Hegel's Universal in Marx, Durkheim and Weber: The Role of Hegelian Ideas in the Origin of Sociology

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Hegel's Universal in Marx, Durkheim and Weber: The Role of Hegelian Ideas in the Origin of Sociology

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The theoretical origins of the conflict, functionalist and organizational paradigms in sociology are usually seen as distinct. Common elements in the social theories of Marx, Durkheim and Weber are usually seen as common responses to the development of industrial, capitalist, democratic, bureaucratic structures. However, in all three milieus, Hegel's social theory, particularly his theory of the break-up of feudal society, was a looming point of reference. Thus, an inventory of the respective common elements and breaks from Hegel of founding sociological theorists represents one of the simplest ways of relating Marx, Durkheim and Weber to each other and to neighboring disciplines.

INTRODUCTION

The rise of Marxist, historical, phenomenological and interpretive positions within sociology is forcing the discipline to make yet another peace with Hegel. Obstructing this process is the fact that most sociologists are not familiar with Hegel, and the most commonly accepted family tree of sociology hardly recognizes Hegel even as a distant ancestor (Parsons, 1968; Coser, 1971). Hegel is commonly viewed as belonging to the a speculative, pre-scientific, pre-empirical, pre-history of sociology—a period of purely antiquarian interest.

Against this dominant conception, it would be both wrong and foolish to try to portray Hegel as a contemporary sociologist. But Hegel is of immense importance to modern philosophy. He is also important to the historical genesis and the contemporary relation of sociology to neighboring disciplines such as history, jurisprudence, theology or criticism. And, in addition, I am going to argue that he is also very important to the relation among paradigms within sociology. He formulated several insights foundational to the discipline, including the master distinction between state and society (Gesellschaft). He developed a rich
Hegel's Universal mass of sociological analysis, and I am going to argue that for sociologists to neglect him is parochial.

Specifically, Hegelian social theory is usefully viewed as fusing three strands of social analysis using the three paradigmatic conceptions of society important today: Conflict theorists conceive the social as constituted by the play of conflicting interests. Functionalists conceive the social as constituted by a shared value system. And organization theorists conceive the social as constituted by rules and organization. It was the task of the nineteenth century to disentangle these and develop each independently.

That development was extremely complex. Demonstration of direct Hegelian influence even in one corner of the work of Marx or Durkheim or Weber requires extensive analysis. Hegel's influence upon Marx is the topic of an enormous literature. Weber's debts to Hegelian traditions of theory of law, religion and history, though more problematical, are also known (Loewith, 1982; Ringer, 1969). And it can be argued that the main traditions important to Durkheim owed their common stock of ideas to Hegel (Knapp, 1982, 1985). Nevertheless, the demonstration of direct influence is problematical, and the aim of this paper is different. I shall present a broad, synthetic overview, relevant to the systematics of theory (Merton, 1968:1–38). At the present time, sociology is fragmented among divergent paradigms (Ritzer, 1975; Eckberg and Hill, 1979). Hence historical analysis of theory that demonstrates a common basis of these positions is valuable. The complex relation of the individual and the universal in Hegel is such a common basis.

GENERAL, UNIVERSAL, COLLECTIVE STRUCTURES IN HEGEL

The central concept of Hegel's sociological theory is the concept of rules or concepts that are general or universal (allgemein). The German term and its cognates are pervasive within Hegel's writings, and they may be variously translated: general, public, common, universal and universalistic. Shklar notes that all five meanings should be tried as the meaning of a given statement (1976), and usually several of them are intended. I shall take the linkage between these different connotations as a key to Hegel's sociological relevance.

In law, art, philosophy, religion, literature, science and other spheres, Hegel tried to uncover processes by which rules, concepts and laws emerged that were general, public, common, universal or universalistic. He believed that these processes are entwined with each other in many different ways. Rules, concepts, or laws that are public relate to people's social intercourse, while those that are private relate to individual existence. Rules, concepts or laws that are common are the property of
a larger number of persons; while those that are uncommon are the property of a smaller number of persons. The expansion of literacy, the electorate, and bureaucratic law were among the ways that the growth of common rules, concepts and laws are bound up with the development of a public sphere. Rules, concepts, or laws that are *general* apply to a larger number of cases than those that are more specific. It can be argued that all systems of rules, concepts or laws have a tendency to generate more general, over-arching constructs. It can be argued that the growth of general constructs in this sense is bound up with the growth of public, common rules and concepts, both as cause and as effect. The diffusion of rules, concepts or laws to a larger number of persons and/or the development of a distinct public sphere promotes the development of more general ones. Rules, concepts or laws that are *universal* apply without qualification, while those that are particular apply only within more restricted domains. *Universalistic* rules, concepts or laws are determined by an impersonal code or standard, regardless of one’s social group, while those that are particularistic apply only to specific social groups. It can be argued that the existence of more general, common, public, or universal rules, concepts and laws produces and is produced by universalism.

Hegel wrote at the time of the French and the industrial revolutions. The idea that both sociology in general and the theories of Marx, Durkheim and Weber were generated by the attempt to describe and explain this transformation is hardly new (Nisbet, 1966; Giddens, 1971). Rural, agricultural, local, monarchical, peasant, feudal social structures coexisted with urbanization, industrialization, bureaucratization, the development of national states, the democratic revolution, and the growth of literacy. Some contrasts and changes leapt to the eye. Marx analyzed these changes in terms of alienation, expropriation, and the development of capitalism. The rise of capitalism and the world market leads to the destruction of self-employment, local boundaries and the creation of an international working class. Durkheim analyzed the same changes in terms of the weakening of normative integration and then the formation of new normative integration on a new basis. Mechanical solidarity is replaced by organic solidarity in which greater individual differences are integrated by increasingly abstract, general norms concerning human dignity. Weber analyzed the changes as a process of rationalization. In a host of different spheres there is a growth of systematic bodies of rules, bound up with the growth of organized structures of domination. I shall argue that the theorists not only observed a common reality, but their analyses contain a common core, stemming in part from the common Hegelian problematic, pervasive in their milieus. For Hegel, the march of Reason through history was the growth of the universal—the spread of universalistic laws and ethics, the growth of an
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educated public sphere, and the breakdown of local parochial barriers between people. Hegel's vision, variously corrected and interpreted, is the central core of the sociologies of Marx, Durkheim and Weber.

