

right motives, does this automatically coincide with the law of the state? Green does maintain that there are rights that a state 'ought' to maintain, yet he seems to come down at some points to the duty of compliance with bad laws. He oscillates between a concern for stability on the one hand and human moral perfection on the other. Green's citizen, unlike Hegel's, is confronted by the problem of obligation. It was argued, during debate, that Green's account of disobedience was confusing and contradictory.

The general consensus of the conference was that Green had been too long ignored and that more attention should now be paid to his philosophy.

A.W. Vincent

University College, Cardiff

Seventh Biennial Meeting of the Hegel Society of America,  
Clemson, South Carolina, October 7-9, 1982

The 1982 meeting of the HSA took place at Clemson University, normally basking in glorious sunshine in October but this time unfortunately blanketed by low clouds and heavy rain. This did not prevent the meeting from being rather successful for which major credits must go to William Maker, the local arrangements chairman, and Robert L. Perkins, the program chairman. The generally impressive quality of papers and comments showed that there was much talent in the younger generation of American Hegelian scholars.

The theme of the meeting was 'Hegel's Philosophy of History'. The first paper on 'Hegel and the Reformation' by Merold Westphal (Hope College) raised a number of central issues on Hegel's philosophy of history and political philosophy. Westphal examined the meaning and significance of 'the Protestant principle' which the mature Hegel regarded as the great contribution of the Lutheran Reformation to the development of modern European culture and society. His thorough analysis led him to the conclusion that under the term Hegel conflated two separate principles, subjectivity and autonomy. The former implies a qualified freedom of conscience which exempts man from human authority but not the divine authority of the Scripture; the latter amounts to a total rejection of external authority and to a claim of reason to be the sole standard of truth. The practical historical consequence of the latter was the French Revolution and Terror. In a comment David Duquette (Kansas University) offered an alternative interpretation of Hegel's 'Protestant principle', which stressed the incomplete character of Lutheran subjectivity and the fact of its overcoming in the secular world through a rational social and political order.

The paper by Shlomo Avineri on 'The Fossil and the Phoenix: Hegel and Krochmal on the Jewish Volksgeist' was read for him as the author was unable to attend the meeting. Avineri showed how Krochmal, an early 19th Galician Jewish thinker, explained the survival of Judaism and thus solved a problem which this

survival posed for Hegel's philosophy of history. According to Kroeckmal the monotheistic religion of the Jews was a universal contribution to the development of world spirit and transcended the contingencies of world history. The secular history of the Jews as a people, on the other hand, belonging to the sphere of the particular, was subject to a triadic development which repeated itself in cycles. Because the Jews' world-historical contribution was spiritual, not political, the Jewish people could survive the cycle of statelessness. By implying the possibility of political revival during a future historical cycle Kroeckmal anticipated modern zionist thought.

The influence of the Silesian theosoph Jacob Boehme on Hegel was the subject of a dispute between David Walsh (University of S. Carolina at Sumter) and Eric von der Luft (Bryn Mawr). Walsh argued in his paper that the central idea of history as a medium for self-alienation and self-revelation of God was already present in Boehme's work, which Hegel knew and praised in his writings. Von der Luft, however, regarded the evidence of Boehme's influence as inconclusive and argued that Hegel could have drawn his inspiration from earlier sources (e.g. Plotinus or Origen).

In his paper on 'The Dialectic in Hegel's Philosophy of History' Rolf Ahlers (Russel Sage College) traced the origin of Hegel's ideas on history to the overcoming (with the help of Rousseau and Kant) of the inadequacies of the Enlightenment idea of progress and perfectability, which excluded both the participation of the moral subject in progress and the historic achievement of perfect society. Hegel views history and society as a dialectical process through which the subject externalizes itself in an institutional and social world and also internalizes this world in culture and philosophy. On a more speculative level Hegel conceives world history as the dialectic of time and concept; the consciousness of freedom is a product of history, yet at a point in time (in the French Revolution) determines the shape of history. The Hegelian path to further progress towards freedom Ahlers saw in the free interplay of states in the international arena. Although this explained why the Philosophy of Right concluded with a section on world history, the commentator on Ahler's paper (Joseph Flay, Pennsylvania State University) and other participants had some difficulty in seeing how 'the free interplay of states' could help in the formulation of a practical philosophy for our times, which Ahlers advocated.

In 'Hegel, Art and History' William Desmond (Loyola College) sought to relate Hegel's conceptions of art and history. In his view art was for Hegel an imaginative appropriation of the essential strivings of historical man hence was neither a-historical nor anti-historical, despite being included by him in the realm of Absolute Spirit. Art has a dialectical character since it involves the sensuous presentation of spirit and a spiritualization of the sensuous; there is also a dialectic of freedom and necessity and individuality and universality in art as in history. Desmond argued that other aspects of art discussed by Hegel, e.g., the open-ended nature of artistic perfection, yielded interesting insights into Hegel's conception of history.

