

ABSTRACT

Hegel, Kojeve, Marx, and Yoder: An Examination of Christianity and Social Justice

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In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* G.W. F. Hegel puts forth a number of ideas on man's relationship with the world. In his chapter on the "Dialectic of Subject," specifically, Hegel looks at the ability of self-consciousness to relate to the world by putting itself at the center of things. In doing so, Hegel takes the reader through the steps which self-consciousness undergoes in order to relate properly to the world. In my thesis, I utilize an interpretation of this text by Alexandre Kojeve in order to demonstrate that Christians can create the world and thus take a proper place in history as Hegel so desires. In using figures such as John Howard Yoder and other theologians and biblical exegetes, I demonstrate that Christianity is not merely an ethereal concept, as Kojeve seems to think, and that Christians are meant to and do in fact take part in social action in our relation to the world. In doing so, Christians properly work in the world, as Kojeve demands, and thus take part in the process of "completing" history, in proper Hegelian fashion.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: An Introduction to the Phenomenology of Spirit	1
Chapter Two: Alexandre Kojève's Interpretation	17
Chapter Three: A Response to the Objection of the Beyond	32
Chapter Four: A Synthesis of Christianity, Marxism, and Hegel	45
Bibliography	57

CHAPTER ONE

An Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

G.W.F. Hegel lived in a tumultuous time. We find littered in Hegel's philosophy a number of references to the French Revolution, Napoleon, and other monumental historic references. Hegel even references the war sounds of the Battle of Jena in some of his writing as if they are background music to his time at work. Not only did Hegel live in an unstable realm politically, but this was a time in which the seas of thought were turbulent as well. As Robert Stern points out, this period was "a kind of crossroads between the Enlightenment and Romanticism"¹. Additionally, Kant's critical philosophy was fresh off the press, so every academic in sight was trying to respond to his metaphysically novel system. Given the political and intellectual tumult, the goal of Hegel's philosophic endeavor was to make sense of the world and all that was going on in it.

In this thesis, I will explore Hegel's master/slave dialectic, in which he demonstrates the interactions of self-consciousnesses in order to demonstrate how it is that man comes to know himself as a subject. Specifically, I will argue that the self-consciousness, given Hegel's description of its coming to know itself as pure self-consciousness, can create a better world through the continual incorporation of Christian service in its daily work and thus draw himself closer to what Hegel calls the "pure self-consciousness" in addition to creating opportunities for those they serve to do the same. I will do this by looking at Alexandre Kojève's reading of Hegel and incorporating

¹ Stern, Robert. *Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*. (London:2002) Routledge, 3

Kojeve's heavy emphasis on idea and work based on such idea in order to demonstrate how Christians can create a world which is predicated on these two things.

In this chapter, I will maneuver through the second section of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the "Dialectic of Subject," in order to properly set the stage for the remaining chapters of this thesis. I will explore the background from which Hegel began his mature philosophy (marked first by the *Phenomenology of Spirit*), how the *Phenomenology of Spirit* falls into his overall system, and what purpose the master/slave dialectic serves in this portion of his work.

As noted above, Hegel wrote in the context of a fluid world, in which the French Revolution had shattered then current ideas of human interaction. Charles Taylor remarks that Hegel needed "to come to terms with the painful, perturbing, conflict-ridden moral experience of the French Revolution."² Most importantly, Hegel wanted to figure out "human subjectivity and its relation to the world."³ Such a desire was birthed from the idea of expressivism, which he was exposed to in his youth and while at seminary. Taylor explains that expressivism was "a realizing in external reality of something we feel or desire."⁴ And in realizing such feelings or desires, "this life must have the added dimension that the subject can recognize it as his own."⁵ In the process of attaining recognition, Taylor points out that there are three main thrusts found in expressivism: anti-dualism, freedom, and union with nature (24). In specifically looking at union with nature, Taylor states that

² Taylor, Charles. *Hegel*. (Cambridge: 1975) Cambridge University Press, 3

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 14

⁵ *Ibid.*, 15

“if [a] life is to be fully reflected in [one’s] expressive activity, if the feeling/vision of [oneself] which this expresses is to be adequate to [one’s] real existence, then this feeling cannot stop at the boundary of [self]; it has to be open to the great current of life that flows across it...Hence it must be more than a useful interchange of matter. It must be experienced as a communion.”⁶

Though this communion is first in reference to nature, Taylor goes on to note that the expressivists were equally interested in communion with other men.⁷

This communion and the failures found in the lack of it will become readily apparent in Hegel’s master/slave dialectic. Recognizing the benefit of communion in Hegel’s dialectic and attempting to resolve the lack or failures of it will play a vital role when I delve into the importance of Christian practice in conversation with Hegel’s master/slave dialectic. I will demonstrate how the master/slave dialectic in Christian context reaches what Hegel’s goal was in encouraging man to express himself as subject.

Hegel was looking for a regeneration: “The regeneration he looks for is one in which men achieve the freedom of moral self-determination, while at the same time recovering a wholeness or integrity where reason is not at odds with the passions, or spirit with sensibility, but where the whole man is moved spontaneously to moral goodness.”⁸ Taylor goes on to say that “this wholeness would not only heal the divisions within men but between them as well” and that “a regeneration of this kind, which involves the whole man, can only be achieved by religion, within the terms of the problem which Hegel has

⁶ Ibid., 25

⁷ Ibid., 27

⁸ Ibid., 54

established.”⁹ Thus, our exploration of Christianity, specifically a Christian call to service, will converse well with Hegel’s dialectic of subject.

With an attempt at this regeneration in mind, Hegel set out to create a system of philosophy that made sense of the world for humans and allowed them to properly interact with it. In writing the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel began what some consider to be his ‘mature’ philosophy. Published for the first time in 1807, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* served as an introduction to the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences* which would be published ten years later.¹⁰ In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel explores the development of the spirit,¹¹ its relation to the self, and its various relations to the world. He also explores how the spirit must go about making sense of the world around it in order to interact with it properly. Throughout the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel is attempting to break down preconceived notions concerning the spirit that his readers may bring to the table. He does this in order that he might create a system which fully develops the world. According to Robert Stern, then, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* serves as a *via negativa*.¹²

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* also exhibits Hegel’s dialectical movement. Michael Forster notes that many sell Hegel’s method short. While the ‘thesis, antithesis, synthesis’¹³ notation is a good generalization of Hegel’s method, it does not completely

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Stern, 7

¹¹ This term will be used interchangeably with “self-consciousness” throughout this chapter. In no reading of Hegel or his interpreters have I found any valuable differentiation between the two terms.

¹² Stern, 196

¹³ The classical example of this will be given below.

capture all that Hegel intended to do with the dialectical movement.¹⁴ Though it does contain more than this ‘thesis, antithesis, synthesis,’ the exact movements involved in Hegel’s dialectical movement are aptly summarized by Forster: there is a moment of thought, then the “dialectical moment is the self-sublation of such finite determinations and their transition into their opposites,” and finally the “speculative moment” allows for the contradiction between the moment of thought and dialectical moment to produce a unity between the two contradicting ideas.¹⁵ This process is to work all the way to the attainment of what Hegel calls the “Absolute Idea.” An example of this method is to start at “Being,” and then recognize “Non-being.” Clearly, these two ideas are contraries of one another. Throughout his text, Hegel refers to moments such as these as the first moment and second moment or an initial moment alongside its negation. This is the thesis alongside the antithesis. In this specific example “Being” may be the first moment and “Non-being” may be the second or negative moment or negation. The speculative moment, however, allows us to move beyond this contradiction between first and second or initial and negation and thus into Becoming, which is neither Being nor Non-being specifically but retains them both simultaneously.¹⁶ This speculative moment is the synthesis.

Forster also points out that the system serves a greater function than solely moving towards the Absolute Idea, though this is the primary goal. There are three other goals which Forster believes Hegel has in mind in executing the dialectical movement:

¹⁴ Forster, Michael. “Hegel’s Dialectical Method,” *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*. (Cambridge: 1993), 131

¹⁵ Forster, 132

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 133

pedagogical, epistemological, and scientific. First, the pedagogical goal of the dialectical movement is intended to rid the reader of false ideas which he approached the text with, to serve as a demonstration of the method and to allow the reader to witness and understand it, and to provide the actual content of Hegel's philosophy.¹⁷ Second, in executing the epistemological goal, Hegel simply desires to demonstrate how his method does not fall subject to skeptical criticisms and even how his philosophy is demonstrable from every viewpoint within it.¹⁸ Thus, "Hegel is able to interpret human history as a teleological process aimed at unfolding, in order, this very dialectical sequence...and eventually reaching the self-consistent position of his own system."¹⁹ And in finally attempting to create a philosophy which is scientific, Hegel ensures that his corpus contains a method, that it is in fact an entire system, that this system covers everything, that it demonstrates the necessity of these things, and that it gives "existing empirical sciences...an *a priori* character."²⁰

Though all of the above aspects of the dialectic are present in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, many agree that the main goal of this work is to erase presuppositions the reader holds in order to enable her full capacity to take in all of that which Hegel intends to expound in his system.²¹ Stern calls this a "process of conceptual therapy."²² Stern goes on to say that "the unity of the work comes from its attempt to show that a similar

¹⁷ Ibid., 134

¹⁸ Ibid., 135

¹⁹ Ibid., 136

²⁰ Ibid., 137

²¹ Taylor, 127; Stern, 22

²² Stern, 22

difficulty is common to a range of concerns, which all show the same kind of distortion in our thinking.”²³ Once this therapy has been accomplished, Hegel will be able to approach fresh minds in his *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.²⁴

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel hopes to dispel myths pertaining to the consciousness’s relationship to the world. And thus,

The [*Phenomenology of Spirit*] intends to start with our ordinary consciousness of things...and to take us from there to the true perspective of *Geist*. The work is called a ‘phenomenology’ because it deals with the way things appear for consciousness, or with forms of consciousness.²⁵

In doing this, Hegel seeks to demonstrate that we are not simply objects in the world (understood as a distinct entity from ourselves) but that we are “vehicles of a spirit which is also expressed in the world, so that this world is no longer distinct from us.”²⁶

In order to begin the dialectical movement, Hegel must first choose a starting point. Thus, he begins with ordinary conscience: “a starting point that must be seen as a realized standard, and hence is able to start an ascending dialectic from the most natural and unsophisticated conception of the knowing subject, which he calls ‘sensible certainty’.”²⁷ ‘Sensible certainty,’ then, is the ground floor for Hegel’s exploration of the subject. Every person has sensible certainty and their consciousness can move from this point through the dialectical movement.

