Subjectivity and Temporality
in Hegel's Philosophy of Right

ANGELIKI D. KONTOU
Open University of Cyprus

I

THE NOTION OF TIME, as an explicit, central and systematic object of inquiry, is not a notion one is most likely to come across when engaging with the secondary literature on Hegel, especially so in the context of a philosophical anthropology, despite the fact that, in different forms, it permeates the whole of Hegel's work, and despite its indispensability to the aforementioned discipline. The present paper seeks to contribute to the broader theme of self and time in Hegel's philosophical anthropology by looking into the notion of *temporality* and in particular into certain functions the latter assumes in the context of the *Philosophy of Right* (Hegel, 1967). This orientation involves an engagement with the *experiential dialectical character* of Hegel's thought as well as with his understanding of the modern institutional articulation. The two (the abstract method and the concrete content) are separated here only for analytical purposes while in the *Philosophy of Right* they remain organically interwoven.

II

Nowhere in the *Philosophy of Right* does Hegel engage explicitly with the notion of temporality as such. Yet, temporality is an essential element of the subject's education to freedom and self-actualization this work expounds in phenomenological terms. Following the unfoldment of Hegel's thought, the reader witnesses a series of transformations of the subjective consciousness towards gradually richer and more adequate levels of understanding of both the self and the surrounding social reality. The subject's gradual cognitive participation in and endorsement of the objective social institutional truth is equally *a process of reconciliation* (*Versöhnung*) between self and other, particularity and universality, individuality and sociality. (1)

In metaphorical terms, such process can be understood as a journey from the state of *immediacy* that characterizes adolescence to that of maturity that

is characteristic of adulthood. In the present context, immediacy refers to an earlier, as yet, not fully developed state, to an existent, as yet undiscovered and therefore unactualized potential, whereas maturity expresses the advancement, deepening and enrichment of a prior, immediate and unreflective way of being in the social world and of relating to the other. Attaining reconciliation involves on the part of the subject an immanent process of *transcendence* (*Aufhebung*) of prior theoretical viewpoints (the latter, in Hegel's thought, are simultaneously translated into specific practically chosen actions), in the sense that all that is overcome is also preserved by means of its *transformation*.

Michael Hardimon's comparison of the Hegelian notion of reconciliation to the notions of resignation, pure acceptance and consolation is illuminating here. (2) In differentiation to the latter notions, Hegelian reconciliation amounts to a freely chosen and "natural" affirmation of an emergent way of relating to the other that is conceptually experienced by the subject as undoubtfully reasonable and as truly satisfactory. Hegelian reconciliation involves "something like [a] complete and wholehearted acceptance" of a particular situation that is clearly manifested to the subject as the best possible one (Hardimon, 1994: 87). Hegelian reconciliation expresses an actual *embracement* that is incompatible to stoical and fatalistic ways of perceiving social objectivity and of being in the world. Crucial to the Hegelian notion of reconciliation is the fact that it amounts to an acceptance of the present "in its own right, not merely as a stage to something else" (Hardimon, 1994: 88). Whereas "consolation involves essentially coming to terms with the failure of satisfaction of expectations that one *still* regards as reasonable (i.e. even after one has found consolation)", the attainment of reconciliation "turns on freeing oneself of expectations that one has justifiably come to regard as unreasonable. People who seek consolation regard the non-satisfaction of their expectations as a genuine loss for which some kind of replacement or compensation is due. People who attain reconciliation come to see that the fact that their unreasonable expectations were not fulfilled does not constitute a real loss at all" (Hardimon, 1994: 89).

Hegel's claim in the *Philosophy of Right* that the subject *can* "find satisfaction in the present" (i.e. that it can be reconciled to it) is inextricably interwoven, in terms of its exposition and theoretical foundation, with the additional argument that the structure and workings of the modern social institutional reality (which the *Philosophy of Right* expounds) *share in the essence of its member*. It is the *intrinsic rationality of modern society* –the fact that its institutional arrangements make possible the actualization, in a mutually mediated way, of both *individuality and sociality*- that makes modern social objectivity worthy of reconciliation and the latter a mainly subjective issue. Notwithstanding the persistence of non-fundamental failures and limitations, reconciliation between individuality and sociality, in Hegel's view, is objectively possible –what its

attainment requires, therefore, is the subjective experiential reflection on its objective worth and feasibility (Hardimon, 1994).

