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THE PHILOSOPHY
OF HISTORY

BY
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WITH PREFACES
BY CHARLES HEGEL AND THE
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*"The History of the World is not intelligible apart from
a Government of the World."*—W. V. HUMBOLDT

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39

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

	PAGE
I. Original History.....	1
II. Reflective History.....	4
III. Philosophical History.....	8
Geographical Basis of History.....	79
CLASSIFICATION OF HISTORIC DATA.....	103

PART I.—THE ORIENTAL WORLD

Principle of the Oriental World.....	111
SECTION I. China	116
SECTION II. India	139
SECTION II. Continued. India—Buddhism	167
SECTION III. Persia	173
Chapter I. The Zend People.....	176
Chapter II. The Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians	182
Chapter III. The Persian Empire and its Constituent Parts....	187
Persia	188
Syria and Semitic Western Asia.....	191
Judæa	195
Egypt	198
Transition to the Greek World.....	219

PART II.—THE GREEK WORLD

The Region of Spirit.....	223
SECTION I. The Elements of the Greek Spirit.....	225
SECTION II. Phases of Individuality Æsthetically Conditioned..	241
Chapter I. The Subjective Work of Art.....	241
Chapter II. The Objective Work of Art.....	244
Chapter III. The Political Work of Art.....	250
The War with the Persians.....	256
Athens	258
Sparta	262
The Peloponnesian War.....	265
The Macedonian Empire.....	271
SECTION III. Fall of the Greek Spirit.....	275

INTRODUCTION

79

Spirit, and in the History of the World regard everything as only its manifestation, we have, in traversing the past—however extensive its periods—only to do with what is *present*; for philosophy, as occupying itself with the True, has to do with the *eternally present*. Nothing in the past is lost for it, for the Idea is ever present; Spirit is immortal; with it there is no past, no future, but an essential *now*. This necessarily implies that the present form of Spirit comprehends within it all earlier steps. These have indeed unfolded themselves in succession independently; but what Spirit is it has always been essentially; distinctions are only the development of this essential nature. The life of the ever present Spirit is a circle of progressive embodiments, which looked at in one aspect still exist beside each other, and only as looked at from another point of view appear as past. The grades which Spirit seems to have left behind it, it still possesses in the depths of its present.

GEOGRAPHICAL BASIS OF HISTORY

Contrasted with the universality of the moral Whole and with the unity of that individuality which is its active principle, the *natural* connection that helps to produce the Spirit of a People, appears an extrinsic element; but inasmuch as we must regard it as the ground on which that Spirit plays its part, it is an *essential* and *necessary* basis. We began with the assertion that, in the History of the World, the Idea of Spirit appears in its actual embodiment as a series of external forms, each one of which declares itself as an actually existing people. This existence falls under the category of Time as well as Space, in the way of natural existence; and the special principle, which every world-historical people embodies, has this principle at the same time as a *natural* characteristic. Spirit, clothing itself in this form of nature, suffers its particular phases to assume separate existence; for mutual exclusion is the mode of existence proper to mere nature. These natural distinctions must be first of all regarded as special possibilities, from which the Spirit of the people in question germinates, and among them is the Geographical Basis. It is not our concern to become acquainted with the land occupied by nations as an external locale, but with the natural type of the locality,

as intimately connected with the type and character of the people which is the offspring of such a soil. This character is nothing more nor less than the mode and form in which nations make their appearance in History, and take place and position in it. Nature should not be rated too high nor too low: the mild Ionic sky certainly contributed much to the charm of the Homeric poems, yet this alone can produce no Homers. Nor in fact does it continue to produce them; under Turkish government no bards have arisen. We must first take notice of those natural conditions which have to be excluded once for all from the drama of the World's History. In the Frigid and in the Torrid zone the locality of World-historical peoples cannot be found. For awakening consciousness takes its rise surrounded by natural influences alone, and every development of it is the reflection of Spirit back upon itself in opposition to the immediate, unreflected character of mere nature. Nature is therefore one element in this antithetic abstracting process; Nature is the first standpoint from which man can gain freedom within himself, and this liberation must not be rendered difficult by natural obstructions. Nature, as contrasted with Spirit, is a quantitative mass, whose power must not be so great as to make its single force omnipotent. In the extreme zones man cannot come to free movement; cold and heat are here too powerful to allow Spirit to build up a world for *itself*. Aristotle said long ago, "When pressing needs are satisfied, man turns to the general and more elevated." But in the extreme zones such pressure may be said never to cease, never to be warded off; men are constantly impelled to direct attention to nature, to the glowing rays of the sun, and the icy frost. The true theatre of History is therefore the temperate zone; or, rather, its northern half, because the earth there presents itself in a continental form, and has a broad breast, as the Greeks say. In the south, on the contrary, it divides itself, and runs out into many points. The same peculiarity shows itself in natural products. The north has many kinds of animals and plants with common characteristics; in the south, where the land divides itself into points, natural forms also present individual features contrasted with each other.

