A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WILL

My history can be brief because it will focus primarily on the contrast between (1) Hellenic will, a determinate agency shaped by a particular post-natal *paideia* restricted to those few human beings who are not barbarians, and (2) post-Hellenic will, an indeterminate and innate source of agency universal to all animals who can mean what they say. It is the contrast between these two and the transition from the one to the other that I will attempt to bring into view.

It has frequently been observed[1] that the Hellenic Greeks had no concept of 'the will' as that term is used in modern languages. That is no doubt true. But it is not easy to say just what the 'modern' concept is or what the Hellenic concept lacked. And it cannot be denied that modern translations of Hellenic texts make frequent use of the word 'will' and that modern interpreters of Hellenic thought use the word 'will' in their explications. Simply to declare such usages 'incorrect' is not very illuminating. Those who use the controversial word have made helpful translations and intelligible interpretations. Those who assiduously avoid the word are not necessarily more helpful or intelligible. When we are not doing formal logic (or under the illusion that we are) we naturally speak of things in many ways. Linguistic puritanism obscures this fact.

The point of my remarks is to ease an insight into the transition by getting a sharper grasp of the contrast. So I propose to exploit a procedure used to great effect by Aristotle, and, after more than two millennia, first systematically redeployed by Hegel. According to this procedure things are spoken of in many ways, πολλαχως λεγομενον. These many ways, however, all consider things 'in process,' involving three αρχαι (sometimes translated 'principles'): a beginning, a middle, and an end. As I will spell out below, some of these processes are susceptible of 'theoretical' consideration (θεωρια, 'Spekulation' in Hegel), some of 'only' practical (πραξις),[2] some of 'poetic' (ποιησις),[3] and some merely contingent (κατα συμβεβηκος).[4]

The topic of my story, the will, is spoken of in many ways, no one of them 'correct,' a topic open to clarification if several tacks are taken. I shall focus upon two: (1) the will as a matter of *paideia* as contrasted with the will as an 'uncaused cause' and (2) the transition between them.

I shall begin by locating the transition in time, but merely as a heuristic for conceptual comprehension. The conceptual issue cannot be reduced to history. For present purposes let me simply assert that the transition in question began with a reorientation that may be dated from the third century BC to the first century AD. Of course there were previous adumbrations and subsequent refinements. But in my short story the key figures who articulated the transition were two: (1) the Cypriot logicist-Stoic who lived in Hellenistic Athens, Chrysippus (279–206 BC), and (2) the Jewish

---

1 Hegel, Snell, Dodds, Dihle, etc.

2 The main difference between Aristotle and Hegel is that in Hegel the condition of 'modernity' is said to render the 'practical' sphere theorizable, namely, as 'Objektiver Geist.'

3 A poetic process, a μυθος, a dramatic 'plot,' the *mimesis* of a *praxis*, is quasi-theorizable according to Aristotle's *Poetics*. This served as the model for Hegel's introduction to Aristotelianism for the modern world, i.e., Hegelianism, in his *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (= PhG), as I spell out in "Logic and Theory in Aristotle, Stoicism, Hegel," *The Philosophical Forum*, Fall 2006.

4 The recognition of a sphere of sheer contingency.

Mosaic-Stoic[5] who lived in Hellenistic Alexandria, Philo (20 BC–50 AD). It is noteworthy that Chrysippus lived in a Hellenistic city, Athens, which was no longer a *polis* and that Philo lived in a city, Alexandria, which had never been a *polis*.

Chrysippus inaugurated the habit of speaking about human language as divided in two, the one 'outer' and the other 'inner.' With this new habit it became possible to speak of human agency as having a universal source and to speak of the 'will' as an interior spring of action common to all human beings. This was the new *koine*. Philo's contribution was to extend the Stoic bifurcation of human language to the language of Yahweh. With Philo's innovation it became possible to consider the words "Let there be" as a *creatio ex nihilo*, to consider the world as launched by a cosmic 'speech-act,' retranslated in our time as a 'big bang.'

The post-Hellenic will came to be understood as an agency universal because interior to all members of that species which 'means' what it says, the interiority we have come to call 'mind.' In our time this speech habit inaugurated by Chrysippus has been powerfully reformulated by the Chomsky school of linguistics as 'a distinctively human semiotic,' founded on the 'deep-language competency' of any speaker to generate an infinite variety of novel sentences that are intelligible to others who are similarly competent, namely, all other speakers, a universal category.

When Philo extended the Stoically conceived universally human linguistic competency to the divine, the post-Hellenic will became an agency interior to a universal world-creator whose speech-acts became 'biblical.' Two thousand years after Philo, the habit of speech he induced is now implicitly shared by children who ask: "Mommy, where did the world come from?" The 'scientific' counterpart of our children's question is 'the big bang,' conceived without question within the Philonic habit but questionably suggested by no more than the Hubble 'red-shift.' Such has been the power of Philo's linguistic revolution, now 'second nature' to most of us, including 'scientists,' and accordingly unquestioned.

