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Why Did Hegel Study Political Economy? From Propriety
as a Form of Reflection to Life as an Ideal Whole
Ohta, Kotaro (2018)

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- Section 1 Political and religious circumstances surrounding the young Hegel
- Section 2 Critique of Christianity as a private religion and the formation of “the spirit of the nation”
- Section 3 Christianity and property
- Section 4 From the critique of property to property as destiny
- Section 5 German states in Hegel’s time and “the spirit of Judaism”
- Section 6 Ancient Greeks and Jews – Two very different people produced by property rights
- Section 7 The fate of property and the religion of Jesus as the religion of love
- Section 8 From the world of the inanimate (property) to the world of the living
- Section 9 Investigation into modern civil society as “the system of property and right”
– Beginning the study of “political economy”
- Afterword by the translator

In *G. W. F. Hegel’s Leben*, Karl Rosenkranz wrote about Hegel’s first serious study of political economy as follows:

All of Hegel’s thoughts about the nature of civil society, about needs and work, about the division of labor and property of the classes, the care of the poor and the police, taxes, etc. , are summarized in a glossary commentary on the German translation of Steuart’s state economy, which he wrote from February 19 to May 16, 1799, and is still completely preserved. There are many great insights into politics and history, and many shrewd remarks. Steuart was still a

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student of the mercantile system. With noble pathos, with a plethora of interesting examples, Hegel fought against the inanimate of mercantilism, striving to save man's mind in the midst of competition and in the mechanism of labor and trades. [*Alle Gedanken Hegels über das Wesen der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft, über Bedürfniß und Arbeit, über Theilung der Arbeit und Vermögen der Stände, Armenwesen und Polizei, Steuern u. s. w. concentrirten sich endlich in einem glossirenden Commentar, zur Deutschen Uebersetzung von Stewart's Staatswirtschaft, den er vom 19. Februar bis 16. Mai 1799 schrieb und der noch vollständig erhalten ist. Stewart war noch ein Anhänger des Mercantilsystems. Mit edlem Pathos, mit einer Fülle interessanter Beispiele bekämpfte Hegel das Todte desselben, indem er inmitten der Concurrrenz und im Mechanismus der Arbeit wie des Verkehrs das Gemüth des Menschen zu retten strebte.*] (Rosenkranz, 1969, S. 86)

Hegel's commentary on Stewart, whose complete version Rosenkranz could have used, was scattered and lost and is not available to us today. However, Rosenkranz's short description above reveals some information regarding Hegel's intention of studying political economy.

According to Rosenkranz, Hegel studied political economy to clarify "the nature of civil society,"¹⁾ grasped the inherent inner structure of modern civil society – which is a system of labor and desire based on the division of labor and its problems – and tried to save human life from the inanimate things in civil society.

It is no coincidence that, among German Idealist Philosophers, Hegel was the only philosopher who was interested in political economy. His interest in political economy may have stemmed from his long-standing awareness of the issues.

In this article, I would like to trace the development of Hegel's interest in political economy. First, I would like to describe the necessity and process by which Hegel, in his time in Frankfurt (1797–1800), turned to the study of political economy to clarify "the essence of civil society" before searching for the "mediation" between the "reflective form" of "propriety" and "life" as a whole.

1) Young Marx, after having encountered the real economic problem, critically reread Hegel's *Philosophy of Law* and came to know that political economy is the very means for "the anatomy of civil society." Marx noticed the importance of political economy because he could grasp Hegel's long enduring and persistent interest in civil society in his *Philosophy of Law*.

For example, he wrote, "It shows Hegel's profundity that he feels the separation of civil from political society as a contradiction" (Marx, 1975, p. 75). This shows that Marx grasped that the distinction and relation of civil society and state is the main task of Hegel's *Philosophy of Law* and that the essence of Hegel's philosophy itself is apparent there.

Section 1 Political and religious circumstances surrounding the young Hegel

Hegel graduated from the University of Tübingen in 1793 and then worked as a private teacher in Bern. At that lonely and unhappy time, he wrote a letter to Schelling (April 16, 1795), which contains the following remarks:

Why have we been so late in recognizing man's capacity for freedom, placing him in the same rank with all spirits? I believe there is no better sign of the times than this, that mankind is being presented as so worthy of respect in itself. It is proof that the aura of prestige surrounding the heads of the oppressors and gods of this earth is disappearing. The philosophers are proving the dignity of man. The people will learn to feel it. Not only will they demand their rights, which have been trampled in the dust, but they will take them back themselves; they will appropriate them. Religions and politics have joined hands in the *same* underhanded game. The former has taught what despotism willed: contempt for the human race, its incapacity for any good whatsoever, its incapacity to be something on its own. With the spread of ideas as to how things *ought* to be, the indolence that marks people set in their ways, who always take everything the way it is, will disappear. (Hegel, 1984, p. 35)

Thus, Hegel describes clearly in the letter how he was grappling with real-world issues.

According to Hegel, religion and politics should be some of “the most important matters [*die wichtigsten Angelegenheiten*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 3) of humankind and should support our lives. However, in reality, they have not contributed to making humanity more humane; conversely, they have planted “disdain for humanity” in people and helped bring about the oppression of humankind.²⁾

Considering this situation, Hegel problematizes private interest. In the same letter, he writes that “the spirit of constitutions has presently made a pact with self-interest and has founded its realm

2) Young Hegel must have had the following phrases from Rousseau in mind:

We must not, from all this, conclude with Warburton that politics and religion have among us a common object, but that in the origin of nations religion serves as an instrument for politics. [*Il ne faut pas, de tout ceci conclure avec Warburton que la politique & la religion aient parmi nous un objet commun, mais que dans l'origine des nations l'une sert d'instrument à l'autre.*] (Rousseau, 1964a, p. 384)

Christianity only preaches bondage and dependence. Its spirit is so convenient for tyranny that tyranny always benefits from Christianity. [*Le christianisme ne prêche que servitude & dépendance. Son esprit est trop favorable à la tyrannie, pour qu'elle n'en profite pas toujours.*] (Rousseau, 1964a, p. 467)

upon it" (Hegel, 1984, p. 36). Hegel was worried that private interests would prevail in the universal area of the human spirit, including religion and politics, and make them their own subordinates.

What Hegel wanted to prove during his time in Bern (1793–1796) was that the human being had the original "ability for freedom" to heighten itself to the level of "spirit" by criticizing politics and religion. This, wrapped together around humans, obscured their original selves in self-interest with multiple thick layers and oppressed "human dignity." At that time, Hegel believed that this was the very task of philosophy.

The real conditions that Hegel experienced at that time influenced his thoughts.

