



THE GENESIS OF DIALECTICS*

(THE COMING INTO BEING/EMERGENCE OF THE DIALECTIC)

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THE THESIS PERTAINING TO THE HISTORY OF IDEAS of this work can be synopsised (summarised) as follows. Dialectics, as Hegel made it/them widely known, by connecting it/them with his name, were formed on the basis of a monistic world view, or of a unifying (connective, conjunctive) philosophy,

* The (This) text constitutes the prologue (foreword) of the book *Die Entstehung der Dialektik. Eine Analyse der geistigen Entwicklung von Hölderlin, Schelling und Hegel bis 1802* (= *The coming into being (emergence, genesis) of dialectics (the dialectic). An analysis of the intellectual(-spiritual) development (unfolding, evolution) of Hölderlin, Schelling and Hegel until (up to) 1802*), Stuttgart 1979, pp. 11-17. [[Translated by C.F., ©, January 2019, from the Greek text authored/ translated by P.K. himself in *Λεβιάθαν (Leviathan)* 15 (1994), Athens, pp. 69-77. I did not consult the German original for the purpose of this translation, apart for the odd term like «Οὐσία» = „Substanz“, etc.. I have opted to use “dialectics” in plural rather than the singular “dialectic”, given that in English, reference is usually made to Hegelian, Marxian “dialectics”, rather than to the Hegelian/Marxist “dialectic”.]]

which itself also embraced (and agreed with) intense monistic tendencies of the late German Enlightenment, and at the same time found itself forced to studiously, and in great detail, go about and come to grips with as many gnosis-theoretical (epistemological and pertaining-to-the-theory-of-knowledge) problems (questions) Kant and Fichte posed/posited or set. This unifying philosophy, and indeed in a comprehensive, inclusive and already systematic form, is the product of Hölderlin's autonomous and independent intellectual(-spiritual) attempt and effort in (during) the years 1795-1799. Schelling, having been informed already from the end of 1795 of the particulars (facts, details and elements of the matter) regarding his friend's (Hölderlin's) philosophical direction, in part adopts and in part himself discovers, through his personal contrasting with and opposition to Fichte, this unifying philosophy in the years 1801-1802, in order to concurrently (simultaneously) change and transform it into a programmatic construct(ion) anchored in a triadic schema. Hegel's contribution to the formation of this first, but determinative or definitive, form of dialectics must be regarded as minimal, if it is assumed that it (such a contribution) exists. Because his (Hegel's) writings from the epoch of (i.e. his time at) Frankfurt constitute an explication and clarification (elaboration) and application of Hölderlin's unifying philosophy, whilst his (Hegel's) first treatises at Jena echo the – in the meanwhile – completed Schellingian version of it (Hölderlin's unifying philosophy). Hegel's autonomous and independent philosophical development (evolution), which had significant consequences also for the form of dialectics, begins only after 1802, and indeed with the decision that the Absolute can be known, or that Substance (Essence) is a Subject – a decision which meant a split (rift, rupture) with the common, until then accepted also by Hegel, conviction of Hölderlin and Schelling that the Absolute cannot be known and that knowledge and thought constitute per definitionem separations (segregations) and abstractions.

The essential new points of this position or thesis are three. First, the internal unity and the consciously systematic character of Hölderlin's philosophical thought is described thoroughly and extensively, so that its (Hölderlin's philosophical thought's) influence on Schelling and Hegel not only becomes understandable as to individual points, but can also appear in all its depth. Secondly, against the predominant view, that Schelling's philosophy changes (is transformed) radically after 1803, the continuation (continuousness) of, or continuity in, his intellectual(-spiritual) development (evolution, unfolding) is shown, which exists despite all the more or less significant shifts in emphasis which emanate and stem from the striking structural analogy (correspondence) between Hölderlin's unifying philosophy – as Schelling accepted it or discovered it on his (own) account –, and the late/mature “positive” philosophy of the latter (i.e. Schelling). The great common denominator is the thesis of the non-knowability of the Absolute, of the intrinsic (immanent, inherent, innate) and insurmountable negativity of cognition, the intellect or thought. And thirdly, against the univocally accepted, albeit differently justified (given causes and reasons for), view that Hegel's thought is characterised by an organic continuity, a deep rift is attested to in his (Hegel's) intellectual(-spiritual) development (unfolding, evolution).