The World is divided into *Old* and *New*; the name of *New* having originated in the fact that America and Australia have only lately become known to us. But these parts of the world

INTRODUCTION

81

are not only relatively new, but intrinsically so in respect of their entire physical and psychical constitution. Their geological antiquity we have nothing to do with. I will not deny the New World the honor of having emerged from the sea at the world's formation contemporaneously with the old: yet the Archipelago between South America and Asia shows a physical immaturity. The greater part of the islands are so constituted, that they are, as it were, only a superficial deposit of earth over rocks, which shoot up from the fathomless deep, and bear the character of novel origination. New Holland shows a not less immature geographical character; for in penetrating from the settlements of the English farther into the country, we discover immense streams, which have not yet developed themselves to such a degree as to dig a channel for themselves, but lose themselves in marshes. Of America and its grade of civilization, especially in Mexico and Peru, we have information, but it imports nothing more than that this culture was an entirely national one, which must expire as soon as Spirit approached it. America has always shown itself physically and psychically powerless, and still shows itself so. For the aborigines, after the landing of the Europeans in America, gradually vanished at the breath of European activity. In the United States of North America all the citizens are of European descent, with whom the old inhabitants could not amalgamate, but were driven back. The aborigines have certainly adopted some arts and usages from the Europeans, among others that of brandy-drinking, which has operated with deadly effect. In the South the natives were treated with much greater violence, and employed in hard labors to which their strength was by no means competent. A mild and passionless disposition, want of spirit, and a crouching submissiveness towards a Creole, and still more towards a European, are the chief characteristics of the native Americans; and it will be long before the Europeans succeed in producing any independence of feeling in them. The inferiority of these individuals in all respects, even in regard to size, is very manifest; only the quite southern races in Patagonia are more vigorous natures, but still abiding in their natural condition of rudeness and barbarism. When the Jesuits and the Catholic clergy proposed to accustom the Indians to European culture and manners (they have, as is well known, founded a state in Paraguay

and convents in Mexico and California), they commenced a close intimacy with them, and prescribed for them the duties of the day, which, slothful though their disposition was, they complied with under the authority of the Friars. These pre-scripts (at midnight a bell had to remind them even of their matrimonial duties), were first, and very wisely, directed to the creation of wants—the springs of human activity generally. The weakness of the American physique was a chief reason for bringing the negroes to America, to employ their labor in the work that had to be done in the New World; for the negroes are far more susceptible of European culture than the Indians, and an English traveller has adduced instances of negroes having become competent clergymen, medical men, etc. (a negro first discovered the use of the Peruvian bark), while only a single native was known to him whose intellect was sufficiently developed to enable him to study, but who had died soon after beginning, through excessive brandy-drinking. The weakness of the human physique of America has been aggravated by a deficiency in the mere tools and appliances of progress—the want of *horses* and *iron*, the chief instruments by which they were subdued.

The original nation having vanished or nearly so, the effective population comes for the most part from Europe; and what takes place in America, is but an emanation from Europe. Europe has sent its surplus population to America in much the same way as from the old Imperial Cities, where trade-guilds were dominant and trade was stereotyped, many persons escaped to other towns which were not under such a yoke, and where the burden of imposts was not so heavy. Thus arose, by the side of Hamburg, Altona—by Frankfort, Offenbach—by Nürnberg, Fürth—and Carouge by Geneva. The relation between North America and Europe is similar. Many Englishmen have settled there, where burdens and imposts do not exist, and where the combination of European appliances and European ingenuity has availed to realize some produce from the extensive and still virgin soil. Indeed the emigration in question offers many advantages. The emigrants have got rid of much that might be obstructive to their interests at home, while they take with them the advantages of European independence of spirit, and acquired skill; while for those who are willing to work vigorously, but who have not found in Europe

opportunities for doing so, a sphere of action is certainly presented in America:

America, as is well known, is divided into two parts, connected indeed by an isthmus, but which has not been the means of establishing intercourse between them. Rather, these two divisions are most decidedly distinct from each other. North America shows us on approaching it, along its eastern shore a wide border of level coast, behind which is stretched a chain of mountains—the blue mountains or Appalachians; further north the Alleghanies. Streams issuing from them water the country towards the coast, which affords advantages of the most desirable kind to the United States, whose origin belongs to this region. Behind that mountain-chain the St. Lawrence river flows (in connection with huge lakes), from south to north, and on this river lie the northern colonies of Canada. Farther west we meet the basin of the vast Mississippi, and the basins of the Missouri and Ohio, which it receives, and then debouches into the Gulf of Mexico. On the western side of this region we have in like manner a long mountain chain, running through Mexico and the Isthmus of Panama, and under the names of the Andes or Cordillera, cutting off an edge of coast along the whole west side of South America. The border formed by this is narrower and offers fewer advantages than that of North America. There lie Peru and Chili. On the east side flow eastward the monstrous streams of the Orinoco and Amazons; they form great valleys, not adapted however for cultivation, since they are only wide desert steppes. Towards the south flows the Rio de la Plata, whose tributaries have their origin partly in the Cordilleras, partly in the northern chain of mountains which separates the basin of the Amazon from its own. To the district of the Rio de la Plata belong Brazil, and the Spanish Republics. Colombia is the northern coast-land of South America, at the west of which, flowing along the Andes, the Magdalena debouches into the Caribbean Sea.

With the exception of Brazil, republics have come to occupy South as well as North America. In comparing South America (reckoning Mexico as part of it) with North America, we observe an astonishing contrast.

