemporary simplifications. Thus, what is interesting here is not a "utopian" character of Hegel's considerations concerning civil servants, but – generally speaking – the distinguished role of the general estate and its role in differentiated society.

The social structure, according to Hegel's interpretation, determines the actors between whom the drama of history takes place and those complex problems of mediations and exteriorization, establishment, abolishment and reification, fetishism and alienation are realized. Its basic elements, besides estates, are individuals structured by estates, the family, the nation, the state and – finally – universal history. However, real subjectivity concerns individuals and the state embodied by the general estate, because estates are only a form of specification of the general substance in an organic way. Huge significance of the general estate results from its recognition as a form of

active mediatization not only for estate differentiation, but also between the “direct or natural” spirit – that is, *family*, the ‘relative’ totality of the ‘relative’ relations of the individuals as independent persons to one another in a formal universality – Civil Society”²¹, and – finally – the “consciously free substance, in which the absolute ‘ought’ is no less an ‘is’, has actuality as the spirit of a nation”²².

Nation, according to Hegel’s interpretation, plays a distinguished role; as a divided internal power and a necessity of persons’ self-existence, it is individuation of the nation’s spirit, “the person, as an intelligent being, feels that underlying essence [that is, nation – J.K.] to be his own very being... his absolute final aim... Thus, without any selective reflection, the person performs his duty as his own and as something which is; and in this necessity he has himself and his actual freedom”²³.

Thus, at least in that moment, freedom has a national character – and it has it in an unreflective, “natural” way. Going further, we come to a conclusion that real subjects of the historical process are nations in the form of states – they are those who create universal history and their history is the place where individuals’ detailed self-existence saturates.

What does it mean?

According to Hegel, it means that an individual submerged in the reality of concrete life experiences himself as “nullity” and preserves existence of the social reality by readiness for “sacrifice on the part of these individuals of this natural and particular existence – so making nugatory the nugatoriness that confronts it”²⁴.

Nowadays that proclamation sounds menacingly, but, after all, it is only an illusion. Giving up one’s own life for the country and – generally – self-immolation as a sacrifice on some altar still belong to the recognized dominating cultural paradigm. At the turn of the 18th and the 19th century the situation was not different. Let us recall a scandal connected with Fichte’s opposition to justifying a student’s refusal of taking part in a duel. According to Fichte’s opinion it was an undignified deed requiring condemnation, because life is not as valuable as honor.

But that similarity to Fichte goes even further. He also, after all, looked for a sense of life constituting an alternative to religion, referred to its humanistically relativized interpretation. The human vocation is realized by achieving immortality through introducing an individual existence into an infinite process of the humankind’s improvement. An indubitable similarity cannot, however, cover a basically different attitude to the individual. In the case of Fichte, society – and the human’s vocation connected with it – provides the individual subject with happiness and immortality

²¹ *Ibidem.*

²² *Ibidem.*

²³ *Ibidem.*

²⁴ *Ibidem.*

matching the religious version of eternal happiness. We cannot speak there of recognizing the individual – no matter in what a relative context – as “nullity”. The real subject, the creator of the world, is the human being, the individual – always “I”.

Recognition of the national state as the subject of history instrumentalizes the individual. It turns them into elements of reproduction of the supra-individual being, which reveals accidentalness of their unique characters, although it does not abolish their necessity. My aim is neither “moral” condemnation of Hegel, nor praising Fichte. It is rather about revelation of the basic difference between Hegel’s *subject of the state’s reproduction* and Fichte’s *ideological subject*, which is the subject of revolution, of a radical negation of feudalism and even – if we take into account that *The Closed Commercial State* was precursory to scientific socialism – of capitalism.

I have already stressed the difference between the Hegelian and the Fichtean attitude to the problem of property, the basic difference in abstracting from property relations in the analysis of the early 19th-century German reality and in the project of the closed commercial state. In the first case it is building of ideological veils which wrap up social contradictions and exploitative relation with a soft matter of ignorance, in the other case it is a theoretical basis for abstracting from the existing property relations in revolutionary practice. Similarly I pointed out to a significant translocation of the philosopher’s functions from a creator of human vocation to a laureate of competitive exams entitling for being a civil servant, a member of the general estate. Philosophy becomes necessary equipment of the state and of the office holder, like an inkwell, an abacus and oversleeves. Besides the above-mentioned differences there is also a difference which I call the difference between the subject of reproduction and the ideological subject.

But it is possible to reveal even more differences constituting a significant whole. A different interpretation of the issue of freedom in Hegel’s philosophy is indubitably connected with those differences between both philosophers’ attitudes. It can be said that for Hegel “freedom” is an already existing element of the philosophical landscape and it demands “only” justification and groundwork²⁵. Holism of the Hegelian philosophy and its historicism are connected with an interpretation of freedom as the culmination of the whole history. That way we are shown a classic figure of thought consisting in presenting the past as a sequence of necessary steps leading to that what exists and presenting that what exists as the only possible reality. The whole Hegelian philosophy is one big figure of that kind and that is why it is a philosophy of freedom.

Of course, in that case it has its limitations. “That what exists” include Napoleon and the Restauration. Hegel – unlike Fichte, who hated Emperor of the French and

²⁵ You can get a picture of just that systematic character of the issue of freedom in Hegel’s philosophy thanks to, among others, H. Perkowska’s work *W kręgu heglowskiej dialektyki*, Szczecin 1987, especially pp. 128–170.

who, in response to betrayal of ideas of the French Revolution turns with hope to the “philosophical” German nation – has a great respect for Napoleon²⁶. And in German conditions he not only reprimands any mutiny against any government – let us remember about a basically different Fichte’s standpoint – but he also praises monarchy²⁷.

But such a form of limitation, similarly as limitations resulting from the presented Hegel’s analyses of the social structure, has a clear and directly accessible character. However – generally speaking – interpreting freedom as an element of social reproduction in such a total way is based on Kant’s and Fichte’s works, or rather on the essence of those works presented in earlier chapters. The referred – and somehow scandalizing – neoconservatism of Hegel is not able to constitute a basis for understanding attractiveness of his philosophy in next generations’ reception. That attractiveness is connected with absorption of his predecessors’ achievements and shifting them somehow to another position in social ontology. The structure of ideological appellation based on the medial function of freedom is moved to comprehensively understood reproduction of the social being and referred to the state, law, religion, art and philosophy²⁸. The ideological subject undergoes universalization and, simul-

²⁶ Hegel’s attitude to revolution and to the French Revolution is a problem in itself. With all his positive attitude to Napoleon an opinion of J. Ritter about revolutionary character of his philosophy is worth quoting: “There is no other philosophy than Hegel’s philosophy which would be a philosophy of revolution to such a degree, as far as to its most internal motives”. J. Ritter, *Hegel et la Révolution française*, Paris 1970, p. 17. That issue is interestingly described by R. Panasiuk in the paper *Mysł polityczna Hegla wobec Rewolucji Francuskiej*, „Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej” vol. 25, 1979; cf. also: *idem*, *Hegel a Marks. Studia i szkice*, Warszawa 1986.

²⁷ “In the perfect form of the state, in which each and every element of the notion has reached free existence, this subjectivity is not a so-called ‘moral person’, or a decree issuing from a majority (forms in which the unity of the decreeing will have not an actual existence), but an actual individual – the will of a decreeing individual – monarchy. The monarchical constitution is therefore the constitution of developed reason: all other constitutions belong to lower grades of the development and realization of reason. The unification of all concrete state-powers into one existence, as in the patriarchal society – or, as in a democratic constitution, the participation of all in all affairs – impugns the principle of the division of powers, i.e. the developed liberty of the constituent factors of the Idea. But no whit less must the division (the working out of these factors each to a free totality) be reduced to ‘ideal’ unity, i.e. to subjectivity. The mature differentiation or realization of the Idea means, essentially, that this subjectivity should grow to be a real ‘moment’, an actual existence; and this actuality is not otherwise than as the individuality of the monarch – the subjectivity of abstract and final decision existent in one person” (G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind...*). Of course, we see that monarchy which is accepted by Hegel is not monarchy in general, but a product of his times, which is a result of abolition of earlier patriarchal and democratic stages of history.

²⁸ In *The Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel writes that “each individual consciousness elevates itself out of the sphere assigned to it and no longer finds its essence and its labor within this particula-

taneously, diversification, division into various individual subjects according to the increasing social division of labor. For Fichte, lack of answer to the human vocation disqualifies to a degree entitling for recognition that such a German as a matter of fact is not a German, that such a human as a matter of fact is not a human and that he is not different from the world of nature. A human without freedom is not a human in the restrictive, and not the descriptive sense – it is consistent, after all, with the logic of ideology, which likes to speak about e.g. “a real Pole”, “real democracy”.

Hegel generously provides everybody with passion and individual freedom, which is reducible to such a passion, but which – along with the spirit’s progress in history – undergoes evolution on the level of subjectivity. Thus, freedom is here just growing subjectivity and rationality, the spirit’s increasing awareness of being free. Such a processual attitude does not mean rejection of the Fichtean attitude, but only in this sense that the Odyssey of individual freedom is embedded in history and constitutes an “answer” to the Other, it becomes involved in dialectic dependencies of the individual, the detailed and the general. It is no more a conscious individual answer to an appellation, but dialectics of the subjective, the objective and the absolute spirit.

Reconciliation with the bourgeois society takes place not only by a “consent” to Napoleon – a consent indubitably heroic in German conditions, but also in the form of giving up an idea of the individual as a rational subject or, more cautiously, a philosophical or an ideological subject. Philosophy is philosophical, similarly as philosophers, but its social presence can be realized only in a form mediatized by religion, art, the state, law, morality, the general estate, officials and policemen... People driven by passion create the social reality *as if* it was a natural reality, with its laws, ontological structure and dependencies. But they do not create it consciously, although they are directed by their own consciousness, passion²⁹. An objective sequence of results of their crashing and transforming passions is uncontrolled – also in the times of nation states, which are appointed “to occupy only one grade, and accomplish one task in the whole deed”³⁰.

rized social sphere, Instead, it grasps itself as the concept of the will, and it grasps all the social spheres as the essence of this will; thus it is only able to realize itself in a labor which is a total labor. The individual consciousness that belonged to any such group and which exercised its will and which found its fulfillment there, has sublated its boundaries, and its purpose is now the universal purpose, its language the universal law, its work the universal work”. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/ph/pinkard-translation-of-phenomenology.pdf>. And later, “in making the transition into activity and into creating objectivity, it is thus not making anything which is individual; it is merely making laws and state-actions” (*ibidem*).

