

A Critical Narration About Enlightenment: The Hegelian Concept of Religion

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Abstract:

This article tries to clarify the interaction of Hegel's critique upon enlightenment and religion. Inspired by the long term cliticization about Hegel's conservative inclination towards toward religious belief, the main research object of this article would be a defense for Hegel's concept of religion as well as enlightenment. Through reducing the Hegelian concept of religion back to a dialectical link in the development of spirit, Hegel's critique both on enlightenment and religion would be performed on a holistic logical chain. Though the enlightenment (die Aufklärung) essence of the concept of religion in Hegel's philosophy of right is undoubtedly, still, because of the ambiguous meaning of religion as a link in the dialectic movement of reason, some scholars insist that Hegel is trying to defend the absoluteness of Christian theology under the cover of dialectics. As one of the most important German philosophers after Immanuel Kant, Hegel goes much further than the German enlightenment philosophers before him in the pursuing for the veridicality of human intellectual in the view of rationalism. Compared with Kantian philosophy, the enlightenment characteristic of Hegelian philosophy cannot be easily identified intuitively or distinctly. The concept of religion, generally be considered as the object for the critique of enlightenment, however appeared as an objective historical movement in the Hegelian dialectic narration about the development of spirit, which is showed by the world history. The opposition between ration and belief is sublated in the spirit by the ultimate religion realized by the idea of absolute knowledge. The Hegelian dialectic narration in history provides a philosophic methodology for the further understanding about the alienated world under the representation of religion, as well as an insight for the modern philosophy based on the critique towards enlightenment.

Keywords: Hegel, Enlightenment, Religion, Critique

1. Introduction

Hegel's critique upon religion shows a holonomic movement of spirit that contains religion and justifies the rational necessity of religion, compared with the typical critique upon religion in the enlightenment age commenced by the French scholars, including the humanism or materialism, which mainly delivered radical messages aiming at the construction of a new civilization through philosophical revolution (Tylor 1977, p.5-8). In order to fulfill the destiny of philosophy and spirit after enlightenment, Hegel realized that a sole opposition from the stand of science or reason is too weak and rash to reveal the concept of freedom of human being. Therefore, in Hegel's theory about religion, he shows a careful seek for a philosophical methodology that is able to analyze the phenomenon of mind "after religion" or "after God" and belongs to human internality, which later becomes a seed of inherence as well as a object for critique in the later philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx. H.S.Harris once criticized the attempt to claim that the youth Hegel once confirm the "positive meaning" in positività, which is misleading. (Harris 1972) Also K.Rosenkranz argues the fact Hegel Hegel not only opposes the reason in the custody of belief, but also radically opposes any ambition to strengthen a constitution built by magisterium. (Rosenkranz, 1844).

2. A Mirror for Developing Spirit: the Stages of Religion

In Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (*Phanomenologie des Geistes*), as a link in the logic movement of mind, religion is developing and accomplished in the stage of objective mind (ziel der geist), which signifies religion is not only located in the dialectical interaction with other links in the logic movement of mind, but also itself is the content of the development from subjective mind to objective mind. Hegel sees religion as the accomplishment of spirit, which indicates the particular links of spirit, e.g. consciousness, self-awareness or reason, will inevitably return to religion as their foundation, on the other hand, it also indicates the "general emergence" of religion is included in the "universal link" of the spiritual movement. (Hegel 1907, S.419). Since the correspondence between different links of mind movement as a whole and different stages of religion as a mirror is purely logical, the linear dimension of development in time is temporarily removed by Hegel in his phenomenological analysis about mind. As a result of spirit movement, religion is simultaneously a result of the

sublation(aufheben) of the contradiction between conscious and self-conscious(selbstbewusstsein), which realizes religion as the spirit sensed by the self and the true ethics(sittlichkeit). Meanwhile, as a self-alienated(selbst entfremdung) spirit, religion reflects and surpasses the opposition between the subjectivity and objectivity within the whole process of spirit, which also allows reason and mind to eager for infinity.

