

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Contribution to the Philosophy

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Abstract

There were many philosophers like Hegel who contributed in many ways in the history of political philosophy. Hegel was a significant philosopher in the philosophy. He gave many arguments on various aspects. His views will be discussed in below. Then we will be clear about his contributions.

Keywords: State; Dialectic; Liberty; Right; State.

1. Introduction

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was a German philosopher and an important figure of German idealism. He achieved wide recognition in his day and—while primarily influential within the continental tradition of philosophy—has become increasingly influential in the analytic tradition as well. Although Hegel remains a divisive figure, his canonical stature within Western philosophy is universally recognized.

2. About Hegel

G.W.F. Hegel was born in Stuttgart in 1770, the son of an official in the government of the Duke of Württemberg. He was educated at the Royal High school in Stuttgart from 1777-88 and steeped in both the classics and the literature of the European Enlightenment. In October, 1788 Hegel began studies at a theological seminary in Tübingen, the Tüberger Stift, where he became friends with the poet Hölderlin and philosopher Friedrich Schelling, both of whom would later become famous. In 1790 Hegel received an M.A. degree, one year after the fall of the Bastille in France, an event welcomed by these young idealistic students. Shortly after graduation, Hegel took a post as tutor to a wealthy Swiss family in Berne from 1793-96. In 1797, with the help of his friend Hölderlin, Hegel moved to Frankfurt to take on another tutorship. During this time he wrote unpublished essays on religion which display a certain radical tendency of thought in his critique of orthodox religion.

3. Writings of Hegel

Apart from his philosophical works on history, society, and the state, Hegel wrote several political tracts most of which were not published in his lifetime but which are significant enough in connection to the theoretical writings to deserve some mention. (These are published in English translation in Hegel's *Political Writings* and *Political Writings*, listed in the bibliography of works by Hegel below.)

Hegel's very first political work was on "On the Recent Domestic Affairs of Wurtemberg" which was neither completed nor published. In it Hegel expresses the view that the constitutional structure of Wurtemberg requires fundamental reform. He condemns the absolutist rule of Duke Ferdinand along with the narrow traditionalism and legal positivism of his officials and welcomes the convening of the Estates Assembly, while disagreeing with the method of election in the Diet. In contrast to the existing system of oligarchic privilege, Hegel argues that the Diet needs to be based on popular election through local town councils, although this should not be done by granting suffrage to an uneducated multitude. The essay ends inconclusively on the appropriate method of political representation.

A quite long piece of about 100 pages, *The German Constitution (Die Verfassung Deutschlands)* was written and revised by Hegel between 1799 and 1802 and was not published until after his death in 1893. This piece provides an analysis and critique of the constitution of the German Empire with the main theme being that the Empire is a thing of the past and that appeals for a unified German state are anachronistic. Hegel

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Contribution to the Philosophy

finds a certain hypocrisy in German thinking about the Empire and a gap between theory and practice in the German constitution. Germany was no longer a state governed by law but rather a plurality of independent political entities with disparate practices. Hegel stresses the need to recognize that the realities of the modern state necessitate a strong public authority along with a populace that is free and unregimented. The principle of government in the modern world is constitutional monarchy, the potentialities of which can be seen in Austria and Prussia. Hegel ends the essay on an uncertain note with the idea that Germany as a whole could be saved only by some Machiavellian genius.

The essay "Proceedings of the Estates Assembly in the Kingdom of Württemberg, 1815-1816" was published in 1817 in the *Heidelbergsche Jahrbücher*. In it Hegel commented on sections of the official report of the Diet of Württemberg, focusing on the opposition by the Estates to the King's request for ratification of a new constitutional charter that recognized recent liberalizing changes and reforms. Hegel sided with King Frederick and criticized the Estates as being reactionary in their appeal to old customary laws and feudal property rights. There has been controversy over whether Hegel here was trying to gain favor with the King in order to attain a government position. However, Hegel's favoring a sovereign kingdom of Wurtemberg over the German Empire and the need for a constitutional charter that is more rational than the previous are quite continuous with the previous essays. A genuine state needs a strong and effective central public authority, and in resisting the Estates are trying to live in the feudal past. Moreover, Hegel is not uncritical of the King's constitutional provisions and finds deficiencies in the exclusion of members of professions from the Estates Assembly as well as in the proposal for direct suffrage in representation, which treats citizens like unintegrated atomic units rather than as members of a political community.