²³ Stern, 26

²⁴ Taylor points out, however, the difficulty many have had in accepting the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as an introduction after Hegel calls it the beginning of his system. Taylor sides with Forster above in noting that the entire system is demonstrable at any point. Thus “one should be able to start anywhere, and recuperate one’s original starting point.” (See Taylor, 128)

²⁵ Taylor, 128

²⁶ Taylor, 128

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 136

Taylor notes that Hegel acknowledges the experience of the dialectical movement in every individual. However, ordinary individuals (as opposed to the philosopher) simply see this movement as straightforward experience rather than as a dialectical movement. While a philosopher such as Hegel has the tools and capacity to understand the dialectical movement as a purposeful change from one phenomenological standpoint of the self-consciousness to another, the average person simply experiences this change with no ability to answer the question, “Why?”²⁸

In moving from the consciousness to the self-consciousness, Hegel moves in a way such that “the dialectic will be between our idea of ourselves, what we claim to be, and what we actually are...What is aimed at is integral expression, a consummation where the external reality which embodies us and on which we depend is fully expressive of us and contains nothing else.”²⁹ In doing this, the spirit comes to recognize that it is to be one with the universal *Geist*. And not only is it one with this universal spirit, but it is vitally physical. In recognizing its physical nature, Taylor notes, the spirit recognizes its need for the physical world and all that which the physical world provides for its survival.³⁰

Because of this “breakdown of consciousness, and the collapse of its purely object-centered theoretical attitude, we now move to self-consciousness, which takes up the opposing stance, by placing the subject at the center of things.”³¹ Here, Stern refers to the second chapter of the Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in which Hegel explores what

²⁸ Ibid., 136

²⁹ Taylor, 148

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Stern, 71

he calls the “dialectic of the subject.” In this portion of the dialectical movement the consciousness has discovered how meaningless it is to compare itself to the outside objective world and how such comparison lacks the ability to provide life. Thus, the self-consciousness will follow the dialectical movement in such a way that it begins with desire, moves to a struggle for recognition and thus a life and death struggle, and finally reaches the relationship between the master and slave. The relationship between the master and slave will be a key point in the remainder of the thesis, as Kojève will lean heavily on it in his interpretation and, consequently, so will I.

To begin, therefore, it would be helpful to lay out the three movements which were established above, beginning with desire. Taylor points out that “for Hegel the drive for integrity is evident even in lower forms of life in the fact that they seek out what they need from the external world, and devour it, that is incorporate it in themselves.”³² Thus, Hegel begins his explanation of desire in self-consciousness’s relation to itself. In this, self-consciousness experiences itself in two ‘moments’ (as would be expected in the Hegelian method of dialectical movement). The first of these two moments is that of sense-certainty which has failed to adequately demonstrate the world for the subject. These perceptions “have no [realities] *for* consciousness itself, and are purely vanishing essences.”³³ The second moment comes in consciousness’s self recognition in that “what it distinguishes from itself is *only itself as* itself,” but this recognition arises merely in “the motionless tautology of: ‘I am ‘I’; but since for it the difference does not have the form of *being*, it is *not* self-consciousness” (105). Hegel then goes on to explain that the

³² Taylor, 150

³³ All future references to this text (HEGEL) will be parenthetical. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: 1977) Oxford University Press.

first moment, sense-certainty, is the negative as it is not a vital part of consciousness, whereas the second moment, the tautology of self identification, “is the true *essence*,” and “in this sphere, self-consciousness exhibits itself as the movement in which this antithesis is removed, and the identity of itself with itself becomes explicit for it” (105). This removal of such antithesis is that in which Hegel says self-consciousness displays itself as “*Desire in general*” (105).

Once self-consciousness has overcome the antithesis of sense-certainty versus self recognition, it takes a closer look at the negative element (as noted above) and realizes that it has “returned into itself, just as on the other side consciousness has done. Through this reflection into itself the object has become Life” (106). Thus, the negative element of self-consciousness has now been identified as something completely independent of self-consciousness. After further explanation of this process of turning into self, Hegel notes that these “independent members are *for themselves*” which helps us see “Life as a *living thing*” more completely. (107).

However, the self-consciousness now finds itself somewhat perplexed in that it is faced with these independent objects which are Life as well. The solution which self-consciousness finds to its perplexing situation is brought to fruition “by superseding this other that presents itself to self-consciousness as an independent life; self-consciousness is Desire” (109). Here, we can see somewhat of a different slant on the desire whereby self-consciousness displays itself as compared to the “*Desire in general*” described above. Rather than overcoming its own antithesis of sense-certainty versus self recognition by means of desire, self-consciousness is here overcoming its negation with other objective living things. “[Self-consciousness] destroys the independent object and thereby gives

itself the certainty of itself as a *true* certainty, a certainty which has become explicit for self-consciousness itself *in an objective manner*” (109).

However, this negation of objective living things proves to be completely inadequate, and so the dialectical movement must take the self-consciousness further in order for it to truly experience Spirit. As Hegel puts it:

A self-consciousness, in being an object, is just as much ‘I’ as ‘object.’ With this, we already have before us the Notion of *Spirit*. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is—this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: ‘I’ that is ‘We’ and ‘We’ that is ‘I’. It is in self-consciousness, in the Notion of Spirit, that consciousness first finds its turning-point, where it leaves behind it the colourful show of the sensuous here-and-now and the nightlike void of the supersensible beyond, and steps out into the spiritual daylight of the present. Hegel 110-1

With this explanation of the inadequacy found in superseding non-self-conscious beings, Hegel moves into the section ‘Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage.’ Hegel begins this section by noting that self-consciousness exists only “in being acknowledged” (111). Thus, Hegel will here explore how the self-consciousness can go about attaining such acknowledgement and come to make sense of the world in reference to itself, the subject, by “the process of Recognition” (111). It is at this point in the text that Hegel makes the transition from talking about Desire and the self-consciousness’s need to fulfill such desire to the life and death struggle, which is the second movement in the dialectic of subject.

In moving from fulfillment of desire to an attempted recognition, two self-consciousnesses mirror each other in their complex movements in an attempt to attain such recognition. Both have come to realize that they do “not have the object before [them] merely as [they] [exist] primarily for desire, but as something that has an

independent existence of its own” (112). Thus a vital movement has begun which disallows for the simple fulfillment of desire, as seen before. However, the lack of simplicity in this aspect of the process will allow for a much greater return if it is successful. In continuing this process of mutual recognition, the two self-consciousnesses “*recognize themselves as mutually recognizing one another*” (112).

In further exploring this mutual recognition, Hegel expounds on how this process takes place. The self-consciousness begins by retaining its individuality and the essentiality solely of its individuality. For “what is ‘other’ for it is an unessential, negatively characterized object” (113). The two self-consciousnesses are “for one another like ordinary objects, *independent shapes*” (113). In order to fulfill itself, just as it did with desire, one self-consciousness attempts to treat the opposing self-consciousness as “pure negation” (113). In doing so, Hegel notes that the self-consciousness must do two things: seek the death of the other self-consciousness, and risk its own life while doing so. In seeking the death of the other, self-consciousness treats the opposing self-consciousness as its negation (as it did desire), and in risking its own life, self-consciousness demonstrates its lack of reliance on any externality whatsoever (113). As Hegel notes,

They must engage in this struggle, for they must raise their certainty of being *for themselves* to truth, both in the case of the other and in their own case. And it is only through staking one’s life that freedom is won...[in] that there is nothing present in it which could not be regarded as a vanishing moment, that it is only pure *being-for-self* (114).

However, just as we saw in the negation of objects which is entailed in desire, the life-and-death struggle which Hegel speaks of concerning two consciousnesses leads to “a lifeless unity which is split into lifeless, merely immediate, unopposed extremes”

(114). Thus, the self-consciousness finds itself yearning for another opportunity at negation. Better yet, it needs a “standing negation” or a negation which accomplishes the goal of the original negation found in the desire of objects while allowing that which is negated to retain existence.³⁴ The benefit of this type of negation is obvious: the self-consciousness can infinitely realize its existence by perpetually negating the other while never bringing about its destruction.