However, religion is just the “original realization” of spirit(Hegel 1907, S.419).Religions on different developing stages only provide the objects in direct and natural form for the mind to aware self(Hegel 1907, S.445). The moralization achieve by the self-alienation within religion still relies on the objective(gegenständliche) externality, which indicates religion is the incomplete form of the realization of absolute spirit(der absolute Geist), identified by Hegel as the terminal form of spirit and the realization of concept, while religion is just a link in the self-alienation of spirit. The phenomenon that religion surpasses the contradiction between objectivity and subjectivity by the self-alienation shall be sublated in the link of concept realized by the absolute knowledge, in which spirit is able to grasp the holistic truth “in the form of self”(Hegel 1907, S.485). The end of Hegel’s phenomenology and philosophy of spirit is to give religion an end by absolute knowledge rather than enlightenment(Aufklärung), which ignored the importance of replacing the abstractness and objectivity by concept. Jean Jacques-Rousseau and Immanuel Kant tried to actualize the formalist liberty and construct a political ethics by utilize the practical reason, which is purely a form contradicted with its content in their context of enlightenment. Hegel names this contradiction as the “deliberated tautology” or “a simple scale for self examine”(Hegel 1907, S.425).

According to Hegel’s observation, the way enlightenment philosophers critique upon religion is not far from religion itself, the reason and rationality that used by enlightenment philosophers as weapons to criticize belief are also the outcome of self-alienation of spirit. The pre-Hegel critique upon religion results in a reason as a form without content, the victory of enlightenment reason only leads to the “definite objectivity” achieved by utility or instrumental good(Hegel 1907, S.350).Belief, on the other hand, as the object for formal rationality, is regraded as the spiritual obstacle for such instrumental good. But Hegel believes that religious belief and formal rationality both are the results of the “idealess blind diversity” of civil society. ¹ One prominent reason why Hegel’s critique upon religion can not be easily acknowledged, mainly because Hegel always tries to continue the mission of enlightenment, including the critique upon religion and religious belief, based on the premise of the critique upon enlightenment itself. On the political dimension, Hegel is famous for his dialectical or twofold comments about French Revolution. On the philosophical dimension, Hegel shows life long dedication for the conceptualization and universalization of reason. In this sense, Hegel’s critique upon religion is an exploration about the scientific regulation in the history of human spirit, in which religion plays an indispensable role, based on the Hegelian definition of reason, rather than the ideological work inherited from Voltaire or Kant. The enlightenment idea of the French philosophy in 18th century and Kant likes the material world constructed by the bourgeoisie, which attempts to create the abstract subjective freedom and justice by the particular good and rationality, while Christian religion and the pre-Christian pagan religion that is unified within the nature are together reduce to “void” by the “finitude” revealed by enlightenment.However, the enlightenment conceptual criticism towards religion may appear as the idea of “validity criteria”, still remains the particular perceptual experience that cannot ascend to universality and ethics. According to Hegel’s critique on enlightenment, on the basis of the certainty in the life provided by modern society, namely the limited intuition about the perceptual experience, enlightenment consciousness gains the ability to disenchant (entzauberung) the divine objects of belief on the one hand, and negate the belief of worship and mortification by performing belief as a structure alienated from self-awareness. The divine content of religious belief, like the holy Icon and holy Grail molten and reshaped into coin, becomes the objects of deduction or narration, which can be feasible by restore religious back to “metal” or “the law of causation”(Hegel 1907, S.351).This concept is equal to the “idea of freedom” or “the true realization of freedom” in Hegel’s philosophy(Hegel 1989, p.286). Hegel’s concept of religion avoids the fate of be judged as the ashes of the pre-enlightenment world or science, and finally has to develop logically to the religion being-in-itself(Religion an und für sich), that is not Protestantism or natural religion, but an absolute knowledge beyond the opposition between belief and reason. This development of religion, Hegel points out, is exhibited in the history of human civilization.

By narrating the development links of spirit and religion lying in the world history, Hegel tries to reveal the historical source for the reason and religion moralized in the modern world. As a purely spiritual movement, religion is a homologous side to the movement of mind or the alienated form of the opposition between self-awareness and the world. Charles Taylor’s claims “the development of religion is associated with the

¹The concept Hegel uses to define the link of absolute knowledge is different from the concept that enlightenment uses to deconstruct the other world or religion. Hegel’s concept aims at creating the universality for self, while the concept of enlightenment tries to grasp nature and civil society by particularity(einzelheit). In Hegel’s view, if the idea is narrated by concepts based on particularity, that is the status of non-idea.