This core has been overlooked because of a conception of Hegel as containing only pre-sociological metaphysics. Most sociologists are acquainted with Hegel only through commentaries upon him, but the dominant readings of Hegel by professional philosophers are not especially useful to sociology. These readings have translated *allgemein* as "universal," and they have stressed metaphysical meanings of the statements in which it appears. The universal is also the absolute; it is truth and reason; its development is the march of God through history. Hegel did regard much of what he had to say as metaphysical, necessary truth in this sense, and he framed many of his analyses in this way. But such interpretations are not the only ones possible, and they are not the ones useful for social theory. Hegel's influence upon social theory often depended upon other connotations of *allgemein*.

Hegel's usage, which counterposes public, common, general, universal or universalistic concepts and rules to individual or particular actions and ideas, suggests a rich mass of theory. Specifically, the development of general, universalistic social relations is a process with three components that later became central to the thought of Marx, Durkheim and Weber. In Hegel, this development is a contradictory process of *alienation* or objectification whereby humanity transforms itself as a collective historical subject. Section three of this paper will view Marx's analysis as based on this conception of alienation/objectification. At the same time, Hegel's view of the growth of universalistic forms of social interaction rested upon his conception of *objective spirit* as social integration maintained by law, legitimated by cultural values, which were enshrined within a religious system. "Objective spirit" and law develop universality, interdependence, tolerance of variation and freedom. Section four of this paper will argue that this idea informs Durkheim's conceptions of social facts, religion, social integration and organic solidarity. Finally, Hegel's view of the development of universalistic, general forms of social organization was a contradictory *march of reason*, a process of rationalization whereby general rules and routinized structures emerged in every social sphere. Hegel's analysis of the role of Christianity and especially Protestantism in preparing the development of general rules in other spheres informs Weber's analysis of rationalization and universalism in law, the economy, religion and other spheres, where subjectively understood rules and meanings become general and explicit. Section five argues that these views provided much of the impetus for Weber's ideal types.

Hegel equates these three processes. Alienation is objective spirit, which is reason in history. Today we cannot use Hegelian conceptions
to synthesize the opposed paradigms of contemporary sociology. Hegel's synthesis blew apart long ago. But Hegel's ideas help illumine the interrelation of sociological paradigms. Of course, neither Marx nor Durkheim nor Weber merely developed "Hegelian" analyses. Their conceptions of alienation, social integration or rationalization were directed against Hegelian forms of analysis as well as being influenced by them. The common elements each theorist shares with Hegel are accompanied by distinct breaks which separated each from Hegel. Often the simplest and most direct way to see the interrelation of the three theorists is to see what they rejected of Hegel.

MARX AND CONFLICT THEORY: CONTRADICTORY ALIENATION OF LABOR

Writing in the first generation after Hegel, Marx stated many of his ideas in explicit opposition to Hegel. He also stated an explicit debt. Most sociologists follow Engels in regarding that debt as one of method: dialectics. But after a century of debate, the question of what is a materialistic dialectic remains controversial. The dialectical method is not a conceptual analysis; it involves substantive theses (Knapp, forthcoming).

Ten ideas that Marx shares with Hegel not only illuminate the concerns of neoMarxist and conflict sociology but also their relation to the other sociological paradigms. They are schematically represented in Table 1.

(1) For Hegel, humankind is a social product. Marx started from the idea that humankind is a collective essence or species being (Gattungswesen, Marx, 1975, vol. 3:277), an ensemble of social relations. Marx always recognized Hegel as the major source for this insight.

The idea that humans are a social and historical product might be

### TABLE 1. Common Elements Shared by Marx and Hegel

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Humans are a collective, historical, social product.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Private interests are the motor of history.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Philosophical, ethical, or social positions must be criticized immanently, in terms of actual contradictions.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Labor is the production of laborers.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Human action (objectification, alienation) is social.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Property is fundamental to the law and the state.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Growth of science and technology are potent social forces.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>The productive process is a collective, social product.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>People are moved by unrecognized social forces.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Universalistic outcomes are achieved behind actors' backs.</td>
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termed the first axiom of structural analysis. All that one ever sees are individuals. But each individual is as she is—indeed she is in the first place—only because of larger processes and structures that are not visible. History, law, politics, language, custom, morals, economics, technology and other structures intersect in such a way as to determine the characters of particular individuals and the bounds within which they operate. One needs a general theory of how those structures come together in order not to get lost in a maze of structures. Both in Hegel and in Marx, the terminology of “universal/particular/individual” is a marker for this problem and issue.

(2) For Hegel, the growth of humanity as a social, historical product is also the story of how humanity became free. Against Rousseau, freedom is located at the end of history. The contradictory development of spirit in Hegel anticipates key ideas of historical materialism, if one substitutes “mode of production” for “spirit” (Cohen, 1978:1–27). And Hegel's conception of the growth of general rules is intertwined with an idea that most contemporary theorists do not associate with Hegel but with Marx and with forms of conflict theory in Weber and Simmel: Hegel argued that personal, private interests have to link people to larger social structures and movements in order for those structures to amount to anything. Thus he asserts:

The first glance at history convinces us that the actions of men proceed from their needs, their passions, their characters and talents. . . . Passions, private aims, and the satisfaction of selfish desires are on the other hand, most effective springs of action . . . nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion. Two elements, therefore enter into the object of our investigations; the first the idea, the second the complex of human passions; the one the warp, the other the woof of the vast arras-web of universal history. . . . Passion, it is true is not quite the suitable word for what I want to express. I mean here nothing more than the human activity as resulting from private interests (particularen Interessen)—special, or if you will, self-seeking designs. (Hegel, 1956:20–23 [trans. modified])

This conception of the importance of particular interests is closely connected to Hegel's conception of rationality and actuality (Wirklichkeit). The first conclusion that Hegel draws from the discussion just quoted is that the state is strong only when private interests coincide with the common interests of the state (Hegel, 1956:24), and this, in turn, leads to his emphasis on the “universal class” or bureaucracy as the motor behind the development of universal rules. Rejection of Hegel's analysis of the universal class was one of Marx's points of departure, but his
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analysis used a methodological principle implicit in Hegel's analysis just cited and developed elsewhere.