²⁹ As Hegel wrote: “the majority has no idea what it is about and gets beaten up like by an invisible hand” (a letter to Niethammer from 5.07.1816, in: *Briefe von und an Hegel*, vol. II, Hamburg 1958, p. 87).

³⁰ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind...*

Subjectivity on the level of history is subjectivity of nations, but the universal history in Hegel's works is a spontaneous process with no prospects for rationalization. There is no question of globalization of reason. What can be achieved in the area of international relations is, at best, mutual recognition which is the best demonstrated by peace treaties. There is no mention of any world government, a level of rationality achieved on the level of nation states but transferred into the global dimension.

Let us notice that also in this case Hegel's view constitutes – from the viewpoint of lovers of, for example, globalization or humanism – a regress not only in comparison with futurology of *The Closed Commercial State*, where an acute reader can notice an announcement of the global social justice system, but even in a juxtaposition with the global power of Kant's categorical imperative or with his project of eternal peace.

That irrational process of world, global historicity, which is a permanent point of reference for all Hegel's historiosophical statements, is often treated by interpreters as something existing outside of the absolute spirit and there is a tendency to identify it with "some" form of dependence on a "higher power", a symptom of true – although modified – religiosity. It is, however, indubitable that we have to do with proclaiming of the end of something. What is the end proclaimed by Hegel?

The simplest answer is a statement that Hegel was a precursor of Francis Fukuyama's ideas and that he "splendidly anticipated" conceptions of the contemporary pop-philosophy.

Apprehension of Hegel's standpoint, under the assumption that our recognition of a spontaneous character of the historical process in the global dimension is right here, simply requires looking at the history of philosophy and asking a question not only about the "end" in philosophy of the author of *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, but also, at least, about proclaiming a "Copernican revolution" by Immanuel Kant, the end of philosophy by Johann Gottlieb Fichte, the end of all philosophy by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, coming of a new positive age by August Comte. The question asked in such a way moves us towards recognition of an unspecific character of Hegel's standpoint and treating him as a representative of a much broader opinion which stated that some breakthrough took place or was taking place in history at the turn of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century.

What does that breakthrough consist in?

Answers are rather known. The story goes that "Kant proved that human beings are not a passive receptors of phenomena, but they impose their *a priori* on reality". Even if we limit our reference to Kant to this one popularly perceived moment, ignoring the practical reason, it is enough to see that the essence of change consists in "humanization" of the theory of cognition, subjectivization of the act of cognition, subjectivization of knowledge. That humanization in Fichte's philosophy reaches the level of the total I = I annihilating the thing-in-itself, the idea of "human vocation" and a radical social project. Comte proclaims the end of the metaphysical phase and

coming of the age of positivism, foundation of sociology and ideas of social engineering³¹. In the case of young Marx of *The German Ideology*, the same spirit leads to a declaration of the end of philosophy and proclamation of existence of the only one science – history³².

In all those standpoints there is an acute awareness of an end and of a beginning of something new. The thing which unites those, after all, much different views is opening to history and society, to studying what is social and historical, to radical planning and transforming society on the basis of a scientific diagnosis. All those proclamations are expressions of a happening breakthrough – the breakthrough taking place not only in the referred philosophical conceptions, but in a much broader context, for example in the field of development of economic thought, which was such a significant source for Hegel. The essence of the new is a discovery of a “continent of history” for scientific cognition and making a variously defined science on society not only a background for created ideologies – of a more or less particular or statist character – but also a necessary element of social self-reflection, of reproduction of the social process in conditions of developing capitalism³³.

If a connection between the general state and philosophy in Hegel’s works reveals social and institutional carriers of ideal and symbolic premises of reproduction, proclaiming that the spirit has achieved self-consciousness is a form of proclamation of constitution of all premises of that social self-reflection. And of nothing more. *Savoir pour prévoir*. However, rationality on the level of the nation state is not so simple. Similarly like in other moments, Hegel’s attitude also here is more realistic, it is a regression in relation to Fichte’s ideological practice in the strict sense. Sin is not something what would be situated only on the level of individual, as it seems in various pastoral practices. Rationality also stops being a feature of an individual subject.

³¹ “The metaphysical phase – Comte writes – can be recognized as a kind of chronic disease which is a necessary stage of intellectual development of both the individual and society; it constitutes a natural passage from childhood to maturity”. A. Comte, *Rozprawa o duchu filozofii pozytywnej*, transl. by J.K., Warszawa 1936, p. 13. How close is Comte in that statement to Kant answering the question: *Was ist Aufklärung?*

³² “We know only a single science, the science of history. One can look at history from two sides and divide it into the history of nature and the history of men. The two sides are, however, inseparable; the history of nature and the history of men are dependent on each other so long as men exist. The history of nature, called natural science, does not concern us here; but we will have to examine the history of men, since almost the whole ideology amounts either to a distorted conception of this history or to a complete abstraction from it. Ideology is itself only one of the aspects of this history”. K. Marx, F. Engels, *German Ideology*, [in:] *eadem, Collected Works*, vol. V, http://www.hekmatist.com/Marx%20Engles/Marx%20&%20Engles%20Collected%20Works%20Volume%205_%20Ma%20-%20Karl%20Marx.pdf.

³³ There is a very characteristic Hegel’s statement in *Preface to The Phenomenology of Spirit*, constituting a declaration comparable to F. Bacon’s *Novum organum*.

Rational law, rational institutions, customs, religion – thus, social non-individual beings – are a way of creation of rationality going beyond rationality of particular persons, of their sum; achievement of self-consciousness means saying goodbye to pre-scientific humanism, which becomes an area gladly operated by ideological practices, almost their element. The existence of that non-personal rationality is more durable and reliable than that which was to be based only on persons' rationality. Moreover, it is immune to stupidity and "passions" to a considerable degree. Rationality of that new rationality need not be understandable for individuals who are guided by passions, for a part of them it may be completely unclear because of its necessary complex mediation. In this sense it is both a departure from Fichte's optimistic interpretation and a step towards Immanuel Kant, whose construction of the categorical imperative as well as treating religion as a vehicle of morality were forms of constructing social rationality while having given up the idea of a democratized rational subject.

It is very characteristic that – against various interpretations of Hegel's attitude to religion, treating him either as a pantheist, or a non-conventional theist, or even a panentheist³⁴ – the attitude to religion which is presented by him for example in *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences* begins from the initial full acceptance of Kant's standpoint:

The strictly technical aspects of the Mind's elevation to God have been spoken of in the Introduction to the Logic [...]. As regards the starting-point of that elevation, Kant has on the whole adopted the most correct, when he treats belief in God as proceeding from the practical Reason³⁵.

Recognition of the problem of the god as a problem of the practical reason is, of course, a matter of basic significance: it is difficult to recognize a view which is built on it, unless it is childishly inconsistent, as a theist, a pantheist or an animistic one... In order to understand Hegel, and earlier Kant, it is necessary – there is no other way – to adopt an understanding of religion and the god as derivatives of ethicality and only of ethicality. The difference between Kant and Hegel is much subtler than it usually seems. For Hegel the basic problem is Kant's recognition of "elevation of the subjective spirit to God" as a postulate, only as a duty. Similarly as the author of

³⁴ R. Whittemor, *Hegel as panentheist*, "Tulane Studies in Philosophy" 1960, vol. X, pp. 134–164. Panentheism was to mean something different than pantheism, which is equation of the god with the world. Such a standpoint assumes that God is not only the world, but an entirety irreducible to parts. Such a view is discussed by Singer, who surprisingly seems to agree with it and firmly rejects a possibility of recognizing Hegel as an atheist. He maintains that presenting Hegel as an atheist would be tantamount to rejection of his most basic ideas. P. Singer, *Hegel*, p. 85).

³⁵ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*...

Critiques he is of an opinion that the content of religious views, the notion of god, is determined by “material” of the practical reason, but the basic significance has the “spirit” – that is, the effectively operating reason, the phenomenon of very self-determining thinking treated in isolation from everything else as well as from any content of thinking. In that sense it is “reason, i.e. the self-determining and self-realizing notion itself – Liberty”³⁶.

According to Hegel, elevation of the subjective spirit to the god is a function resulting from existence of awareness of the reason conceived in such a way, something like an “automatic” tendency towards overcoming one’s own finity. That finity should not be simplicistically identified anew with the body. Neither should it be identified in the spirit of existentialism... Hegel’s idea concerns rather the reason’s own dynamics, which assumes all its content as infinite. Thus, breaking down one’s own finity means also formulating laws in the field of science – laws which cannot have concrete, individual character. A similar process takes place in the case of “elevation to God”, although that case is about an infinite interpretation of freedom and even, to be more precise, about the very process of (self)elevation towards the infinite, the process of immortalization and self-absolutization.

Hegel’s accusation concerns Kant’s interpretation of that (self)elevation as a postulate, a duty. It is to break apart the process and consolidate moments and finity and infinity, whose “abolishment and truth is the very elevation”, as opposites, a contradiction. The process of “coming into being” of the god according to Hegel’s interpretation, which is presented on the occasion of that polemic, is worth illustrating with a longer quotation:

As regards the ‘mediation’ which, as it has already been shown, that elevation to God really involves, the point specially calling for note is the ‘moment’ of negation through which the essential content of the starting-point is purged of its finitude so as to come forth free. This factor, abstract in the formal treatment of logic, now gets its most concrete interpretation. The finite, from which the start is now made, is the real ethical self-consciousness. The negation through which that consciousness raises its spirit to its truth, is the purification, actually accomplished in the ethical world, whereby its conscience is purged of subjective opinion and its will freed from the selfishness of desire. Genuine religion and genuine religiosity only issue from the moral life: religion is that life rising to think, i.e. becoming aware of the free universality of its concrete essence. Only from the moral life and by the moral life is the Idea of God seen to be free spirit: outside the ethical spirit therefore it is vain to seek for true religion and religiosity. But – as is the case with all speculative process – this development of one thing out of another means that

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

what appears as sequel and derivative is rather the absolute prius of what it appears to be mediated by, and here in mind is also known as its truth³⁷.