development of human being”, may indicate that the form and content of a specific religion is decided by the consciousness and the ability to occupy the objectivity in the corresponding developing link. In another word, religion itself is the purest form of ideology in the conflicts between human spirit and the world as object. On the stage of religion, the finite spirit is an inappropriate reflect of the infinite spirit. Hegel claims “in the link accommodates the perceptual certainty or master-slave dialectic, the human consciousness has to become a way to think universally, while God must be treated as a complete other.”(Tylor 1977, p.199) In the historical forms of religion that is restored by Hegel, first is the stage of natural religion, which is the result of “spirit senses self”. What self-awareness can truly hold is the “objects in the direct and natural form.”(Hegel 1907, S.401) On this stage, self-awareness and the God of light correspond with the primitive dialectics that is given by the perceptual certainty in the alternative change of day and night. To the extent of being, neither spirit nor religion is the substance of subjectivity. In the stage of paganism for animal and plant, after the abstraction and the belief in the godliness of the objects in the nature, mind returns to self and forms the “spiritual perceptual religion” or pantheism. While the struggle for living and the practice in the present world keeps dragging mind back into the conflict with the objects. The paganism for animal and plant signifies “the conceptual self without self”. Namely, when self is trapped into the fighting for existence, mind somehow appears submission to its objects, meanwhile, the contradiction between self and the objective world is reconstructed into a spiritual form without true content, religion.

Since the suppression from the natural objects, like animal or plant, is gradually relieved by the development of mind in the way of labour(arbeit) and creation, the link of natural religion enters the conversion to the link of craftsman, such as Ancient Egypt religion. Along with the evolution of labour and the ability to occupy the natural objects, self-awareness is further integrated into the objects, mind and nature is unified by labour, the products of the craftsman is not restricted to material ones but also spiritual ones, which signifies the beginning of art religion. If the labour in the link of craftsman or natural religion realizes the mind from the stage without self, or as Hegel says “self is objectified by the creation of labour...spirit creates objects for itself through the act of craftsman.”(Hegel 1907, S.404) Then in the link of art religion, as known as the polytheism in Ancient Greece, the epics, tragedy and comedy are the three linguistic pattern to convey the initial the conscious oxymoron of the “ethical and true spirit” living in a hierarchical society. This oxymoron represents the static truth held by the initial philosophy and ethics on the one hand, but also indicates the unstable social status and vulnerable life in this historical link on the other hand. The two sides of the oxymoron paradoxically forms the objects for the self-awareness and makes a clear suggestion of the limit of mind through the “absolute art” of Ancient Greece. The tragedy of Apollo and Dionysus, the mock on the weakness of Zeus and other godliness, finally get externalized by the substance in the comedy, which signifies the transformation from substance to subject(Die Substanz ist allsubjekt zu bestimmen)(Hegel 1907, S.460), and the beginning of revelational religions and the monotheist spirit of Christianity.

3. After Revelational Religion: the Conceptual Sublation of Belief

Christianity, especially the Christianity that Hegel confronted in the 18th century, has already been moralized and assimilated by the ideology of the civil society. Hegel believes there are specific historical conditions for Christianity to be the only revelational religion in modernity. The object of Christian faith is the alienation of self, namely the “escape” from the present world. As a revelational religion, through the belief of Christianity, God is in the unification with the being of human, which means the transcendent concept of self achieves substantiation by the incarnation of godliness. In other words, the ideal that Christian faith goes for has already been realized in the world that beyond the reality as a purely spiritual existence, which originates from the fear and emotion that each individual can experience in the actual world. Alexandre Kojève gives a brief map about the correlation of different ideological facts in human society that mirrored by Christianity, which is based on Hegel’s phenomenology: (1) Three parallel phenomena in the world of Christian free citizen: private proprietary\ legal person in Roman laws\ Judaic monotheism (2) Three ideologies reflects the reality in the world of free citizen: stoicism\ skepticism\ sense of distress (Christianity) .Kojève believes that the world in which the Hegelian concept of Christianity exists is a disrupted world after the self-alienation of spirit. As a sense of stress, Christianity is a pure consciousness generated by the substance, which can sense the non-substance movement of self. On the other hand, Christianity still has to co-exist with the alien world created by self, as “a spiritual essence permeated by self-awareness.”(Hegel 1907, S.316) In this explanation, the self-alienation in the spiritual movement clearly implies the periodical feature of the developing self-awareness of the free citizen or Jews in the late slave society. Specifically, the free citizen that can be concluded as the private ownership of proprietary consistently lives in the transient moral or physical status, which force individual to grieve for the lost of the actual word(=nation) on the one hand, but to conceive a transcendent world through idea on the other hand(Kojève 1947, p.301). The death of God and the death of belief both occur in the fade of the spiritual world of Judaic monotheism and Roman world.

