HEGEL AND KIERKEGAARD
ON THE RELATION BETWEEN TRUTH, SELFHOOD AND AUTHORSHIP

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ABSTRACT

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Durmuş, Sevde
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The primary purpose of this study is to read Hegel and Kierkegaard together by focusing on the relation of the themes of truth, selfhood and authorship. Starting with the exposition of Kierkegaard's idea of "truth as subjectivity," I will show how his understanding of truth is revealed throughout the journey of becoming a true self. Later, I will inquire Hegel's understanding of truth by addressing a Kierkegaardian question regarding the place of selfhood in the search of truth. This question will direct me to a detailed reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* where consciousness' journey to the way of truth is presented. In order to show that these two philosophers have different philosophical standpoints, although they have similar focuses, I will explain their interpretations of the "Fall from Eden." This will clarify their ideas on the subject of philosophy and the becoming of the self as either "necessity" or "possibility." Finally, I will discuss the meaning of such stories as a way of communication about truth in their philosophies. Then, I will argue their authorship as well as their way of communication with the reader. I will state that both philosophers invite their reader to be included in the journey of becoming a true self. In this sense, the reader can also become a part of the

philosophical dialogue in which the reader can act for the realization of its true selfhood by contemplating on its own way of existing.

Keywords: Hegel, Kierkegaard, truth, selfhood, authorship

ÖZ

HAKİKAT, KENDİLİK VE YAZARLIK İLİŞKİSİNDE
HEGEL VE KIERKEGAARD

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Bu çalışmanın başlıca amacı, hakikat, kendilik ve yazarlık temalarının ilişkisi odağında Hegel'i ve Kierkegaard'ı birlikte okumaktır. "Öznellik olarak hakikat" fikrinin anlatımıyla başlayarak Kierkegaard'ın hakikat anlayışının, hakiki bir kendi oluş serüveninde açıldığı gösterilecektir. Sonra, Kierkegaard perspektifinden bir soru olan hakikat arayışında kendiliğin yeri dikkate alınarak Hegel'in hakikat fikri araştırılacaktır. Bu soru, bilincin hakikate doğru olan serüveninin sunulduğu *Tinin Görüngübilim'*inin detaylı bir okumasını gerektirecektir. İki filozofun farklı bakış açılarına sahip olmalarına rağmen benzer odaklarının olduğunu gösterebilmek için "Cennetten Kovulma"ya dair yorumlamaları açıklanacaktır. Bu, felsefenin öznesi ve "zorunluluk" ya da "olanak" olarak kendi olmak meselelerine dair de fikirlerinin açıklığa kavuşturulmasını mümkün kılacaktır. Son olarak, Kierkegaard'ın felsefesinde ve Hegel'in *Görüngübilimi*'nde, böylesi hikayelerin, hakikate dair bir iletişim biçimi olması bakımından anlamı tartışılacaktır. Böylece, iki düşünürün yazarlıkları ve okurla kurdukları iletişim biçimi gündeme getirilecektir. Bu iletişimin açıklanmasıyla iki düşünürün de okuru, hakiki bir kendi olma serüvenine davet ettikleri ifade edilecektir. Bu anlamda, okur da felsefi diyalogun bir parçası

olabilir ve kendi varoluş biçimini mesele ederek hakikatini gerçekleştirmek üzere harekete geçebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hegel, Kierkegaard, hakikat, kendilik, yazarlık

To my sister, Simge.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Heraclitus of Ephesus said once that "men who love wisdom must be good inquirers into many things indeed."[1] Many years later in 19th Century, a philosopher became the Heraclitus of his time and sought wisdom in many things. As one of the greatest inquirers in the entire history of philosophy, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel searched for truth even in errors. He discovered truth not in somewhere beyond but in our very own errors and frustrations. His wisdom was not grounded in the idea of keeping truth isolated from falsehood. Instead, truth and falsity are intertwined, and taking the risk of falling into error is the half-way truth.

Hegel's philosophy has had enormous influence not only during his own lifetime but on the entire subsequent philosophical traditions that have arisen since. For philosophers who have either followed his footsteps or tried to find another path, Hegel is an inescapable reference point. In Hegel's absolute system, different philosophical standpoints become different phases that necessarily overcome themselves through their mediation by the other. It is true that each standpoint has an importance of its own, but they are never essential on their own, that is, as separated from the whole. Moreover, Hegel also offers a great chance for many philosophers. As being one of the most inspirational philosophers, Hegel transformed not only the understanding of truth but also the approach to philosophical inquiry. With the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel invited us to face our own erroneous standpoints and to be able to transform them. Even an opposer

[1] Heraclitus, "The Fragments," in *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: An Edition of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary*, Charles H. Kahn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 33.

who tries to go beyond Hegel's system could get inspired by many aspects of his works.

One of the most important philosophers who sought to go beyond the Hegelian system was Søren Kierkegaard, whose relation to Hegel has mostly been understood as oppositionary. Although their understandings of truth and selfhood are different from each other, the meaning of truth reveals itself through the act of the self in their philosophies. For both Hegel and Kierkegaard, while the self becomes aware of its own essentiality in its own process of becoming, we simultaneously come closer to truth.

Kierkegaard's main criticism towards Hegel is centred on the dissolution of the independence of the otherness in the system. While doing so, Kierkegaard also changes the subject of philosophy. For him, without problematizing the questioner's own existence, philosophy cannot deal with the essential truth. The existing individual is the one who seeks truth, and to exclude it from the meaning of truth would be a mistake. By shifting the attention from a universal self to an individual one, Kierkegaard does not only present his own philosophy but also opens the door slightly for Existential Philosophy, which deals with questions directed at the existing subject. It is true that most of his ideas include crucial criticisms of Hegel's philosophy while at the same time being inspired by Hegel even more than he often accepted. Although in Hegel's and Kierkegaard's philosophies we find different meanings for truth and different definitions of self, their approaches to philosophical questions are parallel to each other.

In this thesis, my purpose is to read Kierkegaard and Hegel together within the context of the exposition of truth throughout the journey of becoming a true self. This reading will lead to a discussion regarding their authorship and their relation to the reader. As has been stated, although Hegel and Kierkegaard have different understandings of truth and selfhood, we can inspect common threads in the ways in which they expose their ideas. With regard to this, it is crucial to determine their approach towards thinking as philosophers and their styles of writing as authors. The main aim of my thesis is to illustrate the importance of selfhood in the inquiry

of truth for both Hegel and Kierkegaard and the interconnection between their approaches' towards truth and authorship. Bringing Hegel and Kierkegaard together in relation to these themes presents a chance to situate the place of the self in philosophical inquiry. Rather than solving Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel by placing him as either a defender or an opposer of Hegel, I find it much more crucial to expose their answers and positions to the same questions by focusing on their different styles of philosophizing. By doing so, we can go beyond a mere comparison between Hegel and Kierkegaard in order to deepen the role of the subject in philosophy which cannot exclude authors and readers. In general, my main focus is bringing Hegel and Kierkegaard together by presenting a thematic reading which problematizes the relation between truth, selfhood and authorship in their philosophies.

In order to realize my aim, I shall start with the exposition of Kierkegaard's and Hegel's ideas on the meaning of truth in relation to becoming a true self. First, in the second chapter, I will start with Kierkegaard's approach to the meaning of truth in relation to the existence of the individual self. The main reason why I start with Kierkegaard's idea of truth instead of Hegel is that I try to ask a Kierkegaardian question to Hegel's philosophy, i.e., the question of the place of selfhood in philosophical truth. In this regard, starting with Kierkegaard will allow me to shape this question and determine the scope of my reading of Hegel.

In the second chapter, I will first start with Kierkegaard's idea of "subjective reflection," which includes not only the inquiry of truth but also the relation of the existing inquirer to such truth. Accordingly, in subjective reflection, the questioner of truth becomes an essential part of truth itself.

Later, in the same chapter, I will continue with Kierkegaard's idea of "the stages of existence" in order to clarify the link between the truth and the self. Each stage of existence is independent from each other, and the passage from one to the other does not arise from necessity but from the way in which the individual encounters with itself and its way of existing. In each stage of existence, the individual separates itself from its other and problematizes its existence in relation to this

otherness. In this relation, the individual eventually finds itself in an existential dilemma arisen exactly from its way of existing. Facing with its own frustration and suffering caused by this confrontation, a moment of choice arises for the individual: the choice of either staying in the current stage and living in this suffering or taking a "leap" to a higher one which would also mean to leave the previous stage behind. In this regard, the individual chooses its own self by undertaking the moment of choice in an either/or situation. Instead of a relief in arriving at the unity between self and other, Kierkegaard narrates that the individual can only become a true self in an authentic relation to the otherness. By detailing each stage of existence, I will explore how the possibility of becoming a true self opens from the individual's act of choice and of commitment to that choice. The exposition of the stages of existence is a chance to present Kierkegaard's idea of "truth as subjectivity" through a subjective reflection which focuses on the existing individual's inward relation to truth.

In the third chapter of my thesis, I will concentrate on Hegel's understanding of truth by presenting the process of consciousness in coming to know itself, which eventually is finalized by arriving at "Absolute Knowing" in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*[2]. First of all, I will start by explaining the place of the *Phenomenology* in Hegel's philosophy and the method he used in the work. For Hegel, in order to speak from a philosophical standpoint, there is a long path we should take. The *Phenomenology* is this path, which presents the consciousness' overcoming of its own alienations that arise from its one-sided and limited way of thinking of its object.

Secondly, I will explicate consciousness' development from "self-consciousness" to "absolute knowing." The reason why I start with "self-consciousness" is that in this moment, consciousness' concern becomes its own self instead of its object. Throughout this process, consciousness seeks to assert its own independence by being recognized by another consciousness. However, without mutual recognition, the independence of consciousness remains an abstraction. In the entire journey of

[2] Hereafter *Phenomenology*.

consciousness, it tries to assert itself in different shapes; however, without constituting the unity with itself and the other, consciousness finds no rest at all. In each phase of it, consciousness seeks truth by separating itself from the other. This other becomes another self-consciousness, nature, society, God, and above all, its own self. By detailing the journey of the consciousness in the *Phenomenology*, I will try to present how consciousness comes closer to the truth by confronting with its own failures in different shapes caused by understanding itself as separated from the world in general. In this regard, with *Phenomenology*, Hegel, as in Kierkegaard's narrative, explains the truth of the self by focusing on the journey of becoming oneself. However, *Phenomenology* also presents the dialectical movement that consciousness in each shape, necessarily comes to the point where it brings the opposites together by mediation, instead of choosing in an either/or situation. By detailing each moment of consciousness in the *Phenomenology*, I will explore Hegel's idea of truth. By doing so, I will also have a chance for the next chapter to deepen the implication of that Hegel and Kierkegaard understand truth quite differently, although they have similar approaches towards philosophy.

In the fourth chapter of my thesis, first, I will bring Hegel and Kierkegaard together by presenting their interpretations of a Christian doctrine, i.e., Original Sin. A detailed reading of their interpretations of The Fall from Eden will give a chance to inquire not only the essential role of the subject in philosophy, but also why such stories have a crucial place in the expression of truth. For both Hegel and Kierkegaard, the Fall represents the transformation of the self. However, while Kierkegaard understands this transformation as possibility, Hegel takes it as necessity. Additionally, the subject of this narrative is the individual self for Kierkegaard. Hegel, on the other hand, takes this subject as the universal self.

After presenting their interpretations of the Fall, I will continue with their authorships in the second part of this chapter. Although they have different philosophical standpoints, they both use religious doctrines, such as Incarnation and Original Sin, to give a place to stories and characters in their philosophies. While presenting their authorships, I will also discuss the position of the reader

who inevitably find herself in their writings. In this sense, both of them are in a dialogue with the reader. Accordingly, the reader becomes a part of the work, not only by reading it but also by acting upon it. Therefore, the way they posit themselves as authors carries a responsibility towards the reader. This is the responsibility of letting the reader to confront the true sense of becoming oneself.

In sum, in this endeavour, I will try to express the relation between truth and selfhood in Hegel's and Kierkegaard's philosophies. Later, I will explore their authorships which also enables to problematize the place of the reader in a philosophical dialogue. I find great importance in the expositions of two different paths towards truth presented by Hegel and Kierkegaard and of their authorships. I hope such thematic way of reading of Hegel and Kierkegaard would contribute to later discussions not only on the relation between Hegel and Kierkegaard but also on the importance of the themes like truth, selfhood and authorship in philosophy.

CHAPTER 2

KIERKEGAARD: TRUTH AS SUBJECTIVITY

"This above all: to thine own self be true."
-Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet*[3]

Having a crucial place in philosophy, truth has been investigated and determined in various ways throughout the entire history of philosophy. How philosophers relate themselves to the question of truth gives a key to understanding their philosophical approaches. Therefore when philosophers reference the question of truth, it is important to see the way in which they posit their philosophy.

In *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Johannes Climacus, the pseudonymous author of Søren Kierkegaard, reveals his idea of truth as one of the most essential ideas in his entire philosophy. His problematization of the question helps us to comprehend his philosophical approach by illustrating his position to the question. As Walter Kaufmann notes, Kierkegaard "tried to introduce the individual into our thinking as a category."[4] Accordingly, the individual's existence is emphasized, or in a strict sense, it becomes the focus of Kierkegaard's philosophy. For Kierkegaard, the individual's life cannot be separated from truth. In other words, while asking about the meaning of truth, Kierkegaard also asks what it means to be an individual. The inquiry on the relation between individuality and truth also necessitates the questioning of what exactly Kierkegaard means by Christianity and its being the essential truth. "Becoming a Christian" is the key to understanding Kierkegaard's main argument that truth is subjectivity. The question why we should pay attention to Kierkegaard's idea of becoming a Christian and to his

[3] William Shakespeare, *The Works of Shakespeare: The Tragedy of Hamlet*, ed. Edward Dowden (London: Methuen Publishing, 1899), 33.

[4] Walter Kaufmann, *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 16.

understanding of truth as subjectivity is the main concern of this chapter in general. This question will be inquired into by focusing on Kierkegaard's exposition of the stages of existence which presents us not only how he interprets the existence of an individual from a philosophical point of view but also the ways in which he expounds his idea of truth as subjectivity. However, before explaining all these points, it is crucial to understand his approach while seeking the truth. Hence, the first part of this chapter will give some details on what Kierkegaard offers on his path of seeking the truth.

2.1 Seeking the Truth through Subjective Reflection

For Kierkegaard, when the question of truth is the issue, the one who asks this question cannot be separated from the question itself. According to Climacus, the questioner is included in the question once it asks what truth means. Since "it is an existing spirit that poses the question,"[5] truth cannot be known objectively. What is meant can be clarified as follows:

> The path of objective reflection makes the subject accidental, and existence thereby into something indifferent, vanishing. Away from the subject, the path of reflection leads to the objective truth, and while the subject and his subjectivity become indifferent, the truth becomes that too, and just this is its objective validity; because interest, just like decision, is rooted in subjectivity. The path of objective reflection now leads to abstract thinking, to mathematics, to historical knowledge of various kinds, and always leads away from the subject, whose existence or non-existence becomes, and from the objective point of view quite rightly, infinitely indifferent…[6]

According to this, a knowing that does not relate to the existing subject turns out to be a mere abstraction which cannot grasp existence. However, this does not mean that Climacus denies objective knowledge, such as mathematics and historical knowledge. Rather, he objects to the way in which objective reflection cannot give an answer to the question about *the* truth and the meaning of existence, and what is more important remains indifferent to it.

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[5] Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to the Philosophical Crumbs*, trans. and ed. Alastair Hannay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 162.

[6] *Ibid*., 162-163.

Climacus shifts attention away from the question of "what" to the question of "how." To put it another way, what is important now is *how* the existing individual relates itself to the truth rather than what the nature of truth is. For Climacus, there is an essential relation between knowing and existing. This is why he emphasizes the idea that the existing individual is the one who asks for truth. This existing questioner relates itself to truth, and this being in relation to truth is what it focuses on. As has been said, although Climacus does not claim that there is no objective knowledge, he nevertheless states no objective knowledge is essential unless it concerns existence:

> All essential knowing concerns existence, or only such knowing as has an essential relation to existence is essential, is essential knowing. Knowing that does not concern existence, inwardly in the reflection of inwardness, is from an essential point of view accidental knowing, its degree and scope from an essential point of view indifferent.[7]

From this, the question arises as to what kinds of knowledge are related to existence, i.e., essential knowledge. Climacus' answer is that only ethical and ethico-religious knowing is essential[8] because only this knowing relates itself to the existing knower. For instance, trying to know God objectively is nothing but a mistake. As Merold Westphal puts it,

> Objectivity is purchased by abstracting from everything subjective—which is to say from just that first-person dimension of human life without which the ethical and religious become meaningless. This renders the objectivity that is available to us inappropriate when it comes to understanding ourselves ethically and religiously.[9]

Johannes Climacus notes that "for subjective reflection the truth becomes appropriation, inwardness, subjectivity, and the thing is precisely, in existing, to

[7] *Ibid*., 166.

[8] *Ibid*.

[9] Merold Westphal, *Becoming a Self: A Reading of Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1996), 115.

deepen oneself in subjectivity."[10] For Climacus, in seeking the truth, the examiner must give attention to its own way of relating to the question of truth. Accordingly, without inwardness, which "at its highest in an existing subject is passion,"[11] there will be no subjective reflection to the ethical and religious, and without this, there will be no truth relating to the essential knowledge. Jon Stewart rightfully notes that "ethical and religious truths have a necessary inward value."[12] Therefore, the question is how it could be possible to abstract the existing individual from the question of the essential truth if the religious truth cannot be thought without the individual's inward relation to God. Only with subjective reflection can this inwardness be embraced by the individual.

According to Climacus, there is an essential link between knowing and existing. Unlike subjective reflection, objective reflection cannot comprehend this link. This is because the existing individual becomes indifferent in objective reflection. Climacus defends the fact that the objective reflection leads to nothing but abstract thinking. In abstract thinking, the subject becomes insignificant. For Climacus, abstract thinking inevitably ends up with a contradiction:

> This path will lead maximally to a contradiction, and in so far as the subject fails to become wholly indifferent to himself, this only shows that his objective striving is not sufficiently objective. At its maximum this path will lead to the contradiction that only the objective has come about and that the subjective has been extinguished, that is to say, the existing subjectivity that has made an attempt to become what in the abstract sense is called subjectivity, the mere abstract form of the abstract objectivity. And yet, the objectivity which has thus come into being is at most, from the subjective point of view, either a hypothesis or an approximation, because all eternal decision lies in subjectivity.[13]

[10] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 161.

[11] *Ibid*., 167.

[12] Jon Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 264.

[13] *Ibid*., 163.

Since the knower is an existing individual, it would not be possible for it to get rid of its own existence completely. At that point, objective reflection contradicts itself. For Climacus, objectivity cannot be successful even in being objective. However, he reserves certain kinds of knowledge which are already formal. When the issue comes to knowing the essential knowledge, on the other hand, all objective reflection can do is to approximate to a kind of abstract subjectivity.

Climacus argues that the individual "has God by virtue not of any objective deliberation but of the infinite passion of inwardness."[14] Since, for Climacus, subjectivity is inwardness, the individual can be in a relationship with God by choosing subjective reflection. From the perspective of objectivity, there is no infinite striving of faith. On the contrary, there are definite, universal categories of thought that ask what truth means. On the other hand, the subjective question deals with the question of "how," that is, the manner of existence. For instance, how the single existing individual relates to God is the question of subjective reflection, but not what the determinations of God actually are.

The individual who chooses the path of subjective reflection knows that it also chooses the objective uncertainty and embraces it. For Climacus, this exactly means faith. Faith is this risk that the individual freely commits.

> Faith is just this, the contradiction between the infinite passion of inwardness and objective uncertainty. If I can grasp God objectively, then I do not have faith, but just because I cannot do this, I must have faith. If I wish to stay in my faith, I must take constant care to keep hold of the objective uncertainty, to be 'on the 70,000 fathoms deep' but still have faith.[15]

Faith is a paradox that cannot be grasped by reason. God stands as an absolute otherness, and for Climacus, human reason is limited and can never know this absolute difference. Stewart explains this paradox as a tension between reason and God. Accordingly, reason cannot know this transcendence. Rather, the individual

[14] *Ibid*., 168.

[15] *Ibid*., 171-172.

can only believe it.[16] To state it more clearly, reason, which has been limited only to what is given, cannot know anything beyond this givenness. Therefore, God stands as an ultimate unknowable. Reason can never break this limit and reach out to God through thinking. There is this essential difference between the one who has a passion to know and the one who is unknowable. What Kierkegaard suggests, then, is the acceptance of not being able to know God through reasoning, that is, the acceptance of God through having faith. By illustrating the difference between knowledge and faith, Kierkegaard actually criticizes philosophers who try to solve the paradoxical relationship between God and human beings by using concepts which work only for the world we live in. Although Kierkegaard uses the term paradox with different meanings, the idea here is that human beings, through their own capacity, cannot know God because human beings and God are absolutely different from each other. However, because of the idea that human beings have the passion to know everything without any limitation, they continue to desire to know the unknowable. In *Philosophical Fragments of a Fragment of Philosophy*, Johannes Climacus describes paradox as follows:

> The paradoxical passion of the Reason…comes repeatedly into collision with this Unknown, which does indeed exist, but is unknown, and in so far does not exist. The reason cannot advance beyond this point, and yet it cannot refrain in its paradoxicalness from arriving at this limit and occupying itself therewith. It will not serve to dismiss its relation to it simply by asserting that the Unknown does not exist, since this itself involves a relationship. But what then is the Unknown, since the designation of it as the God merely signifies for us that it is unknown? To say that it is the Unknown because it cannot be known, and even if it were capable of being known, it could not be expressed, does not satisfy the demands of passion, though it correctly interprets the Unknown as a limit; but a limit is precisely a torment for passion, though it also serves as an incitement…[17]

This passion for the reason to transcend its limits is an endless torment because it can never be realized. Therefore, the individual who chooses the path of objective reflection to grasp the relationship between its own self and God is doomed to fail.

[16] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 339.

[17] Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments/Johannes Climacus*, trans. and ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 55.

Only by choosing the passion of faith and subjective reflection does the individual also choose to commit objective uncertainty and risk. The individual should dare to choose faith and embrace this uncertainty and the insurmountability of this transcendence. In a way, it would mean giving up the idea that God is an object of knowing, which amounts to admitting that it can only be the object of faith. The individual who chooses the objective uncertainty also chooses to be at risk constantly. This is because having faith in this objective uncertainty is the embracement of being alone in the individual's own inwardness and of the paradoxical relationship between itself and God. Once the individual accepts all of these, it also defies its own reason. In other words, it abandons the path of objective reflection that presents nothing but deceptive comfort by means of subjective reflection. Therefore, by presenting subjective reflection as the only way to relate to God, Climacus invites the reader to be honest enough to recognize that faith is beyond reason. The individual should abide by this paradoxical nature of the relationship between the self and the divine other.

C. Stephen Evans debates whether faith is against reason or not. His answer is important to understanding Climacus' point of view in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*.

> If one thinks of reason as a timeless, godlike faculty, Kierkegaard's answer is that faith is not against reason in this sense, because reason in this sense does not exist. It is a myth. If one thinks of reason as simply thinking in accordance with the laws of logic, faith is not necessarily against reason either. But if one thinks of reason as the concrete thinking of human beings, shaped as it is by our basic beliefs and attitudes, then there is a tension between reason and faith… [18]

According to this argument, the essential point is that the individual should be conscious of the fact that faith cannot be comprehended by mere thought. For there is to be no contradiction between faith and reason; the knower must accept the limits of reason. The paradoxical relation between the existing individual and the divine being is not a contradiction that can be solved by the principles of logic. Put

[18] Stephen C. Evans, *Kierkegaard on Faith and the Self: Collected Essays* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 131.

differently, reason cannot be the source or the savior of religion. It cannot resolve the paradox of faith and turn it into an objective certainty. On the contrary, the individual commits to this paradox and accepts that reason cannot help it in its endless striving. Here, Kierkegaard essentially targets philosophers who defend the rationality of faith and believe that God is knowable through speculative thinking. Therefore, the criticism is essentially against the ones who defend the idea that the otherness of the unknowable can be resolved through reason.

Climacus repeats his idea that objective reflection can only be an approximation. For objective reflection, there cannot be any essential truth. Subjectively, on the other hand, truth is inwardness "because the decision of truth is in subjectivity."[19] Christianity, in its true essence, is this inwardness that no speculative philosophy can explain. It should be remembered that Christianity represents the absolute paradox. Climacus notes that "subjectivity culminates in passion, Christianity is the paradox, paradox and passion are quite in accord."[20] Speculative philosophy is an inappropriate approach for grasping this paradox. The task of Climacus is to show this impossibility and to present subjective reflection as the only way to be a true Christian.

Stewart explains how speculative philosophy fails to grasp Christianity in its trial to define the nature of faith as follows:

> Speculative philosophy tries to explain the paradox of Christianity…But by explaining the paradox, speculative philosophy destroys the possibility of faith that requires paradox, uncertainty, and the absurd as its object. If the paradox is explained objectively by speculative philosophy, then it ceases to be an object of faith and becomes the object of scientific knowledge. When the objective thinker tries to base his faith upon this explanation, he misunderstands the nature of Christianity. By explaining the paradox, he destroys the very nature of faith.[21]

[19] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 183.

[20] *Ibid*., 193.

[21] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 471.

The individual who seeks to analyze faith will not only fail to understand it but also will fail to understand its own selfhood. Climacus defends that "If one had forgotten what it is to exist religiously, no doubt one had also forgotten what it is to exist humanly."[22] Accordingly, the individual should give attention to the question of how it relates to truth rather than the question of what the truth is. Only in this way does the individual not move away from religious truth and its own existence. Neither Christianity nor selfhood can be grasped speculatively because speculation is not concerned with asking how one relates to truth. At that point, there remains the subjective approach in which one accepts this mysterious nature of paradox and realizes that it is not the object of knowledge but of faith.

In the light of these given expositions, it can be said that Kierkegaard invites his reader to choose the path of subjectivity. This is because only through a subjective approach can the individual realize its own existence. Any truth claim that dismisses the existing individual from truth is destined to fail in knowing the essential truth. As an author, Kierkegaard's task is to remind his reader that essential truth necessitates a unique relation, i.e. a relation that can only be explained subjectively. The crucial task of *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* is to present subjectivity as the only way to relate to the essential truth and to warn the reader that through a speculative philosophy the reader will remain empty handed in her desire to know the nature of faith and selfhood. Truth can only be known subjectively since truth is subjectivity. It is the existing individual's relation to the absolute difference in which it does not conquer or master truth but instead commits itself to the unknown.

After introducing Kierkegaard's position as one who defends the idea of truth as subjectivity and his path of seeking this truth through subjective reflection, it is now possible to continue with his understanding of the three basic stages of existence: the aesthetic stage, the ethical stage and the religious stage of existence. Through these stages, Kierkegaard presents the journey of becoming a true self. It

[22] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 209.

is crucial at this point to comprehend the importance of the term "becoming" because what Kierkegaard is offering is not the ground of being a true self or a way to grasp the essential truth. Rather, he invites his reader to problematize the meaning of existing as an individual through subjective reflection. Therefore, it has to be kept in mind that Kierkegaard does not present any systematic or direct reading. On the contrary, he introduces the existence of the individual as a non-systematic becoming through its own choices that cannot be grounded from a speculative point of view but only through subjective reflection. Since subjective reflection asks how the individual realizes its own true self instead of securing the answer of what the essential truth is, it would be reasonable to continue with Kierkegaard's expositions on the stages of existence. In this way, the realization of selfhood through its relation to the essential truth can become clearer.

2.2 The Stages of Existence

For Kierkegaard, the passage from one stage to the other is not an issue of necessity. Instead, the individual chooses it freely. In the stages of existence, Westphal sees a double claim in "that the journey is grounded in human nature and that its goal is simultaneously the discovery and realization of one's true self…Neither developmentally nor conceptually is there any necessity to the movement from one stage to the next."[23] In this manner, for the realization of selfhood, the individual will choose to make the transition to the next stage. Mark C. Taylor rightfully explains this transition from one stage to the next one as "the movement from spiritlessness to spirit."[24] According to this framing, the individual is also free to stay in the spiritless stage. However, this would mean that the free individual takes the responsibility of its own selfhood represented in the stage that the individual is in at that moment. Stephen N. Dunning explains how the

[23] Westphal, *Becoming a Self: A Reading of Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 21.

[24] Mark C. Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood: Hegel and Kierkegaard* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 230.

individual's act of relating itself to the world in each stage is connected with freedom as follows:

> freedom is described as passing through three stages: one in which it is merely pleasure and is initially unaware of the alien power of repetition; a second in which freedom is shrewdness, consciously and reflectively engaging with repetition as its opponent; and a third in which "freedom breaks forth in its highest form, in which it is defined in relation to itself."[25]

Thus, just like the individual gains its selfhood through the movement from one stage to the next, the individual also become freer when it enters into a higher sphere of existence. This self-realization of the individual does not depend on anything external to the individual but is solely in its own hands.

As Regis Jolivet claims, each stage is "an independent sphere of life, a definitive, isolated state."[26] Given this, we should inquire into the characteristics that determine each stage as different from the others. Recall that the following stage is not the development of the earlier one, but it is actually a new form of life. This means that there is no continuation between stages; on the contrary, there happens to be a kind of break when the individual decides to move on to the next stage. Kierkegaard calls this discontinuity a "leap," which is to be examined later. Moreover, all individuals are either in one stage or another. It is not possible to be in two or more simultaneously. Before giving a detailed account of the stages of existence, quoting one of Kierkegaard's famous accounts on the stages can help us to see how each of them has a unique feature:

> The esthetic sphere is the sphere of immediacy, the ethical the sphere of requirement (and this requirement is so infinite that the individual always goes bankrupt), the religious the sphere of fulfillment, but, please note, not a fulfillment such as when one fills an alms box or a sack with gold, for repentance has specifically created a boundless space, and as a

[25] Stephen N. Dunning, "The Dialectic of Contradiction in Kierkegaard's Aesthetic Stage," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 49, no. 3 (1981): 385.

[26] Regis Jolivet, *Introduction to Kierkegaard*, trans. W. H. Barber (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1946), 113.

> consequence the religious contradiction: simultaneously to be out on 70,000 fathoms of water and yet be joyful.[27]

In each stage of existence, there is always the individual's act of separating itself from an other and its experience of how it posits itself in relation to this other. Through a detailed inquiry of each stage, the individual's act of separating itself from an other will be clarified.

2.2.1 The Aesthetic Stage of Existence

The aesthetic individual is characterized as the one who lacks any genuine decision. Instead of any commitment, the aesthete identifies itself immediately with the world that surrounds it. At this stage, not being aware of its own individuality, the aesthete is nothing but a part of the crowd. In other words, in the aesthetic stage, the individual that does not differentiate itself from others, and thereby cannot even recognize its unique individuality. "The aesthetician," says Merigala Gabriel, "knows only the instant; he lives in things."[28] Such an individual, then, does not choose, but is ruled by its own natural desires. The aesthetic stage is the initial one where the individual does not even know its concrete particularity. Then, this initial stage, as James Collins notes, "signifies a man's immediate attachment to life."[29] The aesthetic individual lives sensuously. More directly, the aesthetic stage is identified with the individual's passion and feeling.

Harry S. Broudy states that the aesthetic life "is the viewpoint of Eudaemonism, which embraces a wide variety of pleasure theories."[30] Broudy is right to defend the notion that the main characteristic of the aesthetic individual is its seeking

[27] Kierkegaard, *Stages on Life's Way*, 476-477.

[28] Merigala Gabriel, *Subjectivity and Religious Truth in the Philosophy of Søren Kierkegaard* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2010), 19.

[29] James Collins, "Faith and Reflection in Kierkegaard," *The Journal of Religion* 37, no. 1 (1957): 11.

[30] Harry S. Broudy, "Kierkegaard's Levels of Existence," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1, no. 3 (1941): 295.

pleasure, but it may not be correct to see this as Kierkegaard's analysis of pleasure theories. Rather than being a collection of theories, it is an analysis of a specific way of existing. In this regard, seeing the stages of existence in general as theories of life would be a misunderstanding. What Kierkegaard does with the stages of existence is to interpret the journey of the self from untruth to the essential truth.

Although the general structure of the aesthetic stage has been given, there are different moments in the stage that need explanation. The moments in the aesthetic stage can be organized according to the individual's immediacy. This is a reasonable viewpoint to follow since the aesthetic stage is determined according to the immediate sensuousness of the individual. "A," the pseudonymous author of *Either/Or, Part I*, explains "the immediate-erotic stages" by using an indirect language. The content of the immediacy in this stage is desire, and the moment is determined according to the individual's manner of desiring. "A" indirectly categorizes the three moments in the aesthetic stage by using Mozart's operatic characters that correspond to these moments. Although "A" calls them "stages," he explains how the reader must consider the term "stage" as follows:

> Moreover, when I use the term "stage" as I did and continue to do, it must not be taken to mean that each stage exists independently, the one outside the other. I could perhaps more appropriately use the word "metamorphosis." The different stages collectively make up the immediate stage, and from this it will be seen that the specific stages are more a disclosure of a predicate in such a way that all the predicates plunge down in the richness of the last stage, since this is the stage proper. The other stages have no independent existence; by themselves they are only for representation, and from that we also see their fortuitousness in relation to the last stage. But since they have found a separate expression in Mozart's music, I shall discuss them separately. But, above all, they must not be thought of as persons on different levels with respect to consciousness, since even the last stage has not yet attained consciousness; at all times I am dealing only with the immediate in its total immediacy.[31]

As "A" himself admits, the term "stage" is not really appropriate for these three moments. For this, I prefer to continue with "moments of immediacy." Still, these three moments are to be explained separately for clarification, just as "A" does.

[31] Søren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part I*, trans. and ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 74.

The Page in *Figaro* is the figure that represents the first moment of immediacy. For "A," the Page is a "mythical figure" in whom "the sensuous awakens, yet not to motion but to a still quiescence, not to delight and joy but to deep melancholy. As yet desire is not awake."[32] Taylor clarifies this first moment of immediacy by stating that the individual that desires and the object that is desired are not yet separated from each other.[33] Self and the other are not differentiated in this primal moment. Taylor explains this as "the undifferentiated oneness."[34] According to the figure given by "A" the Page is not even aware of its desire, and because of that it cannot posit himself as the one who desires. The Page's desire, then, "remains simple, passive, undeveloped, and unable to relate its own inner energy to anything 'other'."[35] Because of that, the desire is not qualified as desire; "A" does not see a movement in this moment. According to this, the Page's unawareness of its desire also means it being unaware of the desired object; consequently, it is not able to distinguish itself from the object. Thus, in the first moment of immediacy, the desire and the desired are in a unity, and because of this the self and the other are not differentiated yet.

"A" uses Papageno in *The Magic Flute* as the figure of the second moment. Only in this moment of immediacy when desire awakens do the object and the subject become two different things.[36] Only in desiring, then, are the self and the other posited as separate from each other. Taylor explains desire's awakening as "the original bifurcation of the self and the other."[37] Behind this, there is "A's" idea that

[32] *Ibid*., 75.

[33] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 233.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] Dunning, "The Dialectic of Contradiction in Kierkegaard's Aesthetic Stage," 388.

[36] *Ibid*.

[37] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 233.

"only when there is an object is there desire; only when there is desire is there an object. The desire and the object are twins."[38] However, in this moment of desire's awakening, the desired object is not a specific one but a manifold of objects. "In Papageno," says "A," "desire aims at discoveries."[39] Although desire is now awakened in this moment, it does not really mean to desire. It rather means desiring to desire, Papageno desires to discover. For "A," Papageno is after "the adventure of a journey of discovery."[40] This means that not even in the second moment does desire mean desire.

Only in the third moment is desire qualified as desire. The portrayal of this moment is famously personified in Don Juan. "A" sees him as the synthesis of the figures from the first two moments:

> The contradiction in the first stage consisted in the inability of desire to find an object, but, without having desired, desire did possess its object and therefore could not begin desiring. In the second stage, the object appears in its multiplicity, but since desire seeks its objects in this multiplicity, in the more profound sense it still has no object; it is still not qualified as desire. In *Don Giovanni,* however, desire is absolutely qualified as desire; intensively and extensively it is the immediate unity of the two previous stages. The first stage ideally desired the one; the second desired the particular in the category of multiplicity; the third stage is the unity of the two.[41]

According to this, Don Juan is the leading figure that fully represents the sensually immediate life. Desire in the first moment "is qualified as *dreaming*, in the second as *seeking*, in the third as *desiring*."[42]

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[38] Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part I*, 80.

[39] *Ibid*.

[40] *Ibid*., 81.

[41] *Ibid*., 84-85.

[42] *Ibid*., 80-81.

