William Lombardo

July 16, 2024

Boston College

[lombarwb@bc.edu](mailto:lombarwb@bc.edu)

Hegel on Labor

Hegel’s daunting complexity and abstraction can obscure that labor—engagement with the physical, material world—plays a critical role in the development of the self-conscious individual and of the rational state. Indeed, as vociferous a critic as Marx observes (albeit critically) in the *1844 Manuscripts* that Hegel “grasps labor as the essence of man.” Without embracing Marx’s totalizing claim, this chapter aims to highlight the importance of labor to Hegelian philosophy by focusing on two major texts. This task requires treating labor’s crucial but often underappreciated role in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* before turning to some more familiar passages on labor in the *Philosophy of Right.*[[1]](#endnote-1)The chapter will proceed in the following manner. We will first examine the *Phenomenology* to see how labor functions as a foundation for human self-consciousness before proceeding to an analysis of its role in the mature political philosophy of the *Philosophy of Right*. There, we shall see Hegel’s analysis of labor both embedded in civil society and under threat from the market.

Alongside its discussion of labor’s role in these two major works of Hegel, this chapter aims to support another claim, namely that Hegel’s thoughts on labor are of enduring, and not merely historical, interest. To that end, the chapter will conclude with brief remarks on how Hegel provides valuable material for thinking through the automation of labor, now perhaps aided by artificial intelligence. While Hegel is light on institutional solutions to such issues—and, indeed, this pessimism is an important part of his thinking around these questions—he suggests that a post-laboring humanity would be unworthy of the name.

*Labor in The Phenomenology of Spirit*

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is an account of consciousness’s self-education, from its simplest, unmediated, natural form to complex, mediated Absolute Knowing that has earned for itself the name of science (*Wissenschaft*). The work sets out to answer what consciousness can know and how consciousness can be sure of its knowing. To that end, consciousness proceeds through a series of necessary, logically predetermined shapes. These shapes increase in sophistication and complexity, but they all share in the following structure of the opposition of consciousness (see *PG* §81-87; 9:58-61): briefly put, each shape of consciousness is defined by two relations. The first is that of consciousness and the object it gives itself; there is some object that consciousness takes to be essential, the cognizing of which would represent knowledge. The second is that consciousness gives itself the standard by which it can recognize knowing as knowing. Consciousness proceeds from one shape to another when the mode of knowing it sets for itself fails to provide it with knowledge of the object it takes to be essential. In light of this failure, consciousness revises both its object and its mode of knowing. This series of revisions—what Hegel will call “determinate negations”—propels consciousness’s journey.

Labor appears in the second major shape of consciousness, self-consciousness (Chapter IV), and it has the specific function of holding desire in check. In self-consciousness, consciousness takes itself as its object; what is essential is that it know itself. Self-consciousness appears confronted by an external world, and yet the appearance of a freestanding, external world threatens self-consciousness’s claim to essentiality. It must therefore convert what is alien to it into a part of itself. It does this by consuming, appropriating, sublating (*aufheben*) the external world. Self-consciousness’s initial relation to the external world is therefore one of ravenous, frantic consumption. As Hegel succinctly puts it, “self-consciousness is desire as such (*Begierde überhaupt*)” (§167; 9:104). In its simplest form, self-consciousness is characterized by its desire for all things. There is no real limit to self-consciousness’s desire, because self-conscious desire arises out of a need for constant confirmation of its own essentiality. The desire is not indexed to biological need; there is no point of satiety for the desiring self-consciousness.

This poses a problem for self-consciousness, since it cannot in fact negate the entirety of the external world. It “constantly re-engenders the object of its desire.” Self-consciousness cannot just sublate anything lest it be trapped in the infinitude of its own desire. It must, rather, sublate something else essential, namely another self-consciousness: “self-consciousness finds its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness.” It finds satisfaction only as a “recognized being” (§175; 9:108) In the duplication of self-consciousnesses, therefore, each strives to establish himself as the essential being, and they engage in a life and death struggle. This is the beginning of the famous dialectic of master and servant (*Herr*/*Knecht*). The victor in the struggle assumes the role of master and sets the vanquished, the servant, to work on the external world. The former thus receives the recognition of the latter and no longer has to tarry with the inessential external world; he satisfies his desire while the servant labors on the inessential.