In terms of both its process *and* state, Hegelian reconciliation takes place simultaneously on two mutually mediated levels, in the sense that the different ways in which individuality is shown to relate to sociality are unfolded by means of corresponding forms of relation between *concept* and *object*. Hegelian dialectic is made possible by the subjective recognition of the concept's failure to express the truth of an object that was regarded as static. The concept 'corrects' itself by letting itself be mediated by the emerging dynamic movement of the object. In Adorno's vocabulary the Hegelian concept "surrenders itself without reservation to the specificity of [its] objects" (Adorno, 1993: 7): "Through what is experienced, the abstract idea is transformed back into something living, just as mere material is transformed through the path thought travels" (Adorno, 1993: 50). Hegelian dialectic is made possible by the concept's recognition of the constantly re-emergent *nonidentical*. The latter, contrary to Hegel's intentions, forms a reminder of the *nonreducibility* of reality to its mere conceptual articulation. It is this recognition Adorno reads as an expression of a 'realised' self-critique of knowledge. In Hegel, Adorno writes, "the Kantian limits of knowledge become the principle of epistemological advance" (Adorno, 1993: 77), since instead of being content by attributing them an external to knowledge existence, the Hegelian argument presents them as inherent in the nature of cognition itself: "All knowledge, and not merely knowledge that ventures out into the infinite, aims, through the mere form of the copula, at the whole truth, and none achieves it" (Adorno, 1993: 77).

The experience of nonidentity therefore is crucial to the Hegelian understanding of reconciliation as regards *both* the very process of human cognition *and* the process of socialization. Hegelian reconciliation presupposes the recurrent recognition that the object cannot be reduced to its concept and that society or the other cannot be reduced to the individual or to the self. Indirectly, Hegelian dialectic criticizes as deceptive the view of the individual as a separate, independent and self-subsistent unit –the view Adorno characteristically calls "the moment of illusion in individuation" (Adorno, 1993: 45). It tempers the ideological glorification of the individual by revealing the persistent presence of the social (and, therefore, the common and the general) within the individual (unique and singular) identity. As the *locus* and outcome of the aforementioned experience, temporality is indispensible to Hegel's understanding of human nature, even though Hegelian speculative idealism on the one hand and the teleological character of his philosophy of history on the other, finally betray the eminently critical character of his thought.

In the context of the Hegelian dialectical process of reconciliation, the experience of the nonidentical that makes possible the actuality of temporality,

assumes a *conflictual* character. Conflict in the *Philosophy of Right* forms the condition of unveiling and discovery of the inadequacies that characterize the subject's immediate, unexamined relation to the world. These concern the abstraction from particular interests and viewpoints and the one-sided character of relations that are nevertheless thought to bear universality. Conflict emanates from the essential *nonrecognition of otherness* which, in Hegel's philosophy, is interwoven to the *misrecognition of the self*. Despite the fact that *it follows* the establishment of an initial relation, conflict is implicitly present in it from the start, as the *necessary* development of an externally harmonious, yet internally contradictory state; it forms a transitory phase by whose means previously implicit contradictions become explicit and are led to their resolution. The dialectical overcoming of conflict and contradiction and the attainment of reconciliation are made possible when the subject comes to *transform* its way of looking at (and, therefore, of being in) the world. The validity of Hegel's claim that this transformation, more than being the formal condition of the self's effective participation in the surrounding social objectivity, is also the condition of an essential self-actualization, and thereby the expression not of an imposed compromise but of a rational endorsement of the new situation, is dependent on the cogency of his assertion that the social other to which the self is reconciled is not *fundamentally* an *Other*, in the sense that it encourages and promotes, by means of its structure and workings, the actualization of human nature.