Don Juan is "sunk in sensual immediacy,"[43] thereby losing himself in his sensations. In this pleasure seeking and being lost in the moment, Don Juan is nothing but a man in the crowd "by being completely finitized, by becoming a number instead of a self."[44] The pseudonymous author of *The Sickness Unto Death: A Christian Psychological Exposition for Upbuilding and Awakening* Anti-Climacus thinks that this becoming a part of the crowd causes despair:

> Every human being is primitively intended to be a self, destined to become himself… But whereas one kind of despair plunges wildly into the infinite and loses itself, another kind of despair seems to permit itself to be tricked out of its self by "the others." Surrounded by hordes of men… —such a person forgets himself, forgets his name divinely understood, does not dare to believe in himself, finds it too hazardous to be himself and far easier and safer to be like the others, to become a copy, a number, a mass man.[45]

According to this, although the subject's inability to separate itself from objects seems to be limited to the first moment of immediacy, even Don Juan, who carries the qualification of desire, is not wholly aware of his selfhood. For aesthetic immediacy in general, the self is not entirely distinguished from the world that surrounds it. In other words, as Anti-Climacus explains, "The man of immediacy does not know himself, he quite literally identifies himself only by the clothes he wears, he identifies having a self by externalities."[46] Only in reflection is a separation between the self and the world possible. Only through reflection is it possible to be freed from being determined by and in the crowd. In addition, through reflection, the self also draws a distinction in itself. When the self also reflects upon itself, one separates reality and ideality, necessity and possibility and finitude and infinitude. As being self-reflective, one can distinguish itself from the

[43] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 235.

[44] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death: A Christian Psychological Exposition for Upbuilding And Awakening*, ed and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 33.

[45] *Ibid*., 33-34.

[46] *Ibid*., 53.

crowd, but it is still not an individual in the strict sense. This means that neither in immediacy nor in reflection can the aesthetic personality gain authentic existence. The reflective aesthete, then, continues to despair. The aesthete's despair is the "suffering of the self."[47]

In "The Seducer's Diary," "A" presents Johannes who, contrary to Don Juan, devotes himself to seduce a specific woman, Cordelia. However, Johannes' relation to Cordelia is never an actual one. In fact, even the seducer Johannes becomes the seduced, "not by confused Cordelia, but by his confusing imagination."[48] Johannes, by seducing Cordelia, seduces himself too, becoming unreal.

> What the self now lacks is indeed actuality, and in ordinary language, too, we say that an individual has become unreal. However, closer scrutiny reveals that what he actually lacks is necessity…the tragedy is that he did not become aware of himself, aware that the self he is is a very definite something and thus the necessary. Instead, he lost himself, because this self fantastically reflected itself in possibility. Even in seeing one*self* in a mirror it is necessary to recognize oneself, for if one does not, one does not see one*self* but only a human being.[49]

Just like immediacy, reflection turns out to be unable to create a genuine individuality. Neither in immediacy nor in reflection can the aesthete become an authentic self.

In the end, the aesthete is the "unhappiest man" in a deep melancholy in which all that the aesthete can see is the emptiness and the meaninglessness of life.

> He cannot grow old, for he has never been young; he cannot become young, for he has already grown old; in a sense he cannot die, for indeed he has not lived; in a sense he cannot live, for indeed he is already dead. He cannot love, for love is always present tense, and he has no present time, no future, no past, and yet he has a sympathetic nature, and he hates the world only because he loves it; he has no passion, not because he lacks it, but because at the same moment he has the opposite passion; he does not have time for anything, not because his time is filled with something else, but

[47] *Ibid*., 54.

[48] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 239.

[49] Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, 36-37.

> because he has no time at all; he is powerless, not because he lacks energy, but because his own energy makes him powerless.[50]

This melancholy that the self is in has a value since it can awake the possibility of the self's metamorphosis. Judge William, the author of rebuttals to Johannes, defines melancholia as the "hysteria of the spirit" which represents a moment where "the spirit requires a higher form."[51] For in the transfiguration that the self seeks, the self "wants to become conscious in its eternal validity."[52] Without doing so, there can be no remedy for the depression of the self. The melancholia, then, cannot be resolved by staying in the aesthetic stage. Only the ethical stage can overcome the dissolving of the aesthete in its melancholia. Thus, in a sense, the melancholia is both the dissolution and the salvation of the self.

The aesthete who avoids the self-continuity is not capable of self-commitment. Without commitment, there is no genuine choice for the aesthete. Rather, "The aesthete allows himself to be driven and loses himself in possibilities."[53] Eventually, as has been explained, the aesthete arrives at melancholia in which it may feel an awakening. This awakening can lead the individual to opening its own self to another stage of existing, i.e., the ethical stage. This is because only in the ethical stage is self-commitment possible for the individual. The object of this commitment is the universal task. It is this idea that makes it possible for the ethical individual to be defined as the free actor. The ethical persona is the one who chooses freely.

The journey of the ethical individual will be the next topic to examine. However, before that, I shall quote "A's" famous expressions on the aesthetic individual's

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[50] Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part I*, 226.

[51] Søren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part II*, trans. and ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 188-189.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] Broudy, "Kierkegaard's Levels of Existence," 297.

being regretful in any either/or situation because of one's not being able to choose in a genuine sense:

> Marry, and you will regret it. Do not marry, and you will also regret it. Marry or do not marry, you will regret it either way. Whether you marry or you do not marry, you will regret it either way. Laugh at the stupidities of the world, and you will regret it; weep over them, and you will also regret it. Laugh at the stupidities of the world or weep over them, you will regret it either way. Whether you laugh at the stupidities of the world or you weep over them, you will regret it either way. Trust a girl, and you will regret it. Do not trust her, and you will also regret it. Trust a girl or do not trust her, you will regret it either way. Whether you trust a girl or do not trust her, you will regret it either way. Hang yourself, and you will regret it. Do not hang yourself, and you will also regret it. Hang yourself or do not hang yourself, you will regret it either way. Whether you hang yourself or do not hang yourself, you will regret it either way.[54]

The answer of the ethical persona to this regret of the aesthete is presented as follows:

> Your choice is an esthetic choice, but an esthetic choice is no choice. On the whole, to choose is an intrinsic and stringent term for the ethical. Wherever in the stricter sense there is a question of an Either/Or, one can always be sure that the ethical has something to do with it. The only absolute Either/Or is the choice between good and evil, but this is also absolutely ethical.
>
> The esthetic choice is either altogether immediate, and thus no choice, or it loses itself in a great multiplicity… if one does not choose absolutely, one chooses only for the moment and for that reason can choose something else the next moment.[55]

Every single act of an aesthetic persona is doomed to be a momentary one. That is why each act will be accompanied by regret. Because of this constant regret, the aesthetel can never be committed to anything. The fate of the aesthetic way of living is melancholy. This is because the aesthete realizes that the world it lives is meaningless and it cannot find a solution to this emptiness by staying in this way of living. Although it suffers from being in this immediacy, the suffering also gives the aesthete a chance to understand an urgent need for giving up this way of living. The one who realizes its dissolution caused by its own living is also the one who can act to make a transition. Accordingly, melancholy of the aesthete is also a

[54] Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part I*, 38-39.

[55] Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part II*, 166-167.

possibility that allows to choose its own self freely. This actually would be the first time that the aesthete makes a choice and agrees to leave its own immediacy by committing to the universal. Becoming an ethical self means to choose itself as to be determined by universal laws. Instead of losing its own self in immediacy, at this stage the individual now chooses the absolute duty as the universal determination of its own self. In the next section, I will discuss the ways in which Kierkegaard interprets this relation between the individual self and the universal law.

2.2.2 The Ethical Stage of Existence

The ethicist's ultimate aim is to obey the absolute duty. For the ethical individual, realizing its selfhood is possible only by obedience to duty. In this regard, the ethical individual can be the synthesis of the universal and the particular. The act of free choice means to act in accordance with the moral law. This act is the expression of the ethical persona.

In *Either/Or, Part II*, Judge William representing the ethical persona, sends letters to Johannes, the figure of the aesthetic stage. In these letters, Judge William criticizes the aesthetic way of living from his ethical perspective and presents the ethical way of living. In one of these letters, Judge William asks:

> But what does it mean to live esthetically, and what does it mean to live ethically? What is the esthetic in a person, and what is the ethical? To that I would respond: the esthetic in a person is that by which he spontaneously and immediately is what he is; the ethical is that by which he becomes what he becomes.[56]

The becoming is essential for the ethical individual since it is an autonomous moral actor who determines itself through every act of choice it makes. The ethicist recognizes that every single choosing act allows the individual to be in a becoming.

[56] *Ibid*., 178.

The ethicist appropriates itself "as a self-determining being."[57] According to this, in every ethical choice, the self chooses itself.

In the ethical stage, the individual defines its own self as the universal task. On the other hand, it is true that the ethical self is still an existing individual. That would mean that the ethical individual now stands as a unifying relation between the universal and the particular:

> the individual is simultaneously the universal and the particular. Duty is the universal; it is required of me. Consequently, if I am not the universal, I cannot discharge the duty either. On the other hand, my duty is the particular, something for me alone, and yet it is duty and consequently the universal. Here personality appears in its highest validity. It is not lawless; neither does it itself establish its law, for the category of duty continues, but the personality takes the form of the unity of the universal and the particular.[58]

As the representation of the ethical self, Judge William says, "He who lives ethically has himself as his task…The ethical individual, then, does not have duty outside himself but within himself."[59] This is because the ethical individual who realizes its own self as a task establishes the universal law as the goal and the measure of its selfhood. The ethical individual becomes the synthesis of universality and particularity through the act of commitment to duty. However, this unity is not a peaceful completion for the ethical self because it can never be sustained without constantly choosing the universal duty. To put it differently, the ethicist has to suspend its own particularity to act according to the universal law. The ethicist must fight against its own contingency, i.e., its limitations, inclinations, etc. Therefore, there is a constant tension between the contingent self and the universal duty. George J. Stack explains as follows:

> an individual who chooses himself ethically chooses himself as this concrete individual who exists here and now and whose present existence has been shaped by causal factors which he appropriates…Without the

[57] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 243.

[58] Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part II*, 263-264.

[59] *Ibid*., 256.

> intentional repetition of decisive choice, what has been gained in terms of responsibility for oneself may be lost.[60]

Accordingly, the ethical self always has to stay earnest and take the responsibility for the ethical choice constantly.

This would also necessitate being isolated from being here and now because, otherwise, the individual might find itself being provoked by its surroundings. As a result, while striving for the realization of the ethical task, there is always the danger that the individual would fail. This is because the ethical individual does not actually choose its own self. Rather, there is this necessity to abandon its own individuality for the sake of the universal duty. Therefore, the individual actually gets stuck in a contradiction. This is a contradiction between the finitude of the individual and the infinitude of the universal duty. As Taylor summarizes perfectly, the self "finally negates itself in the struggle to affirm itself."[61] The individual, who claims to be the unifying relation between contingency and necessity, turns out to be a mere contradiction. The earnest ethicist strives to realize the universal task because it seeks the determination of itself in the realization of duty. However, this would be an endless striving, and eventually an impossible task to be realized. Thus the ethical self would either become isolated from its individuality to act for the sake of duty or fail to realize this duty through empirical temptations. In sum, the ethical individual's motto "to choose oneself"[62] and its idea to choose the self in continuity[63] turns out to be an unachievable task.

Kierkegaard understands the ethical life as acting according to the universal law. More clearly, he claims that being an ethical individual is to be able to realize this law in the empirical world, that is, the ethical choice cannot be abstracted from the

[60] George J. Stack, "The Self and Ethical Existence," *Ethics* 83, no. 2 (1973): 116.

[61] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 251.

[62] Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part II*, 258.

[63] *Ibid*.

empirical. The ethical individual is the one who is in a synthesis with the universal, but this does not entail the suspension of individuality. Not the universal "I," but the contingent individual is the one who is the actor of ethical life. According to this, what govern ethical life is the individual's commitment to the universal law.

> Spiritual existence is the dynamic, projective movement of the individual toward his own unique, subjective reality by virtue of the attempt to realize his authentic possibilities in accordance with a subjectively posited *telos*, appropriated in inwardness, which infuses his life with direction, purpose, and meaning. In an ethical existence man is spirit insofar as he is engaged in this decisive inwardness of striving to become an authentic self. The true subject, Kierkegaard insists, is not a cognitive, knowing subject, but the ethically existing individual.[64]

The essence of the ethical self is the tension between its being an existing individual and its commitment to the universal law.

However, in the ethical level of existence, the contradiction arises exactly from this togetherness of the existing individuality and the universal duty. Contrary to an idea of a universal self, for Kierkegaard, there is the individual self who commits to the universal law. Therefore, the Kierkegaardian understanding of the ethical life is not the suspension of the individual's individuality. In fact, the universal law even carries a great danger, a danger that can lead to the conclusion of "making man forget that he is and must be an Individual, subject to his own personal duties and end up with a responsibility which is inalienably his own."[65] Assuredly, Kierkegaard's understanding of ethical life is the individual's choosing its own self, but eventually it does so by committing to the universal law which is the law of all.

The aesthetic stage is the most spiritless one because its transforms the individual into a number in the crowd. However, the ethical way of living also carries the danger of turning the individual into a passive member of the masses by making the individual forget its own unique individuality. This means that when the

[64] Stack, "The Self and Ethical Existence," 122.

[65] Jolivet, *Introduction to Kierkegaard*, 136.

individual becomes lost in the ethical task, it falls into a contradiction since the essential characteristic of the ethical stage is the realization of its true self through the universal task. In this situation, the self might find itself isolated from its individuality in order to realize its task, which would mean that it abandons the idea of the realization of its own self so it can solely strive for the sake of the universal law. Even if the self succeeds in protecting its individuality, this time there will always be the possibility of acting contrary to the universal law.

Stewart notes, "In ethics, with the appropriation and repetition of an abstract, transcendent ethical principle, one participates in moral life as an agent, but part of being a moral agent is making mistakes."[66] According to this picture, there are obstacles present in the fulfillment of the ethical task. The ethical self's relation to the universal law is not a necessary one. Rather, this relation is the existing self's commitment to the law. For the ethical individual, there will always remain the possibility of failure. The individual who understands its own self through the fulfillment of the universal task would eventually fail if it does not succeed in acting in accordance with the law. At this point, the self cannot become itself, which was the essential claim of the self in the first place:

> If the self does not become itself, it is in despair, whether it knows that or not. Yet every moment that a self exists, it is in a process of becoming…as the self does not become itself, it is not itself; but not to be itself is precisely despair.[67]

The ethical individual, who in the end cannot express its own individuality while trying to be in accordance with the universal norm, loses itself in despair. Judge William presents despair in *Either/Or Part II* as the individual's choice.

> When I choose absolutely, I choose despair, and in despair I choose the absolute, for I myself am the absolute; I posit the absolute, and I myself am the absolute. But in other words with exactly the same meaning I may say: I choose the absolute that chooses me; I posit the absolute that posits me—for if I do not keep in mind that this second expression is just as absolute,

[66] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 300.

[67] Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, 30.

> then my category of choosing is untrue, because it is precisely the identity of both.[68]

However, at the end of the story, the ethical individual's choosing of the absolute and the absolute's choosing of the individual are not identical at all. The ethical obligation becomes a task that is impossible to fulfill. The ethical individual is now aware that the synthesis of the individual and the universal law turns out to be the untruth. In the awareness of failure, the ethicist becomes guilty.

At this point, the highest expression of the ethical stage is the individual's choice of repentance that comes with guilt. Jolivet notes, "Repentance is the sole condition which allows the individual to choose himself absolutely,"[69] meaning that only in repentance, and not in being synthesized with the universal law, does the individual become its own self. In choosing itself as guilty, the self absolutely chooses itself. In other words, the individual must be confronted with failure, not by abstracting itself from individuality but by facing its own guilt. In this regard, repentance is the affirmation of the self. However, this affirmation makes it impossible to stay in the ethical stage. Consequently, the true way of relating to the eternal is not a commitment to a universal law but the love of God, which is the genuine act of commitment. Jolivet expresses this turning point by saying that "the ethical can fulfill itself only by denying itself,"[70] whereby the ethical stage summons the highest way of living by ending up in a situation where individual is faced with its own guilt, and through the act of repentance, an inevitable demand for a qualitative leap to a new form of life occurs. Therefore, the individual would not be overreaching its bounds in saying that the true ethical act is its act of choosing repentance and abandoning the idea of committing to a universal ethical law. When the self does so, it leaves the ethical stage behind and chooses to commit to something higher. In order to understand this leap that the individual freely

[68] Kierkegaard, *Either/Or, Part II*, 213.

[69] Jolivet, *Introduction to Kierkegaard*, 138.

[70] *Ibid*., 140.

chooses, it is now time to continue with the religious stage, where the individual finally commits itself to the essential truth.

2.2.3 The Religious Stage of Existence

By means of accepting its guilt, the ethical individual removes itself from the universal task and relates itself absolutely to the absolute. This new stage of existence is the expression of the highest stage, i.e., the religious stage. Only in the religious form of life does the self realize its authenticity since it finally becomes what it really is. This stage of existence expresses the free activity of the self, not by relating to a universal law but by relating to the wholly other, i.e., God; in this way, the self can actualize its freedom by being fully conscious of its responsibility.

Before examining the religious sphere in detail, I would like to discuss a question that has a great deal of importance for understanding the passage from the ethical stage to the religious one: Does the religious stage mean the removal of the ethical one? Calvin O. Schrag explains that the ethical stage of existence is neither suspended nor contradicted in the religious stage. He is right in a sense, in that both stages of existence have something in common, i.e., the individual's commitment to something other than itself. Schrag defends the idea that "what is suspended in Kierkegaard's teleological suspension is not the ethical as a mode of existence but the ethical as a universal moral requirement."[71] According to him, there is no discontinuity between the ethical and the religious stages because what has changed is not the individual's way of relating itself to an otherness but rather the nature of this otherness itself. Moreover, he argues that the ethical is rooted in the religious; it is not abolished. On the contrary, it gains a new, authentic expression in the religious stage.[72] Although this argument is important in the sense that the

[71] Calvin O. Schrag, "Note on Kierkegaard's Teleological Suspension of the Ethical," *Ethics* 70, no. 1 (1959): 67.

[72] *Ibid*., 67-68.

religious stage[73] is not entirely contradictory with the ethical stage, it would be problematic to understand this argument in a way that leads to the idea that the religious stage is the continuation of the ethical one. This is because the religious individual is only committed to the Absolute, i.e., God, and in its commitment to the God, the act of the religious individual may conflict with the ethical stage. In this regard, the religious can be the suspension of the ethical, when it is necessary.

To expect harmony between the ethical and the religious spheres would be a misunderstanding since the former is not really included in the latter as such. Rather, the religious stage gives birth to a new understanding of existing. In addition to this, it has been stated that the individual's commitment to an otherness in both stages might be taken as a similarity between stages. However, the way of relating is not the same at all. Jolivet insists that "the religious realm cannot be reduced to the moral, for it is the realm of the infinite, of the 'prodigious,' to which one can only attain by virtue of the 'absurd,' outside all rational principles."[74] In light of this, if the ethical consists in the religious sphere, this ethics must be a new one that gains a different expression in the religious. One more thing to be remembered is that the religious sphere is not the development of the ethical sphere. Ultimately, the ethical individual must deny its own self by facing its guilt. Accordingly, the relation between two stages is not the ethical stage's continuation in the latter; instead, it is the inversion of it. At the end of the day, the argument that the ethical is rooted in the religious is not so strong. However, the ethical stage is important because it opens up the possibility of true selfhood in repentance. Therefore, it is crucial to keep in mind that the religious sphere is a new way of living instead of being in harmonious relation with the ethical sphere. Leaving this discussion behind, the religious stage of existence can now be examined in a deeper sense.

[73] At least, for the Religiousness A.

[74] Jolivet, *Introduction to Kierkegaard*, 143.

As has been stated before, staying in the ethical stage cannot solve the dilemma it presents. The individual who wishes to gain its own authentic selfhood has to establish a relation to God. Only through faith does the individual have the chance to become what it is. This necessitates the transcendence of ethical individuality because the individual's relation to God is not established through the universalization of a law. Neither can the self ever claim the unity between itself and God. Therefore, the absolute difference between the individual and God cannot be dissolved. Johannes Climacus, the pseudonymous author of Kierkegaard, explains the absolute difference between the individual and God as follows:

> If a human being is to come truly to know something about the unknown (the god), he must first come to know that it is different from him, absolutely different from him. The understanding cannot come to know this by itself…if from the god, and if it does come to know this, it cannot understand this and consequently cannot come to know this, for how could it understand the absolutely different?…At this point we seem to stand at a paradox.[75]

The nature of the individual's relation to the God, then, is a paradox that cannot be the object of knowledge. The argument being given is that in relation to the absolute other, the individual realizes its own true selfhood. If this is the case, a new question arises: How does the individual become what it is in this paradoxical relation to God? The answer to this question will also present Kierkegaard's understanding of the essential truth. However, in order to give a proper answer, the first point to be examined is Kierkegaard's distinction between the two forms of religious experience: Religiousness A and Religiousness B. To become a true self, the individual must pass through these two forms of experiences.

2.2.3.1 Religiousness A

Religiousness A is the struggle to express the absolute difference between the individual and God. It is also called the immanent religion. It is the individual's relating "absolutely to the absolute *telos* (an eternal happiness as relationship with

[75] Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*, 46.

God) and relatively to the relative."[76] Climacus, the pseudonymous author of *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, explains that relating to the absolute *telos* means renouncing everything:

> What is the maximum a person can gain by relating to the absolute τέλος? In a finite sense there is nothing to gain and everything to lose. In temporality, *the expectation* of an eternal happiness is the highest reward, because an eternal happiness is the highest τέλος; and there being not only no reward to expect but also suffering to bear is precisely the mark of one relating to the absolute.[77]

According to this, relating to the highest good means taking a risk in renouncing everything. From this, the first factor of this absolute relation arises: Resignation. This means being willing to sacrifice everything temporal in the individual's relation to the absolute. This resignation is infinite such that it is a lifetime task. For the sake of the absolute relation to God, the individual is ready to sacrifice the world in which it lives. However, the self realizes that this task of resignation is an absolute difficulty. From the awareness of the absolute difficulty of resignation, suffering arises. Climacus defines suffering as follows:

> The essential existential pathos relates to existing essentially; and to exist essentially is inwardness; and the action of inwardness is suffering, because changing himself is something the individual cannot do…and that's why suffering is the highest action in the inner life.[78]

According to Climacus, trying "to bring the absoluteness of the religious together with the particular"[79] is the cause of this suffering. It is the individual's awareness of its impotence to relate absolutely to the highest good and relatively to the relative good. The individual who was ready to sacrifice everything finite for the sake of the absolute relation to God realizes the difficulty of infinite resignation. In

[76] David J. Gouwens, *Kierkegaard as Religious Thinker* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 111.

[77] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 338.

[78] *Ibid*., 363.

[79] *Ibid*., 405.

other words, the individual's love of its own life makes it impossible to renounce life. This awareness, then, causes suffering.

At this point, something crucial happens. While facing how the individual is in a deep relation to the world, it also becomes aware of its absolute dependency on God. In other words, one is nothing before God. Climacus notes, "If the individual is dialectically defined inwardly in self-annihilation before God, then we have *religiousness A*."[80] Taylor explains that the acceptance of the individual's own incapability of maintaining an absolute relation to God as follows:

> Through the act of "infinite resignation," in which the self dies to…the world of finite experience, the believing subject freely confesses both its own powerlessness and the omnipotence of the object of belief. At this stage on life's way, religious self-denial displaces ethical self-assertion.[81]

Through this self-denial, the individual realizes that God is the one who brought life from nothingness. The self recognizes that it is completely dependent on God as the creator of everything. Before God, the individual is powerless, incapable of doing anything. It is not the individual but God that gives it the power to act. The individual's life is nothing but a gift given by God, and it recognizes its own life as a gift. In other words, when the individual recognizes its absolute dependency on God, it also receives selfhood as a gift. Moreover, this receptivity brings thankfulness for everything that comes from God.

What follows resignation and suffering is guilt. Guilt is the individual's awareness that it is not possible to relate to God absolutely. In accordance with this, as Climacus notes, "Guilt is nothing but a new expression of suffering in existence,"[82] and this is another way of saying that guilt is the expression of the individual's failure before God. In the end, the individual comprehends that there can be no immanent relation to God. On the contrary, the qualitatively absolute difference

[80] *Ibid*., 479.

[81] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 254.

[82] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 442.

between the individual and God makes any immanent relation to God impossible. The individual realizes that in its willingness to sacrifice all relative goods for the sake of an absolute relation to the highest good, it is precisely the individual that is the obstacle. Thus, the idea of an immanent relation to the highest good ends with the individual's awareness of the qualitative and absolute difference between God and its own self. There can be no immanent relation to God, and the consciousness of guilt is the individual's acceptance of the impossibility of such a relationship.

The individual's consciousness of this guilt is the most edifying aspect of Religiousness A. In this train of thought, Westphal explains why the consciousness of guilt is essential for religious living as follows:

> Total guilt is decisive because it signifies the relation of the self to its eternal happiness. It may be more obvious that such guilt signifies the distance of the self from its highest good, and indeed it does. The guilty self has not arrived at that place where "they live happily ever after." But without this guilt there is no relation to an eternal happiness…If I would live in the ethical-religious, as Climacus understands it, I must open myself to the experience of total guilt…Climacus seems to want to make total guilt not only the necessary but also the sufficient condition of the religious.[83]

Accordingly, the religious individual must embrace this guilt. Trying to get rid of the individual's own guilt by means of an abstraction is nothing but the rejection of religious life. Acceptance of guilt also signifies that there can be no way of relating to God speculatively. The consciousness of guilt is consciousness of the fact that "we cannot find God or the highest good speculatively."[84] Religiosity is a way of life, not a speculation of the mind.

In light of the given explanations, let us now recall the discussion Schrag presents. His argument was that the religious stage does not necessitate the suspension of the ethical, but neither does the religious stage contradict with the ethical. Religiousness A shows that the individual, who wishes to synthesize individuality with the eternal, comes to the conclusion of the absolute impossibility of this

[83] Westphal, *Becoming a Self*, 174.

[84] Broudy, "Kierkegaard's Levels of Existence," 309.

relationship. While trying to comprehend the religious stage as the transformation of the ethical, the individual is in an empty striving that ends up with its being guilty in this trial. More clearly, the main idea in the ethical stage, which is the synthesis of the individual and the universal, is that this cannot be maintained in the religious stage. At minimum, transforming this idea into the religious stage would be the rejection of God's being absolutely different. Therefore, the individual cannot sustain the idea of being in unity with God without ending up with guilt.

Religiousness A is not specifically Christian religiousness. According to Climacus, "Religiousness A can be present in paganism, and in Christianity it can be the religiousness of everyone who is not decisively Christian."[85] Through presenting Religiousness B, Climacus will ask whether it is possible to go beyond Religiousness A, and he does so by presenting Religiousness B as the paradoxical-religious that breaks with immanence. Moreover, Religiousness B is specifically the Christian religiousness, and the stage of "the full realization of spirit in which the temporal self, isolated from all other selves, freely defines its unique individuality."[86]

2.2.3.2 Religiousness B

This type of religiousness represents becoming and being a Christian. In other words, Religiousness B is the essential religiousness. After admitting the individual's guilty in the trial of relating to God immanently, the possibility of a different form of religiousness reveals itself. However, this happens through a leap in which the individual is at that moment to "abandon himself wholly to God."[87] If this is the case, it will be better to begin with the idea of this leap.

[85] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 466.

[86] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 231.

[87] Jolivet, *Introduction to Kierkegaard*, 145.

In *The Concept of Anxiety*, Kierkegaard's pseudonymous author Vigilius Haufniensis defines the fall as the "qualitative leap."[88] According to Vigilius Haufniensis' interpretation, sin enters into the world through the fall. At this stage, it would be better to start by summarizing Vigilius Haufniensis' account of sin's entrance into the world by first analyzing his narrative of the fall[89].

Before the fall, Adam and Eve were innocent dreaming spirits. At that time, they were not animals but neither were they really human beings.[90] In the moment that Adam and Eve were tempted by the serpent, they realized their possibilities. In other words, the question of acting differently arose. Up until that time, God's command was the only actuality for Adam and Eve. Whenever they realized they had the possibility to do what was forbidden, they lost their innocence and became sinners. The possibility of sin arises from the possibility of freedom, at which point innocence was lost. From this moment, anxiety arises. For Haufniensis, this is because "freedom's possibility announces itself in anxiety."[91] With the fall, then, sin entered into the world, but so did anxiety. This does not mean that there is sin in the world because of the fall. Every single individual repeatedly brings sin into the world, and, consequently, each individual is a sinner, just like Adam and Eve.

Now, what is more important in this story is the deeper analysis of the concept of anxiety, which sheds light on how anxiety is brought into the world. This aspect is also essential because it has a determinative role in the possibility of faith.

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[88] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Orienting Deliberation on the Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin*, trans. and ed. Reidar Thomte (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 48.

[89] The Original Sin will also be discussed in Chapter 4 in order to bring Hegel's and Kierkegaard's concepts of actuality and possibility together. For now, the account of the Original Sin is explained to present the relation between faith and the concept of anxiety.

[90] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, *Ibid*., 49.

[91] *Ibid*., 74.

According to Haufniensis, after the fall, there were two types of anxiety: subjective and objective.

> The distinction made here is that subjective anxiety signifies the anxiety that is present in the individual's state of innocence and corresponds to that of Adam, but it is nevertheless quantitatively different from that of Adam because of the quantitative determination of the generation. By objective anxiety we understand, on the other hand, the reflection of the sinfulness of the generation in the whole world.[92]

Objective anxiety is the one that Adam and Eve, as the first ones who sin, were responsible for. Haufniensis notes that "Adam…posits sin in himself, but also for the race."[93] In other words, Adam is the origin of objective anxiety for the whole history of the human race. However, what is essential is the subjective anxiety.

Subjective anxiety refers not to the human race but to individual existence. Subjective anxiety is the awareness of the individual's own possibilities. Haufniensis defines subjective anxiety as "the dizziness of freedom."[94] Can such dizziness be annihilated? Haufniensis' answer is negative. As long as there is possibility, there will be anxiety since to exist means to have possibilities; consequently, there will be no circumstance in which the existing individual can annihilate anxiety, yet the real question is whether anxiety is something that should be annihilated. Vincent A. McCarthy explains why anxiety has an essential role in the journey of the self:

> [Anxiety] constitutes…the initial movement in the direction of a God-relationship, in the consciousness of oneself as a being qualified by spirit. Anxiety indeed serves as the measure of a man: of his rising to higher consciousness, to a higher relationship to himself and to God – i.e. anxiety rightly understood and accepted. For what is crucial is learning *rightly* to be in anxiety.[95]

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[92] *Ibid*., 56-57.

[93] *Ibid.*, 57.

[94] *Ibid*., 61.

[95] Vincent A. McCarthy, *The Phenomenology of Moods in Kierkegaard* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978), 47.

In this regard, if the individual embraces anxiety in the right way, then the anxiety has an essential role for the individual.

Anxiety can be a heavy burden that gives pain to the individual, and the individual's empty trial to get rid of anxiety can only result in making this burden heavier. Thus, the first thing to do is to accept that there is no way to annihilate anxiety because it is an essential feature of existence. Haufniensis states, "If a human being were a beast or an angel, he could not be in anxiety."[96] Human beings are in anxiety because they are the synthesis of actuality and possibility.

There can be anxiety only for a being which carries possibility in its existence. This point is important from an existential perspective since Kierkegaard attributes anxiety to human beings only as an essential feature. Being actuality, God has no anxiety. On the flip side, animals, either because of not being the synthesis of actuality and possibility or because of not being aware of this synthesis, have no anxiety. However, human beings are in anxiety whether they realize or not that they are the synthesis of actuality and possibility. In this case, the first option that animals are not a synthesis at all is to be the reason for why they are not in anxiety. Anxiety is a human condition, and only a human condition. In the light of this, if the individual tries to abstract from anxiety through speculation, this would not be the annihilation of anxiety but the rejection of the human condition. Resulting from this, as has already been stated, the individual must accept anxiety. Whenever this happens, the individual becomes aware of the possibility of freedom. Accordingly, anxiety is not only a heavy burden but also a great gift because the individual who embraces the essentiality of having possibility can be educated by anxiety. Only for the individual educated by anxiety is a leap to the religious life possible. In other words, only through accepting anxiety, that is, instead of trying to resolve it can the individual freely choose to relate to the essential truth, i.e., religious truth.

Yet, when anxiety is at hand, despair also plays a role. They are two essential and irreducible features that still cannot be separated from one another. McCarthy is

[96] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 155.

right to claim that "the discussion of despair cannot be separated from that of anxiety, for the analysis of anxiety leads naturally into the consideration of this, its intensified form,"[97] so how despair accompanies anxiety must be examined. However, this examination will be limited to despair's relation to the awareness of possibility, hence sin, because what is essential for this particular investigation is the analysis of how they take place in religious life.

Despair is "a heightened form anxiety,"[98] and as such it is related to sin and offence. Before examining how despair is related to sin and offence, Kierkegaard's idea of despair is to be introduced first. Anti-Climacus, Kierkegaard's pseudonymous author in *The Sickness Unto Death*, defines despair as "the misrelation in the relation of a synthesis that relates itself to itself."[99] Here, the synthesis is between the temporal and the eternal, the finite and the infinite. Therefore, the individual is this synthesis. However, despair is the individual's refusal to be aware of being that synthesis and of course, to become a true self. In refusing its true self, the individual sins. Despair, then, is this sin. After defining despair as "sickness," Anti-Climacus heralds that possibility of despair is the possibility of becoming a true self:

> The possibility of this sickness is man's superiority over the animal; to be aware of this sickness is the Christian's superiority over the natural man; to be cured of this sickness is the Christian's blessedness.[100]

Accordingly, despair is a human condition that indicates the possibility of realizing the individual's authentic self. In this regard, the individual must be conscious of its despair since only after that is it possible for the individual to be conscious of its true self, and thus of sin. When the individual becomes conscious of its despair, it

[97] McCarthy, *The Phenomenology of Moods in Kierkegaard*, 82.

[98] *Ibid*., 84.

[99] Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, 15.

[100] *Ibid*.

wills to be itself. This happens after a shift of defiance that leads to willing to be one's own true self. Anti-Climacus explains how defiance takes place in despair as follows:

> There is a rise in the consciousness of the self, and therefore a greater consciousness of what despair is and that one's state is despair. Here the despair is conscious of itself as an act; it does not come from the outside as a suffering under the pressure of externalities but comes directly from the self. Therefore defiance, compared with despair over one's weakness, is indeed a new qualification.[101]

The individual who has this new qualification wants to be the creator of its own life, rejecting the limitations of life and wanting to take life, to control it, into its own hands. Finally, the individual who wishes to be the master of its own life is defeated by itself. Anti-Climacus poetically explains why, at the end of the day, the defiant individual is in an even deeper despair:

> Absolute ruler is a king without a country, actually ruling over nothing; his position, his sovereignty, is subordinate to the dialectic that rebellion is legitimate at any moment. Ultimately, this is arbitrarily based upon the self itself.[102]

Such a self is nothing but an abstraction. With the choice to be defiant, the self tries to abstract itself from the fact that it is created by God. Actually, it denies its own self in the process, and, in doing so, the individual sins. The highest form of despair is the consciousness of sin. The individual who realizes its own sin also realizes its true self, i.e., being created by God. This awareness is a turning point for the individual because it then has two different possible trajectories: the individual could continue to be defiant and remain sinful, or it could accept sin and chooses faith. According to Anti-Climacus, faith is the opposite of sin, and it is when "the self in being itself and in willing to be itself rests transparently in God."[103]

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[101] *Ibid*., 67.

[102] *Ibid*., 69.

[103] *Ibid*., 82.

At first sight, anxiety and despair may be thought as features weakening the individual, and this may be true in a sense, yet, only when the individual tries to annihilate these features by mere abstraction. At that moment, they will make the individual more powerless. The more the individual rejects anxiety and despair, the more it will be buried in them. However, there is one more possibility for the individual: embracing its own anxiety and despair. In this case, it would be possible to realize true selfhood. This is not, of course, a happily ever after story in which the individual finally takes a rest in the realization of its authentic selfhood. On the contrary, this would be an endless striving that brings fear and trembling with it. Namely, for faith, it would never be enough for the individual to realize its complete dependence on God. Obviously, through anxiety and despair, the individual is faced with the possibility of taking a leap of faith. However, this would not be sufficient for a religious life. How, then, is it possible to exist religiously? How does an individual become an authentic self? Actually, waiting for determinate answers to these questions would be a mistake because Kierkegaard never posits himself as the one who passed through all the stages of existence and became a religious individual thereafter. Thus, he does not teach one to be a true Christian but rather tells a story of the journey towards becoming a Christian. Nevertheless, his admiration of Abraham makes it possible to comprehend what he means by faith. Accordingly, this latter analysis focuses on how Kierkegaard interprets the story of Abraham and how this interpretation fits in with his understanding of faith.