Bern, where he lived, facially had the republic political system, but in reality, oligarchy prevailed there, and apparently, an aristocracy dominated by self-interests. In the letter cited above, he describes the corruption of Bern's oligarchy as follows:

Every ten years, *about ninety new members replenish the conseil souverain*, replacing those who have departed in this period. I cannot describe to you how all-too-humanly this is done, or how all the intrigues involving cousins and so on at princely courts are nothing compared to the schemes concocted here. A father nominates his son, or perhaps the son-in-law who adds the largest marriage portion, and so it goes. To get to know an aristocratic constitution, one must have lived through a winter such as is encountered here before these vacancies are filled during the Easter holidays. (Hegel, 1984, p. 35)

In those days, Hegel produced a translation of an article by Cart,³⁾ who lived in Vaud of the Bern republic and exposed the historical facts and actual state of the oligarchy of Bern to teach the politicians about "justice [*Gerechtigkeit*]" (Hegel, 1974, S. 248). This translation and its commentary led Hegel to clearly realize that the political powers were completely permeated by economic interests and were no more than the means of private interests.

After that, Hegel moved from Bern to Frankfurt, stopping temporarily along the way in his hometown of Stuttgart, where he realized that the political situation in Kingdom Württemberg was no different from that in Bern.

At that time in Württemberg, the monarch and the parliament were in conflict, which became apparent after the monarch convened the parliament to finance reparations to France.⁴⁾

According to Hegel, in Württemberg's realpolitik, "in the end everything revolves around a person

3) Original Title is *Letters de Jean Cart à Bernard de Muralt, Trésorier du Pays de Vaud, sur le droit public de ce Pays et sur les événements actuels*, Paris 1793. Title of Hegel's translation of it is *Vertrauliche Briefe über das vormalige staatsrechtlich Verhältniß des Waadtlandes [Pays de Vaud] zur Stadt Bern*. Frankfurt a. M. 1798.

4) Takezo Kaneko explains the domestic politics of Württemberg at that time and its historical background. Cf. Kaneko 1972, pp. 98f. ; Takezo Kaneko's comments on Hegel, 1968.

who ex providentia majorum unites all powers in himself and gives no guarantee for his recognition and respect for human rights [*am Ende Alles um einen Menschen herumdrehe, der ex providentia majorum alle Gewalten in sich vereinigt, und für seine Anerkennung und Achtung der Menschenrechte keine Garantie giebt*]” (Haym, 1962, S. 67). Not only the monarch but also the parliament – which was the countervailing force against the monarch – made use of their political power to pursue their interests. Hegel strongly condemned that the parliament was permeated by “self-interest [*Eigennutz*]” (Hegel, 1913, S. 154) and did not function as a restraining power against the monarch.

Hegel concentrated his criticism mostly on the “consultants [*Konsulenten*]” and “advisors [*Advokaten*]” (Hegel, 1913, S. 153) of the Standing Committee, which was the core of the parliament. They handled the official documents exclusively for their own purposes, hid them if they were inconvenient for them, spent the official fund at their will, and intervened in elections. They utilized the Standing Committee for their own interests.

Furthermore, they secretly cooperated with the court of the monarch and confirmed their interests. However, the court made use of them to pursue its own purposes. Thus, in the Duchy of Württemberg, both the monarch and the parliament appeared to be in conflict with each other, but they cooperated to protect their self-interests.

According to Hegel, such political situations, as a whole, should be altered according to the idea of “justice [*Gerechtigkeit*]” (Hegel, 1913, S. 151) – that is, “the public interest [*das allgemeine Beste*]” (Hegel, 1913, S. 152).

Hegel argued that a person who went against “justice” and focused solely on his self-interests should recognize the collision of his own spirit and the universal spirit and follow the necessary development of the situation.

After being coldly convinced that a change is necessary, they [Germans] must not be afraid to go into detail with the investigation and, whenever they find something to be unjust, those who suffer injustice must demand that it be eliminated, and those who have unjust property must give it up voluntarily. [*nach kalter Überzeugung, daß eine Veränderung notwendig ist, dürfen sie sich nun nicht fürchten, mit der Untersuchung ins einzelne zu gehen, und, was sie Ungerechtes finden, dessen Abstellung muß der, der Unrecht leidet, fordern, und der, der im ungerechten Besitz ist, muß ihn freiwillig aufopfern.*] (Hegel, 1913, S. 152)

Hegel criticized Württemberg’s political system, which contributed mostly to promoting the self-interests of involved parties, and made every effort to find ways to change it in line with the idea of “justice.”

The religious situation in Württemberg at that time was also deplorable. Religion, like politics – or, together with politics – connected with the private interests of people. In a letter to Schelling,

Hegel writes as follows:

Orthodoxy is not to be shaken as long as the profession of it is bound up with worldly advantage and interwoven with the totality of a state. This interest is too strong for orthodoxy to be given up so soon, and it operates without anyone being clearly aware of it as a whole. (Hegel, 1984, p. 31)

In fact, Tübingen Stiftung, where Hegel studied, was one of the most supported facilities of the Württemberg government; its graduates had great opportunities to hold positions not only as Lutheran pastors but also as many other important public positions.⁵⁾ With the monarch as its supreme authority, the Lutheran church had a significant influence, both in parliament and other committees (Cf. Kaneko, 1972, pp. 9–10). It also supervised the school system in Württemberg, and only members of the authentic Lutheran church had the opportunity to take a leading position in the government.

Owing to this oppressive network of authority, the church pursued thought control and the strict suppression of heresies. Hegel criticized the inhumane domination of the authentic Lutheran church as follows:

It would perhaps have brought more credit to us and mankind if no matter what heresy, damned by councils and creeds, had risen to become the public system of belief, instead of the orthodox system maintaining the upper hand. (Hegel, 1984, p. 43)

“Reason and Freedom” (Hegel, 1984, p. 32) – which was key term frequently used by Hegel, Hölderlin, and so on at that time for their future reunion – was thwarted. This was because the people who were embedded in the orthodox ruling system and preserved their self-interests were satisfied in the system and thus were unwilling to thwart their own vested interests.

Section 2 Critique of Christianity as a private religion and the formation of “the spirit of the nation”

As sketched in Section 1, the circumstances surrounding Hegel were that private interests prevailed in politics and religion, which were the most universal elements of human spirit, leading them both to lose their original spirit.

The young Hegel proposed the idea of “national religion” as a new form of religion and investigated the origin of the positivity of Christianity. He wanted to make people devote themselves

5) For an explanation of the Tübingen Stiftung at the time, see Asveld, 1953, pp. 30ff.

to realizing ideals by showing them the antithesis of the surrounding circumstances.

Hegel criticized Christianity and tried to demonstrate the ideal religion. However, he not only thematized religion itself but also intended to “ennoble the spirit of a nation [*Veredlung des Geistes einer Nation*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 5) through religion (or the critique of religion) and find a way to foster “the formation of the national spirit [*Bildung des Volksgeistes*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 21, 27). This was his final theme.