In North America we witness a prosperous state of things; an increase of industry and population civil order and firm

freedom; the whole federation constitutes but a single state, and has its political centres. In South America, on the contrary, the republics depend only on military force; their whole history is a continued revolution; federated states become disunited; others previously separated become united; and all these changes originate in military revolutions. The more special differences between the two parts of America show us two opposite directions, the one in political respects, the other in regard to religion. South America, where the Spaniards settled and asserted supremacy, is Catholic; North America, although a land of sects of every name, is yet fundamentally, Protestant. A wider distinction is presented in the fact, that South America was conquered, but North America colonized. The Spaniards took possession of South America to govern it, and to become rich through occupying political offices, and by exactions. Depending on a very distant mother country, their desires found a larger scope, and by force, address and confidence they gained a great predominance over the Indians. The North American States were, on the other hand, entirely *colonized*, by Europeans. Since in England Puritans, Episcopalians, and Catholics were engaged in perpetual conflict, and now one party, now the other, had the upper hand, many emigrated to seek religious freedom on a foreign shore. These were industrious Europeans, who betook themselves to agriculture, tobacco and cotton planting, etc. Soon the whole attention of the inhabitants was given to labor, and the basis of their existence as a united body lay in the necessities that bind man to man, the desire of repose, the establishment of civil rights, security and freedom, and a community arising from the aggregation of individuals as atomic constituents; so that the state was merely something external for the protection of property. From the Protestant religion sprang the principle of the mutual confidence of individuals—trust in the honorable dispositions of other men; for in the Protestant Church the entire life—its activity generally—is the field for what it deems religious works. Among Catholics, on the contrary, the basis of such a confidence cannot exist; for in secular matters only force and voluntary subservience are the principles of action; and the forms which are called Constitutions are in this case only a resort of necessity, and are no protection against mistrust.

If we compare North America further with Europe, we shall

find in the former the permanent example of a republican constitution. A subjective unity presents itself; for there is a President at the head of the State, who, for the sake of security against any monarchical ambition, is chosen only for four years. Universal protection for property, and a something approaching entire immunity from public burdens, are facts which are constantly held up to commendation. We have in these facts the fundamental character of the community—the endeavor of the individual after acquisition, commercial profit, and gain; the preponderance of *private* interest, devoting itself to that of the community only for its own advantage. We find, certainly, legal relations—a formal code of laws; but respect for law exists apart from genuine probity, and the American merchants commonly lie under the imputation of dishonest dealings under legal protection. If, on the one side, the Protestant Church develops the essential principle of confidence, as already stated, it thereby involves on the other hand the recognition of the validity of the element of feeling to such a degree as gives encouragement to unseemly varieties of caprice. Those who adopt this standpoint maintain, that, as everyone may have his peculiar way of viewing things *generally*, so he may have also a *religion* peculiar to himself. Thence the splitting up into so many sects, which reach the very acme of absurdity; many of which have a form of worship consisting in convulsive movements, and sometimes in the most sensuous extravagances. This complete freedom of worship is developed to such a degree, that the various congregations choose ministers and dismiss them according to their absolute pleasure; for the Church is no independent existence—having a substantial spiritual being, and correspondingly permanent external arrangement—but the affairs of religion are regulated by the good pleasure for the time being of the members of the community. In North America the most unbounded license of imagination in religious matters prevails, and that religious unity is wanting which has been maintained in European States, where deviations are limited to a few confessions. As to the political condition of North America, the general object of the existence of this State is not yet fixed and determined, and the necessity for a firm combination does not yet exist; for a real State and a real Government arise only after a distinction of classes has arisen, when wealth and poverty become extreme, and when such a

condition of things presents itself that a large portion of the people can no longer satisfy its necessities in the way in which it has been accustomed so to do. But America is hitherto exempt from this pressure, for it has the outlet of colonization constantly and widely open, and multitudes are continually streaming into the plains of the Mississippi. By this means the chief source of discontent is removed, and the continuation of the existing civil condition is guaranteed. A comparison of the United States of North America with European lands is therefore impossible; for in Europe, such a natural outlet for population, notwithstanding all the emigrations that take place, does not exist. Had the woods of Germany been in existence, the French Revolution would not have occurred. North America will be comparable with Europe only after the immeasurable space which that country presents to its inhabitants shall have been occupied, and the members of the political body shall have begun to be pressed back on each other. North America is still in the condition of having land to begin to cultivate. Only when, as in Europe, the direct increase of agriculturists is checked, will the inhabitants, instead of pressing outwards to occupy the fields, press inwards upon each other—pursuing town occupations, and trading with their fellow-citizens; and so form a compact system of civil society, and require an organized state. The North American Federation have no neighboring State (towards which they occupy a relation similar to that of European States to each other) one which they regard with mistrust, and against which they must keep up a standing army. Canada and Mexico are not objects of fear, and England has had fifty years' experience, that *free* America is more profitable to her than it was in a state of *dependence*. The militia of the North American Republic proved themselves quite as brave in the War of Independence, as the Dutch under Philip II; but generally, where Independence is not at stake, less power is displayed, and in the year 1814 the militia held out but indifferently against the English.

America is therefore the land of the future, where, in the ages that lie before us, the burden of the World's History shall reveal itself—perhaps in a contest between North and South America. It is a land of desire for all those who are weary of the historical lumber-room of old Europe. Napoleon is re-

ported to have said: "*Cette vieille Europe m'ennuie.*" It is for America to abandon the ground on which hitherto the History of the World has developed itself. What *has* taken place in the New World up to the present time is only an echo of the Old World—the expression of a foreign Life; and as a Land of the Future, it has no interest for us here, for, as regards *History*, our concern must be with that which has been and that which is. In regard to *Philosophy*, on the other hand, we have to do with that which (strictly speaking) is neither past nor future, but with that which *is*, which has an eternal existence—with Reason; and this is quite sufficient to occupy us.

