II. HEGELIAN REMINISCENCES IN A NEW INTERPRETATION

The Right of Desire in Hegelian Philosophy of Law

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Abstract

The present analysis aims to show that according to Hegel's logic the unity of thought and will founds itself as an activity, such that by objectifying its own self-development, differentiates itself in diverse forms: each necessarily resulting in the other depending on the functional and dynamic re-evaluation of its distinct elements. It gives Hegel the opportunity to summarize his radical rationalism adequately, those elements with which the will (and desire) are developed as an immanent factor of society. It was found that some specific sentences and expression of its activities are in the condition not only to create the image but the historical content of the given historical epoch as well. Moreover, they give the specifics of a person's self-relationship beyond natural data. In spite of Hegel's intentions in Philosophy of Law, the unguarded transcendental human desire, however, is an important condition for social and cultural phenomena, their stability and importance.

1

Even to the philosophically educated, integrating the theme of desire into Hegel's philosophy seems to be somehow a useless effort. One thing seems to have already found its complete expression and it is all related to the proud self-determination and the domination of spirit; the other one has nothing but the confusing contradiction and unpredictability of this non-perfect universe of desires; those possessing irresistible charm and which

fulfill human life with its unending, subtle, uncompleted aspirations, as if we should want to get away and forget as soon as we can. Desire did not escape Hegel's attention - even if we conditionally accept that it was not his own passionate urge of desire, peculiar to every great investigator, that brought him to reflect on it. One of Hegel's texts, in which the theoretical analysis of desire is tangibly present, even though not as an object of systematic interpretation, is his *Philosophy of Right*.[1]

The analysis in *Philosophy of Right* is dedicated to considering of the objective spirit, taken as the reason in humans' lineal life, i.e. the superindividual wholeness that integrates particular individuals in a community and that is displayed through their different connections and relations. It also gives the internal impulse of spreading the historical content and modes of that community. In this way Hegel tries to understand and explain specific modes of development, in and through which the freedom of spirit is accomplished. The first level or mode of this accomplishment is the abstract right, followed by morality, which already has to do not with the purely external, but with the internal modes of objective spirit, the latter connected to "the right of subjective will", and finally to the morality in which the essence of objective spirit finds its completion through concurrence of its external and internal modes. Morality embraces all the organizations of human life, which further the realizations of lineal generality of reason in common life. Here, in the sphere of morality, the objective spirit traverses again a peculiar triad of objectifying itself through family, civil society, and state. According to Hegel, right gets activation and effectiveness in regulation of civil relations due to the will, which contains or embraces the needs, inclinations, desires, interests, and aims of the individuals who create those relations. That is why one of the fundamental issues in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* is the examination of genesis, structure, and functional determination of the meaning of will in the mechanism of both legal influence over social life and in the entire context of social interaction.

[1] I do not forget in any way the multiple interpretations, from every point of view, on the issue of desire in the chapter *Independence and Dependence of Self-Conscious: Lordship and Bondage* from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*. Those interpretations are also good evidence on the fact that the systematic analysis on Hegel's understanding of desire, as we found it in the whole corpus of his works, is still pending. The text, which is proposed here, is also an attempt for widening the analysis of other significant works of the great philosopher.

2

While still in preface to the *Philosophy of Right* we come across the first analytical inclusion of the issue on desire that meanwhile delineates the character and the intention of its reception in Hegel. In it, will and desire directly connect to each other. The thesis being explicated is that the essential difference between humans and animals is in the realization of their actions. In their situations is the intention of the first and the impulse of second: the animal "has no will, because it cannot place before its mind what it desires", writes Hegel.[2] Animals lack the inner interaction between a theoretical and practical approach to the world, which is the essential peculiarity of man's active behavior.

Will is an expression of the practical approach of man to the world and one does imagine what he or she desires because he or she has a will. While constituting the possibility of desires to pass through a specific image, i.e. including them in the structure of a concrete subjective inclination, the will gives the purposefulness of their outlet on realization in the range of reality. This is how the drawing of desires in the real world becomes conscious and is done on a peculiar level of awareness; in other words, the accomplishment of desires is related to or mediated by a determined knowledge of themselves.