Of course, the master’s expectations are subverted, as the recognition of his essentiality is bound up in the self-consciousness of the servant. The master passes from the shape, and the servant becomes the self-consciousness which proceeds to successive shapes. The servile consciousness is “forced back into itself [and] will take the inward turn (*in sich gehen*)” (§193; 9:114), gaining for himself a “mind of his own” (§196; 9:115), the depth and reflexivity we associate with self-consciousness. Hegel explains that this is for two reasons. First, it is because of the servant’s brush with death, in the face of which “all stable existence becomes absolutely fluid, [which] is the simple essence of self-consciousness” (§194; 9:114). Second, and more important for our purposes, it is because the servant *labors*, which distinguishes him from the master who never overcomes the desire that constitutes his initial relationship with the external world.

During his labor for the master, “the aspect of the non-essential relation to the thing seemed to fall to the lot of the servant, as the thing there retained its self-sufficiency (*Selbständigkeit*)” (§195; 9:114-5). The master, on the other hand, “reserved to itself the pure negating of the object,” that is, its consumption (ibid). And for this reason, the master’s “satisfaction is itself only a vanishing, for it lacks the *objective* aspect, or *stable existence.*” The master replicates the problem of desire in general, namely that it is boundless and incapable of discriminating between objects. It is the servant who, in his servitude, must take a different stance toward the object of the master’s desire. For the servant labors on the external world without the expectation that he will thereby consummate his desire.[[2]](#endnote-2) On the contrary, through his labor the servant maintains an enduring distance between himself and the object of its labor. Labor is thus, Hegel says, “desire held in check, it is vanishing *staved off*, or: work *cultivates and educates* (*Arbeit bildet*).”

This latter claim requires further elucidation, since if it is clear that laboring on an object requires suppressing one’s desire to consume that object, we must do further work to see how it thereby cultivates. The solution thus comes by way of seeing how permanency in the object of labor engenders a similar permanency in the laboring subject. Recall that the servant appears initially as an inessential consciousness to himself. Because he now labors on an object, the servile consciousness deals with an object that “endures” and that endures precisely because of “the negative mediating middle, this formative *doing* (*formirende Thun*),” namely labor (ibid). In the process of giving permanence to its object, the servile consciousness likewise “enters into the element of lasting (*Element des Bleibens*).” He “comes to an intuition of self-sufficient being *as its own self*” (ibid). By laboring on an external object and giving form to an object that endures, the subject comes to realize that he himself also endures, for his own permanence is necessary to give form to the object. What is more, he sees himself “externalized” in a free-standing object, as Oran Moked’s discussion of this movement makes clear.[[3]](#endnote-3) Moked clarifies that the servant recognizes the object as a testament to his labor, as something whose way of being results from his investment and nobody else’s.[[4]](#endnote-4)Labor, as the mediating middle between subject and external object, mediates two enduring terms. The servile consciousness becomes an enduring, existing being *for itself.*

We are now in a better position to understand how labor educates and cultivates the subject. In short, it helps to turn the subject into a temporally extended one of explicit and constant concern to himself. This is the kind of subject who is available for self-cultivation, who can make of himself an enduring project. As we have seen above, the *Phenomenology* follows the development and cultivation of consciousness, from natural consciousness to spirit to Absolute Knowing. This process ultimately demands that consciousness be an object capable of development—a subject with permanence.

Within the *Phenomenology*, therefore, labor plays a crucial role not only in driving consciousness forward to a higher stage but also in establishing a precondition for all later development. Within the movement just outlined, however, Hegel is also making claims about labor as such. It is labor, that is, that raises self-consciousness out of the condition of pure desire. The modality of uncultivated self-consciousness, according to Hegel, is unceasing desire, and absent labor self-conscious human beings would be caught in this bad infinitude. Note that this is not an historic claim. Hegel’s argument is not that there was some prehistoric time during which humans consumed without restriction until one of them “discovered” labor and thereby tamed his own desire. Nor is this dialectic restricted to feudalism and its dissolution. Insofar as the *Phenomenology*’s argument is logical and not historical, it examines the logical components of human self-consciousness as such. On this view, humans are always already laboring beings, and this is why they are capable of assuming a distance from and control over their desire and of undertaking projects to cultivate both the external world and themselves. It does not overstate things to claim that in the *Phenomenology* labor is a core, constitutive element of human self-consciousness. In the absence of labor, a possibility we will consider in the next section, we can expect not only impoverishment and alienation—though these are certainly symptoms—but also the unraveling of self-consciousness altogether.

