Journeys to Moriah: Hegel vs. Kierkegaard

Mark C. Taylor

Harvard Theological Review / Volume 70 / Issue 3-4 / October 1977, pp 305 - 326
DOI: 10.1017/S0017816000019957, Published online: 10 June 2011

JOURNEYS TO MORIAH: HEGEL VS. KIERKEGAARD

Mark C. Taylor

Williams College
Williamstown, MA 01267

Abraham, born in Chaldaea, had in youth already left a fatherland in his father's company. Now, in the plains of Mesopotamia, he tore himself free altogether from his family as well, in order to be a wholly self-subsistent, independent man, to be an overlord himself. . . . The same spirit which had carried Abraham away from his kin led him through his encounters with foreign peoples during the rest of his life; this was the spirit of self-maintenance in strict opposition to everything—the product of his thought raised to be the unity dominant over the nature which he regarded as infinite and hostile (for the only relationship possible between hostile entities is mastery of one by the other). With his herds Abraham wandered hither and thither over a boundless territory without bringing parts of it any nearer to him by cultivating and improving them. . . . The groves which often gave him coolness and shade he soon left again; in them he had theophanies, appearances of his perfect Object on High, but he did not tarry in them with the love which would have made them worthy of Divinity and participant in Him. He was a stranger on earth, a stranger to the soil and to men alike.[1]

One cannot weep over Abraham. One approaches him with a *horror religiosus*, as Israel approached Mount Sinai.—If then the solitary man who ascends Mount Moriah, which with its peak rises heaven-high above the plain of Aulis, if he be not a somnambulist who walks securely above the abyss while he who is stationed at the foot of the mountain and is looking on trembles with fear and out of reverence and dread dare not even call to him—if this man is disordered in his mind, if he had made a mistake![2]

I. Horror—Horror Religiosus?

Hegel had an uncanny ability to anticipate insights and criticisms of many of his most influential successors. His formulation of positions later developed by left-wing critics such as Marx, Feuerbach, and Bauer, as well as right-wing supports such as Martensen, Heiberg, and Göschel

[1]G. W. F. Hegel, *Early Theological Writings* (trans. T. M. Knox; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1971) 185-86. I have checked all the quotations from Hegel and Kierkegaard against the original German and Danish, and have corrected texts when necessary.

[2]Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* (trans. by Walter Lowrie; Princeton: Princeton University, 1970) 71-72.

is widely recognized and well documented.[3] Less frequently noted is Hegel's anticipation of important dimensions of Kierkegaard's philosophical and theological perspective. This oversight is largely the result of the failure of partisan commentators to recognize the complexity and the dialectical character of the Hegel-Kierkegaard relationship. We shall attempt to probe more deeply the theological and philosophical issues joining and separating Hegel and Kierkegaard by analyzing their alternative interpretations of Abraham.

Kierkegaard's discussion of Abraham forms the foundation of one of his best known and most popular works, *Fear and Trembling*. In this essay, Kierkegaard at once seeks to ascertain the religious significance of his personal experience and to elaborate a clearly articulated view of faithful existence. Abraham, journeying in lonely silence to Moriah to sacrifice Isaac to the transcendent Lord, represents the knight of faith in whom individual self-fulfillment is actualized most completely. Kierkegaard's entire authorship is unified by a consistent dialectical progression toward the authentic form of existence expressed in the life of Abraham.[4]

Hegel's early writings present a picture of Abraham that bears a striking resemblance to Kierkegaard's analysis in *Fear and Trembling*.[5] As always in such cases, the similarities and differences between Hegel and Kierkegaard are complex. While they agree about the main contours of the form of life embodied in Abraham, their interpretations of the significance of Abraham differ widely. In contrast to Kierkegaard's view of Abraham as the paradigm of authenticity, Hegel maintains that Abraham represents the extreme of alienation (later identified as the unhappy consciousness) which is the propaedeutic to the reconciliation disclosed in the incarnation. Hegel's entire philosophical system is unified by a consistent dialectical progression that seeks to sublate the inauthentic form of selfhood expressed in the life of Abraham.

Both Kierkegaard and Hegel approach Abraham in horror. For Kierkegaard's persona, Johannes de Silentio, this is a *horror religiosus* generated when he beholds the strenuous life of faith. For Hegel, this is a

[3]See, e.g.: Niels Thulstrup, *Kierkegaards forhold til Hegel og til den spekulative idealisme intil 1846* (København: Gyldendahl, 1967), and William J. Brazill, *The Young Hegelians* (New Haven: Yale University, 1970).

[4]I have examined the coherence of Kierkegaard's writings in *Kierkegaard's Pseudonymous Authorship: A Study of Time and the Self* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1975).

[5]This similarity is all the more remarkable when one realizes that these writings were not published until this century. Hence there would seem to be little likelihood of any direct influence of Hegel's analysis of Abraham on Kierkegaard's discussion. See *Hegels Theologische Jugendschriften* (ed. Herman Nohl; Tübingen: Mohr, 1907).

horror that arises from the encounter with the terrible tension of estrangement.

II. Faithful Wandering

In order to appreciate the significance of Hegel's interpretation of Abraham, it is helpful to place his analysis within the context of his early reflection and writing. During his student days at the Tübingen Stift, Hegel fell under the sway of Kantian philosophy. To Hegel and his classmates Hölderlin and Schelling, the coincidence of Kant's critical philosophy and events surrounding the French Revolution seemed to herald the dawn of a new epoch in human history. The principles of freedom and rationality elaborated with theoretical precision in Kant's three critiques appeared to be achieving concrete historical expression in the revolutionary struggle in France. The pervasive influence of Kant on Hegel's thinking throughout the 1790's is evident in his earliest writings. An essay of 1795 entitled "The Positivity of the Christian Religion" and *The Life of Jesus* (1795) disclose Hegel's attempt to uncover a completely rational religion that lies fully within the bounds of reason and is unencumbered by historical and revelational positivity. In the former manuscript, Hegel presents Christianity as a totally positive religion that has fallen from the moral purity essential to the faith of its founder. *The Life of Jesus* complements the positivity essay by attempting to present Jesus as a thoroughgoing Kantian moralist.