For Hegel rectification of ethicality leading to the god as an objective value of elevating thought is of paramount importance going far beyond the polemics against Kant. The very polemics reveals that Hegel's views concerning the genesis of religion are basically different neither from Kant's views nor even from Fichte's ones. The "practical" status of religion is canonical for Kant as well as for Fichte or Hegel. But Hegel's practicality goes further, because his considerations there have a hyper-practical sense.

After the quoted fragment concerning religion there is an instant move to going "more deeply into the reciprocal relations between the state and religion". Thus, the dispute with Kant is for Hegel a kind of introduction to important findings concerning the state. In Kant's theoretical standpoint Hegel perceives dangerous premises facilitating treating morality and religion, the state and religion independently.

From Hegel's viewpoint "the state is the organization and actualization of moral life" and "religion is the very substance of the moral life itself and of the state". Religion, as "elevating to God", immortalizes the finite and the reason is the basis for a possibility of thinking, of existence of the absolute. Because the state is based on the ethical disposition – and the latter on the religious one – everything what occurs both in morality and the state, a duty or a legislation, can be legitimized only by religion. What is not legitimized by religion is *poorly* legitimized, its legitimization is uncomplete, because religion is also the notion of the absolute truth. Thus, everything that aspires for truthfulness, must be "participant in that absolute truth". Of course, here also we should remember that the "absolute truth" is a result of rectification of much less absolute and universal truths by the human reason, because there is always a danger that besides the ethical proof for the existence of God there can appear an "epistemological proof for the existence of God".

For Hegel religious ethicality is not anything over-riding. It means that it is not genetically primary, although – as he wrote – later it appears to be "the absolute Prius". As a matter of fact, its role is sanctioning ethicality occurring in the empirical reality³⁸. It seems that from that viewpoint religion has not its own history and generally it is hard to speak of religious morality in another sense than as of a form of preserving ethical content by the reason.

However – according to Hegel's opinion – religion is not anything existing independently from the state, indifferent to the state or separable from the state. The situation where the state, the political system, law exist on some non-religious bases

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

and religion is added to them later as a subjective supplement is not possible. Law and the political system are not based on autonomous foundations and they are not secondarily strengthened by religion, because religion in its content is “indwelling spirit of self-consciousness in its actuality”, what means that it is only ethicality of a changing reality of the empirical.

This is just the place where the essence of the difference between Hegel and Kant becomes visible. What is very important for Hegel is exposure of the impossibility of abandonment of the religious legitimization of the state and ethicality. He assumes a necessity of exceeding finity in a religious form and an impossibility of non-religious legitimization, because the latter is always going to have a finite character and hence to be unacceptable for religious consciousness which subsumes everything under awareness of the absolute truth³⁹. Kant’s rational legitimization of laws and morality is too weak for Hegel and its postulative form tacitly destroys an already existing religious connection constructed by the spirit. Hegel, unlike Kant and Fichte, excludes the possibility of existence of the world without religion. Why? That is a question which concerns simultaneously relations between religion and philosophy as such. Hegel is generally of an opinion that both in the individual dimension and in the historical dimension – that is, in ontogenesis and in phylogenesis of thinking – perceptions, feelings and imaginations underlying religiosity precede a possibility of coming into existence of philosophy. As he writes:

it is in fact necessary that in point of time the consciousness of the absolute Idea should be first reached and apprehended in this form: in other words, it must exist in its immediate reality as religion, earlier than it does as philosophy. Philosophy is a later development from this basis...⁴⁰

Thus, it seems that there also takes place adoption of an assumption that individual subjects are not “mature enough” for philosophy, but it does not really matter and drawing such conclusions too hastily can lead us astray.

It is because of the fact that Hegel, while criticizing a postulative character of Kant’s standpoint, rejects also unconditioned acceptance of religion as such. He strengthens his arguments with criticism of political aspirations of philosophy in the case of Plato and with an analysis of significance of enslavement resulting from Catholicism. Plato’s failure results from limitations of the Platonic philosophy generated by a concrete form of ancient Greek beliefs. They were based on an “imaginative polytheism” and on “the gladsome and frivolous humors of its poetic creations”. Thus, Plato’s philosophy constituted itself in opposition to such a concrete form of

³⁹ There is no doubt that Hegel could not be a postmodernist. There is probably nothing more alien to him than the idea of nomadism.

⁴⁰ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind...*

religiosity, philosophy was a factor which purified religion from its concreteness from outside and acted autonomously as a truth which is to be included in the state, without support from the true religion and hence incapable of giving the idea of the state an infinite form of subjectivity. An idea of philosophers' direct rule is burdened with a specific form of ancient religiosity and with resulting infirmity of philosophy, which wants to substitute for religion in the times of barely emerging subjectivity of the spirit understood as free thinking. The state, which emerges earlier than philosophy but also from religion, has also a character close to ancient Greeks' fancy and frivolous nature; its essence is corruption by one-sidedness which is brought by democracy – criticized by Plato and many of his contemporaries. Thus, philosophy and philosophers create the general only in thought, but it is not an immanent truth shaping the state's system and government.

Nowadays, according to Hegel's opinion, the situation is quite different. It is characterized by the fact that "political power, religion, and the principles of philosophy" coincide in one and "the reconciliation of actuality in general with the mind, of the state with the religious conscience as well as with the philosophical consciousness" is accomplished⁴¹.

The factor of the basic significance for such a state of affairs is emergence of the "true religion", and especially of Protestantism, which removes enslavement which still exists in the Catholic religion because of the form. Hegel does not wait for a slow transformation of the existing religion into the true religion, he does not look – as Kant does – for clean, true rationality beneath the crust of existing religiosity, but he refers to that current in works of the author of *Critiques* where he makes an analysis of existing religious practices, their deforming and fetishist character. The sting of Kant's criticism was aimed at religion, it became blunt because of taking a reality check, patience and confidence in evolution of religion. For Hegel "purification" of the true religion, which is Christianity for him, already took place in the Reformation. The existence of the Protestant church, of Protestantism, is just the premise of "coincidence" of religion, state government and principles of philosophy. In Hegel's works German patriotism gets anchoring in Protestant tradition and not, like it was in Fichte's works, in the phenomenon of German idealist philosophy. But Hegel cannot go beyond the national form of the spirit's march, whereas Fichte – faithful to Kant's universalist humanistic tradition – paves the road to a universalist just global society in his speeches to the German nation, in *The Human Vocation* and *The Closed Commercial State*.

The breakthrough has already happened. Catholicism was not loyal to the principle of having no "natural elements" by the "content of God", the principle proclaiming

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

that God “is known in spirit and in truth”⁴². It generated for Christians the opposition between God and the human being. Hegel sees that externality of God and the human being in various aspects of religious life. For Catholics the host is already sanctified as an external thing, for Lutherans it becomes sanctified and elevated to the status of God who is present “solely and only” in the process of consumption and hence, as Hegel writes, during annihilation of externality and in faith which accompanies that annihilation, “i.e. in the free self-certain spirit”⁴³. Consequences resulting from treating the host in just such a way are all other manifestations of unfree, spiritless and arbitrary relations in the Catholic religion. They include existence of a separate *secular state*, which gets “knowledge about the divine truth” from the *clergy*, which also does not have such knowledge, but “needs for it – as something significant – some external sanctification”. Hegel writes critically about praying which consists in moving your lips or about asking others for praying for us, about adoration of miraculous images, “indeed even of bones, which are expected to work miracles”, and of various others forms of making religiosity “being outside oneself”. For Hegel just that *being outside oneself* is in Catholicism the state where “the very meaning of spirit is perverted and misconceived at its source, and law and justice, morality and conscience, responsibility and duty are corrupted at their root”⁴⁴.

⁴² *Ibidem*. Hegel refers here to: *John*, 4, 24. It seems that Hegel’s intention is to bind Christian religiosity not so much with ethics but rather with subjective cognition: “its content is God, who is known in *spirit* and in *truth*” means after all something quite different than e.g. a statement “its content is God, who is truth”.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*. Hegel’s statement in *The Philosophy of History* seems also similar: “Thus through the perversion of the principle of Freedom, absolute Slavery became the established law. The other aspects and relations of the spiritual life of Europe during this period flow from this principle. Knowledge, comprehension of religious doctrine, is something of which Spirit is judged incapable; it is the exclusive possession of a class, which has to determine the True. For man may not presume to stand in a direct relation to God; so that, as we said before, if he would apply to Him, he needs a mediator – a Saint. This view imports the denial of the essential unity of the Divine and Human; since man, as such, is declared incapable of recognizing the Divine and of approaching thereto. And while humanity is thus separated from the Supreme Good, no change of heart, as such, is insisted upon – for this would suppose that the unity of the Divine and the Human is to be found in man himself – but the terrors of Hell are exhibited to man in the most terrible colors, to induce him to escape from them, not by moral amendment, but in virtue of something external – the “means of grace.” These, however, are an arcanum to the laity; another – the “Confessor,” must furnish him with them. The individual has to confess – is bound to expose all the particulars of his life and conduct to the view of the Confessor – and then is informed what course he has to pursue to attain spiritual safety. Thus the Church took the place of Conscience... Thus was produced an utter derangement of all that is recognized as good and moral in the Christian Church”. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, transl. by J. Sibree, <http://www.efm.bris.ac.uk/het/hegel/history.pdf>.

Thanks to philosophy the content of religion grants itself quite a different form. The place of the vow of celibacy is taken by marriage and the family, the vow of poverty is replaced by the duty of earning money by oneself and of reliability in that field, the vow of obedience gives way to conformity to law, the state. Ethicality of marriage in opposition to sanctity of celibacy, ethicality of earning money and increasing fortune in opposition to sanctity of poverty and connected idleness, ethicality of conformity to the state law in opposition to obedience without laws and duties, which is slavery of conscience⁴⁵.