Hegel, thus, puts forward the notion that “in this experience, self-consciousness learns that life is as essential to it as pure self-consciousness” (115). This necessity for life thus drives one self-consciousness to retain the opposing self-consciousness and hence to abandon the life-and-death struggle. Not only do these two self-consciousnesses retain one another in this movement, but the self-consciousness that first recognizes the need for life in surviving as a self-consciousness gives up its ability to be an independent self-consciousness. This self-consciousness which seems to resign any attempt at recognition, a recognition which Hegel mentioned earlier as a means to pure self-consciousness, thus becomes the dependent self-consciousness “whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another” (115). It is dependent, therefore, because it is “for another.” This dependent self-consciousness is now existing for the independent self-consciousness, or the self-consciousness “whose essential nature is to be for itself” (115).

The dependent self-consciousness Hegel refers to as the bondsman or slave whereas the independent self-consciousness he describes as the master. In serving the master, the slave demonstrates itself to be a dependent and unessential self-consciousness “both by its working on the thing [or object], and by its dependence on a specific

³⁴ Taylor, 153-4

existence” (116). In being dependent, the slave acknowledges the master. However, Hegel points out that this recognition is clearly not one which is mutual, a claim earlier established as a necessity in order for both self-consciousnesses to attain pure self-consciousness.

The lord or master comes to realize this when he recognizes that he is no longer being recognized by an independent consciousness but by a dependent consciousness. And in being recognized only by a dependent consciousness, “his truth is in reality the unessential consciousness and its unessential action” (117). Thus, the lord finds himself, yet again, in a position similar to that of the perpetual fluctuation between desire and fulfillment established earlier, as the dependent self-consciousness has begun to serve as an object which is merely negated. Hegel goes on to posit that just as the master has found itself to be a dependent self-consciousness, so has the slave discovered how it is actually an independent consciousness due to the fear of death which it has experienced.

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. (117)

In addition to such an experience of independence, Hegel notes that “through his service [the slave] rids himself of his attachment to natural existence in every single detail; and gets rid of it by working on it” (117). It is this work that allows the slave self-consciousness to realize that it is a being-for-self or pure self-consciousness.

Hegel also provides a careful exposition concerning how the work of the slave allows this self-consciousness to become independent. Where the lord used the slave as a dependent and unessential object (and this returned the lord to a battle against desire), the

slave's "work, on the other hand, is desire held in check...work forms and shapes the thing" (118). And thus, for the slave, the object which is worked on becomes an independent object. Therefore, the independence of the object worked on by the slave reflects the slave's own independence back to it (118).

Hegel then closes this first part of the chapter on self-consciousness in reflecting that "without the discipline of service and obedience, fear remains at the formal stage, and does not extend to the known real world of existence" and that "if consciousness fashions the thing without that initial absolute fear, it is only an empty self-centred attitude" (119). Thus Hegel demonstrates how central both fear and work are to the slave in order to become a being-for-self.

I maintain that in the master/slave dialectic can be easily related to Christian practices and service. It is this process of attaining pure self-consciousness through work that I hope to flesh out in the coming chapters of this thesis. In doing so, I will attempt to demonstrate how Hegel's master/slave dialectic is comparable to the Christian obligation of service to fellow men, both Christian and non-Christian alike. I will demonstrate how Christ's call to practice rightly fulfills the movements which Hegel puts forth in his master/slave dialectic and also how the master/slave dialectic might compete with the ideals found within Christian moral practice. The fulfillment of the master/slave dialectic will rely heavily on Alexandre Kojève's interpretation of Hegel, which I will explore in the next chapter. A competing claim made by Hegel and Kojève is explored in the third chapter. In the final chapter, I will synthesize all of these thoughts comparing Christian practice to Hegel's master/slave dialectic and Kojève's interpretation in order to

demonstrate how, by carrying out Christian practice, Christians might become fuller selves and allow the wider world to do so also.

CHAPTER TWO

Alexandre Kojeve's Interpretation

In the *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, we find a number of Alexandre Kojeve's essays which introduce his audience to his interpretation of the Hegelian dialectic and its contents. In this chapter, I will closely examine Kojeve's reading of the master/slave dialect in which Kojeve places a great amount of importance on knowledge of self as well as action—action carried out through fighting and working. Kojeve will prove to be an important contribution to my interpretation of Hegel through the lens of Christian service. It is this specific type of work which I will argue that allows Christians to create the world in a certain and proper manner, according to Christian belief.

In Chapter 2 of this introductory text, Kojeve intends to give a summary account of the first six chapters of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In doing so, Kojeve notes that he is summarizing that which allows Hegel to arrive at the completion of phenomenology, or that "which [shows] how and why man could finally reach absolute Knowledge."¹ Thus, he demonstrates how man could finally reach the culmination of Christianity. Ultimately, Kojeve notes that

Religion is only an ideological superstructure that is born and exists solely in relation to a *real* substructure. This substructure, which supports both Religion and Philosophy, is nothing but the totality of human *Actions* realized during the course of universal history, that History in and by which Man has *created* a series of specifically *human Worlds*, essentially different from the natural World.²

¹ Kojeve, Alexandre. *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. (London: 1969) Cornell University Press, 32.

² *Ibid.*

It is this ability for man to create that compels Kojeve to dwell so intently on the action of men and outcomes of such action. Kojeve goes on to assert how men are not only the masons of history through action, but they are also the architects, and they are even the bricks in that they are the very materials which they must manipulate in order to create history. “There is something in Man, in every man, that makes him suited to participate—passively or actively—in the realization of universal history.”³

Kojeve is persistent about the place of action in Hegel’s thought and the importance it plays in every step of creating history. For this reason, men who simply talk about ideologies and take little part in the world are chastised by Kojeve due to the fact that they find themselves above such action. Kojeve makes clear that these men do not create the world because they do not participate in action. In furthering this point, Kojeve puts forth that, as his completion of history, Hegel “is a man of flesh and blood” and that “this man does not float in empty space. He is seated on a chair, at a table, writing with a pen on paper.”⁴ Not only is Hegel (and every other man who realizes the importance of completing history through the Hegelian dialectic) a physically present flesh and blood man, but he knows he is such as well.

The knowledge of one’s existence also plays a continual role in Kojeve’s interpretation of Hegel. For it is by knowing that the action of Napoleon created new worlds and that Napoleon’s struggle culminated in absolute knowledge.

By understanding himself through the understanding of the *totality* of the anthropogenetic historical process, which ends with Napoleon and his contemporaries, and by understanding this process through his understanding *of himself*, Hegel caused the completed whole of the

³ Ibid., 33

⁴ Ibid., 34

universal real process to penetrate into his individual consciousness, and then he penetrated this consciousness.⁵

In other words, Napoleon's action completed historical action, but Hegel's understanding or knowledge of the completion of history allowed for the completion of the historical process as a whole. Kojève will reiterate this near the end of the chapter.

Thus far, Kojève has exposed what he finds to be vital aspects of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*: physical action and knowledge of the meaning within such action. In this sense, the ideal results in action (Kojève will speak on this later), and man acts for a certain purpose—to achieve certain ends.

Because of the importance of action, Kojève notes that Hegel is dissatisfied with the Cartesian account of the human being as a thinking thing. He must not merely be a consciousness but also a self-consciousness. And Kojève reiterates Hegel in noting that the first moment in becoming a self-consciousness comes through desire, for it is through desire that one comes to recognize himself. “Indeed, when man experiences a desire, when he is hungry, for example, and wants to eat, and when he becomes aware of it, he necessarily becomes aware of *himself*.”⁶ And it is through this desire that man discovers he “is negating *Action*.”⁷ Man, through such action, creates the world. Fighting and work, specifically, are the two types of action which allow men to create the world.

In overcoming simply animal desires through such action, however, Kojève points out that “there must be *transcendence* of self with respect to self as *given*. And this is

⁵ *Ibid.*, 35

⁶ *Ibid.*, 37

⁷ *Ibid.*, 38

possible, according to Hegel, only if Desire is directed...toward another *Desire*.”⁸ Just as was noted in the previous chapter, such desire directed at other desires (or men attempting to negate other men) leads men into fights unto death. And such fighting leads to the realization that the death of one of the desires (consciousnesses) will lead to the necessary regress of the living desire to its animal nature because there is no longer another desire to negate. Thus, the master/slave dialectic is realized.

The master, in enslaving the opposing consciousness, continues to fight (as Kojève posits), but he no longer works. He fights in subduing the other consciousness and through this warfare also subdues nature in forcing the slave to work. However, the master himself does not work, so he does not embody that aspect of action. The slave, on the other hand, does not fight but does in fact work. This work which Kojève speaks of carries a precise definition.

And it is this transformation of Nature in relation to a *nonmaterial idea* that is *Work* in the proper sense of the word: Work that creates a nonnatural, technical, humanized World adapted to the *human* Desire of a being that has *demonstrated* and realized its superiority to Nature by risking its life for the *nonbiological* end of Recognition.⁹

This work done by the slave, in service to the master, is historical interaction. It is how history moves forward.

Kojève then puts forth the idea of three historical time periods. The first of these is dominated by the moment of mastery. The second is dominated by the slavish existence of man. The third and final historical period comes in the synthesis of master

⁸ Ibid., 39-40

⁹ Ibid., 42

and slave. Thus, the completion of history comes in the overcoming of the opposition between the master and slave and the simultaneous completion of “the whole Man.”¹⁰ In order to better understand the interaction and movement between these three moments in history, Kojève takes his readers through the essence of both master and slave.