This new interpretation arises from a methodic, i.e. methodological approach [[which is]] new in a dual (twofold, binary) sense. First, all the texts of the three friends and co-philosophising (men/thinkers) [Hölderlin, Schelling, Hegel] are analysed together, i.e. as an intellectual(-spiritual) unity, and indeed from a chronological and systematic point of view, simultaneously. The thinkers, who influenced our heroes positively and negatively, from Schiller, Rousseau and Jacobi, up to Kant and Fichte, are examined in digressive chapters, i.e. in excursus, which aim at illuminating deeper nexuses or interrelations (correlations) of/in the history of ideas, and of philosophical problem

examination. It is obvious that on the basis of this methodological choice/selection, the analysis of the sources necessarily has absolute priority (precedence), even though, for the most part directly, but also indirectly, we take a position also vis-à-vis all the weighty and significant positions/theses or antitheses/contrapositions of the older and newer (more recent) interpretive philology (literature). Secondly, the philological fullness sought and pursued, which also made the relatively large/long extent (great length) of the study unavoidable/inevitable, does not at all mean that we have restricted/confined ourselves to the philological/literary part, and to the ascertainment of common points with the aid (assistance, help) of similar (like) excerpts. On the contrary, the comparison of texts takes place mainly structurally, i.e. through the morphological (i.e. as regards forms) processing of the thought (intellectual) construct, which comes out of a certain mode or way of thinking with necessity (i.e. necessarily). This structural consideration (way of looking at things) permits here, for the first time, detailed and thorough (exhaustive, painstaking) comparisons of texts like for instance Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, and Hegel's notebooks (sketches, drafts) from the epoch of (i.e. his time at) Frankfurt, or of Schelling's late/mature texts from the period of (i.e. his time at) Jena, and Hegel's first publications during his stay in the same city/town. Previous attempts and endeavours in respect of such comparisons did not render (or give us) many things, because they were content with the putting forward or projection of selected excerpts without studying the totalities of the texts as totalities of thought, i.e. structurally.

As to its philological or literary kind (sort, type, genre), this work belongs to the dinosaurs of scholastic lettered/learned sapience, which thrive in Alexandrian epochs (eras), in order to be eclipsed, i.e. to die off and die out (disappear, go extinct, cease to exist) a little while later. And yet, its ambition remains, beyond the findings/results which concern the history of philosophy, to

disclose and expose the innermost aspects (dimensions, elements, sides) of the genetic (i.e. as regards the coming into being) process of a certain type of philosophy (of certain philosophies) (or philosophical idea(s)/(kinds of) thinking/dogmata/research), which was decisive for philosophical tradition until now. It demonstrates how a systematic thought, as the rationalisation of a fundamental stance, or of a fundamental decision, is crystallised step by step, and indeed during its attempt and endeavour to argumentatively (in terms of argumentation) overcome and decisively beat rival positionings. It also describes how, parallelly, the interweaving of Is (Being) and Ought inside the thought of those philosophising is reflected in the onticisation of axioms of a normative-ethical character, which constitute the axis around which the philosophical system being shaped and moulded revolves. When we look at and consider things in this way, it is tenable or valid to go or slip into the existential situation of the thinkers too, in discussing psychological and sociological factors. This mention of the specific and concrete case, inside which the fundamental intellectual(-spiritual) stances are formed, has as its goal or purpose (end) to repel the widespread conviction that the fundamental stance or decision of a subject is something chaotic and imponderable. The fundamental stances or decisions can be explained, in part at least, genetically (as to coming into being) through psychological-sociological¹ methods, and their mental-cognitive unfolding can also be followed from a purely logical-structural standpoint. Because, from the moment it exists, a fundamental stance has its logic, which, seen morphologically (in terms of form), is subject to the laws of logic in general. So that even also with the methodological prerequisites (presuppositions) which we mentioned beforehand, whatever is usually called

¹ (Translator's footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): the more mature P.K. of the 1980s and 1990s did not often or at all use the term "psychological-sociological", and even though he recognises psychology, particularly social psychology, as a legitimate discipline in the social sciences, psychology does not feature prominently in his more mature thought, which increasingly cultivates an increasingly refined understanding of the many different manifestations of power, culminating in the notes to the unwritten second and third volumes of *The Political and Man*.