III

Hegel's discussion of wrong and punishment in the *Philosophy of Right* reveals the pattern of the dialectical movement in accordance to which the process of reconciliation unfolds. In this section of the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel shows wrong to be rooted in the immediacy and abstractness that is characteristic of the essence of contract. The "unity of different wills" (Hegel, 1967, §73) contract involves is shown to concern only the level of appearance, as the supposedly "common" or "identical" will contract establishes takes the form of an arbitrary and posited external coexistence (Hegel, 1967, §§75, 81A). The constitution of an identical will contract formally declares has as its object a single external thing beyond which the established relation between the individuals collapses: particularity exists in its initial form beneath the appearance of its annihilation (Hegel, 1967, §§74, 75, 81R). The actual lack of mediation between the particularity of the subjective will on the one hand and the universality of the common will on the other is the source of an established implicit tension which makes the correspondence between the two, in the sense of the observance of the contract and thereby of the respect for the principle of rightness, an entirely contingent matter. Hegel claims therefore that inherent in the very nature of contract is its exposure to "the mercy of wrong"

–an exposition Hegel views as part of a "logical higher necessity" (Hegel, 1967, §§81A, 81R). In other words, the internal contradiction contract bears by its very constitution will be unavoidably externalized at some point in the form of wrong. The latter is a state of opposition between the particularity of the will, or "right in its real existence", and the principle of rightness that is embodied in and represented by the universal will (Hegel, 1967, §§81,R. A. 82,A). Wrong cancels the mere *appearance* of right and promotes the latter's *actuality* (Hegel, 1967, §82).

Hegel presents a typology of wrong that accommodates non-malicious wrong, fraud and crime, and focuses on the latter type as that which fully expresses the content of the notion, in the sense that in crime

> "there is no respect either for the principle of rightness or for what seems right to me [… -i.e.], both sides the objective and the subjective are infringed" (Hegel, 1967, §90A).

Hegel bases his argument, *including* his attribution to punishment of a necessary, reconciliatory role, on the *assumption of a split will*: in crime, he writes, the particular will is "at variance with and opposed *to itself* as an absolute will" (Hegel, 1967, §40). (3) If the universal will (the principle of rightness) is the criminal's own implicit will, then the act of denying and opposing it involves an essential self-contradiction and self-denial. (4) Even though the criminal's act is senseless and irrational –since a) at the logical level, wrong can have no meaningful existence outside a context of rights and b) at the sociological level, the rejection of the intersubjectively constituted common will bears a significant personal cost- the criminal, nevertheless, is attributed a rational essence (Hegel, 1967, §97A). This means in turn that the transgression has to be interpreted as having "laid down a law", which the criminal "explicitly recognized in his action, and under which, in consequence, he should be brought as under his right" (Hegel, 1967, §100). The criminal deserves to be treated according to the law his act has established as, thereby, he is "honored as a rational being" (Hegel, 1967, §100R). Punishment's justification, according to the Hegelian argument, rests on the additional prerequisites that it takes place within the *institutional* order of a *just* and *free* society and that it is retributive; the proper criterion for retribution is identified by Hegel in the inner "value" of the performed action and not in the mere reproduction to the opposite direction of the initial transgression (Hegel, 1967, §§101,R, 102,A).

Hegel shows *revenge* to be an inadequate form of attributing justice. The clash between wrong and right, when expressed in terms of a conflict between the transgressor (who expresses the non-recognized in the formal constitution of the common will particularity) and the avenger, leads to an impasse. By being "the positive action of a particular will" revenge, unlike punishment, "becomes

a new transgression", reproducing, thereby, instead of resolving, the contradictions that inhere in contract (Hegel, 1967, §102). Yet, the repetitive experience of an "impossibility of satisfaction" (Hegel, 1967, §102A) that necessarily accompanies revenge becomes, according to the Hegelian argument, a source of a mutual self-reflection and, therewith, of a mutual self-transformation. The vengeful will comes to recognize that abstract right "must be mediated by the particular conscientious convictions of the subject": (5) it discovers morality in becoming a will which "though particular and subjective, yet wills the universal as such" (Hegel, 1967, §103). (6) Correspondingly, the criminal realizes that the choice of *wrong* involves a claim for a *right* to this choice. He realizes that his act has set a *law* as to what *ought* to happen and discovers the universality of right that lies in his own particular will (Hegel, 1967, §§104, 105). In both cases, temporality, experienced by means of a forceful, conflictual externalization of previously implicit latent contradictions, is linked organically to the production of a transformed, internally mediated as well as affirmed, by both self and other, state. Temporality is showed to be inseparable from an on-going process of *becoming*.

