

have certain feelings towards it. It is, as far as its institutions go, much the same community as civil society; it differs from it mostly in the spirit that informs it. If, when Hegel distinguishes the State from civil society, we suppose him to be saying that there is something about a community, and especially about a political community, which is altogether missed by such explanations as the Utilitarians give, we may well agree with him; but this something has really nothing to do with the reconciling of a contradiction between the family and civil society. Moreover, this something is not peculiar to the State, nor always more marked in it than in other communities, nor confined to communities included in it.

c. *Why No World-State?*

In the *Philosophy of History* and in the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel takes it for granted that for Mind or Spirit to be made fully actual, there is no need for a world-state; he takes it for granted that the nation-state or the system of such states is the highest manifestation of Objective Spirit. This does not, in my opinion, square with his conception of Spirit, which, he tells us, is essentially one. Spirit, in the form of rational self-knowledge, is fully and explicitly made actual in a single, coherent, all-embracing philosophy. This philosophy may develop out of many incomplete and partly inconsistent philosophies but must itself be fully consistent and complete. Why, then, should Spirit, in the form of rational will, not be made fully actual in a single community whose laws can be conscientiously obeyed by all its members? The universal will necessarily finds expression in the laws and conventions of a community of finite minds. If Spirit is essentially one, there can be only one universal will and therefore only one fully rational and free community. No doubt, that community will include other communities and associations inside it, just as the nation-state does. Hegel admits that the universal will, in so far as it is manifest in the nation-state, is not realized as fully as it might be while the individuals and associations inside the State are in conflict with one another, or, rather, while the differences that arise between them cannot be resolved by methods which they all accept as rational and just. How, then, can the universal will, in so far as it is manifest in a system of states, be fully realized while those states resort to war with one another because there are no methods for settling disputes between them which they all accept as rational and just? But if there were such methods and they were effective, there would be a world-state. It seems to follow from Hegel's conception of Mind or Spirit that the fully rational and free community must be a world-state.

d. *Success and Justification*

Though Hegel is logically committed only to saying that the laws of the fully developed – or completely rational and free – State are always to be obeyed, he does sometimes create the impression that the laws of any state ought always to be obeyed, except by great men or, as he puts it, by World-Historical Individuals. I have already criticized this strange doctrine, and I must not now repeat what I said before. But there is another criticism often made against Hegel, and made justly.

For all his talk of conscience and freedom, he was impressed by power and even by the ruthless use of it. If he had not been, he would not have spoken as he did of History justifying those who succeed, even when they act from evil motives. It is one thing to say that good sometimes comes of evil, and quite another to say that the evil is justified even when the person who commits it never intended the good. And, as we have seen, it is only the great criminal whose crimes are justified.

Hegel's position here is by no means the same as Machiavelli's. Machiavelli neither condemned nor justified the great criminal; he merely argued that great crimes have sometimes to be committed if power is to be achieved, or the State to be saved or enlarged. He despised the man who refrains from crime only because he lacks the courage to commit it, because he lets 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would'. But he never said that the great criminal is justified; he never sought to elevate him morally. He spoke only of men; he did not speak of larger than human purposes working through men and justifying their wickedness when that wickedness contributes to those purposes. Nothing so logically absurd and morally perverse as the doctrine of justification by unintended good consequences is to be found in his writings. He admired courage, firmness of purpose and intelligence, but he did not revere power, as Hegel did. He was not ignoble; he was not vulgar in that particular way.

I have been concerned only with Hegel's doctrine, and have felt bound to insist that, taken as a whole, it does not have some of the implications which his detractors have read into passages taken out of context. But I would not deny that there is an unpleasant tone about the writings of a man who appears to have believed that the Universal Mind had attained full self-knowledge in his philosophy. His manner is against him; it suggests a colossal arrogance. And we do well to mistrust the arrogant, especially when they speak of freedom.