By the time of "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" (1799), Hegel's position has changed significantly.[6] The contact with outstanding leaders in the German romantic movement in Frankfurt and Jena forced Hegel to reevaluate Kant's philosophy.[7] Rather than seeing rational morality as the fulfillment of selfhood, Hegel now maintains that obedience to the moral law perpetuates the inward distention of the personality characteristic of alienation. This interpretation of Kantian morality enables Hegel to reconsider Christianity. In this essay, Jesus emerges as the proponent of a religion of love that stands in marked tension with pure morality. Moreover, the paradigm of positivity no longer is Christianity, but now is Judaism. It is within this context that

[6]As Harris points out, this work grew out of a series of shorter essays Hegel had been preparing throughout 1798 and 1799 (*Hegel's Development Toward the Sunlight, 1770–1801* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1972] 330). Unlike Harris, however, I believe "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" represents a decisive turning point in Hegel's development. In following this line of argument, I side with Professor Dieter Henrich against Harris. See Harris, ibid., 294–95n, and Dieter Henrich, "Hegel und Hölderlin," *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971) 9–40.

[7]For details of Hegel's relation to romanticism, see: Henrich, ibid.; and M. C. Taylor, "Love and Forms of Spirit: Hegel vs. Kierkegaard," *Kierkegaardiana*, vol. 10 (ed. Niels Thulstrup; København: C. A. Reitzel, 1977) 95–116.

Hegel elaborates his interpretation of Abraham.[8] Hegel insists that Abraham is the quintessential expression of the spirit of Judaism.[9]

"The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" is the first significant anticipation of Hegel's mature position. The discussion of love represents a decisive advance beyond the perspective of the Enlightenment and foreshadows pivotal Hegelian notions such as *Geist* and *Vernunft*. In addition to this, the essay contains the rudiments of the dialectical structure upon which Hegel's philosophical system is built. One cannot understand Hegel's view of Abraham apart from the dialectical progression of the essay. Abraham plays a central role in the story of the movement of human spirit from innocence through alienation to reconciliation.

Hegel presents the faith of Abraham as a response to the conflict engendered by the separation of human consciousness from its natural milieu, mythically depicted in the Old Testament flood narrative. Prior to the estrangement of man from nature, Hegel posits a state of harmonious unification in which humankind finds itself at home in, or at one with its world. With the unleashing of dissolutive flood waters, "Formerly friendly or tranquil nature abandoned the equipose of her elements, requited the faith the human race had in her with the most destructive, invincible, irresistible hostility."[10] Hegel suggests three alternative reactions to the breach between man and nature. The characteristic Greek response is captured by the beautiful pair, Deucalion and Pyrrha who, "after the flood in their time, invited men once again to friendship with the world, to nature, made them forget their need and their hostility in joy and pleasure, made a peace of *love*, were the progenitors of more beautiful peoples, and made their age the mother of newborn natural life which maintained its bloom of youth" (185–86). In contrast to this effort to restore harmony lost, the Jewish reaction to the flood maintains the hostility between man and nature by attempting to establish human mastery over natural forces. Two possibilities of mastery emerge. Nimrod "persuaded men that they had acquired all good things for themselves and by their own courage and strength" (184), and hence could dominate nature by means of their own activity. Uncertain of the efficacy of human agency, Noah sought mastery over nature through a product of his own reflection.

[8]Harris has carefully documented Hegel's preoccupation with the figure of Abraham throughout this period. The materials finally included in "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate" are abstracted from numerous drafts on Abraham written between 1797 and 1799. Harris, *Hegel's Development*, 27ff.

[9]It should be noted that Hegel's view of Judaism does not change significantly throughout his career.

[10]Hegel, *Early Theological Writings*, 182. Hereafter page references to this text are given in the body of the essay.

> It was in a thought-product that Noah built the shattered world together again; his thought-produced ideal [*gedachtes Ideal*] he turned into a [real] Being and then set everything else over against it, so that in this opposition realities were reduced to thoughts, i.e., to something mastered. This Being promised to him to confine within their limits the elements which were his servants, so that no flood was ever again to destroy mankind[11] (183).

Abraham rendered explicit the implications of Noah's attempted resolution of the human dilemma brought by the severance from the natural domain.

Abraham's entire existence was testimony to his devotion to the radically transcendent Lord who is the ground of all reality.[12] Having suffered separation from the natural whole of which he had been an integral member,

> Mastery was the only possible relationship in which Abraham could stand to the infinite world opposed to him; but he was unable himself to make this mastery actual, and it therefore remained ceded to his Ideal. He himself also stood under his Ideal's domination, but the Idea was present in his mind, he served the Idea, and so he enjoyed his Ideal's favor; and since its divinity was rooted in his contempt for the whole world, he remained its only favorite (188–89).

This is a particularly rich passage and requires considerable comment. Rather than seeking immediate reconciliation with the totality from which he had fallen, Abraham tried to establish a domination over the surrounding world that was mediated by an exclusive relation to the Lord of nature and history. Hegel expresses the heart of Judaism represented in Abraham as "the spirit of self-maintenance in strict opposition to otherness"[13] (186). There were, however, multiple oppositions requisite for Abraham's self-maintenance. On the most basic level, there was the opposition between man and nature (consciousness and world, subject and object) that initiated the

[11]Hegel's argument at this point is a remarkable anticipation of Feuerbach's analysis of the origin and the function of religion developed in *Lectures on the Essence of Religion* and of Freud's position in *The Future of an Illusion.* See *Lectures on the Essence of Religion* (trans. Ralph Manheim; New York: Harper & Row, 1967) 131, 250–54d; *The Future of an Illusion* (trans. W. D. Robson-Scott; New York: Doubleday, 1964) 21-28.

[12]It should be evident that the essential features of Hegel's famous analysis of the master-slave dialectic developed in the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* are already present in his discussion of the God-self relation. What we do not see at this stage in his thought is the dialectical reversal by which the slave becomes the master and the master becomes the slave. See *The Phenomenology of Mind* (trans. J. B. Baillie; New York: Harper & Row, 1967) 229–35.

[13]In Hegel's later writings, the oppositional quality of Abraham's faith is incorporated in his interpretation of *Verstand.* According to the principles of understanding, "the determinations of thought are absolutely exclusive and different and remain unalterably independent in relation to each other." *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (trans. E. B. Spiers and J. B. Sanderson; New York: Humanities Press, 1968) 2. 18–19.

movement toward the reintegration of opposites. In addition to this, there was the opposition between God and world, creator and created, master and mastered. Hegel explains:

> The whole world Abraham regarded as simply his opposite; if he did not take it to be a nullity, he looked on it as sustained by the God who was alien to it. Nothing in nature was supposed to have any part in God; everything was simply under God's mastery (187).

