CHAPTER THREE

HEGEL: AMBIVALENCE RESOLVED BY PHILOSOPHICAL RE-DESCRIPTION
Hegel's reception of the modern society was ambivalent. This is clear from his lecture notes of the 1801-1806 period.\(^1\) He saw in it ever enlarging scope for individual freedom and therefore he welcomed it. But he was also disturbed by what he perceived as the logical consequences this freedom had for the stability and spirituality of the modern society. His *Philosophy of Right* (1821), however, reflects his confidence that this society has within it the resources to contain its own tendencies towards anarchy and unrest. These resources do not emanate from the state's universality alone. Civil Society itself has educative as well as narrowly liberating role to play in the lives of individuals.

Civil Society, as Hegel defines it, is an association of self-subsistent individuals brought about by their needs and secured by law.\(^2\) Men have far greater needs than animals. Their satisfaction is not restricted to an inflexible range. Needs multiply, get refined and the means to their satisfaction also develop in all directions. Moreover there is a complex relationship of mutual dependence in so far as men, through their work, provide each other unwittingly, objects of their needs.\(^3\) This is what Hegel means by 'System of Needs'.\(^4\) Contingent, contractual relations between externally linked and equal individuals produce the System marked by complexity, mutuality, and anonymity.
Hegel mentions in a Remark that **Political Economy** is a science which has the task of comprehending these relationships. It is the same Political Economy which alerts him to the working of the dialectic of freedom in Civil Society. What starts as a concrete expression of individuals' freedom becomes an impersonal force of uncontrollable dynamism.

Each individual works because of his needs but they are satisfied in an indirect, mediate way. His concrete needs become part of the totality of needs which cannot be traced back to specific individuals and the totality is, therefore, abstract. My work is part of the System, as such it is social in character. But I see it only as an unavoidable means to my satisfaction. My partaking of abstract universality ties me all the more firmly to particularity. The connection between my work and the satisfaction of my needs is so indirect and non-sensuous that it presents itself to me as an incomprehensible, impersonal mechanism.

This incomprehensibility is accentuated by the variety of influences the System is vulnerable to. Faraway economic operations affect it, whole branches of industry have to fold up, and prices keep fluctuating. The System of Needs becomes an alien power over everybody.

Hegel has something to say about the travails of labour
also. As needs multiply and develop qualitatively, labour must also improve in skill and productivity. But under the factory system of production, every improvement of labour is accompanied by its division and specialization, by the use of machinery which changes the rhythm of the productive activity. It is no longer the worker who is in command of the process, rather, it is the process—enlarged and made far more complex—which employs him. His work loses its personality; it is a part of a chain of small, specialized tasks, it is dull and repetitive, and the more productive it is, the more one-sided and mechanical it becomes. Hegel cites Adam Smith and says:

"The particularisation of labour multiplies the mass of production; in an English manufacture, 18 people work at the production of a needle; each has a particular and exclusive side of the work to perform; a single person could probably not produce 120 needles, even not one... But the value of labour decreases in the same proportion as the productivity of labour increases"

"A mass of the population is condemned to stupefying, unhealthy, and precarious labour in factories, manufactures, mines, etc."

Between cultivation of tastes of some and coarse lives of many Hegel perceives a direct relationship. The industrial system of production is based on the misery of the class of workers. Cultured enjoyment and drudgery produce each other. As tastes and fashions change, demand for old product dwindles and factories close down. As a result,

"Whole masses are abandoned to poverty which cannot help itself. There appears the contrast between vast wealth and vast poverty..."
People thus being tossed around by the fluctuating business fortunes become helpless and dependent on the rich and the powerful. Extreme inequalities of wealth beget domination.

It is significant that Hegel thinks that misery is generated when the Civil Society is flourishing, when it is 'in a state of unimpeded activity'. The exact causality that Hegel sees is not clear, but overproduction is explicitly mentioned as leading to economic crises, presumably through glut and unemployment.

Poverty, for Hegel, is not merely the lack of means of subsistence and the consequent failure to satisfy even the most basic needs. He seems to include general economic insecurities and the degrading nature of work in his notion of poverty. Poverty is the inability of a whole class of people to enjoy the intellectual and cultural benefits of Civil Society.

Understood relatively and culturally (as well as purely economically), we can appreciate how destitution generates hostility among the deprived, whom Hegel calls a 'rabble'.

Poverty in itself does not make men into a rabble; a rabble is created only when there is joined to poverty a disposition of mind, an inner indignation against the rich, against society, against government, etc.

Torn from their families, barred form all the opportunities
of education and training, without any access to justice, and often without the consolations of religion even, this mass of people turns 'against the whole system in indignation and hatred'.