Essence of Master

The master, as we may recall from our reading of Hegel, is one whose consciousness overcame the desire for physical existence through insistence on recognition from the slave. Thus, the master has overcome, in a sense. He has overcome biological being in order to attain self-consciousness recognized by another consciousness. The master also continues to domineer over the biological world by enslaving the opposing consciousness. The master is no longer forced to work because he can “yield the result of [the slave’s] *Action* to him.”¹¹ The master can overtake the biological world continually without having to negate it or work on it. Kojève calls this enjoyment, or pleasure. Thus the master lives a life of pleasure because no work is done but the same ends are still achieved.

Kojève then quickly moves to the problems of pleasure found in mastery. The master, though he lives a life of pleasure, has not fulfilled his goal. He has not accomplished the task of being recognized by another. The slave, of course, recognizes him, but this slave is beneath the master. The master wishes to be recognized by a fellow human, not a slave. Succumbing to the service of master above his own mastership, however, would degrade the master to a slave, and he could not accept this. Kojève thus

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 44

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 46-7

points out that “Mastery is an existential impasse.”¹² In understanding that he has not met his original goal of recognition, the Master cannot complete history. For “it is only conscious satisfaction...that can complete History, for only the Man who *knows* he is *satisfied* by what he is no longer strives to go beyond himself.”¹³ Unfortunately, the master is incapable of completing history. Only the slave can do so. “The Master is only the “catalyst” of the History that will be realized, completed, and “revealed” by the Slave or the ex-Slave who has become a Citizen.”¹⁴ Thus, Kojève moves on to discuss the nature of the slave.

Essence of Slave

In discussing the essence of the slave, Kojève begins by noting that the slave did in fact give in to the “animal fear of death” and by giving in to such a fear “experienced the dread or the Terror...of Nothingness, of his nothingness.”¹⁵ Kojève attributes this realization to the slave as his first victory over the master, or a victory over existence which the master fails to have. The slave realizes that he must exist by negating the world through fighting and work, the two types of action discussed above.

Furthermore, the master gives the slave the ability to execute such action in the service of another person. In doing so, Kojève notes that the slave overcomes the need or desire to fulfill his own needs. Such work not only allows the slave to develop the world in a number of ways, but it “will also open the way to Freedom or—more exactly—to

¹² *Ibid.*, 46

¹³ *Ibid.*, 47

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 47

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 47

liberation.”¹⁶ This liberation comes in the ability of the slave to think abstractly. In thinking abstractly, the slave has the ability to “surmount his *instincts*” just as the master did in their initial fight. Kojève acknowledges that the freedom has not yet realized itself, but it has reared its head in the sight of the slave, and the slave can now work willingly, knowing what it means to be free.¹⁷ “Progress in the realization of Freedom can be carried out only by the Slave, who begins with a *nonrealized* idea of Freedom.”¹⁸

In order to realize this idea of freedom, the slave must recognize a need for change and implement his work in a way that allows for such change. Kojève notes that this is the impetus behind historical movement. The first fight may occur in hand to hand combat. Then an axe is crafted. Then a better axe. Man creates history through his work on the world and adjusts the world according to his own recognition of and yearning for the liberation explained above. “Since this World has been *changed*, he changes as well. And since it was *he* who changed the World, it is *he* who changes himself, whereas the Master changes only through the Slave.”¹⁹ Kojève continually emphasizes the ability of the slave to overcome his instincts and thus to change himself. He also recognizes how this process is much more easily said than done. The transformation of the Slave, which will allow him to surmount his dread, his fear of the Master, by surmounting the terror of death—this transformation is long and painful.”²⁰

¹⁶ Ibid., 48-9

¹⁷ Ibid., 49

¹⁸ Ibid., 50

¹⁹ Ibid. 52

²⁰ Ibid. 53

In putting heavy emphasis on the fact that the slave changes the world, Kojève notes that the master is required for such a process, though he is never responsible for direct change. He affords the slave the opportunity for change in requiring that the slave do work for the master.²¹ Thus, the master is an indirect contributor to the completion of history. We will look thoughtfully on this in the coming chapters. Is the master a mere branch in the river of the historic forward momentum? What does this mean for recipients of the Christian service which I will advocate?

In noting the ability for the slave to create forward momentum in the span of history, Kojève notes that the slave first considers several ideologies through which he will attempt to realize the world. In this way, Kojève seems to create a teleological push for history. There is not simply a blind run for the finish, since the slave contemplates a number of possible outlooks for the future and thus a way to direct his work.²² When we attempt to bring Christian service alongside Kojève's need for action in the slave, we will examine whether such a teleological outlook is possible and whether this is acceptable under Christian standards or not.

Possible Slave Ideologies

“The first of these Slave's ideologies is Stoicism.”²³ In this ideology, the slave hopes to be “free simply by *knowing* that he is free.” In Stoicism, thus, the slave does not act, and “the Stoic ideology was invented to justify the slave's inaction.”²⁴ Kojève points

²¹ Ibid. 52

²² Ibid. 53

²³ Ibid. 53

²⁴ Ibid. 53

out that, as Hegel states, the slave suffers a type of boredom. Kojeve also points out how this might seem a bit simplistic at first. However, Kojeve notes that this has profound metaphysical implications. In experiencing the boredom found in Stoicism, the slave decides that he must act, that he must carry out action and do work in order to experience his liberation. However, the slave at this point is too frightened by the master to attempt any negation of him. Therefore the slave moves to negate other things. This moves us into the second Hegelian ideology which Kojeve interprets.

Solipsism is the second ideology. In this, “the very reality of all that is not I is denied, and the universality and radicalism of this negation makes up for its purely *abstract*, verbal character.”²⁵ The most radical expression of solipsism comes through suicide. However, this course of action obviously negates the existence of the man who pursues it. Nor does it do any good for the course of history, which is what he is attempting to move along. Again, Kojeve recognizes the need for action. “But in the Slave’s case, to transform existence is, again, to fight against the Master.”²⁶ And again, the slave is not ready to take on such a task.

Thus, the slave searches one final time for an ideology which will allow him to attain his goal without having to fight the master. The ideology this time is that of Christianity. In this ideology, emphasis is on the “beyond.” “Freedom is *real*, real in the *Beyond*.”²⁷ In being recognized by God, the slave attains the freedom he has been

²⁵ Ibid. 54

²⁶ Ibid. 55

²⁷ Ibid. 55

searching for all along. Additionally, the slave discovers that he is equal to the master because in this world everyone is equal in the eyes of God.

Without Fighting, without effort, therefore, the Christian realizes the Slave's ideal: he obtains—in and through (or for) God—equality with the Master: inequality is but a mirage, like everything in this World of the senses in which Slavery and Mastery hold sway.²⁸

However, Kojève points out Hegel's note that "a liberation without a bloody Fight...is metaphysically impossible."²⁹ The slave must first be willing to risk his life before he can become a free self-consciousness. Kojève notes that if the Christian accepts this divine master he does so only under fear of death, just as he accepted his human master. Therefore, the slave must overcome such a fear of death and need for a master "only on the condition that one accept the idea of death and, consequently, atheism."³⁰ Kojève argues that only in overcoming the ideal of Christianity and working towards the ideal of German philosophy and hence to Hegel, will man be able to finally realize a world and not simply be carrying out a number of ideologies in which the real world fails to come to fruition. Kojève, therefore, wants to demonstrate how the world comes to be one of a "*Christian, essentially slavish, world.*"³¹

In my next chapter, I will discuss how I believe the necessity for such an overtaking of the Christian ideology and world realization to be nonexistent. Thus, I will demonstrate that Christian's can create a world through the Christian ideology without needing to overcome it as Kojève says. For the sake of this chapter and the ability to

²⁸ Ibid. 55

²⁹ Ibid. 56

³⁰ Ibid. 57

³¹ Ibid. 57

indicate errors in Kojève's rationalization of this process, however, I will follow Kojève's argument to demonstrate the development of the Christian ideology over the Master-state, as Kojève puts it.

Development of the Slavish Christian World

Kojève notes that "pagan Society" is a state full of masters:

And thus the State, in its totality, is a Master-State, which sees the meaning of its existence not in its work, but in its prestige, in the wars for prestige that it wages in order to make other States, *all* other States, recognize its autonomy and its supremacy.³²

At this point, Kojève also introduces Hegel's idea of the universal and particular. The pagan society, filled with masters, is only capable of recognizing the universal aspect of man, but it fails to give any credence to the particular. "Mastery corresponds to Universality and Slavery to Particularity."³³ Thus, History ends only when the universal recognizes the particular and all particulars recognize the universal. This is the essence of the master/slave synthesis.

The master recognizes only the universal, and for this reason, the master can never be satisfied as an individual. He solely recognizes what Kojève calls the State, the conglomeration of masters that make up and recognize the universal. Slaves, on the other hand, solely recognize the particular. "It is by Work, finally, that the differences between men are established, that the 'particularities,' the 'personalities,' are formed."³⁴ However, the state is interested in action of the individuals. Though the only action the pagan state

³² Ibid. 58

³³ Ibid. 58

³⁴ Ibid. 59

values is war-like action because such action allows for the maintenance of the universal (state).