Through the relationship to God, Abraham attempted to maintain himself in opposition to the hostile powers of nature.[14] In this process a further opposition emerged. As a member of the created order, Abraham stood opposed to the wholly other God upon whom he was absolutely dependent. The positive relation to the divine for which Abraham longed could be established only by unqualified obedience to God expressed in a thoroughly negative relation to world and to self.[15] Negation of world and self and affirmation of God stood in a completely dialectical relationship. From this perspective, it becomes apparent that the Abrahamic "solution" to the alienation of man from nature replaced one form of slavery with a more profound servitude. The price of the mastery over nature was bondage to a transcendent Lord whose demands upon the individual are infinite.

Abraham's heteronomous obedience to transcendent authority deepened his separation from and heightened his opposition to his world. Hegel points out that "The first act which made Abraham the progenitor of a nation was a disseverance which snapped the bonds of communal life and love. The entirety of the relationships in which he had hitherto lived with men and nature, these beautiful relationships of his youth he spurned" (185). Abraham became a faithful wanderer, a lonely nomad who "was a stranger on earth, a stranger to men and soil alike. Among men he always was a foreigner" (196). The struggle to avoid constricting ties to the surrounding world sometimes became violent. At certain junctures in Jewish history, obedience to God manifested itself in the effort to slay infidels.[16] For Abraham, the supreme test of faith was his willingness to obey the divine demand to sacrifice his own son. Only in such an extraordinary act of negation

[14]As we shall see in what follows, Abraham's exclusive relation to God is the source of further opposition.

[15]For a later statement of this position, see *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* 2. 173–74, 188–89, 207–08.

[16]See also *Lectures on the Philosophy,* 2. 196, 210; and *The Philosophy of History* (trans. J. Sibree; New York: Dover Publications, 1956) 195. Hegel's discussion of Judaism bears an interesting relationship to Marx's analysis in "On the Jewish Question," *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society* (trans. L. D. Easton and K. H. Guddat; New York: Doubleday, 1967) 216–48.

could complete devotion to God be affirmed. Anticipating his discussion of Christianity, Hegel writes:

> Love alone was beyond his [Abraham's] power; even the one love he had, his love for his son, even his hope of posterity—the one mode of extending his being, the one mode of immortality he knew and hoped for—could depress him, trouble his all-exclusive heart and disquiet it to such an extent that even this love he once wished to destroy; and his heart was quieted only through the certainty of the feeling that this love was not so strong as to render him unable to slay his beloved son with his own hand (187).

From the viewpoint represented by Abraham, self-realization is inextricably bound to religious faith. Individual selfhood is most completely actualized in the isolation from other persons and the opposition to the natural realm established by total devotion[17] to the transcendent Lord over against whom the individual always stands. This is the end toward which "the spirit of self-maintenance in strict opposition to everything" is directed.

What for Abraham was the goal of human striving, is for Hegel the negative moment of alienation which must itself be negated if reconciliation is to become actual. Rather than healing the breach between man and nature, Abraham's type of faith exacerbates the opposition between the individual and his social and natural world. The faithful wanderer remains alienated from his natural environment and from the rest of the human race. Even the ostensibly sustaining relationship to God really represents a further dimension of estrangement. God remains other—wholly other—apart from and opposed to finite persons. Moreover, the infinity of the demands placed upon the individual by this authoritarian Master necessarily renders reconciliation between self and God eschatological.[18] This leads to the final and most excruciating aspect of alienated existence—the alienation of the self from itself. Unable to fulfill completely the commandments of the Lord, the believer becomes guilty. He is not what he ought to be. Reality and ideality clash in his own personality and perpetuate precisely the inward tension he has been attempting to overcome. As Hegel later points out in the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*,

> . . . we have here that dualizing of self-consciousness within itself, which lies essentially in the notion of mind; but unity of the two elements is not yet present.

[17]I use the word "devotion" in this context to call attention to the parallel between Hegel's analysis of Abraham and his discussion of the "unhappy consciousness" in the *Phenomenology*. In the later work, devotion (*Andacht*) is one of the fundamental ways in which the believer approaches his God. The term suggests the servility of the relationship.

[18]The abstract otherness of God and the quantitative infinity of divine demands are definitive characteristics of what Hegel later labels the "bad infinite." See, e.g., *The Science of Logic* (trans. A. V. Miller; New York: Humanities Press, 1969) 139-43.

> Hence the *unhappy consciousness*, the alienated soul which is the consciousness of self as a divided nature, a doubled and merely contradictory being.[19]

Self against nature, self against selves, self against God, self against itself—the unhappy consciousness that is the fate of Abrahamic faith. Judaism, Jean Hyppolite explains, "poses essence beyond existence and God outside of man. By recognizing the duality of the extremes, I stand with the nonessential. I am merely nothingness; my essence is transcendent. But that my essence is not in me but posed outside of me necessarily entails an effort on my part to rejoin myself so as to free myself from nonessence. Human life, thus, is an unceasing effort to attain itself. But this effort is futile, because immutable consciousness is posed as transcendent *a principio*."[20] Put more briefly, for Abraham, "melancholy, unfelt unity was the supreme reality"(194). Hegel summarizes his interpretation of Abraham when he suggests that the guiding principle of the Jewish religion

> . . . was the spirit inherited from its forefathers, i.e., was the infinite object [*das unendliche Objekt*], the essence [*der Inbegriff*] of all truth and all relations, which thus is strictly the sole infinite subject, for the object can only be called 'object' in so far as man with the life given him is presupposed and called the living or the absolute subject. This, so to say, is the sole synthesis; the antitheses are the Jewish nation, on the one hand, and, on the other, the world and all the rest of the human race. These antitheses are the genuine pure objects; i.e., this is what they become in contrast with an existent, an infinite, outside them; they are without intrinsic worth and empty, without life; they are not even something dead—a nullity [*ein Nichts*]—yet they are a something only in so far as the infinite object makes them something, i.e., makes them not something which *is*, but something *made* which for itself has no life, no rights, no love (191).

As we have noted, however, Hegel's analysis of Abraham cannot be understood apart from the dialectical progression of the essay as a whole. Hegel insists that Abraham's faith and the Jewish religion are moments in the unfolding of human spirit that prepare the way for the more complete form of selfhood revealed in Christianity. From emptiness comes fullness; from bondage, freedom; from alienation, reconciliation.