To this sense, the City of God that Saint Augustinus claims after the downfall of Roman Empire, and the World Empire that Dante Alighieri prospects, both depict the limit of spirit in the history that Christian belief develops to theology. The Christian belief signifies the beginning of Hegelian revelational religion and the contradiction between self-awareness and substance, while the stage of theology prospects a new round of moralization of the alienated world in the stage of civil society, directing to the final sublation of belief in the further stage. The Christianity Hegel describes, in fact, is the Christian rationality decided by the bourgeoisie society and its alienated moralization. Such Christian rationality performs a typical “rationality of ego” in the Descartes sense, which leads to the subjectivism that opposite to belief and Berkeley’s rationalism. The rationality of the theology of revelation religion, similar to the spirit without substance, is a simple negativity, while the belief itself surely has a positive\ primitive\ unprovable content, an incarnated object (gegenstand) . Thus the objectivity of the belief of revelation religion and the origin of its theology can be confirmed, while the relative subjectivism push the solipsism to another pole, it “claims God is the creation of mind.” (Kojève 1947, p.156) When the rationality keep moving in the way paved by belief, it gradually makes spirit occupying all objects, signifies the end of the conditions for the objectivity of belief. On this stage, the rationality of revelation religion can enter the negative idea by itself even without revelation, which can be seen as the the form of self-awareness. According to Hegel’s analysis, though “belief is still a reflect of the religious life that hasn’t been realized”, absolute knowledge and its ideas shall become the place where the self-awareness can be holistically exhibited, which signifies the vanish of the land of belief, the Religion (absolute knowledge) will surpass belief (Tylor 1977, p.200). This evolution of rationality and sublation of belief is identified the science of spirit by Hegel.

In line with the dialectical movement of mind, Hegel sees an inevitable trend that religion will develop to the atheism governed by absolute knowledge. According to Hegel’s history clue, before sublated, religion is in the tension between the form and substance of spirit. However, this tension will be sublated by the further development of rationality. The free spirit described by “Hegelian science” is the spirit sense self (Der den Geist wissende Geist). Spirit reoccupies objects and self by the idea of absolute knowledge, which, on the dimension of mind, indicates “someone knows himself is action, knows the objects related with him is his creation, the objects are himself, this is the true self-awareness (Selbst-bewusstsein).” (Kojève 1947, p.256) Accordingly, the unification of subject and object\ form and substance in the development of religion implies the dialectical reconciliation between human and god, which signifies that the objects in the other world are realized in the factuality. The universal and actual subject no more need to escape from the disrupted (zerrissenheit) world. This is the developing of religion that Kojève identifies “the final atheism” (Kojève 1947, p.254). The logic in the developing of religion is a line towards the realization of God himself. God, as the object in the other world and the self-alienation of spirit, undergoes a process from zilch to being, from the substance without form to incarnation. In the initial religion or natural religion, the God does not belong to human and his spirit, godliness only exists in the power of death, which is the final objective natural power to punish human. While in the initial atheism or the art religion or comedy, human loses God, the belief and faith are generated from ethical reality. But the free citizen under the status of legal right, eventually reconstructs the religious belief that exists in the contradiction between ethical world and self, which is removed by art and comedy in the first place, which named the sense of stress by Hegel. The sense of stress is the spiritual essence for Christianity in Hegelian philosophy, which loses the direct personality under the status of right, on the other hand, also loses “the indirect value of personality in idea.” (Hegel 1907, S.481) Finally, what is left after the sublation of religious belief is “the man becomes God”, while in the revelation religion or Christianity is “the God becomes man” (e.g. incarnation). Hegel believes the victory of Christianity toward nature and paganism makes nature become a genus (arten) of Godliness. While “man is born to be free” is converted to “spiritual freedom is the nature of human” in the narration of Christianity. In Hegelian definition of Christianized spirit or divinity, as Francesca Cauchi concludes, man shall be fulfilled by divinity, yet the secular awareness or idea is not only the “necessary rational will” driven by idea, but also the crucial path for spirit to realize self (Cauchi 2016). In the abstract humanity of Christian belief, the freedom of will, the realization of nature and the utilization of reason are unified, which means the death of God, or God comes down to the the existence (dasein) of self-awareness. This is the way Hegel analyzes Gospel stories, Christian theology is the dead theology of God, it is a unconscious and symbolic atheism. And to the ethical sense, “the tension with the world demands God to be dead”, which means only when the fake form of love and its historical conditions existing in struggle and labour are eliminated, can the sublation of self-alienation of mind be possible. Therefore, the absolute knowledge can express such atheism or incarnation solely through idea (begriff=logos) (Kojève 1947, p.349). In this occasion, belief and pure knowledge (enlightenment rationality) that both classified as pure consciousness by Hegel, will “return from the actual moralized world” and become the possible status of being for mind (Hegel 1907, S.346).