3. Contribution of Hegel in Political Philosophy

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel is one of the greatest systematic thinkers in the history of Western philosophy. Hegel was a follower of Kant. He made new era of idealism by following Kant. He was the new founder of new idealism of nineteenth century. He has contributed in political theory by giving some new significant idea. 'The phenomenology of spirit' was his one of the famous works. part from his philosophical works on history, society, and the state, Hegel wrote several political tracts most of which were not published in his lifetime but which are significant enough in connection to the theoretical writings to deserve some mention. Hegel's very first political work was on "On the Recent Domestic Affairs of Wurtemberg" which was neither completed nor published. In it Hegel expresses the view that the constitutional structure of Wurtemberg requires fundamental reform. A quite long piece of about 100 pages, The German Constitution was written and revised by Hegel between 1799 and 1802 and was not published until after his death in 1893.

3.1. Hegel's Idea of State

He added main ideas of his idea of state from the idea of Kant. He gave his idea of state as a philosopher.

“The state in and by itself is the ethical whole, the actualization of freedom; and it is an absolute end of reason that freedom should be actual. The state is mind on earth and consciously realizing itself there... The march of God in the world that is what the state is. The basis of the state is the power of reason actualizing itself as well.”

Now I am discussing the contribution of Hegel in the idea of state.

4. Characteristics of State According to Hegel

- a) State is idea. The complete express of reality.
- b) State is self-conscious. The most powerful.
- c) State is an inspiration of the universe.
- d) State is not only the way, this is the ultimate aim.
- e) This is the symbol of regulation.

5. Now I am discussing the contribution of Hegel in the idea of state.

5.1 Powerful Organization

According to Hegel, State is an institution which is most powerful. There is no scope for liberalism. The main work for a person in state is to be loyal for his state. A person cannot think himself as an out of state. He is a being of state. A man cannot be proud without the state.

5.2 Development of a Person

A person's full development can be possible only by following the laws of state. His distinct of will must be universal. A man doesn't have the right of doing revolution against the state. Even he didn't allow the behavior against the state

5.3 The origin of state

Hegel explained the origin of state by his dialectic method. In his idea the idea of national state got priority. He didn't give respect to the organizations out of state. He thought that they were harmful for the state.

Culture + Institution = State

5.4. The lack of Thee Culture of Democracy

Hegel couldn't give the idea how people can reserve their rights. In his idea, he didn't tell how the government cannot be autocratic. He didn't gave the scope for the development of democracy in his idea of state.

5.5. *Integrated Views*

We can see the influence of German idealism. The idea of Rousseau about giving priority of society was presented in his idea. His thinking was restricted. He gave the integrated idea of state.

5.6. *The Work of State*

According to Hegel, the main work of state is to getting the moral aims. Every person of the state must have the knowledge of morality. The state will make the people willing to follow the laws of the state.

5.7. *The Principles of State*

Hegel told about three principles of state. 1) Liberty, 2) Equality, 3) Self-reliance.

State must be conscious about these three principles.

5.8. *The Power of the State*

To make certainty of the rights of people a state must have huge power. For taking any decision, a state must have some powers. He didn't allow the works of thinking of people against the state.

Even he thought about the punishment of being against of the laws of the state.

5.9. *The Rights of Property*

Property is necessary for a person for his development. But that property must be approved by the state. Hegel didn't allow the use of property of the people from their will. How a person will use the property that will be decided by the state.

5.10. *The Constructivism of State*

According to the view of utilitarianism, state is not trustable. Hegel changed this view. HE told that, state is not a harmful institution for a person. Even state contributes in the development of a person. Even for making unity in society, state contributes a lot.

Criticisms

1. His theory seems like that, the state is an autocratic institution.
2. He told about the liberty in state of people. But there is no maintain of the liberty.
3. He told about the following of the laws of state. But that is like inhuman.

6. Hegel's Dialectic Method

Hegel was famous for the dialectical approach. The main theme of his philosophy was the dialectical method. Socrates gave a connotation about the subject, then he asked the idea. Then he made some arguments against this idea. Thus Socrates strengthened his theory. The cunt and its dialectic system were different from Socrates. The German philosopher Hegel eventually presented his dialectical method, called

the structural dialectical method.

Hegel offers the most comprehensive, general description of his dialectical approach. Books include: Phenomenology of Mind, Philosophy of Right, Philosophy of Law, among others.