It must be noted that the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* is not to be found in the Hebrew Bible. That it has in the meanwhile been found there is a testimony to the power of Philo's rhetoric and the needs of the time in which he wrote. Its first occurrence in a Jewish Biblical text is in 2 *Maccabees*, 7, 28ff., written in Hellenistic Greek, like the works of Philo, at a date uncertain. "I implore you, my child, observe heaven and earth, consider all that is in them, and acknowledge that God made them out of what did not exist, and that mankind comes into being in the same way."[6]

The linguistic revolution of Chrysippus marked the onset of a new human order, in which all members of a species could be said to act on a common footing, the post-Hellenic will. The theological

---

[5] Philo was firmly convinced that all of Greek philosophy, Hellenic as well as Hellenistic, derived from a plagiarism of Moses. That is why he, unlike the Jews of Palestine, was able to take Greek philosophy seriously and comment upon it confidently: with better access to Moses than the secondary Greeks, and with better linguistic access to Greek than his Jewish brethren in Palestine, he was confident that he understood much better than either the Greek philosophers or the Palestinian Jews what the Greek philosophers were trying to say. A strong claim to 'privileged access.' As we shall see, this belief is what enabled him to use the Stoic doctrine of the two *logoi* and thereby, inadvertently no doubt, to *invent* the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*.

[6] Translation from *The Jerusalem Bible*.

revolution of Philo, which extended Stoic linguistic interiority to the God of *Genesis*, marked the onset of a new worldview. The insignia common to both Chrysippus and Philo is interiority, human and divine. Both stand in sharp contrast to Hellenic man and the sacred world of *paideia*. Hellenic man was an agent, engaged in *praxis*, because his character was formed by *paideia* in one of many particular *poleis* and in one of many particular *oikoi*. As institutions whose *raison d'etre* was character-formation, both the *polis* and the *oikos* were profoundly religious in a distinctively Hellenic way. Hellenic will was shaped under an irreducible condition of plurality, by sharing with others the distinctive rituals of a domestic religion, the rites of an *oikos*—epitomized by but not limited to the burial of a dead ancestor—and by participation in the daily and seasonal liturgies of a civic religion. Stoic will is an unshaped, indeterminate, indeed an infinite linguistic interiority able to generate an infinite variety of external and intelligible utterances.

The world situation in which Stoicism emerged and flourished was introduced by Alexander. It had been ideologically anticipated by Isocrates, who first formulated the 'ideal' of a 'universal' *paideia*.[7] The numerous towns founded by Alexander and sustained by his successors, the Diadochi, were all outfitted with the trappings of the *polis*: temples, baths, theaters, and, most importantly, *gymnasia*. Of course it was only a tiny urbane elite minority of the conquered population who, by opportunity and choice, participated in the Isocratic 'universal' *paideia* on offer, but the incentives were real and they were the commanding elite. By choice they learned Greek as a second language, read Homer, formed professional associations, joined religious cults, and, if a bit more sophisticated, became Epicureans, Stoics, or Sceptics. It was the decisive factor of choice that separated these quasi-*politans* from the Hellenic originals they emulated. In brief outline, this was the world in which post-Hellenic will took shape.

It must be added that the ritual dimension of Hellenic religions was far more encompassing than in post-Alexandrian religious practice, especially in its post-Philonic phase. In the latter there is a necessary rite of passage from the quotidian realm of the profane to the sacred space of divine worship, e.g., a temple. Such religion is an introvert affair. In Hellas, quotidian life, domestic as well as civic, was already sacred. Hellenic religion was extrovert.

One is tempted to look for a sensible metaphor that might illustrate this somewhat complex conceptual contrast. There is one that will be available to anyone educated in the European tradition. It is the contrast between two temples, two of the most famous structures ever erected: the Parthenon and the Pantheon.[8]

The Doric Parthenon, like its Ionic siblings on the Acropolis of Athens, is a radically public building. There is no inner/outer distinction that comes to view. Since it is open, there is no rite of passage to enter it. Like the classic nudes of Polykleitos and Praxiteles, and the poetry of Homer, it

---

7 Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, § 50: " … the word 'Hellene' no longer denotes a *particular* man but a *kind* of mentality, those who share our *paideusis* are now called Hellenic …. "

8 The contrast has been drawn by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in his *Roman Art and Architecture*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1964. Wheeler credits the insight to his student, J.B. Ward-Perkins, "The Italian Element in Late Roman and Early Medieval Architecture," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XXXIII (1947), 169.

invokes no foreground/background contrast because everything is in the foreground.[9] Whether seen from inside or out, everything is clear. It is not hard to see why the Parthenon is everyone's implicit image of Periclean Athens.

Hadrian's Roman Pantheon is an entirely different story, the other side of the story in this brief history. Here interiority is everything. Architecture has been turned outside-in.[10] Despite the brilliant *bon mot* of Horace on the Roman annexation of Greece—"Captured Greece then captured its rude conqueror"[11]—the Greek capture of Rome was anything but complete. Well before the rise of Roman Christianity, Hellenistic and Roman paganism had become a matter for the individual and his god or gods.[12] Public ritual had become a dimly recalled feature of Rome's ultimately Hellenic background. Hellenistic and Roman religion had become personal. We are at the advent of worship in the form of an intimate confessional prayer between man and god.[13] For a dramatization of this transition we can recall the walling up of the open colonnades at the former temple of Athena at Syracuse when it was transformed into a cathedral church.[14]

The transformation of the will was like this. Let us see how Hellenic will, too, got turned outside-in.

Our most articulate account of Hellenic will is to be found in the practical philosophy of Aristotle, and his predecessors, from 'Homer' and Herodotus, in poetry and prose, are of a piece with his account.[15] The main point is that we have a written record from which we can now[16] determine that Hellenic will was originally informed under conditions of pre-literate orality. As we will see, this same written record, at the hands of Hellenistic and Roman readers, produced entirely different results. Indeed, one of the results was the Stoic concept of will.