History (*kronos*), politics (*politeia*), religion, fine arts, and so on do not exist self-sufficiently and independently. They interact, are interconnected, and depend on each other, and they form the “national spirit” as a whole (vgl. Hegel, 2018, S. 27–28).

Therefore, religion has to engage not only in the moral formation of each person but also in all other spheres that form the national spirit. According to Hegel, “Forming the spirit of the nation is a matter partly of national religion and partly of political conditions [*den Geist des Volks zu bilden ist zum Teil auch Sache der Volksreligion, zum Teil der politischen Verhältnisse*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 27). Therefore, we must remember that the young Hegel argued religion from the viewpoint of the formation of a national religion and in relationship with politics and history.

When Hegel argues for a national religion, he mainly values whether religion upholds a vivid harmony with the national spirit. According to these criteria, he had to criticize Christianity. He found Christianity to be not a national religion but “a private religion [*eine Privatreligion*]” (Hegel 2018, S. 49) that aimed at the moral perfection of every person. However, he thus assumed that Christians could not make themselves morally perfect:

Through all endeavors, through all sincere zeal for good, man can never go so far as to earn bliss because of his total inability to morality. To what degree it belongs to him depends on the undeserved free grace of God. [*durch alles Bestreben, durch allen aufrichtigen Eifer zum Guten kann der Mensch es wegen seiner völligen Unfähigkeit zur Moralität nie so weit bringen, Glückseligkeit zu verdienen, welcher Grad ihm von derselben zuteil wird, hat er von der unverdienten freien Gnade Gottes,*]. (Hegel, 2018, S. 63)

Humans must go through “the detours [*die Umwege*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 44, 59 usw) of “belief in Christ [*Glaube an Christum*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 62, 63 usw) to achieve some happiness in spite of their moral inability. However, Hegel argued that the necessity of such a detour makes Christianity an inhumane religion. This detour presumes that human nature is degenerate and that humans are not virtuous. Therefore, Christianity is the religion of disdain for humanity.

Hegel, however, counterposes “the never wholly destructible goodness of human nature [*die nie ganz zerstörbare Güte der menschlichen Natur*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 52; vgl. Hegel, 2018, S. 34) after Jean-Jacques Rousseau:

The proposition of the corruption not only of men but of human nature contradicts our experiences where bad governments have not condemned human nature. [*Der Satz von der Verdorbenheit nicht nur der Menschen, sondern der menschlichen Natur, dem die Erfahrung da widerspricht, wo nicht schlechte Regierungen die Menschheit heabgewürdigt haben*]. (Hegel, 2018, S. 63)

As we can see, Hegel thinks that the notion of Christianity as a detour is the product of corrupt politics and Christianity, and the decadent government that fosters this religion, go hand in hand to corrupt humankind.

Section 3 Christianity and property

What does the “degeneracy of humanity” mean? It means that “the virtue of publicness [*öffentliche Tugend*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 71) disappears and that human interest concentrates mostly on private things. Private things come first because of “private property [*das Eigentum*].”

The young Hegel’s critique of Christianity relates to the problem of private property. Hegel criticized Christianity as a private religion, as well as “German liberty” in his time because he found that they each stemmed from the problem of private property.

Based on the rise of private property, and as Rousseau did, Hegel divided human history into two sections when he had not yet begun his study of economics and especially when he stayed in Bern. He described ancient Greece as the world of freedom and harmony, where people were not yet tainted by private property. The dominance of assets (property) made humans into private people, thus changing the nature of humanity. The rise of private people caused the disintegration of the ancient republic of Rome. Hegel considered the time from the collapse of the Roman republic to his era as the progressive corruption of humans, and he tried to stop this process by reviving the ideal of the ancient republic in the future (vgl. Lukács, 1948, S. 168).

The dominance of property is the criterion for dividing world history into the ancient era and modern, and it is the criterion as well for the profound cause of the corruption of the modern world.⁶⁾ In a fragment about national religion, Hegel writes as follows:

6) It is well known that Rousseau identified the establishment of civil society with “property [*propriété*]” and grounded the ethos of civil society on “the idea of property” (Cf. Rousseau 1964b).

Rousseau says, for example, the following:

in a word, competition and rivalry on the one hand, from the opposition of interests on the other, and always the hidden desire to make profit at the expense of others; all these evils are the first effect of property and the inseparable train of incipient inequality. [*en un mot, concurrence & rivalité d'une part, de l'autre opposition d'intérêts, & toujours le désir caché de faire son profit aux dépens d'autrui; tous ces maux sont le premier effet de la propriété & le cortège inséparable de*

If moral ideas can take hold in man, then those goods decrease in value, and constitutions that only guarantee life and property are never considered to be the best. [*wenn moralische Ideen in dem Menschen Platz greifen können, so sinken jene Güter im Wert, und Verfassungen, die nur Leben und Eigentum garantieren, werden nimmer für die besten gehalten*]. (Hegel, 2018, S. 71)

Both Rousseau and Hegel considered that the state regime, which only protected the lives and property of its people, enabled the individuals to “live” but not to “live well.”⁷⁾ Later, in his Frankfurt era, Hegel described the modern state, which became a mere means to protect properties, somewhat cynically.

In recent times, security of property is the axel around which all legislation revolves, to which most of the rights of citizens relate. In many free republics of antiquity, the constitution of the state has already impaired the strict right of property, the care of all our authorities, the pride of our states. [*In den Staaten der neueren Zeit ist Sicherheit des Eigentums der Angel, um den sich die ganze Gesetzgebung dreht, worauf sich die meisten Rechte der Staatsbürger beziehen. In mancher-freien Republik des Altertums ist schon durch die Verfassung des Staats das strenge Eigentumsrecht, die Sorge aller unserer Obrigkeiten, der Stolz unserer Staaten, beeinträchtigt worden.*] (Hegel, 1974, S. 268)

In the ancient era, people did not care much about the “security of properties.” Their lives were concerned not with their private property but with the universal idea of the state. They were unified directly by the shared idea of the state. They had “the image of the state as a product of their activity [*das Bild des Staates als ein Produkt seiner Tätigkeit*]” (Hegel 2018, S. 223) in themselves, and it made them free and independent.

As free people, they [ancient Greeks and Romans] obeyed laws that they had given to themselves, they obeyed people they set by themselves to be their superiors, they engaged in warfare that they themselves decided, they gave up their property, their passions, and sacrificed a thousand lives for their cause. [*Als freie Menschen gehorchten sie Gesetzen, die sie sich selbst gegeben, gehorchten sie Menschen, die sie selbst zu ihren Obern gesetzt, führten sie Kriege, die sie selbst beschlossen, gaben ihr Eigentum, ihre Leidenschaften hin, opferten sie tausend Leben für eine Sache, welche die ihrige war.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 221)

For example, Socrates was born in a state that fostered the spirit of the republic. Those who learned

l'inégalité naissante.] (Rousseau, 1964b, p. 175)

7) Hegel agrees here with Rousseau on the issue of ideal state. Cf. Noda, 1974, p. 314.

from Socrates also enjoyed the “same spirit [*einen Geist*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 33). Although they were the students of Socrates, they were independent beings and were not necessarily satisfied with believing everything he said. For them, Socrates was neither the mold to be poured into nor a rule to blindly follow.