Returning to Hegel's thoughts about the essential definitions of will and the accessibility to desire: "The territory of right is in general the spiritual, and its more definite place and origin is the will, which is free. Thus freedom constitutes the substance and essential character of the will, and the system of right is the kingdom of actualized freedom. It is the world of spirit which is produced out of itself, and is a second nature."[3] That is, the essential definition of will is that it is a social quality, not a pre-cultural relict transformed by the social.

It is not hard to guess that desires are being determined by will hereafter and they would not succeed in escaping the will's embrace, as far as they manage to socialize because of it. Immediately after that Hegel adds an extended explanation of his understanding on freedom of will.

> "Freedom of will is best explained by reference to physical nature. Freedom is a fundamental phase of will, as weight is of bodies. When it is said that matter is heavy, it might be meant that the predi-

[2] G.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, transl. S.W. Dyde. Canada: Batoche Books, 2001, 29.
[3] Ibid, 28.

> cate is an accident; but such is not the case, for in matter there is nothing which has not weight; in fact, matter is weight. That which is heavy constitutes the body, and is the body. Just so is it with freedom and the will; that which is free is the will. Will without freedom is an empty word, and freedom becomes actual only as will, as subject. A remark may also be made as to the connection of willing and thinking. Spirit, in general, is thought, and by thought man is distinguished from the animal. But we must not imagine that man is on one side thinking and on another side willing, as though he had will in one pocket and thought in another. Such an idea is vain. The distinction between thought and will is only that between a theoretical and a practical relation. They are not two separate faculties. The will is a special way of thinking; it is thought translating itself into reality; it is the impulse of thought to give itself reality. The distinction between thought and will may be expressed in this way. When I think an object, I make of it a thought, and take from it the sensible. Thus I make of it something which is essentially and directly mine. Only in thought am I self-contained. Conception is the penetration of the object, which is then no longer opposed to me. From it I have taken its own peculiar nature, which it had as an independent object in opposition to me."[4]

From this point of view, the theoretical approach of man to the world is expressed in the following way: "The I is at home in the world, when it knows it, and still more when it has conceived it"[5] while the active man defines himself and stands out through differences. The differences he puts are his own; he owns the definitions and purposes, too. In the logic of Hegel's statement, the unity of thinking and will is peculiar for showing such an activity that would differentiate, while objectifying its self-development, into various modes. Those are necessarily coming one from another, depending on the functional and dynamic prevailing of one of their structure-determining elements. That would allow Hegel to adequately ground those parameters of his radical rationalism, through which the will (and, implicitly, the role of accomplishment, too, in this context) reveals itself as an immanent factor in the development of human society. It turns out that

[4] Ibid, 28-29.
[5] Ibid, 29.

the specific definitions of will's activity are capable of forming not only the aspect, but the historical content of a given historical epoch. Even more: they are the ones to specify a certain self-relation of man to himself, beyond his natural determinateness. It is a definitely unrestrained transcending, which makes its own durability a cultural fact, too.

Here is what Hegel means: "The will contains (a) the *element of pure indeterminateness*, i.e., the pure doubling of the I back in thought upon itself. In this process every limit or content, present though it be directly by way of nature, as in want, *appetite*, or impulse, or given in any specific way, is dissolved. Thus we have the limitless infinitude of *absolute abstraction*, or *universality*, the pure *thought* of itself. (Italics mine.)