In the context of morality Hegel attributes to evil a corresponding role to that exercised by wrong in the context of abstract right: the occurrence of evil manifests the subject's lack of self-sufficiency in the provision of normative principles of action and occasions the production of an ethical consciousness –that is, of a consciousness whose subjective disposition is the affirmation of social-institutional objectivity. That this *internalization of the external* is not a self-defeating development rests, as it has been noted already, on Hegel's argument that the universal will embodied in the institutional articulation of modern society *is* actually *the universal implicit within the particular* in a substantial sense (Hegel, 1967, §§132,R, 212, 218,R, 220).

IV

Even though Hegel's dialectical understanding of human nature associates self-actualization with a reconciled relation between individuality and sociality, his discussion of the three modern institutional spheres (i.e., the family, civil society and the state) either cancels or significantly differentiates the conceptual content and role that are attributed to the element of self-transformation and hence, also, to temporality. The remaining part of the paper will seek to explicate the aforementioned thesis.

FAMILY

As regards the institution of the modern family, central to Hegel's understanding of it is his conceptualization of *erotic love*. Hegel presents the latter as an emergent, identical will that is made possible through the willful renunciation

by the parties involved of all separate individualities (Hegel, 1967, §§158,A, 162,R, 163,R, 168). Hegelian erotic love is put forth as the expression of an actual "identification of personalities" and as the free conscious production of a unitary common subject (Hegel, 1967, §163R). Yet, Hegel's inegalitarian (clearly sexist, in contemporary terms) view of gender (that is, his recognition of an alleged difference in rationality between the sexes) is obviously incompatible to an actual state of *mutual recognition* –to a state whereby each comes to find himself or herself in the other (Hegel, 1967, §§164A, 166,A, 163R). (7) The allocation of *reflectivity* and *substantiality* to man and woman respectively, as essential and *exclusive* capacities, despite the external complementarity between them one may discern, binds Hegel to condemn erotic love to a permanently immediate character. Woman's axiomatic deprival of the capacity for reflection is not irrelevant to the fact that the failure of love, in Hegel's argument, *does not amount to an experience*, in the sense that it *does not form an occasion for further self-transformation*. Despite its immediacy, Hegelian erotic love remains *conflict-free* and, as such, bound to be devoid of any inherent potential. The potential for self-actualization that concerns the process of maturing of certain intimate interpersonal relationships is ignored by Hegel, as he fails to abandon himself to his dialectic when faced with the social conventions and prejudice of his own time. Hegelian love, in other words, never reaches maturity, as its immediate character cannot become an object of self-reflection. Its *telos* is the equally immediate, arbitrary and incomprehensible –yet, definite- negation of its beginning. As such, it can only be followed by repetition, not by growth. Feelings, Hegel notes, are contingent and subjective; hence, the emergence of a situation whereby the lovers become *total strangers* to one another is always a possibility (Hegel, 1967, §§159A, 161A, 163A, 176,A). (8)

Thus, what from the point of view of the Hegelian dialectic would be a temporal, transient "moment", persists; it is being reproduced statically. Temporality bursts and reveals itself as such only with the seemingly arbitrary interference of a subjectively inexplicable state of total estrangement; Hegel's theoretical expulsion of reason from love, means that temporality's contingent re-manifestations are bound to be experienced *as the recurrent return of the same* –paradoxically, the latter will keep being felt anew, without ever coming to be known.