"It hence becomes apparent that despite an excess of wealth civil society is not rich enough, i.e. its own resources are insufficient to check excessive poverty and the creation of a penurious rabble'.

In the Addition to paragraph 244 of the Philosophy of Right, Hegel acknowledges that the poor have a right to subsistence.

"Against nature man can claim no right, but once society is established, poverty immediately takes the form of a wrong done to one class by another".

And as an admission of the insolubility of the problem he ends the discussion by saying:

"The important question of how poverty is to be abolished is one of the most disturbing problems which agitate modern society.'

Modern society is based normatively on the promise of freedom to each individual. This freedom may be, and as a matter of fact will be, used variously by different individuals. The societal network is meant for providing opportunities to them to flourish in their respective ways. For this provision, the modern society uses universal egoism. Society is the concatenation of particular interests. But is it precisely this motor force which impels the system towards deprivation, chaos and unrest.
It makes the society both unstable and unjustifiable. Its promise to provide freedom cannot be fulfilled. At least for a class of people.

Even those who are fortunate enough to ‘flourish’, to be able to freely enter into contracts, to acquire and exchange property, to refine their tastes - even their freedom is not unproblematic. Behind the show of extravagant luxury there lurks vacuity and frustration.

The revolutions of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries freed individuals from political and theological confines. The process is completed in Civil Society where

"A man counts as a man in virtue of his manhood alone, not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc."

Civil Society recognizes every individual as a person, i.e., as a rational being who can make choices and has needs. What these choices are, Civil Society is on principle indifferent to. The kind of life a person wants to lead is not what makes him a person; that he has or can have a projection of himself into future is what his identity consists in for Civil Society. It is organized around the principle of mutual recognition of individuals as persons, as free choosers.

This separation of the form and content of individuality is
novel and revolutionary. In pre-modern societies everyone was tied to a role and these roles, taken together, had a place in the purposeful universe. The scientific, philosophical and political revolutions purged the human identity of all the ascribed attributes and produced the "unencumbered selves" typical of modernity. Thus it is that

"In the mutuality of civil society I recognize you as recognizing me as pure self not identified with any particular role or content of choice."

I am not encumbered by any 'given' identity, I am free to decide who I am. In fact, my identity lies in my ability to choose my identity.

But while Civil Society gives me the sense of selfhood by allowing me to choose, it does not give any criterion of choice. Freedom in its modern sense is self-determination. But, as David Kolb remarks, for there to be self determination, there must be something in the self that can serve as a measure. This 'something' cannot be a result of arbitrary or fleeting choice. It must be something enduring about me, something that makes me the concrete individual that I am, with specific aspirations and aversions. And that is exactly what Civil Society is unable to provide. Or, rather, it is this 'thick' identification that the egocentric interaction of Civil Society cannot generate, nor can it recognize it.
Thus, in trying to liberate the individual from the ascriptive weight of tradition and from the eternally given purposes of theology, modern society leaves him 'at the mercy of the contingent'. Hegel recognized this. He saw the 'contentless void' that must swallow insubstantial (insubstantial because unencumbered) individuals. They do not identify themselves with any specific needs and impulses and yet they are ruled by them. And every satisfaction is a vanishing trace of gratification followed by a lurch to another impulse.

The third great defect of Civil Society for Hegel is the fixation its life involves for the individual: the bourgeois is over-concerned with his gains and his security and private enjoyments. The idea of possession or property fixes the separatedness of the individual. The 'common life' that every man participates in, is oriented towards private life that it supposedly enables every man to enjoy.

As Laurence Dickey points out, Adam Ferguson, in his *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) lamented these bourgeois preoccupations. Ferguson said that the laws in the modern society secure the freedoms of every individual, without discrimination based on political considerations. This allows men to fully busy themselves with property and comforts. With triumph of interests everywhere and commerce as the only tie uniting men, the spirit of society has ceased to animate them. There are hardly any citizens left...
Hegel had read Ferguson and several other main thinkers of the Eighteenth century on this subject. From Adam Smith, Montesquieu, to Rousseau, the problem of luxury and commerce exercised all. There was a general apprehension that commerce would sap the moral fiber of men and leave them with too little time or uprightness to participate in public affairs. Lack of courage, inability to see beyond one's personal ambitions, false cosmopolitanism in place of patriotism - these were believed to be the consequences of the corrupting commercial civilization.