Thus, it is just that what was described by Hegel as cognition of God in spirit and truth freed from slavery. As it seems, we have to do with a standpoint assuming that philosophical rationalization of religion already took place as a part of the Reformation, because only the reformed religion can become a soil for coming into being of philosophy already free of accidentalness of ideas appearing in *Republic* and for a magnificent “coincidence” of the state, religion and principles of philosophy⁴⁶. That is how Hegel’s philosophy and its relations with religion were interpreted by Benedetto Croce when he wrote that Hegel’s philosophy is “radically antireligious, because

⁴⁵ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind...* The same issue is described under clear Hegel’s influence, although a bit differently, by young Marx: “Even historically, theoretical emancipation has specific practical significance for Germany. For Germany’s revolutionary past is theoretical, it is the Reformation. As the revolution then began in the brain of the monk, so now it begins in the brain of the philosopher. Luther, we grant, overcame bondage out of devotion by replacing it by bondage out of conviction. He shattered faith in authority because he restored the authority of faith. He turned priests into laymen because he turned laymen into priests. He freed man from outer religiosity because he made religiosity the inner man. He freed the body from chains because he enchained the heart”. K. Marx, *Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right*, transl. by J. O’Malley, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_Critique_of_Hegels_Philosophy_of_Right.pdf.

⁴⁶ It worth remembering on that occasion on changeability of Hegel’s standpoint on that issue and about his more radical attitude to religion, especially in his youth when he wrote about the Christian religion for example in the following way: “And the fate of that religion is such that the state and the Church, liturgy and life, piety and virtue, spiritual activity and secular activity can never melt into one” (*Hegels Theologische Jugendschriften*, Tübingen 1907, i. 341). On the other hand, in *The Philosophy of History* we can read: “In Germany the entire compass of secular relations had already undergone a change for the better [...]. The principle of Thought, therefore, had been so far conciliated already; moreover the Protestant World had a conviction that in the Harmonization which had previously been evolved [in the sphere of Religion] the principle which would result in a further development of equity in the political sphere was already present”. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*. In another place we get to know that “Religion should certainly visualize us the truth, but faith for our culture is generally something what has passed, while our reason – with its postulate that we should not believe, but we should know what is true – has strengthened...”. K. Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben*, Berlin 1844, p. 182 – quot. after: G. Lukács, *Młody Hegel*, Warszawa 1980, p. 819.

it contents itself neither with presenting religion as its opposite nor with treating it as its equal, but it absorbs religion and replaces it⁴⁷.

Does such a considerable role of religion in Hegel's philosophy mean departure from Kant's or Fichte's rational interpretation? Is it Reformational rationalization total without leaving anything contradictory with a solely "practical" attitude to religion?

It seems that a question formulated in such a way should be answered definitely. There are no reasons to adopt a standpoint recognizing any essential regression of the author of *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences* in relation to views of both Kant and Fichte. You can even perceive Hegel as more radical, since the unity of law, philosophy and religion is for him the principle of the present time (which is not postponed to the future and is not transferred to the world of duties), which means that compliance with it can be rigorously required as early as today. The misery of a possible conservative reactionary interpretation of Hegel's philosophy consists not in its concession to religion or the state but in poor recognition of the social reality of Germany against the background of historical processes of development of market economy and in the connected far-reaching sanctioning of the existing *status quo* as well as rationalization of German social relations of the times of the Restoration. It is not a mistake that Hegel discovers universal rules of functioning of the state, social reproduction, estate division and many other issues in the Prussian state or in whole Germany; the mistake is recognition of a historically limited German form as the universal one and – in the case of many general issues – as the final one.

It would, however, be a mistake if you would like to finish evaluation of Hegel's analyses on this right but generic formula. The strength and genius of thought of the author of *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* consist in going beyond traps of apparent alternatives and practical adherence to the rule of concreteness of truth. Let us remember that truth is not a gunshot and that it rather resembles Dionysian intoxication – everyone is drunk. Thus, rationality cannot be connected only with the process of reforming Catholicism, with the triumph of Protestantism. In Hegel's works it takes the form of a complex problem of – as we would call it today – social communication.

In reply to the famous question coming from a competition organized by scholars from the Berlin Academy – and suggested by Frederick the Great *S'il etre utile de tromper un peuple?* (Can cheating the people be useful?) – Hegel comes to a conclusion that the people usually cannot be cheated in matters regarding their property, real existence, spiritual life, but they simultaneously cheat themselves in many other matters and they did it in a pretty and successful way. That popular thinking is rich in

⁴⁷ B. Croce, *What is Living and What is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel*, New York 1969, pp. 70–71.

forms, but also in content which is often unavailable for representatives of the general estate. Public servants, politicians, educated people excel in efficiency, knowledge of the general, routine, but they are inferior regarding knowledge of details and practical knowledge. Excessive reservation of competences for qualified knowledge, jealous escalation of monopolization of knowledge are commented by Hegel with an ironic remark that you need not be a shoemaker to know whether a bad shoe injures a foot⁴⁸. It is written by Hegel, who, after all, attributes such a great significance to the general estate and dreams about making “the scholarly estate – that is, the intelligentsia, the core of the general estate”⁴⁹; Hegel, who in the course of time started to speak so severely about the “people”, who “do not know what they want” and who are “unlimited multitude”, “shapeless mass” which easily transforms into a “mob” and can be something “irrational, wild and terrible”.

From the perspective emerging from these seemingly contradictory statements the opposition between religion transformed by Protestantism and philosophy becomes – if somehow possible – something secondary in its relation towards a need of creation of complex constructs of mediations for communication in society which is rather a patchwork than a pretty polarized social space from the ideal model of capitalism. Rationality surpasses the individual subject and becomes a problem of a complicated machinery of society and the state, of complex anthropomaterial relations.

Thus, it is not only about a councilor Glayre’s *méchaniser l’éducation*. What becomes a problem is mechanization of the whole society and replacement of spontaneous rules of its functioning based on passion with an artificially constructed mechanism of social reproduction⁵⁰. This is just “self-conscious liberty” which “has become nature”⁵¹. We touch a very characteristic moment of development of not only Hegel’s thought but of the classic German philosophy. Namely, if in both Kant’s philosophy and Fichte’s philosophy an essential point is emphasizing the difference between the human being and the natural being, in Hegel’s considerations there is a turn in the opposite direction: he uses formulations stressing a natural character of dependencies,

⁴⁸ G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy...*

⁴⁹ A. Ochocki, *Jestem człowiekiem wolnym. Acz żaden ze mnie Grakch*, [in:] G.W.F. Hegel, *Ustrój Niemiec i inne pisma polityczne*, Warszawa 1994, p. 21.

⁵⁰ In contrast, a young Schelling’s interesting statement, which also raises the moment of *mechanization* of society, is also worth remembering in this place: “From nature I come to *human works*. With the idea of the humankind as a beacon, I want to show that there is not any idea of *the state*, since the state is something *mechanical*; similarly as there is not any idea of *the machine*. We call *the idea* only that what constitutes a subject matter of *freedom*. Thus, it is necessary to go beyond the state! It comes from the fact that each state must treat free people as cogs of a mechanism – and that is something it should not do – and hence it should *disappear*”. J. Hoffmeister, *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung*, Stuttgart 1936, p. 219.

⁵¹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind...*

laws and rules controlling the social reality. The statement about self-conscious liberty which has become nature is its good example. It is probably important to remind that that moment plays a crucial role also in works of mature Karl Marx⁵².

The problem possibly consists not only in the statement about an objective character of laws ruling the social reality. It seems that it is a bit deeper and concerns just that anthropomaterial character of the social rationality exceeding a rationality which can be shortly called a “Cartesian” one. It is indubitably extended to social relations and institutions, but also to material conditions of production and the connected division of work. Unification of the machine and the human into an alloyed anthropomaterial premise of production is expressed, among others, by replaceability of human work by a machine⁵³. The above-mentioned remarks concerning a “sociological” character of social relations and Hegel’s economic passions, show – although in a necessarily abbreviated way – how great are his achievements in that field.

Thus, society, social relations do not have volitional character. From the viewpoint of Hegel’s philosophy, they are irreducible to relations of domination and control, to political relations or to a social contract understood in any way. It is impossible also in that sense that theoretical proposals which try to analyze the contemporary times within the pure paradigm of politics as well as those who perceive violence as only a half-forgotten historical root of contemporaneity are unacceptable.

This is a matter of extreme importance and it concerns interpretation of probably the most famous fragment of all G.W.F. Hegel’s works – a chapter *Lordship and Bondage* from *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Its analysis is not an easy task. The existing historical receptions of Hegel’s thought show a broad spectrum of possible interpretations and they become themselves subjects of interesting studies⁵⁴. However, Hegel’s “timeliness” results also in very deep deformations of his theories as a result of influence of authors’ political views, their worldview and philosophical affiliations. There is also a problem of recidivism of the pre-critical, pre-Kantian model of practising reflection, which is repeatedly generated by popular thinking, by imagination. In serious texts you can find lack of seemingly rudimentary sensitivity to peculiarity and precision of Hegel’s language. It is partly determined by the deep essence of practicing philosophy by the author of *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Science of*

⁵² K. Marks, *Przedmowa do drugiego niemieckiego wydania pierwszego tomu „Kapitału”*, [in:] *idem, Kapitał*, vol. I, Warszawa 1970.

⁵³ “The labor which thus becomes more abstract tends on one hand by its uniformity to make labor easier and to increase production – on another to limit each person to a single kind of technical skill, and thus produce more unconditional dependence on the social system.. The skill itself becomes in this way mechanical, and gets the capability of letting the machine take the place of human labor”. G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*...

⁵⁴ In Poland special recognition is deserved by the work by Z. Kuderowicz *Hegel i jego uczniowie*, Warszawa 1984, pp. 43–52, 199–216.

Logic. His making use of notions which today seem sometimes strange – such as, for instance, *desire*, *passion*, *spirit* requires very specific heroism of getting oneself out of colloquiality. The reasons of such a state of affairs are excellently revealed by Z.K. Kuderowicz, who writes that in Hegel's works:

The road to philosophy begins from “sensual certainty” – that is, from knowledge manifesting itself in a sensual perception and oriented on apprehension of a particular thing. There is a relation between an individual “I” and a strictly placed thing. The mediating link is language, which uses a general name and apprehends the thing in its general features which are common for the designata of the name. Thus, it turns out that the basic, the simplest condition of philosophy is language. There are passed over individual peculiarities of both the perceiving subject and of the particular thing. That what cannot be expressed is placed beyond the reach of knowledge. As you see, philosophy cannot rely on an intuitive sense of mysteriousness of the world. Language turns out to be the element where it develops. Its initial conviction is enough to make the Hegelian conception of philosophy different from both all kinds of intuitionism and from sensualism, which bases knowledge on “sensual certainty”. This is an important premise of Hegelian rationalism⁵⁵.