Those who treat thinking and willing as two special, peculiar, and separate *faculties*, and, further, look upon thought as detrimental to the will, especially the good will, show from the very start that they know nothing of the nature of willing … The will on *one side* is the *possibility of abstraction* from every aspect in which the I finds itself or has set itself up. It reckons any content as a limit, and flees from it. This is one of the forms of the self-direction of the will, and is by imaginative thinking insisted upon as of itself freedom. It is the *negative* side of the will, or freedom as apprehended by the understanding. This freedom is that of the void, which has taken actual shape, and is stirred to passion. It, while remaining purely theoretical, appears in Hindu religion as the fanaticism of pure contemplation; but becoming actual it assumes both in politics and religion the form of a fanaticism, which would destroy the established social order, remove all individuals suspected of desiring any kind of order, and demolish any organization which then sought to rise out of the ruins. Only in devastation does the negative will feel that it has reality. It intends, indeed, to bring to pass some positive social condition, such as universal equality or universal religious life. But in fact it does not will the positive reality of any such condition, since that would carry in its train a system, and introduce a separation by way of institutions and between individuals. But classification and objective system attain self consciousness only by destroying negative freedom. Negative freedom is actuated by a mere solitary abstract idea, whose realization is nothing but the fury of desolation.'[6]

[6] Ibid, 30-31.

As to the individual existence of this intoxication of uniqueness, of the omnipotence that is unexpectedly revealed to the effort here and now (felt, sensed, taken as one's own) becomes a unique inspiration for every kind of creative work of both demolition and creativity. At that time, at the time of revolutions, appetites have no limit, but they simply and directly make their aspirations measureless, they give to the world at once and up to the last their frantic generosity, as they anticipate this would be possible in that moment only. In the doom of solitude of relatively calm epochs, individual effort to seek the will is capable of going even further beyond the confines set by the domination of reason to be obviously restraining self-destruction. The negative phase of will "implies that I break loose from everything, give up all ends, and bury myself in abstraction. It is man alone who can let go of everything, even life. He can commit suicide, an act impossible for the animal, which always remains only negative, abiding in a state foreign to itself, to which it must merely get accustomed. Man is pure thought of himself, and only in thinking has he the power to give himself universality and to extinguish in himself all that is particular and definite. Negative freedom, or freedom of the understanding, is one-sided, yet as this one-sidedness contains an essential feature, it is not to be discarded. But the defect of the understanding is that it exalts its one-sidedness to the sole and highest place.

This form of freedom frequently occurs in history (i.e., in the destroying art of the historical, in the negative social activity, in the personal self-denial). To the Hindus, the highest freedom is declared to be persistence in the consciousness of one's simple identity with himself, to abide in the empty space of one's own inner being, like the colourless light of pure intuition, and to renounce every activity of life, every purpose and every idea. In this way man becomes Brahma; there is no longer any distinction between finite man and Brahma, every difference having been swallowed up in this universality. A more concrete manifestation of this freedom is the fanaticism of political and religious life. Of this nature was the terrible epoch of the French Revolution, by which all distinctions in talent and authority were to have been superseded. In this time of upheaval and commotion any specific thing was intolerable. Fanaticism wills an abstraction and not an articulate association. It finds all distinctions antagonistic to its indefiniteness, and

supersedes them. Hence in the French Revolution the people abolished the institutions which they themselves had set up, since every institution is inimical to the abstract self-consciousness of equality.[7] Accordingly, the human desires themselves play a considerable role in forming the abstract self-conscious of equality. Those are the desires, which seem to turn, under the pressure of mass psychological euphoria, to a peculiar explosive mixture. The destructive power of that mixture realizes in the special uniformity of a pure striving for change, which sweeps up anything in its way.

After presenting a large-scale picture of his view's peculiarity, in which the historical activity of volitionally-defined actions in the social sphere pours out, Hegel again turns back to an investigation of the dynamic structure of human individuality. He does so now to explicitly show the complex, ambiguous, and asymmetrical role of the will and the desires in addition to those processes which constitute the unique specificity of man being both a natural and a social being.