Socrates was a companion with whom his associates thought about the most important things in life and practiced together. There were no strict relationships such as master and disciples between Socrates and his followers, because they

loved Socrates for his virtue and his philosophy, not virtue and his philosophy for his sake. [*liebten den Sokrates um seiner Tugend und seiner Philosophie wegen, nicht die Tugend und seine Philosophie um seinetwillen.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 163)

Socrates fought as a free citizen for his state three separate times in his life. He continued tirelessly conducting dialogues with people to practice the virtue of the free citizen. He died behaving as a free citizen.

Before his death, he spoke to his disciples about the immortality of the soul, like a Greek speaks to reason and to the imagination - he spoke so vividly. [*vor seinem Tode also sprach er mit seinen Jüngern über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele, wie ein Grieche spricht zur Vernunft und zur Phantasie --- er sprach so lebendig.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 34)

Socrates was able to speak vividly about the immortality of the soul because he believed in the immortality of the idea of the state to which he contributed his entire soul. Only a man with such an idea in himself could speak about the immortality of the soul with confidence.

Therefore, according to Hegel, the ancient Greeks who shared the spirit of republic had the ideas of virtue and supreme morality in them and were free people.

Section 4 From the critique of property to property as destiny

In the ancient republic, there was a free and harmonizing relationship between individuals and the state. However, it was the universal domination of property and possession that destroyed this relationship, restricted human interests to the realm of selfishness, brought about the inequality of wealth, and abolished the people’s interest in the idea as a totality.

The freedom to obey self-imposed laws, to follow self-chosen authorities in peacetime and military leaders, to carry out plans that were decided upon by oneself, fell away; all political freedom fell away; the right of the citizen gave only one right of security of property, that is its

whole world. [*Die Freiheit, selbstgegebenen Gesetzen zu gehorchen, selbstgewählten Obrigkeiten im Frieden und Heerführern zu folgen, selbstmitbeschlossene Pläne auszuführen, fiel hinweg; alle politische Freiheit fiel hinweg; das Recht des Bürgers gab nur ein Recht an Sicherheit des Eigentums, das ist seine ganze Welt ausfüllte.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 223)

Therefore, beginning with the collapse of the ancient republic, all people direct their attention to the security of private property, and this continues to prevail in the “spirit of the age [*Geist des Zeitalters*].” (Hegel 2018, S. 220, 228)

As property and possession became the center of people's lives, their interests were directed toward selfish aims, and the universal ideas for which they once risked their lives disappeared. Simultaneously, contrary to what was the case for Socrates, death began to seem horrific, for, with the disappearance of those universal ideas, people were unable to find something eternal in their souls that could remain after their death; they were obsessed with the Death that was possession.

The means of death would have immediately made the purpose of getting property and enjoyment meaningless. [*das Mittel, der Tod, hätte den Zweck, Eigentum und genuß, unmittelbar aufgehoben.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 230)

As stated above, the domination of property (possession) drove human beings to become private and led to the inversion of human nature. According to Hegel, the privatization of the human spirit was the objective foundation for the acceptance of Christianity as a “private religion.” He refers to this as

the open, welcome reception of the Christian religion at the time of the disappeared public virtue of the Romans, and the diminishing dignity. [. . . *der offene, willkommene Empfang der christlichen Religion zu den Zeiten der verschwundenen öffentlichen Tugend der Römer, und der sinkenden äußern Größe*]. (Hegel, 2018, S. 71)

Along with the loss of human freedom, the eternal and the absolute are driven to another world, which is beyond human reach. Thus, humans cannot achieve happiness in this world, only in heaven. God became an objective being alienated from humans, and humanity was forced to be obedient to God as an infinite object. The objectification of God and the enslavement of humanity thus go together.

The loss of freedom forced him (=the human being) to evacuate his eternal, his absolute, into God. . . . The objectivity of God has gone in step with the corruption and slavery of human beings, and that is really only a revelation, only a manifestation of this spirit of the times. [*der Raub der Freiheit hatte ihn gezwungen, sein Ewiges, sein Absolutes in die Gottheit zu flüchten*

. . . . *Die Objektivität der Gottheit ist mit der Verdorbenheit und Sklaverei der Menschen in gleichem Schritte gegangen, und jene ist eigentlich nur eine Offenbarung, nur eine Erscheinung dieses Geistes der Zeiten.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 227–8)

As the above overview indicates, Hegel criticized Christianity as private or positive religion not only on its tenets. He also criticized it in the political context of his time and investigated it as the product of “the spirit of the time” that was supported by the economic phenomenon of property.

The problem of “property” was always on Hegel’s mind when he was in Bern, writing articles to institute a plan for a national religion and criticizing the Christianity as a positive religion. In his Frankfurt period, he softened his criticism of property as anathema and gradually came to understand its importance and consider it as the inevitable “fate” for the modern age. Hegel, therefore, began to evaluate the modern age positively.

Section 5 German states in Hegel’s time and “the spirit of Judaism”

With the support of Hölderlin, Hegel moved from Bern, where the oligarchy of noble lineage prevailed, to Frankfurt, “a town dominated by the commercial rich [*eine Stadt der mercantilen Geldaristkratie*]” (Rosenkranz, 1969, S. 85), and deepened his critical recognition of the current situation in Germany. In his time, Germany was divided among many local feudal lords, each of whom claimed his own special interests and benefited from the universal authority: a decentralized political system.

In the German Empire, the general authority as the source of every law has disappeared because it has isolated itself and made itself special. The general authority is therefore only present as thought, not as reality. [*Im Deutschen Reiche ist die machthabende Allgemeinheit, als die Quelle alles Rechts, verschwunden, weil sie sich isoliert, zum Besonderen gemacht hat. Die Allgemeinheit ist deswegen nur noch als Gedanke, nicht als Wirklichkeit mehr vorhanden.*] (Hegel, 1913, S. 141)

The German Empire was powerless because of “German liberty [*Deutsche Freiheit*]” (Hegel, 1974, S. 284; Hegel, 1913, S. 8), which allowed each special authority to claim its interests and rights without considering the interests and rights as a whole. It prevented the universal and common authority from being a foundation for building the integral state, making the integral German state impossible. In the German Empire, the universal and the public were privatized; thus, the state could not truly become the state.