Thus, language, natural language is the element of philosophy. It constitutes – in the same way as material culture – a condensed record of history of civilization determining its sense, meaning, structure, content and, generally, defining language in its real being unreservedly. But it does it not only in the current sense understood as contemporary existence of language. It is very important to notice history of existing notions in their content. Richness of verbalized notions reflect richness of social relations, history, culture generating tradition and the present day of language.

It does not mean, of course, that theoretical cognition, philosophy are identical with colloquiality. The task of philosophy is elevation of a notion to the rank of a concept. “Ordinary life – Hegel writes – has no concepts, only representations of the imagination, and to recognize the concept in what is otherwise mere representation is philosophy itself⁵⁶.”

Another very significant issue in the analysis of the problem of *Lordship and Bondage* is multidimensionality of Hegel's analysis. We should remember that when he writes about self-consciousness as something what exists “only as something which has been recognized”, that what becomes the moment of considerations is just the process of constituting a social form, because recognition is not only a problem

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 73–74.

⁵⁶ G.W.F. Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, transl. by G. di Giovanni, http://assets.cambridge.org/97805218/32557/frontmatter/9780521832557_frontmatter.pdf.

which can be considered in the *face to face*. Moreover, it is not possible at all to consider the issues of recognition in such a bicomponent set and taking it up by Hegel in such a form is only addressing the “ideal type”⁵⁷ of development of recognition for a moment. But again – not only: because that ideal type includes, again as a moment, a real historical possibility of occurrence, as something peculiar, on various levels of ontology of the social being and in various moments of history⁵⁸.

Finally, it is worth remembering that the logic of Hegel’s lecture includes also an assumption – to a considerable degree tacit – of necessity of referring to historically occurring philosophical conceptions. It concerns not only explicit references to, for example, stoicism or skepticism, but also to simultaneous constant occurrence in the background of various concrete conceptions of coming into being of the state, coming into being of social classes, etc. which were Hegel’s contemporaries or at least present in his times. Hegel’s dialectics has neither intuitive nor naturalistic character, but it is a conscious form of theoretical practice built on “material” provided by science and philosophy.

That last moment especially deserves taking here into account, because the whole part preceding the disquisition about the lord and the bondsman, dedicated to the duplicated self-conscious and the conflict of contradictory self-consciousnesses, is just constructed on the basis of the Hobbesian notion of pre-statist society as a *bellum omnium in omnes*. The first Hegel’s words confirming that self-consciousness “exists only in being acknowledged”⁵⁹, are a simple and fundamental critique of all kinds of “Robinsonades” and a dialectically expressed conviction that self-consciousness is social and that self-consciousness divided into roles plays infinitely – thus, it is a history without end, an infinite movement of “recognizing one self-consciousness by another”. Thus, “recognizing” is something what appears together with the occurrence of man and constitutes the foundation of human communication of self-consciousnesses, which should be distinguished from each other as particular moments, but which should simultaneously be always interpreted as undistinguished, because they constitute only/as much as moments of spiritual unity as such.

⁵⁷ I refer to the real content of that concept in Max Weber’s works only approximately.

⁵⁸ The status of generality in Hegel’s works is similarly described by E. Iljenkow: “According to Hegel, only generality has a privilege of taking up a special and individual form, whereas individuality always turns up to be a partial product and hence a «modus» of generality which is poor in content”. E. Iljenkow, *Logika dialektyczna*, transl. by W. Krzemień, Warszawa 1978, p. 307. Of course, here appears the whole complex problem of the Hegelian dialectics, which, because of obvious reasons, is only touched here.

⁵⁹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, transl. by A.V. Miller, http://www.faculty.umb.edu/gary_zabel/Courses/Marxist_Philosophy/Hegel_and_Feuerbach_files/Hegel-Phenomenology-of-Spirit.pdf.

If it happens to later philosophy to talk about the death of man, the lethal disease which he suffers is already visible in that moment of analysis of self-consciousness. There is no man. He is replaced by a dynamic structure, by an infinite game of distinguished and disappearing self-consciousnesses, whose “flickering” establishes an infinite process of shaping recognition.

Disquisitions about the duplicated self-knowledge and the conflict of contradictory self-consciousnesses are not a simple continuation of earlier considerations. Hegel seems rather to string another bead of his rosary, without explaining the way of coming to the next stage he simply translates the conception of the war of all against all into his language, trying to de-animalize it and interpret with the logic of relations between self-consciousnesses, with the logic of the process of recognition and not of a simple expression of animalistic blood-thirsty inclinations.

It is quite a funny phenomenon that Hegel’s statements are uncritically accepted – sometimes also in our times. It refers, for example, to those of them which say about a fight “to death”. That statement is understood in such a way that the concept of self-consciousness is spontaneously interpreted with a vision of fighting warriors of various hordes, tribes, wearing sometimes colorful historical attires. And yet we do not hear about warriors’ self-consciousness, but about self-consciousness as such – and hence, for example, also about women, which are not separated from the achievement of self-consciousness. Traditional relations between men and women – so significant for existence of self-consciousness – may seem a “life-and-death struggle” only from the bars of a baby bed. Spontaneous acceptance of the “war-like interpretation” as a universal truth about relations between individuals is rather a function of succumbing to common sentiments of capitalist society, to a belief and a feeling that its essence is constituted by struggle, competition, rat race – and not by really realized socialization in the global dimension. It is also possible that – as it is said by feminists – it is a version of his-story (in contrast to her-story).

Hegel should not be blamed for such receptions. His interpretation raises the theoretical standard of Hobbes’ notions and, simultaneously, it includes a significant contribution to understanding of the specifically human sense of war, struggle, violence as well as of their historical and – what is the most important – cultural forms. Finally, we have here to do with proving historically limited significance of such struggle: “Death certainly shows that each staked his life and held it of no account, both in himself and in the other; but that is not for those who survived this struggle”⁶⁰. Fruitlessness of a life-and-death struggle consists in lack of “giving and receiving one another back from each other”, it is “leaving each other free only indifferently, like things”⁶¹.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

It is true that Hegel's – and earlier Fichte's – attitude to violence does not fit well not only sentimental versions of history. Fichte thought that avoiding a duel and jeopardizing one's own life in it is dishonorable; Hegel, with a historical breadth, which is so characteristic for him, spoke of a necessity of “shaking” society “from time to time” by the government with a war and; of long-lasting peace, which brings a bourgeois society to degeneration and sometimes even to destruction and of courage which is the highest form of sacrifice of one's own life to the people, what leads to practical – and not only theoretical – abolishment of specificity and realization of generality of a whole people's life in a single individual⁶². Those and other similar statements are sometimes justified by referring to the general mood of the age, the sound of cannons in the Jena battlefield and Hegel's admiration for Napoleon⁶³. It probably does make a lot of sense, but the argument concerning the conflict of self-consciousnesses we are interested in is not about such a concrete and current level of reflection.

Rejection of the war as a form of recognition results from the fact that the war does not lead to recognition, but quite the opposite – it reifies self-consciousnesses and separates them. Thus, it is not recognition in the sense which means that “the abolished” remains and persists, “and, thanks to that, it still lasts in spite of abolishment”. Hegel, for whom history is also a progressing process of development of freedom, rationality, but also – and maybe first of all – of socialization – cannot accept a “life-and-death struggle” of “all against all” as its form. But that fight is acceptable for him as a moment which is significant, first of all, because it makes possible a transition to the mutually contradictory self-consciousnesses of the lord and the *slave*.

In the background of all considerations concerning the lord and the bondsman we have to do with adoption of the theory of conquest – a conception proclaiming that coming into being of class societies is a result of an invasion of “aliens” and subjugation of “autochthons” as a result of application of brute force. In that sense, the theory of conquest is compatible with the vision of the primary war of all against all and is capable of explaining a transition from pre-statist to statist conditions, from

⁶² Let us quote here one of characteristic Hegel's statements: “In order not to let them become rooted and set in this isolation, thereby breaking up the whole and letting the [communal] spirit evaporate, government has from time to time to shake them to their core by war. By this means the government upsets their established order; and violates their right to independence, while the individuals who, absorbed in their own way of life, break loose from the whole and strive after the inviolable independence and security of the person, are made to feel in the task laid on them their lord and master, death. Spirit, by thus throwing into the melting pot the stable existence of these systems, checks their tendency to fall away from the ethical order, and to be submerged in a [merely] natural existence; and it preserves and raises conscious self into freedom and its own power” (*ibidem*).

⁶³ It is done in that way by, for example, G. Lukàcs [in:] *idem, Mlody Hegel*, pp. 668–669.

contradictory self-consciousnesses to class society⁶⁴. But Hegel's lecture is not easy, it captivates with its almost enchanting logic and consistence, it radiates with rich theoretical consequences which are almost impossible to grasp.

The analysis begins from the concept of the *master*. It is important to notice that the *bondsman* as an autonomous subject is not present there at all. Everything Hegel writes about is development of the concept of the *master*, revealing the content which is inherent in that concept. There is no meeting of independent subjects, there is only inference of subsequent terms from the analyzed concept⁶⁵. In the first phase it has – you might say – a structural character, in the course of time there appears a genetic interpretation revealing historical justifications of *status quo* as a moment of a structural interpretation, and then development of the structural interpretation changes into historical dynamics being a function of disclosure of very intraconceptual tensions.