“philosophical analysis” is not done an injustice by those who believe in the higher logicality of philosophy. The founding of the content of the fundamental stance or decision is found beyond, however, the possibilities of (“philosophical”) logic – and this precisely is the crucial point or spot. As we shall see, axioms like “all (everything) is good” or “all (everything) is rational” were useful as cornerstones inside the thought of the founders of dialectics, and it is difficult for me to imagine that someone could seriously (in earnest) characterise such positions not as decisions, but as “discoveries”. The reader will judge to what extent these general observations are confirmed by the analyses of the texts. In any case, the validity or soundness of our purely historical-philosophical findings (i.e. pertaining to the history of ideas), as they were expounded at the start (in the beginning), is independent of whether these observations are considered or not well-founded and are taken into account/consideration or not.

The narrower social-theoretical (i.e. as regards the theory of society or social theory) side of the early work of Hölderlin, Schelling and Hegel, is examined only incidentally in our work. This did not take place only for understandable reasons of space, but especially on the basis of a conviction taken from our long contact and dealing or engagement with these texts: that the cradle of the dialectical structures of thought (thought structures) is not social theory, but metaphysics. I can demonstrate that the perceptions or views of our heroes [Hölderlin, Schelling, Hegel] in terms of the theory of society (social theory), if seen structurally, are deduced from their metaphysical schema and follow it in its modifications on each and every respective occasion. It was not possible for this demonstration (proof) to be undertaken with sufficient completeness (fullness) in the framework or context of our work, if certain examples are excluded, because the complete and full comprehension of the above-mentioned perceptions or views presupposes clear concepts founded in social history

regarding conservatism, liberalism and democracy, something which demands investigations and research of an entirely different kind than those here. With very few exceptions, the philosophical discussion of recent years, which, as is known, turned almost exclusively towards and around Hegel, was characterised by conceptual unclarity with regard to this central matter, and for that reason, despite the notable contributions to individual matters, cannot constitute the self-evident basis of/for further research. At least all those who are not philosophers would have to know that the lack of informed, reasoned and expert knowledge of (first-hand) social history (i.e. from first-hand sources), frequently constitutes the main source of inspiration of/for philosophers occupied with or engaged in social theory.

The contention, that inside the dialectical structure of thought (thought structure), the metaphysical element (performs rites, i.e.) is predominant or pre-eminent, does not at all contradict itself as to the underlining of the significance of social-historical and psychological factors inside the course of its (the dialectical thought structure's) formation. In particular, neo-Marxist interpretation confuses the (correct) ascertainment of the influence of social-political factors on the thought of post-Kantians with the (erroneous) view that this thought was initially formed or mainly (formed) in the field of social theory. Against this confusion, it must be pointed out that stimuli, which in the final analysis have a social-political origin or provenance, at least in the philosophical (and or the theological) field, are not reflected primarily or necessarily in autonomous and self-sufficient social-theoretical (i.e. as to social theory) positionings, even though their objective social-political significance many times (often enough) is echoed in statements or judgements pertaining to social theory. Our thesis (position), that dialectics constitutes a metaphysical construct(ion), does not, therefore, aim at a brave (gallant) and naive defence of the nobility of the philosophical spirit(-intellect) against its alleged demotion