Dismissing, then, the New World, and the dreams to which it may give rise, we pass over to the Old World—the scene of the World's History; and must first direct attention to the natural elements and conditions of existence which it presents. America is divided into two parts, which are indeed connected by an Isthmus, but which forms only an external, material bond of union. The Old World, on the contrary, which lies opposite to America, and is separated from it by the Atlantic Ocean, has its continuity interrupted by a deep inlet—the Mediterranean Sea. The three Continents that compose it have an essential relation to each other, and constitute a totality. Their peculiar feature is that they lie round this Sea, and therefore have an easy means of communication; for rivers and seas are not to be regarded as disjoining, but as uniting. England and Brittany, Norway and Denmark, Sweden and Livonia, have been united. For the three quarters of the globe the Mediterranean Sea is similarly the uniting element, and the centre of World-History. Greece lies here, the focus of light in History. Then in Syria we have Jerusalem, the centre of Judaism and of Christianity; southeast of it lie Mecca and Medina, the cradle of the Mussulman faith; towards the west Delphi and Athens; farther west still, Rome: on the Mediterranean Sea we have also Alexandria and Carthage. The Mediterranean is thus the heart of the Old World, for it is that which conditioned and vitalized it. Without it the History of the World could not be conceived: it would be like ancient Rome or Athens without the forum, where all the life of the city came together. The extensive tract of eastern Asia is severed from the process of general historical development, and has no share

in it; so also Northern Europe, which took part in the World's History only at a later date, and had no part in it while the Old World lasted; for this was exclusively limited to the countries lying round the Mediterranean Sea. Julius Cæsar's crossing the Alps—the conquest of Gaul and the relation into which the Germans thereby entered with the Roman Empire—makes consequently an epoch in History; for in virtue of this it begins to extend its boundaries beyond the Alps. Eastern Asia and that trans-Alpine country are the extremes of this agitated focus of human life around the Mediterranean—the beginning and end of History—its rise and decline.

The more special geographical distinctions must now be established, and they are to be regarded as essential, rational distinctions, in contrast with the variety of merely accidental circumstances. Of these characteristic differences there are three:—

(1) The arid elevated land with its extensive steppes and plains.

(2) The valley plains—the Land of Transition permeated and watered by great Streams.

(3) The coast region in immediate connection with the sea.

These three geographical elements are the essential ones, and we shall see each quarter of the globe triply divided accordingly. The first is the substantial, unvarying, metallic, elevated region, intractably shut up within itself, but perhaps adapted to send forth impulses over the rest of the world; the second forms centres of civilization, and is the yet undeveloped independence [of humanity]; the third offers the means of connecting the world together, and of maintaining the connection.

(1) *The elevated land.*—We see such a description of country in middle Asia inhabited by Mongolians (using the word in a general sense): from the Caspian Sea these Steppes stretch in a northerly direction towards the Black Sea. As similar tracts may be cited the deserts of Arabia and of Barbary in Africa; in South America the country round the Orinoco, and in Paraguay. The peculiarity of the inhabitants of this elevated region, which is watered sometimes only by rain, or by the overflowing of a river (as are the plains of the Orinoco)—is the patriarchal life, the division into single families. The region which these families occupy is unfruitful or productive

only temporarily: the inhabitants have their property not in the land—from which they derive only a trifling profit—but in the animals that wander with them. For a long time these find pasture in the plains, and when they are depastured, the tribe moves to other parts of the country. They are careless and provide nothing for the winter, on which account therefore, half of the herd is frequently cut off. Among these inhabitants of the upland there exist no legal relations, and consequently there are exhibited among them the extremes of hospitality and rapine; the last more especially when they are surrounded by civilized nations, as the Arabians, who are assisted in their depredations by their horses and camels. The Mongolians feed on mare's milk, and thus the horse supplies them at the same time with appliances for nourishment and for war. Although this is the form of their patriarchal life, it often happens that they cohere together in great masses, and by an impulse of one kind or another, are excited to external movement. Though previously of peaceful disposition, they then rush as a devastating inundation over civilized lands, and the revolution which ensues has no other result than destruction and desolation. Such an agitation was excited among those tribes under Genghis Khan and Tamerlane: they destroyed all before them; then vanished again, as does an overwhelming Forest-torrent—possessing no inherent principle of vitality. From the uplands they rush down into the dells: there dwell peaceful mountaineers—herdsmen who also occupy themselves with agriculture, as do the Swiss. Asia has also such a people: they are however on the whole a less important element.

(2) *The valley plains.*—These are plains, permeated by rivers, and which owe the whole of their fertility to the streams by which they are formed. Such a Valley-Plain is China—India, traversed by the Indus and the Ganges—Babylonia, where the Euphrates and the Tigris flow—Egypt, watered by the Nile. In these regions extensive Kingdoms arise, and the foundation of great States begins. For agriculture, which prevails here as the primary principle of subsistence for individuals, is assisted by the regularity of seasons, which require corresponding agricultural operations; property in land commences, and the consequent legal relations;—that is to say, the basis and foundation of the State, which becomes possible only in connection with such relations.

(3) *The coast land.*—A River divides districts of country from each other, but still more does the sea; and we are accustomed to regard water as the separating element. Especially in recent times has it been insisted upon that States must necessarily have been separated by natural features. Yet on the contrary, it may be asserted as a fundamental principle that nothing *unites* so much as water, for countries are nothing else than districts occupied by streams. Silesia, for instance, is the valley of the Oder; Bohemia and Saxony are the valley of the Elbe; Egypt is the valley of the Nile. With the sea this is not less the case, as has been already pointed out. Only Mountains separate. Thus the Pyrenees decidedly separate Spain from France. The Europeans have been in constant connection with America and the East Indies ever since they were discovered; but they have scarcely penetrated into the interior of Africa and Asia, because intercourse by land is much more difficult than by water. Only through the fact of being a sea, has the Mediterranean become a focus of national life. Let us now look at the character of the nations that are conditioned by this third element.