According to Hegel, "The will, which is at first only *implicitly free*, is the *direct* or *natural* will. The distinctive phases, which the self-determining conception sets up in the will, appear in the direct will, as a directly present content. They are *impulses*, *appetites*, *inclinations*, by which the will finds itself determined by nature. Now this content, with all its attendant phases, proceeds from the rationality of the will, and is therefore implicitly rational; but let loose in its immediate directness it has not as yet the form of rationality."[8] He underlines with regard to this, that the only thing that empirical psychology makes in such a case is that it "enumerates and describes these impulses and inclinations, and the wants which are based upon them. It takes, or imagines that it takes this material from experience" - without trying to succeed in achieving what "the *objective side* of impulse is, and what impulse is in its truth, apart from the form of irrationality which it has as an impulse, and also what shape it assumes when it reaches existence."[9] "Impulse, appetite, inclination are possessed by the animal also, but it has not will; it must obey impulse, if there is no external obstacle. Man, however, is

[7] Ibid, 31-32.
[8] Ibid, 36.
[9] Ibid, 37.

the completely undetermined, and stands above impulse, and may fix and set it up as his. Impulse is in nature, but it depends on my will whether I establish it in the I. Nor can the will be unconditionally called to this action by the fact that the impulse lies in nature."[10] It is interesting to note Hegel does not try to cover the internal tension that is hard to be tamed - the tension between the will as a socializing factor and the pre-cultural (i.e. natural) definitions of man, which are now marked by being included in the structures of social wholeness.

This objective bipolarity of desires is integrated in the concrete dynamical stereotype of every individual and it is expressed in the personal specifics of his adjustments to the manner of their accomplishment. Because of that Hegel takes the system of this content, which is directly situate in will, as "a multitude or multiplicity of impulses, every one of which is mine in a general way along with others, but is at the same time universal and undetermined, having many objects and ways of satisfaction."[11] In the area of double indeterminateness, will makes decisions and thus it gives form to singularity: "The will… only by resolving is actual". The making of decisions ceases the indeterminateness, in which every type of content is only possible, while here the very indeterminateness of will is the neutral for them, but that is exactly why the will itself is an "infinitely fruitful germ of all existence [which] contains within itself its definite character and ends, and brings them forth solely out of itself."[12] Thus, only "by resolution will fixes itself as the will of a definite individual, and as thereby distinguishing itself, from another."[13] But according to Hegel this urge of the will to put itself in the real world as a will of a concrete individuality is not a synonymously defined act of its immediate placement in the context of a certain reality. The very decision is being revealed and based on as a result of an immanently subjective and dialectically subordinated logic of the processes, which are set in the structure of the decision in its wholeness. The uncompromising rationalism of Hegel is being explicitly displayed here.

[10] Ibid, 37.
[11] Ibid, 37.
[12] Ibid, 37.
[13] Ibid, 37.

> "To the intelligence, as *thinking*, the object or content remains *universal*; the intelligence retains the form merely of a universal activity. Now the universal signifies in will that which is mine, i.e. it is individuality. And yet, also, the direct and formal will is abstract; its individuality is not yet filled with its free universality. Hence at the beginning the *peculiar finitude* of the intelligence is in will, and only by exalting itself again to thought and giving itself intrinsic universality does the will transcend the distinction of form and content and make itself objective infinite will. It is therefore a misunderstanding of the nature of thought and will to suppose that in the will man is infinite, while in thought and even in reason he is limited. In so far as thought and will are still distinct, the reverse is rather the case, and thinking reason, when it becomes will, assigns itself to *finitude*."[14]

It is this very finitude, which has been objectified in a certain individuality, which makes it necessary for the will to be set as a concrete will through the peculiarity of its own action in the world of reality. For "a will which resolves nothing, is not an actual will; that which is devoid of definite character never reaches a volition… By volition alone man enters actuality."[15] Through that kind of entering the reality the indeterminateness of possibilities in hesitation closes and one can choose his behavior. This is a behavior which turns out to be not a synonymously predetermined event, which happens in the sphere of the finite human actions, but an internally contradictive actuality of happening of the various modes of human activity. This actuality is dynamically changing the fields of its structure-determining moments. Thus the human will, being an expression of freedom, can manifest itself as a caprice.