(3) Hegel insists that actual philosophical and ethical positions must proceed by immanent critique. While one can always refute or deny such a position externally, that denial leaves it unchanged. One deplores the real world in the name of another world that exists God knows where. Instead, one's thinking must be this-sided; one must take existing positions to their logical conclusion.

In social theory, stress on immanent critique leads one to look for groups whose interests lie with change. In opposition to abstracted ethical idealism Marx insisted upon an immanent analysis of actual historical tendencies. His theses on Feuerbach are an Hegelian critique. At the same time, Marx insisted that analysis focus on the material interests involved. This is the focus of his rejection of Hegel's idealism. Both the rejection of ethical idealism and the concern with material interests are prefigured in Hegel's position that ideas and particular interests serve as the warp and woof of history.

(4) As is well known, Hegel stressed the importance of the labor process (work, labor, fashioning). Hegel saw history as that which was actual (wirklich—from the verb wirken, to form or to work), that which was viable or workable, that which had been actualized. Marx often stresses that making pins makes pinmakers, that production not only produces a product but also produces the producer of that product. Hegel made the labor process central to the genesis of self-consciousness:

In fashioning the thing, the bondsman's own negativity, his being-for-self, becomes an object for him only through his setting at nought the existing shape confronting him... he destroys this alien negative moment, posits himself as a negative in the permanent order of things, and thereby becomes for himself, someone existing on his own account. In the lord, the being-for-self is an "other" for the bondsman, or is only for him (i.e., is not his own); in fear, the being-for-self is present in the bondsman himself; in fashioning the thing, he becomes aware that being-for-self belongs to him, that he himself exists actually and essentially in his own right... It is precisely in his work wherein he seemed to have only an alienated existence that he acquires a mind of his own. For this reflection, the two moments of fear and service as such, as also that of formative activity, are necessary, both being at the same time in a universal mode. Without the discipline of service and obedience, fear remains at the formal stage, and does not extend to the known real world of existence. Without the formative activity, fear remains inward and mute, and consciousness does not become explicitly for itself (Hegel, 1978:118–119).
In this well-known account of the origin of self-consciousness in fear, service and fashioning, Hegel says that in becoming for-himself, the bondsman becomes the master of the master. The master turns out to depend on the bondsman and disappears. While the importance of this passage for Marx has probably been exaggerated (Arthur, 1983), it is typical in the number of different themes that it fuses together. The "universal mode," which alone fuses fear, service and work to produce self-consciousness, allows many translations, depending whether the object, subject, feelings or tasks are to be generalized.

The opposition between being in-itself and for-itself takes many forms in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Marx used it to deal with the social generation of self-conceptions and class-consciousness. Hegel treated self-consciousness as a hall of mirrors, and Marx regarded his analysis as very important. For the moment what is important in this passage is the prominence it gives to labor and production in generating self-consciousness.

(5) For Hegel, the labor process was also a process of alienation and objectification. All human actions slip out of our control and come to confront us as alien things. For Hegel, alienation is inherent in all action and all creation. It is the human condition. At the same time, it is also the process by which humankind achieves freedom. The march of reason in history is the actualization of freedom. By understanding the past objectification of the human race, by seeing the reason in things, we come to be as free as we can be. Marx viewed the analysis as profound but mystified.

Marx started from the ideas that history does reveal a real development of human freedom and that the state, Christianity, and private property are historical products. And for Marx, also, the alienation of products and the productive process was the key to human freedom, but the degree to which producers are in control of that process and/or alienated was historically variable. The fundamental condition for the realization of human freedom was to achieve common, public, general control of the formative or productive process (Rose, 1981:73; Knapp, 1984).

(6) Hegel's concern with labor as the realization of will (freedom) in relation to inert matter leads him to stress the institution of property. He places property at the foundation of his analysis of abstract right and the destiny of Roman law (1952:40–42). Marx agreed with Hegel that the institution of property was of fundamental importance both to the law and to conceptions of the human person. He disagreed on its future. The destruction of feudal ownership of the state and sovereignty over land and the elimination of a rural peasantry become the basis of common, public ownership and control of the productive process.

(7) In addition to stress on historical development, interests, alien-
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ation of labor, and property, Hegel's view of the progressive realization of universal reason in history led him to emphasize the cumulating growth of science and technology. Hegel discusses technology in relation to human labor.

(The) MEANS is superior to the finite ends of external purposiveness: the PLOUGH is more honorable than are immediately the enjoyments procured by it and which are ends. The tool lasts, while the immediate enjoyments pass away and are forgotten. In his tools man (sic) possesses power over external nature, even though in respects to his ends he is, on the contrary, subject to it (Hegel, 1969:747).

As in Marx, the idea of the tool as persistent involves the self-realizing activity of labor and a kind of technological cumulation, stopping short of technological determination. While a particular product or idea is ephemeral, its more general procedures, methods or implications are not.

(8) Thus, in moving from simple labor to the production of means of production, Marx cites Hegel's *Logic*, to underscore his definition of instruments of production:

"Reason is just as cunning as she is powerful. Her cunning consists principally in here mediating activity, which, by causing objects to act and re-act on each other in accordance with their own nature, in this way, without any direct interference in the process, carries out reason's intentions. . . ." [Thus] an instrument is a thing, or a complex of things, which the laborer interposes between himself and the subject of his labor, and which serves as the conductor of his activity. He makes use of the mechanical, physical, and chemical properties of some substances in order to make other substances subservient to his aims (Marx, 1967:1,179).