III. Faithful Communion

Jesus, Hegel argues, set himself against the entire spirit and fate of the Jewish religion. Whereas Judaism emerged from the negation of primordial unity, Jesus proclaimed the negation of this negation which

[19] *Phenomenology of Mind,* 251.

[20] Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (trans. S. Cherniak and J. Heckman; Evanston: Northwestern University, 1974) 251.

reconciles or reintegrates self and other in harmonious interrelationship.

> Over against commands which required a bare service of the Lord, a direct slavery, an obedience without joy, without pleasure or love, i.e., the commands in connection with the service of God, Jesus set their precise opposite, a human urge and so a human need. Religious practice is the most holy, the most beautiful, of all things; it is our endeavor to unify the discords necessitated by our development and our attempt to exhibit the unification in the *ideal* as fully *existent*, as no longer opposed to reality, and thus to express and confirm it in a deed (206).

Each of the discords perpetuated by Abraham's faith is overcome in the religion of Jesus. To see how this is so, it is necessary to return to the *telos* of the Jewish spirit.

We have argued that the alienation inherent in Abraham's form of existence finds its most profound expression in the self's opposition to itself. Unable to fulfill God's law, the individual becomes guilty, thereby deepening his separation from and establishing his opposition to the Lord. As the previous text suggests, Hegel believes this alienation to be inseparable from the servility of such a God-self or Master-slave relationship. Recalling the significant influence Kant exercised on Hegel's thought during this period, we might suspect Hegel to oppose this positivistic, authoritarian faith and heteronomous legality with a rational faith and an autonomous morality. As we have noted, this is precisely the line of argument developed in "The Positivity of the Christian Religion." But by 1798, Hegel thinks that Kant's position preserves and does not resolve the dilemma of self-alienation. He goes so far as to suggest that Kantian morality is an extension of the spirit of Judaism. By absolutizing the distinction between universal, rational moral law and idiosyncratic, natural inclination, Kant internalizes the man/nature opposition in a way that necessitates the self's opposition to itself. The essential difference between the heteronomous obedience of Abraham and the autonomous conduct of the Kantian moralist is not that the former enslaves himself, while the latter is free, but that the former has his lord outside himself, while the latter carries his lord in himself. Even the purest moral striving leads to continued self-alienation: particularity set against universality, inclination against obligation, desire against duty, passion against reason, self against self.

Hegel maintains that Jesus represents "a spirit raised above morality." The Sermon on the Mount, Hegel argues, "does not teach reverence for the laws; on the contrary, it exhibits that which fulfills the law and makes law superfluous" (212). Love emerges as the means by which the law, Jewish or Kantian, is simultaneously fulfilled and annulled. Through love intrapersonal disintegration is sublated by the integration of inclination and obligation. Since the lover *wants* to fulfill

his obligation to the beloved, desire and duty do not oppose one another. Discussing love in a passage that indicates his early disaffection with Kant's moral philosophy, Hegel suggests:

> . . . the inclination [to act as the laws may command], a virtue, is a synthesis in which the law (which, because it is universal, Kant always calls something 'objective') loses its universality and the subject its particularity; both lose their opposition, while in the Kantian conception of virtue this opposition remains, and the universal becomes the master and the particular the mastered. . . . In the 'fulfillment' of both the laws and duty, their concomitant, however, the moral disposition, etc. ceases to be the universal, opposed to inclination, and inclination ceases to be particular, opposed to the law, and therefore this correspondence of law and inclination is life, and, as the relation of differents to one another, [is] love . . .[21] (214–15).

Love unifies the personality by reconciling the is and the ought within the self.

Love, however, is not simply an intrasubjective phenomenon. The cultivation of a loving disposition leads to the reunification of the self with its natural and social world. Reflecting the influence of the romantics, Hegel contrasts to the desacralized world of the Jewish religion[22] a cosmos sacralized by the omnipresence of the divine. Hegel contends that the truth disclosed in the incarnation is the coinherence of the infinite and the finite. God is immanent in, and not radically transcendent to the world. Given the mutual indwelling of the infinite and the finite, the relationship of the finite to the infinite presupposes the affirmation and not the negation of the finite. Jesus proclaimed that "nature is holier than the temple" devoted to an alien God (208). In more general terms, Jesus insisted that the individual is not to withdraw from, but is to become involved with the ongoing worldly process. Reconciliation is impossible apart from the restitution of unity with the natural determinants of existence, both within (i.e., sensuous inclination) and without the self.

With respect to the individual's social world, Hegel's contention that love is the means by which alienation is negated implies that self-reconciliation must be mediated by reconciliation with other selves. Against the individualism of Abraham in which self-identity is maintained by virtue of opposition to otherness, Hegel argues, selfhood is inherently social; self-identity is fully relational. Professor Stephen Crites points out that "Although lovers remain distinct from one

[21]This way of stating the argument points toward the complex epistemological analyses developed in Hegel's mature system. The attempt to reconcile self and world, self and God, and self and self, is nothing other than the effort to establish absolute knowledge.

[22]And, we might add, of Enlightenment philosophy in general, and Kantian philosophy in particular.

another, they are no longer foreign to one another, no longer in opposition to one another, no longer mutually limiting as mere objects are."[23] In love, selves overcome isolated individuality and abstract opposition, and maintain self-identity through relationship to each other. Borrowing the organic metaphor that had been revitalized by nineteenth-century romantics, Hegel suggests that "each separate lover is one organ in a living whole" (308). The whole, of course, is nothing other than the relationship itself. The members, in this case, the lovers, both sustain and are sustained by their relationship. Organs and organism, lovers and love, relata and relationship have no independent reality, but live only in and through each other.

The difficult point to understand in the complex analysis of the nature of relationship that grows out of Hegel's examination of love is that relationship is at once the source of unity and distinction. Separation of self and other need not imply hostile opposition, but can entail a distinction that is simultaneously a unification. Hyppolite's analysis again is helpful: "Love is the miracle through which two become one without, however, completely suppressing the duality. Love goes beyond the categories of objectivity and makes the essence of life actually real by preserving difference within union."[24] Self and other are joined in a substantial unity that also establishes their determinate distinction from one another. Love presupposes both the unity of and the difference between the lovers. When the purely dialectical character of this relationship is grasped, we can see the basis of Hegel's contention that self-reconciliation must be mediated by the reconciliation with other. From the lovers' perspective, genuine self-realization is impossible apart from the relationship to each other. The particular identity of the lover grows out of the association with the beloved. Self-identity and relation-to-other are not exclusive opposites as Abraham had supposed, but in the final analysis, are inseparable. Lovers find themselves in each other, and in so doing, sublate each other's otherness or foreign character. Relationship to each other is at the same time self-relation. In love lordship and bondage, domination and submission, give way to mutuality and comm*union*.