4. Hegel's Critique upon Enlightenment and the "Death of God"

As stated above, Hegelian critique upon religion is not a rude deny of religion, but a re-exhibit of the historical movement of spirit that includes religion as a logical link. Hegel believes though the objects of religious belief are multiple from the natural religion, art religion to revelation religion, still the essence of these objects always has to return to the self of man. Especially in the revelation of incarnation, theology inevitably equals an anthropology. As Hegel says: "when the believers are talking about themselves, they feel like talking about a God." (Kojève 1947, p.313) When spirit is at the stage lack of self-awareness, it will project(vor-stellen) a full self-awareness into the imagination of the other world. While God is unimaginable and infinitely perfect, which reflects in the undeveloped stages of reason and spirit. Man can not easily aware himself is spirit itself and always feel the lack of self in the ethical(political) world, which makes another world with infinity and fullness of self is necessary.

However, in the moralized world or modernity, the perceptual certainty confirmed by reason is still confronted with the contradicted labour and its objects. The tension between belief and reason in such occasion shows two movements in opposite directions, when religious belief tries to deny or melt the fact of self-alienation, the moralized or enlightened rationality is intensifying the alienation in in the modernity. In the context of enlightenment, religious belief and Descartes's insight(einsicht) are in a dialectical relation which implicates a fact, that as a spiritual critique upon the alienated world, religious belief has to be accomplished by reason. In the case of the Christianity after 18th century, the religious critique or escape from the actual world is realized by the negativity of rationality in the reformed doctrines of Christianity. Hence the religious belief depends on the form of rationality to maintain its appearance as pure(reines) spirit, while reason tries to realize further moralization of spirit by serving as the content and methodology of belief.

Hegel admits this interdependence of moralized reason and religious belief in civil society, and decides to keep a distance both from enlightenment and religion, in order to implement his historical observation, which he names science. Hegel refuses the revelation from religion to help him understand belief, nor he accepts the plan offered by enlightenment philosophers before him to find the truth of reason. As he claims: "I do not need to have conversations with the people from the polis, neither do I need to discuss by the Cartesian meditation." Hegel tries to reach a historical analysis that can reveal the truth, just as the one that world history can present dialectically by itself. "Hegel's thought can only represent the world history by his own words." (Kojève 1947, p.498)Hegel expects, through understanding the development clue of spirit existing in the world history, the essence and truth of fighting\ labour and their contradictions, which have long been covered by religion and reason, can be explicitly performed, which allows subjects can and must dominates all forms externality.

Yet Hegel is not satisfied to perform the "legitimacy" of the enlightenment critique toward belief, because the world history promoted by machine and market has already given a clear explanation about the truth—"the right of enlightenment equals to the right of self-awareness". The negative movement of enlightenment rationality inevitably will "sublate all the content heterogeneous to self-awareness", or create the rules of dealing with others within particularity. Meanwhile, Hegel has no intention to defend religion by his critique upon enlightenment, because the universality developing in the modern history adumbrates that the religious morality will be sublated by the realization of universal homogenous nation and its ethics. As Kojève claims, in his analysis about the movement of morality in Hegelian phenomenology, the morality of revelational religion is restricted by the alienation of self in reality after all. Thus the Christian love is insufficient, for such love "depends on difference and contradiction, only when the thorough nation that is achieved by the elimination of fighting and social class, can love no longer be fulfilled with religious meaning"(Hegel 1907, S.507)To this extent, Feuerbach shows a misapplication of Hegelian philosophical methodology. There is no doubt that Hegel, as an continuity of enlightenment, does not have a absolute neutral stand for religion and bishop. In fact, Hegel in his youth has already put a radical critique towards church by his "The Positivity of the Christian Religion"(Die Positivität der christlichen Religion) and "Life of Jesus", which is typical enlightenment and rationalist. Hegel points the Christianity relying on revelation(positivität) has the characteristics as statutory, mandatory and slavery. Meanwhile, Hegel also claims Christianity is a transnatural religion by against natural religion and nature, which allows religion to demand the unnatural emotion and action that people can only practice by obeying.