In *Fear and Trembling,* Kierkegaard, under the pseudonym of Johannes de Silentio, narrates the story of Abraham. Silentio admires Abraham for his faith. Abraham, the knight of faith, did not doubt for a second. He had faith, and he answered when spoken to by God:

> Cheerfully, freely, confidently, loudly he answered: Here am I. We read on: "And Abraham arose early in the morning." He hurried as if to a celebration, and early in the morning he was at the appointed place on Mount Moriah. He said nothing to Sarah, nothing to Eliezer —who, after all, could understand him, for did not the nature of the temptation

> [*Fristelsen*] extract from him the pledge of silence? "He split the firewood, he bound Isaac, he lit the fire, he drew the knife."[104]

If faith is taken away from Abraham's story, then Abraham becomes a father who tries to kill his own son. Silentio clarifies the distinction between the ethical perspective and the religious one by saying that "the ethical expression for what Abraham did is that he meant to murder Isaac; the religious expression is that he meant to sacrifice Isaac."[105] Silentio admires that Abraham was willing to sacrifice his beloved son; not of course because he was ready to murder his son in cold blood, but because he had faith by virtue of the absurd. Abraham loved God, and he had faith. These two together, according to Silentio, are needed because "he who loves God without faith reflects upon himself, he who loved God in faith reflects upon God."[106]

Abraham is the knight of faith which also means that he is the knight of infinite resignation. The infinite resignation is "the continual leap in existence"[107] that explains the movement of infinity. The knight of infinite resignation is the one who has the power to focus on the act of consciousness. Silentio then asks whether the knight, by focusing on this act, forgets their own life. The answer is no. The power of the knight of resignation comes from its not being in a contradiction with itself: "The knight, then, will recollect everything, but this recollection is precisely the pain, and yet in infinite resignation he is reconciled with existence."[108] The knight of infinite resignation does not stop living its life, but neither do it stop loving it. On the contrary, the knight renounces love infinitely.

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[104] Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling/Repetition*, trans. and ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 21.

[105] *Ibid*., 30.

[106] *Ibid*., 37.

[107] *Ibid*., 42.

[108] *Ibid*., 43.

> Infinite resignation is the last stage before faith, so that anyone who has not made this movement does not have faith, for only in infinite resignation do I become conscious of my eternal validity, and only then can one speak of grasping existence by virtue of faith.[109]

After the movement of infinite resignation, there is one more movement, one that is made by the virtue of the absurd: the paradoxical movement of faith. The knight of faith embraces the paradox and believes in the absurd.[110] Vasiliki Tsakiri notes, "For Silentio, the greatness of this movement consists in the fact that after making the movement of infinitude, the knight of faith proceeds to the movement of finitude, for he belongs to this world,"[111] and it is here that the paradox lies. In the first movement, the individual has the courage to sacrifice its own life. In the second movement, the individual gains life back by virtue of the absurd. This, for Silentio, is "the courage of faith."[112] Silentio further notes that "by faith Abraham did not renounce Isaac, but by faith Abraham received Isaac."[113] However, to receive Isaac back is different than Abraham renouncing Isaac by his own will. John Lippitt explains the difference by saying that "I can renounce and resign by my own strength of will, but the 'getting back' which faith provides is something I cannot bring about myself. Thus the 'getting back' of faith must be *received as a gift*."[114]

It is obvious from the given explanations that the story of Abraham is essential to understand Silentio's account of faith. When the question of what Abraham

[109] *Ibid*., 46.

[110] *Ibid*., 47.

[111] Vasiliki Tsakiri, *Kierkegaard: Anxiety, Repetition and Contemporaneity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 142.

[112] Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling/Repetition*, 49.

[113] *Ibid*.

[114] John Lippitt, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kierkegaard and Fear and Trembling* (London: Routledge, 2003), 51.

achieved is asked, Silentio's answer is that "he remained true to his love."[115] Silentio adds, "Either there is a paradox, that the single individual as the single individual stands in an absolute relation to the absolute, or Abraham is lost."[116] However, Abraham is not lost. He stands as the knight of faith who takes the leap and embraces the paradox of faith, which "makes a murder into a holy and God-pleasing act…[it] gives Isaac back to Abraham again…no thought can grasp [this], because faith begins precisely where thought stops."[117]

When Kierkegaard comes to the religious stage, he presents the paradoxical nature of faith that cannot be reached through speculation. This paradox is the essence of religious faith. As was stated at the beginning of this chapter, paradox cannot be resolved by objective reflection, yet neither can it be conceptualized through speculative thinking. However, what has been written is still not enough at least to contemplate paradox as the essence of truth. Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Christian doctrine of Trinity gives a chance to understand what he really means in saying that essential truth is not an object of reason but of faith. According to Kierkegaard's interpretation of Trinity, God's being in space and time, in a human's body, is the Absolute Paradox. Johannes Climacus says, "The proposition that God has come into being in human form, was born, grew up, etc., is surely paradoxical…the absolute paradox."[118] God's coming into existence is infinitude coming into finitude. The Incarnation of God, i.e., God-man, is this Absolute Paradox. It is the becoming actual of the impossible. At the very least, it is impossible for an individual's will to create such a synthesis. Only God has this power. A speculative thinker, for Kierkegaard, would try to have power to understand and resolve this paradox, but, as Climacus says, for the Absolute

[115] Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling/Repetition*, 120.

[116] *Ibid*.

[117] *Ibid*., 53.

[118] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 182-183.

Paradox, "The only understanding possible is that it cannot be understood"[119] because the Absolute Paradox of God's coming into existence is not a matter of understanding but of faith. The individusl can choose either to have faith in this paradox or to reject it. This is, as Taylor argues, the absolute either/or.[120] This is either choosing the paradox in faith or blindly striving to resolve it; either committing to the essential truth or rejecting it; and finally either becoming a true self, or annihilating the individual's own possibility of becoming a religious self.

Ultimately, through this Absolute Paradox, Kierkegaard offers a choice to his reader: a choice between subjective thinking or speculative thinking. As a philosopher who understands truth as subjectivity, he does not offer a peace that would last forever in relation to this truth. On the contrary, this truth can never be kept in reserve. The individual who chooses this essential truth also chooses a constant becoming and striving. Choosing the essential truth is also willing to be alone, that is, being only armed with the individual's own faith all the while knowing it can never feel at home in the world.

In light of Kierkegaard's interpretation of Trinity as the Absolute Paradox, it is crucial to ask about the possibility for a different interpretation that might present a different understanding of truth: What if the idea of God-man is not the paradox of absolute difference but the mediation of opposites? To rephrase this, what if faith does not rest upon this absolute otherness between the religious self and God? All these questions will be the focus of the next chapter, which deals with Hegel's interpretation of truth. Up until now, we have dealt only with one side of the either/or. Through the exposition of Hegel's understanding of truth, the other route will be investigated.

The question of either/or also indicates a sacrifice. For the Kierkegaardian self, the issue consists in sacrificing the individual self's feeling at home with its other since the true self actually does accept being alone in its commitment to the essential

[119] *Ibid*., 183.

[120] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 258.

truth. What, then, does the Hegelian self sacrifice in order to grasp truth? The next chapter will also ask this question while focusing on the experience of the Hegelian self.

CHAPTER 3

HEGEL: THE PATH TOWARDS ABSOLUTE KNOWING

"Let's plunge into the torrents of time,
into the whirl of eventful existence!
There, as chance wills,
let pain and pleasure,
success and frustration, alternate;
unceasing activity alone reveals our worth."
-Goethe, *Faust*[121]

There is no doubt that pointing out the account of a philosopher with regard to the question of what truth means is a challenging task. When this philosopher is Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who is one of the most puzzling philosophers in the history of philosophy, this task becomes exponentially more complex. Hegel himself does not start with giving a concrete answer to the question of truth but rather lets consciousness build the path to truth through its own experience. *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the work in which Hegel inspects how consciousness' partial truth claims become richer and richer and come closer to the absolute truth through its own journey.

The German philosopher and writer Gotthold Ephraim Lessing explains it as follows in "A Rejoinder":

> If God held fast in his right hand the whole of truth and in his left hand only the ever-active quest for truth, albeit with the proviso that I should constantly and eternally err, and said to me: 'Choose!', I would humbly fall upon his left hand.[122]

[121] Johann W. V. Goethe, *Faust I & II*, trans. and ed. Stuart Atkins (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 45.

[122] Gotthold E. Lessing, *Philosophical and Theological Writings*, trans. and ed. H. Barry Nisbet (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 98.

In the *Phenomenology,* Hegel chooses to start from consciousness' "ever-active quest for truth" in spite of the fact that consciousness constantly errs. With the *Phenomenology*, we see the way in which Hegel refuses to take truth for granted and to philosophize with given concepts. At this point, one could ask what the methods Hegel uses could be if he does not build the *Phenomenology* on an unshakable ground, or even whether there is any method at all. In order to give a proper answer to this question, it would be much more convenient to start from what philosophy means for Hegel and where the *Phenomenology* stands in his philosophical system.

3.1 The Method of the *Phenomenology*

Hegel announces in the "Preface" that "the true shape in which truth exists can only be the scientific system of such truth."[123] In the following pages, he adds that "knowledge is only actual, and can only be expounded, as Science or as *system*,"[124] which means that only a scientific system can discover truth. For this reason, philosophy, since it seeks the truth, is to become a science. As a German Idealist, Hegel follows his forerunners in claiming that philosophy must be "raised to the status of a Science."[125]

In the "Preface" to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant explains that philosophy must be able to "enter upon the secure course of a science."[126] Although Hegel agrees with Kant that philosophy can only justify its aim to reach the truth if it becomes scientific, Hegel's understanding of science assuredly differs from Kant. Hegel rejects the Kantian idea that it is necessary to determine the conditions of the

[123] Georg W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Arnold V. Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 3.

[124] *Ibid.*, 13.

[125] *Ibid.*, 4.

[126] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 109.

possibility of experience in order to save philosophy from dogmatism and scepticism and to turn philosophy into a scientific system. One of the tasks of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is to determine the limits of knowledge because, for Kant, philosophy has the possibility of becoming a science solely through a proper limitation. According to Hegel, on the other hand, philosophy as a science cannot be achieved by giving certain limitations to it. He explains what it is to be a scientific philosophy in the "Introduction" to *The Encyclopaedia Logic: Part One of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*[127] as follows:

> A philosophising *without system* cannot be scientific at all; apart from the fact philosophising of this kind expresses on its own account a more subjective disposition, it is contingent with regard to its content. A content has its justification only as a moment of the whole, outside of which it is only an unfounded presupposition or a subjective certainty. Many philosophical writings restrict themselves like this—to the mere utterance of *dispositions* and *opinions*.—It is erroneous to understand by "system" a philosophy whose principle is restricted and [kept] distinct from other principles; on the contrary, it is the principle of genuine philosophy to contain all particular principles within itself.[128]

Accordingly, a philosophical system that does not comprise the whole, but rather uses principles as means for the restriction of thinking activity, cannot be scientific. Philosophy as science is the exposition of truth, and this truth for Hegel "is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development."[129] This would mean that truth is not something given, or even something that can be presupposed, but is instead an organic whole that uncovers itself in its own developmental process. In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel explains how to understand this organic whole with the analogy of a plant:

> The bud disappears in the bursting-forth of the blossom, and one might say that the former is refuted by the latter; similarly, when the fruit appears, the blossom is shown up in its turn as a false manifestation of the plant, and the

[127] Hereafter *The Encyclopaedia Logic*.

[128] Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic: Part One of the Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*, trans. Theodore F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991), 39.

[129] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 11.

> fruit now emerges as the truth of it instead. These forms are not just distinguished from one another, they also supplant one another as mutually incompatible. Yet at the same time their fluid nature makes them moments of an organic unity in which they not only do not conflict, but in which each is as necessary as the other; and this mutual necessity alone constitutes the life of the whole.[130]

A philosophical system is the comprehension of life as a whole in its organic unity, and this would mean grasping truth. Without its relation to a systematic whole, any truth claim turns out to be nothing but a lifeless presupposition. Thus, Hegel's notion of philosophy as a science consists in the interrelations of every mode of knowing with one another. Moreover, by taking this position, Hegel is rejecting the idea that philosophy must determine certain boundaries to knowing itself to become a science.

Robert Solomon explains that for Hegel, truth is the "all-embracing picture," which is in turn desired by human consciousness as the comprehension of "the world and itself."[131] However, Hegel declares in the *Phenomenology* that to satisfy such a desire, "to become genuine knowledge, to beget the element of Science which is the pure Notion of Science itself, it must travel a long way and its passage."[132] Therefore, to build a proper philosophical system, a long "process of coming-to-be"[133] must be experienced. The revelation of this process is nothing but the course of the *Phenomenology*, whereby the *Phenomenology* is the preparation to the science. It is a path which constitutes itself in its own experience. As Hegel puts it, "The way to the Science is itself already *Science*, and hence, in virtue of its content, is the Science of the *experience of consciousness*."[134]

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[130] *Ibid.*, 2.

[131] Robert C. Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 179-180.

[132] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 15.

[133] *Ibid*.

[134] *Ibid*., 56.

As Jon Stewart explains, "In each of the subordinate levels of the *Phenomenology*, consciousness seeks a criterion for truth in an 'other' which it believes to exist independently of itself."[135] Because of this idea of an independent other, consciousness "becomes alienated from itself and then returns to itself from this alienation, and is only then revealed…in its actuality and truth."[136] What consciousness discovers becomes the particular shape of truth enacted in each moment. However, this process of alienation and returning to itself from the alienation repeat incessantly until consciousness arrives at "the point where knowledge no longer needs to go beyond itself, where knowledge finds itself, where Notion corresponds to object and object to Notion."[137] Until consciousness finally comes to such a position, consciousness confronts several problems in its journey as a consequence of its own limited and one-sided thinking. Robert Stern explains the position of consciousness as follows:

> Consciousness will…find itself caught up in a characteristic movement: starting from one position, it comes to see that that position leads to problems that are unresolvable from that standpoint. Consciousness will therefore be plunged into despair, as it now finds no satisfaction in the world, but only puzzlement and frustration.[138]

In this situation, consciousness realizes that what is problematic is not the world in front of it but its own way of thinking. For that reason, "The loss of its own self"[139] and the loss of its own immediate truth makes consciousness an alien to itself. This is why Hegel defines this road as "the pathway of *doubt*, or more precisely as the

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[135] Jon Stewart, *Idealism and Existentialism: Hegel and Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century European Philosophy* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 37.

[136] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 21.

[137] *Ibid*., 51.

[138] Robert Stern, *Routledge Philosophy GuideBook to Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 28.

[139] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 49.

way of despair."[140] Consciousness suffers in every moment because of its failure to satisfy its own desire to know.

At this point, it is possible to say that Hegel agrees with Aristotle's claim that "all men by nature desire to know."[141] Since it cannot abandon its desire, consciousness cannot rest with its failure. Although it suffers from the "violence" at its own hands, it finds no other way than to carry out its search for truth:

> Its anxiety may well make it retreat from the truth, and strive to hold on to what it is in danger of losing. But it can find no peace. If it wishes to remain in a state of unthinking inertia, then thought troubles its thoughtlessness, and its own unrest disturbs its inertia.[142]

Consciousness cannot take a step back from searching the truth. It comes to the point that the satisfaction of its desire becomes possible only if it shoulders its own exhaustion that results from its despair. It realizes that it has to gain a new perspective that makes it possible to overcome its despair. In other words, it realizes that it has to abandon its claim that once it was certain in order to solve the problem with which consciousness is faced. By doing so, it has to change itself too. Therefore, consciousness' despair does not stop it from moving forward. On the contrary, thanks to the fact that it faces the *aporiai* in its own way of thinking, consciousness develops a more comprehensive and articulate claim. Every single error helps consciousness to become closer and closer to truth and, by consequence, its satisfaction as well.

That is one of the reasons why the *Phenomenology* is important as an introduction to science. As Charles Taylor puts it, "[Its] initial darkness reflects something essential about the absolute, viz., that it must grow through struggle to self-

[140] *Ibid*.

[141] Aristotle, *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, trans. William D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), 2.

[142] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 51.

knowledge."[143] In other words, it is consciousness' own darkness, its own despair, which shows that only consciousness is able to light its own way. Thus, consciousness clears the path for science:

> In pressing forward to its true existence, consciousness will arrive at a point at which it gets rid of its semblance of being burdened with something alien, with what is only for it, and some sort of 'other', at a point where appearance becomes identical with essence, so that its exposition will coincide at just this point with the authentic Science of Spirit. And finally, when consciousness itself grasps this its own essence, it will signify the nature of absolute knowledge itself.[144]

Consciousness' progression to absolute knowing in the *Phenomenology* opens up the possibility for a self-determining, presuppositionless philosophical system.

The *Phenomenology* is also important for us, as Stern describes it, as "phenomenological observers."[145] We learn that only consciousness itself can clear these errors, and in doing so, it can come to the point where it finally finds satisfaction with its desire to know. In "Spirit as the 'Unconditioned,'"[146] Terry Pinkard explains this by saying that nothing outside of experience can offer a "guarantee that such contradictions will ever be finally resolved; the proof, as it were, can come only by following out all the steps."[147] We see that consciousness' being alone in its process also means its being free and self-determining. If we are in relation to this process, we can also reflect upon ourselves. We can become participants of the *Phenomenology*, not just passive observers. According to Solomon, as being participants of the process of consciousness, "Our comprehension 'grows,' it becomes more encompassing, letting us see things we

[143] Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 127.

[144] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 57.

[145] Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 25.

[146] Terry Pinkard, "Spirit as the 'Unconditioned'," in *A Companion to Hegel*, ed. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 91-107.

[147] *Ibid*., 94.

did not see, letting us appreciate ideas we could not accept, forcing us to see connections we had not seen before."[148] Thus, while consciousness slowly learns something new from the negative consequences of its experience, we may become more than just passive observers of the process by addressing our own one-sidedness and by freeing ourselves from the limitations of our own thought. Stephen Houlgate explains another reason for the idea that we are more than passive observers: "We are active in so far as we think through and articulate that experience and in so far as we effect the transition, made necessary by a given shape, from that shape to another."[149] We are in a different position than consciousness; we can take a step back and see what is wrong with its claim to truth when it is still not yet aware of its own error. The *Phenomenology* allows us to think speculatively, and by doing so, it allows us to prepare ourselves for the viewpoint of philosophy.

Now it is possible to return to the question of the method of the *Phenomenology*. At first glance, it may seem as if *Phenomenology* does not have a methodology. Walter Kaufmann argues that the *Phenomenology* can have neither a scientific status nor a specific method:

> The *Phenomenology,* whatever its virtues, is certainly neither rigorous nor in any reasonable sense of that word an example of "scientific" philosophy…undisciplined, arbitrary, full of digressions, not a monument to the austerity of the intellectual conscience and to carefulness and precision but a wild, bold, unprecedented book that invites comparison with some great literary masterpieces.[150]

Although Kaufmann is right to point out the artistic power of the *Phenomenology* – at least in a philosophical sense – he actually presents a misreading of Hegel's text. What seems to be "arbitrary" and "full of digressions" is actually the

[148] Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 25.

[149] Stephen Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel: Freedom, Truth and History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 57.

[150] Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: A Reinterpretation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), 157-158.

consciousness' movement itself. Consciousness goes beyond itself and violates its own constitution. It convinces itself that its claim is true, but when it tries to test that claim, it comes up with the opposite of its own claim. This causes a despair that cannot hold consciousness back from taking a new step to overcome this opposition. For the one who does not include themselves in the becoming process of consciousness, both as an observer and as a participant, this process of becoming can be taken as a work that does not have an adequate philosophical ground. Another reason for such a point-of-view would be a specific understanding of the philosophical system. The *Phenomenology* is not scientific in the way of starting philosophy by determining a certain ground. In fact, for Hegel, such an approach is not scientific at all. On the contrary, he only envisions the possibility of a scientific philosophy in giving up all determinations. In other words, as Jean Hyppolite says, "The very existence of philosophic science…is a refutation of such presuppositions."[151]

In "The Project of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*,"[152] John Russon rightfully states, "A unique characteristic of Hegel's project is that the method of phenomenology is itself shaped by what it reveals."[153] The *Phenomenology* is not the exposition of the philosopher's own idea; rather, it is the operation of thought's own reflection upon itself. Hegel refuses to dictate any method outside of the consciousness' own experience. He lets consciousness reveal truth through its own contradictions. For Hegel, one who chooses to impose a prescript on thought because of a "fear of error" actually has a "fear of the truth."[154] According to Hegel, the only method to be used in the *Phenomenology* is to embrace the

[151] Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 6.

[152] John Russon, "The Project of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," in *A Companion to Hegel*, ed. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 47- 67

[153] *Ibid*., 47.

[154] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 47.

possibility of consciousness' falling into errors in its process, which thereby lets consciousness become itself. Solomon explains, "The entire *Phenomenology* is a study of the 'false' (i.e. incomplete) forms of consciousness…since it is by way of the 'false' that we arrive at the 'true.'"[155] The activity of consciousness, which is full of contradictions and misunderstandings, is the one that makes its maturity possible. Therefore, defeating the fear of falling into error consists in choosing to walk a long and exhaustive, but still emancipatory, road.

What Hegel does in the *Phenomenology* is to trace the movement in which ordinary consciousness becomes more adequate and comprehensive, eventually developing into absolute knowing. This is also what we are invited to do, and only by doing so is it possible for us to understand the inner development of the *Phenomenology*:

> Phenomenology is the project of bearing witness to the given dimensions of meaning, the parameters of experience that can only be described, not deduced, a project that itself produces the recognition that our nature as self-conscious subjects…is fulfilled only in giving ourselves over to the project of giving voice to the self-presentation of the absolute.[156]

The project and the method of the *Phenomenology* give us a chance to become more than a mere witness to the self-development of consciousness. It is a chance for a person who desires to recognize their own selves in relation to what they take as other to themselves. However, one should consider the idea that both the writer and the reader do not dictate anything to the process, nor at any point should they take the experiences of consciousness as the ultimate truth of the *Phenomenology*. It is problematic to evaluate consciousness' process of becoming from the endpoint of the *Phenomenology*.

Rather than adopting such approaches, taking the experience of consciousness as the growing of a plant presents a more adequate interpretation of the *Phenomenology*. This becoming is a dialectical movement that is inherent to the experience of consciousness. In the "Introduction," Hegel explains, "This

[155] Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 265-266.

[156] Russon, "The Project of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," 59.

dialectical movement which consciousness exercises on itself and which affects both its knowledge and its object, is precisely what is called *experience* [*Erfahrung*]."[157] The dialectical movement, which "generates itself, going forth from, and returning to, itself,"[158] is not an abstracted method but the very activity of consciousness. This is why Solomon warns us, "Every form of consciousness, whether implicitly or explicitly, is not a belief about "the external world"; it is rather…*a form of life.*"[159] Although a specific form of life can be significant from a certain point-of-view as a reference, the isolation of a single form from its context carries the danger of misinterpreting the *Phenomenology*.

In the following section, my intention is to inquire into some of the specific forms of consciousness while trying not to become too distant from the inner movement of the *Phenomenology*. To do so, I prefer to follow in Hegel's footsteps and embrace the oppositions of consciousness by focusing on the interplay of the process.

3.2 Journey of Consciousness to the Way of Truth

The *Phenomenology* begins with a chapter entitled "Consciousness," in which consciousness' concern is to give an ultimate account of the object. Accordingly, consciousness takes the object as an immediate "other" to itself and tries to determine it as separate from itself.[160] However, in attempting to do so, it becomes aware of its inability to realize its aim to know the object when it focuses only the sphere of the object. Consequently, consciousness admits that it cannot find its

[157] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 55.

[158] *Ibid*., 40.

[159] Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 316.

[160] Houlgate warns readers that "all the shapes analysed in the *Phenomenology* – with the exception of absolute knowing – count as shapes of 'consciousness', since all fail to recognize fully the essential structural identity between being and thought." (*An Introduction to Hegel*, 68.)

truth in the object, at which point it must turn its attention from the object to its own self:

> The *necessary advance* from the previous shapes of consciousness for which their truth was a Thing, an 'other' than themselves, expresses just this, that not only is consciousness of a thing is possible only for a self-consciousness, but that self-consciousness alone is the truth of those shapes.[161]

At the end of the chapter, consciousness again reverts its attention to the knowledge of its own being; In the "cognition of *what consciousness knows in knowing itself*,"[162] consciousness has to become self-consciousness. Mark Taylor summarizes this passage to self-consciousness as follows:

> While consciousness begins with a belief in the essentiality of the object and the inessentiality of the subject, self-consciousness initially assumes the essentiality of the subject and the inessentiality of the object. Throughout the circuitous course of its education…self-consciousness attempts to achieve satisfaction by giving objective expression to its subjective certainty.[163]

Therefore, this time consciousness brings its own self to the center of its world. In the "Self-Consciousness" chapter, consciousness mainly focuses on asserting its own priority so that it can achieve satisfaction.

3.2.1 Self-Consciousness: Desire for Recognition

With the "Self-Consciousness" chapter, the question of consciousness' own selfhood becomes important. In relation to this question, desire, life, death and the struggle for recognition are included in the process of searching for the meaning of the self.[164] However, the essential point of this chapter is consciousness' desire to

[161] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 102.

[162] *Ibid*., 103.

[163] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 192.

[164] Because of the relation of the self to all these concepts, the chapter entitled "Self-Consciousness" is one of the most inspirational parts of the *Phenomenology*. For many philosophers, whether they are opposed to Hegel or not, "Self-Consciousness" becomes an important reference point. As a matter of fact, it would not at all be far fetched to say that "Self-Consciousness" has had a

secure its essentiality by demanding recognition from its other. This demand, on the other hand, is doomed to failure because consciousness refuses to recognize the essentiality of the other. Yet, the first thing to do is to follow the process of consciousness and get involved in its desire for recognition.

At the beginning, self-consciousness posits itself as the essence while the object loses its so-called independency. Hegel explains the relation of self-consciousness with itself and its object in the following manner:

> Self-consciousness is *Desire* in general. Consciousness, as self-consciousness,…has a double object: one is the immediate object…which however *for self-consciousness* has the character of a *negative*; and the second, viz. *Itself*, which is the true *essence*, and is present present in the first instance only as opposed to the first object.[165]

The first primitive form of desire is the negation of the objects in the world. However, such a sensuous desire can never be satisfied because of the fact that self-consciousness can never fully negate the object. In other words, whenever the desiring consciousness wants to assert its own independency by negating the object, it realizes that the object arises again and again. Accordingly, in the experience of the consciousness, the seemingly dependent object turns out to be independent: "Thus self-consciousness, by its negative relation to the object, is unable to supersede it; it is really because of that relation that it produces the object again, and the desire as well."[166] Through this realization, self-consciousness comes to the conclusion that the satisfaction of its own desire is something more than the mere negation of the object. In fact, self-consciousness sees what it really desires: to be recognized by an other's self-consciousness. Only then can it find satisfaction. As Robert Pippin explains that the reason for this is that "self-

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significant influence on existentialism. Jon Stewart argues that "Hegel can…be seen, not as the great enemy of the irrationalist tradition and the bitterest opponent of Kierkegaard and Schopenhauer, but rather as an important forerunner of the existentialist tradition." (*Idealism and Existentialism*, 23.)

[165] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 105.

[166] *Ibid*., 109.

consciousness can actually *be* self-conscious *only* in 'being recognized.'"[167] Hence, the self-consciousness that desires to prove its independency needs another self-consciousness that recognizes its being for-itself: "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged."[168] In this confrontation, both sides will seek to prove their own being for-itself by demanding acknowledgement from the other self-consciousness. Therefore, the desire for recognition will be mutual:

> Thus the movement is simply the double movement of the two self-consciousnesses. Each sees the *other* do the same as it does; each does itself what it demands of the other, and therefore also does what it does only in so far as the other does the same. Action by one side only would be useless because what is to happen can only be brought about by both.[169]

The self-consciousness which asserts itself as pure negation meets with another self-consciousness which has the same claim for its own being. Given these circumstances, for these two self-consciousnesses that want to prove their independency to each other, a conflict is inevitable. The conflict turns out to be a life and death struggle in which both sides want to cancel out the other's independency.

3.2.1.1 Master-Slave Dialectic: Struggle for Independency

This is indeed a life and death struggle in that both sides risk their own lives for being recognized by the other. However, if this fight ends up with the death of a combatant, there would be no recognition. Both sides have to be alive at the end of the struggle. Taylor explains it in the following way: "What is needed is a standing negation, one in which my opponent's otherness is overcome, while he still

[167] Robert B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness: Desire and Death in the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 60.

[168] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 111.

[169] *Ibid*., 112.

remains in being."[170] However, in the act of risking their lives, one of them comes to the point that its fear of death defeats its desire for recognition. This is, actually, one of the most crucial points of "Lordship and Bondage." At the apex of this antagonism, the one which surrenders to the other does not do so because of its fear of the other's power. What it realizes is that the actual negation is nothing but death. Accordingly, with the fear of death, the meaning of life changes for the surrendered consciousness: "*Life has become a value*, not a specific imperative."[171]

At the end of the struggle, these two consciousnesses become "two opposed shapes": "One is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another. The former is lord, the other is bondsman."[172] However, the position of the bondsman is deeper than the lord. In fact, the lord, which thinks it has proven its independency, does not actually emerge a victor. Hyppolite explains this as such:

> The master is master only because he is recognized by the slave; his autonomy depends on the mediation of another self-consciousness, that of the slave. Thus his independence is completely relative…In fact, the slave is, properly speaking, the slave not of the master, but of life; he is a slave because he has retreated in the face of death, preferring servitude to liberty in death. He is, therefore, less the slave of the master than of life… [173]

The lord, seeking to prove its so-called independency by becoming the victor of the struggle, achieves its recognition through the other. However, this sense of independency is actually dependent upon the bondsman. Not only because it has been recognized by the other but also because it is nothing but a mere consumer of the bondsman's labour. Therefore, in the dialectical movement, what seems to be

[170] Taylor, *Hegel*, 153-154.

[171] Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*, 79.

[172] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 115.

[173] Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, 173.

apparent for the lord turns out to be an illusion. The lord seeks to satisfy its desire to be recognized as a pure negation, but it ends up with the inverse, which is its full dependency on the bondsman. Accordingly, the lord can never find its satisfaction for recognition.

Satisfaction is only possible for the slave, or, more precisely, as Alexandre Kojeve explains, for the self-consciousness "who has been a slave, who has passed through Slavery, who has 'dialectically overcome' his slavery."[174] The starting point of overcoming slavery is the bondsman's fear of death. Hegel explains this in a powerful way:

> This consciousness has been fearful…for it has experienced the fear of death, the absolute Lord. In that experience it has been quite unmanned, has trembled in every fibre of its being, and everything solid and stable has been shaken to its foundations. But this pure universal movement, the absolute melting-away of everything stable, is the simple, essential nature of self-consciousness, absolute negativity, *pure being-for-self*…Furthermore, his consciousness is not this dissolution of everything stable merely in principle; in his service he *actually* brings this about. Through his service he rids himself of his attachment to natural existence in every single detail; and gets rid of it by working on it.[175]

In its service for the lord, the slave becomes aware of its own power of negation. However, this is actually different from the consumption or destruction of things. It is rather the ability of transforming them. By means of this transformative activity, the slave sees its own self in the object. In other words, the transformed object becomes the expression of the slave. The slave labors over the object, reflecting upon itself in this relation to the object. This is because the slave discovers its ability to transform itself. In its transformative relation to the object, the slave becomes permanent in the world, that is, its transformative performance on the given makes it more than a passive sufferer. On the contrary, the slave gains its independency thanks to its "formative activity."[176] Kojeve clarifies this point by

[174] Alexandre Kojeve, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. James H. Nichols, Jr (New York: Cornell University Press, 1980), 20.

[175] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 117.

[176] *Ibid*., 118.

saying, "The Slave, in transforming the given World by his work, transcends the given and what is given by that given in himself; hence, he goes beyond himself, and also goes beyond the Master who is tied to the given."[177] Although the slave is the one which actually performs a transformative process, it is not yet recognized by its master. In other words, it is still the slave of its master. However, as Houlgate emphasizes, "He…regards himself as non-slavishly free *in his very slavery*."[178] This is why the independency of the slave remains a pure abstraction. This kind of freedom is a conceptual thought. With this, self-consciousness comes to a new level which will be discussed in the next part.

3.2.1.2 The Unhappy Consciousness: Consciousness' Loss of Its Essentiality

Before concentrating on the unhappy consciousness, it is important to understand how consciousness gets lost in its thought by withdrawing itself from life. Hegel explains this by focusing on stoicism and scepticism. Within both positions, consciousness finds itself alienated from its experience. First of all, in stoicism, the self-consciousness thinks of itself as a free being, and it is "aware of itself as essential being."[179] However, this kind of freedom is only in thought. Therefore, it is only an unrealized freedom. The consciousness retreats from life, announcing, "In thinking, I *am free*, because I am not in an *other*, but remain simply and solely in communion with myself."[180] It is free only because it thinks it is free. Since it defines itself as a thinking activity, this is the only essential principle for it. It gives up its "*natural existence*, as a feeling, or as desire," but it becomes only the "pure universality of thought."[181] Therefore, the essentiality of this form is an abstraction

[177] Kojeve, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 23.

[178] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 70.

[179] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 120.

[180] *Ibid*.

[181] *Ibid*., 121.

that is a lack of life. Consequently, the thought of this self-consciousness is actually a contentless one. Taylor notes that this type of self-consciousness is alien to the world because the world's reality stays as "something foreign, something that cannot be derived from thought."[182] Since in stoicism self-consciousness' claim of freedom does not correspond with the world, such a contentless freedom is destined to fail.

From the thought of stoic consciousness, a new shape arises for consciousness: "*Scepticism*," which is the "realization of that of which Stoicism was only the Notion, and is the actual experience of what the freedom of thought is."[183] In scepticism, self-consciousness brings the certainty of everything into question. Because of its negating activity, "All the determinations of experience and of life"[184] vanish. The stoic idea, which is only in thought, is experienced by scepticism. In this experience, self-consciousness becomes self-contradictory. Although it thinks itself as self-identical, it becomes contingent in its doubt, whereby it finds itself in "restless confusion" in which "its deed and its words always belie one another."[185]

The experience of scepticism results in another new shape of consciousness which now takes itself as a mere contradictory being. This new shape is the unhappy consciousness.[186] Hyppolite remarks the relationship between "The Unhappy Consciousness" and the course of the entire *Phenomenology* as follows:

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[182] Taylor, *Hegel*, 159.

[183] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 123.

[184] Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, 184.

[185] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 125.

[186] Houlgate explains why this consciousness is unhappy while what is expected from its experience is its realization of freedom. Houlgate expresses that "such unhappiness is…the logical consequence of the idea that freedom and self-consciousness lie above all in the active, insistent *negation* of

> Unhappy consciousness is the fundamental theme of the *Phenomenology*. Consciousness, as such, is in principle always unhappy consciousness, for it has not yet reached the concrete identity of certainty and truth, and therefore it aims at something beyond itself. The happy consciousness is either a naïve consciousness which is not yet aware of its misfortune or a consciousness that has overcome its duality and discovered a unity beyond separation. For this reason we find the theme of unhappy consciousness present in various forms throughout the *Phenomenology*.[187]

According to this, through the course of the *Phenomenology*, consciousness is, in a way, unsatisfied with the result of its experience. Whether it is aware of its unhappiness or not, it remains wounded. Only when it has reached truth does "the wounds of the Spirit heal, and leave no scars behind."[188]

For the unhappy consciousness, there is the "Unchangeable" that "it takes to be the *essential* Being" and, in opposition to this, the "Changeable" that "it takes to be the unessential."[189] The unhappy consciousness takes itself as the unessential, changeable being, whereas it posits the Unchangeable as beyond the changeable. Since the Unchangeable is perceived as true essence for the unhappy consciousness, it desires to close the gap between its own unessential being and the Unchangeable. It wants to become one with the Unchangeable so that it can gain essentiality. In addition, the Unchangeable here is actually the Christian version of God. The understanding of God in this way is actually criticized by Hegel.[190] The

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otherness, givenness and contingency" (*An Introduction to Hegel*, 74-75), which at the end of the day ends up with negation of its own self.

[187] Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, 190.

[188] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 407.

[189] *Ibid*., 127.

[190] This part is a criticism of some certain readings of Trinity. In "Revealed Religion," Hegel presents another kind of reading of Trinity; however, this time, it is presented as truth.
"The Unhappy Consciousness" can also be read as the criticism of some philosophical views that understands God as a beyond that cannot be reached. In this regard, this part is the exposition of the consciousness' useless effort to close the gap between its own self and God, although it was consciousness itself that causes this gap in the first place.

reason for his criticism can be understood by the exposition of the unhappy consciousness' experience.