The sea gives us the idea of the indefinite, the unlimited, and infinite; and in *feeling his own infinite* in that Infinite, man is stimulated and emboldened to stretch beyond the limited: the sea invites man to conquest, and to piratical plunder, but also to honest gain and to commerce. The land, the mere Valley-plain attaches him to the soil; it involves him in an infinite multitude of dependencies, but the sea carries him out beyond these limited circles of thought and action. Those who navigate the sea, have indeed gain for their object, but the means are in this respect paradoxical, inasmuch as they hazard both property and life to attain it. The means therefore are the very opposite to that which they aim at. This is what exalts their gain and occupation above itself, and makes it something brave and noble. Courage is necessarily introduced into trade, daring is joined with wisdom. For the daring which encounters the sea must at the same time embrace wariness—cunning—since it has to do with the treacherous, the most unreliable and deceitful element. This boundless plain is absolutely yielding—withstanding no pressure, not even a breath of wind. It looks boundlessly innocent, submissive, friendly, and insinuating; and it is exactly this submissiveness which changes the

INTRODUCTION

sea into the most dangerous and violent element.) To this deceitfulness and violence man opposes merely a simple piece of wood; confides entirely in his courage and presence of mind; and thus passes from a firm ground to an unstable support, taking his artificial ground with him.) The Ship—that swan of the sea, which cuts the watery plain in agile and arching movements or describes circles upon it—is a machine whose invention does the greatest honor to the boldness of man as well as to his understanding.) This stretching out of the sea beyond the limitations of the land, is wanting to the splendid political edifices of Asiatic States, although they themselves border on the sea—as for example, China. For them the sea is only the limit, the ceasing of the land; they have no positive relation to it. The activity to which the sea invites, is a quite peculiar one: thence arises the fact that the coast-lands almost always separate themselves from the states of the interior although they are connected with these by a river. Thus Holland has severed itself from Germany, Portugal from Spain.

In accordance with these data we may now consider the three portions of the globe with which History is concerned, and here the three characteristic principles manifest themselves in a more or less striking manner: Africa has for its leading classical feature the Upland, Asia the contrast of river regions with the Upland, Europe the mingling of these several elements.

Africa must be divided into three parts: one is that which lies south of the desert of Sahara—Africa proper—the Upland almost entirely unknown to us, with narrow coast-tracts along the sea; the second is that to the north of the desert—European Africa (if we may so call it)—a coastland; the third is the river region of the Nile, the only valley-land of Africa, and which is in connection with Asia.

Africa proper, as far as History goes back, has remained—for all purposes of connection with the rest of the World—shut up; it is the Gold-land compressed within itself—the land of childhood, which lying beyond the day of self-conscious history, is enveloped in the dark mantle of Night. Its isolated character originates, not merely in its tropical nature, but essentially in its geographical condition. The triangle which it forms (if we take the West Coast—which in the Gulf of Guinea makes a strongly indented angle—for one side, and

in the same way the East Coast to Cape Gardafu for another) is on two sides so constituted for the most part, as to have a very narrow Coast Tract, habitable only in a few isolated spots. Next to this towards the interior, follows to almost the same extent, a girdle of marsh land with the most luxuriant vegetation, the especial home of ravenous beasts, snakes of all kinds—a border tract whose atmosphere is poisonous to Europeans. This border constitutes the base of a (cincture of high mountains, which are only at distant intervals traversed by streams, and where they are so, in such a way as to form no means of union with the interior; for the interruption occurs but seldom below the upper part of the mountain ranges, and only in individual narrow channels, where are frequently found innavigable waterfalls and torrents crossing each other in wild confusion. During the three or three and a half centuries that the Europeans have known this border-land and have taken places in it into their possession, they have only here and there (and that but for a short time) passed these mountains, and have nowhere settled down beyond them. The land surrounded by these mountains is an unknown Upland, from which on the other hand the Negroes have seldom made their way through. In the sixteenth century occurred at many very distant points, outbreaks of terrible hordes which rushed down upon the more peaceful inhabitants of the declivities. Whether any internal movement had taken place, or if so, of what character, we do not know. What we do know of these hordes, is the contrast between their conduct in their wars and forays themselves—which exhibited the most reckless inhumanity and disgusting barbarism—and the fact that afterwards, when their rage was spent, in the calm time of peace, they showed themselves mild and well disposed towards the Europeans, when they became acquainted with them. This holds good of the Fullahs and of the Mandingo tribes, who inhabit the mountain terraces of the Senegal and Gambia. The second portion of Africa is the river district of the Nile—Egypt; which was adapted to become a mighty centre of independent civilization, and therefore is as isolated and singular in Africa as Africa itself appears in relation to the other parts of the world. The northern part of Africa, which may be specially called that of the *coast-territory* (for Egypt has been frequently driven back on itself, by the Mediterranean) lies on the Mediterranean and the Atlantic;

a magnificent territory, on which Carthage once lay—the site of the modern Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. This part was to be—*must* be attached to Europe: the French have lately made a successful effort in this direction: like Hither-Asia, it looks Europe-wards. Here in their turn have Carthaginians, Romans, and Byzantines, Mussulmans, Arabians, had their abode, and the interests of Europe have always striven to get a footing in it.

The peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all *our* ideas—the category of Universality. In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence—as for example, God, or Law—in which the interest of man's volition is involved and in which he realizes his own being. This distinction between himself as an individual and the universality of his essential being, the African in the uniform, undeveloped oneness of his existence has not yet attained; so that the Knowledge of an absolute Being, an Other and a Higher than his individual self, is entirely wanting. The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality—all that we call feeling—if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character. The copious and circumstantial accounts of Missionaries completely confirm this, and Mahommedanism appears to be the only thing which in any way brings the Negroes within the range of culture. The Mahommedans too understand better than the Europeans, how to penetrate into the interior of the country. The grade of culture which the Negroes occupy may be more nearly appreciated by considering the aspect which *Religion* presents among them. That which forms the basis of religious conceptions is the consciousness on the part of man of a Higher Power—even though this is conceived only as a *vis naturæ*—in relation to which he feels himself a weaker, humbler being. Religion begins with the consciousness that there is something higher than man. But even Herodotus called the Negroes sorcerers:—now in *Sorcery* we have not the idea of a God, of a moral faith; it exhibits man as the highest power, regarding him as alone

occupying a position of command over the power of Nature. We have here therefore nothing to do with a spiritual adoration of God, nor with an empire of Right. God thunders, but is not on that account recognized as God. For the soul of man, God must be more than a thunderer, whereas among the Negroes this is not the case. Although they are necessarily conscious of dependence upon nature—for they need the beneficial influence of storm, rain, cessation of the rainy period, and so on—yet this does not conduct them to the consciousness of a Higher Power: it is they who command the elements, and this they call "magic." The Kings have a class of ministers through whom they command elemental changes, and every place possesses such magicians, who perform special ceremonies, with all sorts of gesticulations, dances, uproar, and shouting, and in the midst of this confusion commence their incantations. The second element in their religion, consists in their giving an outward form to this supernatural power—projecting their hidden might into the world of phenomena by means of images. What they conceive of as the power in question, is therefore nothing really objective, having a substantial being and different from themselves, but the first thing that comes in their way. This, taken quite indiscriminately, they exalt to the dignity of a "Genius"; it may be an animal, a tree, a stone, or a wooden figure. This is their *Fetich*—a word to which the Portuguese first gave currency, and which is derived from *feitizo*, magic. Here, in the Fetich, a kind of objective independence as contrasted with the arbitrary fancy of the individual seems to manifest itself; but as the objectivity is nothing other than the fancy of the individual projecting itself into space, the human individuality remains master of the image it has adopted. If any mischance occurs which the Fetich has not averted, if rain is suspended, if there is a failure in the crops, they bind and beat or destroy the Fetich and so get rid of it, making another immediately, and thus holding it in their own power. Such a Fetich has no independence as an object of religious worship; still less has it æsthetic independence as a work of art; it is merely a creation that expresses the arbitrary choice of its maker, and which always remains in his hands. (In short there is no relation of dependence in this religion.) There is however one feature that points to something beyond;—the *Worship of the Dead*—in which their deceased

forefathers and ancestors are regarded by them as a power influencing the living. Their idea in the matter is that these ancestors exercise vengeance and inflict upon man various injuries—exactly in the sense in which this was supposed of witches in the Middle Ages. Yet the power of the dead is not held superior to that of the living, for the Negroes command the dead and lay spells upon them. Thus the power in question remains substantially always in bondage to the living subject. Death itself is looked upon by the Negroes as no universal natural law; even this, they think, proceeds from evil-disposed magicians. In this doctrine is certainly involved the elevation of man over Nature; to such a degree that the chance volition of man is superior to the merely natural—that he looks upon this as an instrument to which he does not pay the compliment of treating it in a way conditioned by itself, but which he commands.*

But from the fact that man is regarded as the Highest, it follows that he has no respect for himself; for only with the consciousness of a Higher Being does he reach a point of view which inspires him with real reverence. For if arbitrary choice is the absolute, the only substantial objectivity that is realized, the mind cannot in such be conscious of any Universality. The Negroes indulge, therefore, that perfect *contempt* for humanity, which in its bearing on Justice and Morality is the fundamental characteristic of the race. They have moreover no knowledge of the immortality of the soul, although spectres are supposed to appear. The undervaluing of humanity among them reaches an incredible degree of intensity. Tyranny is regarded as no wrong, and cannibalism is looked upon as quite customary and proper. Among us instinct deters from it, if we can speak of instinct at all as appertaining to man. But with the Negro this is not the case, and the devouring of human flesh is altogether consonant with the general principles of the African race; to the sensual Negro, human flesh is but an object of sense—mere flesh. At the death of a King hundreds are killed and eaten; prisoners are butchered and their flesh sold in the markets; the victor is accustomed to eat the heart of his slain foe. When magical rites are performed, it frequently happens that the sorcerer kills the first that comes in his way and divides his body

* *Vide* Hegel's "Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion," I. 284 and 289. 2d Ed.

among the bystanders. Another characteristic fact in reference to the Negroes is Slavery. Negroes are enslaved by Europeans and sold to America. Bad as this may be, their lot in their own land is even worse, since there a slavery quite as absolute exists: for it is the essential principle of slavery, that man has not yet attained a consciousness of his freedom, and consequently sinks down to a mere Thing—an object of no value. Among the Negroes moral sentiments are quite weak, or more strictly speaking, non-existent. Parents sell their children, and conversely children their parents, as either has the opportunity. Through the pervading influence of slavery all those bonds of moral regard which we cherish towards each other disappear, and it does not occur to the Negro mind to expect from others what we are enabled to claim. The polygamy of the Negroes has frequently for its object the having many children, to be sold, every one of them, into slavery; and very often naïve complaints on this score are heard, as for instance in the case of a Negro in London, who lamented that he was now quite a poor man because he had already sold all his relations. In the contempt of humanity displayed by the Negroes, it is not so much a despising of death as a want of regard for life that forms the characteristic feature. To this want of regard for life must be ascribed the great courage, supported by enormous bodily strength, exhibited by the Negroes, who allow themselves to be shot down by thousands in war with Europeans. Life has a value only when it has something valuable as its object.