[14] Ibid, 37-38. The manners and the content of this final part of the fragment we can take in a certain convention and, making a peculiar critical reference, we can take it as an expression of a negative position towards Schopenhauer's conception of will. I call it "convention", as far as I am not acquainted with Hegel knowing for himself the text of Schopenhauer's *World as Will and Representation*.

[15] Ibid, 38.

3

The theme of caprice arises not only as actually reproducing, but concerns both human behavior and self-relation in its extrapolation of the various spheres of social life. I would allow myself to quote Hegel's theses in that relation in a little bit more detailed manner. Their own significance is in their explicit expression. This significance is related not only immediately to the concrete views of Hegel and to the precision of their argumentation, but they have that explanation pregnant with complete meaning due to the heuristic potential of the dialectic method. And, of course, last but not least, I would also like to underline that the thoughts of Hegel quoted below are directly connected to the theme about the role of desires in the social-historical activity of people. The caprice is in its accomplishment a specific realization of human activity. It necessarily keeps in itself all the personal qualities and definitions of individuals who can accomplish that activity, including their theoretical self-conscious, which uncritically takes the seeming of caprice for freedom. The finite will, which has merely from the standpoint of form doubled itself back upon itself, and has become the *infinite* and self-secluded I, stands above its content of different impulses and also above the several ways by which they are realized and satisfied. At the same time, as it is only formally infinite, it is *confined* to this very content as the decisive feature of its nature and external actuality, although it is undetermined and not confined to one content rather than another. As to the return of the I into itself, such a will is only a possible will, which may or may not be mine, and the I is only the *possibility* of deputing itself to this or that object. Hence amongst these definite phases, which in this light are for the I external, the will exercises choice.

Freedom of the will is in this view of caprice, in which are contained both a reflection free and abstracted from everything, and a dependence upon content internally or externally provided. Since the content is in itself (or implicitly necessary as an end), and in opposition to this reflection is a definite possibility, caprice when it is will, content is contingent in its nature.

The usual idea of freedom is that of caprice. It is a midway stage of reflection between the will as merely a natural impulse and the will as free absolutely. When it is said that freedom as a general thing consists in doing what one likes, such an idea must be taken to imply an utter lack of devel-

oped thought, containing as yet not even a suspicion of what is meant by the absolutely free will, right, ethical system, etc. Reflection, being the formal universality and unity of self-consciousness, is the will's abstract certitude of its freedom, but it is not yet the truth of it, because it does not have itself for content and end; the subjective side is still different from the objective. Thus the content in such a case remains purely and completely finite. Caprice, instead of being will in its truth, is rather will in its *contradiction*.

In the controversy carried on, especially at the time of the metaphysics of Wolf, as to whether the will is really free, or our consciousness of its freedom is a delusion, it was this caprice which was in the minds of both parties. Against the certitude of abstract self-direction, determinism rightly opposed a content, which was externally presented and not contained in this certitude coming from without. It did not matter whether this "without" was about impulse, imagination, or in general a consciousness so filled that the content was not the peculiar possession of the self-determining activity as such. Since only the formal element of free self-direction is immanent in caprice, while the other element is something given to it from without, to take caprice as freedom may fairly be named a delusion. "Freedom in every philosophy of reflection… is nothing more than this formal self-activity."[16]

What we should point out in the richness of the last quotation from Hegel are some important distinctions he makes in relation to his own theoretical position in defining the rich aspects of the concept of caprice. Also, we should point out the available stages of reconsideration of previous theoretical constructions, which interpret the freedom issue. The first and maybe the most significant thing is defining caprice as a seeming of freedom, or, which is the same as a peculiar, specific, objective mode of non-freedom. Being such a mode of non-freedom, caprice reveals itself only in human activity. The possibility of its realization in this manner is, according to Hegel, based on the very inner inclination of a certain reflexivity, which builds the motivational aspects of a correlation to the world of a concrete individuality. This point of view is a precondition for a critique to both the everyday images of caprice and the philosophical and theoretical concepts which derive from such images.

[16] Ibid, 38-39.