To begin with the consummatory Hellene, Aristotle, it is easy to determine that his concept of agency involved emotional and intellectual factors as well as that ritual shaping of Hellenic will that I have called *paideia*. The main point is that neither Aristotle nor any of his predecessors had a concept of the will as independent from such predetermining factors. That is to say, he had no concept of agency like that of the Stoics, which we moderns have inherited, as universal to a given biological

---

9 The absence of a foreground/background distinction in the Homeric diction has been made luminous by Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis*, Princeton: PUP, 1953, Ch. I, "Odysseus' Scar."

10 Wheeler, p. 13.

11 Horace, *Epistles*, II, 156, my version.

12 This has been shown by, among others, Peter Brown in his numerous illuminations of late antiquity.

13 Human/Divine *intimacy*, unthinkable in the Hellenic world, is epitomized in Augustine's *Confessions*.

14 Wheeler, p. 14.

15 The inverted commas are inserted as a reminder that the epic poems of Hellas were probably oral compositions based upon performances that extended over generations. See, for example, Gregory Nagy, *Poetry as Performance: Homer and Beyond*, Cambridge: CUP, 1996.

16 This was not always so. It is mainly since the work of Parry, Lord, Havelock, and Nagy that scrutiny of the written record has yielded insight into the orality that shaped the Hellenic will. Key figures who shaped the written record upon which we perforce must rely, e.g., Plato and Aristotle, presumed with all their contemporaries that 'Homer' was a literate individual. When F.A. Wolf (*Prolegomena to Homer*, 1795) first challenged the view of Homer as an individual 'creative genius,' nineteenth century romantics like Schiller and even Goethe (who had at first taken Wolf seriously) howled.

species, say, *anthropos*. Famously, Aristotle defined man as the ζωον πολιτικον.[17] Notoriously, this definition has been misread. We say today, for example, that Angela Merkel is 'a real political animal,' echoing Aristotle. But what Aristotle understood is that man is an animal who only realizes 'his' (yes, Aristotle was by modern Stoic standards a 'sexist') nature if he has been lucky enough to be brought up in a *polis*. On strictly biological grounds, this definition excludes all human animals, the vast majority, including all women, children, metics, and 'barbarians,' who perforce missed out on 'his' lucky *paideia*. In short, Aristotle's concept of Hellenic will is highly restrictive or particular. To be included one had to be habituated to particular forms of life.

Now it must be acknowledged that, with rare exceptions, *all* human beings grow up and are habituated within a community, in Aristotle's phrase, a κοινωνια. But that does not make them, on his reckoning, a ζωον πολιτικον. The analogous process identified in modern social science as 'acculturation' was not enough. Any association whatsoever involves 'acculturation.' Our question is what was different about acculturation in a *polis* and an *oikos*. For our brief history it is vital to recognize that the sole κοινωνιαι requisite to habituate a ζωον πολιτικον, an ανθρωπος, to Hellenic will, were precisely a πολις and an οικος. And the death of these institutions just happened to coincide with the death of Aristotle. He would have instantly recognized the significance of this event.[18]

For our brief history we need a structurally clear account of the Hellenic will. Now any act of will is clearly a process, indeed a practical process. To comprehend the structure of Hellenic will and grasp its difference from post-Hellenic will it will be useful to recall the four kinds of process outlined at the outset of this essay: (1) theoretical, (2) practical, (3) poetic, and (4) contingent.

We are accustomed to think of processes in terms of two principles or αρχαι, form (ειδος) and matter (υλη). We implicitly assume that a physical process involves the in-formation of a material component by a form. We were taught this lesson by Plato and it has stuck. That is why it has been rightly said that the western intellectual tradition largely consists in 'footnotes to Plato.' But when we take the contrasts form and matter seriously (as only Aristotle, in *Phy* I, and Hegel, *Enz* II, have done so far), we see that the Platonic (i.e., 'our') notion of matter is already in-formed whereas by matter 'we' primarily understand an αρχη as what is susceptible of in-formation. This primary understanding is compromised when we think of the material component in a process as this, that, or another *kind* of matter, whether bronze or iron; earth, water, air, or fire; or hydrogen, oxygen, etc. Such matters are not merely susceptible of in-formation; they are already determinate matters, i.e., in-formed.

There is a fairly obvious alternative to this equivocal concept of matter. It involves a distinction between (1) matter *qua* susceptible of in-formation and (2) matter *qua* determinate or already in-formed. Clearly there are two distinct aspects of matter Platonically conceived: (1) matter *per se* and (2)

---

17 *Politics* I, 1253a3.

18 The event was the elimination of Athens as an independent πολις by Alexander's Macedonian general Antipater in 322 BC, in response to the revolt fomented by Demosthenes on word of Alexander's death. Ironically, perhaps, it was Antipater who had funded the establishment of Aristotle's Lyceum in Athens, without whose legacy our grasp of what the *polis* was would be hopelessly incomplete.

its form *qua* determinate matter. Aristotle and Hegel's proposal is simplicity itself: distinguish between these two.

