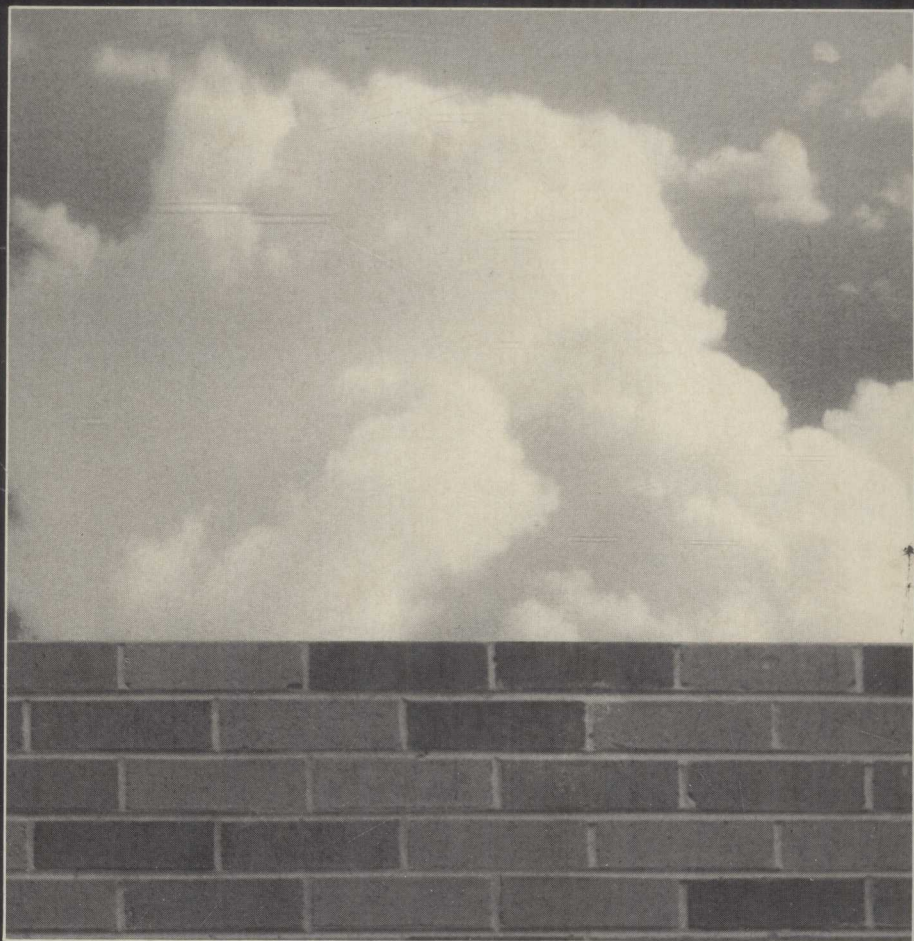


The Hegelian Aftermath



READINGS IN HEGEL, KIERKEGAARD,
FREUD, PROUST, AND JAMES

HENRY SUSSMAN

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Henry Sussman

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For Tamara and Nadia Rebecca

CONTENTS

<i>One. Introduction: From Philosophy to Poetics</i>	1
<i>Two. Five Hegelian Metaphors</i>	15
<i>Three. Søren Kierkegaard and the Allure of Paralysis</i>	63
I. The Intimate Approach	63
II. The Impasse of Irony	93
III. <i>Either/Or</i> : The Theater of Irony	110
IV. Hegel and Kierkegaard	155
<i>Four. The Subject of the Nerves: Philosophy and Freud</i>	159
I. The Sour Turn	159
II. Clinician at the Witch's Kitchen: Freud the Grammarian	164
III. The Neurotic as Deranged Philosopher	184
IV. The Meeting of the Ways	202
<i>Five. The Contours of Modernism</i>	208
I. Introduction	208
II. Proust: The Seascape of Girls	212
III. The Sleeping Albertine	216
IV. The Pregnant Invert	221
V. James: Twists of the Governess	230
Notes	241
Index	257

ONE

Introduction:
From Philosophy to Poetics

Outside or Inside?