The master must find his particular existence in the family because it cannot be found in the state. However, there is no action involved in becoming or being a father, Kojeve argues. There is no particular struggle necessary to maintain the title of “father.” It is simply given to him. Kojeve notes that “to attribute an absolute value to a being not in relation to what he *does*...but simply because he *is*...is to love him.”³⁵ Though the father is recognized as an individual in the context of family, Kojeve argues that it is not a purely human existence because there is no action involved. Thus, the father synthesizes a human universal recognition as a citizen of the state with a not-so-human particular recognition in the family. “Wherever the human Actions of Fighting and of Work are not synthesized in a *single* human being, Man is never fully ‘satisfied.’”³⁶ Kojeve goes on to discuss how the family and State are mutually exclusively, and “in the final analysis, the pagan World perishes because it excludes Work.”³⁷

The pagan world, as mentioned above, lives only through the battles it wages against other states. Kojeve notes that as the state expands (the Roman empire is his specific example), the emperor enslaves members of the state because “citizens of the City are no longer *obliged* to make war. And little by little, at the end of a certain time, they no longer make war.”³⁸ Thus, those who no longer fight become slaves to the

³⁵ Ibid. 61

³⁶ Ibid. 61

³⁷ Ibid. 62

³⁸ Ibid. 62

emperor. Because of this “they accept the *ideology* of their Slaves: first Stoicism, then Skepticism, and—finally—Christianity.”³⁹

These men who were once masters of the empire become slaves of the emperor, because they are no longer obliged to make war (which is what made them masters). Kojeve points out, however, that they are a type of pseudo-master or pseudo-slave in that they do not act as “real Slaves...because they do not work in the service of another.”⁴⁰ This pseudo-slave/pseudo-master brings Kojeve to what he calls “the *Bourgeois*, the private property-owner.”⁴¹

“The Roman Empire is a bourgeois World. And it is as such that it finally becomes a *Christian World*.”⁴² Kojeve states that it is the bourgeois that allows the Christian ideal to become a reality. Where the slave worked for a master and was supported by the idea of that master, a slave without a master can also work for the idea of a community, or state. However, the bourgeois has no state to work for at this point. He works only for himself within an “agglomeration of *private* Property-owners, isolated from each other, without true community.”⁴³ Through such movement, Kojeve states that the private property owner engenders the Christian ideology in a pagan context. Money and property take the place of a transcendent Christian ideal and the relationship between Emperor and bourgeois are analogous to that between God and Christians. Through this analogous attempt at a Christian ideal, however, the bourgeois comes to realize that he is

³⁹ Ibid. 63

⁴⁰ Ibid. 63

⁴¹ Ibid. 63

⁴² Ibid. 63

⁴³ Ibid. 65

not his own man capable of acting through the political realm, but he is instead the subject of the emperor.

The bourgeois turns to Christianity because “Christianity finds the solution to the pagan tragedy” by combining the particular with the universal. God has a relationship with each and every individual Christian, and thus eliminates the need for a state or a politic. However, Christianity is not sufficient for Hegel because it can only come to fruition in the “beyond” and such a beyond presupposes the immortality of man. Hegel desires for man to experience his completion in the synthesis of particular and universal on the earth. Thus, the state must serve the final purpose that Christianity pursues. In the eyes of Hegel, the Napoleonic state did this. It “is the *realization* of the Christian Kingdom of Heaven.”⁴⁴

“But in order to realize this State, Man must look away from the Beyond, look toward this earth and act only with a view to this earth. In other words, he must eliminate the Christian idea of transcendence.”⁴⁵ Kojeve notes that this is the task of intellectuals. However, the intellectuals, as we saw a number of times in Hegel’s text, cannot realize any of their ideas. They can simply adjust them. Thus, the French Revolution serves as a point at which the bourgeois worker realizes the ideas of the enlightenment.⁴⁶ It is through this revolution that the bourgeois gains the ability to fight and thus the ideal of the Napoleonic Empire is reached. The Napoleonic Empire is the ideal state which combines the universal with particular.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 67

⁴⁵ Ibid. 67

⁴⁶ Ibid. 68

However, Kojève goes on to note that Napoleon does not know that his empire is the ideal. Only Hegel recognizes that he is the ideal man at the ideal time, and thus, “this dyad [of Hegel and Napoleon]...is the perfect Man, fully and definitively “satisfied” by what he *is* and by what he *knows* himself to be. *This* is the realization of the ideal revealed by the myth of Jesus Christ, of the God-Man.”⁴⁷

How is it that Christians might come to the same realization that Kojève ascribes to Hegel and Napoleon? In the next chapter we will look at a number of questions which arise out of Kojève’s interpretation. Some of these questions have been voiced previously in this chapter. In looking at these questions, we will seek to lay the groundwork for a path to aligning Christian service with Kojève’s heavy emphasis on action and ideal in order to demonstrate that Christianity can serve as a proper starting point for creating a world in which humans thrive and accomplish the mutual recognition which Hegel proposed as the proper method for arriving at full self-realization.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 70

CHAPTER THREE

A Response to the Objection of the Beyond

In the previous chapter, we offered a thorough examination of Kojève's reading of Hegel. In it, I explicated Kojève's need for action and knowledge of such action as working in tandem to make Hegel's realization of history become a reality. Near the end of the previous chapter, I noted the difficulty which Kojève saw in Christianity. This difficulty consisted in the allegedly otherworldly nature of Christianity. Such a "beyond" as posited in Christianity disallows for any Christian conception of the synthesis of the master-slave dialectic in this life. Thus, Christianity and the realization of history, to Kojève, are incompatible concepts. In this chapter, I will explore what the problem is more precisely and how this problem of the beyond might not be a problem for Christianity after all. In doing so, we will first look shortly at Denys Turner's essay on the Marxist disdain for Christianity due to this emphasis on what Kojève and Hegel call the "beyond." In further explicating the dichotomy, I hope to lay a path by which we might be able to reach a solution to this problem of the beyond, as it is hinted at by Turner. Authors such as John Howard Yoder will serve as starting points in overcoming this problem by demonstrating the deeply social nature of Jesus' coming. In further explicating the problem of the beyond and providing a viable refutation of it, I will come to provide a clear point of departure for demonstrating how Christianity can interact with Hegel's text and Kojève's Marxist interpretation of his text. In doing so, I will demonstrate that Christians can in fact act in such a way that they might create a

distinctly human world, though by following divine command, and reach the goal which was so desired by Hegel and Kojève.

To begin, I will look first at Turner's portrayal of the Marxist dislike of Christianity in relation to the attempted Marxist social revolution. In his chapter "Religion: Illusions and Liberation" in *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*, Turner discusses the Marxist dichotomy between religion and social revolution. There he presents us with a summation which encapsulates yet expands on much of what Kojève argues, and Turner also discusses how Liberation Theology might serve as an example of a possible escape from this dichotomy. In finding small difficulties with the attempt Liberation Theology makes at integrating Marxism with its revolution, Turner then points us to the root of Marx's thoughts concerning religion and revolution. Through this, Turner demonstrates how Christianity does have a way beyond the Hegelian-Kojévian critique.

In the beginning of his chapter, Turner outlines why Marx asserted that Christianity was ideological and how this poses a problem for any attempt at the social revolution which Marx so desired from the proletariat. In doing so, Turner explicates how Christianity is a recursive practice. In first noting how Christianity is allegedly ideological, Turner explains that "the believer relates not to a false world by means of an alternative to the real world but to the real world in and through the prism of belief in a false world. Religion misconstrues this particular world."¹ This Christian prism misconstrues the world in causing it to look like a "world of mere make-believe."² The

¹ Turner, Denis. "Religion: Illusions and Liberation," *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*. (Cambridge: 1991). Cambridge University Press, 324

² Ibid.

term “ideological” is an apt one for such a religion that turns the world into some kind of fantasy land.

Such a view of the world is recursive from the Marxist point of view, Turner notes, because it feeds back into a Christian’s relation to and interaction with the world. Christianity is not merely a fantasy belief that is pondered upon and forgotten, but it is acted upon by Christians in such a way that changes the way the world is. Such change negatively impacts what Marx was originally attempting to accomplish and it fails to properly address systemic social issues.

Due to its ideological and thus recursive nature, Christianity, by Marx’s approximation, can only serve as a false pretense for the type of revolution he is seeking. In noting this, Turner discusses Marx’s refutation of Thomas Munzer’s attempt at a Christian “Marxist” uprising. Christian Marxism is an oxymoron according to Marx. Turner points out that Marx’s refutation stems from the additional fact that Christianity seems to be an alienating force. The “pure moral idealism” which Munzer sought was not rooted in human history.³ Rather it was rooted in the message of the early Christians found in the Book of Acts. Marx believed this to be a “failure to attend to the actual agenda of the material history.”⁴ In such failure, the Christian agenda under Munzer’s revolution was thus alienating, “for ultimately and to some degree, it must always place the destiny of the human species under the control of forces other than those purely human.”⁵

³ Ibid. 328

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

This alienation stems from an unavoidable dichotomy between the religious and the political for Marx. Turner notes:

A notable Christian conservative, Edward Norman, argues that the politicization of Christianity involves the denial of its transcendence, of its otherworldliness, as if the affairs of this world and the affairs of the next could not coincide without the destruction of either one or the other. For this reason the concerns of the Christian, qua Christian, are those to be found in an individualist spirituality, for it is in the ambit of the individual that the reference to the transcendent is possible, not in the “horizontal” dimension of the social. Thus for such Christians the dichotomization of the religious and the political is rooted in the dichotomization of the sacred and the secular which is precisely Engels’s accusation.⁶

Turner goes on to provide Don Cupitt as a Christian example of the very same line of thoughts. Turner’s summation of Cupitt notes that “religious discourse is religious...only insofar as it can make good its claims to independence from the secular.”⁷ Thus, Cupitt and Norman are offered as Christian examples of persons who reinforce the idea of this separation of the sacred and secular. Christianity and social justice apparently cannot commingle. In fact, Christian belief (according to those quoted above) entails a separation from the secular.