In drawing this distinction Aristotle and Hegel distinguish themselves from all the other 'footnotes to Plato.' In short, they identify two forms, or principles of determinacy, in any process: (1) the form-from-which the process proceeds (conflated with matter in Platonism) and (3) the form-to-which the process proceeds. These, respectively, are distinguished from (2) matter, the sheer capacity, δυναμις, to undergo a process. Hence the articulation of any process will require no less, and no more, than three principles, αρχαι, or 'starting points.' Some of these will be theoretically comprehensible; some will not.

In Aristotle there are only two kinds of process that are susceptible of theoretical comprehension. These are motion, κινησις, and activity, ενεργεια. A κινησις is theorized when we see that the αρχη-2, matter, υλη, capable of undergoing the process from αρχη-1, the form-from-which, to αρχη-3, the form-to-which, is realizing its capacity or potential, δυναμις, to be *in* αρχη-3, the form-to-which. Once *in* the form-to-which, the process, as *this* process, is over. Hence Aristotle's celebrated definition of κινησις (*Phy* III, 1, 201a10) as the realization or actualization, εντελεχιος, of a potential (i.e., αρχη-2, matter) to be in αρχη-3, the form-to-which, *qua* that potentiality.

The second theorizable process, ενεργεια, activity, differs from motion in that the αρχη-2, matter, is *in* αρχη-3, the form-to-which, *throughout* the process (*Meta* IX, 1050a15–17: " … matter exists potentially because it may attain to the form; matter exists actually when it is *in* the form, εν τω ειδει." We may therefore define ενεργεια as the actualization of a potential *qua* actual.[19]

In Aristotle, unlike Hegel, a human action, πραξις, is said to be beyond the grasp of theory. The explication of πραξις is nevertheless set forth by reference to the same scheme of three αρχαι used in his theoretical philosophy: (1) αρχη-1, the form or determinacy from-which, (2) αρχη-2, matter or substratum, and (3) αρχη-3, the form-to-which. In any case of *praxis* the determinate state, αρχη-1, of what undergoes the process, αρχη-2, is a combination of cognition, emotion, and habit. An action is said to be voluntary, εκουσια, if the agent proceeds from *its* αρχη-1. If the action proceeds from a αρχη-1 that is not its own but imposed upon it, the action is said to be in-voluntary, ακουσια.

It is important to note that the distinction between εκουσια and ακουσια pertains as much to the motions of animals as to the actions of *politans*. All animals behave on the basis of cognition, emotion, and habit. What distinguishes human action, πραξις, concerns the nature of the habit component of αρχη-1.

Hellenic will is distinguished from the agency of other animals not by virtue of any innately *given* determinacy or form (such as a Stoic 'language instinct'[20] or a soul divinely sparked by a Philonic creator God) but by virtue of a vast capacity, δυναμις, for acquiring habits by imitation, μιμησις. In

---

[19] I have spelled out this interpretation of ενεργεια in greater detail in "Words and Things in Aristotle and Hegel: 'το ον λεγεται πολλαχως,'" *The Philosophical Forum*, Summer 2002, pp. 125–142.

[20] See Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct: How the Mind Creates Language*, New York: Morrow, 1994.

short, the men of Hellas are what they are because man is "the most mimetic," μιμητικωτατον,[21] of all animals. This capacity *per se* does not set Hellenic will apart from animal agency. For animals also form habits. If sheer habit-formation were the criterion of Hellenic will, it would be, like its Stoic successor, universal. If the factors shaping the formation of Hellenic will were universal, Aristotle might have found *praxis* susceptible of theoretical comprehension. But he did not so find them and he was right. Although the capacity for vast habit formation is universal to all *anthropoi qua* animal, there is a basic structure of habits that is requisite for *praxis*. This structure is only acquired by means of extended participation in two specific modes of life: that of the *oikos* and that of the *polis*. These two institutions are distinctive because, unprecedentedly, they inculcated habits that conspire to facilitate happiness (*eudaimonia*). All previous and most subsequent institutions of human habituation or acculturation have been '*utile*,' directed to the production of habits, e.g., craft skills, that produce a product, whether economic, as in the case of that extraordinary level of craftsmanship that made Chinese civilization along the grand canal north of Hangzhou dominate the world from 1000 to 1500, or military, which is what brought the Asians under Attila to the point of conquering Europe in the sixth century AD. Hellenic will-formation was different. Its implicit purpose was to shape individuals, albeit a small minority of mankind, to the point of enjoying the pleasures of a public life and, an even smaller minority, to enjoying the satisfaction of the desire to know or philosophy. In either case, the key to Hellenic will is enjoyment. Post-Hellenic will is less joyful, if more egalitarian.

Hellenic *paideia*, which took shape under conditions of illiterate orality, epitomized by the performances of 'Homeric' verse,[22] later, in the fifth and fourth centuries BC, got transcribed and provided a written legacy of a way of life that had uniquely come to satisfy the desire for human self-realization. In its transcribed form this way of life, now dead, has been again and again intuited as the major clue we have as to how to live. That is why the educational curriculum of Europe has been redirected again and again to Hellas, first schools based on the Isocratic trivium and quadrivium, and then, from 13th century Paris, the 'philosophische Facultät' of a university as based on Aristotle's encyclopedic comprehension of how the world hangs together in the broadest sense. Today the effect of this Hellenic legacy is no longer restricted to the Mediterranean world, or indeed to the North Atlantic world.[23]

Hellenic *paideia*, once transfigured into post-Hellenic will, has been almost occluded but never entirely forgotten. It is the reappropriation of that legacy of *paideia* or will-formation under the condition of 'modernity' that I call Hegelianism. It, too, has been obscured but it remains available to remind us who we are.