This endeavor to make state power into private property means nothing else than dissolving the

state, destroying the state as a power. [*Dies Bestreben, die Staatsgewalt zu einem Privat-Eigentum zu machen, heißt nun nichts anders, als den Staat auflösen, den Staat als eine Macht vernichten.*] (Hegel, 1974, S. 287)

To unite and revive Germany, which was characterized by this “split” and “confrontation,” Hegel, in his Frankfurt time, began to write *A Criticism of the Constitution of Germany* [*eine Kritik der Verfassung Deutschlands*], and his awareness of the issues of the real world was inevitably reflected in his articles about Judaism and Christianity (*The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate* [*Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal*]).

As is well known, Hegel thematized the problem of the positivity of Christianity in his Bern time and studied it further by investigating Judaism as its origin. In this study, he identified the fate of German people, who were absorbed by their own special interests and could not live in a community together, with the fate of Judaism, which was involved in “separation” and “confrontation,” and tried to determine the foundation of their fates (Marsch, 1965, S. 71).⁸⁾

According to Hegel, it was the spirit of Abraham, the primogenitor of Jews, that apparently dominated their fate. The spirit of Abraham refers to “the spirit which puts itself steadfast in strict opposition to everything [*der Geist sich in strenger Entgegensetzung gegen alles fest zu erhalten*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 246). In other words, it pulls itself away from all the various relationships among human lives and confronts them.

This confrontation against nature and humans was the profound origin that dominated Judaism with Abraham as its primogenitor. This antagonism ruled all the interactions of Jews, who absolutely opposed the world and lived estranged from it, and was aimed at “the domination” of all.

8) According to Chamley, Hegel projected two extreme types of states, that is, the powerless German Empire and the political and economic authoritarian state, which was described by Steuart and Fichte, in his description of Abraham and Nimrod (vgl. Hegel, 2018, S. 245), who tried to unite nature and humanity through power. Cf. Chamely 1965, p. 261.

Hegel had a pessimistic view of Germany’s future but still tried to deny this fate and wrote as follows:

Even if the German nation is not able to increase its stubbornness in particular to the madness of the Jewish nation – the nation incompatible with others in sociability and community – even if it does not go to this wickedness of isolation, to murdering and allowing itself to be murdered, until the state is shattered, the special, the privilege, and the rights are something intimately personal. [*wenn die deutsche Nation nicht fähig ist, ihre Hartnäckigkeit in dem Besondern bis zum Wahnsinn der jüdischen Nation zu steigern, dieser mit andern zu Geselligkeit und Gemeinschaftlichkeit unvereinbaren Nation, wenn sie nicht zu dieser Verruchtheit der Absonderung, zu morden und sich morden zu lassen, bis der Staat zertrümmert ist, kommen kann, so ist das Besondere und Vorrecht und Vorzug so was innig Persönliches.*] (Hegel, 1913, S. 136)

For Abraham himself, the only possible relationship that was possible for the opposite infinite world was domination. [*Da Abraham selbst die einzige mögliche Beziehung, welche für die entgegengesetzte unendliche Welt möglich war, die Beherrschung.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 247)

However, he could not realize this relationship. The adversaries were endlessly haunted and prescribed by each other, and it was forever impossible for one of them to win this confrontation and dominate the other in a one-sided manner. Abraham, therefore, had to entrust the domination of the world to the transcendental “ideal.”

Abraham’s belief in the absolute God that was estranged from the world was based on his sense of powerlessness, which was the result of his attempt to dominate and insult the world.

For him, the root of the deity was his contempt for the whole world. [*die Wurzel seiner Gottheit seine Verachtung gegen die ganze Welt war.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 247)

Thus, Abraham’s assertive wish to dominate the world turned into passive obedience to God.

The foundation of Judaism is the objective, that is, the service and the servitude to the estranged. [*Die Wurzel des Judentums ist das Objektive, d. h. der Dienst, die Knechtschaft eines Fremden.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 386)

The servitude of the Jews to the God that was estranged from the world had its foundation in Abraham’s unimaginable distrust and antipathy toward humans and nature. He who wanted to persevere in the confrontation with all had to fall into the bad infinity of dominance-servitude, was haunted by the objective that he wanted to dominate, and finally had to be discarded by his God, like Shakespeare’s Macbeth (vgl. Hegel, 2018, S. 260).

Section 6 Ancient Greeks and Jews – Two very different people produced by property rights

It is interesting that Hegel took notice of property in the systematization of the spirit of Abraham by means of Moses’ lawmaking.

Hegel explained the opposite characters of peoples: the “passiveness” of Jews and the “autonomy” of the ancient Greeks.⁹⁾

9) Hosoya explains this issue in detail (Cf. Hosoya 1971, pp. 172ff.).

We must note that Hegel compared the ancient Greek and the Jude from the viewpoint of property to use this comparison to foreshadow the story of Jesus’ later setback in overcoming property, not simply to describe a trivial episode.

In order to avert their states from the danger that the inequality of wealth threatens freedom, Solon and Lycurgus had restricted the rights over property in many ways and excluded some arbitrariness that could have led to inequalities of wealth. In the same way, in the Mosaic state, the property of a family was connected to it forever [*Um die Gefahr, womit der Freiheit die Ungleichheit des Reichtums droht, von ihren Staaten abzuwenden, hatte Solon und Lykurg die Rechte über Eigentum auf mancherlei Art beschränkt und manche Willkür ausgeschlossen, die zu ungleichem Reichtum hätte führen können. – Ebenso war im mosaischen Staate das Eigentum einer Familie auf immer in dieser befestigt*]. (Hegel, 2018, S. 254)

Both people in the Greek republic and Jews were restricted in their property but for opposite purposes. Solon and Lycurgus tried to prevent the unlimited acquisition of wealth and return to the principle of equal property to prevent the political freedom of citizens from collapsing because of the inequality of wealth. The equality of property was, in ancient Greece, the prerequisite for all citizens to be free and independent.

Conversely, Jews were restricted in their property because they originally did not have property, rights, or freedom. For Jews, property was given to each individual by God as grace, and each individual simply possessed it.

Greeks should be equal because all are free, independent; the Jews equal because all were without the ability to exist independently. [*jene Griechen sollten gleich sein, weil alle frei, selbstständig; die Juden gleich, weil alle ohne Fähigkeit des Selbstbestehens waren.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 255)

Hegel confirmed here that “property” was both the origin of social disintegration and the foundation of social freedom.

Section 7 The fate of property and the religion of Jesus as the religion of love

During his time in Frankfurt, Hegel understood Jesus as a person who tried to overcome the tragic fate of Jews – who were inevitably involved in the vicious cycle of confrontation – with the religion of love.

However, the tenets of Jesus were accepted in a society where property became the inevitable human “fate.” It was not the ancient Greek republic or the ancient Jewish society where property was restricted. Christianity seemingly extended its power over the society when the security of property became the most important task of the state and people lost the universal idea for which they would have risked their lives.