Richard Dien Winfield (University of Georgia) in 'The Theory

and Practice of the History of Freedom: on the Right of History in Hegel's Philosophy of History' raised the question why Hegel thought it necessary to include a theory of history in his essentially normative philosophy of right or justice. In his view this was the logical consequence of Hegel's theory of justice which, paradoxically, excludes all historical considerations and equates justice with the interaction of free (self-determined) wills. The interaction is institutionally structured in the family, civil society and the state, with their various subdivisions, but the rational necessity of those institutions has nothing to do with history. This raises the possibility of justice being a mere postulate of reason, especially as Hegel rejects any kind of natural necessity behind the realization of justice. 'Consequently' (argued Winfield) 'the philosophy of right must certify that freedom can emerge in history if its conceptions of right are not to be ideals incapable of coming into being'.

R.D. Winfield was also the winner of a competition for the best prize essay on the theme of Hegel on economics and freedom, the prize being endowed by the Roe Corporation of South Carolina. In the essay Winfield argued that for Hegel economic activity was not reducible to natural or 'monological' functions, but comprised normative social relations which fell into the theory of justice or right. Winfield analyzed Hegel's theory of civil society as the sphere in which economics acquired normative character and contrasted this with Marx's conception of civil society having the commodity market as its central feature. Winfield's conclusion as to the nature of Hegel's normative economics was summed up in what he called the 'three imperatives of justice: first, that the economy be made a sphere of right offering everyone the full array of commodity relations; secondly, that civil authority regulate the economy to guarantee all their exercise of economic freedom; and thirdly, that government act to prevent economic power and interest from obstructing political freedom.'

Walter Jaeschke (Ruhr University, Bochum) in his paper on 'World History and the History of Absolute Spirit' distinguished four kinds of history seemingly found in Hegel's philosophical works: 1) world history (as in the Lectures on the Philosophy of History), 2) partial histories of Absolute Spirit (art, religion and philosophy, as in other Berlin lecture series), 3) temporal history of Absolute Spirit as a whole, and 4) external history of Absolute Spirit, i.e. the conceptual ground of history in the system ('eternal history'). Pointing out that there are logical and textual difficulties in maintaining this quadripartite structure, Jaeschke argued for regarding world history as having absolute content and being the key concept in Hegel's philosophy of history. World history, however, need not in Jaeschke's view be limited to the emergence of the concept of freedom; it must include also the task of its realization in the moral life of living peoples.

The concluding paper of the Clemson meeting was 'On the Impotence of Spirit: Profane Reflections on Hegel's Philosophy of History' by George di Giovanni (McGill University). Di Giovanni expressed strong dissatisfaction with the whole Hegelian enterprise of reducing world history to a rational scheme. In his view Hegel should have applied to the realm of

history an idea he mentions with reference to nature, viz. that within the natural realm the notion (concept) is determined only abstractly, leaving its specifications to external determination. Di Giovanni called the basis of the revised view of history 'the impotence of spirit', adapting a phrase in *Enc. Phil. Sci.*, para. 250, on 'the impotence of nature'. While one might strongly sympathize with di Giovanni's wish that Hegel had given more room to contingency in his world history, it was argued convincingly by the commentator on his paper, Thomas Wartenberg (Duke University) that Hegel meant something quite specific by 'the impotence of nature'. The idea could not be made the basis of a radical *Aufhebung* of Hegel's philosophy of history of the kind di Giovanni ingeniously advocated.

As was customary, the retiring President of the HSA, Professor Quentin Lauer, delivered a Presidential Address on 'Hegel as Poet', giving the word 'poet' rather a generous latitude of meaning in his stimulating and wide-ranging paper. The Clemson meeting elected Professor Merold Westphal President until 1984 and once again re-elected Lawrence S. Stepelevich (Villanova University) as Treasurer and Editor of *The Owl of Minerva* (which in 1983 will start to appear as a journal). The theme chosen for the HSA next biennial meeting was 'The philosophy of spirit'. The idea of another joint conference with the HSGB (possibly in 1985) was mooted and favourably received. The publication of the proceedings of the joint Oxford conference of 1981 was proceeding satisfactorily. Members of the HSGB were invited to subscribe to the published proceedings of the Clemson meeting on the same terms as the HSA members (particulars from Prof. Stepelevich, Villanova University, Villanova, Pa. 19085).

Z.A. Pelczynski

#### 1983 HSGB Conference: Notice

The fifth annual conference of the Hegel Society of Great Britain will be held in Pembroke College, Oxford on 15-16 September 1983. The theme chosen for the conference is 'Hegel's Dialectic'. As usual five sessions are envisaged. It is hoped to include a discussion of Michael Rosen's recent CUP book *Hegel's Dialectic and its Criticism* and a paper by the President of the HSA, Merold Westphal. There is room for two more papers, say, one on a general aspect of the dialectic and one on its application to some particular field of Hegel's philosophy. Those interested in contributing should send an outline to the Conference Chairman, Prof. W.H. Walsh, Merton College, Oxford OX1 4JD, at the latest by the end of February 1983. Detailed programme, particulars of charges and registration forms can be obtained after 1 April 1983 from the HSGB Secretary/Treasurer, Dr. David Lamb, Department of Philosophy, The University, Manchester M13 9PL, and will also be sent out with the summer 1983 issue of the Bulletin.