For Marx, the whole complex of ideas concerning labor, personal interests, alienation, technology, property, self-production and production can be focused on understanding and then reversing the process of expropriation by which socially-produced instruments come to be private rather than common, public property. The disappearance of (private) farms and artisan workshops becomes part of an inexorable process in which work becomes more social and public. Marx believed that this process ultimately allows the realization of aspirations for universalism and brotherhood, which remain utopian within the liberal tradition.

(9) Hegel's conception of the cunning of reason (*List der Vernunft*) expresses the idea that social action has cumulative unintended consequences. There are structural processes and dynamics that operate
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independently of the wishes and the consciousness of participants. This
latter idea is not only present in Marx, but is fundamental to much of
his analysis. It is an extension of the idea of structural analysis.

Marx says that Hegel, throughout his work, adopts the standpoint
of modern political economy, i.e., economics (1975, vol.3:333). Often
modern readers do not see an "economic standpoint" in Hegel. By mod-
ern political economy, Marx meant, in part, structural analysis. In Adam
Smith, people pursue their own interests, but an "invisible hand" com-
pels them to achieve the common interest. In Hegel there is not one,
but many invisible hands. Universalistic, common, general interests are
often achieved behind the backs of participants. For example, Hegel de-
scribes a transition whereby state right, perceived as the good in me-
dieval times, comes to be viewed as bad in the modern age. Pursuit of
wealth, which people had seen as bad, becomes the inmanent basis of
universal citizenship and equality, ushering in the French Revolution
(Hegel, 1978:301). Marx rejected some of Hegel's particular historical
analyses as mystified. But he did not reject the conception of structural
dynamics driving history. Related analyses are central to Marx.

(10) Probably the over-arching example is Marx's conception that
it is the world-historical task of capitalism to break down the particu-
larisms of community, religion, region, clan, sex and personal depen-
dence. Marx believed that dissolution of these particularisms was the
prelude to the destruction of nation and class. Thus, Marx's interna-
tionalism and his belief in the abolition of classes were not primarily
ethical postulates. His analysis focused on ways in which boundaries
between communities, crafts, nations or other groups were being torn
down, and led to his view that producers would come to be one single
human race.

DURKHEIM AND FUNCTIONALISM: SPIRIT AS
CONSCIENCE COLLECTIVE

The dominant conception of the origins of Durkheim's sociology
is that he was influenced almost exclusively by figures within the French
contrast Parsons, 1974:xiv, and Pope, 1973). The idea of a link between
Durkheim and Hegelian ideas was voiced by theorists who wanted to
attack Durkheim. Certainly Durkheim refers to Hegel rarely and dispar-
agingly, and there were sharp breaks between Hegel and Durkheim.

In the revanchist atmosphere of France between the Franco-Prus-
sian and the First World War, Durkheim could not acknowledge any
relation to Hegel without destroying the prospect of an academic social
science. He was also deeply antagonistic to a number of strands within
Hegel (as were Marx and Weber). But within his milieu, Hegel was a
looming figure. Hegelian ideas were pervasive, and it can be argued that the five main tendencies to which Durkheim did acknowledge debt contained a common core of Hegelian concepts (Knapp, 1982, 1985): (a) neoKantian ethical philosophers: Boutroux, Renouvier, and Hamelin; (b) idealist-positivist literary figures dealing with religion: Cousin, Renan, Taine; (c) socialists, especially the German “socialists of the chair”: Schmoller, Wagner, Schaeffle; (d) the “folk-psychologist” Wundt and his followers; (e) the historicist current in German scholarship associated with Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert, Toennies and others. Durkheim’s theoretical synthesis depended on the common stock of ideas that he found among these tendencies. They derived their common stock of ideas from Hegel. Table 2 summarizes some common elements.

(1) Hegel's concept of Geist (spirit, mind, wit, genius) is a relative of such distinctive Durkheimian concepts as society as a sui generis reality, social integration, the collective conscience, collective representations, homo duplex; the constraint exercised by social facts, and the transition from mechanical to organic solidarity. Hegel saw Geist as prior to and constitutive of individuals. Thus, firstly, the concept formulates the insight that objective, supra-individual processes shape and constrain human thought and action. For the social sciences, Geist is usually most usefully conceived as culture (ShMar, 1976:42; Plamantz, 1963, vol. II: 150ff.). Durkheim made the concept of objective supra-individual processes the center of sociology as a discipline.

The main thing that distinguishes this idea from its analogue in Marx is the stress on the cultural, normative aspects of social facts. The degree to which Durkheim himself, in contradistinction to Durkheimians, regarded social facts as cultural and normative is subject to dispute. What is not subject to dispute is that the idealist tradition tended to emphasize the cultural and the normative, and to treat them as having an objective reality, outside individuals.

**TABLE 2. Common Elements Shared by Durkheim and Hegel.**

1. Objective, supra-individual cultural, normative processes shape and constrain human thought and action.
2. They include language, law, morality, custom, kinship, religion, politics, division of labor and science.
3. They form an integrated, historically developing system.
4. They form a functional system; nothing exists without reason.
5. Humans only become human by participation in these processes.
6. Religion expresses the moral reality of the society.
7. The basis of freedom is impersonal law.
8. Law in the West developed universal, general rules.
9. The main political need is for authoritative intermediaries.
10. The modern world is morally split and fragmented.
Hegel used the concept of *Geist* to popularize ideas about the unity of culture and social structure, especially language, law, custom, morality, kinship, politics, religion and science. Many commentators argue that the fundamental category of Hegelian analysis is the concept of a whole with emergent properties not reducible to or deductible from the properties of its parts (Sartre, 1967:9; Lukacs, 1978:67; e.g., Hegel, 1975:191–192). Hegel viewed *Geist* as a whole with emergent properties. These emergent properties form its parts, each of which are themselves wholes. The idea organizes seminal studies of law, religion, art, philosophy, and other social and cultural formations. The studies raise methodological problems of functional analysis and holism that are still alive today.