Turner then goes on to give an example which attempts to directly counter the statements above. In doing so, Turner cites the Liberation Theology of Latin America as an effort to seek social justice in using the Christian Gospel as its point of departure.

Turner notes that

on the one hand, the meaning of liberation from poverty and oppression is worked out in terms of the Bible’s message, and on the other hand, the Christian message has to be worked out in terms of the political, economic, and personal practices of liberation from oppression.⁸

⁶ Ibid. 330

⁷ Ibid. 331

⁸ Ibid. 333

Such an example demonstrates that many Christians find compatibility between social justice and their religion. Turner also notes that Latin America has served as the “chief source of theological vitality in Christianity.”⁹ The correlation between theological vitality and social justice efforts in Latin America seem to be a proper social appropriation of Christianity.¹⁰

A problem arises for Liberation Theologians when they attempt to separate the atheistic notions of Marx from his ideas of social revolution. Turner posits that the inseparable nature of Marx’s atheism from his social movement makes it difficult for Liberation Theology to adopt the fight against social injustice from a Marxist perspective. Thus, Turner notes that we must further clarify what exactly Marx’s atheism entailed in order that Christianity (or any religion) might respond to it.¹¹

In attempting to further clarify Marx’s theological standpoint, Turner points out that Marx denied not only theism but he also denied atheism in that it sees the world through the negation of God. Turner points out that Ludwig Feuerbach put forth a theory in which the world could be seen through such negation of God. Feuerbach’s theory arose from the idea that Christianity is simply an attempt to project human capacities onto an objective God, and that this rids humans of their capacities completely, and thus the world works through a transcendent being rather than through humans (as has been the theme of the Marxist critique of Christianity). In negating the attributes of God and in fact his very existence, men would revitalize these attributes in themselves. Thus,

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ More discussion of this will come when I look at sources such as Yoder to speak into social justice alongside Christianity.

¹¹ Ibid. 334

Feuerbach's practice of atheism reattributed to men the abilities which were afforded to God.¹²

In contrast to this, Marx desired to look completely beyond the theism/atheism differences. Marx saw a social movement which was positively embodied in the thought and action of man rather than being negatively discovered through Feuerbach's atheism. Thus, "he rejected this antithesis itself in the name of a socialist consciousness that has gone beyond the problem."¹³ Such claims directly follow the Marxist path of social creation which we have seen in this small sampling of Marx's response to religion, and Kojève's reading of Hegel seems to provide a virtual echo of such statements. In paralleling this Marxist ability to go beyond the beyond, Kojève notes that in the context of the Roman Empire the

bourgeois essence of the Roman Empire is what explains its transformation into a Christian World, makes the reality of Christianity possible, transforms the Christian *idea* and the Christian *ideal* into a social and historical *reality*.¹⁴

Therefore, in conclusion, Turner argues that Christianity can in fact demonstrate its ability to enact social justice. It can do so by side-stepping the accusations of Marx and Engels in overcoming the "dichotomized Feuerbachian problematic" just as Marx's atheism did.¹⁵ Christianity must demonstrate that it is not a prism through which vision of the world is distorted (as mentioned earlier) and that God is not an objective notion

¹² Ibid. 335-6

¹³ Ibid. 337

¹⁴ Kojève 64

¹⁵ Ibid. 337

onto whom human capacities are projected and through whom the world works from the outside.

Rather, Christianity—as Liberation Theology attempted to do—must demonstrate that humans can positively assert their existence, while maintaining the vital role which God and Christian practices play in this project. John H. Yoder demonstrates how this is completely possible within our human sphere and does not require that we so readily separate the secular from the sacred (as Marx and Engle so quickly posited). In examining Yoder’s article, I hope to explicate ways in which Christians can appropriate Marx while transcending the Marx and Kojève problem of the beyond and while maintaining the ability to address social justice issues and thus acting more fully as a servant to the world.

Yoder’s “The Original Revolution” puts emphasis on the good news that is preached in the Bible and was brought about by Jesus as a revolutionary occurrence. In focusing on this good news, Yoder (throughout his article) hopes to demonstrate that the good news is not solely for another world, though it does play a vital role in allowing for existence beyond the present realm. Thus, in beginning his article, Yoder posits that “*euangelion* would today best be translated ‘revolution.’”¹⁶ And this revolution is not some far off or removed “beyond” which we continually await. Rather it is the revolution of the Gospel, and the “‘Gospel’ is good news having seriously to do with the people’s welfare...not merely an event that makes some of us happy, but one which shapes our common lives for the better.”¹⁷ In Jesus’ arrival on the scene as the Messiah,

¹⁶ Yoder, John H. *The Original Revolution: Essays on Christian Pacifism*, (Scottsdale: 1972) Herald Press, 15

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

he brought what was promised in Mosaic Law as “the periodic economic leveling-off provided for by the Mosaic law.”¹⁸

The priority agenda for Jesus, and for many of us, is not mortality or anxiety, but unrighteousness, injustice. The need is not for consolation or acceptance but for a new order in which men may live together in love. In His time, therefore, as in ours, the question of revolution, *the judgement of God upon the present order and the imminent promise of another one*, is the language in which the gospel must speak.¹⁹

These Yoderian claims demonstrate two important things in response to the Marxist . First, and most obviously, according to Yoder, Jesus’ came not solely for the purpose of an other-worldly result. He came to make a direct impact upon the current historical world. His coming to make an impact on this world prioritizes the fact that Christianity is not based on solely ethereal and other-worldly beliefs. Christians hold Jesus to be God incarnate. Thus, what the believers discover in Acts is based on the coming of a man for the saving of other men. While this savior is God in the form of man, he is man nonetheless and has broken into history nonetheless. This idea is supported throughout Christian scripture, both Old Testament and New. In Isaiah 42, for example, the author writes of one who will come to bring justice.

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.²⁰

¹⁸ Ibid. 17

¹⁹ Ibid. 18

²⁰ Isaiah 42:1-4

The coming of Jesus, therefore, was long thought to be a historical in-breaking of God in order that justice might be brought. Jesus was and is not merely a character in some ideological revolution.

In addition to this earthly coming, Yoder's statements directly deny an individualistic outlook. Rather, Yoder directly opposes such individualism in mentioning "our common lives" and living "together in love." Thus, the Marxist complaint of an individualistic outlook resulting from Christianity and thus the lack of community and social involvement is immediately contested.

To further combat this individualistic outlook, Yoder focuses on the improper response of the hermits. In discussing hermits, Yoder cites Dead Sea monasteries, modern monastic life, and Amish communities as peoples who have attempted to escape the world in order to live a life more rightly ordered in the Christian pursuit. Yoder even notes that today's "rural community has often been praised as the place where it is easier to be Christian, because life is more simple and one has to deal with fewer people."²¹ Yoder notes that, Jesus, rather than staying in his countryside and avoiding the problems of the world, "forsook His own handicraft and called His disciples away from their nets and their plows. He set out quite openly and consciously for the city and the conflict which was sure to encounter Him there."²² Thus, the founder of the Christian faith did not hide from the world's problems. He set out to approach them head on. And just as Christians seek to follow the teachings of Christ, they also seek to follow his example. As Christ left his hamlet for the city, so Christians leave their tranquility to directly approach the dirtier parts of the world and participate in it. Social justice is therefore the

²¹ Ibid. 25

²² Ibid. 25-6

keystone of the ministry of Christ himself, and thus it is that which Christians are called to do as well. Individualistic outlooks are not a solution in the eyes of a rightly practicing Christian.

In addition to this, Yoder presents us with another plausible option which Jesus had in attempting to carry out the revolution which he was sent to fulfill. In listing a variety of strategies Jesus could have used in order to carry out the revolution espoused above, Yoder mentions that of “proper religion” as the final option on the list.²³ In practicing such so-called proper religion, the Pharisees kept “themselves pure and separate.”²⁴ Yoder goes on to note that many Christians currently feel this way.

So it is in our day; there are many who feel that it is both possible and desirable to distinguish by a clear line the “spiritual” or the “moral” issues, to which religion properly speaks, from “social” and “political” issues, which are not the business of religion. The theme of “revolution” in our society is the prime example of what is not the Christian’s concern.²⁵

In scorning such a dichotomy, Yoder goes on to say that “the separation is really not that clean.”²⁶ Yoder adeptly makes the claim that any failure to undertake social action is not in fact a neutral choice by the church. To Yoder, “to avoid revolution means to take the side of the establishment,” and in avoiding revolution, the church would properly receive criticism from Marx and other critics of religion.

Such direct contradictions to the Marxist thoughts on religion, and specifically Christianity, can be found in a number of other Christian theologians. Yoder is definitely a foothold for social justice within the Christian religion, but he is by no means the only

²³ Ibid. 26

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

source available for such movements. In an introductory chapter to the *Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells note that

Christianity is not principally something people think or feel or say—it is something people *do*. The narrative of the Gospels is the story of what Christ *did*, and what God did in Christ, and the scriptural narrative shapes and inspires disciples to go and do likewise. This emphasis on praxis as the center of theology affirms the common cause between this book and the movement known as liberation theology.²⁷

It is not surprising that Hauerwas and Wells recognize the significance of liberation theology just as Turner did when referring to social justice and its relation to the Christian religion.