The position where Hegel is located in the spectrum of enlightenment, just as his ambiguous or dialectical theory about religion, is hard to be confirmed by a simple standard, such as rationality or positive science. Along with his clue of his own thought, Hegel appears a critique or even a rupture with enlightenment, as well as a tight correlation with later philosophers, such as Karl Marx, F. Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger.

First, despite the broad category of historicism, there does exist an intersection in Hegel and Nietzsche's methodology of critique upon religion. The concept of "death of God" claimed by Hegel in his phenomenology of spirit serves as a necessary link for the development of self-awareness, while the utilization of this concept in Hegel's political philosophy has long intrigued complex and mainly negative academic comments. For a long time, enormous scholars insist that on the topic of religion critique, Hegel and Nietzsche are in opposition.

Robert Williams and Will Dudley return to Hegel's theoretical premise, in order to point out that Hegel's critique on religion is from the point of refusing Kant's practical reason. Dudley on the other hand claims both Hegel and Nietzsche initiate their philosophy from the rupture with Kant's idea of freedom. The consistency from Hegel to Nietzsche presents an effort to fulfill the void formalism of Kant's subjective rational will by practical reason (Cauchi 2016).

Secondly, there is an intersection in Hegel and Marx's dialectics applied in their philosophy. In Marx's critique upon capitalism, which is given analogy as new religion or God by Marx's son in law Paul Lafargue, the Hegelian dialectics that once utilized for Hegel's critique on religion is explicit. In Marx's theory of history, he confirms capitalism as a positive consequence of the development of productivity, on the other hand, he puts enormous philosophical and economical analysis to find the factors that can prove the inevitable self-sublation of capitalism in further development of productivity. This dialectical critique can also be found in Hegel's critique on religion, where he confirms the different stages of religion are the positive consequence of the development of spirit and self-awareness, while he also expects the inevitable sublation of religion by the further realization of self-awareness.

Hegel tries to remove the subjective form of the future religion by the objectified absolute spirit, through which the abstract object for religious belief is restored as the practical principles in the historical events. The vision of salvation offered by Christianity is no longer a pure movement of spirit, but a force to promote new historical event. Just as how Jesus's career and his death promoted the history, the force of religion shall become a force to realize Jesus's life in individual body, exactly as the possibility of realizing universality in the French Revolution as a finite historical event (Ciavatta 2014). Since the modernity in which human is living in is in the context of the death of God, what idea and philosophy shall do is to provide insights for the further realization of human spirit and freedom, modestly and boldly.

5. The Reconciliation of Enlightenment and Religion in Hegel's Philosophy of Right

In *Philosophy of Right (Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts)*, Hegel tries to depict the possibilities of the reconciliation between enlightenment and religious belief by analyzing the historical factors for modern politics(state) sublating all abstract forms of right. After the French Revolution, the idea of right no longer is restricted in the field of philosophy. As the horrible consequence of radical practice of philosophical idea of right and liberty, Hegel believes the understanding of right should be prudently examined both by historical experience and universal reason. Religious belief on the other side, should not be an object for philosophical revolution or enlightenment, which may cause the misuse of reason itself. The enlightenment rationality, though restores the external objects and universality of belief as individual reason and utility, still can not find a feasible conceptual way to realize a true and universal ethic based on particular reason. As the moral utopia composed by Rousseau and the global peace constructed by Kant's metaphysics, the formalist reason used for the explanation about the historical link constituted by particularity, on one hand, may seem universally justice and good for each individual, while still depends on the creation of Others and potential horror, which is performed by the formalist liberty of Jacobin.