Hegel's postulate of the coherence, unity or integration of cultural formations took the form of a number of uses of the term *Geist*. Hegel suggested that during world history, the world spirit or *Weltgeist* develops through a series of distinct stages, each the spirit of its age, or *Zeitgeist*. Moreover, in Hegel's analysis, each stage of world history is embodied as the national culture of a distinct people, as a *Volksgeist*. (Hegel, 1953:29)

In contrast to Marx's rejection of the nation state, Hegel and Durkheim (like Weber) were nationalists who believed that general, universalistic rules could only be achieved in nation states. Durkheim rejected what he regarded as metaphysical aspects of Hegel's theory of the state; he did not reject this idea. For Durkheim, as for Hegel, there is a collective, social, public, general component to particular concepts, rules, actions or norms. The law embodies this general component.

The interrelation of all components of social life means that all these components have some reason for being as they are; they are functional. Thus, (4) Hegel's postulate of the rationality of the actual bears a family resemblance to functional analysis. Hegel's importance for Durkheim's milieu was precisely to merge conceptions of *Geist* with immensely powerful nineteenth-century forces of nationalism, traditional religious doctrines, romantic conceptions of art and culture creation, and liberal ideas about the development of law and freedom. Linked with such currents, Hegelian ideas popularized ideas of hidden, lawful developmental sequences, encouraging systematic historical analysis of religion, art, law, custom, ethics, etc. Specifically, the sequences involved the gradual development of more general, more universal, concepts, rules, laws and forms of social intercourse.

Hegel believed that humans only become human by being part of the system of objective spirit, and he further related this idea to traditional religious doctrines and moral ideas. Both Durkheim's view of the social nature of humanity (*homo duplex*) and his theory of religion are indebted to Hegelian analyses. In the case of religion, Hegel rejected
Deist religious conceptions of God in favor of a conception of religion as an active force of concrete images and practices. That view encouraged the study of religion as a social institution.

(6) Hegel, like Durkheim, believed that religion expresses the moral reality of society. Entwined with other ideas, to which Durkheim was antagonistic, is a sociological theory of religion. Hegel, like Durkheim, believed that values, especially religious values, form the core of social structure and the basis of moral life and the state. When Durkheim comes to confront Marxism, it is precisely the importance of religion which he stresses (1897), and although Durkheim traces his analysis of religion to W. R. Smith rather than Renan or Strauss (Durkheim, 1907), Smith's work was merely another branch of the explosion of historical-critical studies of religion deeply molded by Hegel.

Hegel's lectures on history, art, religion and philosophy were influential in Durkheim's milieu, but the core of his social theory was his analysis of "objective spirit," the realm of obligatory, sanctioned behavior, especially law. Objective spirit is central to the growth of universality. Hegel defined civil society (burgertum Gesellschaft) as the unity of the concrete person (individuality) with the universality that stems from individuals' interdependence:

The concrete person is . . . one principle of civil society. But the particular person is essentially so related to other particular persons that each establishes himself and finds satisfaction only by means of others, and at the same time purely and simply by means of universality, the second principle here (Hegel, 1952:122–123).

Hegel and Durkheim differed on crucial political questions. Durkheim was a democrat and a quasi-socialist. And though some commentators view Hegel as radical or liberal (Aveniri, 1972; Cullen, 1979; Lukacs, 1978), that view is contested. What is not contested is that Hegel believed that the central thrust of Western history was the development of freedom in law that is rational and universal (i.e., general, common, public and universalistic). Hegel's analysis centers on a view of history as growth of interdependence and positive valuation of the human as such. Despite obvious differences, this view parallels key aspects of Durkheim's analysis of the transition from mechanical to organic solidarity. That is, (7) both believed that the development of freedom in this sense was the main trend within law. Moreover, (8) Durkheim believed, with Hegel, that the basis of liberty is obedience to law; that humans can only be free insofar as they have mastered themselves through law. This broad similarity is grounded in a host of more detailed views on the importance of Roman property law and Christianity, as well as views of the function of punishment, custom and organizations.
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Thus, (9) both Hegel and Durkheim viewed the basic problem of the modern world as creation of authoritative intermediary bodies between the individual and the state. While important differences separate Hegel's analysis of the corporation (1952:152–155) from the quasi-syndicalist proposals closing Durkheim's major early works, nevertheless, the central political proposals of both sought to modify the medieval corporation provide mediation between the individual and the state.

Finally, (10) it can be argued that the central theme of Hegel's philosophy as a whole is the breakdown of religious, moral, intellectual and political bases of community in modern society. Hegel's basic concepts of alienation, diremption, contradiction, and the many splits between subject and object, individual and collective (universal), finite and infinite, truth and certainty, can all be related to this central issue (Cullen, 1979). Durkheim's main lifetime theoretical concern likewise centered on the breakup of social integration, in egoism and anomie. His analysis depended on criticisms of individualism, which extended from the far right to the far left of the political spectrum. Many of these criticisms derived from Hegel.

Thus the common elements in Hegel's conception of spirit and Durkheim's conception of society are considerable. Hegel's conception contains a view of normative and social integration, of the social as a realm sui generis, of the normative system as represented within the religious system, and of the normative system of modern society as developing freedom in general, universal rules. To speak of "Hegelianism" could not promote institutionalization of an academic, empirical discipline within the Third Republic. Perhaps that is why Durkheim downplayed the elements just discussed. But it is not an attack on Durkheim to view him as having theoretical concerns deeply entwined with those of Marx and Weber. Marx could not comment on Durkheim and Weber did not. But often they adopted precisely the elements of Hegel's analysis that Durkheim discarded. It is by seeing their theories at the more general level, highlighted by their common relation to Hegel, that they may be related to each other.