In addition to these authorities who have attempted to correctly interpret Christian history and the Christian faith, scripture also offers a number of clear-cut instructions in terms of being involved in the social realm and the problems found therein. Jesus gives explicit instruction throughout the Gospels of providing for others. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), Jesus discusses giving to the needy, loving enemies, and retaining judgment of others. These moral teachings found in the Christian text have clear implications for social justice. Near the end of the same New Testament book, Jesus foretells the judgment of men and how those who help the needy will secure a special place for themselves in heaven. He even takes it a step further in noting that many who fail to do such things will be banished from the presence of God. Again, we can see clear implications for social justice and the Christian mission to make changes in the world we currently inhabit, even if it is in pointing to the hope of the world beyond this one. The scriptural references to such a mission could go on and on.

²⁷ Stanley Hauerwas & Samuel Wells, "How the Church Managed Before There Was Ethics," *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*. (Oxford: 2011). Blackwell Publishing, 37

In commenting on Jesus' words and similar teachings in scripture, Yoder says that "Jesus did not bring to faithful Israel any corrected ritual or any new theories about the being of God. He brought them a new peoplehood and a new way of living together...a deep social change."²⁸ All of this, along with the example of Liberation Theology which Turner provided, are demonstrations of the social and communal involvement of Christianity.

Christianity, contrary to what Marx and Engels had to say about it, is not an ideological and individualistic movement. Rather, under Yoder's framework of the original revolution, it presents itself as a surging social movement which urges consistent involvement in human history, just as Marx so desired of his movement. Furthermore, it relies on human history to begin in the first place. Jesus saw his coming and his revolution as a part of the greater revolution which God had put in place starting with Abraham. Though the covenant with Abraham was brought as a promise to a specific group of people, Jesus came to render the distinction between Jews and Gentiles null. Just as Marx did, Jesus came to create a revolution for all in the present world. However, he did so under the mantle of divine command and the promise of eternal blessings for those who had faith in his mission and became part of it.

Given Turner's treatment of the Marxist problem with religion—Christianity specifically—and Yoder's response in addition to relevant scripture and the responses of others, Christians and the church (as a community of Christians) do in fact seem to have the ability to create the world just as the slave did in Kojève's interpretation of Hegel. In the next and final chapter, therefore, I will closely examine how it is that the church has

²⁸ Yoder 31

the ability to act as Kojeve mentions in his chapter, and how the Christian can carry out the Hegelian notion of completing history in a Kojevian interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Synthesis of Christianity, Marxism, and Hegel

In this chapter, I hope to culminate all that has been discussed thus far into a cogent Christian appropriation of Hegel's text and Kojeve's interpretation of it. More specifically, I will demonstrate how Christians can create the world, in a manner similar to Kojeve's, by acting upon ideas within the Christian faith and creating a world that is an earthly, human world yet whose creation follows the divinely inspired plan set forth in Scripture through Jesus' radical in-breaking of history. In doing so, I will first recapitulate the vital points given in chapter two which pertain to Kojeve's interpretation of Hegel and how men can create the world by working in it. I will discuss how this involves the twofold task of recognizing Christ's idea of the world and then acting in order to create it. After this, I will express how the church has been divinely charged with the task of working on the world through the example of Jesus Christ, and in being so charged the world will be shaped not solely by human desires but will contain aspects of divine intention through the following of Jesus' example. I will do this by explicating more of John Howard Yoder's thoughts on Christian social action, and I will provide a contemporary example given by Emmanuel Katongole. In this, I will demonstrate that the church acts as a servant to all and, in doing so, works to rid the world of social injustice. Thus, Christianity, carried out in communal involvement of the church, reflects practices which directly impact the world and thus follows Kojeve's definition of work. In procuring Kojeve's use of work in his interpretation of Hegel and relating it to the Christian faith via Christian minds such as those of Yoder and Katongole, I will

demonstrate that the Christian achieves and presents the possibility to others of the acknowledgement which Hegel calls for in his text in order to survive as a self-consciousness and become a full self.

In beginning such an audacious process, it will be helpful to first recall how Kojève defined work:

It is this transformation of Nature in relation to a *nonmaterial idea* that is *Work* in the proper sense of the word: Work that creates a nonnatural, technical, humanized World adapted to the *human Desire* of a being that has *demonstrated* and realized its superiority to Nature by risking its life for the *nonbiological* end of Recognition.¹

Thus, the Christian must satisfy Kojève's two prerequisites in carrying out work by 1) acknowledging an idea which she will base her work on and 2) acting in such a way that she transforms nature in order to make it conform to said idea. Thus, the remainder of this chapter will deal primarily with Christianity's ability to fulfill such transformation in relation to the idea of Christ's teaching and example.

There may, however, be a slight discrepancy in the term 'work' put forward above and that which will be advocated for in this chapter. Unlike the Hegelian/Kojevian perspective on work, the duty of the Christian is not to change the world individually, but to witness that the world has been changed by the in-breaking of Christ into history. Christians, through liturgical practices of the church, serve as witnesses to this great in-breaking. This liturgy serves as the continual and cyclical work (as witness) of Christians, and thus provides constant reminders of the action which the church should take in acknowledging its presence in the world and thus the Christian's place in it as well. I will demonstrate, later, how Katongole exemplifies this by discussing how true

¹ Kojève, 42

liturgical greeting might be formative in racial relations. Such liturgical practice is the ‘work’ the church is called to perform in scripture, and this is the work it brings into the world in hopes of furthering the message of the divine in-breaking which occurred at Christ’s coming into the world.

In working to bear witness to this divine in-breaking, Christians are provided with an idea with which to work from. This is the initial demand of Kojève, as stated above. However, it would be good to provide some further definition to this term as well. It is important to note that this ‘idea’ is not an abstract concept. If it were, difficulties addressed in chapter three seem as though they would rear their ugly heads again. Rather the ‘idea’ Christians look to is the bodily, historical example of Jesus Christ and the teachings of his church that followed. Such an example allows for proper formation in Christians by giving concrete examples of such responses to problems which Christians might still face today, and it also allows for interpretation in light of contemporary problems that might not have explicit reference in Christian scripture.² Thus, the term ‘example’ might serve as well, but ‘idea’ will be used in order to properly parallel the language of Kojève, and I do so while believing that Kojève could agree with such use of the term. Thus, in adopting this idea brought by the in-breaking of Christ and the metaphysical change which he implemented in the world, Christians enable themselves to transform the world and do work “proper” according to Kojève.

It will be helpful to first further flesh out the idea that I claim Christians are to follow. Though the ability for Christians to pursue social justice in this world rather than

² While the Katongole example provided below will look at instances of racial relations (this might be likened to the relations between Jews and Gentiles, though that’s debatable), ‘contemporary issues’ that might even less explicitly be addressed in scripture are those concerning technological advances (e.g., in vitro fertilization).

waiting for a world “beyond” was heavily covered in the last chapter, a more definitive look at the idea which Christians are pursuing will serve my response to Kojève well. Thus, in the coming pages I will enumerate what exactly it is that Christian scripture, interpreters of such scripture, and theologians present as the idea which Christians are to transform nature around.

I will look primarily at John Howard Yoder, whose work I examined in the previous chapter as a response to the thought that Christianity merely involves a “beyond.” Yoder’s chapter in *Faith and Freedom: Christian Ethics in a Pluralist Culture* seems to serve as a direct parallel to the Kojévian thought of work based on idea in order to create the world. This becomes apparent when Yoder notes that his description of Jesus as a model for political movement “may be more accessible if [he tells] the story twice, once from the perspective of ideas and once from that of public activity.”³ Just as Kojève argues, so Yoder also thinks that changing the world involves understanding a certain idea and then acting on it. Thus, Yoder intends on demonstrating how Christ reported this idea of social action in his words and then exemplified it in his actions.

In beginning this process, Yoder makes a number of notes concerning the ideas which Jesus put forward in his time on earth. First, Christians “are called to renounce...not only killing or committing adultery, but thinking that way,” and in transforming the thoughts of such followers of Christ, Yoder notes that “loving the neighbor becomes loving indiscriminately, including the enemy; not swearing falsely expands to mean not needing the oath at all to validate what one says.”⁴ Thus, the

³ Yoder, John H. “Jesus—A Model of Radical Political Action,” *Faith and Freedom: Christian Ethics in a Pluralistic Culture*. (Adelaide, 2003). ATF Press, 163

⁴ *Ibid.*, 164

Christian has the beginnings of a proper idea which he can take ownership of and act from by transforming the Old Testament commandments of God to fit within the bounds of Jesus' teachings.

In further noting the importance of Christ's teachings and actions and in further positing an idea which Christians can follow, Yoder notes that "no theme is more widely present in the New Testament than that Jesus reveals what God wants of the believer." This theme Jesus presents is also one that would "include social conflict and even death."⁵ Thus, while most Christians would admit that this is deeply imbedded in Christian tradition, Yoder might serve as a present day intellectual authority by which to accept the thought of Christ as an example in the ideas which should be formative in Christian action.