No question is more decisive to the contemporary critical wars that rage around us than the one that plays on the border between the outside and the inside.¹ Is an “outside” to the conventions and practices of traditional philosophy possible? If so, what are its qualities and extent? How long and under what conditions does the “outside” of speculative philosophy remain detached and autonomous from the “inside”? Can the “outside” of Western metaphysics resist a relapse back within the system from which it separates? Does the “inside” in any sense preempt the radicality that the outside would claim? In some final sense, are the “outside” and “inside” situated on the same side of the border, or are they fated to a persistent relation of alterity?

Many of our most pressing concerns hang in the balance of this fundamental question regarding demarcation and its corollaries. The uses, motives, and procedures of literary criticism, for example, are at stake. A criticism confined to the interior of conceptual acceptability merely reiterates the known etiquettes of philosophy. It establishes the “truth,” validity, derivation, representability, or formal esthetics of the artifact. The suggestion of an “outside” to systematic thought carries with it a deviation from these acceptable critical and scholarly functions. The critical text enters a collusion with that element of its esthetic occasion which is beyond the “inside.” In this way, criticism passes from a reinforcement of scholarly propriety to a celebration of that for which scholarship is not equipped. Not merely the thrust of the critical vehicle but also its constitution is geared for the “outside.” Gone are the reassuring measures of simplicity and verifiability. A criticism admitting and accommodating an “outside” to the system it once comprised is receptive to the inconsequentiality of the artifact—and assimilates within itself jokes, double meanings, and breaches of logic and derivation.

Yet if the notion of a distinct "outside" is merely a Fata Morgana, an heuristic device ultimately regressing to the interior, what does this imply for a reprobate criticism? Even if the foyer between the systematic outside and inside some day becomes open, free, and civil, criticism is unlikely ever to return to a purely subordinate function, to the service of derivation, authenticity, logic, or truth. Although in some senses a fictive construct, the "outside" has already reified itself in the new devices and games available to criticism, pleasures which once enjoyed, will not be relinquished. Wherever it situates itself, criticism is not again to be contained. If not a "real" divide, the border between the "outside" and the "inside" offers endless possibilities for play.

Enter Hegel

Let the noted and ponderous German philosopher Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1770–1831) serve as an instance of the exasperation accompanying borders. In certain regards, no thinker could be more exemplary of a systematic "inside" to Western thought. By means of a comprehensive and striking *formal* expertise, Hegel manages to coordinate the technical achievements of occidental philosophy with its most sensitive topics of concern. Consistent with the ideology of organicism that he expounds, Hegel effects a continuity between the techniques of philosophical speculation and the fundamentals of Western theology, idealism, and teleology. If a certain monumental quality attaches to the thought or name of Hegel, this is by virtue of the dual nature of his prodigy, the formal virtuosity that accompanies his cultural omniscience.

Yet even the pivotal works of this most central and consummating thinker are invaded and corrupted by the systematic "outside." As we will have occasion to observe in our discussion of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, a very unsystematic arbitrariness creeps into the basic preconditions for abstraction. Hegel arrives at the hierarchical divide separating the sensible from the supersensible only by acts of considerable conceptual violence. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel may place his forced twists and leanings at the service of a smooth-running machine of logic and abstraction, but the blunt force involved in this application points in the direction of another, less domesticated realm, toward a world whose only principles are indeterminacy and linguistic copulation. Ironically, it is by virtue of operating so well and efficiently that the Hegelian thought machine discloses its underlying arbitrariness.

The "mainstream" Hegel, the Hegel at the very center of the institutional as well as conceptual *train* of Western civilization, is, then,

never other than a divided or split Hegel, whose linguistic apprehensions belie the propriety of his hypothetical systems. And if the very paragon and consummator of Western civilization is hopelessly torn apart, what of his followers, for whom internal conflict and paralysis became explicit themes?

A dual cosmology, under the gravitational fields of both internal logic and the marginal arbitrariness of language, not only organizes Hegel's discourse but dominates the periods known as "the nineteenth century" and "modernism." This is a historical statement, one belonging to the necessities of the "inside" but also questioning the status of the innovations ascribed to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whether "realism" or "vorticism."