Hegel too was perturbed by the decline of the 'active' ethical virtues like civic sense, magnanimity, indignation at injustice, etc., in Civil Society. It made material pursuit the basis of mutual recognition and elevated commerce into the purpose of civilized man.27

In his Theological Writings of the 1790s, Hegel explains the triumph of Christianity over the pagan religious forms as a symptom of the imperceptible, secret revolutionary transition from the civic republicanism of the ancients to the modern bourgeois -Christian world.28 He says that the Greeks and Romans obeyed laws they had themselves made, chose their officers, sacrificed their all for ends they recognized as their own, and thus lived in the public world of their own collective making. For them this public world,
expressed in the idea of the State, was their highest reality against which everything merely individual vanished.

But in the modern times the idea of the state 'as a product of his own energies has vanished from the citizen's soul'. The interests of the society as a whole became the care of a few.

"All activity and every purpose now had a bearing on something individual; activity was no longer for the sake of a whole or an ideal. Either everyone worked for himself or else he was compelled to work for some other individual".

With this change, citizens' equal and free participation in public affairs declined. Consequently,

"All political freedom vanished also; the citizen's right gave him only a right to the security of that property which now filled his entire world".

And the ancient political virtues were replaced by the Christian moral virtues.

It is entirely of a piece with the reality of such a depoliticized society that the State comes to be viewed on the model of a contract. This founds the political community on something arbitrary. But, moreover, it extends metaphorically a form of relationship which is appropriate only to a particular realm within society, to the entire society.
The State is no more than a collective instrument in this view and that is what it is sought to be reduced to in practice.

"'Liberalism' sets up... the atomic principle, that which insists upon the sway of individual wills; maintaining that all government should emanate from their express power and have their express sanction. Asserting this formal side of freedom... the party in question allows no political organization to be firmly established.... This collision,... this problem is that which history is now occupied, and whose solution it has to work out in future".

At the root of this view of the State is a systematic error: human beings have, as a matter of fact, variety of desires and passions; this natural law is elevated to a normative Law of Nature. Taking an empiricist view of what men actually want in a given society, Hobbes and Locke generalize and normalize the picture of the self-interested, acquisitive individual.

This conception of man as egocentric individual must reduce the society to a heap, disallowing any political mediation between men and the government and thus either reduce the latter to an instrument of individuals or invite despotism.

Mandeville had spoken of Civil Society as 'entirely built upon the variety of our wants, so that whole superstructure is made of reciprocal services, which men do to each other'.

"There are great blessings that arise from necessity and that everybody is obliged to eat and drink, is
This description can easily fit Hegel's Civil Society too; because at one level he accepts the self interestedness of men generating a social bond. But he is also aware of the dark side: the stultifying labour, the inequalities, the poverty, and above all the uncontrollability of the system.

"This system moves hither and thither in a blind and elemental way, and like a wild animal calls for strong permanent control and curbing".

This curbing must come from the society organized as the ethical whole. What must be impeded is the burgeoning of the system of needs into an independent and ever growing power.

Hegel does not find fault with the modern economy on any ascetic or puritanical grounds. His discussion of needs and luxury in the Philosophy of Right makes this quite clear. In fact, his tone is unhesitatingly welcoming. In what could be taken as an oblique criticism of Rousseau he says:

"The idea has been advanced that in respect of his needs man lived in freedom in the so-called 'state of nature' when his needs were... [few]. This view is...false, because to be confined to mere physical needs... would simply be the condition in which the mental is plunged in the natural and so would be one of savagery and unfreedom, while freedom itself is to be found only in the reflection of mind into itself, in mind's distinction from nature, and in the reflex of mind in nature".

Emulation in matters of needs and wants, condemned by Rousseau as a symptom of man's half-socialized state, is
seen by Hegel as a normal trait which multiplies needs ad infinitum.\textsuperscript{41}

Luxury and refinement of needs degenerate into voluptuousness only when their pursuit is so riveting that the bourgeois man starts ignoring his broader allegiances and obligations.\textsuperscript{42} From the viewpoint of religion, material pursuits call for opprobrium when they penetrate the soul and corrupt it.\textsuperscript{43}

To sum up, Hegel did not believe that Civil Society as the system of needs could regulate itself. It had to be regulated from outside. Secondly, he objected to the hegemony of the economy over other spheres of life. He could not accept a society where the bourgeois pursuit of riches overshadowed all other pursuits. Given our essentially ethical nature and our aspiration to universality, wealth cannot provide us with identity, it cannot become the ground for our mutual recognition.\textsuperscript{44} Rousseau’s objection to the pursuit of luxury was that it is a contemptible activity because it absorbs all virtue.\textsuperscript{45} Hegel agreed: it was contemptible if it absorbed all virtue!

But it need not be. Surely it can be tempered. Economy does not have to necessarily colonize all spheres of society. It can be contained. It does not have to be left alone like a wild animal; it can be domesticated.