*The Philosophy of Right: Labor in the Market*

In the *Philosophy of Right*,labor comes to be situated within a community and a market. The work’s goal is to detail the development through which the will comes to take “freedom as its object” (*PR* §27; 14:44). In its fullest development, freedom “becomes the rational system of the spirit itself and…becomes immediate actuality” (ibid). Freedom therefore requires the development of political institutions in which the rational mind recognizes that it enjoys its freedom, and these are the institutions among which modern laborers find themselves. The most developed form of objective freedom for Hegel exists in the sphere commonly translated as “ethical life” (*Sittlichkeit*), within which the state stands as freedom’s highest expression. Yet the state holds together the logically prior moments of civil society, which will be our focus in this section. For civil society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) is the site of the market and the realm of labor. Yet although civil society is the site of a relatively developed form of freedom, Hegel nonetheless argues that labor in a modern, market economy is beset by threats from both the division of labor and the market itself. At their worst, these threats lead to the creation of a laborless class excluded from civil society altogether.

Civil society comprises two principles. The first is the “particular person, as a totality of needs and a mixture of natural necessity and arbitrariness (*Willkühr*).” The second is “the form of universality” according to which each “particular person stands essentially in relation to other similar particulars, and their relation is such that each asserts itself and gains satisfaction through the others” (§182; 14:160). Civil society is rational because the satisfaction of each individual’s biological needs and subjective freedom (“arbitrariness”) tends toward the satisfaction of all others’, while the universal guarantees the satisfaction of the particular. What Hegel comes to call a “dialectical movement (*dialektische Bewegung*)” (§199; 14:169) is the agentless coordination of individual arbitrariness into a system that (potentially) satisfies the needs of all. This ought to evoke Smith’s invisible hand, and indeed Hegel attributes his own understanding of political economy, which “finds the laws underlying a mass of contingent occurrences,” to “Smith, Ricardo, and Say.”[[5]](#endnote-5) The system of needs must, however, achieve this point of universal coordination. The universal satisfaction of needs must exist in actuality.

Labor connects these two principles. Hegel defines labor as “the mediation whereby appropriate and particularized means are acquired and prepared for similarly particularized needs” (§196: 14:168). With respect to its application, labor “specifically applies to these numerous ends the material which is immediately provided by nature” (ibid). It is the “process of formation,” the improving of natural materials and readying them for consumption, that “gives the means [i.e., the particular forms of labor] their value and appropriateness.” Human beings consume “human effort,” and not only raw material. The value of labor, therefore, is not exclusively the compensation paid to the producer. Although in civil society remuneration for labor is the means by which an individual satisfies his own needs, there is a function of labor anterior to its place in a market economy. According to Hegel, “there are few immediate materials which do not need to be processed,” and so “it is by the sweat and labor of human beings that man obtains the means to satisfy his needs” (§196A). Hegel dismisses Rousseau’s notionof an original, harmonious equilibrium between human beings and their environment that obviated the need for laboring on nature. Rather, we have always had to transform what is naturally available into something fit for human consumption. This is but a restatement of the conclusion above that humans are always already laboring animals.

Modern markets, however, produce far more than is needed to satisfy the biological needs of consumers. Hegel thus introduces another component of the system of needs, “social needs,” which represent both the overcoming of natural need and the free rein of “inner contingency” and “arbitrariness” (§194; 14:167). These are the desires molded by fashion and taste, and their specification depends on the individual’s subjective whims. Even if, like food and clothing, they may correspond to biological needs, they can be satisfied by any number of goods. From this, Hegel concludes that the “social condition” tends toward “an indeterminate multiplication and specification of needs, means, and pleasures—i.e., luxury—a tendency which…has no limits *(Grenzen*)” (§195; 14:167-8). Labor is just as crucial for facilitating an economy of opinion as for producing the rudiments of life, and the limitlessness of these needs spawns both a division of labor and a tendency toward overproduction.