Hegel's notion of immediate erotic love is plausible neither with reference to persons who can and have developed themselves to significantly different degrees –for the one will always have much more to offer than what the other can accept, and the standing remainder will testify to the individuality that has not been surrendered and is external to the 'common will'- nor, of course, between persons that have significantly actualized their equal potential and have attained maturity and freedom –since, in the context of the Hegelian argument,

the very contents of the latter notions express the transcendence of immediacy, not its maintenance. The basic dialectical premises of Hegel's thought implicitly indicate that a proper locus for the genuine existence of immediate erotic love is the early phase in the journey of discovery of a commonly defined freedom in the context of a relationship between equals. In the context of Hegel's inegalitarian view of gender, reason's axiomatic expulsion from love means that, at least beyond an initial stage, the erotic relationship between man and woman is bound to be a contractual partnership of limited communication, in sharp contradiction to Hegel's attempted presentation of it as an actual companionship whereby everything is shared and nothing reserved for the individual self (Hegel, 1967, §163).

CIVIL SOCIETY

The conflict Hegel denies to the realm of intimacy he allocates to the institutional sphere of civil society. The latter forms the social field of action wherein the 'free play' of "every idiosyncrasy, every talent, every accident of birth and fortune" is allowed to take place and develop (Hegel, 1967, §182A). In civil society, Hegel stresses, the individual is given the opportunity to pursue the satisfaction of her own particular and selfish ends, without consideration of the needs of others (Hegel, 1967, §182A).

Hegel develops an argument whereby progress in the accomplishment of individual freedom and, thereby, progress in the actualisation of human nature, are necessarily interwoven to an endless process of need differentiation, mechanical specialisation and industrialisation. Specifically, he identifies the uniqueness of the human species in its inner ability to transcend, theoretically and practically, restrictions imposed by nature on both its needs and the means of satisfying these needs, and notes that the given mediation of human need by the unique dynamic mental activity of the human subject precludes the permanence of a repetitive (mechanical) way of need satisfaction (Hegel, 1967, §190,A, 191,A). (9) The aforementioned condition leads necessarily, Hegel upholds, to an endless multiplication of needs and of their means of satisfaction; the latter takes place by way of "differentiation and division of concrete need into single parts and aspects which in turn become different needs, particularised and so more abstract" (Hegel, 1967, §190). This course results inevitably, Hegel claims, in the gradual decrease of the complexity of each particular task at the work place, as well as in an augmentative mechanisation of the whole labour process (Hegel, 1967, §198). Overall, Hegel presents characteristic features of the western modern industrial economy as a necessary development of the most distinctive qualities of human nature; in so doing, he attributes to a particular historical development a teleological affirmative character. Temporality

is incorporated in a predetermined socio-economic whole as the latter's partial moments or stages.

Civil society is put forth as the institutional sphere of a continuous legitimate conflict. The latter's absolutisation, by way of institutionalisation of a reproduced acute and generalised antagonism, from the point of view of the Hegelian dialectic, would be the absolutisation of historical and conceptual temporality and, equally so, its annulment. From the same point of view, it would also amount to the fixation of a state of nonrecognition of the other and of misrecognition of the self. However, Hegel's presentation of civil society as the institutional embodiment of subjective freedom, particularity and difference is accompanied by his claim regarding the coexistence in it of universality, or sociality. Hegel utilizes the distinction between appearance and actuality in order to allocate subjective freedom, particularity and conflict to the first part of the conceptual pair, and universality, sociality and reconciliation to the second: The whole that *appears* to be divided *is in actuality* sufficiently integrated, he claims.

In the case of civil society, when referring to universality Hegel describes a state of complete interdependence that is immanent to the modern economic system of a highly developed division of labor. Ethical life is discovered and made sense of once, in the course of attainment of her selfish ends, the individual comes to realize that she is dependent on others, whose labor is the necessary means to these ends while, at the same time, her own labor is a necessary means to the satisfaction of the selfish aims of others: "We play into each others hands and so hang together" (Hegel, 1967, §192A). It is this realization (of the illusion that is involved in the subject's self-understanding as an absolutely self-determined being) Hegel sees as the locus of the dialectical "educative" function of civil society and of the implicated in it "passing over into universality" of "the principle of particularity" (Hegel, 1967, §186).