The momentous theoretical and fictive works of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries *follow* Hegel in more senses than one. Not only are the Hegelian *themes* of destiny and sublimation important, but an entire battery of formal tropes, including bifurcation, inversion, reciprocity, and circularization, characterizes the workings of a wide range of major literary and theoretical texts. The influence of Hegel—direct or oblique, positive or negative—upon such writers as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Freud, Henry James, and Kafka is unmistakable. Whether we attribute to Hegel the power of originality or merely skill at gathering, this momentum is of great historical consequence. History might seem to squelch the agonizing problem of borders which Hegel broached by elevating this grand personage, in the spirit of *Aufhebung*, above the plane of indeterminacy.

There is, indeed, an historical dimension to my approach. I make no pretense of concealing the implicit veneration, resistance, or both maintained toward Hegel by those who followed in his aftermath. I dissimulate neither the historical thrust of my argument nor the assembly of formal operations that makes this history work.

But what is the history made possible by figures of speech and argumentation rather than personalities, eras, or influences?

This study takes Hegel as the central figure in a tropological history running continuously from Romanticism through modernism. The moving force in this history is not persons, authors, or cultures but rather the limits of discursive possibility. The basic outlines for a program of tropological historiography have been explored in the writings of Hayden White.² The compelling inference to be drawn from a set of readings encompassing Proust and Henry James as well as Hegel is that during the span from early Romanticism to well into the twentieth century, largely the *same* discursive and figural resources were available. Literary history, to the extent that it took place, did not *progress*; it did not *produce*. It resided within a common

set of textual games and rules. There is an ineradicable historical bent to any study acknowledging the power of a thinker (Hegel) or the grammar of tropes that he assembled. But a tropological history is ahistorical in the sense that it posits neither an evolution nor an accretion of material in time. It will be suggested in chapter 4 that as a context for the particular conflicts that color and structure the Freudian enterprise, Goethe's writing may comprise as pertinent a background as Hegel's. To be sure, on the levels of both theme and structure, many of Hegel's most pressing concerns were shared with other writers, including Goethe. Yet it is in Hegel's works that the entire battery of conceptual tools comprising the horizon of discursive possibility for a vast range of Romantic and modern texts is combined with a unique concentration and comprehensiveness. It is on the basis of the intensity with which the discursive limits of an age are marshaled and deployed in Hegel's writing that the following essays revolve, although differently, around Hegel.

Philosophy Transfigured; Fiction Philosophical

If the history of the continuous Romantic-Modern age does not develop or increase, it does transfigure. The only movement during this period whose pursuit makes sense is a lateral shift in which the discursive procedures of philosophy become the property of fiction. Depending on the degree of irony that one ascribes to Hegel, the discursive tropes that he collected may or may not have been in the service of the revelation of a transcendental or absolute knowledge. But in the hands of a Kierkegaard, a Kafka, or a Yeats the same moves become the very stuff of literary radicality. During this period philosophy's point of orientation drops away. (The credibility ever attained by some hypothetical central truth remains questionable.) The leftover apparatus of philosophy becomes a legitimate literary concern and even focus.

The overall trajectory of this static evolution is a sideways hop, a lateral displacement. The battery of discursive gestures and tools available to philosophy becomes the subject and substance of poetics. No writer prefigures and embodies the overall shift from philosophy to poetics that takes place during the Romantic-Modern age more than Nietzsche. In Nietzsche's hands the watershed between philosophical etiquette and esthetic excess becomes a doubly permeable and insubstantial membrane. If the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a metaphysical and teleological treatise in whose outlines the program of the *Bildungsroman* are to be discerned, *Also Sprach Zarathustra* is a philosophical novel whose systematic aspirations have been obliterated by

fictionality. In Nietzsche's texts both the predicament and the agenda of the Hegelian aftermath are concentrated. Revulsion (*Ekel*) and suicide are the Nietzschean consequences of a certain literality (*Redlichkeit*). For Kierkegaard the ethics surrounding the matrix of marriage, and for Freud the pretensions of clinical objectivity, are similarly stultifying.