The diversification of needs leads to a diversification of forms of labor, while within the production of a single commodity, labor becomes increasingly particularized. Hegel, that is, introduces the division of labor as a consequence of the system of needs and its satisfaction. On one hand, this is expected and even beneficial, as the individual “by a process of self-determination, makes himself a member of one of the moments of civil society” (§207). The laborer gains a concrete public existence by choosing what role he will play in civil society. On the other hand, however, through division, labor becomes “simpler,” “so that [the Individual’s] skill (*Geschicklichkeit*) at his abstract work becomes greater, as does the volume of his output (*Productionen*)” (§198; 14:169). The notion of abstraction here means that each laborer’s contribution resembles less and less the product that goes to market. To borrow Adam Smith’s famous example, of which Hegel made ample use in his lectures, each pin factory laborer produces ever more minute components of the pin.[[6]](#endnote-6)

From this division comes astronomical increases in productivity, yet this simplification is replete with its own dangers: “the abstraction of production makes work increasingly mechanical, so that the human being is able to step aside and let a machine take his place” (ibid).[[7]](#endnote-7) The obvious implication of this remark—that simple, repetitive tasks are easier to mechanize—obscures a more ominous one, namely that the division of labor minimizes the distance between human beings and machines by making the former more like the latter.[[8]](#endnote-8) Here is Hegel’s clearest indication that certain *kinds* of labor are corrosive of the laborer’s humanity. However much factory work entails the discipline of desire, it prevents the worker from ascending beyond such discipline.[[9]](#endnote-9) These remarks are the end of Hegel’s formal discussion of the nature of labor, and they leave the reader expecting a sublation (*Aufhebung*) of this limitation, some higher reconciliation wherein the threat of mechanization is overcome. Such a development never arrives, however. The full development of *Sittlichkeit*, its fullest expression in the state, never neatly absorbs this externality from the division of labor.

Mechanization is not the only externality in the Hegelian labor market. Unlike in the classical model, in which a labor market equilibrium results if there is free competition among employers, Hegel posits that industrial market economies will produce a class of people to whom the opportunity for work is denied. Civil society’s “own distinct resources are not sufficient…to prevent an excess of poverty and the formation of a rabble [*Pöbel*]” (§245; 14:194). According to Hegel, a general equilibrium between supply and demand is unlikely to emerge across the entire economy, even if it obtains in discrete markets. Rather, the market will always tend toward overproduction and, as resources shift, the resulting contraction will wipe out far more jobs than are required for full productivity (ibid). The result is a permanent population of the unemployed for whom there are no jobs or who always lack the skills for one.[[10]](#endnote-10) Hegel refuses to idealize labor markets; the threat of unemployment, delivered by the impersonal market, hangs over the heads of all industrial laborers. Nor are laborers able simply to change careers. As Lisa Herzog has emphasized, the Hegelian laborer’s identity is in part constituted by an act of subjective freedom, a choice of career (§206; 14:173).[[11]](#endnote-11)

Hegel does not, however, propose reforming the labor market as a way of overcoming this; there are only means of amelioration, of ensuring that “particular welfare (*besondere Wohl*) should be treated as a right and duly actualized” (§230; 14:189) or of the state taking over the (only ever temporary) role as employer (.[[12]](#endnote-12) But the institutions necessary for reducing the poverty of those denied work are less interesting for our purposes than Hegel’s description of the “rabble,” that laborless class inhabiting the “lowest level of subsistence” in a given society (§244 and addition; 14:194). Taking a closer look at the rabble will enable us to conclude this section by unifying some of Hegel’s other, disparate observations about modern labor.