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Thus Hegel allowed himself to be worried about the bourgeois economy but not to the point where he could not reconcile his concerns (ethical, civic, etc.) with it. By a series of argumentative strategies, Hegel managed to both welcome and criticize Civil Society (as system of needs):

I. He argued that the same Civil Society which stimulates individualism also generates solidarities.

II. He tried to demonstrate that work, property, growth of needs, etc. have significance which gives them meanings beyond their mundane, utilitarian or even crass appearance.

III. These meanings he assigned to different spheres so that each sphere of society 'specialized' in being the locus of one aspect of the significant whole called society.

IV. Assigning 'universality' to the State and 'particularity' to the system of needs (Civil Society in one of its dimensions) he argued for a model of complex relationship between the two.

V. The significant social whole was for him the expression of Cosmic spirit (Geist) and the meanings [he had ascribed to various practices and institutions] were a spectacle of the spiritual expanse of Geist.

VI. With his philosophy of history as a narration of the
immanent conceptual unfolding of Geist's spirituality, he could argue that the tendencies he perceived in modern society, the reconciliation he looked for was in fact an objective development that was taking place.

In the remaining part of this chapter, I will elaborate on these moves. I will take up the points listed above though not in the same order.

1. I have already mentioned Hegel's reservations about the bourgeoisie's exclusively commercial and material preoccupations. Now the word 'bourgeois' in French is contrasted with 'citoyen' and a dichotomy between pursuit of wealth and citizenship is implied. In Rousseau the two are held to be definitely irreconcilable. But the German word for bourgeois - 'Bürger' - does not have the same connotations. 'Bürger' and 'citizen' are not only not opposed, they can even be integrated, or, as Dickey and Plant suggest, the latter can be seen as growing out of the former.

'Being a citizen' must be understood here to mean 'having a civic sense', and having a civic sense is a matter of having goals and interests larger than the narrowly egocentric ones. Moreover, the enlarged mentality is not to be immediately identified with 'interests of the society as a whole'. 'Particular' and 'universal' are categories relative to each other and between the standpoint of the interests
of the whole society and the selfish concerns of an atomized individual, there are many intermediate possibilities.

Therefore, the professional bodies in Civil Society represent, for Hegel, an intermediate stage, a step towards universality.

Hegel discusses corporations, the quasi-guilds of his times, as an illustration of such universality. He defines corporations as follows:

"A corporation... comprises all who ply the same trade in a town, and it has the right of admitting whom it will and excluding anyone who does not conform to its rules.... The member of every branch of learned study have [also] unified into a corporation..."

As a legally recognized body, every corporation has the right to admit to its fold members having requisite skills, to regulate its membership taking into account the current demand for its trade, to offer training to those who wish to become members, and provide help to its members in situations of distress. Corporations come on the scene like a second family and function against the atomizing tendencies of Civil Society.

a). In the absence of political parties and in the atmosphere of political apathy, Corporations become a crucial and indispensable medium providing opportunities to its members to experience modern freedoms like the freedom of speech and association. Hegel says:
"Under the modern political conditions, the citizens have only a restricted share in the public business of the state, yet it is essential to provide men - ethical entities - with work of a public character over and above their private business. This work of public character, which the modern state does not always provide, is found in the Corporation".

b). The welfare functions of the Corporations are seen by Hegel as Civil Society's safety-net protecting individuals from the consequences of its blind economic laws. Hegel's awareness of the problem of poverty goes back to the first decade of the Eighteenth century as mentioned earlier in this chapter. In Corporations, he seems to have found a limited solution to that problem. Working more effectively than charity, Corporations alleviate the indigence of the unfortunate among its members without compromising their self-respect.

"Within the Corporation the help which poverty receives loses its accidental character and the humiliation wrongfully associated with it. The wealthy perform their duties to their fellow associates and thus riches cease to inspire either pride or envy...

c). Without the membership of a Corporation, an individual is 'without rank or dignity'. His belonging to it, on the other hand, is an evidence 'that he is somebody'. Knox is right in drawing attention in this context to one of Hegel's remarks elsewhere in the Philosophy of Right. There Hegel says that every individual must belong to some social class.
With slight modification of his observation, Hegel could be taken as giving obliquely a position counter to Rousseau’s insistence that there be no particular bodies or associations within the State. Hegel states that it is a false idea that determination and universality are opposed to each other.\(^{59}\)

Hegel conceived of the political society as an organization, 'each of whose members is in itself a group'.\(^{60}\) Apprehensive of the polarization of the State on the one side and the aggregate of individuals on the other,\(^{61}\) Hegel argued for corporate political representation in the national assembly. Civil Society’s excessive individuation and the dangers this holds for the political health and stability of the society can be neutralized by such representation. Steven Smith rightly points out that even before Hegel, conservatives looked upon Corporations as structures, 'stemming the tide of atomistic individualism', brought forth by the collapse of the medieval social structure.\(^{62}\)

Thus through Corporations, individuals are raised above mere self-seeking,\(^{63}\) private persons gradually become public,\(^{64}\) Civil Society’s atomization is checked, and the State comes to have a structure.