> "Since I have the possibility of determining myself in this or that way, since I have the power of choice, I possess caprice, or what is commonly called freedom. This choice is due to the universality of the will, enabling me to make my own this thing or another. This possession is a particular content, which is therefore not adequate to me, but separated from me, and is mine only in possibility; just as I am the possibility of bringing myself into coincidence with it. Hence choice is due to the indeterminateness of the I, and to the determinateness of a content. But as to this content the will is not free, although it has in itself formally the side of infinitude. No such content corresponds to will; in no content can it truly find itself. In caprice it is involved that the content is not formed by the nature of my will, but by contingency. I am dependent upon this content. This is the contradiction contained in caprice. Ordinary man believes that he is free, when he is allowed to act capriciously, but precisely in caprice is it inherent that he is not free."[17]

Freedom is being objectified, according to Hegel, in the active relations of man to the world, not in the reflexive self-relation of man to the world. That is why man is free just then, when his activity is in accordance with the essential definitions of its objects. Thus freedom is revealed in the multitude of modes that make it possible for man to objectify his essential powers and de-objectify the essential definitions of the object world he can approach.

> "When I will the rational, I do not act as a particular individual but according to the conception of ethical observance in general. In an ethical act I establish not myself but the thing. A man, who acts perversely, exhibits particularity. The rational is the highway on which every one travels, and no one is specially marked. When a great artist finishes a work we say: "It must be so." The particularity of the artist has wholly disappeared and the work shows no mannerism. Phidias has no mannerism; the statue itself lives and moves. But the poorer is the artist, the more easily we discern himself, his particularity and caprice. If we adhere to the consideration that in ca-

[17] Ibid, 39.

> price a man can will what he pleases, we have certainly freedom of a kind; but again, if we hold to the view that the content is given, then man must be determined by it, and in this light is no longer free."[18]

It seems to me that here, finally, we could propose an objection to Hegel. The great artists create different works of art. Those are different in their expression, in their structure, in the feeling they emanate, in the composition, in the shape, in the realization, and so on. The concrete individuality or the detachment of the artist is what allows him to get out of the material one thing or another and to give that thing a new shape and a new existence also, a different existence for the other things. The "in-buildment" of individuality is what creates the particular objectivity of the created. Its "disappearing" in this objectivity should not be regarded as a self-reflected or active refusal of oneself in creating and into the created, but as the only possible discernable re-embodiment of oneself in the objective coolness of "the matter". Through the act of creative effort the material takes the unique shape of a perfect alloy of the complete image. This is what brings it the charm people enjoy during the various historical ages. In my opinion, only in this sense may we speak of the disappearance of the artist's peculiarity because it is inseparable from the lasting, it is the accomplishment of the creative process, and it is not simply left or abandoned or forgotten. As long as the unity of form and content in works of artistic genius is, or is considered to be, or is valued as a unique perfection, then the generality is here a concrete generality. Of course, we could impartially refer what has been said so far about the self-overcoming of the subjective in the objective until reaching a complete wholeness, to the extraordinary achievements in the area of art. It is not the same if we look at things from the point of view of daily human action. The arbitrariness more often and more directly shows its willfulness there. For in practical activity the contradiction involved in caprice is the dialectic of the impulses and inclinations, it is manifested in their mutual antagonism. The satisfaction of one demands the subjection and sacrifice of the satisfaction of another. Since an impulse is merely the simple tendency of its own essential nature, and has no measure in itself, to sub-

[18] Ibid, 39-40.

ject or sacrifice the satisfaction of any impulse is a contingent decision of caprice. In such a case caprice can act upon the calculation as to which impulse will bring the greater satisfaction, or some other similar purpose.