(downgrading) with the proving (demonstration) of its multiple social dependencies – and yet, we guess that the manner with which this thesis (position) is here justified (and given reasons/causes for) will not exactly please all those who flirt with Marxism, when they believe that in its “emancipatory message”, they hear the beats of their own heart; however, they try to evade or go around (circumvent), in some way, the ideological-critical side or aspect of Marx’s work, because in this, a danger is smelt (perceived) for “philosophy” as emancipatory theory with an absolute claim to/of truth. Here, at any rate, we defend that the individual and social (co-)constellation or conjuncture (correlation), inside of which dialectics was formed, initially pushed towards the sketching (outlining, delineation) of a metaphysical schema, and that each and every respective positioning vis-à-vis the social-theoretical (pertaining to social theory) and social-political matters took place from the point of view of this schema, or structurally corresponded to this schema. To put it differently: certain concrete or specific situations make the primacy of the metaphysical element most probable vis-à-vis the element in respect of social theory inside the broader area of ideas, even though this area belongs in itself –at least from what earthly eyes see– in social, and not metaphysical magnitudes. This does not constitute anything new, and no Marxist would doubt that precisely this is what happened (occurred) in the case of the great theological or metaphysical systems of the pre-industrial past.

The desire for the dialectical exception of this rule to be declared stems or emanates from ideological needs. For the Marxists, the fact that dialectics saw the light of day, or came to light, precisely in those much-lamented circumstances of German social “misery”, whose ideological superstructure – according at least to the orthodox schema (of Marxism) – could not possibly make up a brilliant realm of progressivity and modernity, always constituted a theoretical cause of scandal (or apple of discord). The “algebra of revolution”

breathed in, therefore, the mouldy and musty smell of the Theological School of Tübingen (in order to paraphrase Nietzsche), and was anyone other than the “upside down (overturned or inverted)”, the guide towards liberation (the confessed or admitted (to) bravura of the act was due precisely to the paradox of the thing) – and hurriedly dressed with a red shirt – priest of the Absolute Spirit? In the epoch (era, age) of the theoretical domination of German social democracy, this baleful and painful question was put aside through Marxism’s extensive approach or drawing near/close to positivistic-scientistic theses or positions, however, it (the said question) was necessarily posed with acuteness when the rediscovery of the Hegelian roots of Marx’s teaching came to the fore(ground), whilst accompanying the existentialist movement. Lukács saw into (discerned, foresaw) the theoretical dilemma, and understood that the progressivity of dialectics, in the Marxist sense, could be fortified and consolidated only with the demonstration of its (the progressivity of dialectics’) provenance not only from a “progressive” positioning, but especially from the contrast or opposition to a more contemporary examination of the problem. This demonstration became particularly urgent after 1933, when national-socialistic and far/extreme right-wing tendencies threatened to “usurp” significant aspects or facets of the Hegelian cycle of ideas: witness or deponent in regard to this, [[was]] the rescue operation in respect of Hegel on the part of Marcuse,² who worked at the same time as Lukács, albeit independent of him. In connection (an interrelation) with the general ideological functioning and importance of this drawing or extraction of dialectics from “the highest achievements of its (dialectics’) epoch (era, age)”, the fact that only this (drawing or extraction), from within all its intellectual contributions – of the otherwise contemptible or

² (Translator’s footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): as we can see from this reference to Marcuse, the Frankfurt School’s relationship with Marxism at most was on the periphery of Marxism’s own “existential core” of class struggle and international proletarian-communistic revolution (and national liberation), by (earlier) dabbling in “philosophy”, and (later) propounding the Hedonism of ((ZIO-)USA-led) Western mass-democratic consumeristic society, which at most can be considered as a caricature of communistic utopia.

unreliable (untrustworthy) Western neo-Marxism –, became accepted in the Marxist orthodoxy of the Soviet camp – since of course its existentialist dimension was curtailed – remains eloquent.