II. Civil Society can be described as production organized by the multiplicity of contractual relations among the individuals who have needs. Labour, contracts and needs can
be understood as the elements of a system fuelled by individual interests. Political Economy as a science looks for laws of this system in the multitude of accidents. But the society which raises Political Economy to its official philosophy confuses, according to Hegel, ‘a law discovered in the workings of passions, the invisible law of the market with ethical law embraced by rational self-consciousness’. 65

In drawing out the deeper significance of work, needs, property, and contract, Hegel takes us towards the ultimate recognition of the rationality at work in Civil Society.

a). Labour produces objects of our needs but its value is not just instrumental. Through work, the worker acquires skills, habits of mind and body, learns to cooperate with fellow workers and, in the process, educates himself generally. In the Philosophy of Right, in the Remark to paragraph 194, immediately preceding the section on work, Hegel observes that there is liberation intrinsic to work and points to the following paragraphs. But that account has to be complemented with what Hegel says about it in the section on Lordship and Bondage in the Phenomenology of Mind:

"Labour... is desire restrained and checked, evanescence delayed..."66

Hegel goes on to say that through work, worker's consciousness gains objective existence, it expresses itself by externalizing itself. Through work, man disciplines himself, achieves self-determination and the product of his
work reflects back to him his integrated personality. As far as Civil Society is concerned, its productive activity signifies an extensive mastery of nature.

b). Needs are far more than arbitrary desires. To have needs beyond the physical or the basic ones, shows emancipation from nature as has been already discussed in this chapter. Needs are social, they are culturally mediated. As Walton explains:

"In the system of needs men are able to recognize one another as common participants in a scheme of reciprocal relationships; the other's needs and interests are comprehensible because they are informed by a common system of concepts which provides the basis for social recognition."

Taste for a particular kind of thing, desire to follow fashion etc., are social matters, qualitatively different form the hunger of the savage. Natural necessity no longer predominates, ideas and opinions take over, and out of apparently egocentric urges a social bond develops. As human ways of satisfying even 'natural' urges flourish, the natural and the spiritual blend to produce culture. And it is because of the common culture that we understand each other and this mutual understanding generates ethical ties right in the bosom of Civil Society.

c). Hegel distinguishes the various moments of the bourgeois right to property from one another: acquisition, use, and alienation. In acquiring something I embody my will in it
and thus affirm myself as a free person. But it is in 
freely alienating it that I show myself as not tied to what 
I had acquired, not dependent on it.

"If emphasis is placed on my needs, then the 
possession of property appears as a means to their 
satisfaction, but the true position is that, from 
the standpoint of freedom, property is the first 
embodiment of freedom and so is in itself a 
substantive end."  

It follows that

"The reason I can alienate my property is that it is 
mine only in so far as I put my will into it. Hence 
I may abandon... anything that I have..."

The essence of property is to overcome the resistance that 
matter offers me and to show its recalcitrance and its 
independence to be false. And yet, in so doing, I am only 
raising my personhood to the level of objectivity. But I am 
a person not just for myself, but for others as well. The 
appropriation of nature for human purposes thus goes on 
within the context of the mutual recognition of each other 
as persons.

d). Seyla Benhabib clarifies the importance this framework 
has for Hegel. Exchange and contract are the most routine 
and typical interactions of Civil Society. But they are not 
fully understood as long as we do not appreciate what they 
prerequisite.

In property, exchange, and contract we regard ourselves and
each other as free and equal persons. This mutual recognition is logically prior to the innumerable acts of acquisition, alienation, etc. A contract, for example, takes place between contracting parties out of their free initiative and consent. But unless the society has already recognized each of its members as free to enter into such agreements, contract cannot take place. This means that we are persons, that we see ourselves as persons and recognize each other as persons. This presupposition is not part of the contract nor can it be generated as a result of the contract. Valid contractual transactions depend on the non-contractual and non-contractable capacity of individuals as persons.\textsuperscript{77}

Locke derives right to property from the fact of ‘original’ appropriation. In Hegel, the property acquiring individuals are in a social context which ‘empowers’ them as persons. In fact, it is the system of mutual recognition which is prominent: property serves only as a medium for the manifestation of that recognition.\textsuperscript{78}

Thus, work, needs, exchange, etc - the vital elements of Civil Society - have significance which could have only arisen in history. Through this significance, these meanings, quasi-natural facts of human existence are transformed into so many avenues to freedom. Civil Society may celebrate utilitarian or economic rationality. But through the cunning operations of Reason, this economic
rationality itself is turned into the means of goals and values beyond acquisition, gratification, and general voluptuousness.