The impoverishment of the rabble leads to the loss of the “feeling of right, integrity, and honor which comes from supporting oneself by one’s activity and work” (ibid.). They are characterized by their “inward rebellion against the rich, against society, the government, etc.” Over the course of time, “dependent on contingency” for the satisfaction of their needs, they grow “frivolous and lazy.” We can see here that the rabble is deficient in two respects. First, they have lost their self-sufficiency and sense of earning their portion of the common resource. They have faded from civil society and thereby lost their status as citizens. They no longer have a public presence and, indeed, they reject the notion that the community or the state has any claim on their allegiance. Not appearing in public, therefore, they are denied the recognition for which civil society is supposed to be the site (§207; 14:173-4). Beyond the realm of intersubjective recognition, however, they are also left out of the institutional scheme whereby citizens are organized into bodies. They neither belong to an estate—and a person “with no estate is merely a private person and does not possess actual universality” (§207A)—nor to a corporation (§255; 14:199). While their biological needs may be fulfilled, for constitutional purposes they do not exist. The rabble’s exclusion from the political community arises from their failure to satisfy the condition that one must labor to secure one’s independence and to participate fully in civil society. This condition stands in sharp contrast to the classical conception of the healthy body politic, wherein exemption from labor frees the individual to fulfill the duties of citizenship.[[13]](#endnote-13) On the contrary, for Hegel labor is not exclusively concerned with meeting individual needs but with contribution to the needs of civil society as a whole. It is, as we have seen, how the particular and universal moments of civil society come together. Labor is therefore a precondition for full inclusion in the citizenry.

Second, the rabble slides into laziness and frivolity. We can see how this refers back to the discussion in the *Phenomenology*. Without labor, the rabble’s desires are unrestrained, and they slide into frivolous consumption. What is more, they are denied labor’s “practical education,” which cultivates the “habit of being occupied (*Gewohnheit der Beschäftigung*)” and “the limitation of one’s activity” to suit a task at hand (§197; 14:168). This is no mere activity for activity’s sake. Rather, it encourages a certain seamless relationship between means and ends: “a worker can be described as skilled if he produces the thing as it ought to be, and if, in his subjective actions, he encounters *no resistance to the end he is pursuing* (§197A; emphasis mine). In this description, skilled work is portrayed as a microcosm of freedom in general. Rational, self-determining activity in its most developed sense involves freely willing what one ought without experiencing a struggle between competing, countervailing desires (see §23-4; 14:42-3).[[14]](#endnote-14) While in context this applies to the produced object, labor alsoeducates the laborer toward the observation of universal norms, that is toward moral freedom: “the particular must rise to the form of universality and seek and find its subsistence in this form” (§186).[[15]](#endnote-15) In acquiescing to the tastes of others and endeavoring to meet their needs, the individual limits his subjective, arbitrary freedom in the face of others’ demands. While observing norms is ultimately for the *sake* of the individual, it nonetheless prepares the individual for the authentic universality embodied in the state. Inasmuch as the rabble lacks this opportunity, it must necessarily be stunted in its ethical development.

*Conclusion: Hegel and the Automation of Labor*

As the previous sections have demonstrated, much hinges on whether humans maintain their character as laboring beings. It is no overstatement to say that, for Hegel, many of humanity’s significant attributes—self-consciousness, free and autonomous activity, political participation—depend in large part on the fact that human beings labor on the world. And yet, as we have also seen, Hegel is unflinching in his diagnosis of the division of labor as ultimately corrosive of the quality of labor. As employment grows increasingly abstract, workers grow increasingly mechanized until machines can supplant them altogether. In light of twentieth century Fordism and the later, post-industrial economy, this prediction is clearly prescient.

Hegel is thus a worthy diagnostician of what we can expect to lose from the automation of those remaining industrial jobs or from the push to inject artificial intelligence into every corner of the post-industrial, “information” economy. According to him, we might expect to see a crisis of purposiveness, in which the “habit of being occupied” dissipates and we are left listless, unable to give ourselves a direction. In other words, more and more of us would become members of the rabble. One might raise the question in response, however, of what is so worrisome about this condition of laborlessness assuming one’s needs are met. Leisure is, after all, a good thing, and some measure of it is very likely a human need, a thesis defended classically by Aristotle and more recently by Joseph Pieper.[[16]](#endnote-16) Armed with both Hegel’s arguments about labor in the *Phenomenology* and his diagnoses of the threats to labor in the *Philosophy of Right*, we are in a position to respond to this objection.