> In contrast to the Jewish reversion to obedience, reconciliation in love is a liberation; in contrast to the re-recognition [*der Wiederanerkennung*] of lordship, it is the cancellation of lordship in the restoration of the living bond, of that spirit of love and mutual faith which, considered in relation to lordship, is the highest freedom. This situation is [for the Jew] the most incomprehensible opposite of the Jewish spirit (241).

[23]Stephen Crites, *The Problem of the "Positivity" of the Gospel in Hegel's Dialectic of Alienation and Reconciliation* (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1961) 30.

[24]Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, 164.

This freedom in, and not from, relationship is, for Hegel, genuine freedom—the abrogation of heteronomy and the achievement of autonomy. A unity that sustains distinction, and distinction that generates unity. Twoness-in-oneness and oneness-in-twoness; identity-within-difference; the miracle of love . . . the fulfillment of selfhood. Hegel identifies this faithful communion of loving individuals with the Kingdom of God.

> What Jesus calls the 'Kingdom of God' is the living harmony of men, their fellowship in God; it is the development of the divine among men, the relationship with God which they enter through being filled with the Holy Spirit; i.e., that of becoming his sons and living in the harmony of their developed many-sidedness and their entire being and character. In this harmony their many-sided consciousness chimes with one spirit and their many different lives with one life, but, more than this, by its means the partitions against other godlike beings are abolished, and the same living spirit animates the different beings, who therefore are no longer merely similar but one; they make up not a collection [*eine Versammlung*] but a communion [*eine Gemeine*], since they are unified not in a universal, a concept . . . , but through life and through love (277–78).

This text both underscores the intersubjective character of Hegel's interpretation of authentic selfhood and points toward the final dimension of alienation negated by love—toward the reconciliation of self and God. Hegel's exploration of love leads to the conclusion that love, which "excludes all opposition and neither restricts nor is restricted, is not finite at all," but is infinite (304). In other words, love is divine, or God *is* love. Hegel agrees with 1 John 4:16: "God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him." It should be clear that Hegel believes Jewish and Christian notions of God and of the God-self relation to be polar opposites. [25] From Jesus' point of view, God can never be an "infinite Object," for between man and God, there is no "cleft of objectivity and subjectivity; one is to the other an other only in that one recognizes the other; both are one" (265). Hegel reiterates this important point when he delineates the conditions of the possibility of faith.

> 'God is spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.' How could anything but a spirit know a spirit? The relation of spirit to spirit is a feeling of harmony, is their unification [*Vereinigung*]; how could heterogeneity be unified? Faith in the divine is only possible if in the believer himself there is a divine element which rediscovers itself, its own nature, in that on which it believes, even if it be unconscious that what it has found *is* its own nature [26] (266).

[25] In fact, Hegel sometimes sounds like a Marcionite.

[26] This text is an explicit anticipation of Hegel's mature position. In his completed system, spirit and reason play a role strictly parallel to the notion of love in the early writings. The *telos* of Hegel's entire philosophical endeavor is precisely the reconciliation prefigured in the analysis of love.

The faithful appropriation of the identity of the infinite and the finite, the divine and the human, God and self, is the negation of the last vestige of alienation and brings complete atonement.

In sum, love opposes opposition, negates negation. It is the power that reconciles the opposites left sundered in Abraham's faith. Hegel concludes that love "deprives man's opposite of all foreign character, and discovers life itself without any further defect. In love the separate does still remain, but as something united and no longer as something separate; life [in the subject] senses life [in the object]" (305). In love, self and other, subjectivity and objectivity, are unified. "Only through love is the might of objectivity broken, for love upsets its whole sphere" (247). Or as Hegel states tersely elsewhere, "in love alone are we at one with the object, so that there is no mastery or being mastered."[27] Self at one with nature, with selves, with God, with itself—the peace of atonement, the joy of unity regained. Faithful communion rather than faithful wandering.[28]

IV. Faithful Solitude

While Hegel regards Abraham's form of life as the estrangement Christian belief seeks to overcome, Kierkegaard views Abraham as the ideal knight of faith in whom authentic selfhood is ideally represented. As with Hegel, Kierkegaard's argument cannot be grasped adequately apart from the context within which he places his interpretation of Abraham. *Fear and Trembling* is an integral part of Kierkegaard's intricate pseudonymous authorship. Throughout this authorship, Kierkegaard carefully charts the dialectical progression from less to more complete forms of selfhood. By means of various personae, he explores different stages on life's way. Each pseudonym presents an ideal personality type that embodies a particular "life-view" [*Livs-Anskuelse*]. The alternative life-views or stages are neither randomly selected nor arranged, but grow out of Kierkegaard's analysis of the

[27]Quoted by Harris, *Hegel's Development,* 316n.

[28]Throughout this section of the discussion, we have stressed the way in which Hegel's analysis of love foreshadows central aspects of his developed system. One significant difference should be noted. At this stage, Hegel does not think that the unity apprehended in love can be grasped through rational reflection. To the contrary, reflection ruptures the harmonious unity established in love. "The connection of infinite and finite is of course a 'holy mystery,' because this connection is life itself. Reflective thinking, which partitions life, can distinguish it into infinite and finite, and then it is only the restriction, the finite regarded by itself, which affords the concept of man as opposed to the divine. But outside reflective thinking, and in truth, there is no such restriction" (262). Clearly, Hegel's position on the role of reason in the achievement of reconciliation changes radically. As we have suggested, reason later fulfills the function previously accomplished by love.

structure and development of the self.[29] In a manner reminiscent of Hegel, the Kierkegaardian dialectic of existence includes three fundamental moments: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious.[30] There is a striking similarity in the formal structure and progression described by Hegel and Kierkegaard.[31] As early as "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," Hegel had identified the dialectical structure that underlies his entire system.

> The culmination of faith, the return to the Godhead whence man is born, closes the circle of man's development. Every thing lives in the Godhead, every living thing is its child, but the child carries the unity, the connection, the concord with the entire harmony, undisturbed though undeveloped, in itself. It begins with faith in gods outside oneself, with fear, until through its actions it has [isolated and] separated itself more and more; but then it returns through associations to the original unity which now is developed, self-produced, and sensed as a unity. The child now knows God, i.e., the spirit of God is present in the child, issues from its restrictions, annuls the modification, and restores the whole. God, the Son, the Holy Spirit! (273).