Who is the *master*? The lord is, of course, self-consciousness, but not only self-consciousness. Even self-consciousness, as we saw earlier, cannot exist alone. All the more the lord cannot exist alone. Thus, the *lord's* existence certainly requires existence of another self-consciousness. It is impossible to be just a *master*. Being a lord requires necessity of mediation; you need to be someone's *master*, but being someone's lord is not so easy. Hegel makes here a discovery which is often underappreciated; being a lord results, of course, from mediation, but if that subjugation is to be relatively long-lasting it cannot have purely volitional, interpersonal character. Similarly as in an earlier case where, having recognized impossibility of existence of only one self-consciousness, he rejected a possibility of practicing various types of "Robinsonades", Hegel once again generates a theoretical alternative for interpreting relations of domination from the viewpoint of "pure politics", relations of volitional character or reduced to violence, "terror". The existence of the lord is possible only because of the fact that another self-consciousness which mediates the

⁶⁴ "In the battle for recognition and the subjugation under a master, we see, on their phenomenal side – Hegel writes straight out in another work – the emergence of man's social life and the commencement of political union [...]. Force, then, is the external or phenomenal commencement of states. G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*... Recognizing that only mutual recognition of "rational, free and equal individuals" constitutes a "social community" is a misunderstanding, because such a standpoint assumes treating pre-class and class societies as not constituting social communities. Such a view seems to be presented by E. Nowak-Juchacz in the book *Autonomia jako zasada etyczności. Kant, Fichte, Hegel*, Wrocław 2002, p. 303.

⁶⁵ B. Baczeko in the introduction to T. Kroński's work *Hegel*, which is classic on the Polish ground, writes about the same fragment of *Phenomenology of Spirit* and he maintains that "The argument begins from presenting two separate, isolated individuals, which have no relation between each other..." T. Kroński, *Hegel*, Warszawa 1966, p. 89. Quite apart from the fact that the fragment does not say about an "individual", it should be noted that as early as on the level of self-consciousnesses Hegel recognizes impossibility of their autonomous existence.

lord's consciousness (1) "whose nature it is to be bound up with an existence that is independent, or thinghood in general"⁶⁶ (2). The existence of the lord is possible only when the relation of domination does not connect two identical self-consciousnesses; moreover, it cannot be a human–human relation, but it must take the form human–thing–human. Describing it in that way (human–thing–human) offends with its paucity in comparison with themes developed by Hegel, but it accurately reflects the basic breakthrough which takes place here. The process of socialization, the process of recognition, domination – cannot be correctly interpreted without respecting that Hegel's solution. An idea that it is possible to come to an agreement that we all are *masters*, can persist in history only as a language custom and only in Poland.

Remaining "in synthesis with the thing as such", "the being", is for Hegel synonymous with work. Generality of that expression caused that the relation of the lord and the *bondsman* interpreted in such a way is resistant to various forms of its historical concretizations and, as a matter of fact, it becomes a universal formula of class domination, it refers to the epoch of class societies. Such a synthesis can subsume a bondsman working in a mine or in a farm, a feudal peasant plowing a field, a guild's craftsman making a harness and a worker producing in a factory.

It has its consequences in problems with Polish translation of the title of the analyzed chapter. If *pan* is perfectly suitable for calling a slave-owner as well as a feudal lord and a capital owner – and hence it has historically limited, but indubitably transformational character, *niewolnik* (slave) offends in Polish with its limitedness, emotionality and, first of all, with its exotic character. The proposal to translate *Knecht* as *servant* also seems not to be the best one, because it inordinately introduces an element of direct personal dependency and it completely marginalizes *a synthesis with the self-existent being*. Maybe the most elegant term would be the *laborer*: his bonds with "the thing as such" are irrefutable and, in the absence of slavery in the history of Poland, that term is interpreted quite universally. Of course, nothing can replace understanding of the theoretical content of Hegel's concept and it is independent from translation itself.

Let us, however, come back to the analysis of the bond of domination. A limited character of the formula human–thing–human manifests itself in Hegel's analysis in the moment when he proclaims that a master–slave–thing configuration does not exclude a direct relation between a lord and a *thing* (3) and a direct attitude of a lord to a *consciousness for whom a thing is that what is important* (4). Of course, the lord – as a self-consciousness relates directly also to himself (5), he also – as we said at the beginning – relates to himself in a way mediated by another self-consciousness

⁶⁶ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. It is a basic misunderstanding to conceive "being in a synthesis with the thing as such" as identification with "one's own animal being", as it is proposed by Alexander Kojève in *Wstęp do wykładów o Heglu*, transl. by Ś.F. Nowicki, Warszawa 1999, p. 21 and others.

(1). But Hegel writes that the lord additionally refers to (5) himself as a self-consciousness referring to itself (6) and to himself as (1) a self-consciousness mediated by another self-consciousness (7); and later that „the lord puts himself into relation [...] mediately to each through the other” (8) and (9). Besides that, the lord remains in a mediated relations to the bondsman *through the self-existent being* (10).

I suppose that it is clearly visible now why I have mentioned both that Hegel is simplified by interpreting him with the man–thing–man formula and that that formula reflects, nevertheless, the essence of his attitude. The described relations would be presented in the best way with a 3D model or a computer animation. However, for many people it still would not be enough, because at the first glance the discussed relations seems to be incomprehensible and then they seem to be something outlandish, what perfectly justifies opinions describing Hegel’s philosophy as a kind of gnosis or “ravings in the vapors of a chemical laboratory”. Proclaiming such ignorant views in a toga of the academic science sometimes belongs to standards of good manners and give pop-philosophers of various kinds a sense of knowledge and acuteness. Maybe it was the source of concerns of Hegel who not without a reason often complained about being misunderstood. Subsequent parts of the book are an attempt at filling the described structure of influences, dependencies with content. It is something like a formal definition of plans of analysis; and yet it is not formal, because that very form includes revolutionary theoretical content and it is enriched with historical and up-to-date observations concerning many various levels.

The lord – Hegel writes afterwards – remains in such a relation to the *bondsman* which is mediated by the self-existent being, because “that self-existent being is just that what made the bondsman the slave”, it is the *bondsman’s* “chains”, because he could not abstract in fight from it and that is why he must have turned out to be not-self-existent and “to have his own self-existence in self-existence of things”. The fragment is a direct reference to the abovementioned theory of conquest. It proclaims that a division into the lord and the *bondsman* is a result of fight. But not only! The result of fight has been determined by impossibility of dissolving the synthesis between the *bondsman* and the thing as such, the being.

Why? Because here we have simply to do with production work which cannot be abstracted from. Abstracting from it generally calls into question the existence of both the lord and the *slave*. An excellent illustration of that problem is the peasant class. In historiography it has been described for a long time as a so-called ahistorical class. Although its characteristic feature is its transformative character – since it is present, albeit to different degrees – in the Antiquity, in feudalism, in capitalism – it is not able to constitute itself as the ruling class. Its impossibility of abstracting itself from a connection with the thing as such means connection with the rhythm of agricultural production, dispersion, difficulties in organization and mobilization, a low level of political awareness, culture and solidarity, which can lead at most to ephem-

eral mutinies, slaughters, but never to an autonomous and durable role constituted in the form of a state. Peasantry is sometimes called an “ahistorical class” also in that sense that it does not leave material traces of its existence. Its houses are ephemeral, its tools – primitive and fragile, and even if their remains are excavated, they do not please the eye and visitors of museums, while going past them, quicken their pace. Thus, successful abstracting by the *bondsman* would mean his death and the death of the *master*.

As we see, Hegel also in that case is far from connecting the genesis of class division only with war and, in that sense, he goes beyond rules of the orthodox theory of conquest once again.

It was well understood by Karl Marx, whose statement from *German Ideology* represents the purest Hegelian spirit:

Nothing is more common than the notion that in history up till now it has only been a question of taking. The barbarians take the Roman Empire, and this fact of taking is made to explain the transition from the old world to the feudal system. In this taking by barbarians, however, the question is whether the nation which is conquered has evolved industrial productive forces, as is the case with modern peoples, or whether its productive forces are based for the most part merely on their concentration and on the community. Taking is further determined by the object taken. A banker’s fortune, consisting of paper, cannot be taken at all without the taker’s submitting to the conditions of production and intercourse of the country taken. Similarly the total industrial capital of a modern industrial country. And finally, everywhere there is very soon an end to taking, and when there is nothing more to take, you have to set about producing. From this necessity of producing, which very soon asserts itself, it follows that the form of community adopted by the settling conquerors must correspond to the stage of development of the productive forces they find in existence; or, if this is not the case from the start, it must change according to the productive forces. This, too, explains the fact, which people profess to have noticed everywhere in the period following the migration of the peoples, namely that the servant was master, and that the conquerors very soon took over language, culture and manners from the conquered⁶⁷.

The quoted fragment seems to go beyond the sense of Hegel’s statement, but it is just an appearance. Sensitized by its content we do not need to accept such an interpretation of “fight” which reduces it to armed struggle, a singular act or – more broadly – a model patterned on a duel. There can be economic fight and cultural fight, fight may be a complex and long-lasting process, which includes even “absorption” of conquerors and their dissolution in the conquered society. Neither is it about concrete people, “a bondsman in chains” is an economic category here and his connection in

⁶⁷ K. Marx, F. Engels, *German Ideology*...

a synthesis does not mean – using the language of contemporary sociology – lack of social mobility of vertical, horizontal or even geographic kind. What is significant here is being of a social category: the existence of a class remaining in a synthesis with the thing as such. In that context just the synthesis of the bondsman with the thing acquires the basic importance – even for the conquest and its consequences.

The bondsman is not self-existent, what means that he has his self-existence in self-existence of things – Hegel writes supplementing statements about the chains of synthesis. That statement reveals the positive side of the bondsman's dependency and – in a broader context – of each dependency, because the other side of dependency is lack of solitude and often increased safety or only an increased sense of safety. However, when we directly address the issue of having self-existence in self-existence of things by the slave, the historical concretization of that formula is also interesting and significant. The peasant class – which a moment ago was described as “crippled” – has also, as a result of its production position, its self-existence in a specific way. It is not an accident that it is a transformative class, its connection with land in a family farm⁶⁸ makes it independent to a great degree from macrosocial, formation changes, from market fluctuations and it gives it a possibility of living and quite normal, independent functioning in historical conditions which are sometimes extreme. It enables also to reconstruct the foundations of existence, of economic activity quickly. The very process of work, its organizational forms – also constitute a specific space of autonomy and independence.

Such a description referred to peasantry as a class is, to a considerable degree, simple, but it can be transferred to other more complicated forms of manifesting reliance of the bondsman's self-existence on the thing. When referred to the modern working class, it translates, for example, into self-existence which articulates itself in a strike. When a strike of public urban transport begins a bus driver selling his labor under conditions determined by the contract, driving during his whole working time according to regulations of the road traffic code, stopping at all bus stops on time like a cuckoo of a cuckoo clock, is able to paralyze social life of a city; his self-existence is power resulting from his not-self-existence, from his synthesis with the thing as such.