As an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still *bearable* [*erträglich*] for us. . . . At times [*zeitweilig*] we need a rest from ourselves by touching upon, by looking *down* upon, ourselves and, from an artistic distance, laughing *over* ourselves or weeping *over* ourselves. We must discover the *hero* no less than the *fool* in our passion for knowledge; we must occasionally find pleasure in our folly, or we cannot continue to find pleasure in our wisdom. . . . Nothing does us as much good as a fool's cap [*Schelmenkappe*]: we need it in relation to ourselves—we need all exuberant [*übermütige*], floating [*schwebende*], dancing, mocking, childish, and blissful art lest we lose the *freedom above things* that our ideal demands of us.³

Art, in this passage from Nietzsche's *Gay Science*, functions not as a cultivated taste for the sublime but as a manifold of the possibilities excluded by the drives for truth, integrity, and objectivity. The hovering dance of art repudiates, in other words, the very terms upon which philosophy bases its reliability. The departure from extrinsic imperatives and necessity is *toward* poetry. The scenario of our looking down upon or floating above ourselves may not relieve us of contradiction. But the trajectory pursued in this sideways shift is from philosophy to poetics. Deprived, by internal conflict, of linear progress, this dislocation nonetheless signals the transvaluation of all values that describes the relation between Romanticism and modernism. It is in rehearsing the lateral dance of the crab and tarantula that Nietzsche provides an insignia for the Hegelian aftermath.

What of the history that does not move, that dances sideways instead of progressing, that yields no quantifiable increase? The history of the Romantic-Modern age is distinctly nonproductive. The epoch that transpires under the aegis of bifurcation, inversion, reciprocity, and circularity does not produce: it does not add materially to the limits of discursive possibility.

Or if it must produce, it produces precisely *nothing*: not the mystical and mystifying nothingness which is the obverse side of sublimation but the radical nothing which for Walter Benjamin is both the attraction and the upshot of children's games.⁴ The Romantic-Modern age demands the notion of a nonproductive history, a history yielding this indifferent and unapologetic nothing. It is no accident that each of

the followers of Hegel considered in this study reached toward a mode or economy of nonproduction. Kierkegaard opposed the mechanics of qualification and moral rationalization with a vacuousness that he located in Aristophanes' *Clouds*. The economies of the joke and homosexuality intimated for Freud and Proust, respectively, a domain alien to the imperative of increase, whether of conscious control or by human reproduction. And those Henry James characters fated to the compulsion of interpretation are invariably discomposed and maddened by an onus ultimately indistinguishable from nothing.

In much of his work over the past decade, the French critic Jean Baudrillard has advanced a notion of history based on the differential relations between signs rather than on the work ethic, which he finds as characteristic of Marxism as of bourgeois political economy. Baudrillard's critiques of the imperatives toward the notions of production, utility, and consumption that have infiltrated Marxist theory is double-edged: he is no more merciful toward the fundamentals of capitalist metaphysics than he is toward their Marxist counterparts. Baudrillard eschews the "realm beyond political economy called play, non-work, or non-alienated labor"⁵ in Marxist thought as an illusory release from the constraints of labor. Yet even as Baudrillard unmasks the ostensible whimsy corresponding to the esthetics of the revolutionary imagination,⁶ the notion of a radical nothing, a repudiation of the necessity of production, is vital to his work. Baudrillard thus enunciates in terms of political and economic theory a resistance toward accretion in time articulated by virtually all of Hegel's aware followers.

The culmination produced by Marxist analysis, in which it illuminates the demise of all contradictions, is *simply the emergence of history*, that is, a process in which everything is always said to be resolved at a later date by an accumulated truth, a determinant instance, an irreversible history. Thus, history can only be, at bottom, the equivalent of the ideal point of reference that, in the classical and rational perspective of the Renaissance, allows the spatial imposition of an arbitrary, unitary structure. And historical materialism could only be the Euclidean geometry of this history.

It is only in the *mirror* of production and history, under the double principle of indefinite accumulation (production) and dialectical continuity (history), only by the arbitrariness of the *code*, that our Western culture can reflect itself in the universal as the privileged moment of truth (science) or of revolution (historical materialism). Without this simulation, without this gigantic reflexivity of the concave (or convex) concept of history or production, our era loses all privileges.⁷

What is decisive about this passage in terms of the concerns of the present study is its repeated appositional link between production

and history. Both Marxist history and its capitalistic counterpart take off from a moment of reflexive illusion, one of whose primary instances, in the third chapter of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, will be considered in detail below. In its retrospective stance, the historical perspective that rationalizes the facts of history reenacts the spiritual growth of the self-reflexive subject. Truth accumulates, subjective consciousness grows, and history produces. "The dialectic of production only intensifies the abstractness and separation of political economy," writes Baudrillard elsewhere.⁸