Hegel explains that there are three moments of the unessential consciousness being united with the Unchangeable: "First, as pure consciousness; second, as a particular individual who approaches the actual world in the forms of desire and work; and third, as consciousness that is aware of its own being-for-self."[191] The first moment is the unessential consciousness' religious act of devotion through pure thinking. However, in this devotion, the Unchangeable remains only as a holy other that cannot be united:

> What we have here…is the inward movement of the pure heart which *feels* itself, but itself as agonizingly self-divided, the movement of an infinite yearning which is certain that its essence is such a pure heart, a pure *thinking* which *thinks* of itself as a *particular individuality*, certain of being known and recognized by this object…At the same time, however, this essence is unattainable *beyond* which, in being laid hold of, flees, or rather has already flown.[192]

In reality, the unhappy consciousness becomes the prisoner of its own thought. It realizes the act of devotion as its own thinking activity. However, it is directed to an unattainable beyond. When the unhappy consciousness falls back on its own self, all it can find is its own inessentiality. All that the unhappy consciousness can find in the form of presence is "the *grave* of its own life."[193] Moreover, it is exactly the consciousness itself that digs its own grave because it binds the essentiality of its being with an unattainable beyond which is the creation of the consciousness' own thinking. At the end of its experience of devotion, it finds that it is "the struggle of an enterprise doomed to failure."[194]

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[191] *Ibid*., 130.

[192] *Ibid*., 131.

[193] *Ibid*., 132.

[194] *Ibid*.

At this point, the unhappy consciousness adopts a new strategy: desire and work. In desiring and working, it tries to find itself. However, the world that the unhappy consciousness works on has a two-fold characteristic for it. On the one hand, this world is nothing more than a passage which has no significance in itself; on the other hand, the world is the gift of God. Consequently, the unhappy consciousness that wishes to constitute its unity with the Unchangeable finds itself divided in its activity, for it thinks that the Unchangeable is the ground of the unhappy consciousness' involvement in the world, yet it does not see itself as the agent of its own activity:

> The fact that the unchangeable consciousness *renounces* and *surrenders* its embodied form, while, on the other hand, the particular individual consciousness *gives thanks* [for the gift], i.e. *denies* itself the satisfaction of being conscious of its *independence*, and assigns the essence of its action not to itself but to the beyond.[195]

Accordingly, although the unhappy consciousness senses a kind of satisfaction in its working, it does not let itself be deceived by its own desire and chooses humility by rejecting its independent activity. As a result of its perception of itself as an unworthy being, its second trial to achieve unity with the Unchangeable fails too. From this failure, the unhappy consciousness moves on to its third strategy.

Since the unhappy consciousness, in its humility, takes itself as unessential, its working loses its importance. The unhappy consciousness remains empty-handed. In its feeling of nothingness, it is alone with its own particularity. Although its wish to achieve the unity with the Unchangeable seems to have failed, its particular individuality is actually related to the Unchangeable. From this sense of unity with the Unchangeable, the idea of the middle term arises, which is "a conscious Being [the mediator]."[196] The unhappy consciousness thinks that it needs such a mediator as the one that will overcome the opposition between the consciousness and the Unchangeable. With the mediator, the unhappy consciousness hands over its

[195] *Ibid*., 134.

[196] *Ibid*., 136.

destiny to another being because it loses all hope that the thing which can bring unity can be its own activity. Therefore, it sacrifices itself: "This act of letting go of oneself is, therefore, one through which self-consciousness actually succeeds in freeing itself from itself, because it welcomes into itself a will that is *not just its own*."[197] What is strange in this scenario is that self-consciousness is freed from its misery only because it surrenders its will to another consciousness. Accordingly, in its "surrender of its own will,"[198] the unhappy consciousness is not the one that makes unity possible. Philip Kain makes the movement of the unhappy consciousness explicit as follows:

> Self-consciousness *itself* plays all three parts—it is not only individual consciousness but the unchangeable as well as the mediator. It overcomes its own unhappiness as well as postulates…its own God, a God that it then insists is responsible for mediating virtue with happiness and a God that with which it insists it can be linked only by a mediator. The whole problem results from the fact that consciousness posited two worlds and now must bridge them. And it is self-consciousness itself that does the bridging.[199]

That means self-consciousness is the creator of its own unhappiness, while at the same time, it is the one that ends it. However, it is not aware of itself as the one who solves the problem. That is why its misery ends only in principle: "*For itself*, action and its own actual doing remain pitiable, its enjoyment remains pain, and the overcoming of these in a positive sense remains a *beyond*."[200] This carries consciousness to the next shape.

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[197] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 76.

[198] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 138.

[199] Philip J. Kain, *Hegel and the Other: A Study of the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 64.

[200] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 138.

3.2.2 Reason: Rationality of Consciousness

While in the previous section, self-consciousness was in a negative relation to the world, self-consciousness as reason relates to the world positively. It now thinks that it can find peace because it can now apprehend the essence of the world: "It discovers the world as *its* new real world, which in its permanence holds an interest for it which previously lay only in its transiency."[201] Hence, it thinks that it will find peace in this world. However, reason fails to realize its demand for peace. Stern explains this chapter by saying that "we…find Hegel analysing the shortcomings of different kinds of rationalism, all of which turn out to be inadequate and one-sided, as an unresolved tension between the categories of individuality and universality remains."[202] In order to understand how all the inadequacies of consciousness arise, it would be accurate to study the shapes of its rationalism.

3.2.2.1 Observation of Reason: Distancing from Nature and the Self

The first shape of reason is "Observing Reason," which carries "a universal *interest* in the world."[203] First of all, for observing reason, what is real is experience. In its first attempt, what it experiences is to be determined by some universal principles. It tries to describe things in detail and categorize them according to their shared properties. By doing so, observing reason desires to see the harmony between its own thought and nature. However, the classification of objects according to their similarities and differences is condemned to fail. This is because whenever observing reason tries to impose a certain differentiating principle to the object, it realizes that the so-called separate objects interact with each other:

> Observation, which kept them properly apart and believed that in them it had something firm and settled, sees principles overlapping one another,

[201] *Ibid*., 140.

[202] Stern, *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, 97.

[203] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 146.

> transitions and confusions developing; what it at first took to be absolutely separate, it sees combined with something else, and what it reckoned to be in combination, it sees apart and separate.[204]

Consequently, observing reason changes its attitude and adopts the opposite criteria in which it will seek to find the law not in its own cognition, but in nature itself. However, reason has an "instinct" to give a law to the world.[205] Because of this instinct, observing reason withdraws from sensuous beings: "We find, as the result of this experimenting consciousness, *pure law*, which is freed from sensuous being; we see it as a *Notion* which, while present in sensuous being, operates there independently and unrestrained."[206] This means the object becomes more and more abstracted from the world while the notion becomes concrete.

Later on, observing reason proceeds to observe living organisms. First, it tries to understand the relation between living beings and their surroundings, but it cannot find any necessary connection between living organisms and their environments. Next, it finds another way of expressing organic life, which is the teleological relation. However, observing consciousness does not find this purposiveness in the organic being itself. It thinks that the self-preservation of the organic being is different from having an internal purpose, and so observing reason comes to the conclusion that "purposive action…would not belong to the organism."[207] When observing reason thinks that this teleological action is something outside of the organism, the result is not satisfactory either. The reason for this is that if the teleological notion is outside of the organism, then the organism becomes

[204] *Ibid*., 150.

[205] *Ibid*., 151.

[206] *Ibid*., 154.

[207] *Ibid*., 158-159.

something empty, or as Hegel puts it, "Its activity would be an empty activity devoid of any content of its own."[208]

Consequently, observing reason comes to be aware of the fact that it is observing consciousness itself, with itself dividing activity from purpose. While observing nature, in every single attempt to apply some laws to organic life, reason can find nothing but a division that does not satisfy its demand of a notion of universality. As a result of this failure, observing reason turns its attention to its own self. John Russon explains this transition as follows:

> The very ability observing reason to *recognize*…observables *as* units *presupposes* that reason's cognition is *implicitly* animated by a logic more sophisticated than that which it explicitly adopts in its scientific practice…It is only reason's own sophistication in the posing of perceptual questions that allows it to recognize the more sophisticated objects of its experience…[209]

Resulting from this, observing reason starts to focus on self-consciousness itself. This opens up a new field where consciousness tries to classify conscious beings according to their behaviours. However, this is contradictory because such a separation conflicts with the essentiality of consciousness as "the universal of Spirit."[210]

Therefore, it begins to move in another direction by observing the relation between self-consciousness' behaviour and its sociality, such as customs and habits. However, taking the individual as one that is governed by the environment is problematic. Observing reason cannot comprehend that there is a reciprocal relation between the individual and its world:

> Individuality is what *its* world is, the world that is its *own*. Individuality is itself the cycle of its action in which it has exhibited itself as an actual

[208] *Ibid*., 159.

[209] John Russon, *Reading Hegel's Phenomenology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 123.

[210] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 183.

> world, and as simply and solely the unity of the world as *given* and the world it has *made*; a unity whose sides do not fall apart.[211]

Observing reason cannot find a law between the self-consciousness and the world because the link between individuality and the actual world is invisible to it.

Finally, it tries to discover a law that can show the relation between the thought of consciousness and its body. The observing reason tries to set a law to the connection between the inner thought of the individual and its outer existence. However, this is nothing but an illusionary attempt to understand self-consciousness. What the observing reason really does is to reduce self-consciousness to something that can be explained mechanically. Therefore, observing reason fails. It tries to look at its object closely, but while standing in the position of an observer, the world and its own self becomes alien to it. Since reason will not stop seeking its truth in the world, it comes to the point that it has to abandon its being a mere observer. It therefore tries to uncover the truth in its activity.

3.2.2.2 Activity of Reason: Seeking Individuality

In the activity of reason, there is still a dualism between the self and the other, which here means society. While consciousness tries to find itself by observing it in the previous shape, it now aims at producing its individuality in society. In other words, it takes its own individuality into focus and tries to express itself in its activity. It defines itself as "the *negativity* of the 'other.'"[212] In connection with this, it seeks to see itself as "*this particular individual* in another, or…another consciousness as itself."[213] Therefore, its goal is the expression of its own individual reality in social life.

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[211] *Ibid*, 185.

[212] *Ibid*., 216.

[213] *Ibid*.

In "*Pleasure and Necessity,*"[214] reason acts according to its own pleasure. The world is the place in which reason can perform acts in line with its inclinations and desires, and by doing so, it can find happiness. Instead of annihilating the object, reason desires to resolve its independent otherness.[215] In other words, what it wants is not to destroy the selfhood of the other but to present its own independency through the other. Here, the two self-consciousnesses are united. However, in this unity, the independent individuality is only momentary. Individuality loses its content, and the independent particularity turns out to be an abstraction. Consciousness cannot maintain its desire for pure independency in a contentless relation to its object. To put it more explicitly, consciousness' relation to its object, which depends on pleasure, is nothing but a lifeless abstraction. As Hegel explains, "Unity, difference, and relation are categories each of which is nothing in and for itself, but only in relation to its opposite, and they cannot therefore be separated from one another."[216] Accordingly, this so-called unity between consciousness and its object, i.e., pleasure, does not involve anything at all, that is, consciousness seeking to manifest itself as an independent individual through its pleasure shall eventually find itself as being contentless. Consequently, as Hegel notes, "Individuality is smashed to pieces."[217] Consciousness thereby abandons the understanding of pleasure as the manifestation of the independent individual.

In "*the law of the heart and the frenzy of self-conceit*,"[218] self-consciousness finds the universal law within itself, which is not only interested in its own pleasure but also wishes for the good for humanity. This law is the universal law of the heart. However, in the realization of this universal law, the individual finds itself

[214] *Ibid*., 217.

[215] *Ibid*., 218.

[216] *Ibid*., 219.

[217] *Ibid*., 221.

[218] *Ibid*.

alienated from the law: "What the individual brings into being through the realization of his law, is not *his* law; on the contrary, since the realization is in principle his own, but actually is for him an alien affair."[219] The individual becomes separated from the law. Moreover, it realizes that others do not agree with the individual's law:

> Others do not find in this content the fulfilment of the law of *their* hearts, but rather that of someone else; and precisely in accordance with the universal law that each shall find in what is law *his* own heart, they turn against the reality *he* set up, just as he turned against theirs…[220]

Here, individuality and universality again contradict each other. The one that claims the law of its own heart is rejected by the other who claims its own law as well. Consequently, individuals become opponents. Hegel explains the result of this hostility: "What seems to be public *order*, then, is this universal state of war"[221] in which every single individual tries to assert their individual opinion as the law.

Hegel then analyzes another project, which is "*virtue and the way of the world*."[222] Taylor explains this passage by stating that "instead of hoping to save the world by imposing our own individuality on it, our idea now is to purify it by removing all traces of individual aspiration from our actions."[223] The former shape shows that even though the individual adopts a universal law, it still preserves its individuality, which causes a conflict in society. In the shape of virtue, on the other hand, the individual sacrifices its own personality. For the individual, society and the individual are still opposed to one another, and in order to preserve the good of

[219] *Ibid*., 223.

[220] *Ibid*., 224.

[221] *Ibid*., 227.

[222] *Ibid*., 228.

[223] Taylor, *Hegel*, 166.

society, it thinks it has to annihilate its own individuality. Therefore, it must nullify its individuality by handing itself over to universality. However, this kind of virtue is actually unreal and doomed to failure:

> The 'way of the world'…does not triumph over something real but over the creation of distinctions; it glories in the pompous talk about doing what is best for humanity, about the oppression of humanity, about making sacrifices for the sake of the good, and the misuse of gifts. Ideal entities and purposes of this kind are empty, ineffectual words which lift up the heart but leave reason unsatisfied… [224]

This understanding of virtue is contentless and an unreal one. Since it creates a conflict between the good of society and of the individual, virtue is not more than an abstract principle that can never be actualized. Therefore, consciousness has to abandon its attempt to sacrifice its individuality for the sake of society. After its constant failures, reason realizes that it has to adopt a new perspective in which the individual and the universal are not contrary to each other.

3.2.2.3 Manifestation of Reason: Acting for the Harmony between the Individual and the Universal

In this new shape, reason believes that action is the unity that "alters nothing and opposes nothing."[225] Through its action, the individual is united with the world. The first subsection is "*the spiritual animal kingdom and deceit, or the 'matter in hand' itself*"[226] in which the individual seeks to go beyond the limitation of its own thought. In other words, through action, the individual recognizes its own self: "An individual cannot know what he [really] is until he has made himself a reality through action."[227] Accordingly, the individual expresses its truth thanks to its action in the outer world. Kain clarifies this by saying that "the original nature of

[224] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 233-234.

[225] *Ibid*., 237.

[226] *Ibid*.

[227] *Ibid*., 240.

potential of the individual can be nothing but what eventually gets carried out, expressed, realized in the world."[228] However, in its realization, this idea is not as satisfactory as was expected. The work of the individual becomes relative to others. Therefore, action, which is taken as the actuality of the individual, becomes contingent when the work is done. For the individual, its work is the most essential because it is its own manifestation. However, in the public eye, this work loses its essentiality and becomes alien. In this way, Hegel summarizes the current position of the individual:

> Consciousness is thus made aware in its work of the *antithesis* of willing and achieving, between end and means, and again, between this inner nature in its entirety and reality itself, an antithesis which in general includes within it the contingency of its action, yet the unity and necessity of the action are no less present, too.[229]

At this point, the individual passes onto another attitude in which it thinks of itself as "*honest*."[230] However, this honesty turns out to be hypocritical. It tries to convince others of its honesty by acting in accordance with what is the "matter in hand."[231]

Although it does not do anything virtuous, it consoles itself with the idea that "it has at least *willed*"[232] to do so. The consequent of this approach is twofold: first, by retreating from action, the individual abandons its claim, which it realizes is its true self in its activity; second, it deceives itself and others. The result is nothing but chaos in which everyone tries to fool one another with their so-called acts. However, the individual necessarily internalizes the idea that "action is the concrete

[228] Kain, *Hegel and the Other*, 112-113.

[229] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 245.

[230] *Ibid*., 247.

[231] *Ibid*.

[232] *Ibid.*

whole; we must act for the sake of acting."[233] Accordingly, it renounces the idea that action is the mere expression of its own self and agrees with the idea of action's "nature such that its *being* is the *action* of the *single* individual and of all individuals and whose action is immediately *for others*."[234] Thanks to this realization, it now defines its action not as the expression of its individuality but the realization of moral purpose.

Later on, Hegel analyzes "*reason as lawgiver*,"[235] by which reason does not suffer because of a lack of harmony between the universal and the individual. It sees itself "in communion with itself."[236] Thanks to this harmony, it believes that it can immediately grasp good and evil. Hegel gives some examples of laws that are "considered as *immediate* ethical laws,"[237] such as "everyone ought to speak the truth"[238] and "love thy neighbour as thyself."[239] In the experience of acting in accordance with such laws, reason realizes that such rules actually lack any content. They are just mere "commandments"[240] that do not actually make it easy to determine right and wrong actions. As the result of the realization that such empty rules are not functional to determine ethical acts, reason abandons its reliance on such contentless rules. Instead, it tests its actions directly.

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[233] Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, 299.

[234] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 251-252.

[235] *Ibid*., 252.

[236] *Ibid*., 253.

[237] *Ibid*., 254

[238] *Ibid*.

[239] *Ibid*., 255.

[240] *Ibid*., 256.

Hegel explains this new viewpoint under the subsection of "*reason as testing laws*."[241] The task here is to apply a criterion of law to decide whether something is self-consistent or not. The criterion is to be the universal maxim, and as such does not have content. However, this contentless maxim is actually indifferent to the world. Such an isolated, formalized criterion cannot evaluate the action properly. Hegel states, "The criterion of law which Reason possesses within itself fits every case equally well, and is thus in fact no criterion at all."[242] Accordingly, the idea of a universal, formalized criterion of law fails, thereby allowing him to make a distinction between the law as being universal and life as being contingent, which turns out to be erroneous. For one thing, the law is neither in the individual nor in the contentless criterion. From the failure of the individual's attempt to establish a formal criterion or to internalize a command arises the truth of the law:

> The law is equally an eternal law which is grounded not in the will of a particular individual, but is valid in and for itself; it is the absolute *pure will of all* which has the form of immediate being. Also, it is not a *commandment*, which only *ought* to be: it *is* and is *valid*; it is the universal 'I' of the category, the 'I' which is immediately a reality, and the world *is* only this reality.[243]

Above all, it follows that the law is not something beyond or alien but rather something actualized in the cultural and social life of a community, which is itself constructed in and through the law. Moreover, the law is only actual in ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*). With this idea of the actual law, consciousness becomes willing to free itself from the one-sided view of reason and to adopt a new shape. This new shape is Spirit, which "takes the form of a community of reciprocal recognition."[244]

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[241] *Ibid*.

[242] *Ibid*., 259.

[243] *Ibid.*, 260-261.

[244] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 78.

3.2.3 Spirit: The Realization of the Reciprocal Relationship of Individuals

With the articulation of spirit, the *Phenomenology* enters a new sphere in which social, ethical and religious lives are introduced. Hegel defines spirit by explaining that "Spirit…is self-supporting, absolute, real being."[245] With this chapter, consciousness enters into a new realm where it recognizes its being a part of a community. Stewart explains what changes in this chapter as follows:

> In "Spirit" the dialectic departs from the abstract account of the individual and the community found in "Reason" and moves through history, and this movement shapes the truth claims of peoples and historical periods in a way that the "Reason" chapter could not account for.[246]

It is true that Hegel uses some historical references to clarify the process of consciousness' recognition of its communion with others, which is mostly because consciousness now saves itself from mere abstractions and relates to its life in community. Consciousness' process of recognizing itself as part of "we" will be detailed by studying each shape of spirit.

3.2.3.1 The Ethical Life of Spirit: Conflict between Humanity and Divinity

In "The True Spirit: The Ethical Order,"[247] Hegel argues that there is a contradiction between the human law and the divine law. Given this contradiction as it is displayed in and through the way in which consciousness experiences the ethical order, Spirit cannot sustain its truth in the ethical life. The relationship between the divine law and the human law is expressed in being a family member governed by the divine law and a citizen governed by the human law. Hegel interprets the relationship between the divine law and the human law, as well as the relation between family and state in and through the relationship of brother and sister. While a brother becomes a member of the state, or an agent of the human

[245] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 264.

[246] Stewart, *Idealism and Existentialism*, 60-61.

[247] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 266.

law, a sister remains a member of the family, or as Hegel puts it, "The guardian of the divine law."[248] So far, Hegel tells of the happy relationship between the divine law and the human law by exemplifying the relationship between brother and sister, presenting the peaceful picture of the harmonious relationship between state and family:

> The individual who seeks the pleasure of *enjoying his individuality*, finds it in the Family, and the necessity in which that pleasure passes away is his own self-consciousness as a citizen of his nation. Or, again, it is in knowing that the law of his own heart is the law of all hearts, in knowing the consciousness of the self as the acknowledged universal order…The whole is a stable equilibrium of all the parts, and each part is a Spirit at home in this whole, a Spirit which does not seek its satisfaction outside of itself but finds it within itself, because it is itself in this equilibrium with the whole.[249]

However, such harmony does not last forever. The collapse of the peaceful togetherness of the divine law and the human law appears as the "dreadful fate,"[250] the reason being that in this peace, a conflict of two different duties arises.

At this point, Hegel adds that "the collision of duties is comic because it expresses a contradiction, viz. the contradiction of an Absolute that is opposed to itself."[251] For the individual, the divine law and the human law stand in opposition to each other, and now the individual identifies itself with one of these laws and so opposes the other:

> Since it sees right only on one side and wrong on the other, that consciousness which belongs to the divine law sees in the other side only the violence of human caprice, while that which holds to human law sees in the other only the self-will and disobedience of the individual who insists on being his own authority.[252]

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[248] *Ibid*., 275.

[249] *Ibid*., 276-277.

[250] *Ibid*., 279.

[251] *Ibid*.

[252] *Ibid*., 280.

The individual adopts one of these laws and acts accordingly. However, appropriating a one-sided law is actually the "guilt."[253] This is because it creates a division between laws:

> The movement of the ethical powers against each other of the individualities calling them into life and action have attained their true end only in so far as both sides suffer the same destruction…The equal essentiality of both and their indifferent existence alongside each other means that they are without self.[254]

Hegel illustrates this conflict with Sophocles' *Antigone*, in which family and state, individual and community, man and woman and, eventually, the divine law and the human law, are in contradiction to one another. He gives this example to show that ethical life, represented in the Ancient Greek way of life, cannot be sustained. This is because the act of the individual who is committed to its own isolated individuality is guilty according to the individual who is committed to the community, and vice versa. Their act of destroying the other's law, at the end of the day, is the destruction of their own selves.

The community only recognizes the individual who is committed to the human law. The one who is against the state, on the other hand, is punished. The form of punishment in the play of *Antigone* is to forbid the burying of the dead body of the rebellious. Being the representation of the human law, the state now takes this punishment as the rightful one. For the family, on the other hand, the obedience to this punishment would be guilt. Therefore, for the family member, i.e., Antigone, the burying of the dead is a necessary duty and responsibility. At this point, Hegel interprets human law as the community of manhood while family is "presided over by womankind."[255] Accordingly, woman becomes the representation of divine law and the protector of the family, whereby Antigone, who acts in accordance with the

[253] *Ibid*., 282.

[254] *Ibid*., 285.

[255] *Ibid*., 288.

ethical essence of the family, shakes the power of manhood in a way through the representation of the state.

The state of manhood suppresses the individual being and values it only as a member of the community, whereas the family values the actual existence of the individual. The state starts to see the individuals as its enemy, even though it is actually the individuals that make the state what it is. The state subsequently turns against its own essence. Simultaneously, the family is obligated to look after its family members. Therefore, it becomes conflicted with the law of the state.

The tragic story arises from the one-sidedness in the representation of ethical life. Family and state, individual and universal, man and woman – these all become sharply separated. This ruins the picture of the happy state in which every member feels at home. It becomes a corrupted place full of soulless and dead beings.[256] Therefore, in the ethical order, consciousness finds itself alienated, far away from being at home. Ethical principles turn out to be suppressions of the individual.[257] Thus, consciousness starts to reject such rules that come outside of itself, and it accepts its own point-of-view. Hence, it becomes "Self-Alienated Spirit," in which it tries to dissolve the suffering that is caused by nothing but the one-sidedness. However, it only tries to annihilate this misery by adopting its own isolated selfhood.

[256] The death of the brother in the story of Antigone recalls the transformative meaning of trembling in fear of death in "Lordship and Bondage." Just as self-consciousness realizes the meaning of life by facing the fear of death, individuality gains its importance in the death of the brother. An individual's value does not only come from its service to the state, but it is also a brother, a son, a young man and an existent person. What Hegel understands from the being of a community is not the loss of such individuality. On the contrary, the death of the individual refers to the value of this individual's life. Without honoring "this" individual life, it is not possible to constitute the harmonious life of the whole. Otherwise, the state, far from being "the home," becomes the graveyard of individual lives.

[257] Here, I do not discuss the last subsection of "The Ethical Order," the "*legal status*," in which the individual starts to gain its selfhood not as a mere member of society but as a person. Hegel states this new claim by saying that "the actuality of the self that did not exist in the ethical world has been won by its return into the 'person.'" (*Phenomenology*, 294). In the ethical life, however, consciousness cannot account for this concept of personhood, so it tries to realize itself in a new shape that takes the priority of the person as the essential.

3.2.3.2 The Cultural Life of Spirit: Destruction of the Individuality

The self-alienated spirit takes itself as the essential and refuses to be determined by accepted rules and traditions. While the previous form of the spirit represents Ancient Greek life, the new one represents modern culture.

The first subsection is "*culture and its realm of actuality*,"[258] through which Hegel discloses the oppositions between nature and culture, good and bad. The individual removes itself from nature because it thinks that only by doing so can it gain actuality. Hegel notes, "His true *original nature* and substance is the alienation of himself as Spirit from his *natural* being. This externalization is, therefore, both the purpose and the existence of the individual."[259] Consequently, the individual finds its essentiality not as being part of nature but in cultural life. Nature, then, loses its essentiality and becomes unreal. In addition, the individual becomes a self in being against nature, or as Hegel puts it, "The self knows itself as actual only as a *transcended* self."[260] The individual also makes a differentiation between thoughts of good and bad in relation to their being the essence of either state power or wealth: "State power is the simple *substance*, so too is it the universal '*work*,'" while wealth is "devoid of inner worth."[261] Work is taken as good because of its being for the sake of all, whereas wealth is bad because it is only the concern of the individual. However, consciousness comes to the point that the state is the oppressor over the individual:

> It finds that the state power disowns action *qua* individual action and subdues it into obedience. The individual, therefore, faced with this power reflects himself into himself; it is for him an oppressor and the Bad; for…its nature is essentially different from that of individuality. Wealth, on the other hand, is the Good; it leads to the general enjoyment, is there to be

[258] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 297.

[259] *Ibid*., 298.

[260] *Ibid*., 299.

[261] *Ibid*., 301.

> made use of, and procures for everyone the consciousness of his particular self.[262]

However, this new thought on good and bad causes a disparity in consciousness. Now, the individual finds that the good in its own wealth can change this idea again and realizes that what is higher is to act for the sake of all. As a result of these imbalanced thoughts, the individual finds itself divided over two ways of relating to the world. One is "noble" and the other is "ignoble."[263] While the noble values its service to the state and finds its identification in this service, the ignoble thinks that its own self is suppressed by the state. However, this way of thinking is nothing but the continuation of one-sidedness.

The noble consciousness represents the "heroism of *service*"[264] by which it actually sacrifices its individuality. Eventually, the noble consciousness becomes alienated from itself by devoting itself to the power of the state. The noble consciousness comes to the extreme thought that its service to the state can only be completed by sacrificing its own life. However, the noble consciousness recalls its individuality because it is not ready to give up its own life. Accordingly, the noble consciousness that is not satisfied with the idea of heroism of service comes up with a new strategy, which is the "heroism of flattery."[265] In this moment, the noisy sound of flattery creates an individual power which is an "*unlimited monarch*."[266] The result is that a particular individual that has its own interest becomes the universal power. The noble consciousness, on the other hand, is now in the service of this monarch. At this point, Hegel notes that "the self sees its self-certainty as such to be

[262] *Ibid*., 303.

[263] *Ibid*., 305.

[264] *Ibid*., 306.

[265] *Ibid*., 310.

[266] *Ibid*.

completely devoid of essence, sees that its pure personality is absolutely not a personality."[267] With this feeling, then, the noble consciousness becomes rebellious: "When the pure 'I' beholds itself outside of itself and rent asunder, then everything that has continuity and universality, everything that is called law, good, and right, is at the same time rent asunder and is destroyed."[268] While the individual feels more and more alienated from the universal power, the monarch becomes more and more despotic. Therefore, the gap between the individual and the state appears to be larger:

> What is learnt in this world is that neither the *actuality* of power and wealth, nor the specific *Notions*, "good" and "bad," or the consciousness of "good" and "bad" (the noble and the ignoble consciousness), possess truth; on the contrary, all these moments become inverted, one changing into the other, and each is the opposite of itself.[269]

From the realization of this dividedness, "disrupted consciousness" arises. Hegel defines this as the consciousness of "absolute perversion."[270] Disrupted consciousness, aware of the corruption in the relationship between the individual and the state, has the power to transform itself. Since the world now becomes alien to the disrupted consciousness, it changes its attitude and retreats from cultural life. With this change, consciousness takes a new form.

This brings us to the discussion under the later subsection, "*Faith and pure insight*."[271] While faith takes its content beyond its own self, pure insight is a mere inwardness. However, both of them represent the consciousness' retreat from the world. Hegel explains what they mean by comparing them:

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[267] *Ibid*., 314.

[268] *Ibid*.

[269] *Ibid*., 316.

[270] *Ibid*., 317.

[271] *Ibid*., 321.

> The essence of faith is…reduced to the level of something imagined, and becomes a supersensible world which is essentially an "*other*" in relation to self-consciousness. In pure insight, on the other hand, the transition of pure thought into consciousness has the opposite determination; objectivity has the significance of a merely negative content, a content which is reduced to a moment and returns into the self; that is to say, only the self is really the object of the self.[272]

Faith externalizes the actual world and turns it into a "soulless existence,"[273] whereas the pure insight knows itself as the "absolute *self*."[274] Accordingly, pure insight has the claim of being absolute identity that "calls to *every* consciousness: *be for yourselves* what you all are *in yourselves—reasonable*."[275] With this call, consciousness enters into the Enlightenment, in which consciousness tries to resolve the contradictions arisen in its previous experiences.

In the subsection "*the struggle of the Enlightenment with superstition*,"[276] Hegel notes that the essence of the Enlightenment is pure insight, which "sees faith in general to be a tissue of superstitions, prejudices, and errors."[277] Therefore, the attack of the Enlightenment is faith's arguments. Solomon notes that the Enlightenment "opposes the church and the priests, who manipulate the general masses with *superstitions*…The notion of 'pure insight' or what Descartes called 'the natural light of reason' is the Enlightenment antidote to superstition."[278] The manifestation of this natural light of reason, on the other hand, is "a sheer uproar

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[272] *Ibid*., 324.

[273] *Ibid*., 326.

[274] *Ibid*.

[275] *Ibid*., 328.

[276] *Ibid*., 329.

[277] *Ibid*., 330.

[278] Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 557.

and a violent struggle with its antithesis."[279] Hegel notes that in this struggle, the Enlightenment becomes the negation of itself: "It becomes…untruth and unreason…becomes a lie and insincerity of purpose."[280] The reason for this criticism is the claim that the Enlightenment considers faith as superstitious without understanding the truth of it.

First of all, the Enlightenment says that the essence of faith is only the thought of consciousness. However, the answer of faith would be that "whomsoever I trust, his *certainty of himself* is for me the *certainty of myself;* I recognize in him my own being-for-self."[281] Accordingly, for faith, what it believes and its own self are one. The second claim of the Enlightenment is that the essence of faith is alien to consciousness. However, Hegel views this as an erroneous claim: "What it asserts to be *alien* to consciousness…directly declares to be the *inmost nature of consciousness itself*."[282] What Hegel means is that consciousness takes the object of faith as its own truth. In other words, consciousness internalizes faith by understanding it as its own essence. Accordingly, the Enlightenment's argument that the essence of faith is nothing more than a delusionary other for consciousness fails.

Hegel's other criticism about the Enlightenment's attack on faith is the idea that faith takes some historical events as proof of its certainty. Unlike the Enlightenment, Hegel defends the notion that faith does not need to base its certainty on any proof:

> Faith, in its certainty, is an unsophisticated relationship to its absolute object, a pure knowing of it which does not mix up letters, paper, and

[279] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 332.

[280] *Ibid*.

[281] *Ibid*., 334.

[282] *Ibid*., 335.

> copyists in its consciousness of absolute Being, and does not bring itself into relation with it by means of things of that kind.[283]

Accordingly, faith does not take its certainty from any externality. Hegel also points out some positive results of the Enlightenment. For instance, the Enlightenment brings to light the separateness of faith. However, at the end of the day, both faith and the Enlightenment are one-sided. Although they seem to be in opposite directions, Hegel shows their shared error:

> Since faith is without any content and it cannot remain in this void, or since, in going beyond the finite which is the sole content, it finds only the void, it is a *sheer yearning*, its truth an empty beyond…Faith has, in fact, become the same as Enlightenment, viz. the consciousness of the relation of what is in itself finite to an Absolute without predicates, an Absolute unknown and unknowable; but there is this difference, the latter is *satisfied* Enlightenment, but faith is *unsatisfied* Enlightenment.[284]

By revealing "*The truth of Enlightenment*,"[285] Hegel questions whether the Enlightenment maintains its satisfaction or not. It turns out that the Enlightenment makes the same mistake that faith does. It carries an internal conflict. It differentiates nature from God, thought from matter. Hegel warns of this: "The two…are absolutely the same Notion; the difference lies not in what they actually are, but simply and solely in the different starting-points of the two developments …"[286] Accordingly, this conflict is not resolved in the Enlightenment, and so consciousness does not remain satisfied. Therefore, it takes a new shape in which consciousness will announce its absolute freedom.

In "Absolute Freedom and Terror," Hegel discusses the new shape, "*absolute freedom*," as the "consciousness of its pure personality…of all spiritual reality."[287]

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[283] *Ibid*., 338.

[284] *Ibid*., 349.

[285] *Ibid*.

[286] *Ibid*., 352.

[287] *Ibid*., 356.

It is the "general will"[288] that represents the whole. Any individuality disappears in such a general will, and it clears itself from all divisions and limitations. Eventually, "Its purpose is the general purpose, its language universal law, its work the universal work."[289] Here, individuality is foreclosed, and so it "is present only as an idea."[290] Since the universal will is nothing but a "One,"[291] there is no other individual, either. As a result, the universal will turns into destruction by turning everything into abstractions. This pure negation, then, is "*death*," which is "the coldest and meanest of all deaths."[292] The government, on the other hand, becomes a specific will by externalising all individuals. As a consequence of this, terror begins. In absolute freedom, everything vanishes. The absolute freedom is indeed actual negation. At this point, Hegel says that it is also pure positivity:

> It is the *universal will* which in this its ultimate abstraction has nothing positive and therefore can give nothing in return for the sacrifice. But for that very reason it is immediately one with self-consciousness, or it is the pure positive, because it is the pure negative; and the meaningless death, the unfilled negativity of the self, changes round in its inner Notion into absolute positivity.[293]

Therefore, from its destruction, spirit finds its reality. Hyppolite explains, "Human and divine law lose their individuality in the unity of substance. Substance itself, detached from naturalness, becomes negative…but, simultaneously, the self

[288] *Ibid*., 357.

[289] *Ibid*.

[290] *Ibid*., 359.

[291] *Ibid*.

[292] *Ibid*., 360.

[293] *Ibid*., 362.

becomes actually real."[294] However, for the recognition of self's actuality, consciousness must become a moral agent.

3.2.3.3 The Moral Life of Spirit: Burden of the Duty

For the moral consciousness, its knowledge is its reality. It knows that it is a free agent. The world, on the other hand, becomes a stage for consciousness so that it can perform itself. Under the subsection of "*the moral view of the world*,"[295] Hegel raises the problem of the determination of the world by a moral agent. First of all, nature and consciousness are completely separated from each other, which have different kinds of laws. Although nature and the consciousness are indifferent to each other, the moral agent still has to perform its action in the world. Therefore, the world must become harmonious with the consciousness so that the moral duty can be realized. However, this harmony arises as a necessity, not as an actuality. The consciousness, then, demands the harmony that was ruined by the consciousness itself. This necessary harmony, however, cannot be sustained because the world and the consciousness still remain as others in actuality. In the realization of the pure duty, the moral consciousness becomes contradictory to the world. The pure thought of the duty cannot overcome the world standing against it.

The moral consciousness that thinks for the sake of the pure duty, which has to resist its own natural existence, such as inclinations and desires are faced with the fact that the moral task cannot be realized in the world. That means moral consciousness cannot find its satisfaction in the world. This brings it to the idea that there must be another consciousness harmonizing the world and duty so that the moral consciousness can finally find its satisfaction:

> The implicit harmony is…the unity of what are *simple essentialities*, essentialities of thought, and are therefore only in a consciousness. This is then henceforth a master and ruler of the world, who brings about the

[294] Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, 363-364.