As our analysis of Hegel's view of Abraham has disclosed, Hegel plots the movement from the harmonious though undifferentiated unification of self and other (i.e., nature, selves, God, and self), through the negation of this unity and the development of differentiation, alienation, and opposition, to the final stage of reintegration in which self and other are reconciled in a unity that maintains, rather than negates difference. The *telos* renders explicit what was implicit in the *archē*. But the end is not simply a return to the beginning, for in the process individual selfhood emerges as self-conscious and comes to recognize its internal relation to the totality in and through which it gains determinate identity. It is clear that in his early writings, Hegel understands the Jewish spirit to play a pivotal role in this dialectic. Abraham represents the negative moment of estrangement that lies between primordial and restored harmony. Abraham wanders between the Garden and the Kingdom. Since Hegel is convinced that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny,[32] Abraham becomes the estranged Everyman.

Kierkegaard's dialectic of existence follows the general direction mapped in the first two moments of Hegel's analysis. The movement through the Kierkegaardian stages is marked by the increasing

[29]These themes are developed in more detail in the first two chapters of my *Kierkegaard's Pseudonymous Authorship*.

[30]In some contexts, Kierkegaard presents refinements of this threefold scheme. For our purposes, however, the triadic structure is most important.

[31]In their eagerness to delineate the differences separating Hegel and Kierkegaard, most commentators overlook the no less significant positive relation between their positions. This essay as a whole attempts to underscore the necessity to reconsider the Hegel-Kierkegaard relationship.

[32]Hegel, of course, does not use biological language to make this point.

differentiation of self and other by which individual selfhood achieves its most radical expression. For Kierkegaard, the whole pathos of human striving is directed to the clear delineation of the individual vis-à-vis the natural and social environment and over against the wholly other God. Kierkegaard believes that the third moment of the Hegelian dialectic is in fact a return to the nondifferentiation characteristic of the first moment.[33] In other words, Hegel's effort to reintegrate self and other negates the very individuality in which Kierkegaard sees authenticity. The identity peculiar to realized selfhood is established and maintained through contrast with and opposition to otherness. Instead of representing an intermediate stage between innocence and redemption (i.e., a negative moment that must be negated), Kierkegaard's Abraham is the model of realized individuality (i.e., the positive moment that must be affirmed). In order to understand more fully Kierkegaard's view of Abraham, and to gain a better sense of the similarities joining and differences separating Hegel and Kierkegaard, it will be helpful to consider briefly each of Kierkegaard's stages of existence.

The aesthetic stage consists of two forms of life that stand in polar tension: immediacy and reflection. Drawing on the image of the maturing child, Kierkegaard writes:

> And yet child-life and youth-life are dream-life, for the innermost thing, that which in the deepest sense is man, slumbers. The child is completely turned outward, its inwardness is extroversion, and to that extent the child is wide awake. But for a man, to be awake means to be eternally turned inward in inwardness, and so the child is dreaming, it dreams itself sensuously at one with everything [*drømmer sig sandseligt sammen med Alt*], almost to the extent of confounding itself with the sense impression [*forvexler sig selv med Sandse-Indtrykket*]. In comparison with the child, the youth is more turned inward, but in imagination; he dreams, or it is as though everything about him were dreaming.[34]

At the initial stage of Kierkegaard's dialectic, there is no differentiation between the self and its social and natural world. Completely dominated by sensuous inclination and lacking any clear self-consciousness, the child "dreams itself sensuously at one with everything." This

[33]In order to evaluate Kierkegaard's critique of the Hegelian system, it is essential to stress that Hegel insists that difference remains in the final unification. In terms of selfhood, the reconciliation of self with other enhances and does not abrogate individuality. From the perspective of Kierkegaard's criticism, the third moment of Hegel's dialectic is a simple reversion to the first moment. Our discussion has made it clear that this is contrary to Hegel's intention. Existentialist critics of Hegel have been too willing to accept Kierkegaard's misrepresentation of the Hegelian position.

[34]Kierkegaard, "The Joy of It—That Affliction Does not Bereave of Hope, But Recruits Hope," *Christian Discourses* (trans. Walter Lowrie; New York: Oxford University, 1962) 113.

identification of self and other begins to break down with the acquisition of cognitive capacities. Stated concisely, "reflection is the negation of immediacy."[35] Kierkegaard explains this process in more detail when he writes:

> That which annuls immediacy, therefore is language [*Sproget*]. If man could not speak then he would remain in immediacy. J.C. [Johannes Climacus] thought that this might be expressed by saying that immediacy therefore is reality and language is ideality. . . . Reality I cannot express in language, for to indicate it, I must use ideality, which is a contradiction, an untruth. But how is immediacy annulled? By mediacy, which annuls immediacy by presupposing it. What, then, is immediacy? It is reality. What is mediacy? It is the word. How does the word annul actuality? By talking about it. For that which is talked about is always *presupposed*. Immediacy is reality. Language is ideality.[36]

With the development of cognition and linguistic facility, consciousness and self-consciousness emerge. The individual is able to identify determinate objects in the field of sensual flux, to distinguish subjectivity and objectivity, and to differentiate himself from himself in the act of self-reflection. In other words, at the reflective pole of the aesthetic stage, there is a fundamental bifurcation of self and other, and of self from itself. Having differentiated subject and object, and having distinguished ideality from reality within oneself, free purposeful activity becomes possible for the first time. Since Kierkegaard contends that decision is constitutive of individual selfhood, he argues that the self becomes actual only after passing through immediacy to reflection. But a person can remain at the reflective aesthetic stage. In this case, life becomes the kind of fantastic imagination existence depicted in Schlegel's *Lucinde* and in Kierkegaard's "Diary of a Seducer." To move beyond the sensual immediacy or imaginative reflection of aesthetic existence,[37] it is necessary to engage the will in free decision. This thrusts one into the ethical stage.

While the primary characteristic of the aesthetic stage is the absence of the exercise of the self's freedom in choice, the fundamental feature of ethical existence is the emergence of decision. This marks a crucial phase in the process of self-differentiation and individuation. At the ethical stage, one becomes a self through decisions by which one forges a personal history. We have noted that reflection enables one to

[35]Kierkegaard, *The Point of View of My Works as an Author: A Report to History* (trans. Walter Lowrie; New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 73.