In the real world, “the safety of the people and property of every citizen [*die Sicherheit der*

Personen und des Eigentums eines jeden Bürgers]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 183) became the most important task, and all freedom in the community was diminished by the development of private interests. The original purpose of Christianity as a private religion was to restore the lost freedom in “the kingdom of God” which transcended the real world, and to try to return humans to their inherent lives.

Christianity, therefore, did not tackle the confrontation originating from property in real life but, instead, attempted to restore human communality in the ideal world of the kingdom of God. This placed Christianity in contradiction to various relationships in the real world.

In an article written during his time in Bern, Hegel wrote about national religion as follows:

So many of Christ's commandments are contrary to the first foundations of legislation in civil societies, the principles of property rights, self-defense, etc. – A state that today would introduce the commandments of Christ among itself . . . would soon resolve itself. [*So sind viele Gebote Christi den ersten Grundlagen der Gesetzgebung in bürgerlichen Gesellschaften, den Grundsätzen der Rechte des Eigentums, der Selbstverteidigung usw. entgegen – Ein Staat, der Heutzutage die Gebote Christi unter sich einführen würde, . . . würde sich bald selbst auflösen.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 41)

Hegel originally found Christianity to be a private religion that aimed at the moral perfection of every person. Therefore, its principles were available only in small communities. Christianity overcame this limit, extended its principles to civil society, and turned into an oppressive ruling mechanism in human societies (vgl. Hegel, 2018, S. 42f).

Hegel, during his time in Frankfurt, tried to overcome this private character of Christianity with the love of Jesus’ religion; however, love could not sublate property or the principle of civil society, nor could it resolve the division of civil society in its higher stage. Instead, against his intention, the love of Jesus had to be brought down and involved in the unavoidable antagonism and disruption in society. His handwritten draft *The spirit of Christianity and its destiny* mainly describes how Jesus’ religion of love was unable to overcome the relationships in civil society based on the property and how it brought about the opposite of its original intention – the intention, that is, to settle with love.

Regarding Jesus’ phrase about wealth, according to which “it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:23), Hegel believed that property was the inevitable fate in modern times and that such a phrase was nonsense.

The fate of property has become too powerful for us to be tolerable of reflections on it, for its separation from us to be conceivable. However, so much is to be seen that the possession of wealth, with all the rights as well as with all worries that are connected with it, brings certainty in people, whose barriers set their limits on virtues, give them constraints and dependencies. [*Das Schicksal des Eigentums ist uns zu mächtig geworden, als daß Reflexionen*

darüber erträglich, seine Trennung von uns, uns denkbar wäre. Aber soviel ist doch einzusehen, daß der Besitz von Reichtum, mit allen den Rechten, so wie mit allen Sorgen, die damit zusammenhängen, Bestimmtheit in den Menschen bringt, deren Schranken den Tugenden ihre Grenze setzen, ihnen Bedingungen und Abhängigkeiten angeben.] (Hegel, 2018, S. 273)

Jesus' religion of love was caught in "the fate of property" and had to restrict itself, in opposition to what the religion aimed at.

At first, love was thought by Hegel to be an unlimited relationship that was not in conflict with other beings:

Love neither restricts nor is restricted; it is not finite at all. It is a feeling, yet not an individual feeling. [*Sie [Liebe] ist nichts Begrenzendes, nichts Begrenztes, nichts Endliches; sie ist ein Gefühl, aber nicht ein einzelnes Gefühl.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 379)

Love is a universal feeling and "a sense of harmony [*Gefühl der Harmonie*]" (Hegel, 2018, S. 296) among identical spirits such that there is no room for objectives separate from the subject of love:

In love, the separated still exists, but no longer as the separated – as unity, and the living feels the living. [*In der Liebe ist das Getrennte noch, aber nicht mehr als Getrenntes – als Einiges und das Lebendige fühlt das Lebendige.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 379)

As love is a feeling that occurs only among living subjects sharing an identical spirit, love must conflict with "the inanimate things" – that is, with assets and property. This is love's fate:

This union of love is complete, but it can only be complete insofar as the separated is only so opposed that the one is the loving, the other the beloved, so that each separated is an organ of a living being. Otherwise, however, the lovers are still connected to a lot of inanimate things, many things belong to each lover; that is, they stand in relation to opposites, which are also opposites and objects. Thus, they are still capable of being in a manifold opposite relationship in the manifold acquisition and possession of property and rights. [*Diese Vereinigung der Liebe ist zwar vollständig aber sie kann es nur soweit sein als das Getrennte nur so entgegengesetzt ist, daß das Eine das Liebende, das Andere das Geliebte ist, daß also jedes Getrennte ein Organ eines Lebendigen ist; außerdem aber stehen die Liebenden noch mit vielem Toten in Verbindung, jedem gehören viele Dinge zu d. h. es steht in Beziehung mit Entgegengesetzten, die auch für das Beziehende selbst noch Entgegengesetzte, Objekte sind; und so sind sie noch einer mannigfaltigen Entgegensetzung in dem mannigfaltigen Erwerb und Besitz von Eigentum und Rechten fähig.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 381)

Here, Hegel recognizes that unity by love does not sublate the inanimate things, that is, property and rights; love can only remove the inanimate things (vgl. Hegel, 2018, S. 379, 388).

In the world of the inanimate (or property), the rulers of the inanimate inevitably conflict with people who are expelled from their properties. Human property, in general, through “the legal form of ownership [*die Rechtsform des Eigentums*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 382), puts human relationships into conflict.

Therefore, the relationships of dominance and confrontation brought about by property are dualistic. People stand in conflict with property by possessing it; however, the dominance of property expels people who do not possess it, and people who do have property can dominate others through this possession. In sum, private property puts proprietors into conflict with other people and possession (=object).

Owing to its directness, love cannot sublate this dual ruler-subordinate relationship. Love can unite the divided among identical spirits but cannot unite heterogeneous things that conflict with each other in nature, such as humans and their property or rulers and subordinates.

Jesus’ tenet of love had to retreat from the whole system of civil society, the main principle of which is private property. Hegel wrote as follows:

Destiny of Jesus – relinquishment of relationships in life – a) civil and national b) political c) living together with other people – family, relatives, household.

The relationship of Jesus to the world is partly flight from it, partly reaction and fight against it. As far as Jesus had not changed the world, he had to flee it and so on. [Schicksal Jesu – Entfaltung der Beziehungen des Lebens – a) bürgerlicher und civiler b) politischer c) Zusammenleben mit anderen Menschen – Familie, Verwandte, Ernährung.

Das Verhältnis Jesu zu der Welt teils Flucht, teils Reaktion, Bekämpfung derselben. Soweit Jesus die Welt nicht verändert hatte, so weit mußte er sie fliehen und so weit.] (Hegel, 2018, S. 305)

Regarding civil relationships based on property, Jesus had to say this, from the view of love: “Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21) ; he thus separated the kingdom of God and the world on earth completely. “The beautiful soul” inevitably has to get away from all the real relationships and turn in on itself.