[295] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 365.

> harmony of morality and happiness, and at the same time sanctifies duties in their multiplicity.[296]

In this case, the moral consciousness delivers an essentiality to another being, i.e., God. The moral consciousness as a free agent is, in a way, dependent on something other than the self. In this case, as Hegel asserts, "Duty in general thus falls outside of it into another being, which is consciousness and the sacred giver of pure duty."[297] Now, since the moral consciousness postulates the pure duty as something that takes its content from a sacred beyond, it sees itself as a natural being which carries the danger of being affected by inclinations and desires. In other words, while the sacred being is the pure and essential one, the moral consciousness becomes imperfect and unworthy.

The moral consciousness is unworthy because it cannot annihilate its being sensuous, so it cannot perform the pure duty perfectly. Consequently, for the moral consciousness, happiness can only be a hope. To put it differently, happiness can be a gift from God, who sees the effort of the contingent to act for the sake of the pure duty.

With the idea of the moral agent that acts for the sake of the pure duty, consciousness becomes abstracted from not only nature but also its own self. First of all, duty without any content has no mastery over nature. As a result of this, the moral consciousness cannot perform the duty. Since it cannot find its happiness in its trial to act morally, it hands its destiny to another will that can decide whether it deserves happiness or not. Therefore, the moral consciousness loses its freedom.

With the section "*dissemblance or duplicity*,"[298] Hegel continues to emphasize the difficulty of finding peace and harmony in such an understanding of morality. First, Hegel criticizes the idea that the harmony, in the moral view of the world, is

[296] *Ibid*., 370.

[297] *Ibid*., 371.

[298] *Ibid*., 374.

something assumed when, in actuality, there is only the contradiction of nature and duty. While performing the pure duty, which is just a thought without any content, all that moral consciousness finds is the disjointedness from its duty and its action. Hegel also adds that "the *actual* moral consciousness…is one that *acts*."[299] Accordingly, the harmony of morality is not the beyond that has to be postulated; rather, it already exists in action. In addition, for there to be a moral duty, it could be realized in the world. In other words, if morality and nature are taken to be opposed to each other, there can be no duty that would be actualized. Here, Hegel presents a shift in the view of morality by stating that "there certainly ought to be action, absolute duty ought to be expressed in the whole of Nature, and moral law become natural law."[300] That would mean nature and morality do not have different laws, and they are in conformity with each other. Therefore, the problem in the moral view of the world is its dualistic point of view.

Another problem that Hegel points out is hoping for a transcendent being to overcome the dualism between one's natural desires and morality. However, this dualism arises from the idea that the moral act has to be clarified from one's inclinations and desires that are supposed to be in conflict with pure duty. For Hegel, the real problem is to see morality as an endless suffering that is caused by the distinctive feature of morality. Here, the moral consciousness runs after a perfect task that it knows it can never fulfill perfectly. Therefore, the actualization of morality stands as a horizon that can never be reached. Hegel presents some other objections to the moral view of the world that show how this understanding of morality collapses eventually. Houlgate argues that moral consciousness turns out to be a hypocritical one, and it has to resolve the gap between pure duty and action in order to overcome this hypocrisy:

> Moral consciousness shows its hypocrisy by proclaiming that it seeks to make its actions moral, while, at the same time, showing that it in fact believes its moral perfection is to be found in the purity of its thought and

[299] *Ibid*., 375.

[300] *Ibid*., 376.

> will *as opposed* to its actions…By drawing attention to the hypocrisy that lies in its own moral standpoint, consciousness points to the fact that *true* morality will be achieved only when this fundamental opposition between duty and actuality is given up. [301]

Nevertheless, within the subsection "*conscience: the 'beautiful soul,' evil and its forgiveness*,"[302] moral consciousness tries to overcome this duality by adopting a new understanding of morality which is conscience.

Conscience takes itself as moral not only in its thought but also in its action. Therefore, it rejects "the internal division…between pure duty *qua* pure purpose, and reality *qua* a Nature."[303] Having no division in itself, consciousness is certain that it can realize the pure duty in its action. In addition, for conscience, the abstract pure duty can gain its content with consciousness itself, which is "not as a mere 'thought-thing' but as an individual."[304] This also changes the relationship between the self and duty: "It is now the law that exists for the sake of the self, not the self that exists for the sake of the law."[305] Duty is no more a universal beyond as the condition of morality, one that is already present in the self. Houlgate explains this by saying that conscience "knows *immediately* that its actions conform to duty…It both knows immediately within itself what counts as acting morally *and* sees immediately by itself that its actions are moral in this sense."[306] Since it takes its action as in conformity with duty, it does not have any doubt about whether its duty is realized in the world or not. For conscience, there is the certainty of being acknowledged by those others that are already carrying the same universal duty.

[301] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 85-86.

[302] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 383.

[303] *Ibid*., 385.

[304] *Ibid*., 387.

[305] *Ibid*.

[306] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 86-87.

Accordingly, it has the conviction that "it is the *implicitly universal* self-*consciousness*, or the state of *being recognized*."[307] The conviction of being recognized by the other, for conscience, is the reality of moral action.

In the light of these revelations, it could be said that consciousness immediately knows that its duty and action are harmonious, and it is also aware of itself as being perfect, noble and good-hearted. However, the standpoint of conscience also implicates a problem. Eventually, the idea of pure conviction becomes not much different from the pure duty. The certainty of conscience about the conformity of duty and action has the danger of vanishing when it is actualized. The moral consciousness retreats itself from experience because it now thinks that its good intention may not be actualized in action. To put it differently, others may misinterpret the moral consciousness' actions, at which point its good heart would be tainted. Hegel explains, "We see self-consciousness withdrawn into its innermost being, for which all externality as such has vanished—withdrawn into the contemplation of the 'I'= 'I,' in which this 'I' is the whole essentiality and existence."[308] With this inwardness, consciousness loses its power to realize its intention in the world; it loses its existence as a living being, and it becomes an abstract thought:

> It lives in dread of besmirching the splendour of its inner being by action and an existence; and, in order to preserve the purity of its heart, it flees from contact with the actual world, and persists in its self-willed impotence to renounce its self which is reduced to the extreme of ultimate abstraction, and to give itself a substantial existence, or to transform its thought into being and put its truth in the absolute difference [between thought and being]…Its activity is a yearning which merely loses itself as consciousness becomes an object devoid of substance, and, rising above this loss, and falling back on itself, finds itself only as a lost soul.[309]

[307] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 388.

[308] *Ibid*., 398.

[309] *Ibid*., 400.

This empty, soulless shape of the consciousness is the "beautiful soul."[310] Mark Taylor defines beautiful soul as the "introversion of consciousness,"[311] which is the consciousness' strategy to protect its purity. By doing so, the conscience would not retreat only from its act, but also from the other selves. When the conscience takes its act as the inessential other, it now has to find something else that can be the manifestation or the content of the duty. Consequently, the expression of its own purity becomes its speaking.

In its speech, the act of the beautiful soul is nothing but a pure judging. A judging that accuses the actions of others as evil and announces its own self as perfectly moral. However, eventually it realizes that without action, its speech is just the echo of emptiness, or more specifically the emptiness of the soul. After all, what the beautiful soul retreats itself from is its own self. Along with the beautiful soul, there is another conscientious self attempting to realize itself in its action. The result of this is an outwardness of the acting conscience in contrast to the inwardness of the beautiful soul. In the act of this conscience, on the other hand, the dualism between its particular self and universal consciousness continues. The acting self comes to be in conflict with the pure duty when it tries to give it content in its act. In other words, in the realization of pure duty, it gains a specific determination given by the acting conscience. The gap between the universality of pure duty and the individuality of giving content to duty by acting becomes more visible. Hegel explains this conflict by saying that for the beautiful soul, which holds to the universal pure duty, the acting conscience is "*evil*" because its action is not the realization of the universal, but the manifestation of individual interest. On the other hand, for the acting conscience, the beautiful soul is hypocritical, since it shies away from acting and confines itself to judging others.[312] Both of them do not

[310] *Ibid*.

[311] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 215.

[312] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 401.

accept the accusations of the opposing side because to be willing to unmask their own evilness and hypocrisy would mean the annihilation of their own selves.

Regardless, they are not actually different from one another. The first one who realizes its own self in the other is the acting self who is condemned to be evil by the judging self. It sees that it acts according to its own law while claiming that it follows the universal law shared by all. When it admits the hypocrisy behind its action, the acting consciousness "comes to see its own self in this other consciousness."[313] Here, there is a positive consequence for the acting consciousness. The act itself makes apparent that there is an error caused by the one-sidedness of consciousness. For this consciousness, to admit this error is inevitable. Now, it also recognizes that it is not different from the self that the acting consciousness thinks to be hypocritical. Therefore, it confesses its own hypocrisy to the other, and by doing so, it declares that these two so-called contradictory consciousnesses are, in fact, identical:

> His confession is not an abasement, a humiliation, a throwing-away of himself in relation to the other; for this utterance is not a one-sided affair, which would establish his disparity with the other: on the contrary, he gives himself utterance solely on account of his having seen his identity with the other; he, on his side, gives expression to their common identity in his confession.[314]

The confession of the acting consciousness, however, is not followed by the judging consciousness. It is the "hard heart"[315] that rejects the similarity between its own self and the evil one. The judging consciousness continues to believe in the certainty of its own beautiful soul, which holds the thought of pure duty. It still thinks itself as the innocent one while condemning the other as the sinner.

Consequently, the judging consciousness does not forgive the other and by doing so, it rejects its own spirituality by blinding itself to its actuality, yet it cannot

[313] *Ibid*., 403.

[314] *Ibid*., 405.

[315] *Ibid*.

maintain its claim of being purely moral. Its being unforgiving is the proof of its being evil. When it confronts its own feud, it finally sees itself in the acting consciousness. Therefore, it accepts its equality with the other. Eventually, the recognition of their own selves in the other is the acknowledgement of their communion. In this communion, they renounce their one-sided and unreal beings, at the same time forgiving one another. While forgiving the other, the self welcomes its actual being consisting of the reconciliation of the oppositions. Mark Taylor explains the communion in reciprocal forgiveness as follows:

> This self-awareness, which is mediated by relation to other, involves both the confession of the self's guilt and the forgiveness of the opposing subject…Through forgiveness, self and other emerge from the suffering of separation and opposition to discover their identity-within-difference. This reconciliation is the true life of spirit.[316]

Although, each self recognizes its own dividedness and forgives one another with the true spirit, this is not exactly the actualization of the true self, or as Hegel explains, "It is still not yet *self-consciousness*"[317] because there is still an otherness that is not yet overcome for the self. In order to resolve this otherness and actualize its true spirit, consciousness takes a new form. In religion, consciousness finally attains its true self. The actualization of the true spirit in religion and its conceptualization in absolute knowing will be discussed in the following section.

3.2.4 Religion and Absolute Knowing: Revelation and Conceptualization of the Truth

In the chapter on "Religion," a similar dynamism that had been experienced in the previous chapters continues. To be more precise, consciousness firstly focuses on the standpoint of the object and realizes that truth cannot be found in the thing that it thinks to be other than itself. It then continues from the standpoint of the subject and tries to ground truth in its own self. However, what has been learned from the entire process of becoming is that neither of these two one-sided standpoints can

[316] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 216.

[317] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 409.

present a satisfactory answer to the demand of the consciousness. Finally, consciousness learns to put these two so-called oppositional standpoints into a dialogue with one another. Nonetheless, reducing the entire process of becoming to this summary would be unfair because each phase of the consciousness has a valuable meaning that deserves to be studied in detail.

The "Religion" chapter, on the other hand, also has another meaning in giving a chance to understand the positions of philosophy and religion in relation to each other, particularly in how they relate to the question of truth. Consciousness' religious relation to itself and the other carries it to the point of absolute knowing. Furthermore, it is this form of experience that saves consciousness from its alienation and lets consciousness recognize its own self in the other. However, one move ahead of religion is absolute knowing, meaning there is still something missing in religion. This missing part is not about the truth that religion finds but about the way that it expresses this truth. This difference between religion and absolute knowing is also important to understanding the imaginative expression of religion and the conceptual expression of philosophy. Therefore, for consciousness to arrive at the philosophical standpoint, religion cannot be the endpoint but, of course like the previous cases, a necessary one. Yet, to understand the passage from religion to absolute knowing, it is necessary to understand how consciousness comes to apprehend the true shape of religiosity.

In general, the "Religion" chapter focuses on how consciousness understands divinity. There are three shapes of religion named "Natural Religion," "Religion in the form of Art" and, finally, "The Revealed Religion." Natural religion is the one where consciousness understands nature as the divine. Here, consciousness immediately finds god in the phenomena of nature. This simply implies that consciousness focuses only on the sphere of the object, taking divinity as something independent from itself. However, when natural religion is taken as the work of an artificer, consciousness starts to see god not as an ambiguous other but as a self-conscious artist. This represents the shift from natural religion to religion in the form of art, whereby consciousness finds divinity in its own self and sees

itself as the "spiritual worker."[318] At the end of this shape, by pointing out the meanings of tragedy and comedy, Hegel announces a sense of unity between the divine and the self. However, this is not yet completely actualized by consciousness. The implication of that divinity is not something beyond but is inherent to the requirement that the self must become actual, or as Mark Taylor says, "The Word must become flesh."[319] This can be realized neither in staying in the sphere of the object nor insisting on the thought or the speech of the subject. For there to be the actualization of truth in religion, consciousness must overcome the one-sidedness in the previous shapes of religion. Hegel presents this actualization within "The Revealed Religion" section. This final shape of the religion is an interpretation of Christianity and will be analyzed in detail to exhibit the ways in which Christianity reveals the truth in an explicit fashion.

3.2.4.1 The Revealed Religion

The last shape of religion is the one where Hegel presents the true way of understanding God, which is eventually found in the community. In other words, in the manifestation of Christianity as the revealed religion, consciousness finally feels at home and becomes spirit. Although it is reasonable to question Hegel's understanding of Christianity – as some interpreters do – I prefer to stick to the place of Hegel's interpretation of Christianity in the *Phenomenology*. However, before focusing on Hegel's exposition of the revealed religion, it is important to note Solomon's criticism on the issue. Solomon argues that in "The Revealed Religion," Hegel completely changes the traditional understanding of Trinity and Incarnation. He also adds that God becomes human thought and loses its otherness: "All men are incarnations of God, and God is *nothing other* than all men."[320] The

[318] *Ibid*., 424.

[319] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 223.

[320] Robert C. Solomon, *From Hegel to Existentialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 66-67.

traditional meaning of God is gone in Hegel's interpretation. At the end of the revelation of true religion, there exists neither mystery nor an obscure beyond.

As Solomon's criticism points out, Hegel does not present a literal reading of religion. In addition, his interpretation of Trinity and Incarnation shows that what Hegel has in mind as the truth of the religion differentiates him from some other philosophers. Kierkegaard is one of these opponents who insist on the idea that the otherness of the God can never be resolved, and the meaning of faith arises from self's relation to the unreachable beyond. However, Hegel presents the otherwise where each self mutually recognizes one another and feels at home by resolving the otherness caused by its own one-sided thinking. In "Love, Recognition, Spirit: Hegel's Philosophy of Religion,"[321] Robert R. Williams explains how religion takes part in this project of mutual recognition as follows:

> Religion is an essential domain of absolute spirit because it makes explicit the reversal, both of perspective and in the order of things, wherein human beings do not apprehend themselves as the subject to which all objects are relative but instead find themselves measured and recognized as spirit. As thus reconciled, they grasp themselves as relative to and members within a larger whole, the ultimate community – the true infinite.[322]

In the manifestation of the truth of religion, God becomes equal with the individual person, and the individual becomes equal to the other individual. Therefore, the truth of religion is not only the overcoming of the transcendence of God; it is also the construction of communal life. In order to clarify the idea of self's finding itself as recognized in the spiritual community, I would like to clarify the process of the consciousness in the revealed religion.

After arguing for consciousness' failure to understand the God in the previous shapes of religion, Hegel starts to discuss God as an actual being:

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[321] Robert R. Williams, "Love, Recognition, Spirit: Hegel's Philosophy of Religion," in *A Companion to Hegel*, ed. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 387-413.

[322] Williams, "Love, Recognition, Spirit: Hegel's Philosophy of Religion," 407.

> [Consciousness] starts from an existence that is immediately present and recognizes God therein…The Self of existent Spirit has…the form of complete immediacy; it is posited neither as something thought or imagined, nor as something produced, as is the case with the immediate Self in natural religion, and also in the religion of Art; on the contrary, this God is sensuously and directly beheld as a Self, as an actual individual man.[323]

God is not an abstract thought of the consciousness but an incarnated individual. This idea of an externalized God recalls the position of the unhappy consciousness suffering because it took God to be an unreachable beyond. In the revealed religion, consciousness does not take God as an indifferent other anymore. The idea that God belongs to the realm of pure thought is left in the moment of Incarnation. This also brings the God into the world, which means God is not external to the realm of the consciousness. Jon Stewart reminds us that "nothing can remain wholly abstract; if something is to be determinate, it must also have a concrete, particular side…Thus, God, conceived…as the abstract God of thought, must abandon His universality and abstraction, and enter into the empirical world of particularity."[324] God's presence in the particular also points out the unity of divinity and humanity: "The divine nature is the same as the human, and it is this unity that is beheld."[325] Here, of course, Hegel illustrates Christ as the son of the God, and Charles Taylor explains this situation by saying that "the singleness of the divine subjectivity is represented in the uniqueness of the Son of God."[326] For now, the unity of God and individual can be taken as a unique miracle where Christ is the chosen one. Therefore, the unity between God and humanity does not exist yet. At this point, Hegel states that only God could down from its externality. The implication of this "coming down" for Hegel is that God becomes more than a pure thought: "By…*coming down* it has in fact attained for the first time to its own highest

[323] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 458-459.

[324] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 473-474.

[325] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 460.

[326] Taylor, *Hegel*, 209.

essence."[327] Therefore, God gains its highest essentiality not because it is distinct from the world but because it becomes worldly.

Another meaning of God's existence in the individual is displayed in the unity of the thought of consciousness and what is thought. The universal thought of God and the contingent existence of the individual come together. Hegel attributes this to the revelation of God in the individual: "God is *revealed as He is*; He is immediately present as He is *in Himself*, i.e. He is immediately *present* as Spirit."[328] However, this actually means that God is immediately present as spirit in the individual, i.e., he is still an other for consciousness. As previously mentioned, the incarnation of God represents the unity of the holy other and a single individual. For there to be "the Self of everyone,"[329] the otherness of the incarnated self must be overcome. Hegel asserts that for now, consciousness immediately knows only the objective individual as the unity of God and man, but it does not yet know itself as Spirit.[330] The immediate consciousness that still understands the unity of God and the individual as an other to its own being must understand itself as "the *universal self-consciousness* of the [religious] community."[331] For the religious consciousness, this means that God is still in an unreachable position. It is true that God is, in a sense, in the world through its existence in the mediator, i.e. Christ, but it is not yet identical with the other selves. In order to overcome the alienation of immediate consciousness from God, this time the mediator must become other to its own self. The immediate consciousness, which understands Christ as the son of God, does not see itself as equal to this unique individual. For immediate

[327] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 460.

[328] *Ibid*., 461.

[329] *Ibid*., 462.

[330] *Ibid*.

[331] *Ibid*.

consciousness to become universal self-consciousness and to be equal with the incarnated self, Christ sacrifices himself. Therefore, it alienates itself from its own self by abandoning its life.

Kain explains the act of the Christ by saying that "here alienation overcomes estrangement. Christ takes on the sins of the world, he takes estrangement onto himself, he sacrifices himself, and is reconciled with God."[332] Before focusing on the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ, it is important to understand the interpretation of sin for Hegel. In the *Phenomenology*, he refers to the religious concept of Original Sin, which is mainly the fall from heaven. He mentions the religious understanding of "the Fall" as follows:

> Man is pictorially thought of in this way: that it once *happened*, without any necessity, that he lost the form of being at one with himself through plucking the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil, and was expelled from the state of innocence, from Nature which yielded its fruits without toil, and from Paradise, from the garden with its creatures.[333]

According to this narrative, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating of the fruit from the tree of knowledge, they lost their innocence and became separated from God. This is when they became sinful, and the entirety of humankind has been carrying this sin ever since. However, for Hegel, the state of innocence is problematic because of its implication of staying in a simple immediacy. In *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, Hegel points out this problem in detail: "It is not correct to regard the immediate, natural unity as the right state…Spirit is not something merely immediate; on the contrary, it essentially contains the moment of mediation within itself."[334]

For Hegel, being in immediate unity with God and staying in a state of innocence is not essentially good, but neither is being alienated from God and becoming

[332] Kain, *Hegel and the Other*, 218.

[333] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 468.

[334] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 62.

separated from universality essentially evil. Hegel sees the real problem in the idea that good and evil – God and human, individual and universal – are thought to be separated from one another. In fact, this separation is not actual but merely thought. Even the incarnation reveals that evil is not alien to God, and human nature is not separated from divine nature:

> We find first of all the declaration that the divine Being takes on human nature. Here it is already *asserted* that *in themselves* the two are not separate; likewise the declaration that the divine Being *from the beginning* externalizes itself, that its existence withdraws into itself and becomes self-centred and evil, implies, though it does not expressly assert, that this evil existence is not *in itself* something alien to the divine Being.[335]

Hegel notes that for religion, the fact that good and evil, or divine being and natural being, are not separated from each other is still immediate and, as Hegel adds, "therefore not spiritual."[336] For it to become spiritual, the unity must take a universal form. Hegel finds this moment of universality in the death of Christ.

The death of Christ and its resurrection make explicit the universality of self-consciousness by transforming the spirit into the community. Charles Taylor explains the meaning of the death and the resurrection of Christ as follows:

> Christ's death…signifies the transformation of this unity between God and man from a particular to a universal fact…The whole meaning of the death lies in the coming of the spirit whereby the locus of Incarnation shifts to the community…God as a pure abstraction has already taken a giant step toward man in becoming incarnate; but in order to become fully realized in man he has to take the other step, that of dying as an incarnate God and therefore cancelling his inherence in a particular time and place, so that the incarnation of God can become that of the community of men in general.[337]

The death of the particular unity of God and man is the death of one-sidedness, and thus the resurrection of universal spirituality. More clearly, it is the death of God as pure and beyond being. However, this, of course, is a bitter end for Hegel. In *The*

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[335] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 471.

[336] *Ibid*., 472.

[337] Taylor, *Hegel*, 210-211.

Encyclopaedia Logic, Hegel says that "Pure light is pure darkness."[338] When God exists in a particular individual, the pure light becomes mediated, and when that individual dies, the pure darkness disappears. This is because the death of the Christ is "at the same time the death of the *abstraction of divine Being*."[339] By overcoming the abstraction of divinity, spirit thereby achieves its absolute content and becomes "*self-knowing* Spirit."[340] With the death of the lifeless abstraction of divinity, the "simple and universal Self-consciousness" becomes actual.[341] The revealed religion arrives at the point where the spirituality does not solely belong to God as the father and Christ as the son but also to the community.

The truth which religion reveals is summarized by Mark Taylor in a very powerful way that illustrates the vivacious dynamism in the religion:

> The ascent of the self and the descent of God are two sides of one complex process: the divinization of the human is the humanization of the divine, and the humanization of the divine is the divinization of the human; the infinitizing of the finite is the finitizing of the infinite, and the finitizing of the infinite is the infinitizing of the finite; the eternalizing of the temporal is the temporalizing of the eternal, and the temporalizing of the eternal is the eternalizing of the temporal.[342]

In the revelation of religious truth, the opposites meet each other. God becomes human, and humanity becomes divine; the alienated consciousness becomes universal self-consciousness that includes particularity. The consciousness that has been in a constant struggle because of its own one-sided thinking can finally rest in the reconciliation of the oppositions. This seems to feel at home finally. However, this is not the case for Hegel. At least as a philosopher, he does not find religion

[338] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 75.

[339] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 476.

[340] *Ibid*.

[341] *Ibid*.

[342] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 225.

satisfactory enough for a consciousness which seeks the absolute truth. For Hegel, religion and philosophy have the same content but different ways of expressing it.

Hegel explains that the content of religion is in the form of "picture-thinking,"[343] and the way of picture-thinking consists in illustrating the truth by means of historical events or religious stories. It is true that religion reveals the truth, but it cannot conceptualize it. Rather, it uses stories from the past, choosing to express truth metaphorically. A religious consciousness feels the truth in its heart but does not yet know the truth conceptually. For example, as Houlgate explains, religion pictures absolute being "as 'God the Father' who 'creates' the world, and sends his 'Son' into that world to die and be 'resurrected' as 'Holy Spirit' within us."[344] God's becoming one with consciousness is pictured as God's coming back to the world as Holy Spirit. However, this unity is not understood as a necessary conclusion; instead, it is more likely to be understood as God's will. This implies the idea that there is still a distance between God and humanity. This is because the reconciliation is projected as if it is gifted by God, whereby it carries the meaning that it could have been the otherwise. Stewart rightfully says that "what is lacking in the picture-thinking of Christianity is the ability to capture the necessity of the Concept."[345] In other words, the true nature of spirit is felt by the religion, but it is not yet recognized as a necessity.

The content of religion is also the content of philosophy. In *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, Hegel announces that "[philosophy] does, initially, have its objects in common with religion."[346] However, in religion, there is still a distance between the knowing subject and the known object. Consciousness does not yet understand

[343] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 477.

[344] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 98.

[345] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 476.

[346] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 24.

itself as the absolute spirit, although this is exactly what religion reveals. This truth is implied by religious stories and myths, but it is not yet conceptualized. As Stewart says, "Truths are couched in the form of a story…but, for Hegel, the philosopher can divest these truths from their stories and see them in their pure, conceptual form."[347] For the complete account of truth, consciousness must be able to understand the truth as the notion. For Hegel, this is absolute knowing. With absolute knowing, we come to the end of the *Phenomenology*, yet we also enter into the realm of philosophy.

3.2.4.2 Absolute Knowing

The last chapter of the *Phenomenology* does not have a surprise end but instead clarifies the problem behind all the failures of consciousness along its journey: truth cannot be known by adopting a one-sided perspective. Although religion reveals truth, it is still inadequate to show that each shape of consciousness is essential only if they are comprehended in their relation to one another. Absolute knowing is the one that shows the unity of these moments of consciousness, or, as Hegel puts it, it is the one that "binds them all into itself."[348] Accordingly, the role of absolute knowing is to constitute the unification of the moments of consciousness.

From the standpoint of absolute knowing, the dependency of moments on each other is not just expressed in principle, but it is also constituted in the act of consciousness. In other words, consciousness' thought and its act are now understood as one and the same. In absolute knowing, consciousness finally grasps the truth in its own action: "Our *own* act here has been simply to *gather together* the separate moments, each of which in principle exhibits the life of Spirit in its entirety."[349] In the light of all these, truth for Hegel is not something that waits to

[347] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 476.

[348] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 482.

[349] *Ibid*., 485.

be discovered at the end of the road, but neither is it a horizon to which one can only wish to come close. On the contrary, it is the act of consciousness, i.e., the act of destroying its own illusion of being separated from truth. Absolute knowing is not the knowledge of everything. It is not the discovery of a secret that will be the answer to everything. At the end of the day, it is making peace with one's own *aporiai*; it is a matter of finding the way to overcome the limitations and one-sidedness in one's own thinking. Absolute knowing is "*comprehensive knowing*"[350] by which consciousness grasps the unity between religion and philosophy, object and subject, universality and particularity, humanity and divinity and, ultimately, between the self and truth. To put it in a different way, absolute knowing is the achievement of consciousness which has been educated by the results of its own partial, erroneous or one-sided ideas. In the "Introduction," Hegel defines the project of *Phenomenology* as "the detailed history of the *education* of consciousness itself to the standpoint of Science."[351] In each phase of its phenomenological journey, consciousness slowly learns from its failures, that is, in order to satisfy its desire to know, it must educate itself.

Hegel claims that consciousness is transformation, whereby its "movement is the circle that returns into itself, the circle is that presupposes its beginning and reaches it only at the end."[352] Without walking on a bifurcated road, without differentiating from itself or without the act of othering, consciousness cannot become what it actually is. Consciousness finally grasps itself as identical with the object that it seeks to know. Therefore, it finally understands that the truth seeker and the truth that is sought are one and the same. Absolute knowing is this unity between the self and truth. This unity, however, is not an abstract or an alien idea that Hegel takes as the ground of the *Phenomenology*. It is exactly this movement of consciousness

[350] *Ibid*.

[351] *Ibid*., 50.

[352] *Ibid*., 488.

that brings it to the point of absolute knowing. In other words, it is the activity in which consciousness continues to educate and transform itself until it arrives at the standpoint of philosophy. Mark Taylor explains this point by saying that "absolute knowledge arises through the rational recollection and reflective inwardization of the entire course of experience through which spirit forms, cultivates, or educates itself."[353] At the end of this course, consciousness finally becomes what it actually is.

However, without this process of becoming, any truth claim cannot be more than a phantom haunting a self and fills one's thinking with illusions. Dialectic ends and philosophy begin when consciousness confronts its own illusionary and partial thinking, grasping the interconnectedness of all forms of knowing. In the last chapter of the *Phenomenology*, "Absolute Knowing" does not explain more than this confrontation. It is, then, an announcement of the end of consciousness' dissolution in its thinking. Hegel explains this by saying that "Spirit has concluded the movement in which it has shaped itself, in so far as this shaping was burdened with the difference of consciousness…a difference now overcome."[354] When we enter into the realm of philosophy, the content is the Notion that "unites the objective form of Truth and of the knowing Self in an immediate unity."[355] This means that philosophy does not deal with the diversity and dialectical movement in the *Phenomenology* anymore. However, as Hegel notes, each Notion or movement finds its place in the *Phenomenology*.[356] Since every single otherness is consumed in the *Phenomenology*, philosophy does not need to adopt this act of othering. Instead, it is now being a part of a whole in speculative thinking.

[353] Taylor, *Journeys to Selfhood*, 227.

[354] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 490.

[355] *Ibid*., 491.

[356] *Ibid*.

There is another point that comes with the revelation of being in unity: the sacrifice of the self. Hegel announces this point by saying that "the self-knowing Spirit knows not only itself but also the negative of itself, or its limits: to know one's limit is to know how to sacrifice oneself."[357] First of all, it is important to understand what Hegel means by the notion of sacrifice in these last pages of the *Phenomenology*. In fact, we come across with some implications of sacrifice in the entire *Phenomenology*. When consciousness does not find peace in its current way of existing, it necessarily matures into a new one. In order to go forward, consciousness has to transform both its own self and its way of thinking. This, in a way, means that an idea has to be sacrificed to adopt the latter, which will bring consciousness closer to the absolute truth. This letting go of an idea is the way of carrying it into the absolute truth. Therefore, when it has been sacrificed, it does not get lost but transforms. What happens is the acceptance of the fact that without the becoming of its negation – without relating to what is other than itself – nothing can be what it really is. Whenever consciousness lets go of its partial assurances, it recognizes that anything it thinks to be outside or unessential is actually central and essential.

When consciousness finally grasps the unity of every mode of consciousness in absolute knowing, it sacrifices the otherness that it has experienced in different shapes. However, in light of all these given explanations, this sacrifice is not meant to reject what has been experienced. Rather, this time the notion of sacrifice implies a shift in the context, which is the unity of concepts. Therefore, where the *Phenomenology* ends and philosophy starts, there is a new focus which is neither selective nor exclusive but rather comprehensive. The focus now is on the whole. This focus on the whole discloses the sense of speculative thinking in Hegel's philosophy, i.e., the only way to grasp the truth in and for itself, which is nothing

[357] *Ibid*., 492.

else than absolute truth. This point sheds some light on Hegel's following assertion: "To know one's limit is to know how to sacrifice oneself."[358]

The idea of self-sacrifice that Hegel points out is a sacrifice for the whole. It is the sacrifice of one's own particularity. In fact, this recalls the sacrifice of Christ and the death of God. When Christ sacrifices his life for others, he also sacrifices his unique particularity. When God becomes the Holy Spirit within us, he sacrifices his being-other than us. In absolute knowing, on the other hand, the self sacrifices its particularity for the unity of self and other. However, this sacrifice is not a painful end of the self. On the contrary, it is the recognition of itself in the other as well as the other in its own self. For Hegel, the recognition of being a particular member of the whole is being at home, and being at home is to be free, i.e. the self-knowing Spirit. In *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, Hegel expresses that "that is just what freedom is: being at home with oneself in one's other, depending upon oneself, being one's own determinant."[359] Being at home is to be with its other or, to be more precise, to become itself in its other. Consequently, being at home is self's being in a communion; the truth of the self is its being at home, which is also home for all selves.

In the last chapter of the *Phenomenology*, "Absolute Knowing" does not introduce more than some fragments from the standpoint of philosophy, not because of Hegel's failure to give an adequate account for what absolute knowing means but rather because this last chapter announces a contextual shift that cannot be studied in a phenomenological manner. Hegel does so by showing that between religion and philosophy, there is a difference in interpreting the truth. This difference, as has been explained, is religion's picturing the truth and philosophy's conceptualizing it. Although *Phenomenology* prepares us for the perspective of philosophy, it is not its work to present the conceptual interpretation of truth. In this sense, "Absolute Knowing" does not say more than the fact that from the

[358] *Ibid*.

[359] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 58.

beginning of its journey, natural consciousness has educated itself, gradually becoming self-knowing Spirit. Becoming a self-knowing Spirit comes with the revelation that every single part of truth has its meaning in a complex whole. When it uncovers this truth, the *Phenomenology* delivers the conceptualization of this complexity to philosophy and completes its mission.

Stewart explains that "Absolute Knowing is not the knowing of any particular fact or ultimate piece of wisdom, but rather merely the grasping of the various forms of thought as a whole."[360] In relation to this, the presence of the self in philosophy, then, is not its particular existence but its being part of a universal whole. At this point, I would like to end this chapter by asking a question that calls us back to a Kierkegaardian position: would the sacrifice of the particular existence of self mean the sacrifice of truth? And in relation to this question, can truth really be conceptualized?

In the next chapter, I will bring these two philosophers together and focus on some differences between them by concentrating on their interpretations of the Christian doctrine of the Original Sin and their authorships in relation to their philosophies. Still, it would be unfair not to express the importance of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, not only as a preparation to Hegel's philosophy but also as a priceless work for any admirer of philosophy. *Phenomenology* is the presentation of a colorful diversity, capturing and captivating any reader from different standpoints as a powerful work making each reader confront their own existences, perspectives, failures and misunderstandings. In fact, even for Hegel's most passionate opponents, *Phenomenology* is an important source of inspiration.

[360] Stewart, *Idealism and Existentialism*, 69.

CHAPTER 4

IN BETWEEN HEGEL AND KIERKEGAARD

"Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the Shadow"
-Eliot, *The Hollow Men*[361]

In *Positions*, Jacques Derrida defines Hegel as the "first thinker of writing," adding that "we will never be finished with the reading or rereading of Hegel, and, in a certain way, I do nothing other than attempt to explain myself on this point."[362] As a philosopher who has a crucial role in changing not only the path of philosophy but also the style of writing in philosophy, Hegel can never be left behind. Even philosophers who oppose Hegel find themselves inspired by his works. When this philosopher is Kierkegaard, it is even much more important to discuss his relation to Hegel. In his works, Kierkegaard mostly attacks Hegel directly or indirectly. Most of his criticisms against Hegel are related to Kierkegaard's distinction between subjective thinking and speculative thinking; however, it would not be adequate to quarantine Kierkegaard as an opposer of Hegel because even in Kierkegaard's expositions on subjective thinking, which are thought of as an oppositional technique to Hegelian thinking, one inevitably finds some positive effects of Hegel. Jon Stewart, the writer of one of the most detailed books on the

[361] Thomas S. Eliot, *Collected Poems: 1909-1962* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963), 82.

[362] Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 77.

relation between Hegel and Kierkegaard, presents a quotation from Kierkegaard's *Journals and Papers*:

> I feel what for me at times is an enigmatic respect for Hegel; I have learned much from him, and I know very well that I can still learn much more from him when I return to him again…in confidence that an open road for thought might be found there, I have resorted to philosophical books and among them Hegel's.[363]

Of course, it would be doing an injustice to Kierkegaard if one were to reduce him to merely an admirer of Hegel. Still, even in Kierkegaard's most aggressive attacks on Hegel's system, one encounters the deep influence of Hegel, not only as a philosopher but also as an author. In the "Introduction" of *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, Stewart argues that some scholars do not concentrate on the actual relation between Hegel and Kierkegaard and consequently confine themselves to agreeing with the idea that Kierkegaard opposes Hegel. For Stewart, most of Kierkegaard's attacks are not against Hegel but rather against some Danish Hegelians.[364] Although Stewart is right to defend the idea that there is no complete opposition between Hegel and Kierkegaard, it is still crucial to discuss Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel.