Turning our attention in the next place to the category of *political constitution*, we shall see that the entire nature of this race is such as to preclude the existence of any such arrangement. The standpoint of humanity at this grade is mere sensuous volition with energy of will: since universal spiritual laws (for example, that of the morality of the Family) cannot be recognized here. Universality exists only as arbitrary subjective choice. The political bond can therefore not possess such a character as that free laws should unite the community. There is absolutely no bond, no restraint upon that arbitrary volition. Nothing but external force can hold the State together for a moment. A ruler stands at the head, for sensuous barbarism can only be restrained by despotic power. But since the subjects are of equally violent temper with their master,

they keep him on the other hand within limits. Under the chief there are many other chiefs with whom the former, whom we will call the King, takes counsel, and whose consent he must seek to gain, if he wishes to undertake a war or impose a tax. In this relation he can exercise more or less authority, and by fraud or force can on occasion put this or that chieftain out of the way. Besides this the Kings have other specified prerogatives. Among the Ashantees the King inherits all the property left by his subjects at their death. In other places all unmarried women belong to the King, and whoever wishes a wife, must buy her from him. If the Negroes are discontented with their King they depose and kill him. In Dahomey, when they are thus displeased, the custom is to send parrots' eggs to the King, as a sign of dissatisfaction with his government. Sometimes also a deputation is sent, which intimates to him, that the burden of government must have been very troublesome to him, and that he had better rest a little. (The King then thanks his subjects, goes into his apartments, and has himself strangled by the women.) Tradition alleges that in former times a state composed of women made itself famous by its conquests: it was a state at whose head was a woman. She is said to have pounded her own son in a mortar, to have besmeared herself with the blood, and to have had the blood of pounded children constantly at hand. She is said to have driven away or put to death all the males, and commanded the death of all male children. These furies destroyed everything in the neighborhood, and were driven to constant plunderings, because they did not cultivate the land. Captives in war were taken as husbands: pregnant women had to betake themselves outside the encampment; and if they had born a son, put him out of the way. This infamous state, the report goes on to say, subsequently disappeared. Accompanying the King we constantly find in Negro States, the executioner, whose office is regarded as of the highest consideration, and by whose hands, the King, though he makes use of him for putting suspected persons to death, may himself suffer death, if the grandees desire it. Fanaticism, which, notwithstanding the yielding disposition of the Negro in other respects, can be excited, surpasses, when roused, all belief. An English traveller states that when a war is determined on in Ashantee, solemn ceremonies precede it: among other things the bones of the King's mother are laved with

human blood. As a prelude to the war, the King ordains an onslaught upon his own metropolis, as if to excite the due degree of frenzy. The King sent word to the English Hutchinson: "Christian, take care, and watch well over your family. The messenger of death has drawn his sword and will strike the neck of many Ashantees; when the drum sounds it is the death signal for multitudes. Come to the King, if you can, and fear nothing for yourself." The drum beat, and a terrible carnage was begun; all who came in the way of the frenzied Negroes in the streets were stabbed. On such occasions the King has all whom he suspects killed, and the deed then assumes the character of a sacred act. Every idea thrown into the mind of the Negro is caught up and realized with the whole energy of his will; but this realization involves a wholesale destruction. These people continue long at rest, but suddenly their passions ferment, and then they are quite beside themselves. The destruction which is the consequence of their excitement, is caused by the fact that it is no positive idea, no thought which produces these commotions;—a physical rather than a spiritual enthusiasm. In Dahomey, when the King dies, the bonds of society are loosed; in his palace begins indiscriminate havoc and disorganization. All the wives of the King (in Dahomey their number is exactly 3,333) are massacred, and through the whole town plunder and carnage run riot. The wives of the King regard this their death as a necessity; they go richly attired to meet it. The authorities have to hasten to proclaim the new governor, simply to put a stop to massacre.

From these various traits it is manifest that want of self-control distinguishes the character of the Negroes. This condition is capable of no development or culture, and as we see them at this day, such have they always been. The only essential connection that has existed and continued between the Negroes and the Europeans is that of slavery. In this the Negroes see nothing unbecoming them, and the English who have done most for abolishing the slave-trade and slavery, are treated by the Negroes themselves as enemies. For it is a point of first importance with the Kings to sell their captured enemies, or even their own subjects; and viewed in the light of such facts, we may conclude *slavery* to have been the occasion of the increase of human feeling among the Negroes. The doctrine which we deduce from this condition of slavery among the

Negroes, and which constitutes the only side of the question that has an interest for our inquiry, is that which we deduce from the Idea: viz. that the "Natural condition" itself is one of absolute and thorough injustice—contravention of the Right and Just. Every intermediate grade between this and the realization of a rational State retains—as might be expected—elements and aspects of injustice; therefore we find slavery even in the Greek and Roman States, as we do serfdom down to the latest times. But thus existing in a State, slavery is itself a phase of advance from the merely isolated sensual existence—a phase of education—a mode of becoming participant in a higher morality and the culture connected with it. Slavery is in and for itself *injustice*, for the essence of humanity is *Freedom*; but for this man must be matured. The gradual abolition of slavery is therefore wiser and more equitable than its sudden removal.

At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit. Historical movements in it—that is in its northern part—belong to the Asiatic or European World. Carthage displayed there an important transitional phase of civilization; but, as a Phœnician colony, it belongs to Asia. Egypt will be considered in reference to the passage of the human mind from its Eastern to its Western phase, but it does not belong to the African Spirit. What we properly understand by Africa, is the Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World's History.

Having eliminated this introductory element, we find ourselves for the first time on the real theatre of History. It now only remains for us to give a prefatory sketch of the Geographical basis of the Asiatic and European world. *Asia* is, characteristically, the *Orient* quarter of the globe—the region of origination. It is indeed a Western world for America; but as Europe presents on the whole, the centre and end of the old world, and is absolutely the *West*—so Asia is absolutely the *East*.