(I will take up point no.s III and IV later)

V and VI. For Hegel, the world is an expressive totality. It expresses sensuously the conceptual entity called Geist, or Cosmic Spirit. This Cosmic Spirit may be understood as Hegel’s version of Aristotle’s God, the self-thinking thought. Of course, the important difference is that for Hegel, Geist, though purely spiritual in nature, exists only in embodied form. Taylor makes the suggestion that we might see Hegel’s Geist on the model of a subject. The subject is the activity of rational thinking but the subject is also necessarily embodied. Embodiment is in time and space, it is in the material world, and as such it is a limitation of pure subjectivity.

"The thinking rational subject can only exist embodied....And yet at the same time this embodiment in life has a tendency to carry...[the subject] along the stream of inclinations.....Reason has to struggle against this in order to realize itself. And in this sense his embodiment is... his limit, his opponent." 

So Geist is embodied but it also has an immanent tendency towards perfection and freedom. The freedom of Geist consists of ‘rational self-awareness’. Geist is aware of itself only through its expression, its embodiment. It realizes full self-awareness and hence freedom, when its expression is adequate to itself, i.e., when its given
expression fully shows itself what it is. It comes to self-recognition when there is no hiatus between what it is and its given embodiment. Till then, the Spirit objectifies itself in the world, finds that objectification inadequate and therefore overcomes it. Spirit is thus essentially a self-positing and self-restoring movement.

The world and the human history are to be understood as successive embodiments of Geist. And Geist comes to self-awareness when it perceives the entire natural and historical development, the totality of history, as its expression. Which means that Geist comes to self-awareness in its other, in the spatio-temporal world of finitude; it comes to self-awareness when it recognizes that the universe (including the social world) is rationally structured so as to be its expression. To be Geist’s expression, it must be rationally structured because Geist is essentially Reason. Infinity of Geist consists in this: it comes to itself in its other, that the other is not a limitation or an opposition but posited by Geist as its expression. This recognition is crucial.

Geist wins through this recognition through human beings. When human beings realize that they are vehicles of the spiritual life of Geist and that their natural and social world is rational (or, more precisely, governed by rational necessity), they come to see it as posited by Geist and as a result they are reconciled to their social institutions.
Hegel's philosophy enables us to attain this realization; but it could not have come before, in some other philosophical medium. The entire historical journey has been necessary: Geist's self realization could not have come about without its full development from potentiality (Concept) to actuality (Idea); and this development involves the natural and social history; particularly, emergence of modern society, emergence of the principle of individuality and of the prospects of solidarity among self interested individuals.

These three are important because, for Hegel, Geist as Concept goes through 1) undifferentiated unity, 2) differentiation, and finally, 3) differentiated unity. And the stages of historical development of man through unity, division, and complex unity are just the embodied forms of the Concepts's development into Idea.

III. Hegel's central idea is that the world is posited by the Cosmic Spirit (Geist) as its expression. From this several things follow, or, rather, this entails several things:

a). Undifferentiated existence is pure existence and pure existence is identical with nothingness.

b). To exist is to be something, to be determinate. Hegel quotes Goethe to the effect that whoever [whatever] wants to
become 'great' must concentrate his energies on being something specific.  

(c). Geist exists only by embodying itself [in the external world, in human institutions and practices].

(d). The world is the statement of Geist and it is rich and diverse because it expresses the richness of Geist;

(e). Geist is the self-differentiating Concept.

(f). Geist must be seen as both differentiation and unity. The thinking typical of Understanding separates aspects of an entity from one another but cannot see them as also related.

g). The Greeks were immediately one with their community, their State. The modern individual is related to the State indirectly through various dimensions of the State.

(h). The family, Civil Society, and the State in the modern society express (1) unity based on feelings, (2) the principle of individuality, and (3) universal interests respectively. (Similar point is made by Hegel about the three classes of Civil Society). Thus the modern society is differentiated internally to express Geist in its fullness because Geist is an articulated whole.

(i). Hegel assigned different 'conceptual spaces' to the economic and the political, that is, to the realm of particularity and that of universality; they were not supposed to be entirely autonomous but to have a 'living bearing' on one another.