WEBER, RATIONALIZATION, THE MARCH OF REASON, UNIVERSALISM AND THE GROWTH OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

In the generation following Hegel's death, Hegelians split into a left wing and a right wing, mainly on the basis of their attitudes toward established religion and the Hegelian Absolute (Toews, 1980). By the end of the century, both groups had further split to the point it was
problematic to label anyone "Hegelian." Yet two clusters of Hegelian themes are important for Weber, whose central concerns involved a synthesis or mediation between the two.

On the left wing, Marxism was the most potent intellectual force to emerge. Within the academy, the "socialists of the chair" articulated a welfare-regulatory compromise between socialism and nationalism. Weber adopted his main intellectual, political and theoretical positions within their Verein fuer Sozialpolitik. Moreover other intellectual forces also emerged from Hegel's analysis of the development of religion, culture and morals. For example, Nietzsche challenged Hegel's absolute with an aesthetics, transvaluation of values, and genealogy of morals which were profoundly marked by other aspects of Hegel's system (Loewith, 1964). Both Marxist and Nietzschean tendencies were profoundly important for Weber, who remarked that,

The honesty of a contemporary scholar, and above all of a contemporary philosopher, can be easily ascertained in terms of his position vis-a-vis Nietzsche and Marx. Those who do not admit that they could not do major parts of their own work without the contributions made by these two men, deceive themselves as well as others (Coser, 1971:250).

Hegel's immanent and historical analysis of philosophy, religion and law played a key role in generating the analysis of ideologies (the hermeneutics of suspicion), which came to Weber via Marx and Nietzsche and which played a central role in his analysis of ideologies/legitimacy (Ashcraft, 1972).

On the right wing, other philosophical and theological forces developed Hegelian ideas while attacking the architectonics of Hegel's system in ways also important for Weber. The neoKantian revival counterposed a transcendental, subjective idealism to Hegel's objective idealism. Within the neoKantian continuum from Windelband and Rickert to Dilthey, Weber denied the possibility of a final synthesis of values and hence "Hegelianism" (Honigsheim, 1968:24). But neoKantians contesting Hegel's synthesis were invariably influenced by other aspects of his work. Hegel's influence cannot be reduced to a metaphysical postulate. Weber was close to some Hegelian philosophers such as K. Fischer, but more important, an immense mass of substantive analysis of religion, law and culture was permeated by Hegelian issues, problems, theories or language. Certainly in political thought and history—especially the history of cultural forms of religion, art, music, law, science or philosophy—the issues of the analysis of objective spirit (Geist, Volksgeist), which we reviewed with respect to Durkheim, remained very important.
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Table 3 schematically represents ten elements common to Hegel and Weber. The transmission and mediation of these elements is complex. But many figures who informed Weber's sociology were powerfully influenced by Hegel even as they contested Hegelian positions. Indeed, the existence of a common problematic within German Idealism and the profound importance of that problematic for Weber, is one of the few points of consensus within the body of Weber studies (Parsons, 1968; Coser, 1971; Gerth and Mills, 1946; Loewith, 1964; Roth, in Weber, 1978; Giddens, 1971; Alexander, 1983; Therborn, 1974; Schluchter, 1981:15).

We said that Marx regarded Hegel's principal contribution as the analysis of subjectivity and freedom. The subjective meanings constitutive of self-consciousness are socially produced. Hegel argued that:

Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged (Hegel, 1978:111).

Hegel regarded the distinctive aspect of his philosophy as its treatment of "spirit" as subject (as actor) as well as substance (as thing). Within the social sciences, the issue of subjectivity—of the internal understanding as well as external explanation of human action—has tended to focus on Weber's definition of sociology as "a science concerning itself with the interpretive understanding of social behavior and thereby with a causal explanation of its course and consequences" (Weber, 1978:4). This definition synthesized opposed traditions each shaped by Hegel: the tradition of interpretive understanding (associated with humanistic history adopted by Dilthey from Droysen) was locked in debate with neoKantian philosophers of science (e.g., Windelband's and Rickert's


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<td>1.</td>
<td>Social structure consists of interlocked social roles.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Their subjective meanings constitute self-consciousness.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>There is a single two-sided development of structures of organization and of systematic theory.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>These emerge from particularistic structures.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>World-historical individuals/charismatic leaders transform traditional structures.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Systems of general rules are driven by private interests.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>These rational structures produce increasing irrationalities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Christianity helped develop Western rationality.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Protestantism accentuated these elements of Christianity.</td>
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distinctions between nomothetic/generalizing and idographic/individualizing studies).

In many ways, the interrelation of individual and general, of subjective and objective, of self-consciousness and cultural configurations, of individual action and social structure is the master problem of Weber’s sociology. We have denied that Hegel has any single, simple, explicit theory of this interrelation. Rather he employs the connotations of allgemein and its relatives as common, general, public, universal and universalistic to conduct a rich series of cultural historical investigations. Probably his fundamental work in this sense was the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. That may be read sociologically as a kind of machine generating sets of linked subjective standpoints/cultural configurations (*Gestalten*) underlying the historical analyses of religion, art, law, philosophy and politics. Some thirty forms, experiences or phenomenological positions appear, generate their antitheses, and then disappear into a new configuration. As such, it constitutes an anatomy of nearly one hundred ethical, religious, philosophical or normative positions which is the direct precursor of the attempts of German formal sociology to produce an anatomy of social forms, whose most outstanding representative contemporary with Weber was G. Simmel.

Hegelian linkage between subjective and objective aspects of action, central to Weber's ideal types, appears in Marx as well.

Reflex categories form a very curious class. For instance, one man is king only because other men stand in the relation of subjects to him. They on the contrary, imagine that they are subjects because he is king (Marx, 1967:57).