Impulses and inclinations are in the first instance the content of will, and only reflection transcends them. But these impulses are self-directing, crowding upon and jostling one another, and all seeking to be satisfied. To set all but one in the background, and put myself into this one, is to limit and distort myself, since I, in so doing, renounce my universality, which is a system of all the impulses. Just as little help is found in a mere subordination of them, a course usually followed by the understanding. There is available no criterion by which to make such an arrangement, and hence the demand for a subordination is usually sustained by tedious and irrelevant allusions to general sayings.[19] Here the analysis of Hegel is really coming closer to the adequate explanation and description of the considerable role of certain ontological prerequisites, which give the essential difference of the various types of individual purpose-laying. Through those types the inexhaustible variety of human life does not cease to surprise every investigator of its own. This is the basis, according to him, to build on concrete behavioral and moral systems. Their normative and axiological interpretations are being further developed in both certain forms of theoretical thinking and various religious ideas and doctrines. Their judgment on inclinations is manifested in the fact that

> "…the phases of the direct or natural will are immanent and positive, and thus good. Hence man is by nature good. But natural characteristics, since they are opposed to freedom and the conception of the spirit, and are, hence, negative, must be eradicated. Thus man is by nature evil. To decide for either view is a matter of subjective caprice. The Christian doctrine that man is by nature fallen is loftier than the opposite that he is naturally good, and is to be interpreted philosophically in this way. Man as spirit is a free being, who need not give way to impulse. Hence in his direct and unformed condition, man is in a situation in which he ought not to be, and he must free himself. This is the meaning of the

[19] Ibid, 40.

doctrine of original sin, without which Christianity would not be the religion of freedom."[20]

The main premise which sets up such a thinking is being explicated, according to Hegel, in the fact that: "in the demand that impulses must be purified is found the general idea that they must be freed from the form of direct subjection to nature, and from a content that is subjective and contingent, and must be restored to their substantive essence. The truth contained in this indefinite demand is that impulses should be phases of will in a rational system. To apprehend them in this way as proceeding from the conception is the content of the science of right."[21]

Nevertheless, this and other similar positions, according to him, are not enough to satisfy the requirements of the philosophical approach to the problem. As always, he is loyal to the last in his extreme rationalism. In the absence of the corrective of self-criticism of the possibilities of his speculative method, again, Hegel does not manage to get an actually relevant decision of the problem. In that case his philosophical approach is being reduced only and solely to the analysis of dialectics of the moments of self-conscious. Here is what we are offered:

"The self-consciousness of the will in the form of appetite or impulse is sensible, the sensible in general indicating the externality of self-consciousness, or that condition in which self-consciousness is outside of itself. Now this sensible side is one of the two elements of the reflecting will, and the other is the abstract universality of thought. But the absolute will has as its object the will itself as such in its pure universality. In this universality the directness of the natural will is superseded, and so also is the private individuality which is produced by reflection and infects the natural condition. But to supersede these and lift them into the universal, constitutes the activity or thought. Thus the self-consciousness, which purifies its object, content or end, and exalts it to universality, is thought carrying itself

[20] Ibid, 40-41.
[21] Ibid, 41.

> through into will. It is at this point that it becomes clear that the will is true and free only as thinking intelligence, i.e., so with the true will; that which it wills, namely, its content, is identical with it, and so freedom wills freedom."[22]

In the concrete case, Hegel's stand does not, according to me, exceed the non-philosophical interpretations he criticizes, but he evades them when including them into the speculative logics of self-development of concept. In this way he falls into the illusion to think that this problem's solution can be found only in the sphere of theoretical thinking. Briefly put, the social interiorizing of the volitional inclinations or actions of man is a structure-constituting element, which alters and transforms simultaneously its entire attitude to the world and his being into the world. It is also strengthening one's positions as the only acceptable thing in the elimination (which happens to be possible only in theory) of that side of his unique essence - as a creature of desire, too - which he has. And it not possible to get it from nature, as he wishes to be a social creature also. Nature has ensured his steadiness as a biological individual.