In the previous two chapters, Kierkegaard's and Hegel's interpretations on the relation between truth and selfhood have been inquired into. Some of the most important themes that can be detailed in order to examine the similarities and differences between these two philosophers' are their understandings of the relation between religious truth and the self as well as their authorship. Instead of presenting a detailed examination on Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel specializing on the 19th Century Continental Philosophy in particular, which Stewart had successfully done, I shall only concentrate on these two philosophers' interpretations of a certain religious story along with their discussions on

[363] Søren Kierkegaard, *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers: Volume 2*, trans. and ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), quoted in Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 18-19.

[364] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 1-44.

authorship. The reason behind choosing these topics is that they can give an insightful perspective when it comes to contemplating the relationship between Kierkegaard and Hegel. More clearly, instead of offering a sharp answer to Kierkegaard's relations to Hegel, the idea of this chapter is to emphasize some questions that can also bring to light the meaning and the place of selfhood in philosophical truth. In addition to these, I shall also discuss on the authorship of Hegel and Kierkegaard because they represent some key changes in the question of how truth can be communicated.

As it has been explained in the previous chapters, according to Kierkegaard, the essential truth of the self is becoming a Christian, and his task, as a philosopher, is to express this becoming. For Hegel, on the other hand, religion and philosophy have the same content, i.e., absolute truth, but the ways in which they interpret this truth indicate only a difference between religion and philosophy. Therefore, for both Kierkegaard and Hegel, religion presents the essential truth, yet their understandings of truth are actually different from each other. Since religion is such a crucial subject which permits us to bring these two philosophers together, I would like to go on with their interpretations of Original Sin, which represents a turning point for the self that falls into the world.

4.1 Interpretations of the Fall from Eden

There was only one forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden: fruit from the tree of knowledge. The serpent came crawling – like a question mark – and seduced Adam and Eve by asking them whether God forbade them to eat from the tree of knowledge, which provides the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command, a transgression for which He expelled them from Eden. They were no longer innocent, thus becoming sinful. Along with their transgression, sin came into the world and has been carried by the entire human race. The only thing that the serpent did was to ask a simple question. Accordingly, just a single question was the first turning point of humankind.

It is not surprising then that both Hegel and Kierkegaard understood the Fall as an important story that could be incorporated into their philosophies. Therefore, there is a concentration here on their interpretations of the Fall in order to be able to find some answers for why the Fall has such importance in their philosophies. Focusing on their interpretations also helps us to track their similarities and differences, which thus presents a general idea about Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel.

4.1.1 Kierkegaard's Interpretation of The Fall as Possibility

In *The Concept of Anxiety,*[365] Kierkegaard's pseudonym Vigilius Haufniensis problematizes themes like the state of innocence, possibility, sin, sinfulness and the leap by focusing on the Christian notion of The Fall from Eden. He starts with a question: "Is the concept of hereditary sin identical with the concept of the first sin, Adam's sin, the fall of man?"[366] By asking this question, Haufniensis actually problematizes the religious idea that the entire human race is sinful because of Adam's sin, which ended with the fall from Eden. Haufniensis disagrees with the idea that "by Adam's first sin, *sin came into the world*,"[367] stating that "by the first sin, sinfulness came into Adam. It could not occur to anyone to say about any subsequent man that by his first sin sinfulness came into the world."[368] Accordingly, Haufniensis criticizes the idea that each individual is sinful because of this hereditary sin. On the contrary, he asserts that sin precedes sinfulness. Therefore, sinfulness comes into each individual through the individual's own sin. In other words, as Haufniensis says, "The individual participates in it [sinfulness]

[365] There are some themes from the book that had already been issued in Chapter 2 in order to explain the passage from the individual's one way of existence to another. However, for this part, they will be used in order to make explicit Kierkegaard's focus on the interpretation of the Fall.

[366] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 25.

[367] *Ibid*., 32.

[368] *Ibid*., 33.

by the qualitative leap."[369] The idea of the qualitative leap here is crucial not only for Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Fall but also for his philosophy as a whole. Haufniensis defines the qualitative leap as "the suddenness of the enigmatic,"[370] which represents a qualitative change. Stewart explains this change in a clearer manner by defining it as "the discontinuity in the realm of freedom."[371] For the case of Adam and Eve, they lost their state of innocence because of their act and became sinful. Accordingly, a qualitative leap happens through an act that changes the individual's way of existing. What more can be said about this leap? What was the leap for Adam and Eve? How can it be explained? For Kierkegaard, this leap cannot be rationalized. As it has been stated, the leap is this enigmatic discontinuity. Still, we can hope to understand more about this theme by continuing to concentrate on the Fall.

After discussing the problem of priority between sin and sinfulness, Haufniensis continues with the state of innocence in "The Concept of Innocence,"[372] where he also criticises Hegel's position on the issue. His main attack on Hegel is the idea that immediacy and innocence are identical for Hegel.[373] Haufniensis rejects this by saying that "the concept of immediacy belongs in logic; the concept of innocence, on the other hand, belongs in ethics."[374] Therefore, one who understands the state of innocence as the state of immediacy actually treats an ethical (and even a religious) realm as if it belongs to the realm of logic. For Haufniensis, the loss of

[369] *Ibid*.

[370] *Ibid*.

[371] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 407.

[372] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 35.

[373] *Ibid*.

[374] *Ibid*.

the innocence does not happen through a logical or conceptual passage. It happens through a qualitative leap for everyone, just as was the case for Adam and Eve: "Every man loses innocence essentially in the same way that Adam lost it."[375] However, before explaining the loss of innocence, it is crucial to understand what innocence actually means.

Haufniensis defines innocence as "ignorance" and adds, "It is by no means the pure being of the immediate, but it *is* ignorance."[376] Before the loss of innocence, or, in other words, before the qualitative leap, Adam and Eve lacked knowledge. What is meant by knowledge is actually the knowledge of good and evil. For Adam and Eve, there was only the word of God. They had no choice between (or even conceptualization of) good and evil. Until they ate the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, they were not free because there was nothing to choose at all. Haufniensis explains this point as follows:

> In innocence, man is not qualified as spirit but is psychically qualified in immediate unity with his natural condition. The spirit in man is dreaming…In this state there is peace and repose, but there is simultaneously something else that is not contention and strife, for there is indeed nothing against which to strive. What, then, is it? Nothing…Dreamily the spirit projects its own actuality, but this actuality is nothing.[377]

There is no suffering for the innocent because there is nothing that would challenge one's individuality. If there is nothing to choose from, then there is no burden that the innocent individual has to carry as the result of its own act. However, as Haufniensis says, human beings are different from animals. Human beings are united in spirit as being body and soul. Even in innocence, it is still a spirit, but it is a "dreaming" spirit.[378] How then does this dreaming spirit awaken? Through the

[375] *Ibid*., 36.

[376] *Ibid*., 37.

[377] *Ibid*., 41.

[378] *Ibid*., 43.

awareness of the possibility. However, how can an individual be aware of its own possibility? At this point, let us turn back to the religious narrative, where we have to talk about the serpent first.

Haufniensis says that "I freely admit my inability to connect any definite thought with the serpent."[379] It seems that he does not even want to include the serpent in the story as the cause of the sin of Adam and Eve. John S. Tanner argues that for Kierkegaard, the serpent is external to the story, adding that "his own preference obviously lies with a thoroughly internalized, individualized Fall."[380] In parallel with Tanner's idea, Haufniensis states that "every man is tempted by himself."[381] Therefore, not the serpent but Adam and Eve tempted themselves and became aware of their possibilities. Haufniensis defines possibility as "to *be able*."[382] When God forbade them from eating from the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve became aware of this possibility to be able to sin by opposing God's command. Therefore, the awareness of this possibility cannot come from something external to the individual. There has to be an inner state that triggers a qualitative leap. Without understanding this inner feeling, neither the heavy burden of the possibility "to be able to" nor the qualitative leap can be understood. This is where Haufniensis introduces the theme of anxiety:

> Anxiety is neither a category of necessity nor a category of freedom; it is entangled freedom, where freedom is not free in itself but entangled, not by necessity, but in itself. If sin has come into the world by necessity (which is a contradiction), there can be no anxiety.[383]

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[379] *Ibid*., 48.

[380] John S. Tanner, *Anxiety in Eden: A Kierkegaardian Reading of Paradise Lost* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 40-41.

[381] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 48.

[382] *Ibid*., 49.

[383] *Ibid*.

As has been stated, Kierkegaard sees the individual as the synthesis of body and soul. If human beings were the same as animals or angels, they would not have any anxiety because there would be no possibility to be able to choose between good and evil for them. Therefore, for Kierkegaard, every individual has anxiety because they have possibility.

In the case of Adam and Eve, they have the anxiety of standing between the states of innocence and sinfulness. However, they cannot be innocent anymore because they now have this growing tension caused by the fear of punishment and the desire of tasting fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. They are now aware of their possibilities. How can they go back to the state of ignorance? At this point, the leap was inevitable for Adam and Eve. However, it is important to note that the leap is inevitable not as a logical necessity but through anxiety, which is defined by Jason A. Mahn in a powerful manner: "The state of…freedom looking down into its own possibility."[384] How can one escape from jumping into this blinding abyss? Or, what can explain being triggered by both the temptation and fearsomeness of this abyss other than anxiety? Philip L. Quinn explains the first sin as follows:

> Increasing anxiety moves Adam in the sense that he feels both a growing attraction and a mounting repulsion focused on the possibility of violating the prohibition…If neither the attractive nor the repulsive component of anxiety is strong enough to overcome the other, then the tension will remain unresolved until he acts to tip the balance when he makes the leap. Thus the narrative leaves room for the leap to be a free act.[385]

It is important to note that Adam and Eve do not become passive because of their anxiety. They actually become aware of their being in between passivity and activity. Anxiety is felt as an urgent call that asks for a change in the state of the individual. The individual, on the other hand, becomes dizzy because of this call:

> Anxiety may be compared with dizziness. He whose eye happens to look down into the yawning abyss becomes dizzy. But what is the reason for

[384] Jason A. Mahn, *Fortunate Fallibility: Kierkegaard and the Power of Sin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 58.

[385] Philip L. Quinn, "Symposia Papers: Does Anxiety Explain Original Sin?," *Noûs* 24, no. 2 (1990): 239.

> this? It is just as much in his own eye as in the abyss, for suppose he had not looked down. Hence anxiety is the dizziness of freedom, which emerges when the spirit wants to posit the synthesis and freedom looks down into its own possibility, laying hold of finiteness to support itself. Freedom succumbs in this dizziness…In that very moment everything is changed, and freedom, when it again rises, sees that it is guilty. Between these two moments lies the leap, which no science has explained and which no science can explain.[386]

According to Mahn, in this passage, the individual's standing in between passivity and freedom is explained by Haufniensis through an experience of vertigo.[387] It is indeed impossible for Haufniensis to explain both the terror and the fascination of freedom through scientific or systematic thinking. The moment that the individual experiences is the moment of this leap, which will completely change not only the life of the individual but also the individual's own self. For Haufniensis, no science will ever be able to explain this dizziness arising from the awareness of possibility.[388]

What happens after the first sin then? Does anxiety vanish? This is not the case for Haufniensis. After the sin, guilt shows up. Guilt is the awareness of the individual's own responsibility. To put it differently, the individual who sins by means of the leap becomes guilty. This is exactly the same for every single individual. Haufniensis notes that "every individual becomes guilty through himself."[389] Guilt is the new state that comes after the leap. Anxiety, on the other hand, never vanishes. Vincent McCarthy explains anxiety as follows:

> The subject's possibility lies at the root of the anxiety experience. More specifically it is the subject's possibility of freedom in a higher subjectivity. Thus the anxiety experience points toward recovery of freedom, recovery of authentic possibility which is evolution as

[386] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 61.

[387] Mahn, *Fortunate Fallibility*, 68.

[388] According to Haufniensis, only psychology can explain a little about the concept of anxiety. However, even psychology cannot present a complete account of it. For instance, even psychology cannot explain the leap of the individual.

[389] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 53.

> spirit…Anxiety is the wrenching away from a would-be static, unfree self and a thrust in the exciting-terrifying direction of one possibility: return to authentic ever-evolving selfhood. [390]

Anxiety never leaves the individual because the individual always carries the possibility of becoming. Although anxiety brings suffering with it, it also carries a great chance for the individual. This is the chance of becoming an authentic self. The individual, who cannot escape from its own anxiety, also cannot escape from its own possibility. Kierkegaard offers his reader this awareness about her own responsibilities towards possibility and helps the reader to realize her true self.

If this is the case, what can we learn from Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Fall? It is true that with the Fall from Eden, Adam and Eve lost their home because of the leap and became sojourners in the world. However, is the story of the Fall really that unfortunate? Not at all. It is even possible to understand *The Concept of Anxiety* as a celebration of the Fall. However, this is not because of the individual's separation from God but because its becoming aware of possibility. John J. Davenport explains the individual's position as follows:[391] "Every human being repeats the original sin, but *in the same process* they also repeat the original discovery of freedom that leads to selfhood."[392] The individual who is educated by its own anxiety can also discover its true self. Haufniensis celebrates anxiety as "freedom's possibility" and states that such an anxiety can lead the individual to faith.[393] However, he also warns his reader about the fact that possibility is the heaviest burden for the individual:

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[390] McCarthy, *The Phenomenology of Moods in Kierkegaard*, 50.

[391] John J. Davenport, "'Entangled Freedom:' Ethical Authority, Original Sin, and Choice in Kierkegaard's 'Concept of Anxiety,'" *Kierkegaardiana* 21 (2000): 131-151. http://www.academia.edu/10105818/Entangled_Freedom_Ethical_Authority_Original_Sin_and_Choice_in_Kierkegaards_Concept_of_Anxiety (accessed July 23, 2018).

[392] *Ibid*., 146.

[393] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 155.

> Whoever is educated by anxiety is educated by possibility, and only he who is educated by possibility is educated according to his infinitude. Therefore possibility is the weightiest of all categories…in possibility all things are equally possible, and whoever has truly been brought up by possibility has grasped the terrible as well as the joyful.[394]

However, he does not end there, continuing as such:

> In order that an individual may thus be educated absolutely and infinitely by the possibility, he must be honest toward possibility and have faith.[395]

Only the individual who is brave enough to be educated by possibility can have faith. Only the individual who is committed to carrying such a weighty burden can become a true self.

In the light of all of this, Kierkegaard believes that no one is sinful because of Original Sin but rather every single individual becomes a sinner in the same way that Adam and Eve did. Instead of taking responsibility for its own sin, positing itself as the victim of Original Sin is to choose spiritlessness in which "there is no anxiety."[396] Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Fall also presents a cure to the spiritlessness of the age caused by the dogmatic understanding of that sinfulness preceding sin. The cure is to take the responsibility for the individual's own sins and to embrace its possibility to be able to choose between good and evil.

Kierkegaard's attack on Hegel, on the other hand, is mostly directed at Hegel's interpretation of the Fall from a logical standpoint. As mentioned earlier, Kierkegaard refuses the possibility of explaining the leap through any kind of science. Consequently, the next thing to do is to concentrate on Hegel's interpretation of the Fall so that it would be possible to understand both Hegel's position on the issue and Kierkegaard's criticism against it.

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[394] *Ibid*., 156.

[395] *Ibid*., 157.

[396] *Ibid*., 95.

4.1.2 Hegel's Interpretation of the Fall as Necessity

In both *The Encyclopedia Logic* and *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Hegel discusses the Fall from Eden. Just like Kierkegaard, Hegel criticizes the general understanding of the Fall. For both of them, the state of innocence does not represent the right state at all. On the other hand, while Kierkegaard understands the Fall as the sin of a single individual, Hegel takes the story as the history of humanity. Moreover, for Hegel, the story is to be understood as a necessity which brings us back to Kierkegaard's criticism that the Fall cannot be explained through a logical concept. After concentrating on Hegel's point of view, a closer look at these two philosophers' relation on the interpretation of the Fall will be presented.

In *The Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel starts by defining the forbidden tree as the "tree of cognition of good and evil."[397] Accordingly, for human beings, the command was to stay in a state of innocence. This state of innocence, for Hegel, is "the immediate, natural unity"[398] which has to be overcome through mediation. Hegel, like Kierkegaard after him but in a different way, rejects the idea that the state of innocence is the one to which human beings would wish to go back. On the contrary, in the state of innocence, there is no difference between a human being and an animal. The true spirit cannot be gained by staying in this kind of innocence. There is indeed a union in the state of innocence, however, this is an immediate unity in which a human being does not have any cognition.

In *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Hegel defines the Garden of Eden as "a zoological garden."[399] Even naming paradise as the garden of animals indicates what he understands from the state of innocence. As Stewart notes, "The Garden of Eden was no paradise but rather a prison appropriate for animals who are bound by

[397] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 62.

[398] *Ibid*.

[399] Georg W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion: One Volume Edition: The Lectures of 1827*, trans. R. F. Brown, ed. Peter C. Hodgson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 442.

natural necessity."[400] In this context, Hegel makes a clear distinction between human beings and animals according to their relation to nature. For Hegel, the so-called harmony between human being and nature in the state of innocence does not represent peace. It does not represent the true spirit either. Hegel states that "it is not correct to regard the immediate, natural unity as the right state…Spirit is not something merely immediate; on the contrary, it essentially contains the moment of mediation within itself."[401] In the natural unity of Eden, human beings are merely passive, just like the animals that "are unable to make distinctions within themselves."[402] However, human beings have consciousness; they are able to make such distinctions. That is why the state of innocence should not and cannot last forever.

The emergence of the antithesis of the unity of innocence happens through an externality, i.e., the serpent. The serpent tells Adam and Eve that "humanity will be like God when it has the knowledge of good and evil."[403] However, Hegel asserts that "the awakening of consciousness, lies within human beings themselves."[404] Accordingly, the serpent is actually nothing more than a symbol which represents human beings' own ability to overcome the immediate unity of innocence. Eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge awakens human consciousness. While in immediate unity with nature, Adam and Eve were just like animals, unconscious and unable to make a distinction between good and evil. For Hegel, then, the first sin is to become conscious:

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[400] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 412.

[401] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 62.

[402] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 443.

[403] *Ibid*.

[404] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 62.

> Being evil resides in cognitive knowledge; cognition is the source of evil. For cognition or consciousness means in general a judging or dividing, a self-distinguishing within oneself. Animals have no consciousness, they are unable to make distinctions within themselves.[405]

By eating from the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve differentiate themselves from nature. The moment of alienation from their immediate unity with nature appears as the first sin. However, for Hegel, this is a necessary movement not only for Adam and Eve but for all of humanity. As William Desmond explains, "Hegel wants to universalize the implicit meaning of the Fall: he is concerned with implicit humanity *according to its concept*, not the represented individuals, Adam or Eve."[406]

What follows sin is mostly understood as a curse or a punishment from God. However, Hegel rejects this idea. On the contrary, he understands this so-called curse as a fortunate moment:

> At this point there follows the so-called Curse that God laid upon human beings. What this highlights is connected with the antithesis of man and nature. Man must labour in the sweat of his brow, and woman must bring forth in sorrow. What is said about labour is, more precisely, that it is both the result of the schism and also its overcoming. Animals find what they need for the satisfaction of their wants immediately before them; human beings, by contrast, relate to the means for the satisfaction of their wants as something that they themselves bring forth and shape. Thus, even in what is here external, man is related to himself.[407]

Through labour, human beings can relate to nature in a new way. They realize that they have the ability to transform things. It is true that the so-called unity in the state of innocence has been broken because of this eating of the forbidden fruit, yet through God's punishment, this alienation is overcome.

When Adam and Eve eat from the Tree of Knowledge, they become like God. In the state of innocence, they were like animals. On the other hand, they realize their

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[405] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 443.

[406] William Desmond, *Hegel's God: A Counterfeit Double?*, (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1988), 153.

[407] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 62.

essential truth and become like God through their newfound cognition. Hegel argues that the serpent was not lying at all.

> The story reports that an alien creature, the serpent, seduced humanity by the pretense that, if one knows how to distinguish good and evil, one will become like God…The confirmation of the fact that the knowledge of good and evil belongs to the divinity of humanity is placed on the lips of God himself. God himself says: "Behold, Adam has become like one of us."[408]

Hegel does not interpret the story as one that breaks the unity between God and human beings. On the contrary, through the sin by which human beings reach cognition, human beings become like God. As Hegel states, "Philosophy is cognition, and the original calling of man, to be an image of God, can be realised only through cognition."[409] Hegel draws a distinction between religion and philosophy by rejecting the theological interpretation of the Fall. For him, sin does not mean becoming separated from God because he understands the first sin as becoming conscious; therefore, sin also means being united with God. Moreover, only philosophy can give the account of this unity. What makes human beings different from animals is also the very thing that makes them the same with God: cognition. Therefore, from a philosophical point of view, the story of Adam and Eve is a fortunate one. However, it also arises from a necessity which is, as Desmond puts, "a *dialectical elevation* of the human being."[410] By eating from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, then, Adam and Eve attain the truth of humanity. Stewart explains this by saying that "by acquiring knowledge and reason, humanity steps out of the realm of nature and enters into the realm of spirit."[411]

With his interpretation of eating from the Tree of Knowledge, Hegel criticizes the immediate unity between human beings and nature, explaining how this unity is

[408] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 444.

[409] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 62-63.

[410] Desmond, *Hegel's God*, 153.

[411] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 413.

superseded through sin. Meanwhile, God's punishment represents the synthesis between nature and human beings through labour. As a result, Hegel presents this story as a dialectical process through which human beings become conscious. After the interpretation of the Tree of Knowledge, Hegel continues with the meaning of the Tree of Life, which is the source of immortality:

> The story now goes on to say that God drove man out of the garden of Eden, so that he should not eat of the tree of life; this means that man is certainly finite and mortal on the side of his nature, but that he is infinite in cognition.[412]

With the Fall, particular human beings became mortal, yet humanity gained immortality in the universal sense. Immortality is gained through cognition, which is described as "the root of human life, of human immortality as a totality within itself."[413] With the idea of the immortality of human cognition, Hegel draws a distinction between the particular individual and the universal cognition. For him, through the Fall, human beings gain universality by gaining cognitive knowledge. The main difference between Hegel's and Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Fall lies in this distinction. Desmond explains how Hegel's idea of immortality is to be understood: "Hegel's discussion of immortality reveals the more general tension…between existential particularity and logicist universality."[414]

What is important for Hegel is not the particular lives of Adam and Eve. They are only the religious images that show human beings' overcoming of immediacy. For Hegel, as Stewart says, the Fall is not an accidental moment but a necessary one.[415] It is not only the story of Adam and Eve but the dialectical movement of the spirit as well. Therefore, through his interpretation of the Fall, Hegel explains how

[412] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 63.

[413] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 446.

[414] Desmond, *Hegel's God*, 154.

[415] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 412.

consciousness separates itself from the immediate unity, thereby finally constituting this unity through mediation:

> We must give up the superficial notion that Original Sin has its ground only in a contingent action of the first human pair…The relationship [of man to nature] in which man is a natural essence, and behaves as such, is one that ought not to be. Spirit is to be free and is to be what it is through itself. Nature is, for man, only the starting point that he ought to transform…When man goes beyond his natural being he thereby distinguishes his self-conscious world from an external one. But this standpoint of separation, which belongs to the concept of spirit, is not one that man should remain either.[416]

Human beings have to arrive at the unity, but not the immediate one that has already been overcome. It is important to understand the entire interpretation of the Fall as the process of immediacy, differentiation and mediation. Neither in immediacy nor in differentiation can human being become a true spirit. Mahn explains the meaning of the Fall for Hegel's philosophy as follows:

> "The Fall" itself can be seen as a metonym for Christian doctrine as a whole. Hegel sees Christianity as rehearsing the necessary unfolding of Universal spirit, which undergoes self-diremption into particulars and then re-members itself into the Concrete Universal.[417]

The Christian doctrine of the Fall serves as the manifestation of the spirit in Hegel's interpretation. For Hegel, the first sin is not an accidental act of an individual but a necessary moment which will carry humanity towards the universal spirit. In this sense, both human being's sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge and God's punishment of expulsion of humanity from Eden are positive because they represent the movement from the state of immediacy to true spirit of human beings.

Up until now, Kierkegaard's and Hegel's interpretations of the Fall have been explained. However, it is crucial to concentrate on the importance of these interpretations in order to understand their philosophical standpoints so that the relations between these two philosophers can be illustrated.

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[416] Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 63.

[417] Mahn, *Fortunate Fallibility*, 61.

4.1.3 Falling Far Away From Eden

Although their understandings of religion and the relation between religion and philosophy are different from each other, what is common to both Hegel and Kierkegaard, i.e. religion, is the key for the essential truth. While reading both of them, the reader comes across references to religious doctrines. They become more than mere examples used to make their ideas explicit. These religious references become part of their understanding of philosophical truth. Although their views on truth are generally opposed to each other, they agree on the relationship between religion and truth. The importance of their interpretations of the Fall, nevertheless, is not merely their agreement on the essentiality of religion. What is more crucial is that their interpretations help us to understand some core ideas of their philosophies.

In *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered,* Stewart tries to reconstruct the relation between Hegel and Kierkegaard by showing that most of Kierkegaard's criticisms are not really directed at Hegel but at some Hegelians instead. According to Stewart, even Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Fall is not a criticism of Hegel.[418] Although while interpreting the Fall, Kierkegaard's main idea was perhaps not to criticize Hegel's narrative, it would be unfair for both philosophers to defend that there is no opposition between their interpretations. Still, it is possible to inspect some similarities between them too.

First of all, for both Hegel and Kierkegaard, the idea of the Fall has been misinterpreted time and again by dogmatics. They argue that the state of innocence is not the rightful state to which human beings have to go back. While the state of innocence is ignorance for Kierkegaard, Hegel argues that it is the immediate unity in which human beings cannot stay. In addition, both Hegel and Kierkegaard interpret the first sin in a positive way. According to Kierkegaard, the sin represents the moment in which the individual becomes aware of its own possibility to be able to choose. For Hegel, on the other hand, through sin, human

[418] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 417-418.

beings become conscious by making a distinction between their own selves and nature. Another point that has been shared by them is that human beings are not sinful because of the first sin (Original Sin). For Hegel, the process that Adam and Eve experienced is actually the dialectical movement that all human beings go through. Adam and Eve are only the examples of this process. Kierkegaard defends this notion that sinfulness does not precede sin, in order to point that no one is sinful because of the first sin. However, every single individual sins as Adam and Eve did. In general, there is a parallelism between their interpretations in some aspects. However, their interpretations of the Fall give important clues as to their philosophical perspectives and reservations. At this point, in spite of all these similarities, Hegel and Kierkegaard have different paths.

The main difference concerns the subject of the story. For Kierkegaard, the Fall is the story of an individual self. It is true that every individual experiences sin in the same way that Adam and Eve did. Still, the individual is alone with its own choice. The individual relates itself with truth. Therefore, human beings might sin in the same way, but they relate to their sin in their own ways. According to Kierkegaard, the individual that seeks the essential truth retrieves itself from the crowd and commits to God. Hegel, on the other hand, understands the Fall as the story of the humanity. What is essential for his philosophy is not the existence of an individual but the necessary movement of spirit. Put bluntly, while the actor of the Fall is the individual for Kierkegaard, universal humanity is the subject in Hegel's interpretation.

The other important difference consists in Kierkegaard's criticism of Hegel. Kierkegaard rejects the notion that the Fall is a necessary movement. Rather, he explains it as the individual's awareness of its own possibility. By rejecting necessity, he also criticizes the logical justification of the Fall. For Kierkegaard, possibility is not something that can be conceptualized or understood through speculative thinking. The individual can only internalize it. In Hegel's interpretation, the story is explained from the point of absolute knowing. In other words, Hegel indeed conceptualizes the story. For him, the Fall is not an accidental

event beyond reason. On the contrary, he justifies religious truth with speculative thinking. As Hegel explains throughout the *Phenomenology*, the only difference between religion and philosophy is not the content of truth but the way of expressing it. In this sense, Hegel's interpretation of the Fall is also an proclamation of the idea that the truth religion reveals is to be conceptualized through philosophy. This idea also determines the subject of philosophy, which is not Adam and Eve in particular or any other existing individual; it is spirit. Therefore, on the contrary to what Stewart defends, Kierkegaard does criticize Hegel himself while refusing to interpret the Fall in the same way Hegel does. By doing so, he thus offers a new path for philosophy: to focus on the existing individual's relation to truth. By doing so, instead of concepts like immediacy and mediation, Kierkegaard uses themes like anxiety and possibility.

In the light of all of these distinctions, differences between these two philosophers' interpretations also refer to the difference between their philosophies in that how they understand truth and what the main subject of this truth is in reality is starkly opposed. In addition, their interpretations of the Fall open up another discussion too. As unique philosophers holding different views about truth, how do they posit themselves on the issue of the communicability of the truth? For both Hegel and Kierkegaard, the Fall has a profound importance in explaining their philosophical standpoints. They both use stories, myths and religious doctrines to expose their understandings of truth. Moreover, they both, in a way, communicate with their reader in order to lead her to inquire into her own standpoints. Therefore, to understand the relation between these two philosophers linked by their thoughts on truth, it is important to question their positions as authors in relation to their ways of interpreting truth.

The last part of this chapter focuses on Hegel's and Kierkegaard's conceptualizations of authorship, which gives me a chance to problematize not only their solutions on the communicability of the truth but also the position of reader who relates herself to the truth as well.

4.2 The Philosopher as an Author

While reading Kierkegaard's expositions on the stages of existence, the reader eventually realizes that the individual who seeks the essential truth retreats itself from the world. The world and everyone in it eventually turn out to be nothing more than a crowd that the individual must leave behind. Reading Hegel's *Phenomenology*, on the other hand, is like a celebration of the individual's homecoming. One who was separated from the world before becomes to feel at home with its other. A reader of both philosophers stands in between: on the one hand, there is the sacrifice of the other, but on the other hand, the individual fades away in the unity of the self and the other. How can the reader, who is an existing individual and a part of a community at the same time find her own place in Hegel's and Kierkegaard's texts? How can the reader relate to her ideas without sacrificing both her own individuality and the sense of being at home with herself in the other?

I shall offer an indirect response to these questions by deepening the relation between the author and the reader in inquiring into Hegel's and Kierkegaard's authorships. Both philosophers are also incredibly powerful authors who ask their reader to problematize her own viewpoints and ways of living. In a way, they both provoke their reader to relate herself to truth in order to realize her own true self. The reader is also invited to be a part of the text. Hegel and Kierkegaard are not just philosophers who state their ideas; they are also authors who communicate with their reader.

4.2.1 Kierkegaard's Authorship

For Kierkegaard, who understands truth as subjectivity, the way of expressing such truth cannot be the same as it is with objective knowledge. As an author, he offers indirect communication as the only way of expressing the essential truth. Therefore, the starting point for us is Kierkegaard's understanding of indirect communication, which makes it possible to problematize his authorship.

> Here as everywhere I feel myself abandoned to my own thoughts. Wherever I look I meet the sciences. As far as I can judge, I observe that they, every one of them, are extraordinarily developed, in almost every case have enormous apparatus which is gone over and remodeled again and again. But I also find everywhere that men are preoccupied with the WHAT which is to be communicated. What occupies me, on the other hand, is: what does it mean to communicate – of this I know I have really read nothing at all in the productions of the modern period, nor have I heard anything spoken about it.[419]

Instead of asking what is to be known, Kierkegaard chooses to ask how it is to be communicated, saying that "the distinguishing characteristic in life is not what is said but how it is said."[420] In this sense, one has to give up trying to domineer the truth by dealing with the whatness of truth. Instead, the individual should agree "to stand alone"[421] in its own relation to the truth.

4.2.1.1 Direct Communication and Indirect Communication

In *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Climacus announces that the essential truth cannot be communicated directly. The only way of expressing subjectivity is indirect communication. He sees a significant difference between direct and indirect communication. On the basis of this distinction, there lies the way for the individual to relate itself to the idea. In direct communication, the individual is entirely indifferent to the idea. This type of communication is, of course, useful for some types of ideas, like mathematical truth and logic. However, direct communication is not applicable to other ideas that are related to existence. No ethical or religious ideas can be communicated directly. This would be nothing but the annihilation of the very essence of the subjective idea.

Truth can only be related to the single individual. Consequently, the crowd cannot communicate the expression of truth. Direct communication is even the crowd's

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[419] Søren Kierkegaard, *Journals and Papers: Volume 1*, trans. and ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 304.

[420] *Ibid*., 317.

[421] *Ibid*., 280.

way of expression. Michael Galati notes that for Kierkegaard, truth depends on subjective discovery, being the single individual's inwardness. In this way, the crowd cannot know the truth. As an author, Kierkegaard has the task of leading his reader to becoming a single individual, independent from the so-called truth of the crowd.[422] Hence, the communication of truth is indirect and can be expressed only by the single individual apart from the crowd.

By presenting indirect communication as the only way of expressing subjective truth, Kierkegaard invites both his reader and other authors who seek the essential truth to realize that there has to be a shift in the style of writing. The objective reflection, which abstracts the existing individual from philosophy, has its own style of writing, i.e., direct communication. A subjective thinker, then, will necessarily fail in the examination of truth if one uses direct communication as the expression of its philosophical standpoint. Accordingly, Kierkegaard presents indirect communication also as a criticism of philosophers (like Hegel) who for Kierkegaard, dictate objective reflection, and direct communication by consequence, to subjective truth.

As David Wood more clearly argues, the difference between direct and indirect communication is based on the reflection that objective and subjective thinking involves:

> Reflection goes beyond what is merely given, and takes it up at the level of concepts. So far both types of thinking are the same. But subjective thinking involves a second stage of reflection. This he calls "a reflection of inwardness, of possession, by virtue of which it belongs to the thinking subject and to no one else." That is, the subjective thinker is significantly aware that it is he who is thinking his thoughts, and presumably of what they mean for him in his particular state of existence.[423]

In this regard, subjective reflection is a double reflection, whereby the subjective thinker does not only conceptualize but also relates itself to these concepts. To put

[422] Michael Galati, "A Rhetoric for Subjectivist in a World of Untruth: The Task and Strategy of Søren Kierkegaard," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 55, no. 4 (1969): 375-376.

[423] David Wood, *Philosophy at the Limits: Problems of Modern European Thought* (London: Routledge, 1990), 109.

it differently, concepts of subjective reflection are not abstract; rather, they are ideas that have been touched by existence itself. Subjective reflection problematizes how the single existing individual acts upon ideas, so subjective thinking turns out to be related to the activity of the individual. In objective thinking, on the other hand, the subject becomes irrelevant to thinking. The one who asks the questions is not actually included in the question itself. For subjective thinking, there is something more than a mere thinking: there is "the reflection of inwardness," which is the double reflection of the subjective thinker.[424] In *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Climacus explains the reflection of inwardness and how it cannot be communicated directly:

> Double reflection is implicit in the very idea of conveying something, that the subject existing in the isolation of his inwardness…nevertheless wishes to convey something personal, and hence wants to have his thinking in the inwardness of his subjective existence and at the same time convey it to others. This contradiction cannot possibly…find expression in a direct form…with a God-relationship: just because he is himself constantly coming to be inwardly, i.e., in inwardness, he can never impart this directly, since the movement here is exactly the opposite. To impart something directly presupposes certainty; but certainty is impossible for anyone in the course of becoming.[425]

For a subjective philosopher, every philosophical question concerns existence. For the existence of an individual, there will always be a process of becoming which cannot be freezed by abstract concepts. That is why there is a need for indirect communication expressing the inwardness of the existing individual's becoming.

Kierkegaard's main criticism is not actually against objective thinking but its being used as if it could reveal subjective truth. What is crucial for him is to draw a sharp distinction between the actual concerns of objective thinking and subjective thinking:

> Objective thinking is wholly indifferent to subjectivity, and by the same token to inwardness and appropriation. Its mode of communication is therefore direct…it lacks the deviousness and art of double reflection; it

[424] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 62.

[425] *Ibid*.

> does not have that god-fearing and humane solicitude in imparting something of itself that belongs to subjective thinking.[426]

Accordingly, the ordinary philosophy which has no claims about dealing with subjective issues can continue to use direct communication as its way of expression. However, for philosophy that deals with the essential truth, the only way to do so is to admit that direct communication is not suitable for the communication of inwardness. It has to be noted that Kierkegaard's main concern is actually Hegel's systematic philosophy, which deals with the "dialectic of becoming."[427] He does not criticize one's being a systematic philosopher who uses direct communication as the way of expressing its ideas. However, the problem arises from depending on speculative thinking while dealing with the becoming of an existing subject:

> [Speculative thinking] fails to express the situation of the knowing subject in existence; it therefore concerns a fictitious objective subject, and to mistake oneself for such a subject is to be and remain the victim of hoax. Every subject is an existing subject, and that fact must therefore express itself in all his knowing, and in preventing the knowing arriving at an illusory finality, whether in sense certainty, historical knowledge, or speculative result. In historical knowledge he gets to know a great deal about the world, nothing about himself.[428]

Accordingly, in speculative thinking for Kierkegaard, the individual who asks the question of truth disappears; it gets lost in the history of humanity. Kierkegaard finds deception in the systematic exposition of the becoming. What is more problematic for him is the trial involved in explaining faith. Neither a speculative philosopher nor Kierkegaard himself can explain the paradox of faith, and Kierkegaard offers nothing but silence on this point.