That is, Marx cites Hegel for a discovery that the relationships in which persons or objects stand to others change the person, in ways appearing intrinsic to the person. This is the social role equivalent of production's producing the producer of the product. It is characteristic of Hegel's analysis, and it is very important for Weber.

Thus (1) Weber regards social structure as configurations of social roles. And (2) in the analysis of these configurations, he is informed by the idealist tradition's emphasis on subjectivity. Weber's distinctive approach to this set of problems sees social structure as the intersection of public roles and individual meanings. Weber identifies a causal interrelation between the growth of structures of persons (e.g., courts, parties, schools, churches, firms) and structures of thought (e.g., law, political theory, science, religion, ideology, technology, economics, accounting). These interrelated processes are the process of rationalization. Both his conception of the objective structures and their dy-
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dynamics of development were importantly derived from Hegel.

Thus, (3) Weber's fundamental theory identifies a single, two-sided development of formal, predictable, specialized organizations and formal, explicit, systematic theory. This over-arching process of rationalization can then be related to a host of more specific social tendencies such as religious secularization, the formation of bureaucratic forms of organization in law, politics, business, and all other social spheres, the disenchantment of the world, or the routinization of charisma. The inner logic of all of these processes is what Hegel would have called a universal history (Mommsen, 1974); its dynamic is the growth of the universal.

Within a rich mass of historical analysis—enormously expanded and developed in the generation between Hegel and Weber, (4) Hegel's analysis of the role of structures of domination in the genesis of general, universalistic rules contains many of the elements from which Weber was to build his organizational sociology. Four main structures are of immense importance to Weber: law, religion, economics and politics. In each of these spheres, the main body of theory and evidence upon which Weber built was historical, the work of scholars such as Jellinek, Troeltsch, Knies or Schmoller. None of them accepted the Hegelian synthesis according to which the development of the modern nation state was the development in history of reason and philosophical truth. At the same time, each of them was familiar with and employed Hegelian terms and ideas. Thus, it is not surprising that the central notion of the (conflictual) end of the process was the creation of common, general, universal rules.

Moreover, (5) Hegel's concept of customary ethical obligation parallels Weber's concept of traditionalism. The origin as well as the destination of the development of rules is importantly common to Hegel and Weber. What drives Hegel's universal history is a conception of the unique, basic contributions of the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman civilizations to the modern world. His conception of the birth of general, public, common, universalistic standards and structures in many different social spheres was a major inspiration for the many-sided process of rationalization in Weber.

(6) Hegel links his structural analysis of law and religion with particular historical narratives by means of the concept of world-historical individuals. There is methodological as well as substantive tension between the particular and the general. This concept produces analyses which parallel Weber's analysis of the routinization of charisma and of the role of charisma in breaking through layers of tradition and bureaucracy, generating new, unanticipated, routinized forms of organization.

(7) More than any other sociological theorist, Weber gave a de-
tailed historical analysis of the interlock between personal interests/meanings and collective/public imperatives within structures of domination. We have seen a related idea in Marx's use of Hegel's analysis of the role of particular interests in history. Regardless of Weber's direct debts to the Hegel, his analysis was located within a complex tradition in historical analysis which derived, in part, from Hegel's conception of particular interests as actualizing general rules.

(8) For Hegel, the historical march of reason to freedom in law is always beset by contradictions; it is deeply contradictory. For Weber, the growth of rationalized structures produces increasing conflict and irrationality both intrinsically and extrinsically. Extrinsicly, a routinized, bureaucratized system is increasingly governed by its own pure logic, and this logic increasingly brings it into conflict with the systems of rules generated by other rationalized systems. Internally the generation of a system of rules makes increasingly arbitrary the axioms on which those rules are based. There is an increasing contradiction between the criteria of substantive and formal rationality. Had Weber used the terminology of "dialectic" the parallels with Marx would be far more visible than they are.

(9) Hegel contrasts Christianity with Eastern religions. In the latter, "spirit" has not sufficiently drawn back from the world (1956:104) or, in the case of India, spirit takes the form of dreaming imagination, not sufficiently embodied in the world (1956:139). Weber's religious sociology was based upon better data than Hegel's, his methodological principles rejected Hegel's merging of theology, philosophy and sociology of religion, and he elaborated the organizational structures of religion at greater length than did Hegel. However, despite these differences, one finds the same basic contrast between Christianity and the religions of India and China, and one finds common views of the role of Christianity in the West.

(10) Similarly, within Christianity, Hegel opposes Protestant immersion in the task at hand (Sache Selbst) with Catholic flight from the world, represented by the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience (1956:380). This and related Hegelian analyses prefigure key elements of Weber's analysis of the role of Christian inner-worldly asceticism and of the Protestant ethic.

As in the case of Marx and Durkheim, common elements shared by Hegel and Weber are accompanied by differences, breaks, and rejection of portions of Hegel's analysis. Since Weber rejected some of the elements that the other theorists accepted, the complex relationships of acceptance and rejection of Hegelian ideas also represent complex relations of overlap between the three paradigmatic theorists within contemporary sociology.
HEGEL, UNIVERSALISM AND MODERN SOCIOLOGICAL PARADIGMS

The three sets of ideas briefly sketched and underscored here hardly exhaust Hegel's relevance for modern sociology or its relation to the rest of social theory. However, the three complexes underscored here shed light on the interrelation of the main paradigms in modern sociology. The concept of universalism broadly defined—the view that there is a powerful linkage between the growth of universalistic general, common, public, universal, rules, roles, meanings and laws—plays an important role in each of the founding sociological theories. It lies at the crossroads of important lines of thought within sociology.

To summarize the three complexes: there is first the complex of ideas taken up by Marx. It centers on labor, technology, economic interests, alienation, production and property. The analysis treats human productive activity and the conflictual labor process as constituting society. Hegel takes the process of creation of human institutions as actualizing an historically developing human nature via the historical labor of mankind. It is the central logic of history. Marx develops this notion in terms of concrete processes of exploitation, class relation, expropriation and political conflict. He sees the development of the world market as breaking down the barriers dividing mankind into tribes, regions, crafts, communities, races or other groups. The two last barriers—of nation and class—were, he thought, historically doomed.