We cannot here investigate the reasons to which, in recent years, the neo-Marxist interpretation, in its diverse variations, owes its dissemination, such that it acquired the disarming cogency of a fad (fashion). Furthermore, it is not worth the trouble and effort to enter (slip) into its proving/proof via documents/documentation (evidence, verification, substantiation) on the basis of sources, since indeed not even Lukács's warmest friends did not ever publicly praise his philological and literary conscientiousness. One elementary fact – even if obviously everyone does not know that it is elementary – must be underlined. When the young Hegel's penetration or infiltration into the contradictions of capitalistic society is lauded, and its (this penetration's) fertility for dialectics is underlined, it is forgotten that the philosopher's relevant/related analyses – (we mean here the crucial – for the genesis of dialects – years 1798-1803, when Hegel advocates views regarding social theory entirely opposed – as to their structure and their content – to his political convictions in the Berne period [1793-1796]; the turnaround (shift or change in direction) is due, of course, to the radical philosophical-metaphysical reorientation of this thought after 1797) – in general terms, constitute an adoption, modification and further development of commonplaces of the aristocratic-conservative critique or criticism of early capitalism. Accusations against the industrial division of labour and of “mechanic labour” in view of its (this “mechanical labour's”) consequences for the “nature of man”; warnings in relation to the appearance of a proletariat which will dangerously split open (disrupt or rupture) social unity, and manifestations of sympathy for its (the said proletariat's) fortune/luck; resistance to the general and unified/united legislation, which allegedly equalises and levels not only hereditary differences between social groups, but

also “living multiformity”, since it is necessarily connected with an equally unified/united and impersonal bureaucratic mechanism; all the basic motifs of the critique (criticism) of (capitalistic) culture/civilisation, which also today still moves (emotively) the spirits under/in different forms, exist already in J. Möser, and following him, in Novalis, A. Müller and Fr. Baader (in order to refer only to Germans), and initially constitute an ideological idealisation of the claims of social power of the patriarchal great landowner, whose very own existence is threatened, since on the one hand, the modern state, and on the other hand, modern industry, decompose and disintegrate long-established, time-honoured traditional agrarian *societas civilis*. This early organistic conservatism degenerated even before the dying off and dying out (eclipse) of the hereditary aristocracy as the (a) socially weighty, i.e. significant group (and indeed forever: present-day attempts for it (the hereditary aristocracy) to be rejuvenated as a programme stem and emanate from a particular intellectual(-spiritual) coquetry or vanity (skittishness) of the apologists of the right wing of liberalism, and they ought not be taken at face value). The armoury/arsenal of its (early organistic conservatism’s) arguments remained free for general use from the epoch of the Restoration, and in certain circumstances it was used also by the radical democratic or socialistic movement for its own anti-capitalistic goals (ends, purposes) (I limit myself to recollecting the influence of the critique/criticism of capitalism, as Carlyle formulated and expressed it, on the young Engels). This, of course, does not mean that its importance was determinative or decisive in the absolute sense; but on the other hand, it is not difficult to perceive and apprehend what form – next to, in part, entirely different elements – the ideal of the social community, the idea of unified/united natural man, and also the related with all of these, historical tendencies/trends, took in the thought (intellectual) construct of Marxism. The striking similarities, as far as the critique/criticism of culture is concerned, between Rousseauism and organistic conservatism during the 18th century, constitute precursors of

this later phenomenon – and the same combination can *mutatis mutandis* explain the “understanding” which some contemporary “conservatives” want to display as regards the cultural critique by the “New Left”. But these latter (contemporary “conservatives”) are today connected very closely to the industrial bourgeoisie,³ and thus are not in a position to raise also again the – since very long ago, buried and rotten – flag or banner of *societas civilis*. For this reason, the initial aristocratic-conservative critique of capitalistic culture/civilisation, and the related plans for an “organic community” on a new basis, in our days are cultivated mainly by a politically homeless portion of intellectuals, whose utopian dreams and specific ambitions have no prospects of realisation either in the framework of late capitalism, or of that (framework) of existent (Soviet(-related/inspired) socialism. So paradoxical – and so didactic – can the historical fortune or luck of ideas eventually be.