---

21 *Poetics*, IV, 1448b7.

22 In the *Iliad*, "the taking of arms, combat, injury, councils of war, meals, burial" and other scenes are mostly described by the improvising poet using set formulas … " (A. Dihle, *A History of Greek Literature*, London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 7–8).

23 An anecdote. I have given lectures in many corners of the world. I have never given a lecture that elicited such rapt attention and such sustained and intensive discussion (ranging to four hours) as the one I gave on the *polis* to 40–50 Chinese graduate students and faculty of the department of history at Fudan University in Shanghai, December 1996.

To bring this brief history to a close it remains to see how Hellenic will was turned 'outside-in' and produced the inner vs. outer concept of language and mind, an inner where we 'mean' and an outer where we 'say.' Post-Hellenic will is rooted in the realm of inward meaning.

It is important to realize that the inversion or *Verkehrung* of Hellenic will was not a simple inversion, an '*abstrakte Negation*,' but an inversion of precisely Hellenic will, a '*bestimmte Negation*.'

As an historical phenomenon Stoicism took shape with the invention of consciousness. As Hegel observes in his lectures on the history of philosophy, we must turn to Sextus Empiricus, a very 'objective' opponent, for an historical grasp of Stoicism, though he also refers to Philo. The immediate historical context is the Hellenistic world in the aftermath of the *polis*. That world, for which the beautiful ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) of the *polis* was 'no longer' ('*nicht mehr*' in the parlance of the PhG, V, b), was, in the words of W.H. Auden, "an age of anxiety," an age that possessed the written legacy of the Hellenic world together with the awareness that that world was hopelessly lost. But rather than romantically pining—recall Schiller's words, exquisitely set to music by Schubert: "Schöne Welt, wo bist Du?" ("Beautiful world, where are you?")—or engaging in the millennial games of '*polis* envy,' all of which presuppose Stoic consciousness, the Stoics addressed the problem head on and constructed a new post-*politan* frame of reference for the human spirit, namely, 'mind,' that has endured for more than two thousand years.

The Stoic problem was that the Hellenic or *politan* Greeks had, in Bruno Snell's fine phrase, achieved a 'discovery of the human spirit' ('*die Entdeckung des Geistes*'[24]), and that this discovery was, as Werner Jaeger has persuasively argued (*Paideia*, Vol. I), preserved in writing during the fifth and fourth centuries BC whereas it had first taken shape under the conditions of illiterate *orality*.[25] These writings make clear that human beings first discovered the spiritual beauty of human life *qua* human as the result of a program of 'upbringing'[26] whose result, for the first and only time in history, was a class of human beings (admittedly only adult male citizens of a *polis*) whose happiness (*eudaimonia*) was the object of the exercise. These citizens were habituated for happiness by *paideia* not by study.[27] By these

---

[24] *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* was misleadingly translated into English as *The Discovery of the Mind*, T.G. Rosenmeyer, tr., New York: Harper, 1960.

[25] I address the significance of Greek 'orality,' thanks to 1966–1972 conversations with and books (esp., *Preface to Plato*, Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1963) by Eric Havelock, in "Individuality in the Modern World," presented at a special session of the American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Meetings, Atlanta, December 1989 (unpublished). See my website kenleydove.com. On the topic of Greek 'orality' the writings of Milman Parry, Albert B. Lord, and Gregory Nagy are also indispensable.

[26] The word 'education' has become too intellectual, too Stoic, too literate, to translate '*paideia*.'

[27] 'Study' is the distinctively Trans-Alpine or Germanic path to 'virtue' or, better, to morality, to '*Kultur*,' as opposed to the 'quasi-*paideia*' that the French call '*civilisation*,' still cultivated on the shores of the Mediterranean and evident whenever one sits down to table. As Gadamer said in a 1968 conversation, the line of demarcation could be drawn between those who drink wine and those who drink beer. No one has drawn the contrast with more conceptual precision than Kant (who, incidentally, as a cosmopolitan Hanseatic Königsberger, drank wine, but this doesn't diminish Gadamer's point) in his "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht," Siebenter Satz: "Wir sind im hohen Grade durch Kunst und Wissenschaft kultiviert. Wir sind zivilisiert, bis zum Überlästigen, zu allerlei gesellschaftlicher Artigkeit und Anständigkeit. Aber, uns für schon moralisiert zu halten, daran fehlt noch sehr viel. Denn die Idee der Moralität gehört noch zur Kultur; der Gebrauch dieser Idee aber, welcher nur auf das Sittenähnliche in der Ehrliebe und der äußeren Anständigkeit hinausläuft, macht bloß die Zivilisierung aus."

means men could be habituated to a life of virtue and made capable of a relatively complete practical life, a life of happiness. As the ultimate phase of this development, Aristotle was able to articulate the consummatory mode of the happy life, available only to a very few lucky citizens, as the satisfaction of the desire to comprehend, the sheer pleasure of seeing the differences of things and seeing 'how the world hangs together in the broadest possible sense,' how every individual thing is a part of the whole by the activity of being, which points, προς εν ('*pros hen*'), to its own perfection (*Meta*, IV, 1). This seeing is what Aristotle called the most complete activity, 'theorizing' (θεωρειν, '*theorein*') and what Hegel would later call 'Spekulation.' The activity of individuals *qua* individuals (τοδε τι, '*tode ti*') Aristotle[28] called ενεργεια, '*energeia*.'