The lord rules over the self-existent being, the thing as such – Hegel writes – since he has proved in fight that “that being is only a negative being for him”. Let us turn attention that an unavoidable element of the *master- bondsman* relation is the *lord's* domination over the self-existent being; that the *lord's* attitude to the thing as such is genetically determined by the fight between the lord and the *slave*, that the lord

⁶⁸ This is just the way of understanding the “peasant class” which is adopted by me: I understand it as a class of private owners of land who employ neither hired labor nor slaves to a degree which would be constitutive for the conducted economic activity.

is called here “power”, what articulates the moment of force, violence as not only a genetic one but also a current component of the entirety of relations, although that “force” does not mean, after all, direct presence of violence (and especially it does not mean a “life-and-death struggle”, which is so loved by more blood-thirsty Hegel’s commentators) – it can be a *possibility* of violence or force connected with cultural, symbolic, ideological, political domination, or with a concrete unique plait of all of them.

The phrase which is used here “the being is something negative” is also especially portative. It grasps in an almost incredibly successful way the essence of the relation between the lord and the being. Let us admit that what is the first in the *lord’s* relation to the being is the statement: *That is not me!* There we can also notice various concrete historical realizations of that phrase which seem to “fall off” the general Hegel’s formula. The forms of manifestations of this statement include wearing white gloves, legally reserved attires, fashion forbidding suntan and cultivating white complexion – a visible distance from those working outdoors, the existence of disgraceful professions whose practicing put you in danger of losing your nobility patent as well as *liber chamorum* tracking a synthesis with the thing as such even in distant ancestors of those who currently aspire for participation in the estate which is not their own. There is, of course, considerable dynamism. For example, suntan in the case of a lady of the court in the 18th-century France was something disgraceful, but in the end of the 20th-century it often becomes a visible sign of not lack of a distance but just of existence of a distance from the discussed synthesis: a symptom of not working indoors, having a lot of free time and money. But a form of *That is not me!* is also *apartheid* legislation, a fosse, Latin or French used by priests or the court. A need for that type of a distance has obviously wandering character: tan achieved thanks to cheap bronzer is not the same tan anymore, it is an attempt at jumping over the difference and an amateurish appropriation of visible signs of the distance.

Relations which have been extracted by Hegel from development movement of the concept of the lord have a character of essentialist abstractions for all historical forms of class domination and – to a considerable degree – of domination as such. Their encasement with content is a gradual process of concretization bringing the picture closer to rich forms of their manifestation. The illustrations of power of Hegel’s thought which are constructed here does not mean, of course, that he wrote about them or that he predicted them. They are only positive testing of that thought on diverse historical material for which it manifests its organizing and explanatory power.

The *lord’s* domination over the being and the *bondsman’s* not-self-existence in his relation to being lead, of course, to the domination of the lord over the *slave*. If in the *lord’s* relation through the being to the *bondsman* the *lord’s* domination over the *bondsman* becomes obvious, the *lord’s* relation to the being mediated by the *bondsman* is not anything just the opposite but something completely different. It is

mediated by a negative attitude to the thing manifested by the *bondsman* as a self-consciousness, which, however, as a result of the fact that the *bondsman* (so not a simple self-consciousness anymore) remains in a synthesis with the thing as such, may only take the form of transforming the being, shaping it, work. As Hegel writes, the lord thanks to the *bondsman* connects himself with a not-self-existent character of the thing, he can negate it in a pure way by “using it and enjoying it”.

The described structure of work in the system which has been characterized here is just the basis for recognition of the lord by the second consciousness. But it is a unilateral and uneven recognition. The lord turns out to be a not-self-existent consciousness, the truth of his self-confidence is a not-self-existent character of his consciousness and insignificance of his deeds.

In that moment of Hegel’s lecture the *truth* of the concept of the lord emerges from the development of that concept. *The truth of that concept* is dynamics of the characterized system, its future. If Hegel writes that “the essence of domination is the opposition of that what it want to be” and that “slavery in its realization is going to turn out to be the opposition of what it is directly”, the “essence” and “realization” are just the future. Domination reveals its not-self-existence and insignificance, the working consciousness – through watching its self-existence in the being shaped by work – extracts its own significance, self-existence:

It is in this way, therefore, that consciousness, qua worker, comes to see in the independent being [of the object] its own independence [...]. Through this rediscovery of himself by himself, the bondsman realizes that it is precisely in his work wherein he seemed to have only an alienated existence that he acquires a mind of his own⁶⁹.

Does revealing of the *lord’s* not-self-existence and insignificance in connection with finding one’s own self-existence, significance and “one’s own sense” by the bondsman mean the *lord’s* fall – and hence the end of existence of classes and even... socialism, communism, as it is maintained by some commentators who see the lord and the *bondsman* as a summary of the most radical ideas of the age of the French Revolution and the source of many later conceptions? Is it true that Hegel derived such a historical perspective from the concept of the lord by the power of pure abstraction? Does a possibility of coming into being of a different kind of recognition than “only unilateral and uneven” occur only after liquidation of the opposition between self-consciousnesses in the form of the lord and the *slave*?

⁶⁹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

We are not going to resolve it now. That issue has its rich literature and various brave solutions⁷⁰. But at the end of our trip to the world of slavery we must raise one more issue which seems to be a logical closure of some entirety of Hegel's arguments. According to the interpretation which is presented by me, the essence of Hegel's lecture is constituted here by a presentation of the emergence of class society, which is based on the theory of conquest, but also goes beyond it in a significant way, because it bases the division into the lord and the *bondsman* on a complex structure of anthropomaterial dependencies. What is often stressed in interpretation of that fragment is significance of *fear* for constitution of new relations and new subjectivity. Of course, Hegel writes about it, too. But, as it seems, here also appear difficulties with understanding intentions of the author of *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. The problem is understanding the sense of the concept of *fear*. Everybody has fear at hand, so it is easy to understand Hegel when he writes that the servient consciousness needs servitude, education in work of the being and *fear*. Hegel writes:

Without the discipline of service and obedience, fear remains at the formal stage, and does not extend to the known real world of existence. Without the formative activity, fear remains inward and mute, and consciousness does not become explicitly for itself⁷¹.

Let us notice that, on the one hand, *fear* appears in Hegel's works as the moment of constituting the division into the lord and the *slave*, but, on the other hand, it is connected, as an element permanently accompanying work, with "shaping", servitude, discipline – so with the phenomena characterizing not the *act* of coming into being of the lord and the *bondsman* but rather the whole historical *period* characterized by such a division. It comes from the fact that work, the act of shaping, is a *process* which is constitutive for the analyzed system and in that sense *fear* which accompanies it must have parameters making it suitable for this function. If so, the concept of *fear* appearing in Hegel's works should not be understood in a simple way and identified only with individual fear we know. It does not mean that because of that authentic fear is going to disappear or to be placed outside of philosophy. It must be developed, extended, generalized, it must become all-encompassing *absolute* fear,

⁷⁰ It is indubitable that among the bravest of them we can include A. Kojève's interpretation in *Wstęp do wykładów o Heglu*, which is extremely significant for history of French philosophy. The interpretation of the dialectics of the lord and the bondsman which is presented by me partly constitutes also a polemic against Kojève. Anyway, he has recently been met in Poland with strong opposition in the work by E. Nowak-Juchacz, *Hegel Alexandra Kojève'a, czyli o filozoficznym jakobinizmie*, Poznań 1999. Reading Kojève is not easy and, if someone is allergic to all kinds of politics and ideology, it seems almost impossible.

⁷¹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Fenomenologia ducha*, p. 227.

which, however, draws its strength not only from the threat of *absolute* negation of an individual existence, a possibility of killing me in any moment, but also from its universal presence using all possible social mediations and interpositions.

What is SUCH *fear*?

It is a side of the social being, its indelible moment, a form of constitution of infinity in the subject – so also a form of constitution of truth, morality, law, discipline and servitude. It makes use of eternal damnation and a policeman's club, of doubt and pangs of conscience, of children's love for parents and parents' love for children, it is a component of workers' wages and a moment of each rest. The core of such *fear* is the *state* – in its activity this is what Hegel calls "the first absolute fear".

If consciousness fashions the thing without that initial absolute fear, it is only an empty self-centered attitude; for its form or negativity is not negativity *per se*, and therefore its formative activity cannot give it a consciousness of itself as essential being. If it has not experienced absolute fear but only some lesser dread, the negative being has remained for it something external, its substance has not been infected by it through and through. Since the entire contents of its natural consciousness have not been jeopardized, determinate being still *in principle* attaches to it; having a mind of one's own' is self-win, a freedom which is still enmeshed in servitude. Just as little as the pure form can become essential being for it, just as little is that form, regarded as extended to the particular, a universal formative activity, an absolute Notion; rather it is a skill which is master over some things, but not over the universal power and the whole of objective being⁷².

But unification of *shaping* with *fear* in systems of reproduction seems to be not enough. Something like an *ad hoc* support from the government turns out to be a condition for going beyond "usual dexterity", for a defense against individual and estate particularism. Let us remember once more Hegel's statement about a necessity of "shaking", "violating" just by the government, which must make individuals feel "their lord – death". In that way, according to Hegel, the spirit "maintains the self of its consciousness and elevates it to the level of *freedom*".

Fear does not end with coming into being of civil society. It is worth mentioning on that occasion that nowadays there appears in Poland a tendency to treat Hegel too leniently. There are attempts at rejecting critiques of Hegel – which, after all, have already become part of tradition – and treating civil society as an incarnation of mutual recognition and disappearance of fear, a realization of "a universalist ethos of human solidarity and community". Such a step backward in perception of limitations of the Hegelian philosophy is made under pressure of contemporary historic events, it is an escape into pre-Marxist perception of Hegel's philosophy enforced by the propa-

⁷² *Ibidem*, pp. 227–228.

ganda of “the end of history”. On the theoretical ground it leads to legal fictionalism and a dispute which, as a matter of fact concerns only the *legal subject* or possibly the abstract – because isolated from social conflicts which were noticed even by Hegel – *moral subject*. Its apologetic attitude to the modern world is amazingly naïve and can be understood only as a result of a great stress. That contemporary fully uncritical adoption of the perspective of civil society in theory – I do not think here about political practice, propaganda, political journalism, etc. – is McHegelianism and Francis Fukuyama’s works are its visible manifestation. His last lectures in Poland – after the WTC tragedy in New York – concerned already future world wars for genes and they are again hot items for lifestyle magazines and TV.