Abraham's story is a great example of how truth cannot be communicated, even indirectly. Abraham is a man who silently accepts God's command to sacrifice his

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[426] *Ibid*., 64.

[427] *Ibid*., 68.

[428] *Ibid*.

most precious belonging in the world: his son. Even if Abraham is willing to do so, he cannot express himself. Stewart notes, "The attempt to explain the divine command would only lead to misunderstanding since it is in itself incomprehensible. This is the reason for his repeated question throughout the book, 'Abraham, who can understand him?'"[429] Consequently, for Abraham, words would mean nothing. God's command is unspeakable for him and incomprehensible for others; he is an example of the situation in which there can be no way to communicate, even indirectly; hence, one remains silent. The pseudonym of Kierkegaard in *Fear and Trembling*, Johannes de Silentio, explains how it is impossible to express the passion of faith as follows:

> I am constantly aware of the prodigious paradox that is the content of Abraham's life, I am constantly repelled, and despite all its passion, my thought cannot penetrate it, cannot get ahead by a hairsbreadth. I stretch every muscle to get a perspective, and at the very same instant I become paralyzed.[430]

Johannes de Silentio, which means "John of the Silence," chooses silence in front of Abraham's faith. Faith, like the one Abraham has, means passion. Neither directly nor indirectly can such passion be expressed. De Silentio argues that trying to conceptualize Abraham's faith would be nothing more than philosophy's dishonesty.[431]

In brief, the essential idea behind indirect communication expresses the movement according to which is "*to arrive at* the simple…*from* the public *to* the single individual."[432] At this point, there remains a crucial point to be problematized: as a philosopher who defines truth as subjectivity and argues that such truth can only be

[429] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 331.

[430] Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 33.

[431] *Ibid*.

[432] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Point of View*, trans. and ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 10.

communicated indirectly, what is to be said about his authorship? Moreover, how does he relate to his reader as an author? In the next part, these questions will be investigated more in depth.

4.2.1.2 Seduction of the Author

Even for a committed reader of Kierkegaard, it would not be an easy task to comprehend his works. In accordance with indirect communication, Kierkegaard uses different narratives and myths to express his ideas under different pseudonyms. Pseudonymity is one of the essential features that determine Kierkegaard's authorship. Actually, it is his strategy that problematizes the function of the author. As an individual who chooses indirect communication as the expression of truth, Kierkegaard also takes a different position as an author. Through his pseudonymity, he withdraws his own existence from his works.

Through the different personalities he creates, Kierkegaard becomes a defender of different ways of existing. He seduces his reader in order to confront her with her own ways of existing. In the final pages of *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Johannes Climacus explains his authorship:

> My pseudonymity…has had no *accidental* basis in my *person*…but an *essential* basis in the *production* itself, which, for the sake of the lines and of the variety in the psychological distinctions in the individual characters, for poetic reasons required the lack of scruple in respect of good and evil, of broken hearts and high spirits, of despair and arrogance, of suffering and exultation, etc., the limits to which are set only ideally, in terms of psychological consistency, and which no factual person would, or can, dare to permit themselves within the bounds of moral conduct in actuality. What is written is indeed therefore mine, but only so far as I have put the life-view of the creating, poetically actualized individuality into his mouth in audible lines, for my relation is even more remote than that of a poet, who *creates* characters and yet in the preface is *himself* the *author.* For I am impersonally, or personally, in the second person, a *soufleur* who has poetically produced the *authors*, whose *prefaces* in turn are their production, yes, as are their *names.* So in the pseudonymous books there is not a single word by myself. I have no opinion about them except as third party, no knowledge of their meaning except as reader, not the remotest private relation to them, that being impossible in a doubly reflected communication. One single word by me personally, in my own name, would be a case of assumptive self-forgetfulness that in this one word, from

> a dialectical point of view, would essentially incur the annihilation of the pseudonyms.[433]

Through indirect communication, Kierkegaard refuses to position himself as a lecturer teaching his students what existing really means. Rather, he reminds his reader of her own individuality, which is why there is always a distance between the reader and the author. However, this distance is so balanced that the reader knows that she is always in communication not with Kierkegaard directly but with his writings. Daniel Berthold explains this point by saying that "his authorship must initiate a relationship to the other, the reader, and yet simultaneously maintain the privacy and subjectivity of both the author and reader."[434] Accordingly, Kierkegaard uses pseudonymity as a distancing device that helps the reader to concentrate on what is written and not on by whom it is written. Pseudonymity is a call to ask what it means to be a single individual, not from the author's point of view but from the reader's own perspective.

In Kierkegaard's works, the reader is not a passive but an active participant who problematizes her own existence through indirect communication. In order to encourage his reader to accept her individuality apart from any dogma presented by the crowd, Kierkegaard even deceives his reader. As he states, "Indirect communication first of all involves a deception."[435] Accordingly, the indirect communicator creates a labyrinth and becomes invisible while the reader has to find her own way by actually being a part of what is written. Actually, Kierkegaard deceives his reader to make her aware of her own life, ideas and actions[436].

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[433] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 527-528.

[434] Daniel Berthold, *The Ethics of Authorship: Communication, Seduction, and Death in Hegel and Kierkegaard* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 57.

[435] Kierkegaard, *Journals and Papers*, 274.

[436] However, the reader must also be conscious of that there is a universal aspect in every single individual. This universality is the moods of existence that make possible to be aware of the individual's own self. As it has been stated in the exposition of Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Fall, the individual becomes aware of its being able to choose through its anxiety. Accordingly, what is determinative is the feeling of anxiety which is shared by every individual. Moods like

Therefore, deceiving the reader is Kierkegaard's strategy, for it enables him to shift the position of the reader by demanding her to become an actor, but not a mere reader. His deception, however, is not a manipulation. Kierkegaard leaves his reader alone, but he does not tell her more than he could. He stays in silence if there is something beyond communication; he becomes a character when he wishes to leave a distance between the reader and himself so that she can be alone with her own self. As Berthold puts it, "If the seduction is successful, nothing direct will have been said by the author that the reader can rely on. She is abandoned to herself."[437] Accordingly, Kierkegaard does not rely on concepts, logical explanations or abstract grounds of knowledge in order to secure his own thought. What he offers to his reader, then, is self-doubt instead of certainty. For him, indirect communication is his ethical responsibility as an author. He seduces his reader but does not mislead her by seeking peace in abstract thinking. He invites his reader to act, and not to feel comfortable with solid concepts. This is why Kierkegaard criticizes a direct communicator who tries to conquer the essential truth. A direct communicator, for Kierkegaard, is the one who wishes to reduce existence to logical concepts. In direct communication, the existence of an individual is swallowed up by the system. As he argues, "Existence is the spacing that holds things apart; the systematic is the finality that joins them together."[438] Therefore, a systematic thinker irresponsibly deceives the reader by turning existence into an illusion.

For Kierkegaard, Hegel is a perfect example of a direct communicator with whom "we got a system, the absolute system – without having an ethics."[439] However,

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anxiety, despair and guilt are the universal conditions that allow the individual to be conscious about its possibility to become a true self.

[437] Berthold, *The Ethics of Authorship*, 81.

[438] Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, 100.

[439] *Ibid*., 101.

does Hegel really depend on direct communication? Is it really the case that he offers a system made of words away from existence? In the next part, Kierkegaard's criticisms against Hegel's authorship will be investigated by focusing on Hegel's strategy in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

4.2.2 Hegel's Authorship

Jon Stewart argues that Kierkegaard's criticism is not directed at Hegel's authorship as being the voice of speculative philosophy. According to Stewart, the one criticized is actually "specific personalities, such as Martensen and his students."[440] Yet, this interpretation fails to account for the fact that Kierkegaard uses Hegel's name directly while criticizing the dishonesty of the Modern age:

> There is nothing more dangerous than the thief passing himself off as a policeman, nothing more dangerous than a radical cure miscarrying and contributing to the disease, nothing more dangerous than being stuck in something and saying: Now I will make a desperate extreme effort to get loose – and then by this attempt proceeding to get all the more stuck. The fact that before Hegel presuppositions had grown beyond men's control is clear enough; but then with the assistance of this grandiose enterprise to bring the confusion of presuppositions to a still higher level – this is the most corrupting of all, partly because the confusion increased and partly because men concealed it from themselves by imagining and deluding themselves into thinking that now they had once and for all gotten the better of the bewilderment of presuppositions. There is certainly nothing more terrible than an amazing, gigantic program of disease eradication which turns out to nourish the disease.[441]

According to Kierkegaard, Hegel's philosophy offers illusionary relief by explaining existence as something to be systematically resolved. In this case, Stewart's trial to redirect Kierkegaard's criticism from Hegel to other people cannot succeed. However, this does not mean that Kierkegaard's Hegel is the real one. Is Hegel really guilty of what Kierkegaard accuses him of? Is he a dishonest author who offers his reader nothing but self-deception? In order to handle these claims fairly, we need to go beyond Kierkegaard's portrait of Hegel and concentrate on Hegel's own strategy as an author.

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[440] Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel Reconsidered*, 487. For the details of this discussion, see: "Speculative Philosophy and Forgetting Oneself," 483-488.

[441] Kierkegaard, *Journals and Papers*, 291-292.

4.2.2.1 Indirect Communication in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel presents the difference between religion and philosophy by focusing on their interpretations of truth. Religion expresses truth metaphorically through picture thinking which uses myths, religious stories, historical events and so on. Philosophy, on the other hand, expresses truth conceptually through speculative thinking. Additionally, according to Hegel, there is still a distance between the self and the other, i.e., God in religion. Hegel agrees with Kierkegaard about the idea that God's taking the form of a human being is understood as a gift from God, not as necessity. To put it differently, both Hegel and Kierkegaard think that according to religious truth, the unity in the incarnation of God is not a necessity, but a possibility that has been actualized by God. However, the essential difference between their understandings of religious truth resides in Hegel's idea that there is still something missing in the expression of truth through picture thinking which cannot capture the necessity in the unity between self and other. According to Hegel, in order to understand this necessity, we still need philosophy for which God is not beyond reasoning. For Kierkegaard, on the other hand, religious truth cannot be understood by speculative thinking because the relation between the self and God is not a matter of necessary unity but of absolute otherness. Eventually, Kierkegaard's criticism is targeting Hegel's idea that speculative thinking can eliminate this otherness. Hegel's picture thinking is indeed really similar with Kierkegaard's understanding of indirect communication. However, Hegel takes truth a step further by arguing that philosophy can exactly realize what religion cannot: understanding the necessary unity between the self and its other through speculative thinking. This is because for Hegel truth, in its absolute sense, is indeed conceptual.

Hegel opposes Kierkegaard who defends the idea that essential truth cannot be known speculatively. That is why Hegel, according to Kierkegaard, is a direct communicator who relies on speculative thinking. However, is it really the case for Hegel? *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the greatest example of Hegel's understanding

of indirect communication.[442] *Phenomenology* is to be understood as specific work that is actually a journey inviting the reader to join in. Judith P. Butler explains Hegel's indirect communication with his reader in *Phenomenology* as follows:

> Although Hegel's *Bildungsroman* does not address his reader directly…The narrative strategy of the *Phenomenology* is to implicate the reader indirectly and systematically. We do not merely witness the journey of some other philosophical agent, but we ourselves are invited on stage to perform the crucial scene changes…We recognize *ourselves* as the subjects we have been waiting for inasmuch as we gradually constitute the perspective by which we recognize our history, our mode of becoming, through the *Phenomenology* itself. Thus, the *Phenomenology* is not only a narrative about a journeying consciousness, but is the journey itself.[443]

Phenomenology invites the reader to undergo a double reflection. She becomes more than just a learner; she becomes an actor as well. The work is actually more than a passage from ordinary thinking to speculative thinking. It also gives one the chance to reflect upon one's own self through each mode of becoming that is presented. Accordingly, one does not only read the words but also reflects upon them. The reader is deceived by the *Phenomenology* in the same way Kierkegaard deceives his reader through the exposition of stages of existence. In each mode, consciousness makes a claim and acts on it. Through this process, the reader becomes more than an observer: she becomes the subject of the journey. She feels seduced by the *Phenomenology*.

Unlike Kierkegaard's exposition of Hegel, however, Hegel does not present a peaceful story in that one does not find relief in abstractions. On the contrary, the *Phenomenology* is "the way of despair"[444] that turns every reader into a part of this

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[442] It is important to note that saying that *Phenomenology* is written indirectly does not mean Hegel refuses direct communication completely. Hegel does indeed defend that truth is conceptual. Therefore in Kierkegaard's terms, Hegel argues that truth can be communicated directly. In this regard, Kierkegaard's criticism is not only about Hegel's style of writing but it is actually about Hegel's way of understanding truth. However, for this study, I will only concentrate on Hegel's *Phenomenology* where Hegel indirectly narrates this process of becoming of a true self.

[443] Judith P. Butler, *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 20-21.

[444] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 49. This point has also stated in Chapter 3.

journey. The entire movement in the *Phenomenology* destroys the subject's assumptions and its ways of existence by making it encounter with its own erroneous claims. However, Hegel does not present the one-sidedness or insufficiency in these claims from the beginning; he lets the reader believe that both consciousness, which is the subject of the text, and the reader will finally find peace. Only from a speculative point of view would the one-sidedness of a claim become visible. Other than that, the obscurity of the *Phenomenology* continues restlessly. As Berthold says, "We discover again and again that the 'truth' of a particular form of consciousness…is only partial and thus intrinsically a truth that points out beyond itself, which does not mean what it appears to mean."[445] Hegel takes a step back and allows us to feel alone in the phenomenological journey of consciousness. He does not appear as a teacher who shows his students the truth. Rather, he opens the path of consciousness and leaves the reader alone so that she can be confronted with her own suppositions. During the process, the reader constantly meets her own misunderstandings. In this sense, in contradistinction from Kierkegaard's interpretation of him, Hegel does not present illusionary peace for his reader through direct communication. On the contrary, as Martin Heidegger explains, "The whole work of his philosophy is devoted solely to making…restlessness real."[446]

To see the *Phenomenology* as a work of a direct communication would be a mistake. Until we arrive at the point in which we can know truth absolutely, there will always be indirect communication. It is true that the *Phenomenology* opens up the path of philosophy, which is speculative thinking. However, until one is able to express truth through concepts, the path of indirect communication is to be experienced. Hegel does not present a gift for being convinced by any assumption of consciousness. He asks his reader to silently labour, not as a distanced observer who wishes to understand but as being involved in the process. His indirect

[445] Berthold, *The Ethics of Authorship*, 92.

[446] Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 66.

communication throughout the *Phenomenology* does not force the reader to be included in the journey by a laudy announcement. Rather, it is a silent seduction which the reader cannot escape from, seeing her own self as an actor in the narrative. Butler explains this seduction as follows:

> We begin the *Phenomenology* with a sense that the main character has not yet arrived. There is action and deliberation, but no recognizable agent. Our immediate impulse is to look more closely to discern this absent subject in the wings; we are poised for his arrival. As the narrative progresses beyond the "this" and the "that," the various deceptions of immediate truth, we realize slowly that this subject will not arrive all at once, but will offer choice morsels of himself, gestures, shadows, arments strewn along the way, and that this "waiting for the subject," much like attending Godot, is the comic, even burlesque, dimension of Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Moreover, we discover that simply waiting is not what is expected of us, for this narrative does not progress rationally unless we participate in thinking.[447]

For the *Phenomenology*, what is to be done is to look at the process of becoming. However, this looking at is more than just viewing the process; more directly, it means relating to it. *Phenomenology* accordingly necessitates this double reflection. Hegel does not actually ask the reader to do so, but she eventually finds oneself included in the process. The reader is not able to resist contemplating consciousness' becoming.

The actual difference between Hegel's and Kierkegaard's authorship is not about whether they use indirect communication or not; instead, it is why they use indirect communication at all. Kierkegaard thinks that there is a need for indirect communication because truth cannot be conceptualized or systemized. Truth's essential feature is its being beyond reasoning. We have to accept that there will always be something that will remain as an other to our comprehension. In this sense, we have to find another way that would allow us at least to relate to this other. Kierkegaard even goes further than indirect communication and says that "there is a time to be silent."[448] For him, this time is the God-relation, which is not a matter of comprehension but of faith. On the other hand, the need for indirect

[447] Butler, *Subjects of Desire*, 20.

[448] Kierkegaard, *Point of View*, 23.

communication for Hegel is not because of the idea that truth is something beyond reason. However, in order to be able to grasp truth conceptually, every single opposition, one-sidedness and misunderstanding must first be consumed in the experience of consciousness. Instead of starting with speculation, he sees the need for the *Phenomenology* in which consciousness becomes aware of its own erroneous claims at each moment, thereby becoming closer to absolute knowing. During the *Phenomenology*, we see many references to religious stories, narratives, historical events and literature. As Kierkegaard does while presenting the existence of the individual, Hegel uses these stories as a way to expose consciousness' movement. Consequently, both Hegel and Kierkegaard use indirect communication, but they arrive at different conclusions. For Hegel, through indirect communication in the *Phenomenology*, the self arrives back to its home, the only home where one can be united with its other. However for Kierkegaard, through indirect communication, the self rather becomes retrieved from the crowd and committed to one's own faith.

In the light of all of this, no matter how different they are from each other in their philosophical standpoints, they have similar approaches in their styles of writing. Even Stewart, who searches for the similarity between them in their philosophical views, does not actually focus on the main agreement between them: their style of writing. Robert Piercey remarks this agreement between Hegel and Kierkegaard as follows:

> As different as they are, Hegel and Kierkegaard are both sophisticated writers. Both seek to do something more subtle in their writing than convey information. Both wish to transform their readers in more profound ways, and both use complex stylistic strategies to achieve this goal. Both rely on indirect communication: Kierkegaard through his use of pseudonyms, multi-part works, and fictional editors, Hegel through a dialectical method that observes rival positions as they expose their own limits.[449]

If Hegel's style of writing is not a direct communication, then what is to be said about Hegel's authorship as one who takes the universal spirit as the subject of his philosophy instead of any existing individual? What is his responsibility as an

[449] Robert Piercey, "Learning to Swim with Hegel and Kierkegaard," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 86, no. 4 (2012): 583.

author towards his reader? Moreover, how does he relate himself to his reader? In the next part, these questions will be discussed.

4.2.2.2 Silence of the Author

If it is understood from Kierkegaard's perspective, Hegel would have no responsibility towards his reader. How could he? He is a philosopher of a great System. What would be the place of an existing individual in such a system? How can she preserve her own existence while her individuality dissolved in the Absolute? These questions are of course crucial. However, they are problematic because they represent Kierkegaard's image of Hegel, not Hegel himself. Hegel indeed maintains a responsibility towards his reader. Moreover, he has nearly the same attitude as Kierkegaard, but for different reasons.

To first thing to discuss is Hegel's position as an author in his work.[450] In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel is nearly invisible. He is actually the one which becomes an observer. Berthold defines Hegel's position as author by saying that Hegel "denies a position of authority" and adds that "he is spectral, ghostly, beyond reach."[451] What would be the reason behind this? The first reason is actually that same as Kierkegaard's idea of leaving the reader alone so that she could be included in the process. As Kierkegaard does, Hegel distances himself from the text. In this way, he does not disrupt the becoming of consciousness. Through this, the reader does not find herself as the student of Hegel but as the subject of the experience of this becoming. He does not present meaning but lets the reader to explore it by herself. Even at the very beginning of the *Phenomenology*, he refuses to explain his aim as an author:

[450] Instead of explaining his authorship and style of writing by concentrating on his entire philosophy, rather I choose to focus on the *Phenomenology*. This is because *Phenomenology* is a great reference to illustrate not only his philosophy, but also his authorship and language. Moreover, as it has been stated in the previous chapter, this work also allows us to see the place of the self in Hegel's philosophy.

[451] Berthold, *The Ethics of Authorship*, 99.

> It is customary to preface a work with an explanation of the author's aim, why he wrote the book, and the relationship in which he believes it to stand to other earlier or contemporary treatises on the same subject. In the case of a philosophical work, however, such an explanation seems not only superfluous but, in view of the subject-matter, even inappropriate and misleading.[452]

Hegel refuses to own the meaning and the aim of the *Phenomenology*. He does not see himself as the one who directs the text. Instead, he becomes a voice which delivers the experience of consciousness. In addition, he rejects all attempts at controlling his reader's thinking by presenting her an explanation of the *Phenomenology*. The reader is to overreach what is given and find her own way. By doing so, he makes the path of knowledge not only a matter of comprehension but also a matter of appropriation[453]. As Kierkegaard refuses to be a teacher that explains to his reader what truth means, Hegel does the same thing by rejecting to be the owner of the idea in the *Phenomenology*.

However, there is also another reason behind Hegel's rejection of his own authority in the text. He becomes ghostly in the text, even more than Kierkegaard does. At the very least, Kierkegaard finds it necessary to announce to the reader that he has no authority in his works:

> "Without authority" **to make aware** of the religious, the essentially Christian, is the category for my whole work as an author regarded as a totality. From the very beginning I have enjoined and repeated unchanged that I was "without authority." I regard myself rather as a *reader* of the books, not as the *author*.[454]

Since Kierkegaard asserts himself as a religious author, he finds it necessary to announce that he has no authority in his books. He is in the same position with his reader. He never accomplishes his striving to become a religious person. Who,

[452] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 1.

[453] The reader must appropriate that the *Phenomenology* is the journey of all. More clearly, it is the history of all. That is why every reader can be included in the process of becoming in the *Phenomenology*. When *Phenomenology* ends and philosophy begins, however, the reader is to recognize that the contingent individual is not the subject of philosophy.

[454] Kierkegaard, *The Point of View*, 12.

then, could he be the one that asks his reader to see him as a knower rather than a learner? In this sense, he repeats loudly that he rejects this authority. However, Hegel also rejects this authority without ever announcing it. Berhold explains the difference between them by saying that "it is Kierkegaard, after all, and not Hegel, who writes a *Point of View for My Work as an Author*…For Hegel, though, there is no '*my*' work as an author and hence no impulse or sense of duty to proclaim it."[455] To understand Hegel's silence is actually to understand his authorship in relation to his philosophy. Hegel does not see himself as the owner of his thought. He is not an author who tells his own understanding of truth. Rather, he asserts himself as an anonymous voice delivering *the* truth. If this is the case, how should we understand Hegel's intention? His silent rejection of his authority depends on his idea that he is not the director of consciousness' process of becoming[456]. His passivity as an author enables his work to have authority in philosophy. The name Hegel becomes unessential in the sense that he did not invent the idea but just exposed it. As Berthold puts, "Truth is not proclaimed by the author but rather discovered in the evolving experience of consciousness itself."[457] Accordingly, Hegel claims that he expresses the truth of philosophy by rejecting his own authority as the one who makes claims about truth.

Lastly, Hegel's silence refers to the sacrifice of his own otherness. The entire *Phenomenology* explains the moments of consciousness' freeing itself from its one-sided thinking. In order to arrive at absolute knowing, consciousness has to realize that the one that consciousness asserts as its other is actually caused by consciousness' erroneous claims on the so-called distinction between its own self

[455] Berthold, *The Ethics of Authorship*, 162.

[456] However, in *Phenomenology*, Hegel sometimes interrupts the process and speaks from a speculative point of view. While doing so, he mostly uses the subject "we" as ones who know the absolute truth. These interruptions can be understood as reminders of the fact that the moments in the *Phenomenology* will be consumed and we will arrive at the standpoint of speculative thinking where not the individual but "we" as spirit will be the subject.

[457] *Ibid*., 163.

and the other. Throughout its experience, consciousness realizes its being in unity with its other and gives up its alienation. In the last few pages of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel announces that consciousness comes to the end of its separations:

> Spirit has concluded the movement in which it has shaped itself, in so far as this shaping was burdened with the difference of consciousness…a difference now overcome. Spirit has won the pure element of its existence, the Notion…Spirit, therefore, having won the Notion, displays its existence and movement in this ether of its life and is *Science*. In this, the moments of its movement no longer exhibit themselves as specific *shapes of consciousness*.[458]

Accordingly, every one-sided shape of consciousness has dissolved during the *Phenomenology*. Otherness has been overcome. At the very beginning of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel gives up his own otherness. Each existing individual is not the subject of philosophy. How could he assert his individuality while explaining consciousness' withdrawal of its particularity? Is he being honest with his reader and refusing to betray what he tells her when he turns himself into an anonymous voice? Or does he rather seduce the reader silently with the idea that she also has to sacrifice her desire to find her own individual self in philosophy? According to Hegel's narrative, the self cannot be at home with its other without the annulment of its own exclusive individuality. Therefore, the choice is up to the reader. She can choose either to be retired from a universal crowd by preserving her own individuality or to be at home with its other by turning into an anonymous voice. They both invite reader to act. However, how is it possible for a reader to act while standing in between Hegel and Kierkegaard?

4.2.3 The Reader in between

It has never been an easy task to contemplate on Hegel's and Kierkegaard's philosophies. The difficulty does not only arise from a need of a complete attention about what they say, but also from how they say it. The reader cannot comprehend the ways in which they express their understandings of truth and the positions they take as authors in relation to truth without turning back into the reader's own self.

[458] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 490-491.

Both Hegel and Kierkegaard find a way to include the reader into their philosophies, not merely to convince the reader of their ideas but also to let her inquire into her own standpoint.

It would be an injustice to claim that one can find peace in the relationship between Hegel and Kierkegaard. Although seeing them as merely oppositional philosophers would be too much, insisting on a harmony between Hegel and Kierkegaard would be nothing more than a misinterpretation. They encourage the reader to fall from her immediacy or ignorance. They tell what it means to become a true self and what the reader has to leave behind. Hegel presents an image of the home where the reader recognize her being in unity with the other. On the other hand, Kierkegaard invites her to embrace her loneliness in her commitment to the essential truth. Then they leave the scene. Now, the reader is all alone in between Hegel and Kierkegaard. After reading their works full of suffering, despair, exhaustion, laughter, excitement and joy, what is left in the reader's hands? The gift and the curse they gave to the reader: to take the heaviest and yet the most essential burden of becoming a true self upon herself.

The Hegelian self never fails to find its way. It suffers from its own mistakes, but it eventually learns to overcome these difficulties. At the end of the day, the Hegelian self arrives home. The Kierkegaardian self, in contrast, embraces its suffering in which it heals itself again and again. The Kierkegaardian self is always a sojourner who distances itself from the crowd and commits itself to a paradox. What happens to the reader then? Does she have here only two options that are mutually exclusive, i.e. an "either/or" between the Hegelian self and the Kierkegaardian self? Instead, would it be possible to find the truth of the self neither in Hegel nor in Kierkegaard, but in between? What if the truth of the self is neither in loneliness nor in community but in between, neither in paradox nor in necessity but in between, neither in individuality nor in universality but in between?

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, Hegel and Kierkegaard have been brought together around the themes of selfhood, truth and authorship which find their prominent places in their philosophies. For both philosophers, the meaning of truth shows itself in the act of the self. In addition, their expressions of the intricate relation between the self and the truth give a chance to problematize their styles of writing and positions as authors. In spite of the crucial differences between Hegel and Kierkegaard, bringing them together carries a great opportunity to discuss the place of the self in philosophical truth, and the meaning of authorship. Instead of presenting a concrete answer to the relation between Hegel and Kierkegaard, I have tried to examine their two different paths of truth. Rather than finding reasons to support one side of the dispute, I find it more crucial to ask whether there is another possibility that stands in between Hegel and Kierkegaard. By leaving this question open, I tried to indicate that these two philosophers can inspire us to do more than just to follow their paths. Rather they invite us to inquire into what it means to be a self and what its journey towards truth would consist of.

In the second and third chapters, I have separately examined Kierkegaard's and Hegel's ideas on the relation between truth and selfhood. Later on in the fourth chapter, I brought them together for the first time by presenting their interpretations on a specific story, which allows one to see their understandings of the truth of selfhood clearly. Secondly, I discussed their styles of writing and authorship in relation to the fact that narratives, metaphors and historical and religious stories have a crucial place in their philosophies. During this examination, I realized that for both philosophers, the reader must also problematize her own position and be

included in the philosophical inquiry. In this regard, both philosophers are in a dialogue with their reader by indirectly asking her to reflect on her own viewpoints.

Particularly, in the second chapter, I first presented Kierkegaard's idea of "truth as subjectivity." For this exposition, I initially examined how Kierkegaard defines the appropriate approach towards such truth. Since truth is subjective, Kierkegaard argues that it cannot be known objectively. Accordingly, we must change the ways in which we ask the question related to truth. Instead of trying to define "what" truth means, he changes the focus by asking "*how*" an individual self relates itself to the idea of truth. Contrary to the idea of excluding the existing individual from philosophy, Kierkegaard makes the unique individual the main subject of the essential truth. For him, through "subjective reflection," the individual self relates itself to the idea of truth not by being a mere witness but by becoming an actor in one's inward relation to truth.

Secondly, I examined the individual's process of becoming a true self by focusing on Kierkegaard's idea of "the stages of existence." The first one is "the aesthetic stage" in which one lives immediately. The aesthete has no individuality but exists just a part of the crowd. Since the aesthete cannot distinguish itself from this crowd at this stage, it will never become a genuine individual. According to Kierkegaard, every human being is inherently intended to be one's own self. The aesthete, on the other hand, has no self of one's own but only is lost in the immediate unity with one's surroundings. However, if the aesthete reflects upon this dilemma, it awakens the aesthete. Then, the aesthete finds itself enveloped in melancholia. This, for Kierkegaard, is not only a suffering but also a possibility, which gives one the chance for salvation. With the urge of recovering oneself from melancholia, the aesthete becomes aware of the possibility of a different way of living in which the individual can realize itself in its commitment to a universal idea.

Following this, Kierkegaard presents "the ethical stage" in which one seeks to realize one's own individuality in its commitment to a universal law. This stage represents the unity of individuality and universality. The ethical persona defines oneself in the realization of the universal task. However, Kierkegaard sees an

inevitable failure in this effort too. While seeking for the unity between oneself and the law, the individual finds itself in the contradiction between contingency and necessity, finitude and infinitude and between one's own self and the universal law. Accordingly, the harmonious unity that the ethical individual seeks to realize turns out to be an endless tension between one's own self and the universal task. With the impossibility of realizing this unity, the ethical individual feels guilty from which it cannot escape without abandoning its commitment to a universal law.

Finally, Kierkegaard introduces "the religious stage" as being the highest way of existing for the individual. "Religiousness A" represents the passage from the ethical stage to the religious one. According to Kierkegaard, religiousness A is, again, doomed to fail because the individual seeks an immanent relation to God. The individual recognizes the absolute difference between one's own self and God when the individual tries to sacrifice one's life for the sake of God. The individual self realizes its attachment to one's own life when it tries to renounce it for the absolute relation to God. In this trial, the individual self comes to understand that life is given by God as a gift. Moreover, the individual has no power to act without God. With this awareness, the qualitative difference between the individual and God becomes visible, and the idea of an immanent relation to God fails. This awareness also brings guilt which is crucial for going beyond Religiousness A and becoming a religious individual.

For Kierkegaard, "Religiousness B" represent the essential truth. The religious truth is the "Absolute Paradox" which cannot be turned into an object of knowledge but can only be related by the religious individual's faith. Faith is the individual's embracement of this paradox, which represents the qualitative difference between the individual self and God. Kierkegaard tells the story of *becoming* an authentic self, but he never presents it as arriving at the *being* of such an individual. The individual finally relates itself to an absolute otherness by daring to act endlessly for one's faith. The essential sense of commitment and choice is disclosed in the leap of faith. For Kierkegaard, to become a true self is to embrace this endless relation to the other which can never be dissolved. Additionally,

according to Kierkegaard's narrative, to be in relation to truth is to abandon the idea of unity. In this sense, the individual self is to welcome being alone in the world only with one's own faith. Contrary to Kierkegaard, Hegel's narrative ends by arriving at home, although the entire process of the self, as in Kierkegaard's philosophy, is full of despair, frustration and failure.

In the third chapter, I studied Hegel's idea of truth as "absolute knowing," which necessitates a detailed exploration of the entire process of consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Before doing so, I discussed where the *Phenomenology* stands in Hegel's philosophy and what the method of this work is. Hegel understands philosophy as science which consists in the comprehension of the whole, i.e., the truth. However, in order to arrive at this end, we need first to pass through every single shape of consciousness that is actual in its experience. Throughout the *Phenomenology*, consciousness becomes aware of the one-sidedness displayed by the contradictions involved in its experience. Yet, within this process of losing its certainty, it slowly learns through its own experience. For Hegel, we cannot presuppose truth. We need to focus on consciousness' own activity of disclosing the truth by being faced with its own errors. In this regard, Hegel does not assign himself as the director of the *Phenomenology*. Rather, he takes a step back in order to let consciousness become its true self. Hegel does not seem to be the one who determines the method of the *Phenomenology*; rather, he simply leaves consciousness alone to determine its own self. In general, the only method of the *Phenomenology* and of Hegel in general is to let consciousness reflect upon itself.

After this, I traced the transformation of ordinary consciousness into absolute knowing. I started by explaining "self-consciousness" in which consciousness focuses on its own self by seeking to assert itself as independent. It does so by demanding recognition from an other self while refusing to recognize the other with a trial to cancel the other's independency. This turns out to be a struggle between the two. In the end, the side which manages to transform itself, thanks to its labor, can reflect upon itself and gain independency. Such independency,

however, is only an abstract one because it does not include the recognition of the other self-consciousness. In this regard, consciousness gets lost in its abstract thinking and asserts itself as a free and essential self, which does not go beyond an abstract thought. Yet consciousness remains unsatisfied because it cannot have the certainty of its freedom by staying in pure thought. Therefore consciousness becomes "unhappy," which can be understood as more than just a moment in the *Phenomenology*; rather, it is understood as the general mode of consciousness that cannot grasp the unity between its own self and the other. However, as a specific moment, "unhappy consciousness" represents consciousness' desire to be in unison with God. In this effort, consciousness starts to understand itself as an unessential being which has no power over its activity in the world while understanding God as the one which presents life to the self as a gift. At this point, it is crucial to recall Kierkegaard's understanding of faith. Unlike Kierkegaard, Hegel does not define such relation to God as the essential truth. On the contrary, for Hegel, consciousness necessarily goes further in order to close the gap between itself and its other. Therefore, consciousness can only be freed from unhappiness in the unity that has been gained by the act of consciousness itself. To overcome such a division, consciousness needs to take a new form.

Consciousness as "reason" relates to the world in different ways. First, it asserts itself as the observer of both its own self and of nature to find a law as the ground of the harmony between itself and nature. However, by distancing itself from its object in the position of observation, consciousness inevitably fails to find such principles. It has to join to the world by asserting itself in its activity. This time, consciousness takes society as its other. First, it tries to manifest itself as an independent individual by seeking pleasure. Later, it understands such an assertion as an abstract one and adopts the opposite idea by acting for the sake of the universal law. Consciousness, however, finds itself in contradiction again while trying to sacrifice its individuality for universality. Finally, it tries to manifest itself as the unity of individuality and universality. The idea of realizing oneself in the world turns out to be a failure for consciousness while trying to determine the law

as the ground of harmony in the world. Since consciousness cannot come to the point of such harmony by dictating itself a contentless law while staying in such dualism between itself and the world, it has to take a new form in which it seeks mutual recognition in community.

Consciousness as "spirit" first tries to find truth in ethical life by seeking the unity between the human law and the divine law. The immediate and peaceful unity between these laws is depicted with reference to the tragedy of *Antigone*. At this immediate state, the truth of Spirit consists in the beauty of the communal life of a nation which inevitably develops its own contradictions once it has to actualize its ideals. Here, through the ethical deed of Antigone, the inner contradiction of ethical life is displayed, and the the immediacy of the ethical life is burst into opposition with a tragic knot. One has to be either against human law or against divine law. As Hegel explains through the tragic story of Antigone, one is either to become the enemy of the state or to sacrifice the ethical duty that one finds one's identity. While explaining the cultural life of spirit, Hegel presents the Enlightenment and faith as representations of oppositionary ideas. Eventually, they turn out to be the same by differentiating either thought from matter or nature from God. Neither of them can resolve the conflict between the self and the other. Consciousness, then, asserts itself as the general will that was supposed to be the annihilation of this conflict. However, in this idea of a general will, the individuality dies away. In the destruction of individuality, Hegel finds a positivity which would allow consciousness to recognize its actuality in moral life. By becoming a moral self, consciousness tries to realize the moral duty in the world. Yet, consciousness can overcome the duality between the duty and the world neither in its thought nor in its act. Finally, each moral self has to admit their failure to realize the duty by forgiving one another. Through this mutual forgiveness, consciousness can recognize its own one-sidedness in the other's failure. However, consciousness cannot actualize the mutual recognition without adopting a new shape.