We may catch first sight of post-Hellenic or Stoic will by considering the brief dialogue depicted by Sextus Empiricus (*Adv Math*, VIII, 275–77) between a Stoic and a Sceptic. The topic of discussion is how to identify the human spirit. It was not a topic that had arisen for the *politan* Greeks, who first discovered the human spirit and for whom that discovery was a matter of tacit knowledge and oral tradition. For them 'spirituality' did not attach to any given species of animal, not even to the species *anthropos*.[29] In the world of the *polis* the potentiality for human spirituality was only fully[30] realized by a very few males:[31] those who had had the good fortune of being brought up and habituated

---

"To a high degree we are, through art and science, *cultured*. We are *civilized*—perhaps too much for our own good—in all sorts of social grace and decorum. But to consider ourselves as having reached *morality*—for that, much is lacking. The ideal of morality belongs to culture; its use for some simulacrum of morality and the love of honor and outward decorum constitutes mere civilization." Kant, "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View" (1784), in *Kant on History*, L.W. Beck, tr., Indianapolis: The Library of Liberal Arts, 1963, p. 21. For further development of the contrast '*civilisation*'/'*Kultur*,' affirmed by Nietzsche and Spengler but rejected by Freud, see the various writings of Norbert Elias.

[28] See my detailed analysis, "Individuality in Aristotle: Contexts of τοδε τι," on my website.

[29] In the world of the *polis* the concept of 'human' rights would have been quite unintelligible, and that of 'animal' rights as well. The *politans* were no 'speciesists' in the sense of Peter Singer. Speciesism was a Stoic invention (see (4) in the following paragraph) and, as human rights accorded to individuals *qua* recognized, but not *qua* biological (e.g., touched by the Divine at biological conception), has become for modernity a precious and indispensable legacy. Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (Rph) shows how this Stoic legacy can be, and has been, integrated into an Aristotelianism for the modern world, i.e., Hegelianism, by showing how all who are legal 'persons' (Rph I) and moral 'subjects' (Rph II) are also ethical 'individuals' (Rph III) by habituation in the three *modern* spheres of life—'the family' (a sphere of 'love,' unlike the ancient *oikos*), 'civil society' (unprecedented in the ancient world and hence unknown to Aristotle), and 'the state' (a sphere that does not exclude 'barbarians,' unlike the ancient *polis*), that are, by contrast with the 'elitist' world of ancient Greece, shared by all recognized members of the species 'man,' not *qua* biological but *qua* recognized. This argument is developed in my "Moral Subjects and Ethical Individuals," *Hegel-Jahrbuch 1987*, pp. 62ff.; "The Global Dimension of Ethical Life," a lecture at the National University of Singapore, January 1994; and "What is 'Civil Society'?," a lecture at Fudan University, Shanghai, and Beida University, Beijing, and elsewhere in China, 1996–97. These lectures appear on my website.

It is remarkable how this process of global practical integration has accelerated since WW II and is now, in the 21st century, empirically pointing toward the completion theoretically anticipated by Hegel. These developments have little to do with what Kojève and Fukuyama call 'the end of history.'

[30] It is instructive to note that the wives, children, and slaves of citizens were regarded as *more fully* 'spiritual' than resident aliens (metics), some of whom, like the Cephalus who appears in Plato's *Republic*, Bk. I, were very rich, and in the case of Cephalus' son, Lysias, very literate. See Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 1260a30ff.

[31] By modern (Stoic) standards the *politans* were 'sexists,' a notion that would have been as unintelligible to them as 'humanism' or 'speciesism.' For the Greek practice of 'human spirituality' (*Geist* in the sense of Hegel and Snell), 'ethos' was all and biological categories were irrelevant. The notion of abortion as homicide would have been unthinkable because a fetus has acquired no (or very few—given recent studies of fetal acquaintance with the vocal patterns of

by *paideia* in a good *polis*. With the demise of the *polis* (ca. 322 BC[32]), that intra-species identity was no longer possible. It appears from Sextus' dialogue that the Stoics (he calls them 'the dogmatists') had at first tried to extend the *politan* notion of human spirituality to all members of that animal species which speaks. But they were apparently met by the sceptical objection that that definition could not exclude certain birds like parrots. Sextus then has his Stoic rejoin the argument thus:

> (1) They [the Stoic dogmatists] say that it is not uttered speech (*logos proforikos*) but internal speech *(logos endiathetos*) by which man differs from non-rational animals, for crows and parrots and jays utter articulate sounds. (2) Nor is it by the merely simple impression that he differs (for they too receive impressions), but by impressions produced by inference and combination. (3) This amounts to his possessing the conception of 'following' [inference] and directly grasping, on account of 'following,' the idea of sign. For sign is itself of the kind 'If this, then that.' (4) Therefore the existence of signs follows from man's nature [the origin of 'speciesism'] and constitution.[33]

This monumental and ground-breaking distinction, between 'uttered speech,' *logos proforikos*, and 'internal speech,'[34] *logos endiathetos*, marks the advent of a way of speaking and thinking that will become 'second nature' for philosophy and much else in the West, sedimented and echoed for example in Hobbes' distinction between 'verbal discourse' and 'mental discourse.' I say 'philosophy and much else' because the Stoic identification of human spirituality with a distinctively human semiotic is what facilitated a Habermasianly 'emancipatory' movement in human affairs. Perhaps its most decisive incarnation has been by means of the Christian notion that all persons are equal in the

---

those, usually parents, it hears pre-natally) ethically significant habits, which are what simply constitute spirituality in the Hellenic or *politan* world.