[36]Kierkegaard, *De Omnibus Dubitandum Est* (Trans. T. H. Croxall; Stanford: Stanford University, 1967) 148–49.

[37]Developing the Hegelian notion of *aufheben*, Kierkegaard argues that each earlier stage is taken up into (*ophaeve*) the later stage(s) in such a way that it is simultaneously displaced and preserved.

discriminate ideality and reality. With respect to the personality, reflection engenders a distinction between the real self (actuality or the is) and the ideal self (possibility or the ought). Self-fulfillment then requires the effort to realize the ideal, to actualize the possible, or to mediate the ought and the is through free resolution. Reflecting the significant influence Kant exercised on his thought, Kierkegaard argues that ethical ideality always expresses itself in terms of universality.

> The ethical as such is the universal, and as the universal it applies to everyone, which may be expressed from another point of view by saying that it applies every instant. . . . Conceived immediately as physical and psychical, the particular individual is the individual who has his *telos* in the universal, and his ethical task is to express himself constantly in it, to abolish his particularity in order to become the universal. . . . Whenever the individual after he has entered the universal feels an impulse to assert himself as the particular, he is in temptation, and he can labor himself out of this only by penitently abandoning himself as the particular in the universal.[38]

For the ethicist, authenticity involves the struggle to embody universal moral laws in concrete individual existence.

Kierkegaard, like Hegel, is unwilling to identify Kantian moralism with fully realized selfhood. As we have pointed out, the ethical stage is a clear advance over aesthetic existence. The ethicist differentiates himself from his social and natural matrix and constitutes his own identity by decisions in which he both seeks to control natural inclination and attempts to establish moral relations with other independent persons. Nevertheless Kierkegaard insists that complete individuality lies beyond the ethical domain. In the first place, the ethicist has no clear sense of his existence over against God. At this stage, the divine and the ethical are completely identified. For Kierkegaard, this is tantamount to a denial of the divine. Whereas Hegel criticizes the Kantian position for remaining too heteronomous, for Kierkegaard ethical existence is not heteronomous enough.

> The ethical is the universal, and as such it is again the divine. One has therefore a right to say that fundamentally every duty is a duty toward God; but if one cannot say more, then one affirms at the same time that properly I have no duty toward God. . . . Thus it is a duty to love one's neighbor, but in performing this duty I do not come into relation with God but with the neighbor whom I love. If I say then in this connection that it is my duty to love God, I am really uttering only a tautology, inasmuch as 'God' is in this instance used in an entirely abstract sense as the divine, i.e., the universal, i.e., duty. So the whole existence of the human race is rounded off completely like a sphere, and the ethical is at once its limit and its content. God becomes an invisible vanishing point, a powerless thought, His power being only in the ethical which is the content of existence (78).

[38]*Fear and Trembling*, 64–65. Hereafter page references to this text are given in the body of the essay.

Since authentic selfhood requires a clear recognition of the otherness of God and the dependence of self, ethical existence can only be an intermediate stage on life's way. In the second place, Kierkegaard maintains that individuality can never reach fulfillment in universal determinations. In a passage that at once criticizes the ethicist and points toward the final stage in this dialectical progression, Kierkegaard writes:

> Faith is precisely this paradox, that the individual as the individual is higher than the universal, is justified over against it, is not subordinate but superior—yet in such a way, be it observed, that it is the individual who, after he has been subordinated as the individual to the universal, now through the universal becomes the individual who as the individual is superior to the universal, for the fact that the individual as the individual stands in an absolute relation to the absolute[39] (66).

This is a concise description of the faithful solitude ideally embodied in Abraham.[40]

Kierkegaard's Abraham is a faithful wanderer. In a characteristic text, Kierkegaard maintains: faith "does not join men together—no, it separates them—in order to unite every single individual with God. And when a person has become such that he can belong to God, he has died away from that which joins men."[41] Since "intercourse with God is in the deepest sense and absolutely non-social,"[42] Abraham had to journey to Moriah alone. Sarah was left behind, and though Isaac accompanied his father, neither communication nor communion was possible for them. Faithful solitude is always shrouded in silence.[43] Only by separating himself from all other persons could Abraham come into absolute relation to the absolute.

The God Abraham encountered during his lonely journey is not immanent in the social or natural process, but is wholly other, the transcendent Lord and governor upon whom the created order is fully dependent. In relation to such a God, there is but one proper stance:

[39]Lowrie obscures this important passage by translating *Enkelte* as "particular" rather than as "individual."

[40]Kant himself commented on the Abraham story: "Abraham would have had to answer this supposedly divine voice: 'That I ought to kill my good son, that is wholly certain; but that you, who appear to me, are God, of that I am not certain and never can become certain, even if it should resound from the (visible) heavens.'" *Friedens-Abschluss und Beilegung des Streits der Fakultäten,* quoted by Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: Reinterpretation, Texts, and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1965) 271.

[41]Søren Kierkegaard, *Journals and Papers* (trans. Howard and Edna Hong; Bloomington: Indiana University, 1967) no. 2052.

[42]Kierkegaard, "The Lilies of the Field and the Birds of the Air," *Christian Discourses,* 334.

[43]I have explored the theme of silence in a forthcoming article: "Sounds of Silence," *Kierkegaard's Fear and Trembling: Critical Appraisals,* ed. Robert L. Perkins.

absolute obedience. Kierkegaard makes this point in terms previously noted.

> The paradox can also be expressed by saying that there is an absolute duty toward God; for in this relationship of duty the individual as an individual stands related absolutely to the absolute. . . . If this duty is absolute, the ethical is reduced to a position of relativity (80).

This paradoxical situation is the heart of Kierkegaard's analysis of Abraham. Abraham believed that God had commanded him to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Unlike a tragic hero such as Agamemnon, this deed did not represent a higher form of ethical responsibility. To the contrary, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac had nothing to do with ethics; it was counter to moral law—a teleological suspension of the ethical. The demand to slay his son was a test of Abraham's faith in God. Of course, this does not mean that the religious stage abolishes ethical requirements. As we have stressed, each stage preserves, though relativizes, the earlier stage(s). Ethically speaking, Abraham's duty to love his son remained binding, even though it was contravened by the higher obligation to God. It is precisely this tension that gave rise to the fear and trembling in Abraham's situation. In light of Kierkegaard's view of the relationship among the stages, we must conclude that the first stage also persists in religious existence. Abraham continued to have deep and sincere affection for Isaac. Not only did Abraham's faith lead him to suspend the ethical, it also completely contradicted his feelings. Rather than reconciling self with other and integrating obligation and inclination, Abraham's relation to God isolated him from other selves and created a painful opposition between his desire and duty. Abraham's willingness to capitulate to the unreasonable divine dictate was the act of faith in which his individual selfhood reached its fullest expression.