Baudrillard traces the illusions—the Appearance, if you will—as pervasive to Marxism as to bourgeois political economy to a scene of self-reflexivity common to both systems. In this regard he is not so far as he might surmise from the ironic Hegel who also plays within the pages of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Not only is self-reflection an optical illusion: so is the history that emanates from it. There can be no more compelling proof of this history's delusion than the discursive resources that reside at both ends of the Romantic-Modern age. Structurally and tropologically, they have not changed. From the perspective of the logical and rhetorical capabilities of discourse, history has not produced. The stasis that is Kierkegaard's rallying cry but which dominates the entire Hegelian aftermath gives the lie to the innovative claims of history on both sides of the ideological watershed.

History is the emperor who wears no clothes. To the extent that it produces, it yields precisely nothing. It was the labor of the Hegelian aftermath to dress, ornament, and embellish this nothing.

Another way of characterizing the nonproductive stasis that prevails throughout the Romantic-Modern period is by means of superimposition. While retaining the Appearance of historical and teleological evolution, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* yokes individual, collective, esthetic, and theological experiences in tandem. At any given moment it is difficult to ascertain whether the narrated process takes place within an individual, a thinking collectivity, or an extrinsic conceptual framework such as religion or esthetics.

Hegel's followers tended to find this perspectival uncertainty resulting from a superimposition of contexts a convenient esthetic device, even where fidelity to a predetermined teleological program was no longer possible. Superimposition as it is practiced by Proust, Walter Benjamin, and other modernists is a seamless welding of textual, psychological, sociological, and phenomenological levels. There is no definitive marker indicating where the psychological ends and the phenomenological analysis of time and space begins. There is no recourse to the fictive temporalizing devices operative in Hegel's *Phe-*

nomenology of Spirit or in *Bildungsromane* which assign different stages to, say, the life of the family and the life of the community. The superimposed contexts are synchronic. Any movement that occurs within such an arrangement does not extend in space but transpires between the strata of a contextual and perspectival overlay.

The Hegelian aftermath is concurrent with an age dominated by superimposition. The Kierkegaardian suspension between esthetic excess and ethical restraint is agonizing because the symmetrically disjunctive modes are capable of being experienced simultaneously by the same subject. As we shall have occasion to observe in detail, the external expanse encompassed in Proust's *Recherche* by Elstir's seascapes is a phenomenological correlative to the intrapsychic relations for which Vinteuil's music serves as an accompaniment. One of the key shocks that Walter Benjamin ascribes to the rise of modernity is precisely a collapse: of spatial articulation in the modern city, of ritual markers in the calendar. Not only does Benjamin, in his essay "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," trace the emergence of this modernistic discombobulation in the nineteenth-century lyric and novel; he incorporates shock into his own text by collapsing, early on, its phenomenological (Bergsonian time), psychological (Freud), and literary contexts (*mémoire volontaire* and *involontaire* in Proust).⁹ The superimposed cluttering that Benjamin infuses into his own writing is one according to which he reads and interprets the age running continuously from Baudelaire to Proust.

By the same token, modernist discourse, even within the phenomenological sphere, is organized by superimposition. The great Heideggerian project, to the extent that it was carried out, resulted in a dual articulation of space (*Sein*) and time. It is not far-fetched to assert that the organization of *Sein und Zeit* consists in a mutual superimposition of the spatial and temporal facets of experience. Superimposition enables both time and space to be articulated according to analogous linguistic operations.

The followers of Hegel may limit the range of their own locomotion and of development in general, but they do not proscribe the possibilities for movement altogether. They move not simply by extension but in involution, complexity, and the addition of superimposed planes.

Among the great later works of European Romanticism must surely be numbered Hugh Kenner's *The Pound Era*.¹⁰ Even while incanting a paean to the innovations of modernism, this book incorporates those qualities that exemplify, for Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy in *L'Absolu littéraire*, Romanticism.¹¹ *The Pound Era* is

woven of aphorisms and sharply drawn images. Its heroes, Pound and Lewis, are artificers in a sublime poetic substance sanctified by time and tradition. Promulgating awe of the great experiments and disfigurements that followed the turn of the century, *The Pound Era* nonetheless belongs to the liturgy of Poetry and Image.