Hegel's concept of religion is undoubtedly dialectical and historical. Both religion and right shall be acknowledged as true(wirklich) factors in modern constitution. And only in the context of rationality(vernünftig), can religion and right both be integrated into the universality of modern state, which is the true realization of free will. Hegel's critique on religion and enlightenment are the two sides of one issue: "the enlightenment has knowledge(einsicht) without content, while belief (der glauben) has content without knowledge."(Hegel 1907, S.380)

Hegel claims the historical and rational conditions for belief are from the contradictions of particularity and the weakness of self-awareness in the alienated world. As his support for the true idea of right and freedom, he also tries to find the space for belief in the ethical life of moralized state(das reich der bildung). This effort performed in Hegel's demonstration about the external conditions for free will and reason in modern society, where religion and belief are inseparable parts of the freedom of proprietary and conscience. "If the religious belief is true", which means what religion conveys is the "divine content" within actuality, rather than the abstract paradise opposite to self-awareness. That signifies religious belief develops to an ability of reason that can help self-awareness to understand its own finitude, rather than becomes an artificial(eitelkeit) oppressive spiritual force alienated from pure consciousness(das reine bewußtsein). Hegel believes on this developed stage, religious belief with actuality and rationality, "can promote the intact end of state rather than break it", which indicates the power of state(staatsmacht) shall protect church as "a basic institution" and accept the property right of church(Mitias 1981). Moreover, since the development of spirit is the way in which human escape from the status as animal, right and duty are the consequence of the development of reason, which become the substantial evidence for the free status of human rationality. The unreal freedom that is driven by desire and the bad infinity of impulsion, on the other side, is the origin of the doctrine about the evil of human nature. The

ought(sollen) status of freedom contained in the idea of right, first is a deny towards the freedom of do as pleased, thus maintaining an unification with the Christianity expectation about human nature. Therefore, “As a spirit, man is an essence of freedom”, indicates the reason why man can be identified man is the potential to escape from the control of natural impulsions. Based on this hypothesis, original sin can be understood as a precondition for Christianity as “a religion of freedom”(Hegel 1989, p.95), namely the ideology that avoids the tension with the ethics and right in modern state.

Secondly, Hegel views enlightenment is unable to provide a plan to tackle with the actual world that is full of inequality and alienation, though enlightenment philosophy has already offered meticulous demonstration about the equality and freedom of self(das selbst der person). As a philosopher within the category of enlightenment, Hegel is quite generous to give complement on the political equality and freedom that was promoted by enlightenment philosophy. The “order of right” claimed by Hegel, is famous for the slogan—“become a man and respect other being a man”(Hegel 1989, p.103), which actually inherited the enlightenment philosophy asserting “the equality of personality”¹ and deeply influenced by the political events after “the Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens”.² However, the dialectics as a main methodology decides that Hegel can not easily be satisfied or worship the value of enlightenment that has already become being(dasein) in the modern history. The major value of Hegel’s philosophy of right is his critique that reveals the historical of enlightenment philosophy, rather than his praise on the victory of enlightenment and science in various ways. Hegel believes the philosophical right can keep its indifference about particularity(Hegel 1989, p.121). Philosophy must give a demonstration about how the idea of right can realize itself within universality, which signifies the sublation of contradiction between particularity and publicity, as well as leads to an absolute developing direction that liberty can beyond the particular interest belongs to individual or specific social class. The contradiction caused by the particularity both in nature and society, such as the phenomena of class struggle and giant wealth gap, is not the issue that the idea of right or freedom should settle in present, in Hegel’s view. Because through a objective process of development, right inevitable will settle this contradiction in the future ethical domain of family, civil society and state. However, Hegel finds enlightenment settles for the abstract human right, which can easily bring about the vain hope of “unlawful justice and equality” or “empty and shallow rationality”.

As above, Hegelian idea of right refuses the whole concept that can be applied in actual politics, as Rousseau, Lock or Kant. Hegel tries to blaze a methodology or principle that based on historical dialectics and idealism. The historicity and objectivity in Hegel’s philosophy of right, surely appear a cold character like machine or laboratory. Since Schopenhauer, the philosopher at Hegel’s age, to Rudolf Haym, Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell and Karl Popper, there has been a tradition to relate Hegel with the Prussian conservatism, which depicts Hegel as the defender of the current dictatorship of Prussia and a philosopher belongs to the Prussian state authority. Some criticizers, even rudely define Hegel’s political philosophy as the pioneer for corporate fascism and national socialism. Especially in the work of contemporary liberalists, Hegel can always be associated with the worship of authoritarian state power, with the German Nationalism before Adolf Hitler, with the cruel militant motto—“war is an acceptable option for the nation with courage.” What is ironic, a writer for the journal of American association of Hegel even found a book with the title—*from Hegel to Gaddafi* in Tripoli airport (Houlgate 1991).