[32] In that year, Antipater, Alexander's old and trusted general in Macedonia, who, incidentally, had funded the establishment of Aristotle's Lyceum in Athens, put down a hopeless revolt, fomented on word of Alexander's death by the aging Demosthenes, and thus ended all practical illusion of an independent *polis*. Of course the 'myth' of the *polis* persisted and was again and again exploited for political purposes until well after the Roman annexation of Greece in 146 BC, under Lucius Sulla, who, incidentally, confiscated the unpublished manuscripts of Aristotle and brought them to Rome, where, after several botched attempts, they became the *Corpus Aristotelicum* at the hand of the Stoic Andronicus of Rhodes.

[33] Sextus Empiricus, *Adv Math*, VIII, 275–6 (SVF 2.223, in part), translation by A. Long & D. Sedley in *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Vol. 1, Cambridge: CUP, 1987, pp. 317–18.

[34] Max Mühl, Richard Sorabji, and others have said that the Stoic bifurcation of the *logos* is adumbrated in Plato and Aristotle. As to Aristotle, "εν τη ψυχη ('*en te psyche*')," "in the soul," is indeed said at *An post* I 76b25, as cited by Sorabji *et al.*, but in most cases this amounts to a 'Stoic' misreading of Aristotle. Consideration of the same phrase in context at *An post* II, 19, 100a1 and 100a7 will make this clear, especially in light of Aristotle's treatment there of νους ('*nous*') as a εξις ('*hexis*'), or *Gewohnheit* or 'habit.' The difference between εν τη ψυχη ('*en te psyche*') and λογος ενδιαθετος ('*logos endiathetos*'), which doesn't occur in Aristotle, is manifest. In short, there is no notion in Aristotle of any sphere of 'human spirituality' or *Geist* that attaches to a biological species and is in any way analogous to the postulation of that substitute for *paideia* spirituality that the Stoics made with their notion of an 'inner logos.' For the anticipation of 'Stoicism' in Plato's Socrates, see note 37 below.

eyes of God (Rph § 62 A[35]) and that all human subjects are equally free to act,[36] to have a will of their own.[37]

The key Stoic move, the bifurcation of language (*logos*) into mental and verbal discourse, postulates a dividing line whose crossing *is* post-Hellenic will or Stoic willing. The Stoic 'position' takes 'inner' language, mental discourse, or 'meaning' to be the realm of truth, the only realm in which logical inferences can be performed and consequently, as Hobbes saw most clearly, the only realm in which demonstrative science can be had[38] and the only realm in which post-Hellenic will, will as an 'uncaused cause,' can be conceived. This is the birthplace of modern will.

The essence of Hellenic will turned 'outside-in' is the act of will as a boundary crossing, the transition from an undetermined and uncaused 'inner' to a determinate 'outer.'

Finally, and all too briefly, let us consider Philo, the inventor of the notion that the world was created out of nothing. His writings antedate the written sources (esp. Sextus) for our knowledge of the Stoic doctrine of the *logos endiathetos* and *logos proforikos*. Philo uses this doctrine most dramatically

---

35 "It is about a millennium and a half since the freedom of personality [divinely mediated and hence a *transcendently* mediated reciprocity] began through the spread of Christianity to blossom and gain recognition as a universal principle from a part, though still a small part, of the human race. But it was only yesterday [with the 1789 declaration of 'human rights'], we might say, that the principle of the freedom of property [the immanent reciprocity of legal persons and members of civil society] became recognized in some places." T.M. Knox, tr.

36 Subjects as moral agents (Rph II), each with a 'will' of its own, is a notion unknown in the Hellenic world. See Albrecht Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*, Berkeley: U of California P, 1982, pp. 20ff.

37 Nietzsche famously proclaimed that Christianity was 'Platonism for the people'; with greater justice we might say that Christianity became, especially in the hands of the great Tarsus-trained Stoic philosopher/tent-maker Saul, who became the Apostle Paul, 'Stoicism for the masses.'

Hegel and others have fully appreciated what I have called the 'emancipatory' moment of Stoicism. The story he tells in his lectures on the philosophy of history would be quite unintelligible without it. It is the vital element for the second step in the celebrated progression of worlds from (A) One is Free, to (B) Some are Free, to (C) All are Free. What sets Hegel apart is his insight into the fact that this story, for all its world-historical importance in the liberation of slaves and, more recently, women, is only a story—that history *qua* history is insusceptible of philosophical comprehension. He did not need a Karl Löwith to tell him that any attempt at a '*theory* of history' would require a 'secularization of the Judeo-Christian eschatology,' or the adaptation of what Hilary Putnam has called a 'God's-eye view.'

Many Hegel scholars have attempted to read the PhG as a strangely palimpsestic 'philosophy of history' and much effort has been spent trying to figure out 'its' strange 'historical' transitions and to determine how many times the PhG recapitulates human history. Such attempts are even more systematically misleading than those which try to read Hegel's 'idealism' as the fulfillment of the Kantian (and thus an intra-'Stoic') project. For the project of the PhG, as unequivocally stated in the WdL, is overcoming the 'Form of consciousness,' the 'opposition of consciousness,' and thereby rewinning speculative thought that will enable an encyclopedic fulfillment of the Aristotelian project in the modern world.