Yoder's discussion of Christ and the transformation he provided to the Christian community, both through the transmission of ideas and exemplification of actions, demonstrates that Christians do have a full-orbed idea that they can use as a template for action. Such interpretation of Christ's words and his example as the Christian's goal can be found throughout scripture. Yoder even goes further in attempting to protect the Gospel from being attacked as some terse or shallow description of ideas. He does this in noting that attempting to be like Jesus should not be "caricatured by the naïve 'imitation' language with which later Christians have forsaken marriage, or have gone barefoot, or have begged for a living...(although any one of these specific paths may in some cases be dictated by the gospel)."⁶

⁵ Ibid., 166

⁶ Ibid., 167

In a similar attitude, Yoder gives a short response to critics in other areas. Yoder notes that “for some, the early Christian acceptance of the structures ... which several apostolic texts write of in the language of ‘reciprocal subordination,’ seems like a betrayal of Jesus’ radicality because it did not abolish at one blow the institutions” which seem to be blatant denials of the rights of others in our current day and age.⁷ In reading such a quote, one seems to have heard a reference to Kojève and Hegel crying out at Yoder, “What has your Christianity done for the people? And what is taking it so long?” Kojève, as demonstrated in the second chapter of this thesis mused that only Hegel could recognize the end of history and as such a strong proponent of the Marxist revolution, Kojève would credit it as the sole way out of such social injustices. Yoder, however, notes that Christianity was and is no failure, and he responds to such criticism in observing that such action (or seeming lack of it) was “the subversive strategy of survival in dissent with which Jews since Jeremiah had maintained their moral integrity during centuries of imperial oppression.”⁸

Yoder also discusses how Paul describes such secular powers as fallen in relation to the plan God has for the world. Thus, in the Christian response to these fallen powers, Yoder posits that Paul is taking part in “‘radical social consciousness’, that is, an analysis in terms of the cosmology of the times that defines how the miniscule community of disciples participates already in Christ’s victory by its refusal to honor the fallen powers’ idolatrous claims.”⁹ This serves as yet another example of how early Christianity served as a social revolution.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 167

⁸ *Ibid.*, 168

⁹ *Ibid.*, 168

Jesus does seem in fact to have initiated a movement which presents a set of ideas by which Christians might order their actions. This set of ideas requires Christians to be on watch in the world, to take up the cause of the hurting, and to continually enact social betterment. For, according to Yoder, Jesus came “to light a fire on earth, [and] to initiate an authentically historical process of reconciliation and community-formation.”¹⁰

Given this, followers of Christ are called to carry out this mission in following his example. Christians act in such a way that he would act in regards to social change. The disruption which Jesus brought to the world when his divinity broke into the fallen human world is the daily task of Christians, who are called to “take up [their] cross and follow [him].”¹¹ The movement began and “the subversive memory of Jesus could not but respond in the finite, fallible, historical movements of radical discipleship that we call ‘radical reformation’: monasticism, St Francis, the Waldensians and Czech brethren” and many more.¹² Such examples “regularly challenged the domination of violence, wealth, social hierarchy and empty ritual. Each such summons to the retrieval of discipleship confirms the centrality of Jesus in our history.”¹³

In noting these prominent examples, Yoder recognizes the actions that have taken place under the direction of the ideas that Jesus put forth in his time on earth. Yoder also recognizes that Christians are called to further act on such ideas and continue to create the world in such a way that it encapsulates the original revolution which Jesus brought to the world. In the *Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, for example, several

¹⁰ Yoder, 169

¹¹ Mark 8:34

¹² Yoder, 169

¹³ *Ibid.*, 169

authors further this Yoderian vision by providing examples of various modes in which the Christian faith allows for radical transformation of the world and continued social movement in contemporary society.

One of these examples is found in Emmanuel Katongole's discussion of the formation of race relations in Christian worship. Katongole envisions Christian worship (a practice envisioned and implemented by Jesus and his apostles throughout the text of the New Testament) as a "wild space" in which things exist as that which "does not fit the stereotypical human being, or the definition of the good life as defined by conventional culture."¹⁴ Thus, the theme of a social revolution continues within the Christian culture as Katongole focuses it around the need and possibility for change in race relations.

Katongole looks closely at the interaction which greetings can have on Christians and their outlook on race. Specifically, this work in Christian social revolution attempts to reconcile differences in race relations through interaction that bears witness to the changes Jesus brought to the earth. In attempting to interweave such thoughts, Katongole comes to recognize that

The greeting...places the Christian at the very heart of a Christian anthropology...the very heart of ecclesiology. For what the greeting announces is the fact that the Christian is part of a peculiar gathering, one that is based not in the self-interested accumulation of economic or political gains, but a gathering or assembly (ecclesia) of reconciled sinners, performed by the self-sacrificing love and forgiveness of God.¹⁵

Here, Katongole provides his readers with an example of social revolution that takes place within the church due to the in-breaking of Christ. In so doing, such change also

¹⁴ Katongole, Emmanuel, "Greeting: Beyond Racial Reconciliation," *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*. (Oxford: 2011). Blackwell Publishing, 74

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 76

shapes the actions of Christians outside the church. Katongole's social revolution does this by grabbing hold of the ideas which have so thoroughly shaped Christianity and the church and making them an integral part of the practices which are carried out on a weekly and even daily basis. Such embodiments of ideas in the form of greeting allows Christians to see race in a new light, one which is procured from the various teachings of Jesus and their institutionalization by the apostles in the form of the church itself.

Katongole notes that greeting helps Christians to face "the need for the transformation of our usual forms of social existence and community."¹⁶ Katongole, in stressing the need to defy "conventional culture," thus represents one instantiation of the radical social change that Jesus so ardently pictured and exemplified:

if, through the greeting we receive and offer within Christian worship, we can...begin to see each other not as strangers in competition for limited resources, but as gifts of a gracious God, then we will already have discovered ourselves within a new imagination, on the road to a new and revolutionary future, which worship both signals and embodies.¹⁷

Thus, Katongole exemplifies the original revolution which Yoder attempted to explicate. The original revolution posited that Jesus came to change the world, and Katongole demonstrates that Christians bear witness to the change which was brought forth. Katongole explicitly demonstrates this in noting that

the first presupposition of 'radical political action' is the conviction that a real God is really intervening in human affairs to set things right. Jesus' actions were not mere human idealism; they were defined within a context of promises fulfilled and justice about to be implemented.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid., 79

¹⁷ Ibid., 81

¹⁸ Yoder, 163

As Yoder notes, God chooses to intervene in human affairs. Thus, this process is one which takes place in the historical timeline and operates under the assumption of “promises fulfilled.”

Conclusion

I have demonstrated how Christianity provides both a basis for ideas and how these ideas are continually used in order to create Christian practices that directly approach and challenge current social situations in the world. Yoder provides historic examples of how Christianity intervenes in the social order and does so based on the ideas which Jesus formed Christianity by, and Katongole demonstrates a contemporary example of these same things. Through these, I have attempted to demonstrate that Christianity does in fact provide an answer to Alexandre Kojève. It does so in following the definition of work which he gave in his interpretation of Hegel. Through the ideas of Christianity and the practices seen above, Christianity is capable of working on the world and serving it in such a way that it continues the social revolution which Hegel, and consequently Marxism, so desired.

In an afterword to the *Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, Rowan Williams describes Christianity and the vital practices within it as “God’s wishing-to-be-in-us.” In describing this process of God coming to be in us, Williams brilliantly portrays how God desires for his kingdom to come to this earth and to do so through his human creation and Christian obedience. He notes that “to accept the invitation is not to receive a gift that is

simply assimilated into the receiver; the receiver is transformed into one who enacts Christ's action."¹⁹

In presenting the Christian as one who enacts Christ's action, Williams reveals that this is "a statement about how God comes to be in us, because of God's nature and action in eternity, God's nature and action in the history of divine dealings with human agents."²⁰ Rather than dealing with a beyond that is to be waited upon and separated from the world, as Kojève and Hegel criticized Christianity for doing, Williams gives a vision of God as entering into the world of man and man becoming part of his work in following the practices informed by the ideas and examples of Jesus. And in allowing God to enter into their lives through the community of the church and through the meditation on and practice of the ideas put forward by Jesus, the Christian takes part in becoming a full self, which was the primary goal of Hegel's work in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Christian practice allows for the realization of the significance of the other. Thus, as Hegel so ardently worked to demonstrate is necessary in the development of the self, Christianity takes up the mantle of otherly significance. The Christian fulfills the role of the slave in working on the world, as has been so thoroughly demonstrated, and in doing so creates a world that is independent of herself and thus reflects that independence back at her. In this Hegelian style, the Christian practices service and obedience to the world and to God, and in doing so she holds tightly to the reins of desire and master-like inclinations in order that the world might be a proper place and the Christian might

¹⁹ Williams, Rowan, "Afterword," *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*. (Oxford: 2011). Blackwell Publishing, 497

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 497

become a fuller self, rather than a thing dominated by desire and the world an unwieldy domain. In aligning herself directly with these Hegelian thoughts, the Christian becomes a full self-consciousness and allows those around her to become so as well. In this process of becoming most fully herself—that is, free beyond the limited terms of the Marxist revolution—she also performs such service and obedience in a way that Kojève could admit changes the world into that which is unnatural. It is the goal of the Christian to continue this work in order to continue to rid the world of social injustice. Jesus began the original revolution in supernaturally breaking into the natural world by becoming human, and he charged his followers with continuing his revolution throughout the ages. The Christian does so and thus demonstrates that she works to form the world as God's good work because she has been imbued with and works in light of God's good grace.

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