But still, Hegel maintains his unique position in the history of philosophy. As “the first scholar that consciously tries to be an audience, a historian and a philosopher”, Hegel even consciously tries to abandon the dialectics as a philosophical methodology. Why? Whether dialectics as a methodology is the main reason why Hegel has been mentioned in the past centuries? Just as Hegel’s critique upon the “innocence” and “arrogance” of enlightenment philosophy, he also tries to avoid the theory or philosophy arrogating the absolute spirit. In his view, the world history itself is dialectical. The expression of absolute truth is the only appropriate language for the expression of the dialectics, which has already been developed by the objective history (Kojève 1947, p.546).

¹The equality of personality can be found in Hegel’s confirmation about the historical process opened by enlightenment, as he says: “a human being counts as such because he is a human being not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc.” See Hegel, G.W.F.(1989), *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel Werke, vol.7, Stuttgart: Suhrkamp, p.360-373.

² As Article IV in the *Declaration*—“Liberty consists of doing anything which does not harm others: thus, the exercise of the natural rights of each man has only those borders which assure other members of the society the enjoyment of these same rights. These borders can be determined only by the law.” J.Hardman points out that this content is in consistency with Hegel’s concept of right and freedom. Hegel’s concept of ownership derives from social freedom, rather than natural need. The fact that the right of ownership can be real is a man can only respect other equal right when he is restricted by social freedom. see Hardman, J.(1981), *The French Revolution: The Fall of the Ancien Regime the Thermidorean Reaction, 1785-1795*, London: Edward Arnold, p.114.

6. Conclusion

Hegel's concept of right somehow avoids directly confront the misery and distress, which are described as the phenomena with "rationality" (vernünftig), by his efforts to narrate the historical logics of right and freedom in the frame of "science of state". In Hegel's view, the symptoms and injustice in present society, therefore, only can cause moral discomfortableness in the perceptual sense, which is lower than the reason of objective history. On the other hand, the emerge and sublation of these present social contradictions both objectively decided by history itself, philosophy only can make a narration about this objective process, rather than construct or create a new historical condition. As he says : "we shall develop idea in accordance with concept, since idea is the reason for all knowledge, and right is a part of philosophy". In order to perform "the idea of right is freedom" by historical dialectics, which is the negation of the negation, Hegel fits political ethics into a branch of philosophy(Hegel 1989, p309-311). While freedom itself should be scientifically and objectively realized within the judgement about actuality made by idea. That indicates the barbarism and unfree in the bourgeoisie civilization, though repellent, still have to be sublated by idea in a specific logical link in the future. According to Hegel, enlightenment and religion are static shadows of the other world, the truth of reason shall be absolute objective. Therefore, compared with the objective spirit, the humanism and abstract right claimed by enlightenment philosophers are invalid and arrogant. The true philosophy, Hegel believes, shall understand the current existence is also rational, while enlightenment and religion just provide the existence in another world, since "only God can know what really exists in another world, which only exactly be claimed by the failed unilateral inference."(Hegel 1989, p309-311) Consequently, freedom and right can only be established by its own objective history, rather than by intuition or perception. As Hegel believes "the rational content is the one has already gained its rational form", the free spirit can "begin from itself" through the "consistency with truth"(Hegel 1989, p320-325). While on the contrary, the enlightenment philosophers tend to take "the truth accepted by the masses" as the idea of freedom, which leads to a capricious and irrational ideology that refuses to enquire state or public will, or even the authority of inner emotion.

Political philosophy, as a knowledge about the idea of right, shall obey the principles expected by the modern world, namely the principles of science, since Hegel claims there is a "point of transformation" in 18th century. Hegel believes 19th century is the birth of a new age and a period of transformation, therefore philosophy should rupture from the "ignorant enthusiasm" and "the self-contented attitude towards science."(Hegel 1907, S.XVIII) He expects political philosophy can be a science to reveal the law of history and society, just as how nature science reveals the natural law, which intrinsically is contained in the development of nature. Hegel demands philosophy rise to a science that can perform the inner relations of different links in world history as well as the history of philosophy, rather than simply accumulate academical materials without reflection.As the principles given by Hegel in his Lectures on the History of Philosophy(Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie), "only the history of philosophy that grasps the development in the system of ideas, can matches the title of science."(Hegel 1995, p.32)

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