IV. In his essay on the relation between economics and
politics in Hegel, W. ver Eecke says:

"The thesis I want to defend is that some of the most valuable insights of Hegel can be reduced to Hegel's stubborn realism expressed in the insight that the universal must be represented by a particular and that a particular does not cease to be a particular by the mere fact of assuming a role which is related to the universal".

The universal and the particular are neither utterly opposed to each other nor are they immediately identical with each other. Contrary to Rousseau on the one hand and Liberalism on the other, the universal and the particular must be seen as related to each other, as expressing each other, through various institutions and structures, in an essentially indirect and complex way. Eecke points out three patterns of such a relationship in Hegel:

a). The particular representing the universal:
The universality of the universal is dispersed. The State, for Hegel, is a set of several institutions, agencies and persons: the monarch, the civil servants, the legislature, the public authorities (Police), etc., and he restricts the functioning of each to a specified sphere (e.g. separation of powers, guaranteed domain of the market, etc.).

b). The universal made available to the particular:
The universal can be reached in degrees, and the economy is seen by Hegel as providing various levels of universality to an individual. (i) Through work, the skills exercised, and the product, the individual attains objectivity. (ii) By
working in the system of needs, the individual’s labour becomes part of an anonymous, impersonal (hence universal) system in which the totality of work to which everyone contributes satisfies the totality of needs in the society.

(iii) Moderate universality thought the membership of a Corporation.

c). The universal imposed on the particular:

(i) Protection of individuals’ legitimate interests in contracts, in their property etc., through the system of justice; safeguarding the economic rights.

(ii) ‘Police’ or public authority’s functions: fixing prices of essential goods; public control of industries whose stability is crucial for public welfare; controlling education through public funds; creating public charitable institutions like hospitals and orphanages; creating jobs to alleviate unemployment and poverty.

Equipped with his account of the complex relationship between the economy and the State and his characterization of the institutions of Civil Society, Hegel is able to propose his well known idea of the State as ethical community. The word used by Hegel is Sittlichkeit, which can be literally translated as substantive ethical community. Knox and Pelczynski have provided the invaluable clarification that Hegel distinguishes the State (properly so-called) from the ‘strictly political State’. The latter comprises of the usual structures of the legislature, the
executive, etc., whereas the State proper is the entire society, organized politically, and expressing, through its structures, ethical life. Family, Civil Society, and the political State are aspects of that ethical life (Sittlichkeit).

Hegel's thinking on the economy - State relationship has two parts: Civil Society as system of needs expresses, in a full blooded way, the principle of individualism; but it also has within it forces counteracting excesses of that principle. If we decide to call these the forces of intermediate universality, then forces of higher universality are represented by the legislative assembly and the monarch. But the other part is Hegel's discussion of Sittlichkeit. The State (as we ordinarily understand it), the economy, and the family - these three in their specific qualities and relationships compose the ethical community. The modern freedoms of the individual are restricted in this vision to one aspect or element of the ethical whole.

Hegel has thus sought to achieve a synthesis of the pre-modern idea of the society as part of a larger cosmic order and the modern stress on individual's rights. In achieving their blend, however, Hegel transforms both: the cosmic order is not just pre-given; it is rational, comprehensible and its completion as a rational order critically depends upon it being so recognized by men. Secondly, the modern privileging of the individual's rights
is deflected by making the society the source of these rights. Modern society completes the cosmic rational order; but its emergence and its development are achievements, they are not just givens. And if individual's freedoms are seen as 'contingent' upon a historically evolved community, then this is a strikingly different position from Liberalism; because Liberalism makes individual's rights flow, in a necessary manner, from a source beyond history and beyond a given community, or, society.

Thus Hegel seems to have found a way out of his initial ambivalence about the modern society: This society regards individuals as self-defining beings; there is something very precious in this principle; but it also generates self-weakening tendencies. Hegel manages, apparently, to remove the inadequacies, the one-sidedness of modernity, providing a perspective within which to view it. Individual's freedom is socially and ethically sustainable only if, ultimately, the individual recognizes the conditions of its possibility. And these conditions are a whole complex of not only institutions and rules, but also a range of ways of being and a variety of obligations and ties of different kinds within which the individual moves and within which alone his temporary shedding of the 'encumbrances' makes sense.
ORGANISATIONAL DIAGRAM OF HEGEL'S STATE

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Realphilosophie I and II. Also relevant here are Hegel’s Early Theological Writings and his Essay on Ethics. All these writings belong to the period before the publication of Phenomenology of Mind in 1807.