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In my last reflections I did not mean to undervalue the actual heuristic abilities of Hegel's speculative method as they are brilliantly revealed in his analysis of the social implications of the conception I stated above. That conception concerned the immanent characteristics of caprice as a subjectively-functional subject's inclination and the self-reflectiveness related to it. As a starting point I will use Hegel's thesis that "self-consciousness, affirming to be vanity all otherwise valid marks of action, and itself consisting of pure inwardness of will, may possibly convert the absolute universal into mere caprice. It may make a principle out of what is peculiar to particularity, placing it over the universal and realizing it in action. This is evil, and the evil itself has its root in a self-certitude, which exists for itself, knows and decides for itself."[23] Here he mentions those decisions where the good or the evil nature of deeds relies on the multitude of seemingly good reasons, which are not actu-

[22] Ibid, 91.
[23] Ibid, 118.

ally in accordance with the objectivity of the subject and, thus, the subjectivity is the one to decide. This is how desire and caprice turn out to be the crucial thing about good and evil. This way, according to Hegel, morality and religiousness, and sociality as a whole are also undermined.[24]

> "The summit of the subjectivity, which apprehends itself as ultimate, consists in a consciousness of itself as judge of truth, right, and duty. It is aware, indeed, of the objective ethical principle, but does not forget or renounce itself, or make any earnest effort to sink itself in this principle and act from it. Although it is in relation to this principle, it holds itself free from it, and is conscious of itself as willing and deciding in a certain way, and as being able quite as well to will and decide otherwise. You, let us suppose, honestly take a law to be something absolute; but, as for me, I too have a share in it, but a much grander one than you, for I have gone through and beyond it, and can turn it as I please. It is not the subject-matter which is excellent, but I am the excellent thing, and am master of law and fact. I toy with them at my pleasure, and can enjoy myself only when I ironically know and permit the highest to be submerged. This form, indeed, makes vain the whole ethical content of right, duty, and law, being an evil and in itself a wholly universal evil. Yet to it we must add the subjective vanity of knowing itself as empty of all content, and yet of knowing this empty self as the absolute."[25]

In this fragment a supersensitive fore-sense is found and the enraged solitude of the gentle concern which fore-sees fatefulness for human society in the fragility of its being in the world.

That's enough if we remember what victims of the 20th century gave because of the subjectivity of the personal self-importance that has objectified its measureless confidence. There is no circle, according to Hegel, which can be closed, but only an endless possibility for both "tearing apart" and bounding with the repetition of evil. The personification of evil has the power to get the freedom for an ontological play with the existence of the world. This play could

[24] See 126-127.
[25] Ibid, 127-128.

gain the predominance of generality - the subjectivity has taken the shape of a generality, the shape of an active or acting generality, even when individuality of evil does not hide, but demonstrates itself. The very generality of evil, which has veiled the social body, could be hardly found in the banality of evil, in the resignation of individual existence together with it.

And yet, the desires!...

The desires love playing; they are adhered to our play with them.

As to Hegel, even illuminated by reason, desires are still ontologically unpredictable and, being such, he prefers to forget about them in every one of those modes before reason or concept reaches itself.

The warning remains. The play of desires, the playing with desires not only creates a parallel world, but this can turn out to be a playing with the world itself. For any play is an ontological event and because of that it often has unpredictable consequences. Every kind of play has not only its movement in space but the movement in the soul, in the time of motive, in passion, in desire, in the quality of the individual and, thus, caprice could also turn out to be a rule. The caprice itself is the total manifestation of subjectivity, not the subjectity, i.e. it is the responsibility of the individual. It is easiest to substitute good for evil in play and it is namely in play where you could most successfully hide this substitution. It is also obvious that through play everyone could easily learn to do so.

Playing with our desires is a play with existentially given things, a play with existential definitions. The desires themselves are a play of existentially given things with existential definitions in man. It is exactly because of this ironically confusing duality of desires in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* that an actually possible play with desires is being gambled away, but with no desire. Thus, in the end, the ontological essence of desires in it is reduced to an indeterminate quantity of a modus with its manifestations which we can find under the all-embracing control of reason and reflection. The very rights of desires are seemingly integrated in the system if as content, where they are exposed to the inconvenience of the prejudice of a concrete theoretical approach. This approach has delineated the range of their existential validity within the framework of an actually significant philosophical illusion they share with, in no pretence, many of the secrets of their own social-historical vocation.