Second, there is the complex that informs Durkheimian sociology. It centers around the concept of Geist or culture. Hegel viewed "spirit" as the common core of religion, art, language, norms, customs, manners, science, law and philosophy. It is substance; individuals are its accidents. Embodied in objective law, enshrined in religion, the social, collective public, structures of mankind make humans human. That is, "spirit" constitutes the individuals from whose interactions it emerges.

Durkheim's opposition between the individual and the social, the self-interested and the normative, the accidental and the lawful is closely related to this complex. Specifically, the analysis takes values, enshrined in the religious system, as constitutive of the social. Not only is there a stress on the common, public and the general as the field of analysis of sociology, but also the central conception of the development of social structure lies in the replacement of particularistic and isolated forms of social interaction with universalistic ones. The systems of law and norms which sustain human interaction generate more general, overarching, universalistic principles.

Thirdly, there is a complex that foreshadows Weber. It centers around the growth of reason and the development of universal, public,
common, explicit and universalistic rules, embodied in formal organizations. These developments are formative of individual, subjective self-conceptions and understandings—understandings that must be analyzed as simplified general forms. The development moves via the historical structures of authority, obedience, and domination—a development instigated and carried out by particular individuals who create structures with unanticipated consequences. The analysis of this process of development treats the coexistence of structures of domination with understood shared understandings and rules as constitutive of the social.

It is useful to see the three paradigms in relation to a common origin. To neglect Hegel obscures the relationships between currently active sociological schools. It cuts communication between sociology and neighboring disciplines. It leads to misreading the thrust and intentions of sociologists in the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century. Finally, it leads to a peculiar kind of eternal youth; that is, to the tiresome rediscovery of ideas and methods that had proven to be dead ends by the middle of the last century.

At the present time, sociological theory is fragmented among divergent and opposed paradigms. Conflict, functional and organizational theorists dispute the basis of social structure. Relatively atheoretical empirical analysts contest whether there is a basis of social structure in the sense those paradigms had argued. Phenomenology, ethnemethodology, symbolic interactionism, British action theory and other interpretive approaches present theory and evidence of still other kinds. Comparative historical sociology and world-systems theory are among the most rapidly growing sections of the discipline. In these circumstances, an historical analysis of theory that demonstrates a common basis of these positions can be valuable. The complex relation of the individual and the universal in Hegel is such a common basis.

Hegel’s influence operates prior to the differentiation of the social science disciplines and is often diffuse, indirect and disguised. His influence was often mediated by later thinkers who operated with an Hegelian problematic but who explicitly contested particular formulations within that problematic. The resurgence of interest in and the rebellions against Hegel’s views occurred at different times in different countries and in different disciplines. Thus tracing Hegel’s influence is an enormously complex task. It is a task one would undertake only if one were relatively sure that Hegel was relevant not only to Marx but also to the rest of sociology.

In the last generation, the most important single conception of the genesis of sociology has been that of Parsons. In The Structure of Social Action, Parsons saw the distinctive concerns of sociology as a concern with the normative basis of rational action, and he believed that that
Hegel's Universal concern appeared independently within British economics (Marshall), French positivism (Durkheim), German idealism (Weber) and continental political theory (Pareto). Both the fact that he regarded Marx as a fundamentally non-sociological precursor and his portrayal of the development of sociology as a convergence of traditions led him to downgrade Hegel's importance. However, Parsons's own formulation of the pattern variables, and especially universalism, could be expressed in Hegelian terms. Parsons's later work and especially his conceptions of adaptive upgrading, the general media and the cybernetic hierarchy represent ideas with an even closer kinship with the Hegelian allgemein. Contemporary Parsonian functionalists stress Marx rather than Marshall and Pareto (Alexander, 1983). The growth of a Marxist perspective within sociology is one of the tendencies that a contemporary account of its origins must recognize. Hegel's view of the growth of universalistic, common, public, general, universal structures connects the Marxist conceptions of society as the alienation of labor to liberal conceptions of society as a normative structure, and as a process of rationalization.

At the other end of the sociological continuum from Parsonian functionalism, perspectives informed by conflict theory have re-emphasized Hegelian issues of history, historicity and contradiction. For example, the organizing conception of the world-systems perspective is the idea that political-economic histories are not plural, but rather there has been a single, bipolar, irreversible, world-historical development (Wallerstein, 1974). And, at a less macro level, contemporary comparative theorists such as Tilly have rediscovered the tension between historical particularity and general process in the theoretical analysis of the state and political conflicts (Tilly, 1984).

Sociology is not an island. Hegel not only relates the main paradigms within the discipline but also modes of thought relevant to sociology in neighboring disciplines. Hegelian conceptions, both substantive and methodological can be related to other standpoints in social theory including: historicism, descriptive holism in anthropology, structuralism, phenomenology, symbolic interaction and existentialism. Analyses in literary criticism, history, philosophy, religion, jurisprudence or linguistics, currently influential in sociology can best be related to the main sociological paradigms in light of their common relation to Hegel. During the nineteenth century, figures outside of sociology such as Kierkegaard, T. H. Green, W. R. Smith, Burckhardt, Royce or Bosanquet produced analyses that had important impacts within sociology. At the turn of the century, the same was true of Saussure, Dewey, Husserl, Freud, Mead and Croce. And, in the twentieth century, figures such as Lukacs, Heidegger, Collingswood, Sartre, Schutz, Levi-Strauss, Kuhn, Gadamer, Rorty, Derrida and Habermas continued traditions deeply influenced by
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Hegel. Whether we regard their influence within sociology as pernicious or fertile, as important or marginal, it becomes more understandable in light of the relation of sociology to Hegel and the German-idealistic tradition.

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