6.1. *The Dialectical Method*

Hegel broke the walls that German philosopher Kant founded in scientific reason and morality. He combined this argument and morality together. It is known as the dialectical method that he joins with the method. The main point of this dialectical method is that there are many relationships between each concept. And this relationship has a similarity and contrast. Relationships are not created in parallel and contrast. There is a conflict between each of these thoughts. But there is a temporary unity in each such conflict. Hegel said that for every truth, there are two strengths in each thought. The first is positive and the other is negative. Thus, at one time it can be seen in a true truth.

6.2. *Thesis Antithesis and Synthesis*

There can be a little more discussion on how to find the true truth in the conflict between positive and negative. There will be self-centeredness and sentiment in human nature. No man is free from this. There will be fullness and defects in the decision. And that is the result of positive and negative energy. And this is the third doctrine created from the dispute of these two forces. According to Hegel, the object that first decides is called antonyms or thesis. This argument contributes to positive and negative energy. It is called non-proliferation or antithesis. Opinion or protest or non-perpetuity is not permanent. The third one comes out of it. Called synthesis or synthesis or synthesis if this third opinion is accepted then the true truth is found. And no idea is wrong. No decision is wrong.

6.3. *Coordination or Synthesis is not ultimate*

Note that there is no reasonable reason to accept synthesis finely. It may change with the situation. It may change with the change in human thought.

The Soviet Union was based on Hegelian dialectics. Hegel said there are three moments present in the argument. These parties are not part of logic, rather, "the absurdity of every argument" moment. The first moment - there is seemingly stable definition or determination in the moment of understanding. The second moment - "dialectic" or "negative reasoning" moment - the moment of unrest and the third moment- "a positive reasonable moment.

'Hegel's primary object in his dialectic is to establish the existence of a logical connection between the different categories which are involved in the experience of the constitution.'

A (thesis) (context) vs. B (anti-thesis) (non-proliferation) is equal to C (synthesis).

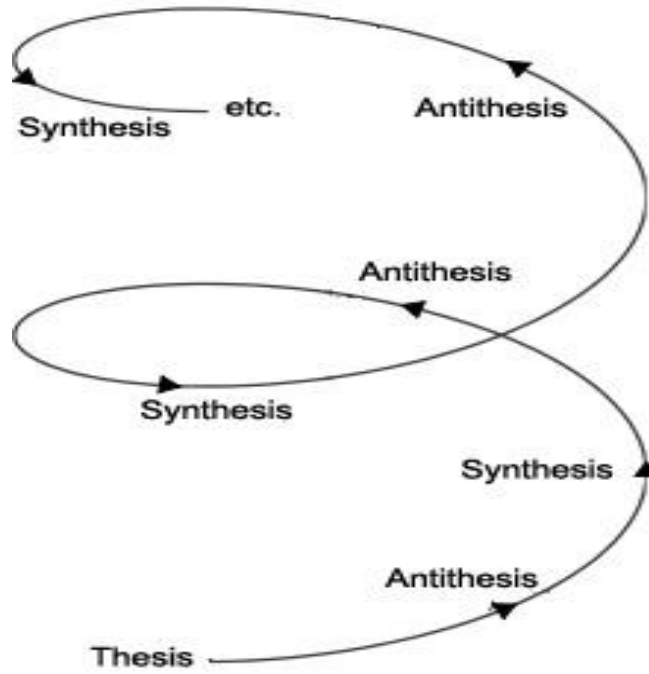
For example: if (a) the concept of independence (B) with the notion of personal freedom (C) cannot be independent until everyone agrees to be one

Hegel explains a process where instead of the truth, coming through disputes and conflicts between a power

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Contribution to the Philosophy

(context) and vice versa (incompatible). The final result from the clash, the third power (synthesis), which is decided.

In all probabilities, synthesis is not absolute and absolute truth. This became a new topic, where the process was repeated until the final synthesis was expressed by opposing a new challenge, ie non-proliferation, which is theoretically the absolute truth.



Example:

a)

Thesis: (context): After the First World War, British and French power authority

Anti Thesis: (Opportunities): Hitler

Synthesis: (synthesis): Consensus of America

b)

Thesis: Traditional Conservatism

Anti Thesis: Marxism

Synthesis: Globalization

c)

Thesis: The US government is losing power

Anti Thesis: 9/11

Synthesis: Patriot Law, NSA Spying

Problems in personal life

Problem: Do not get enough attention

Feedback: Events, Dramas,

Solution: Get attention from family, friends, strangers.

Hegel used his dialectical methods in his major philosophical problems. There, Art Thesis, Religion Antigynesis and Philosophy of Synthesis.