Modernist distortion does not necessarily supersede Romantic sublimation, especially when Romanticism and modernism share the same horizon of discursive possibility. The bizarre juxtapositions and spatio-temporal distortions of a Kafka obscure the conceptual mechanics underlying his texts, a broken-down and obsolete machinery belonging to a prior age, like that used for executions in the "Penal Colony." Up until the past decade and a half, the breakthroughs of modernism, contributed by such authors as Kafka, Musil, Joyce, and Proust, have been synonymous with the radical capabilities of literacy. Modernism was the esthetic aegis under which the New Criticism flourished and which defined the nature of literature for generations of students and scholars in America.¹²

For all that modernism contributed to the style of twentieth-century life in the West, to the tangible domains of architecture and design as well as to the "pure" arts, equating it with the sum of all possibilities for innovation serves little productive purpose. In accordance with any historiographical or archaeological procedure, modernism configures a set of presuppositions and orientations as closed as those characterizing other moments or ages.

No writer has been more decisive to the detachment of current critical alternatives from the biases of modernism than Jacques Derrida. Particularly in his deconstructions of Husserl and Heidegger,¹³ in whose work he discerns the traces of concepts of presence and representation with ancient histories in Western thought, Derrida forges a path leading away from rather than toward modernist attitudes. Heidegger, in his fascination with technology and his recourse to the etymological roots of concepts and words, is an exemplary modernist philosopher. In their style and effect, Heidegger's word plays are not far from those abounding in James Joyce's mature novels.

The border that divides Derrida from Heidegger is a highly intricate and complex one. But in locating "in a note on a note" in *Being and Time* an imperative toward presentation characteristic of the entire span of classical Western metaphysics,¹⁴ Derrida opens a distance between contemporary criticism and the projects of modernism. No longer the implicit horizon of esthetic and critical possibility, modernism takes its place within the tradition that it prolongs, closely adjacent to Romanticism.

If the following study is reluctant to place Hegel definitively on the "outside" or "inside" of Western metaphysics, this is because of its intrinsic fascination with the machine-work of philosophy and its endurance in time. In refusing to locate Hegel squarely on the "outside" or "inside" of a reflexive tradition, my reading overlooks the *what* in favor of the *how* of the Hegelian discursive apparatus. Given my lack of any comprehensive overview of Western metaphysics, I take as my initial object the esthetic quality of the intricacy that Hegel managed to infuse into a discourse machine. The era not only of certain speculative conventions but of the machine itself may be over, replaced by the productions of cybernetics and artificial intelligence. Long before arriving at placement, the following essays stop at astonishment, the wonder at a complex and well-tuned machine.

Yet the success of such elaborate machines as Hegel's invariably requires the intervention of the arbitrary somewhere along the chain of determinations. Like the mail distribution for the officials who reside in the Herrenhof tavern in Kafka's *The Castle*, every precise coordination of functions requires an indiscrete kick or crumpling of a superfluous document. In Hegel's case, the variable Appearance is the wondrous but suspicious factor enabling the future successes of abstraction and cultivation. Appearance both panders to the desires of the machine and harbors the seeds of its inevitable breakdown. The suspect term is two-faced, collaborating with the machine but also dramatizing the linguistic indeterminacy on which the system founders.

By virtue of their orientation toward the *how* rather than the *what* of discourse, the following essays risk falling into a formalism of their own, a formalism inspired by the beauty of certain discursive gestures. If my writing has to some extent been struck blind by the beauty of a machine-work, this blindness is not to be justified, concealed, or ignored. My focus (or tunnel vision) has enabled me to formulate an account of the discursive tropes at play in Hegel and then to suggest their further repercussions as the conceptual limits of an era. The relations on which I have fixated have furnished me with a common ground on which to read a group of important but culturally remote writers: Hegel, Kierkegaard, Freud, Proust, and Henry James.

It is indicative of the extent to which Hegel served as the harbinger of an age that a dubious element informs the work of all of the writers following in this sequence. To varying degrees, all of the other authors considered in this book are system-builders, yet in each case a factor on one level capitulating to the systematic constraints becomes a hidden shoal that submarines the floating enterprise. In the works

of the Hegelian followers as in Hegel's, there is an uncanny collusion between the totalizing and subversive factors. In light of the political developments of the past decade and a half, since the seminal works of contemporary critical theory appeared, an alternation between repressive and radical moments in reading may well furnish a more pertinent scenario than any decisive emergence beyond the systematic limits.