It should be clear that beneath their contrasting evaluations of Abraham, there is substantial agreement between the views of the nature of Abrahamic faith developed by Hegel and Kierkegaard. Both believe Abraham to embody a form of life in which selfhood comes to completion in isolation from other persons and in perfect servitude to a transcendent Lord. Moreover, it would seem that Kiekegaard would agree with Hegel's claim that the positive relation to the divine for which Abraham longed could be established only by unqualified obedience to God expressed in a completely negative relation to the world and the self. But this is an oversimplification, for precisely at this point an important difference between the interpretations of Abraham developed by Kierkegaard and Hegel emerges. Throughout *Fear and Trembling,* Kierkegaard consistently describes faith as a double

movement comprised of a negative and a positive moment. He calls the negative moment "infinite resignation," by which the individual relinquishes the entire sphere of finitude in an act of devout obedience to the transcendent God. Knights of infinite resignation are "strangers in the world" (52) who "find joy and repose in pain" (60).

> In infinite resignation there is peace and rest; every man . . . can train himself to make this movement which in its pain reconciles one with existence. Infinite resignation is that shirt we read about in the old fable. The thread is spun under tears, the cloth bleached with tears, the shirt sewn with tears; but then too it is a better protection than iron and steel. The imperfection in the fable is that a third party can manufacture this shirt. The secret in life is that everyone must sew it for himself, and the astonishing thing is that a man can sew it fully as well as a woman. In the infinite resignation there is peace and rest and comfort in sorrow—that is, if the movement is made normally (56).

From Kierkegaard's perspective, this is the final movement made by Hegel's Abraham.

But, Kierkegaard argues, "infinite resignation is the last stage prior to faith, so that one who has not made this movement has not faith"(57). In other words, Hegel's Abraham falls short of faith in *sensu eminentiori.* Kierkegaard explains:

> By faith I make renunciation of nothing, on the contrary, by faith I acquire everything, precisely in the sense in which it is said that he who has faith like a grain of mustard can remove mountains. A purely human courage is required to renounce the whole of the temporal to gain the eternal. . . . But a paradoxical and humble courage is required to grasp the whole of the temporal by virtue of the absurd, and this is the courage of faith. By faith Abraham did not renounce his claim upon Isaac, but by faith he got Isaac (59).

After having made the movement of resignation in which he willingly sacrificed his son, Abraham made the movement of faith in which he believingly received Isaac again from the hand of the Lord. Faith is the absurdly paradoxical act of simultaneously resigning and appropriating, negating and affirming, the created order. As Kierkegaard points out, "this sort of possessing is at the same time a relinquishing" (57). Hence unlike the knight of infinite resignation and Hegel's Abraham, the knight of faith is no stranger in the world, but lives fully in the finite.

> And yet, and yet the whole earthly form he exhibits is a new creation by virtue of the absurd. He resigned everything infinitely, and then he grasped everything again by virtue of the absurd. He constantly makes the movements of infinity, but he does this with such correctness and assurance that he constantly gets the finite out of it, and there is not a second when one has a notion of anything else. . . . Most people live dejectedly in worldly sorrow and joy; they are the ones who sit along the wall and do not join in the dance. The knights of infinity are dancers and possess elevation. They

> make the movements upward, and fall down again; and this too is no mean pastime, nor ungraceful to behold. But whenever they fall down they are not able at once to assume the posture, they vacillate an instant, and this vacillation shows that after all they are strangers in the world. . . . But to be able to fall down in such a way that the same second it looks as if one were standing and walking, to transform the leap of life into a walk, absolutely to express the sublime in the pedestrian—that only the knight of faith can do—and this is the one and only prodigy (51-52).

The involvement of the knight of faith in the finite world always remains paradoxical. It is not immediate, but is mediated by his relationship to the wholly other God who infinitely transcends and completely sustains his creation. The breach between the finite and the infinite leads to the omnipresent threat of a conflict between one's obligation to these two realms. This paradoxical point of ultimate tension is, for Kierkegaard, the frontier of authentic selfhood. In the face of an all-powerful Master, the individual recognizes his finitude and becomes aware of his profound responsibility for himself. Paradoxically freedom lies in freely appropriated bondage, and bondage is the misguided effort to negate divine Lordship. The journey to this frontier must be undertaken alone, for "in these regions partnership is unthinkable" (82). As Kierkegaard concludes elsewhere, "The Christian combat is always waged by the individual; for this precisely is spirit, that everyone is an individual before God, that 'fellowship' is a lower category than 'the single individual,' which everyone can and should be."[44]

V. Phenomenologies of Spirit

Throughout their extended philosophical and theological writings, Hegel and Kierkegaard attempt to develop phenomenologies of spirit which seek to lead the reader from inauthentic to authentic or fully realized selfhood. Although the destinations of their alternative journeys differ significantly, the courses they chart bear remarkable similarities to each other. Hegel's dialectic moves from the harmonious nondifferentiation of self and other, through the negation of this primordial unification in which opposition and estrangment arise, to the negation of this negative moment in which there is a reintegration or reconciliation of self and other. The Kierkegaardian dialectic of selfhood describes a gradual process of individualization by means of the negation of the undifferentiated identity of self and other, and the affirmation of individual selfhood in contrast with or in oppositon to otherness. By focusing on their interpretations of Abraham, we have been able to establish a dialogue between Hegel and Kierkegaard in

[44]Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity* (trans. Walter Lowrie; Princeton: Princeton University, 1967) 218.

which the complexity of their dialectical relationship to one another has begun to emerge. We have discovered that what Hegel regards as self-realization Kierkegaard sees as self-alienation, and what Hegel interprets as self-estrangement is for Kierkegaard self-fulfillment. Conversely, what Kierkegaard views as authentic selfhood, Hegel believes to be inauthentic selfhood, and what Kierkegaard sees as inauthenticity is for Hegel authenticity. Consequently while Hegel argues that Abraham's faith represents the extreme of alienation negated in the reconciliation revealed by Jesus, Kierkegaard insists that Abraham's faithful solitude is the complete actualization of individual selfhood. The journey to Moriah leads in different directions.