This limitation of love to itself, its flight from all forms . . . This distance from all fate is precisely its greatest fate. [*Diese Beschränkung der Liebe auf sich selbst, ihre Flucht vor allen Formen . . . Diese Entfernung von allen Schicksal ist gerade ihr größtes Schicksal.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 324)

This phrase seems to be a critique of Jesus, but it could be Hegel's self-criticism of his own attempt to sublimate the separation of the real world by love.

Section 8 From the world of the inanimate (property) to the world of the living

Love makes an unbridgeable abyss between the earthly world and the kingdom of God, the world of the inanimate (that is, the world dominated by property) and the world of the living (that is, the world dominated by love). However, in his time in Frankfurt, Hegel could not resolve this abyss logically. He only said the following:

What is contradiction in the realm of the inanimate thing is not in the realm of life. [*Was im Reich des Toten Widerspruch ist, ist es nicht im Reich des Lebens.*] (Hegel, 2018, S. 308–9)

However, if “life” as a whole exists in the relationship between the finite and the infinite, between the inanimate and the living, then the inanimate world that is based on the relationship with property must consist of “externalization of life . . . expression of it [*Aeußerungen des Lebens . . . Darstellungen desselben*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 346). Hegel gradually realized that the real civil relationships dominated by property and assets were not simply inanimate and divorced from life but had the assertive meaning of phenomena of life or of a branch of life.

Hegel criticized his own critical methodology, by which he examined the real world from the view of “the world as it should be,” with concerns like national religion or love, and shifted toward “the understanding what really is.” He wrote in *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* [*Kritik der Verfassung Deutschlands*], which he wrote during his later time in Frankfurt and into his time in Jena, as follows:

It is not what it is that irritates and annoys us, but that it is not as it should be; and if we recognize that it is as it must be, that is, not by arbitrariness and chance, we also recognize that it should be so. [*Denn nicht das, was ist, macht uns ungestüm und leidend, sondern daß es nicht ist, wie es sein soll, erkennen wir aber, daß es ist. wie es sein muß, d. h. nicht nach Willkür und Zufall, so erkennen wir auch, daß es so sein soll.*] (Hegel, 1913, S. 5)

However, he also criticized the uncritical methodology of describing experience and fact itself. What is important, for Hegel, is to consider the necessity of what really is and to make it a critical springboard for creating a new reality.

Later, in the preface of *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, Hegel wrote, “It is the task of philosophy to understand what is to understand conceptually [*das was ist zu begreifen, ist die Aufgabe der Philosophie*]” (Hegel 1970a, S. 26). This phrase does not show an uncritical and

affirmative attitude toward the real world in his late middle age when he had achieved success and fame but rather is the expression of his everlasting critique aimed at reforming the real world.

The following phrase from the preface of *Phenomenology of Spirit* [*Phänomenologie des Geistes*] also supports the above interpretation:

To judge a thing that has substance and solid worth is quite easy, to comprehend it is much harder, and to blend judgement and comprehension in a definitive description is the hardest thing of all (Hegel, 1977, p. 3)

As Hegel accepted the real world as inevitable, the ancient republic as “ideal” was no longer an ideal that should be revived in the modern age.

As cowardly and threadbare as it is to call the sons of that condition (=ancient republic) dreadful, unhappy, and stupid, [and] to believe that we are much more human, happier, and smarter, it would be so childish and foolish, however, to believe that such a condition alone is natural and to long for it, and not to know the state in which the law rules as necessary and a state of freedom. [*So feige und schwächlich es ist, die Söhne jenes Zustands absichtlich, unglücklich und dumm zu nennen, [und] uns unendlich menschlicher, glücklicher und gescheiter zu glauben, so kindisch und albern wäre es, nach einem solchen Zustande – als ob er allein Natur wäre --- sich zurückzusehnen, und den Zustande, worin Gesetzherrschen, nicht als notwendig – und einen Zustand der Freiheit – zu achten zu wissen.*] (Hegel, 1974, S. 284)

Section 9 Investigation into modern civil society as “the system of property and right” – Beginning the study of “political economy”

Hegel finally realized the historical necessity of modern civil society. He understood civil society as “the system of property and right [*dieses System von Eigentum und Recht*]” (Hegel, 1970c, S. 492) and concentrated on investigating the fate of modern society to determine the historical necessity and inner principle of this development. This is clearly seen in his articles written during the Jena years – for example, *On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law* (1802) and the *System of Ethical Life* (1803).

To grasp the substance of civil society, Hegel likely found it necessary to study political economy as “the system of universal interdependence [*das System der allgemeinen gegenseitigen Abhängigkeit*]” (Hegel, 1970b, S. 482) produced by property and labor. He studied James Denham Stuart’s *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy* and made copious critical notes because

he found a series of relevant issues in Steuart's book.¹⁰⁾

Steuart found the transformation from a feudalistic and unfree society to a commercial society based on civil freedom historically inevitable. The major theme of his study of political economy was how the rational individuals in latter society achieved their desires through their interactions.¹¹⁾ He often compared the economy of modern Europe with that of the ancient kingdom of Lyncurgus (Sparta) and emphasized his originality (Steuart, 1767, Vol. 1, pp. 70–71, 250–260). Marx evaluated this point and wrote that “he had in some respects a more historical footing” (Marx, 1973, p. 84).

Steuart followed the tradition of English economics and affirmed human desire and self-interest as historical facts, as Adam Smith later did; he also investigated how the interactions of individuals' private desires achieved the public interest in the end. He emphasized the role of labor as a factor that enables the satisfaction of mutual desire.¹²⁾

Steuart also referred to political economy as a part of “the spirit of a people,” after Montesquieu.¹³⁾ The spirit of a people is based on morality, religion, politics, and customs, and all cultural and economic phenomena are influenced by the spirit of the people.

Steuart must have had a strong influence on Hegel in Frankfurt; this is apparent from our study thus far. Through his study of Steuart's political economy, Hegel felt that he could transform the

10) About Steuart's historical understanding, Cf. Kawashima, 1972, Chap. 2.

11) For example, Steuart described the purpose of his study of political economy as follows:

Civil and domestic liberty, introduced into Europe by the dissolution of the feudal form of government, set trade and industry on foot; there produced wealth and credit; there again debts and taxes; and all together established a perfectly new system of political economy, the principles of which it is my intention to deduce and examine. (Steuart, 1767, Vol. 1, p. 150)

12) For example, Steuart writes as follows:

Men were then forced to labour because they were slaves to others; men are now forced to labour because they are slaves to their own wants. (Steuart, 1767, Vol. 1, p. 40)

13) Hegel and Steuart shared the standpoint of building the “spirit of a people” (vgl. Hegel, 2018, S. 27; Steuart, 1767, Vol. 1, p. 4 and Chap. II). This is because they were both significantly influenced by Montesquieu (cf. Montesquieu, 1998, Livre III, Chaoutre III).