In Asia arose the Light of Spirit, and therefore the history of the World.

We must now consider the various localities of Asia. Its physical constitution presents direct antitheses, and the essential relation of these antitheses. Its various geographical principles are formations in themselves developed and perfected.

First, the northern slope, Siberia, must be eliminated. This slope, from the Altai chain, with its fine streams, that pour their waters into the northern Ocean, does not at all concern us here; because the Northern Zone, as already stated, lies out of the pale of History. But the remainder includes three very interesting localities. The first is, as in Africa, a massive Upland, with a mountain girdle which contains the highest summits in the World. This Upland is bounded on the South and Southeast, by the Mus-Tag or Imaus, parallel to which, farther south, runs the Himalaya chain. Towards the East, a mountain chain running from South to North, parts off the basin of the Amur. On the North lie the Altai and Songarian mountains; in connection with the latter, in the Northwest the Musart and in the West the Belur Tag, which by the Hindoo Coosh chain are again united with the Mus-Tag.

This high mountain-girdle is broken through by streams, which are dammed up and form great valley plains. These, more or less inundated, present centres of excessive luxuriance and fertility, and are distinguished from the European river districts in their not forming, as those do, proper valleys with valleys branching out from them, but river-plains. Of this kind are—the Chinese Valley Plain, formed by the Hoang-Ho and Yang-tse-Kiang (the yellow and blue streams)—next that of India, formed by the Ganges;—less important is the Indus, which in the north, gives character to the Punjaub, and in the south flows through plains of sand. Farther on, the lands of the Tigris and Euphrates, which rise in Armenia and hold their course along the Persian mountains: The Caspian sea has similar river valleys; in the East those formed by the Oxus and Jaxartés (Gihon and Sihon) which pour their waters into the Sea of Aral; on the West those of the Cyrus and Araxes (Kur and Aras).—The Upland and the Plains must be distinguished from each other; the third element is their intermixture, which occurs in Hither [Anterior] Asia. To this belongs Arabia, the land of the Desert, the upland of plains, the empire of fanaticism. To this belong Syria and Asia Minor, connected with the sea, and having constant intercourse with Europe.

In regard to Asia the remark above offered respecting geographical differences is especially true; viz. that the rearing of cattle is the business of the Upland—agriculture and industrial pursuits that of the valley-plains—while commerce and naviga-

INTRODUCTION

101

tion form the third and last item. Patriarchal independence is strictly bound up with the first condition of society; property and the relation of lord and serf with the second; civil freedom with the third. In the Upland, where the various kinds of cattle breeding, the rearing of horses, camels, and sheep, (not so much of oxen) deserve attention, we must also distinguish the calm *habitual* life of nomad tribes from the wild and restless character they display in their conquests. These people, without developing themselves in a really historical form, are swayed by a powerful impulse leading them to change their aspect as nations; and although *they* have not attained an historical character, the beginning of History may be traced to them. It must however be allowed that the peoples of the plains are more interesting. In agriculture itself is involved, *ipse facto*, the cessation of a roving life. It demands foresight and solicitude for the future: reflection on a general idea is thus awakened; and herein lies the principle of property and productive industry. China, India, Babylonia, have risen to the position of cultivated lands of this kind. But as the peoples that have occupied these lands have been shut up within themselves, and have not appropriated that element of civilization which the sea supplies, (or at any rate only at the commencement of their civilization) and as their navigation of it—to whatever extent it may have taken place—remained without influence on their culture—a relation to the rest of History could only exist in their case, through their being sought out, and their character investigated by others. The mountain-girdle of the upland, the upland itself, and the river-plains, characterize Asia physically and spiritually: but they themselves are not concretely, really, historical elements. The opposition between the extremes is simply recognized, not harmonized; a firm settlement in the fertile plains is for the mobile, restless, roving, condition of the mountain and Upland races, nothing more than a constant object of endeavor. Physical features distinct in the sphere of nature, assume an essential historical relation.—Anterior Asia has both elements in one, and has, consequently, a relation to Europe; for what is most remarkable in it, this land has not kept for itself, but sent over to Europe. It presents the origination of all religious and political principles, but Europe has been the scene of their development.

Europe, to which we now come, has not the physical varie-

ties which we noticed in Asia and Africa. The European character involves the disappearance of the contrast exhibited by earlier varieties, or at least a modification of it; so that we have the milder qualities of a transition state. We have in Europe no uplands immediately contrasted with plains. The three sections of Europe require therefore a different basis of classification.

The first part is Southern Europe—looking towards the Mediterranean. North of the Pyrenees, mountain-chains run through France, connected with the Alps that separate and cut off Italy from France and Germany. Greece also belongs to this part of Europe. Greece and Italy long presented the theatre of the World's History; and while the middle and north of Europe were uncultivated, the World-Spirit found its home here.

The second portion is the heart of Europe, which Cæsar opened when conquering Gaul. This achievement was one of manhood on the part of the *Roman* General, and more productive than that youthful one of Alexander, who undertook to exalt the East to a participation in Greek life; and whose work, though in its purport the noblest and fairest for the imagination, soon vanished, as a mere Ideal, in the sequel.—In this centre of Europe, France, Germany, and England are the principal countries.

Lastly, the third part consists of the north-eastern States of Europe—Poland, Russia, and the Slavonic Kingdoms. They come only late into the series of historical States, and form and perpetuate the connection with Asia. In contrast with the physical peculiarities of the earlier divisions, these are, as already noticed, not present in a remarkable degree, but counter-balance each other.