7. Hegel's Dialectic Method in the State's View

Hegel interpreted the origin of the state with its dialectical method. The concept of his conceptual national state gets priority. He did not respect the organization outside the state. He thinks it is damaging to the state. Culture (thesis) + institution (antithesis) = state (synthesis) Hegel believes that the development of society will be developed through three levels in dialectic manner. First thesis, Second antithesis and Synthesis. Synthesis is the result of contradiction between thesis and antithesis. Through the dialectical method, Hegel explains the concept of the state. His contradiction is in favor of this contradiction. He discussed the origin of the state in this process. Society and civilization gradually develops. And it is through specific arguments. And by the development of society, the state is created. And it develops in these three steps.

8. Hegel's Conception about Liberty

According to Hegel, the real meaning of liberty lies in dedicating oneself for the state and for the welfare of the state. Liberty lies in the bonding of the laws of state. Distinct idea of happiness is nothing. His famous work was *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. There he discussed about his philosophy. Hegel thinks the loyalty of someone to his state is freedom.

9. Hegel's View of Liberty

9.1. Rejection of Individualism and Liberalism

Hegel rejected the idea of individualism and liberalism about liberty. He thinks that these ideas are not real. He thinks that laws doesn't reduces freedom by controlling man's activities. Even laws help a man to make him go ahead on the way of liberty. So for Implementation man's freedom, the laws of state are enough.

9.2. Bonding of State

If anyone wants the existence of permanency of his liberty, he must obey the rules and laws of his state. He must have to be controlled by the laws of his state. The state is the actuality of the ethical Idea. For Hegel, 'State is the march of God on Earth' which implies that state is the divine manifestation on the earth. So one must obey all the laws of his state.

9.3. Importance of the aim of liberty

Hegel gave importance to the aim of liberty. According to Hegel, gaining liberty is main term. According to Hegel, anyhow a person can have liberty. A person can have the liberty by following the rules of his state with his own will or he will be automatically controlled by the laws of his state.

9.4. Liberty is the life of being

Hegel considered the liberty as the life of being. According to him, if anyone discuss about the history of the world, he will understand that that is the outcome of man's liberty. If we think about being, then all human are free. But this liberty must be awake. Only the laws of state makes them awake.

9.5. External control

Hegel doesn't think that, liberty means the freedom from external controlling. Even, for gaining man's basic rights a man cannot go ahead with his freedom will. Freedom means the development of human's moral actions. But in this sphere a person cannot avoid the laws of state.

9.6. Single liberty

According to Hegel, a person cannot consider his liberty being out of the society. Then he can think himself free, but actually he is not. He needs social environment for getting liberty.

9.7. Elimination of animalistic tendency

According to Hegel, A person shouldn't be only the member of society. He should also have the ability of removing the animalistic tendency. In ancient society, there was no liberty, because there was no control of animalistic tendency.

9.8. Law and morality of Independence

Hegel showed the relation between Laws and morality and liberty. He showed that liberty becomes restricted by laws, otherwise it will be converted into arbitrariness. Even for the consciousness of morality of man, a man should have restriction of liberty.

9.9. Liberty is a social matter

Hegel considered liberty as the part of society. He rejected the idea of using will in the term of liberty. A man can have all kinds of liberties by the rules and regulations of state. A man should think social freedom as his liberty.

9.10. Self-Appreciation

According to Hegel, if anyone wants to understand rightly about himself, he must know about liberty. If he cannot understand about liberty, he will not be able to understand himself. For the development of one, there must be present the control of state.

9.11. Development of Independence

Without loyalty to state, a person cannot have taste of liberty. If anyone doesn't accept the existence of state, he will definitely be unable to understand about liberty. For real development of liberty the laws of state is mostly necessary.

10. Logic and Political Theory

The Logic constitutes the first part of Hegel's philosophical system as presented in his Encyclopedia. It was preceded by his larger work, *The Science of Logic* (*Wissenschaft der Logik*), published in 1812-16 in two volumes. The "Encyclopedia Logic" is a shorter version intended to function as part of an "outline," but it became longer in the course of the three published versions of 1817, 1827, and 1830. Also, the English translation by William Wallace contains additions from the notes of students who heard Hegel's lectures on this subject. (Reference to the paragraphs of the Encyclopedia will be made with the "¶" character.)