The reminding of the early conservative origin (provenance) of the Hegelian critique of capitalism does *not* mean that Hegel (especially after 1803) was or remained conservative in the sense of A. Müller or of Fr. Baader, but simply and only that his anti-capitalistic theses/positions in themselves by no means suffice to prove the “progressivity” of dialectics from inside the Marxist perspective of ascending historical movement. This optical illusion is created only (and only) because aristocratic-conservative and socialistic anti-capitalism are confused on account of the commonality (common ground) of certain basic motifs. But, also, the other way around: the historical legitimation of the new bourgeois society⁴ on the part of Hegel by no means suffices in order for the genesis (coming into being) and the structure of dialectics to be interpreted. The neo-Marxist interpreters, who underline the central meaning of political

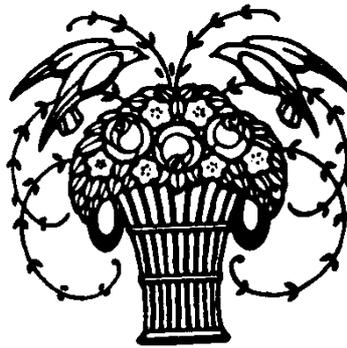
³ (Translator’s footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): personally, I would have added “and or corporate (managerial) elite”, but P.K. is not wrong, in the sense that leading Western countries up to the 1960s and 1970s still had significant heavy industries etc..

⁴ (Translator’s footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): we take it as read that the German(ic) bourgeoisie developed (much) later than the British, French, Dutch, (and of certain Italian “city-states”) bourgeoisies.

economy for Hegel's thought, are obliged to explain the fact that in the first classics (i.e. classic thinkers and theorists) of this science (of political economy), no kind of dialectical tendencies exist. Just as they ought to have existed, if political economy and dialectics are structurally (inter)related. But (the) Hegelian Marx introduced dialectics for the first time (in)to political economy, whereas Hegel made use of (or exploited) his intellectual(-spiritual) loans from the latter (political economy) inside a framework created independent of this (dialectics). It could be counter-observed (contra-indicated) that only engagement with dialectics opened his (Hegel's) eyes vis-à-vis (the) new social developments, and hence, dynamicised his thought (i.e. made his thought dynamic). In this way, however, the reasons are not explained for which Hegel (at least after 1803) affirms these (social) developments (under certain significant conditions), whereas others, even though they knew A. Smith equally well and even before Hegel himself, in part continue to reject the new bourgeois society, and in part are changed or transformed from its (new bourgeois society's) adherents, followers and supporters, to its foes. So, in itself engagement with political economy does not suffice for the *positioning* vis-à-vis its (political economy's) object, i.e. bourgeois society, to be explained – and let it be noted, in passing, that this engagement was anything but some groundbreaking act by Hegel; A. Müller wrote precisely then, in talking about the great spreading or dissemination of A. Smith's work to (amongst) the reading public, that this (man) here (i.e. A. Smith) had the same fate in Germany as Kant, for whom the poets of the *Xenien* (*Xenia*)⁵ said: "one and only one rich man feeds so many paupers!" In Hegel, the legitimation of the new bourgeois society takes place on the basis of a pre-existing radical

⁵ (Translator's footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): "*Xenien* is a [Germanization](#) of the [Greek](#) *Xenia* "host gifts", a title originally applied by the [Roman](#) poet [Martial](#) (1st century) to a collection of [poems](#) which were to accompany his presents. Following this precedent, [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#) named a collection of [distichs](#), which he wrote together with [Friedrich Schiller](#), *Die Xenien*, in which the two friends avenged themselves on opposing critics. They were first published in the [Musenalmanach](#) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenien>).

theodicy, with direct consequences for the philosophy of history. The legitimation of the bourgeois world remains dubious, precisely because it was undertaken with the assistance of means coming or descending (originating, emanating, hailing) from (in) the pre-bourgeois spiritual(-intellectual) world.⁶



⁶ (Translator's footnote. Absolutely nothing to do with P.K.): in other words, there is no necessary schematic or schematised course of bourgeois capitalism overcoming *societas civilis* (feudalism) and necessarily moving onto socialism and then communism, whilst leaving behind all vestiges of the pre-capitalistic world. Or, alternatively, Hegel (and dialectics) do not "fit into" any Marxist or other schematic-dogmatic "reading of history".