The "universality" that is produced therewith, however, bears features that are constitutive of the notion of compromise –a notion whose object, in this case, is the implicit recognition of a universally applicable right regarding the pursuit of self-interests: The subject becomes aware of and accepts the necessity of acting among others whom she cannot evade *although she still wants to be in a position to do so*. The acceptance, as tolerance, of the fact that I cannot attain my particular welfare unless others also, *at least to some degree*, attain theirs too, does entail the consent on my part to restrict my activity to the extent, however, that I judge this to be necessary and unavoidable. This restriction on my particularity, which allows more freedom of action to the necessary for the accomplishment of my self-interest others is, as Hegel himself admits, "present here not as freedom but as necessity, since it is by compulsion that the particular rises to the form of universality and seeks and gains its stability in that form"

(Hegel, 1967, §186). In other words, the subject's education to universality and/or sociality does not entail a *qualitatively significant* transformation of its self-understanding, in the sense that self-interest and particular welfare are still its guiding principles for action and exteriority (otherness) is still experienced as such –i.e. as what constraints and sets limits on its activity rather than as the condition for the actualization of its freedom. Universal egoism keeps being the condition that generates, feeds and makes sense of altruistic acts in the absence of a state that would have rendered both meaningless.

Hegel is aware of the limitations involved in the "formal" and "relative" character of the universality (sociality) he associates to modern economic interdependence (Hegel, 1967, §§186, 184). On the whole, his discussion of the most influential social institutions that are active in civil society is meant to control, alleviate, and counterbalance the negative consequences of such limitations. Yet, next to the Administration of Justice, to the Police or Public Authority and to the Corporation he identifies the existence of large-scale poverty to which he cannot provide an acceptable solution and which he views as a structural feature of modern society. The latter's progress in meeting its members' needs takes place, Hegel remarks, within necessary conditions of industrialization and mechanization that are organically interwoven to a rising level of unemployment and to the parallel production of luxurious wealth and destitution. The "ethical ground" Hegel finally assigns to poverty (Hegel, 1967, §253R), seems to have been intended to provide theoretical consolation; still, this part of his argument remains highly paradoxical: poverty is to be accepted as the unavoidable corollary of the abstract right of particularity, even though its very presence blatantly annuls the actuality of precisely this right. In the context of Hegel's argument, therefore, accepting the actual lack of subjective freedom with relation to a far from insignificant percentage of the population comes to be presented finally as the compromise one needs to make in the interests of subjective freedom's non-generalized, necessarily partial existence. Hegel does not transcend theoretically –to use one of his most characteristic terms- modern sociohistorical temporality.

STATE

Hegelian civil society accommodates the possibility of a unity (sociality, universality) which can encompass a broad spectrum of particularity only at the cost of assuming a relative character and can assume a concrete existence (as in the case of the Corporation) only at the cost of restricting itself within narrow, selective and exclusive boundaries. It is the state, Hegel argues, that comes to transcend the entrenchment of all partial and exclusive totalities by "displaying itself as [their] true ground" and by providing the space wherein they come to share in one another:

"The result is that the universal does not prevail or achieve completion except along with particular interests and through the co-operation of particular knowing and willing; and individuals likewise do not live as private persons for their own ends alone, but in the very act of willing these they will the universal in the light of the universal, and their activity is consciously aimed at none but the universal end" (Hegel, 1967, §260).

In other words, the state, Hegel insists, demonstrates the solely seeming character of its alleged from the point of view of civil society externality by raising its members above the latter's general egoism and antagonism and by elevating the way of thinking and form of life of the bourgeois to that of the citizen; the latter is understood not as the former's other, opposite and complementary side, but as what amounts to the dialectical transcendence of one-sidedness. A paradigmatic expression of the reconciliation between particularity and universality that is implicated here is the content Hegel attributes to the political sentiment of patriotism –that is, to "the consciousness that my interest, both substantive and particular, is contained and preserved in another's (i.e. in the state's) interest and end, i.e. in the other's relation to me as an individual. In this way this very other is immediately not an other in my eyes, and in being conscious of this fact, I am free" (Hegel, 1967, §268).