The structure of the Logic is triadic, reflecting the organization of the larger system of philosophy as well as a variety of other motifs, both internal and external to the Logic proper. The Logic has three divisions: the Doctrine of Being, the Doctrine of Essence, and the Doctrine of the Notion (or Concept). There are a number of logical categories in this work that are directly relevant to social and political theorizing. In the Doctrine of Being, for example, Hegel explains the concept of "being-for-self" as the function of self-relatedness in the resolving of opposition between self and other in the "ideality of the finite" (¶ 95-96). He claims that the task of philosophy is to bring out the ideality of the finite, and as will be seen later Hegel's philosophy of the state is intended to articulate the ideality of the state, i.e., its affirmative and infinite or rational features. In the Doctrine of Essence, Hegel explains the categories of actuality and freedom. He says that actuality is the unity of "essence and existence" (¶ 142) and argues that this does not rule out the actuality of ideas for they become actual by being realized in external existence. Hegel will have related points to make about the actuality of the idea of the state in society and history. Also, he defines freedom not in terms of contingency or lack of determination, as is popular, but rather as the "truth of necessity," i.e., freedom presupposes necessity in the sense that reciprocal action and reaction provide a structure for free action, e.g., a necessary relation between crime and punishment.

11. The Philosophy of Right

In 1821, Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* originally appeared under the double title *Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaften in Grundrisse; Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Natural Law and the Science of the State; Elements of the Philosophy of Right). The work was republished by Eduard Gans in 1833 and

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Contribution to the Philosophy

1854 as part of Hegel's *Werke*, vol. viii and included additions from notes taken by students at Hegel's lectures. The English language translation of this work by T. M. Knox refers to these later editions as well as to an edition published in 1923 by Georg Lasson, which included corrections from previous editions.

The *Philosophy of Right* constitutes, along with Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, the penultimate section of his *Encyclopedia*, the section on *Objective Spirit*, which deals with the human world and its array of social rules and institutions, including the moral, legal, religious, economic, and political as well as marriage, the family, social classes, and other forms of human organization. The German word *Recht* is often translated as 'law', however, Hegel clearly intends the term to have a broader meaning that captures what we might call the good or just society, one that is "rightful" in its structure, composition, and practices.

12. Emancipation from Kantianism

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance that this problem had for Hegel. It is true that his early theological writings contain hard sayings about Christianity and the churches; but the object of his attack was orthodoxy, not theology itself. All that he wrote at this period throbs with a religious conviction of a kind that is totally absent from Kant and Hegel's other 18th-century teachers. Above all, he was inspired by a doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The spirit of humanity, its reason, is the candle of the Lord, he held, and therefore cannot be subject to the limitations that Kant had imposed upon it. This faith in reason, with its religious basis, henceforth animated the whole of Hegel's work.

His outlook had also become that of a historian—which again distinguishes him from Kant, who was much more influenced by the concepts of physical science. Every one of Hegel's major works was a history; and, indeed, it was among historians and classical scholars rather than among philosophers that his work mainly fructified in the 19th century.

When in 1798 Hegel turned back to look over the essays that he had written in Berne two or three years earlier, he saw with a historian's eye that, under Kant's influence, he had misrepresented the life and teachings of Jesus and the history of the Christian church. His newly won insight then found expression in his essay "*Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal*" ("The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate"), likewise unpublished until 1907. This is one of Hegel's most remarkable works. Its style is often difficult and the connection of thought not always plain, but it is written with passion, insight, and conviction.

He begins by sketching the essence of Judaism, which he paints in the darkest colors. The Jews were slaves to the Mosaic Law, leading a life unlovely in comparison with that of the ancient Greeks and content with the material satisfaction of a land flowing with milk and honey. Jesus taught something entirely different. Humans are not to be the slaves of objective commands: the law is made for them. They are even to rise above the tension in moral experience between inclination and reason's law of duty, for the law is to be

“fulfilled” in the love of God, wherein all tension ceases and the believer does God’s will wholeheartedly and single-mindedly. A community of such believers is the Kingdom of God.

This is the kingdom that Jesus came to teach. It is founded on a belief in the unity of the divine and the human. The life that flows in them both is one; and it is only because humans are spirit that they can grasp and comprehend the Spirit of God. Hegel works out this conception in an exegesis of passages in the Gospel According to John. The kingdom, however, can never be realized in this world: humans are not spirit alone but flesh also. “Church and state, worship and life, piety and virtue, spiritual and worldly action can never dissolve into one.”

13. Conclusion

Thus we can know about Hegel. Noticeably, he was an important figure in the history of political philosophy. His works are the significant contributions. His contribution made many philosophers who was famous. His dialectic method was so significant that was followed by many ones.

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