Hegel highly appreciated Montesquieu's methodology, saying that he had:

the true historical view, the genuinely philosophical standpoint, not to consider legislation in general and its special provisions in isolation and abstract, but rather as a dependent element of a totality in connection with all other provisions which make up the character of a nation and a time. [*die wahrhafte historische Ansicht, den echt philosophischen Standpunkt angeben, die Gesetzgebung überhaupt und ihre besonderen Bestimmungen nicht isoliert und abstract zu betrachten, sondern vielmehr als abhängiges Moment einer Totalität, im zusammenhange mit allen übrigen Bestimmungen, welche den Charakter einer Nation und einer Zeit ausmachen.*] (Hegel, 1970a, S. 35)

Steuart also shared Hegel's appreciation of Montesquieu and wished to be a student of “great Montesquieu” (Steuart, 1767, Vol. 1, p. 68).

negative perception of modern civil society into a positive one. Property was no longer made up of inanimate objects but rather by the products of human labor. Hegel got a glimpse of the true identity of the principles of civil society, that is, private interest and property – lower-order human desires – and understood that he could envision modern civil society as a system composed of property and rights.¹⁴⁾

Before his departure to Jena to be a full-fledged philosopher, Hegel described his feelings to his friend Schelling, recalling his development:

In my scientific education, which began with the subordinate needs of people, I had to be driven to science, and the ideal of adolescence had to be transformed into a form of reflection, into a system at the same time; I wonder now, while still busy with it, what return path to enter human lives is to be found. [*In meiner wissenschaftlichen Bildung, die von untergeordneten Bedürfnissen der Menschen anfang, mußte ich zur Wissenschaft vorgetrieben werden, und das Ideal des Jünglingsalters mußte sich zur Reflexionsform, in ein System zugleich verwandeln; ich frage mich jetzt, während ich noch damit geschäftigt bin, welche Rückkehr zum Eingreifen in das Leben der Menschen zu finden ist.*] (Hegel, 1969, S. 59–60)

Hegel always struggled with the problem of self-interest or “subordinate needs [*untergeordneten Bedürfnissen*]” of human in his early articles to see through what it really was.^{15),16)} Hegel now glimpsed the truth of self-interest and property, which grounds it from the stand point of political economy, and he believed that he could grasp the modern civil society as a system of property and rights.

14) Needless to say, Hegel’s idea of logic and his cognition of the real world are mutually related. For example, in his time in Frankfurt, his evaluation of reflective concepts, the logical expression of property, gradually shifted as he came to understand the positive meaning of property. Reflection was the ability to restrict and separate and was the first kind of thought unable to grasp life as a whole. However, until the end of his time in Frankfurt, Hegel gradually tried to understand life, which was antithetical to reflection, by means of the mediations of reflection.

He said that “life is the connection of connection and disconnection [*das Leben sei die Verbindung der Verbindung und der Nichtverbindung*] ” (Hegel, 1970c, S. 422) . This phrase came from the positive evaluation of reflection. The change in his evaluation of reflection from a negative one to a positive one corresponded to the change in his evaluation of property.

15) Already in *Volksreligion und Christentum*, Hegel said about “self-interest [*Eigennutz*]” that it “is the pendulum the vibrations of which keep your machine of emotion running [*Eigennutz ist das Pendel, dessen Schwingungen ihre Maschine im Lauf erhält*]” (Hegel, 2018, S. 7) .

16) There are many interpretations of Hegel’s “subordinate needs of human [*untergeordnete Bedürfnisse der Menschen*],” with which Hegel began the building of his system.

For Example, Hajimu Nakano said as follows:

The purpose of Hegel's study of political economy was to mediate property or a reflective form of life as a whole (ideal) and find a way to return from property or the inanimate to human life as a whole again. This is clearly seen in his articles during his Jena time, for example, *On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law* (1802), *System of Ethical Life* (1803), the lecture drafts from 1803/04 and 1805/06, and *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Afterword by the translator

Kotaro Ohta (b. 1947) is an emeritus professor at Hiroshima University of Economics (Hiroshima, Japan). He published "*Hegel no Baikai Shiso* [Hegel on Meditation]," and I translated Chapter 3 of his book here.

In general, many associate Hegel's dialectic with Trinitarianism, but Hegel clearly criticizes Christianity (vgl. Hegel 2018), and his dialectic is the means to overcome the illegitimacy of Christianity and revive human reason. According to Professor Ohta, Paul Asveld's *La pensée religieuse du jeune Hegel. liberté et aliénation* (Louvain-Paris 1953) was helpful and encouraged him to research *Hegels Theologische Jugendschriften* arduously.

Philosophers usually underestimate economic activities and pursuits of self-interest and do not find them worth studying. Hegel, however, read Stuart's book on political economy and concluded that the fragmented society of the modern era is inevitable and necessary. Hegel disregarded the

For me, it is crystal clear what Hegel's "subordinate needs" means, if you follow his fragmental literatures from his time in Tübingen, Bern, and Frankfurt. It is political and religious desires in a broad sense.

His investigation of "subordinate needs" already produced some results: most of the articles in *Hegels Theologische Jugendschriften* (Hegel, 2018) are the religious outcomes and the political articles [*Publizistik*] written until then are the political outcomes. (Nakano, 1979, pp. 268-287) According to Nakano, "subordinate needs" are opposed to superior needs toward science or systems. If this is the case, "subordinate needs" must belong to the non-academic or non-systematic needs; however, according to Nakano, they do not. They also belong to academic needs and are "political and religious desires in a broad sense." However, his statement that "religious needs belong to 'subordinate needs'" sounds very strange, and we cannot accept this explanation. In sum, according to Nakano, all of Hegel's studies of religion and politics before systematization are labeled as studies of "subordinate needs." He does not explain at all why this is so, although they were academic enough. Instead, our explanation here seems more convincing; namely, Hegel must have called human self-interest and the property underlying it "subordinate needs" because religion and politics originally belong to superior needs, which includes the universal spirit, and the violation of these superior needs by private interests in reality made him struggle with the problem of self-interest and property. Thus, Hegel was already concerned with "subordinate needs" at the start of his academic career. Our conclusion is that Hegel understood the meaning of property through the study of political economy and was able to evaluate the form of reflection as a logical expression of property and begin his systematic investigation of modern civil society.

ideal that he kept in mind from his younger days, criticized that society, and developed dialectics to grasp the principle of the modern society in which Hegel lived and sought a way to renovate the society.

Professor Ohta's article describes Hegel's depression and hypochondria from the recognition of the society of his time and the change in direction that finally comes to *Phenomenology of Spirit*. I hope this translation will help raise the profile of Hegel's earlier works and demonstrate the value of further studying Hegel.

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