Hegel's abstract discussion of the notion of the state is accompanied by a detailed discussion of its institutional articulation. Due to space restrictions, the latter cannot form an object of analysis here. Still, it needs to be said here that, contrary to his intentions, Hegel's description of the staffing, particular functions and interaction between the Legislature, the Executive and the Monarch reveals the state as the power that administers the co-existence of a specifically delimited range of particular interests, regarding which it does produce a whole, whose particular nature, however, rests on the combined power of consensus and enforcement. The notion of consensus is not compatible to the Hegelian dialectical understanding of reconciliation, as it indicates the implicit preservation of the initial particular standpoints –hence, also, of the initial oppositions; reconciliation, on the other hand, involves the recognition of the emergent situation as genuinely good and truly satisfactory. Consensus is achieved through compromises and estimations of private losses and gains, in contrast to the state of reconciliation whose achievement amounts to the abandonment of the initial expectations and the full affirmation of the new situation. In the case of the Hegelian state too, as in that of the family, reconciliation is not brought about through explicit conflict and the concomitant recognition and sublation of the one-sidedness of the standpoints involved. Political "reconciliation" consists rather in the successful avoidance of the outburst of fundamental conflicts, in the successful management of the consequences that accompany the maintenance

of the existent social antitheses (i.e. the reproduction of the preconditions of conflict) and in the attempted control of conflicts whenever and to the extent that these finally do occur.

That the state Hegel portrays at the institutional level, contrary to the claims of the corresponding abstract notion he formulates, forms the political version but not the overcoming of the logic that rules civil society is clearly manifest in Hegel's discussion of war. Hegel recognizes an "ethical moment" in war, which he describes as the preservation of "the ethical health of peoples […] in their indifference to the stabilization of finite institutions" (Hegel, 1967, §324R). His text reads: "just as the blowing of the winds preserves the sea from the foulness which would be the result of a prolonged calm, so also corruption in nations would be the product of prolonged, let alone 'perpetual' peace" (Hegel, 1967, §324R). War therefore, paradoxically, is presented as an admissible of an ethical justification evil; the acknowledgement of its specific necessity bespeaks the state's inability not only to resolve the contradictions of civil society that persist in the latter's self-movement, but also to guarantee the maintenance of even a relative social unity. In this context, the act to self-sacrifice Hegel invokes and praises as the fulfillment of 'substantive' individuality, cannot but be subjectively experienced as an unavoidable, external infliction, while its rootage in altruism, whenever present, will only bear witness to the longing for an unaccomplished reconciled whole.

Even though the experiential character of Hegel's thought, as well as his particular understanding of human nature with which the aforementioned character is organically interwoven, place temporality within an non-homogenous time –to the extent that they associate it to a transformative process of self-actualisation- Hegel's inability to check the determinations of socio-historical temporality, in combination to the teleological dogmatic dimensions of his thought, absolutise the temporal and elevate it to the eternal, thereby depriving temporality of its critical, historical dimension.

NOTES

1. For a systematic and analytical reading of the *Philosophy of Right* as *a project of reconciliation*, see Michael Hardimon (1994). Hardimon offers an impressive and useful reconstruction of Hegel's argument, even though he does not avoid the reproduction of contradictions that are identifiable in it.

2. See Michael Hardimon (1994: 85-92).

3. Italics mine.

4. Cf. Mark Tunick (1992: 29-33).

5. G. W. F. Hegel (1967:333: note 94 by Knox to §104). Hereafter, the symbols 'A' and 'R', when present next to paragraph numbers, stand for 'Addition' and 'Remark' respectively.

6. See also §§104, 105, 106.

7. For a perceptive analysis of the early Hegel's conceptualisation of love that focuses on the Hegelian notion of *recognition*, see Robert R. Williams (1992: 73-94).

8. Wilfried Goossens offers an interesting comparison between Hegel's portrayal of woman *as sister* and his portrayal of woman *as wife* and *mother*. The mutual recognition involved in the former case, Goossens argues, is totally absent from the latter ones, wherein the female identity is seen as coinciding with an immediate universality within whose bounds the particularity of woman's personality has no recognised place (Wilfried Goossens, 1989).

9. It needs to be noted here that the essential characteristics of the human species Hegel identifies are those he has allocated exclusively to the male gender.

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