On the other hand, there are attempts at strange universalization of the problem of violence in history. It happens when it is assumed that the essence of human work is constituted by coercion, which expires only in civil society because of the generated forms of mediations. Admittedly, significance of the economic dimension of Hegel’s reflection is stressed, but it is simultaneously assumed that the human can resist the temptation to consume the produced goods directly only as a result of violence and taking those goods by the *master*. Thus, from such a viewpoint *work as such* is historically possible only in conditions of coercion and domination. It is usually overlooked that such a standpoint is false not only when it attributes refraining from instinctive immediate consumptions only to humans – it is enough to mention bees, beavers and stingy but forgetful squirrels – but also when “inhibited desire” is connected only with appearance of coercion and a *master*. If we recognize that Hegel’s analysis reveals the moment of coming into being of social classes and the state, such a standpoint would assume absence of *work* in pre-class and pre-statist societies. Moreover, M.J. Siemek maintains for example that rationality which comes into being here is “primarily a rationality of coercion; firstly it finds its expression in oppressive and repressive domination, in the law of the strongest”⁷³. Thus, not only *work*, but also rationality connected with it is a function of using force, violence and crime.

I do not neglect the role of violence, what – I hope – is clearly visible in the previous analysis. But, just like I am far from recognizing violence in modern societies

⁷³ M.J. Siemek, *Hegel i filozofia*, p. 78. In another place you can read “The dialectic figure of «domination and servitude», which can be found in *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, is nothing else but the metaphoric description of just that fully social – simultaneously ethical and political – genesis and essence of the very process of work. It is not like the working Servant postponed consumption of fruits of his work «for later» by himself. They are rather taken from him and moved *elsewhere* – that is, they are appropriated by someone else. Thus, work, regarding its essence, is indeed productive activity of a «subject», but such a subject who has already been made only an object by another subject. Primarily nobody works for himself, but always for someone else and *instead of him*, thus, the relation of domination and servient subordination – which, as we can see, from the very beginning is characteristic for the social process of work – turns out to be the most primary form of freedom” (*ibidem*, p. 77).

as something from beyond the system, I can by no means agree with an interpretation which *de facto* recognizes absence of work in pre-class and pre-statist societies. I have an impression that making the existence of work dependent on coercion is connected with a failure to understand relative ontological separateness of economy and politics, with identification of economic coercion with “direct” coercion. Recognition of violence as a constitutive component of work destroys the economic level of the analysis, in spite of the fact that explicitly it refers to work understood in a seemingly obvious way as a field of economy. *Work* is not a simple relation between an individual and a thing, it is obvious that it has an intersubjective character, but it is not only intersubjective. An interpretation of *work* in terms of intersubjectivity must lead its analysis towards a subjectivized interpretation of work, taking up the entirety of issues which are connected with it – that is, the entirety of social issues – in a plane of separated relations of violence, political relations, direction and management relations, of legal fictionalism and, finally, of moralizing or peculiar ethicism.

The *master-bondsman* relation implies not only – and not mainly – violence. The basis for an institutionalized, non-accidental *master-bondsman* relation – hence also a premise of coming into being of social classes – is such a level of material components of work which allows for a permanent dependence, a possibility of coming into being of private property, specific forms of organization of labor, division of produced goods, etc. Referring to Hegel’s term which has already been used, in order to make it possible for the thing as such to become a bondsman’s shackles he cannot abstract from the means of labor which are used in the process of work cannot be easily reproducible. I deliberately avoid here using the term *working tools*, although that historical exemplification seems to be relatively easy: if we fish in a creek with a hand, everybody can fish; the situation is similar in the case of a bow, a spear... – they are forms of acquiring food making use of tools which can be reproduced by each member of a primitive society. The contemporary factory is not such a means, similarly as the water mill.

It is not enough to fence a piece of land and call “This is mine!”. Reduction of coming into being of classes, private property, the state to violence is only a modification of Jean Jacques Rousseau’s ideas, a volitional attitude to the problem, which is understandable to some degree, because we live in an “epoch of transition” when concrete forms of property seem to be socially and politically susceptible to transformations.

Society is structured in its foundations also by transformations in means of labor. I avoid here connecting the problem with tools unequivocally, since the issue of this particular level is very complex. In the theoretical dimension the question is simple: it is about a possibility of a permanent dependence, shaping the division of labor in the technical and organizational sense, but also of property relations and their con-

sequences. But historically it may mean not an invention, a machine, a tool, but, for example, a herd of animals in the pastoral system or a system of irrigation of fields.

The “shackles” you cannot abstract from are not a function of fear and of weak will of slavish characters; they are mainly determined by anthropomaterial conditions of work – and among them there are material conditions of work including tools. Thus, liberation as such is not only liberation of cowardly slaves from fear. If we talk about liberation, let us come back to the generally treated problem of presence of freedom in Hegel’s philosophy.

The topic of elevation of the spirit to the level of freedom by means of governmental “excesses” which are to acquaint people with their lord – death – does not seem very attractive. But the whole of our previous analysis confirms an impossibility of simplicistic understanding of Hegel’s philosophy as a philosophy of freedom. On the distance traveled we can find many arguments justifying the standpoint recognizing that Hegel not only accepts the basic solutions formulated in that field by Kant and Fichte, but he even goes much further in establishing freedom as some kind of a specific form of human – that is, social – determination. That determination obviously must not be understood as a negation of the cause and effect relation and of determinism. Even self-consciousness cannot be solitary and its further development implies entanglement in the dialectics of the *master*, the *bondsman* and the *thing as such*, which in turn leads to institutionalized fear as a guarantee of “freedom of the spirit”. Moreover, there is a formula recognizing “naturalness” of social phenomena hovering over all the above-mentioned things.

Richness of entanglements of freedom is connected with a passage to freedom as an element of social reproduction – and not only as an appellation of finite ideologic-ness. Treating history apologetically as subsequent rungs leading to modernity – as epochs of development of the spirit and freedom, which logically come one after another – is deliberate construction of a *religion of freedom* by Hegel, what means interpreting freedom as something infinite, because only that what is infinite can be a *strong* – and not *brittle* – basis for freedom. Thus, despite appearances, in Hegel’s works we do not have to do with breaking up with treating freedom as a medium of ideological appellation, but quite the opposite – with a general development of just such an attitude in the spirit of a specific philosophy of freedom.

“Thus, freedom is – M.J. Siemek rightly remarks – the highest category of the Logic of the Concept, constructed as unification and mutual mediation of «subjectivity» and «objectivity» in «idea»”⁷⁴. That statement precisely reflects the essence of the figure of appellation in Hegel’s philosophy and although Siemek’s interpretation goes in another direction, it hits home at that moment. The mediation of subjectivity and objectivity in the idea can appear only in the form of an interpellation for partici-

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 68.

pation and freedom acts here also as a medium, similarly as in Fichte's philosophy or (in a bit different way) in Kant's works. It is of course about "being-in-one's-own-in-the-other"⁷⁵.

Thus, let us come back at the end to Hegel's polemics against Kant. Hegel's resistance against subjectivization, formalism, constructivist or conventionalist character of his philosophy – was transformed into a new way of a philosophical entanglement of freedom and a new way of carrying out ideological practice. It is to the highest degree caused by a fear that a formal character of appellation in Kant's works and its universalist message are not concrete enough and they do not take into account a possibility of their contradictory, antagonistic interpretations resulting from particularities and contradictions of civil society⁷⁶. The whole Hegel's work consists in revealing those contradictions to the best of his theoretical abilities and historical experience, and then on constructing a machine able to immortalize them and strip them of character of something being just a simple specificity⁷⁷. The basic role is to be played here by the state, which, using "cunning", changes blind activities of individuals driven by passion into the general. "The real lord – Hegel writes – becomes that who causes that the other turns in its activity by itself", "The cunning of the government [consists in] relying on others' own benefit (law and the mercantile good sense know what the real world is really about: benefits) and changing it into one's own benefit, directing it in such a way to make it return repeatedly"⁷⁸. The state and law become instruments of the government, blind activity is transformed into purposeful activity.

⁷⁵ G.W.F. Hegel, *The Science of Logic, and Philosophy of Mind...*

⁷⁶ Let us remember on that occasion one more Kant's statement: "Any collision between duties or obligations is completely unthinkable" (I. Kant, *Metaphysik der Sitten*, hrsg. v. K. Vorländer, Leipzig 1907, p. 27); and one more Fichte's statement: "There is no conflict between freedom of rational beings *in general*; what means, there is no contradiction in that that there are many free beings in the same sensual world" (J.G. Fichte, *Werke...*, Bd. II, p. 694). Hegel's critique of Kant's formalism is described, although in a slightly different way, by K. Bal, *Kant i Hegel. Dwa szkice z dziejów niemieckiej myśli etycznej*, Wrocław 1994, pp. 57–63.

⁷⁷ Hegel's intention is profound and refers also to the family: "In the ethical household, it is not a question of this particular husband, this particular child, but simply of husband and children generally; the relationships of the woman are based, not on feeling, but on the universal". G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Maybe Lukács' words about "righteousness" as a significant category of the whole Hegel's perspective will be the most sensible here. We should not, however, forget that on that occasion he wrote also that "the model which guides Hegel here is a German philistine and not an English capitalist". G. Lukács, *Młody Hegel*, p. 677.

⁷⁸ G.W.F. Hegel, *Naturphilosophie und Philosophie des Geistes*, [in:] *Hegels Gesammelte Werke*, Hamburg 1976, Bd. VIII, pp. 263 and 276. Hegel's category of the „cunning” is excellently described by M.J. Siemek in the paper *Filozofia wobec wyzwań społecznej modernizacji*, [in:] *idem, Hegel i filozofia*, pp. 143–161.

ABSTRACT

The article is another part of the dissertation on freedom published in *Nowa Krytyka*. This time, after Kant, Fichte, the subject of interest is the place and meaning of the concept of freedom in the philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel. Freedom is included here in connection with the Hegelian theory of social structure / classes, states, *Stände* / and the dialectic of considerations about master and slave.