Labor is, on the *Phenomenology*’s account, one of the centrifugal forces that holds the self-conscious being together. It endows his “I think” with a permanence that enables him to make and carry out a life-plan. The permanence of the laborer and of the object of labor develop in tandem as the latter disciplines the otherwise infinite desire of the former. The threat, from either the vicissitudes of the market or the mechanization of labor, is that there is no suitable replacement for reining in self-consciousness’s desire, that the subject will always be stuck in a bad infinity of insatiable consumption. The Hegelian rejoinder to the sort of utopia of leisure depicted (at least rhetorically) in Marx’s *German Ideology*—a utopia filled with purposive, enduring activity, like criticism—is that it presupposes a human subject whom labor has already constituted. Labor creates the kind of subject who can, among other things, engage in critique. Whether or not capitalism has succeeded in securing the material conditions for such a laborless society, it is not clear on Hegel’s account what kind of human beings would remain to enjoy it.[[17]](#endnote-17)

1. References to these texts will follow standard paragraph numbering and be provided in-text. In most cases, I have followed Terry Pinkard’s translation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) and Andrew Nisbet’s translation of the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), though I have also benefitted from A.V. Miller’s translation of the former and T.M. Knox’s of the latter. References to the German editions are to *Phänomenologie des Geistes* in *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 9(Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1980) and *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* in *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 14.  [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. For a similar, albeit condensed, discussion, see Allen Wood, *Hegel’s Ethical Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 87-88. Wood does not, however, treat the importance of cultivation (*Bildung*) in this section of the *Phenomenology*. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Oran Moked, “Labor, Alienation, and the Transition to Stoicism in Hegel’s “Phenomenology of Spirit,” *Hegel-Jahrbuch* 2006 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag), 124. Moked’s discussion pays scant attention to the role of permanence, however, as simple possession can likewise serve as an externalization of the subject (see *Philosophy of Right* §41-45). [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. This dynamic anticipates Hegel’s discussion of property and “Abstract Right” in the *Philosophy of Right*, §41-45. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. See Lisa Herzog’s excellent comparative study, *Inventing the Market: Smith, Hegel, and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) and Norbert Waszek’s exhaustive *The Scottish Enlightenment and Hegel’s Account of ‘Civil Society’* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1988). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. See Norbert Waszek, “Miscellanea: Adam Smith and Hegel on the Pin Factory,” *The Owl of Minerva* 16.2 (1985), 229-233. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Hegel’s concern with mechanization emerges in his early writings. See Nathan Ross, *On Mechanism in Hegel’s Social and Political Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2008), ch. 3. According to Ross, Hegel tasks the state with the regulation of the mechanicity of civil society. Yet mechanicity is a sliding scale, as Hegel makes clear, and more is worse for laborers. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Smith shares with Hegel an awareness that simple, repetitive tasks lead the laborer “to be mutilated and deformed.” See *Wealth of Nations*,V.i.f.50-61. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. See Joel Bock, “Technology, Freedom, and the Mechanization of Labor in the Philosophies of Hegel and Adorno,” *Philosophy & Technology* 34 (2021): 1263-85. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. That Hegel leaves the problem of poverty unresolved has been remarked on many times. See, for example, Michael O. Hardimon, *Hegel’s Social Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 236-250; Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel’s Theory of the Modern State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 154; Frank Ruda, *Hegel’s Rabble* (New York: Continuum, 2011). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Herzog, *Inventing the Market*, ch. 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Hegel does suggest that the conversion of the rabble into overseas colonists might relieve pressure on the labor market (see §248A). Within the state itself, however, the problem is intractable. Nor does colonization represent a tidy resolution to the problem of unemployment, since there is not unlimited land to be colonized. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1278a; Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), §5. Hegel does retain a universal estate, whose needs are met by the state (§205). Yet Hegel never denies that this class is performing *labor*. The dichotomy labor/citizenship does not hold. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. “Only in this freedom is the will completely with itself (*bei sich*), because it has reference to nothing but itself, so that every relationship of dependence on something other than itself is thereby eliminated” (§23). See also Robert Pippin, *Hegel’s Practical Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), ch. 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. See Paul Franco, *Hegel’s Philosophy of Freedom* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 249-255. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Aristotle, *Ethics* 1177b and *Politics* 1337b; Joseph Pieper, *Leisure, the Basis of Culture* (trans. Alexander Dru) (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009). [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. I am grateful to Paul Wilford and Susan Shell for discussions on these topics that greatly improved this chapter. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)