In "the revealed religion," Hegel interprets the incarnation of God as the unity between the self and the other. When God's otherness dissolves into its being

human, humanity gains divinity. However, in religious truth, the reconciliation of self and other is expressed metaphorically. Although both philosophy and religion have the same content, they express the truth differently. The truth is pictured in religion but it is not comprehended conceptually. To put it differently, the unity is indeed revealed in religion, but it is not recognized as necessity. Rather, in religion, there is the idea that unity is gifted by God, which means unity depends on the will of God. In "absolute knowing," on the other hand, consciousness can give the complete account of truth as "Notion" through which each single moment is brought together. Absolute knowing is this comprehension of the recollection of the entire journey of consciousness. By consuming every single one-sided position, frustration, despair and alienation throughout its journey, consciousness finally arrives at the standpoint of philosophy. Where consciousness' act of othering ends, speculative thinking begins.

For Hegel, to be at home is to discover the truth of being in communion with one's other. Contrary to Kierkegaard, Hegel defends the notion that truth is this unity of self and its other. While the Kierkegaardian self becomes retrieved from others by stating its individuality, the Hegelian self discovers unity with its other by leaving its particularity behind.

In the fourth chapter of this study, I have tried to deepen the difference between Hegel's and Kierkegaard's understandings of the relation between truth and self by studying the implications of their interpretations of the Fall from Eden. Kierkegaard understands the state of innocence, which represents the unity between God and human beings, as "the state of ignorance." In this state, there is no difference between God's command and a human's act. Kierkegaard expresses this as the lack of possibility. With the sin of eating of the forbidden fruit, one becomes aware of its possibility. With the "anxiety" of the awareness of one's possibility as being able, the dreaming spirit awakens. Through "the leap," one can realize its individuality by shouldering its own responsibility to act.

Following this, I presented Hegel's interpretation of the Fall. For Hegel, the state of innocence is "the state of immediacy." Like Kierkegaard, Hegel also argues that

such immediate unity between God and human beings is to be left behind. However, human beings also do not stay in the moment of alienation either. Rather, by eating from the Tree of Knowledge, it arrives at the cognition of truth. This is the cognition of the mediated unity between one's own self and its other. Unlike Kierkegaard, Hegel understands the Fall as necessity. Additionally, the subject of the Fall is not the individual self but the universal one, which is the true spirit of human beings.

While for Kierkegaard, we fall into our possibility to realize our individuality, for Hegel, we necessarily fall from Eden so that we realize our true spirit as universality. Philosophy begins with the transforming act of becoming a true self. For both philosophers, it is not possible to exclude selfhood in seeking truth. However, the selfhood and truth that find their places in philosophy have different meanings for them. Their interpretations of the Fall present more than their understandings of the relation between truth and selfhood. It is also a crucial example of how such stories find their place in their philosophies. I see a great importance in focusing on the place of such metaphors while presenting the self's journey towards truth in Hegel's and Kierkegaard's philosophies. Expounding upon their styles of writing has also allowed me to problematize their positions as authors in a dialogue with their reader.

Later in the same chapter, I discussed Hegel's and Kierkegaard's forms of authorship. First I focused on the distinction between "direct and indirect communications" discussed by Kierkegaard. Accordingly, truth can only be communicated indirectly. For a philosopher whose concern is to deal with existence, the issue will always be the becoming of the individual self. In this sense, direct communication can do nothing more than to just freeze the truth and turn it into an abstraction. Indirect communication, on the other hand, is the only way to express the individual's inward relation to truth. While defining himself as an indirect communicator, Kierkegaard criticizes Hegel as a philosopher who tries to present the meaning of truth by using direct communication. However, Hegel's *Phenomenology* is one of the greatest examples of indirect communication in

philosophy. I understand Hegel's indirect communication in this work as a necessary one in order to arrive at the position where we can express truth directly. First of all, we accordingly need indirect communication to be able to communicate directly. In this regard, before accusing Hegel of being a direct communicator who presents truth as an abstract idea, I strongly emphasize his way of communication in the *Phenomenology*.

By finally discussing their authorship, I have questioned how they posit themselves as authors and where the reader stands in this dialogue with the author. By using pseudonyms and indirect communication, Kierkegaard seduces his reader in order to confront her with her own self and existence. He speaks as if he were a defender of different ways of existing. However, what he really tries to do is to leave his reader alone with her own self. He preserves a distance with the reader not only for protecting his own secrecy but also for reminding the reader that only the individual can choose its own path. His seduction is an invitation to the reader to act to become a true self. Hegel, on the other hand, is even more invisible than Kierkegaard. He never posits himself as the one that directs consciousness in the *Phenomenology*. First of all, with his silence throughout the *Phenomenology*, Hegel leaves his reader alone with the text, just like Kierkegaard does. The reader must involve herself in consciousness' process of becoming in order to grasp the truth that consciousness reveals. Second, by rejecting the authority of the *Phenomenology*, he implies that the *Phenomenology* is not the expression of his own idea of truth. Rather, it is the exploration of consciousness' own experience. Finally, his silence represents his sacrifice of othering his own individuality for the idea that truth is the reconciliation of every single otherness.

Hegel presents a journey full of life and diversity that is inevitably encountered within our own selves. In this regard, both philosophers, through silence or seduction, invite their reader to reflect on her own selfhood. Where does the reader of both stand, then? While the individual self becomes retrieved from the idea of unity in Kierkegaard's understanding of truth, the truth of the self is understood in a universal whole in Hegel's philosophy. In this regard, the reader of both is in

between. There is an implicit sacrifice in both philosophers' understandings of truth: either the sacrifice of being in communion with one's other, or the sacrifice of preserving one's own individuality.

As a reader who deeply admires both Hegel and Kierkegaard, I find myself in between while searching for the truth of my own self exactly in the tension between Hegel's and Kierkegaard's philosophies: the tension of the hope of being at home with one's other while still demanding one's own individuality. However, far from deepening such an idea, I have concluded this study by only asking about the possibility of such a path of truth in between Hegel and Kierkegaard. I strongly believe that, more than persuading us to their own ideas of truth, Hegel and Kierkegaard are whispering to us that we must face our own failure, despair, frustration and tension in our lives and have the courage to seek the truth of selfhood by learning from them.

Lastly, I hope bringing Hegel and Kierkegaard together by presenting a thematic reading which focuses on the triune relation between truth, selfhood and authorship would show the significance of the points like becoming a true self, the position of the philosopher as an author and the possibility of a dialogue which includes the reader in philosophy.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Kierkegaard felsefesinin belirleyici fikirlerinin çoğunda doğrudan ya da dolaylı olarak Hegel göndermeleri olduğu sezilmektedir. Düşünür, metinlerinde kendini belirgin bir biçimde Hegel karşıtı olarak konumlandırmasa da Hegel'in "Sistem"ine ve hatta daha doğru bir ifadeyle Sistem'in dışında kalanlara dair yönelttiği eleştirel sorularla yeni bir felsefi düşünme biçiminin olanağını Hegel'le ilişkilenişi üzerinden açık eder. Bu anlamıyla Kierkegaard'ı Hegel'e referansla çalışmak yeterli olmamakla birlikte çok anlamlıdır. Öte yandan, Kierkegaard'tan Hegel'e geri dönüşte Hegel'in nasıl okunacağını da belirlemek gerekir. Kierkegaard'ın Hegel'ini okumaktan ziyade, Kierkegaard'ın sunduğu temalar ve sorular odağında Hegel'i detaylıca okumak iki düşünürün hem felsefe tarihinde hem de okur olarak bizlerde açtıkları olanakları görünür kılmak açısından oldukça önemlidir.

Belirtmek gerekir ki Kierkegaard'ın Hegel'le girdiği ilişkinin mutlak bir çözümlemesini sunup aralarında salt bir karşıtlık ya da aleni bir benzerlik olduğunu iddia etmek bu çalışmanın başlıca amacı değildir. Çünkü iki düşünürün ilişkisi, ya bir karşıtlık ya da bir benzerlik olarak ele alınarak çözümlenip nihayete erdirilebilir türden değildir. Bu çalışmanın temel meselesi, daha ziyade iki düşünüre yönelik tematik bir okuma sunarak onların felsefi anlatılarında açığa çıkan hakikat, kendilik ve yazarlık ilişkisini irdelemektir. Bu amaçla ilkin, düşünürlerin anlatılarında kendi olma serüveni üzerinden hakikatin anlamının açılışı irdelenir. Filozoflar serüvenin aktarıcıları olmaları bakımından sorgulandıklarındaysa yazarlık meselesi ve beraberinde, yazarın okura olan sorumluluğu bağlamında da okurun konumu gündeme gelir. Bu anlamıyla yazar ve okur, daha doğru bir ifadeyle, felsefi metinle okur arasında bir diyalog söz konusudur.

İlk olarak, Kierkegaard felsefesinin temeli olan "öznellik olarak hakikat" fikrinin açıklanmasıyla başlayarak Kierkegaard'ta hakikat ve kendilik ilişkisi irdelenir. Burada başlangıcın Hegel ile değil de Kierkegaard ile yapılıyor olmasının sebebi, öznellik olarak hakikat fikrinin öncelikli olarak araştırılmasıyla Hegel'e yöneltilecek soru olarak hakikat ve kendilik ilişkisinin ve Hegel okumasının kapsamının belirlenmesinin mümkün olmasıdır. Böylece Hegel'in *Tinin Görüngübilimi* özelinde bilincin deneyiminde açığa çıkan hakikat ve kendilik ilişkisi odak haline gelir. Yani, bu çalışma Kierkegaard'ta görünür olan varoluşçu temalar üzerinden Hegel'in tekrardan okunmasını da içerir.

İlkin, Kierkegaard'ın öznellik olarak hakikat fikri "öznel refleksiyon" ile birlikte ele alınmalıdır. Öznel refleksiyon, hakikat sorusu kadar sorgulayan bireyin de hakikatle girdiği ilişkiyi felsefenin odağı haline getiren bir yaklaşım biçimine işaret eder. Bu anlamıyla öznel refleksiyon iki aşamalıdır. Öznel refleksiyonda yalnızca kavramlar ele alınmaz, aynı zamanda bireyin bu kavramlarla girdiği yaşamsal ilişki de gündeme getirilir. Bir başka deyişle, öznel refleksiyon hem sorunun yöneldiği şeyin mesele edilmesini hem de soruyu yönelten bireyin o şeyle girdiği ilişkinin de sorgulanmasını gerektirir. Kierkegaard'ın "nesnel refleksiyon" olarak tanımladığı bireyin yaşamsallığının felsefi sorgulamanın dışında tutulduğu, soyut kavramlar üzerine düşünme biçiminden farklı olarak, öznel refleksiyon ile yaşayan birey felsefi sorgulamaya dahil edilir. Kierkegaard'ın bireyin kendi hakikatini gerçekleştirme serüvenini anlattığı "Yaşamın Safhaları" ise aynı zamanda öznel refleksiyondan ne anlaşılması gerektiğini ortaya koyar. Bu da felsefi hakikatten yaşayan bireyin dışlanamayacağına işaret eder.

Kierkegaaard yaşamın safhalarını üç temel var olma biçiminde ele alır: "Estetik Yaşam," "Etik Yaşam" ve "Dini Yaşam." Bireyin her safhadaki var olma biçiminden söz etmek adına şunlar söylenebilir: Birey, estetik yaşamda onu saran şeylerden ve kimselerden kendini ayıramaz ve kalabalıkta bir sayı olmaktan farksız bir şekilde var olur. Estetik yaşamdaki birey, kendini arzu nesnesiyle girdiği ilişki üzerinden tanır. Hakiki bir seçim yapmaktan yoksun, seçtiğini düşündüğü her şeyden pişman olmaya ve melankoliye mahkumdur. Etik yaşamda ise birey,

kendini ahlaki bir yasaya bağlayışı üzerinden evrensel ve tekil olanın birliği olarak ele alır. Ancak bu birliğin sağlanamayacak oluşuyla yüzleştiğinde suçluluk hissiyle dolar. Son olarak dini yaşamda, Tanrı'nın mutlak öteki olarak içselleştirmesi üzerinden birey kendini imanında tekrar tekrar kurar. Bu anlamda safhaların her birinde Kierkegaard, bireyin bir ötekilikle girdiği ilişki üzerinden yaşamına ve kendiliğine dair keşfini anlatır. Ancak bu keşif, neşeli bir "Evraka!" değil, acı verici bir kırılma anı olarak belirir çünkü birey, günün sonunda kendi seçtiği yaşamda düştüğü çaresizlikle yüzleşir. Öte yandan bu acı dolu yüzleşme hali aynı zamanda bir olanağın da müjdecisidir: Kendi hakikatini gerçekleştirebilir olmanın olanağı. Ancak bu bir "ya/ya da" seçimi olarak ortaya çıkar. Birey, ya içinde bulunduğu yaşam biçiminden vazgeçmeyi göze alır ve yeni bir ihtimalin riskini sırtlanır ya da feda edemediği yaşamında çaresizlik içerisinde var olmaya devam eder. Bu da demektir ki her yaşam safhası birbirinden bağımsızdır ve zorunlu olarak birbirlerine evrilmezler. Aksine, her yaşam biçimi arasında bir "devamsızlık" söz konusudur. Bu anlamıyla birey, bir önceki yaşam biçimini ve oradaki kendiliğini yeni bir yaşam safhasında muhafaza etmez. Bu anlamıyla, bir safhadan diğerine geçiş, tamamen bireyin seçimidir ve aynı zamanda bir önceki safhadan ve en nihayetinde oradaki kendiliğinden vazgeçiştir. Birey, bir var olma biçimi seçerek kendini de seçmiş olur. Yani yaşam safhaları dışsal olarak değil, bireyin kendi özgür seçimiyle belirlenir.

Öte yandan, bir safhanın terk edilişi, o yaşam biçiminde açığa çıkan birey ve öteki arasındaki ayrımın çözülüp gitmesine değil, artık birey için oradaki ötekilikle girdiği ilişkinin bir "üstlenme" meselesi olmaktan çıkmasına işaret eder. Yani, Kierkegaard'a göre hakikat, bireyin bir ötekiyle kavuşmasında açılmaz. Aksine, bireyin hakikatle girdiği ilişkinin tam anlamıyla derinleştiği ve kendi olma meselesinin anlamının açıldığı dini yaşamda birey ve ötekinin kavuşamazlığı ve birbirlerine indirgenemezliği açıkça görünür hale gelir. Dini yaşamda bireyin kendi olma serüvenini dinsel hikayeler üzerinden anlatan Kierkegaard, aynı zamanda hakikat meselesini de gündeme getirir. Hristiyan teolojisindeki "Tanrı'nın Vücut Bulması" doktrinine başvurarak Kierkegaard "Mutlak Paradoks" fikrini ortaya

koyar. Buna göre, Tanrı'nın vücut bulması, yani sonsuzun sonlu varlığa bürünmesi mutlak bir paradoksa işaret eder. Kierkegaard'a göre Tanrı'nın vücut bulması ancak Tanrı'nın iradesiyle mümkündür. Yani mantıksal bir zorunluluğa değil, keyfi bir olanağa işaret eder. Bu anlamıyla, akıl, Tanrı'yı kavrayacak ya da Tanrı'yla bireyi kavuşturacak güçte değildir. Burada bireye düşen ise bu paradoksun bir kavrama ya da çözümleme değil, iman meselesi oluşunu üstlenmesidir. Nihayetinde, birey imanında yalnızdır. Öte yandan, Kierkegaard, bireyin hakikatini tam da burada görür: Bir ötekiyle kavuşmuş ve eve varmış olmanın huzurundan çok uzakta, mutlak paradoksa dair imanını üstlenişinde bireyin hakikati açılır.

Hakikat ve kendi olma ilişkisi Hegel'in felsefesinde incelendiğinde ise *Tinin Görüngübilimi*'ne odaklanmak gerekir. İlkin, *Tinin Görüngübilimi*, bütünün bilgisinin kavranışına işaret eden "Bilim" olarak felsefeyi önceleyen bir "oluş" sürecini ortaya koymaktadır. Yani *Görüngübilim,* bilime giden yolu ortaya koyar. Bu yol da bilincin deneyiminden başka bir şey değildir. *Görüngübilim*'in yöntemi sorgulandığındaysa filozofun kendi rolünü bir gözlemcilik olarak anladığı görülür. Yani filozof; bilincin ve onun hakikatle girdiği ilişkinin belirleyicisi değildir. Aksine, filozof bilinci kendi hareketinde hakikatini gerçekleştirmesi üzerine yalnız bırakan bir gözlemciden ibarettir. Bu da demektir ki *Görüngübilimi*'nin yöntemi ya da sınırları dışarıdan belirlenmiş değildir. Aksine, hareketin aktörü de belirleyicisi de bilinçtir.

Bilinç, serüveni boyunca kendini nesnesi olarak ele aldığı bir ötekiden bağımsızlığında ileri sürer. "Sıradan bilinç"ten başlayarak "Tin"e dönüşme serüvenine dair bilincin her bir aşamadaki varlığına dair şunlar söylenebilir: İlkin "Bilinç" bölümünde nesnesini kendinden ayırır ve nesnesinin bilinebilirliğini araştırır. "Özbilinç" bölümünde ise mesele, bilincin kendi varlığını mesele edişidir. Bu anlamıyla da kendinden ayrık olarak ele aldığı bir başka özbilinçle girdiği ilişkide kendini kurmaya çalışır. "Us" olarak bilinç, bir öteki olarak ele aldığı dünyayla girdiği ilişkiyi gözleminde ya da ediminde mesele eder. Karşılıklı tanımanın açıldığı "Tin" bölümünde ise bilinç; etik yaşamda, kültürel yaşamda ve ahlak yaşamında toplumsal varlığını ele alır. "Din" ise bilincin bir öteki olarak

Tanrı'yı ele alışını mesele ederken "Mutlak Bilme" tüm önceki safhaların organik bütünlüğünün kavranışını ortaya koyar.

Her bir aşamada kendi ve dünya arasında bir ayrım ortaya koyuşunda hakikat iddiasında bulunan bilinç, bu iddiasını edimselleştirmeye kalktığında ise kaçınılmaz olarak yenilgiye uğrar. Bu yüzden de bilinç umutsuzluk içindedir çünkü kendinden ayrık varlık olarak anladığı dünyada kendi hakikatini gerçekleştirememektedir. Örneğin, bilincin ızdırabının en görünür olduğu bölümlerden biri kuşkusuz, "Özbilinç" bölümündeki "Efendi-Köle Diyalektiği"dir. Burada, kendi varlıklarını bağımsızlığında ileri süren iki bilincin karşılaşması anlatılır. Bu anlamda, bir diğerinden kendi bağımsızlığının tanınmasını talep eden iki özbilincin karşılaşması kaçınılmaz olarak bir ölüm kalım mücadelesine dönüşür. Bu ölüm kalım mücadelesinde taraflardan biri mutlak olumsuzluk olan ölümle yüzleşir. Fakat bu yüzleşmede özbilinç, yaşamdan vazgeçip ölüme razı gelmektense bağımsızlığını feda eder ve diğer özbilinci "efendi"si olarak tanıyarak "köle"ye dönüşür. Öte yandan, ölümle yüzleştiğinde bağımsızlığından vazgeçen bilinç, aslında yaşamı kazanmış olur. Zira mutlak olumsuzluk olarak ölümle yüzleştiğinde yaşama tekrar dönmüş ve yaşamı bu dolayım üzerinden kavramıştır.

Tinin Görüngübilimi'nin tamamında, bilinç kendi tek yönlü iddiası üzerinden bir kendilik ve ötekilik anlamı yarattığı görülür. İddiasını eyleme koştuğunda ise kaçınılmaz yenilgisiyle yüzleşir. Ancak bu yüzleşme her seferinde tıpkı Efendi-Köle diyalektiğinde olduğu gibi, acı verici olsa da günün sonunda bilinç, bir biçimiyle kendi yaralarını iyileştirir. Yenilgisinde kendi tek taraflı düşüncesiyle yüzleşen bilinç, iddiasını değiştirmek ve kendini bir sonraki aşamaya taşımak durumundadır. Böylece nihayet, "Din"de ise hakikat "Tanrı'nın Vücut Buluşu"nda ortaya çıkar. Kierkegaard'ın anlatısının tam tersine, burada hakikat Tanrı'nın mutlak ötekiliği değil, Tanrı'nın insanlaşması ve insanlığın tanrısallaşmasıdır. Yani bir nevi, bir ötekilik olarak Tanrı ölür. Burada Tanrı'nın aşkınsallığının yitip gidişi bilincin kendi varlığı ve nesnesi ile arasında gördüğü ayrımların tükenişine işaret eder. Yani, her iki düşünürde de hakikatin anlamının dinde açıldığı görülmektedir. Öte yandan Kierkegaard hakikati birey ve öteki arasındaki mutlak ötekilik olarak

ele alırken Hegel bilinç ve nesnesi arasındaki birliğe işaret eder. Ancak dinde henüz bilinç ve nesnesi arasındaki birlik kavranabilmiş değildir çünkü burada, Tanrı'nın vücut bulması anlatısı üzerinden ele alınan birlik, zorunluluk olarak değil Tanrı'nın iradesine bağlı olarak ele alınır. Bu anlamda dinde, hakikat açığa çıksa bile zorunluluk olarak kavranması için felsefeye ihtiyaç vardır. Aslında, Hegel'e göre din ve felsefe aynı içeriğe sahiptir ki bu içerik de hakikatten başka bir şey değildir. Ancak, dinin hakikati ele alışı imgesel düşünme biçimindedir. Yani burada, zıtlıkların birliği bir zorunluluk değil, Tanrı'nın iradesiyle gerçekleşmiş olarak, imgeler üzerinden anlaşılır. Hakikatin zorunluluk olarak kavranışı ancak felsefede mümkündür.

Mutlak Bilme bölümü ise önceki aşamalardan farklı olarak, bilincin nesnesiyle girdiği ayrım üzerinden yaptığı iddiasını edimselleştirmesini anlatmayışı bakımından yeni bir şey söylemez. Bilincin serüveni boyunca süren kendini nesnesinden ayırışında sürekli olarak hüsrana uğramasına rağmen günün sonunda kendi sınırlamalarının ve tek yönlülüğünün üstesinden gelişini ortaya koyar sadece. Yani mutlak bilme, en nihayetinde kendilik ve hakikatin birliğinin bütünsel olarak kavranmasıdır. Bu kavrama, tam da açtığı çıkmazlarda yenilgiye düşerek öğrenen bilincin kendi kazanımıdır. Nihayetinde kendilik ve hakikat arasındaki sözde ayrımın yarattığı tansiyon, bilincin kendi deneyiminde sona erdirilir.

Kierkegaard'ın anlatımındaki kalabalıktan geri çekilmiş bireyin hakikatle ilişkisinden farklı olarak, Hegel'de hakikat kendini ötekinde ve ötekini de kendinde tanımaktır. "Ben olan biz, biz olan ben"in kavranmasıyla, bilinç eve varır. Yani, kendi olmanın hakikati sonsuz bir ayrımın sürmesinde bireyin tekrar ve tekrar kendini bu ötekilikte kurması değildir. Aksine, kendi yarattığı ayrımları yine kendi tüketen bilinç, en nihayetinde nesnesiyle olan birliğini kavrar.

İki ayrı kendilik ve hakikat anlayışı sunan Hegel'in ve Kierkegaard'ın yan yana getirildiği dördüncü bölümde ise ilkin, iki düşünürün "Cennet'ten Kovulma" hikayesine dair yorumlamaları sunulur. Benzer odaklar üzerinden farklı iki hakikat ve kendi olma anlayışları ortaya koyan Hegel ve Kierkegaard, pek çok kez dini hikayeleri yorumlayışlarında önemli görüşlerini ortaya koyarlar. Tanrı'nın vücut

bulması üzerinden hakikat anlayışları seriliyorken Cennet'ten kovulma yorumlamalarıyla da kendi olma serüveninin başlangıcı, dünyaya düşmenin anlamı gündeme gelir. Filozofların Cennet'ten kovulma meselesini ele alışlarının tartışılması birkaç sebepten anlamlıdır: Her iki düşünürde de hikayelerin, mitlerin, kurgu karakterlerin felsefi anlatıda yerinin olması; bu çalışmanın son aşamasında filozofların anlatma biçimlerinin ve yazarlıklarının ele alınması bakımından önemlidir. Bunun yanı sıra filozofların Cennet'ten kovulma hikayesini ele alışlarının irdelenmesi aynı zamanda felsefenin öznesinin de sorgulanmasına olanak sağlar. Bununla birlikte, önceki bölümlerde felsefelerindeki kendi olma serüveninin aktarıldığı düşünürlerin, bu serüveni bir "olanak" ya da "zorunluluk" olarak ele almalarının anlamı da Cennet'ten kovulma yorumlamalarının sunulması ile gündeme getirilmiş olur. Böylece, iki düşünürün özel bir okuma odağında yan yana geldiği bu bölüm yalnızca düşünürlerin kendi olmanın hakikatine dair açtıkları ufukları görünür kılmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda düşünürlerin felsefelerinde önemli olan birtakım temaların anlamının serilmesine de olanak sağlar.

Cennet'ten kovulmanın filozoflar tarafından nasıl ele alındığından kısaca söz etmek gerekirse de ilkin, Kierkegaard açısından Cennet'teki masumiyet hali, Tanrı'nın buyruğuyla Adem'in ve Havva'nın ediminin bir oluşuna işaret eder. Ancak bu birlik onların hakikati değildir. Aksine, burada Adem ve Havva masumiyet halinde uyurgezerlerden farksızdırlar çünkü edimleri birer olanak olarak açılmaz. Bu yüzden birey olmanın anlamı, olanak varlığı oluşunda açılır. Yasak meyveden yeme günahı ise Tanrı'nın buyruğundan farklı davranabilir olması bakımından olanağa işaret eder. Bu olanak da özgürlüğün olanağıdır. Olanağıyla yüzleşen birey, seçimini ve nihayetinde kendi varlığını üstlenmek durumunda olduğunu fark edişinde anksiyete içindedir.

Kierkegaard'a göre, bizler Adem'in ve Havva'nın günahı yüzünden günahkar değilizdir. Yani Kierkegaard, günahı Adem ve Havva'dan insanlığa miras kalmış olarak ele almayı reddeder. Nihayetinde, Cennet'ten kovulma insanlığın değil, bireyin olanağıyla yüzleşmesinin hikayesidir. Ancak yine de Kierkegaard'ın

bireyin olanağını ele alışında evrenselliğe dair bir vurgu vardır. Bu da anksiyete, umutsuzluk, suçluluk, melankoli gibi duyguların bireyin kendi hakikatini gerçekleştirebilir olması bakımından belirleyici olduğudur. Bir yandan da bu duygu durumları evrenseldir. Bu sebeple hiçbir birey Adem ve Havva yüzünden günahkar olmadığı halde her birey tıpkı Adem ve Havva gibi olanak varlığı oluşuyla yüzleşmesinin anksiyetesini yaşar. Kierkegaard'ın yorumlaması aynı zamanda şu fikri de ima etmektedir: Tanrı ve birey arasındaki birlik ancak Cennet'te, bireyin olanağının açılmadığı bir varoluşta mümkündür. Bu anlamıyla dünyaya düşmüş birey, bu birliği kurarak değil, ancak seçimini üstlenerek kendi olmanın hakikatini gerçekleştirebilir. Yani, bireyin kendi varlığını üstlenmesi aynı zamanda bir ötekiyle girdiği ilişkideki mutlak kavuşamazlığı içselleştirmesiyle mümkündür.

Hegel de tıpkı Kierkegaard gibi Adem ve Havva'nın Cennet'teki varlığındaki birlikte kendi olmanın hakikatinin açılamayacağını duyurur. Zira bu birlik dolayımsızdır ve bu dolayımsız birlik zorunlu olarak aşılmalıdır. Yasak meyveden yemek, bu anlamıyla bilincin uyanışını temsil eder. Zira bilincin anlamı ayrımlar yapabilir oluşunda açılır. Yasak meyvenin bir arzu meselesine dönüşmesiyle bilinçli varlık, nesnesi olan doğadan kendini ayırmış olur. Doğaya yabancılaşma, bu anlamıyla dolayımsız birliğin bozulmasına işaret eder. Ancak bu yabancılaşmanın da aşılması ve mutlak birliğin sağlanması gerekmektedir. Bu noktada Hegel, Tanrı'nın Adem'i ve Havva'yı cezalandırmasını doğadan yabancılaşmış olmanın aşılması olarak ele alır. Artık doğadan talep ettiğine dolaysızca sahip olamayacakları için Adem ve Havva, ihtiyaçlarını karşılayabilmek adına doğayı dönüştürmek zorundadır. Böylece Tanrı'nın cezası bir lütfa dönüşür ve emeğiyle doğayı dönüştürmek zorunda kalması dolayısıyla insan ve doğa arasındaki yabancılık aşılmış olur.

Cennet'ten düşmeyle tekil birey ölümsüzlüğünü kaybeder çünkü "Hayat Ağacı"ndan koparılıp dünyaya gönderilmiştir. Öte yandan "Bilgi Ağacı"nın meyvesini yiyerek kavrama yetisi kazanmasıyla insanlık tanrısallaşır. Yani, ölümsüz olur. Bu anlamıyla Hegel için önemli olan, birey olarak Adem ve Havva'nın hikayesi değildir. Onlar yalnızca dolayımsız birliğin aşılıp dolayımda

birliğin tekrar kazanılmasının zorunlu sürecini imleyen karakterlerden ibarettir. Bu anlamıyla da Cennet'ten kovulma tekil bireyin değil, evrensel anlamda insanlığın hikayesidir. Artık kavrama yetisini kazanmış olmasıyla da insanlık ölümsüzdür ve felsefenin öznesi de bu "Tin"dir.

Cennet'ten kovulmaya dair bu iki ayrı yorumlama göstermektedir ki Kierkegaard için, hakikat olanağın üstlenilmesiyle açılırken, Hegel'de zorunluluğun kavranmasıyla açılır. Öte yandan, Kierkegaard'ın anlatısında hakikatin öznesi bireyken, Hegel'de evrensel anlamda insanlıktır, yani tindir. Bu temel farka rağmen ilginç olan, iki düşünürde de Tanrı'nın vücut bulması ve Cennet'ten kovulma gibi hikayelerin bu denli önem arz etmesidir.. Bu da her iki düşünürde de hakikatin ifade ediliş biçiminin sorgulanması olanağını sunar.

Kierkegaard'a göre hakikat ancak dolaylı olarak anlatılabilir çünkü hakikat, hali hazırda söz edildiği üzere, kavramsallaştırılabilir değildir. Kierkegaard'ın dolaylı anlatımında ise hikayelere, mitlere, dini anlatılara, kurgusal karakterlere başvurulur. Bu anlamda filozof da kendini bir yazar olarak sorunsallaştırmalıdır. Böylece yazarlığı üzerinden filozof, çeşitli stratejilerle hakikate dair bu dolaylı diyalogu mümkün kılar. Örneğin, Kierkegaard'ın eserlerinde takma isimler kullanması, okuru metinle girdiği diyalogta kendi yaşamını sorgulaması için yalnız bırakmasına işaret eder. Her farklı anlatıda, o anlatıya uygun bir karaktere bürünerek okuru metinle girdiği ilişkide kendi var oluşunu keşfetmeye çağırır. Bu anlamda Kierkegaard okura karşı hakikatin öğreticisi rolünü üstlenmeyi reddeder. Aksine, okuru kendi varlığıyla yüzleşmesi için harekete geçmeye davet eder. Yani Kierkegaard, bir biçimiyle okuru kendi yaşamını sorgulamaya ikna etmek üzere baştan çıkarır. Bu baştan çıkarıcılık, Kierkegaard'ın okura karşı olan sorumluluğu olarak belirir. Zira baştan çıkarılmış olan okur, düştüğü labirentte kendi yolunu, yani kendi varlığına dair sorgulamanın anlamını kendisi bulmalıdır.

Kierkegaard'a göre Hegel ise hakikati dolaysız bir şeymişçesine anlatmaya kalkmaktadır. Ancak *Tinin Görüngübilimi* başlı başına bir dolaylı anlatım örneğidir. Öte yandan, *Tinin Görüngübilimi*'ndeki dolaylı anlatım, hakikatin kavramsallaştırılması için zorunlu bir öncelik olarak açılır. Yani Hegel hakikati

kavramsallaştırabilmek için önce onu hikayeler, dini anlatılar, trajediler üzerinden dolaylı olarak anlatır. Ancak yine de şunu belirtmek gerekir ki Kierkegaard'ın temel eleştirisi, Hegel'e göre en nihayetinde hakikatin kavranabilir oluşuna dairdir.

Hegel'in yazarlığı soruşturulduğundaysa görünür ki Hegel, *Tinin Görüngübilimi'*nde neredeyse görünmezdir. Yalnızca belirli kısımlarda "biz" dilini kullanarak metne dahil olduğu görünür. Bu araya girmelerindeyse felsefi bakıştan konuşur. O müdahaleleri gerçekleştiren dahi Hegel'in şahsı olarak değil, felsefi özne olarak anlaşılmalıdır. Bu anlamıyla da Hegel'in *Tinin Görüngübilimi* genelindeki şahsi sesinin eksikliği, aynı zamanda felsefede kendi bireysel var oluşunun yerinin olmadığı imasını taşır. Bir yandan da Hegel, bilincin ediminde hakikati kavrama serüvenini ele aldığı *Tinin Görüngübilimi*'ni kendi şahsi fikri olarak sunmaz, bilincin deneyiminin serilişi olarak ortaya koyar. En temeldeyse, Hegel'in metin boyunca süren sessizliği; kendisini serüvenin belirleyicisi ve hakikatin öğreticisi olarak konumlandırmak yerine, okuru metinde yalnız bırakmasına işaret eder. Bu anlamıyla okur, bilincin serüvenine dahil olur, kendi tarihselliğiyle yüzleşir ve hatta serüvenden kendine yansıyışında bilinçle birlikte o da kendi düşünme biçimleriyle, çıkmazlarıyla ve hüsranlarıyla yüzleşir.

Sonuç itibariyle her iki düşünür de okuru, kendi hakikatini gerçekleştirmek üzere edime davet eder. Hakikat ve kendilik ilişkisine dair iki farklı anlatı ortaya koyan düşünürün, yazar olarak benzer yaklaşımları olduğu söylenebilir. Öte yandan her iki düşünürün de okuru olan kişi önünde kendi olmanın hakikatine dair iki ayrık anlatı serilmektedir. Bu durumda okur, düşünürlerin metinleriyle girdiği diyalogta kendi pozisyonunu mesele edişinde Hegel ve Kierkegaard anlatılarına yönelik bir ya/ ya da seçimine mi mahkumdur? Yoksa bu iki ayrı hakikat anlatısını kavuşturmak mümkün müdür? Bir başka soru da şu olmalıdır belki: Kendi olmanın hakikatini ya eve varmanın huzurunda ya da dünyadan geri çekilmişlikte, ya "biz" oluşta ya da imanında yalnız oluşta, ya bireysellikte ya da tinsellikte aramak yerine bu iki ayrık yaşam biçiminin arasında oluşun geriliminde aramak mümkün müdür? Yoksa filozoflar tarafından kendi hakikatinin keşfine davet edilmiş okurun, günün sonunda Hegel'i ve Kierkegaard'ı aşması mı gerekir? Belirtmek gerekir ki bu

soruların amacı hesabının verilemeyeceği iddialarda bulunmak değildir. Aksine, burada amaç iki düşünürün de sunduğu imkana işaret etmektir: Okur olarak bizleri de kendi hakikatimizi gerçekleştirmeye davet eden filozofların, bizleri de felsefi diyalogun bir parçası haline getiriyor olmaları. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, okuru da edimselliğe davet eden düşünürler, okurla girilen felsefi bir diyalogun olanağını açarlar.

Son olarak, tekrar belirtmek gerekir ki bu çalışmanın amacı, Hegel'i ve Kierkegaard'ı bir araya getirerek kendi olmanın hakikatine dair sundukları ufukları birbirleriyle barıştırıp burada bir teselli bulmaya yeltenmek değildir. Böylesi bir çaba, bu çalışmada üstlenemeyecek kadar ağır bir sorumluluktur. Aksi halde, kaçınılmaz olarak iki düşünürü birbirlerine indirgemeye çalışarak haksızlık etmeyle sonuçlanır. Bu çalışmada amaç, Hegel'in ve Kierkegaard'ın felsefelerinde açılan hakikat, kendilik ve yazarlık ilişkisini görünür kılarak iki olanağı sermektir. Böylece, okuru da kendi hakikatini gerçekleştirmek üzere edime davet eden Hegel ve Kierkegaard, en nihayetindeyse felsefe ile aktif bir diyaloga girebilmenin iyileştiriciliği sezdirilmek istenmiştir.

APPENDIX B: TEZ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ / INSTITUTE

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Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Marine Sciences ☐

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (**İngilizce** / English) : Hegel and Kierkegaard on the Relation between Truth, Selfhood and Authorship

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE**:** **Yüksek Lisans** / Master ■ **Doktora** / PhD ☐

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