5. Knox, n.2. paragraph 189.

6. The following account, based on Hegel’s early writings, is taken from Shlomo Avineri, Hegel’s Theory of the Modern State (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1974), Chapter 5.

7. Ibid., p.93.

8. Ibid., p.96.

9. Ibid., p.97.


17. Insoluble because charity destroys the self respect of the recipients and in the perspective of Nineteenth century economics, creation of jobs can only lead to overproduction.

18. Knox, n.2, paragraph 244 (Addition).


23. Kolb, n. 21, p. 35.
25. Ibid., p. 219.
26. Hegel had read Ferguson and other economists during 1794-1804, ibid., p. 192.
27. Ibid., p. 249.
29. Hegel, Early Theological Writings, cited in ibid., p. 46.
30. Hegel, Early Theological Writings, cited in ibid., p. 46.
31. Hegel, Early Theological Writings, cited in ibid., p. 46.
32. Smith, n. 28, p. 47.
34. Locke's position is half-empiricist, half-rational. See Smith, n. 28, pp. 65-70.
38. Hegel, Realphilosophie I, cited in Avineri, n. 6, p. 95.
40. Knox, n. 2, paragraph 194 (Remark).
42. Hegel, Natural Law, cited in Dickey, n. 24, p. 248.
44. Dickey, n. 24, p. 249.
45. Rousseau, *Discourse on Political Economy*, cited in
Dickey, n.24, p.249.

46. As a socio-economic category, the word 'bourgeois' has been in use since the late Eleventh century. This usage coincides with the flourishing of commerce and growth of towns. Hence it was used to refer to the domiciled section of population in the town, in which merchants, engaged in long distance trade, were predominant right form the beginning; they were also the leaders in the towns' struggles for local autonomy from the Eleventh century. Another important meaning of 'bourgeois' was 'those not obliged to/not engaged in manual work'. Though the sense of 'bourgeois' as 'ordinary', 'without any feudal distinction', 'lacking in cultivated tastes', etc., is pejorative, it does reflect one dimension. The earlier towns were more communitarian in nature and their internal politics was more participatory. But wherever in Europe distinctions between the wealthy and the ordinary emerged from Thirteenth century the communitarian character declined. The royal patronage that commerce enjoyed during the period of Absolutism further accentuated these differences.

This is the historical background of the ambivalence of the term 'Bürger'. The philosophical context of the difference between the German, Hegelian, ambivalent usage of 'Bürger' and the French, Rousseauvion, apolitical usage of 'bourgeois' will be discussed in Chapter 5.


51. Knox, n.2, paragraph 255 (Remark).
52. G. Heiman 'The sources and significance of Hegel's corporate doctrine' in Pelczynski, n.33, p.133.
53. Ibid., p.121.
55. Knox, n.2, paragraph 253 (Remark).
60. Knox, n.2, paragraph 290.
62. Smith, n.28, p.142.
63. Heiman, n.52, p.131.
64. Knox, n.2, paragraph 253 (Remark).
69. Ibid., p.257.
70. Knox, n.2, paragraph 192, 194.
71. Taylor, Hegel, n.14, p.86.
72. Walton, n.68, p.258.
73. Knox, n.2, paragraph 45 (Remark).
74. Knox, n.2, paragraph 65.
75. Knox, n.2, paragraph 52 (Remark).
76. Seyla Benhabib 'Obligation, contract and exchange: on the significance of Hegel's abstract right' in Pelczynski, The State and Civil Society, n.68, pp.159-77.
77. Benhabib, n.76, p.162.
78. Benhabib, n.76, pp.171-72.
79. For the following account of Hegel's philosophy I have used Knox, n.2; Taylor, n.14; Hegel's Preface to his Phenomenology of Mind, n.66; and J.N. Findlay, Hegel: A Reexamination (London, Oxford University Press, 1976) esp. Introduction.
82. This is the opening argument of Hegel's Science of Logic. See Taylor, n.14, chapter 10, especially pp.232-33.
83. Knox, n.2, paragraph 13 (Addition); Taylor n.14, p.432.
84. For the idea of the world as a necessary embodiment of Geist, see Taylor, n.14, ch.3.
86. Knox, n.2, paragraph 7; Translator's Note 4, p.348; Translator's Note 1, p.319; paragraph 34 (Addition); p. ix.
89. W. Ver Eecke 'Relation between Economics and Politics in Hegel' in D.P. Verene Hegel's Social and Political Thought, n. 47, p.91.
90. Eecke, n.89, pp.97-100.
92. I owe these points to Taylor, Hegel, n.14, pp. 374-377.
93. Here I have in mind Michael Sandel's account of deontological liberalism's view of man. See Sandel, n.20.