All of the Hegelian followers treated in this study vacillate, then, between the speculative system and the indeterminacy of the text. For Kierkegaard, the constraints of the ethical mode constitute a hopelessly belated attempt to erase esthetic excess. Yet even where the ethical is ironized, the Kierkegaardian speculations have relied upon internal division and symmetry for their form. Freud, while embarking in the best of faith upon a rhetorical lexicon of consciousness, reinscribes a metaphysical crisis within all but one of his major grammatical rubrics. For Proust, homosexuality not only is a matter of sexual preference but implies a countereconomy to the imperatives of reproduction and other-orientation in many of their ramifications. Yet the economy of homosexuality is unthinkable in isolation from the image of pregnancy. Alien to the ethos as well as the esthetics of heterosexual love, homosexuality emanates every bit as much from pregnancy, from the unique condition of fullness by involution. (Proustian pregnancy is yet another instance of modernist superimposition.) Finally, the works of Henry James devote considerable narrative resources to the generation of a certain enigmatic suspense, romantic as well as ghostly. Yet the moments of uncanniness in James's fiction are veritable catalogues of Hegelian operations. By means of a scenic construction conducive to a certain suspenseful stillness, James transfigures the normative operations of philosophy into a fictive phantasmagoria.

The Hegelian aftermath is thus relegated to an ambivalence, a schizophrenic uncertainty, already implicit in the system-building of Hegel. Hegel's major followers are informed and motivated by linguistic and textual apprehensions.

This does not imply, however, that they ever succeeded in resolving an impasse in some ways common to them and in some ways different to each—or that they definitively succeeded in severing their textual insights from the conventions of speculation.

Yet for all the force gathered by the Hegelian tropes examined in this volume—and it is no accident that Force became a central Hegelian metaphor—their impact and aftereffects can by no means be characterized as homogenous. The parodic gestures of

Kierkegaard in personalizing the “omniscient” narrative voice and in paralyzing the machinery of dialectics are of a vastly different order than the stylistic experiments of Proust or Joyce. Hegel grounded a *structural* horizon from which modernism found it extremely difficult to extricate itself. The modernist experiments, in their sideways divergence from Romantic convention, were able to immerse themselves in the textual potential that Hegel had tangentially intimated and that his followers exploited in their resistance to the Hegelian formalism. The acknowledged “masterworks” of modernism find themselves in an anomalous position. While depending upon—literally hanging from—the scaffolding of such conventions as opposition and circularity, they are free to explore the very *stuff* of textuality, the tissue, the tone, and the resonances of language. The puns of Joyce, the seemingly endless phrases of Proust, and Kafka’s dislocations of the time-honored conventions of the novel all continue, in different ways, a deconstruction of Hegelian conventions begun by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. What these modernist experiments seem to have in common is their freedom from vertigo, their ability to hover in linguistic suspense without undue concern for the superstructure that supports them.

If the Hegelian aftermath demarcates a space, it is, then, an extremely variegated and diversified one. A close follower of Hegel, Kierkegaard limits his divergences from the machinery of speculation to minute—but profound—adjustments. The sabotage effected by the almost invisible revision becomes the model for Kierkegaardian irony. Freud’s innovations, in proposing a lexicon of consciousness, are wider-ranging than Kierkegaard’s, because they suggest how subjectivity itself may be structured by such linguistic processes as metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche. Yet Freud’s retreat from this apprehension, in the interests of clinical hygiene, politics, and posterity, is no less religious and in a sense frightened, than Kierkegaard’s. In Proust, the operations and concerns of speculation are present as themes in an ever-deepening palimpsest whose ultimate *modus operandi* is the text. Opposition, discrimination, particularization, and repetition all enter the metaphoric economy of the work—but their systematic aspirations are effaced in the accretion of the novel’s superimposed metaphoric strata. Henry James’s *The Turn of the Screw* dramatizes the transposition from philosophy to poetics. The disjointed elements of a broken speculative machine enter the literary vocabulary of the story’s uncanniness. This work is an instance of a text literally composed of philosophical fragments. The systematic heritage of its main events in no way detracts from their esthetic impact or horror.