What we may call 'Hegel's original insight' was that Kant, who regarded the traditional appeal to divine intermediation as a "scandal," represented a rewinning of the original (pre-Philonic) Stoic 'position,' the 'Form of consciousness,' whereby the Stoic project might be subject to a *reductio ad absurdum*. The PhG is that *reductio*.

38 For Hobbes, all else, beyond 'mental discourse,' including physics, is *conjecture* (on this point Hobbes is as emphatic as, indeed more so than, Karl Popper or Paul Feyerabend). As he wrote in his Epistle Dedicatory to *Six Lessons to the Professors of Mathematics*, "Geometry, therefore, is demonstrable, for the lines and figures from which we reason are drawn and described [within, i.e., in the mind] by ourselves; and civil philosophy is demonstrable because we [likewise] make the commonwealth ourselves. But because of natural bodies we know not the construction, but seek it from effects, there lies no demonstration of what the causes be we seek for, but only of what they may be." Giambattista Vico, in *Principi di scienza nuova*, 1725 (in *Opere*, A. Battistini, ed., Milan: Mondadori, 1990, pp. 983–1222), entertained a similar notion of a knower *qua homo faber*, but his principles were more poetic than so explicitly Stoic as in Hobbes, albeit still Stoic.

in his allegorical interpretation of Moses and Aaron,[39] in which Moses *is* the *logos endiathetos* and Aaron *is* the *logos proforikos*.

Here is the text Philo interprets (*Exodus* 4, 10–17, in *The Jerusalem Bible* translation):

> Moses said to Yahweh, "But, my lord, never in my life have I been a man of eloquence, either before or since you have spoken to your servent. I am a slow speaker and not able to speak well." "Who gave man his mouth?" Yahweh answered him. "Who makes him dumb or deaf, gives him sight or leaves him blind? Is it not I, Yahweh? Now go, I shall help you to speak and tell you what to say."
>
> "If it please you, my Lord," Moses replied, "send anyone you will." At this, the anger of Yahweh blazed out against Moses, and he said to him, "There is your brother Aaron the Levite, is there not? I know that he is a good speaker. Here he comes to meet you. When he sees you, his heart will be full of joy. You will speak to him and tell him what message to give. I shall help you to speak, and him too, and instruct you what to do. He himself is to speak to the people in your place; he will be your mouthpiece, and you will be as the god inspiring him. And take this staff into your hand; with this you will perform the signs."

About which Philo writes (*De migratione*, 78): " … Moses is directed to take Aaron with him in addition, Aaron being the symbol of uttered speech [*logos proforikos*]. "Behold," says Yahweh, "is not Aaron your brother?" For one rational nature being the mother of them both, it follows of course that the offspring are brothers, "I know that he will speak." For it is the office of the mind [*logos endiathetos*] to comprehend, and of utterance [*logos proforikos*] to speak. "He," says Yahweh, "will speak for you." For the mind not being able to give an adequate exposition of the part which is assigned to it, uses its neighbor speech as an interpreter, for the purpose of explaining what it receives."[40]

By this Stoic device[41] Philo has achieved two innovations: (1) A radical departure from the Palestinian Jewish understanding of revelation, in which Yahweh 'spoke' to Moses, to a novel Alexandrian understanding of revelation, in which pre-uttered meaning, in the *logos endiathetos*, is conveyed to Moses, who then utters, in the *logos proforikos*, this message to his brother Aaron, who then puts it into polished spoken form for the Israelites.

Philo's second innovation is even more significant: (2) the *logos endiathetos* in man is now said to have a parallel in the case of Yahweh, which is said to be continuous with that of Moses.[42] In discussions of divine revelation it is customary to proceed from the presumed revealer, e.g., Yahweh, to the recipient of the revelation (as in Gilson, Löwith, etc.). But in this case it is clear that a device concocted to replace the sense of the human spirit (*Geist*) discovered in the *polis*, namely, the *logos*

---

39 Philo, *De migratione*, 77–78.

40 Translation by C.D. Yonge, with emendations.

41 The Stoic contrast *logos endiathetos*/*logos proforikos* may well have been suggested to Philo by the D-Scolium to *Iliad* 5.358 (for text see www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/ifa/ianthiel, pp. 221–222), in which the brothers Otus and Ephialtes are allegorically interpreted as *logos proforikos* and *logos endiathetos*, respectively. See Adam Kamesov, "The *Logos Endiathetos* and *Logos Proforikos* in Allegorical Interpretation," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 44 (2004) 163–181.

42 Philo, *Quis rerum*, 234–235; *De opificio Mundi*, 195; *De migratione*, 47–48.

endiathetos, has been effectively transferred from the human dimension of language to the mind of god. Just as that device, in the case of man, facilitated the invention of an 'uncaused causality,' the post-Hellenic will, in the 'secondary' case of god it facilitated the invention of god as the absolute originator of the universe, now understood as God's speech-act.

Both devices have, in the ensuing two thousand years, become deeply sedimented in the European, and now global, intellect. We now tend simply to presuppose, in our concepts and practices of legal responsibility, for example, that any human being is the source of *its* actions. We also assume that the world had an ultimate origination. Perhaps a reconsideration of the 'big bang' in physics might be an appropriate place to judge the significance of this brief history of the will.

KENLEY R. DOVE
New York, Venice