

never be completely free from the influence of the age. And whatever Hegel may have fancied, his view of art, religion, and philosophy was conditioned and limited by the class society and Christian culture of his Biedermeier age. While Hegel tried to put history in its place, it took revenge upon him by shaping his entire philosophy as well as his dialectics according to the standards of his place and time<sup>27</sup>.

If Hegel's misreading of philosophy did a great deal of harm, the violence he did to history was even more serious. History ultimately loses its specific character - no longer is it a unique chain of events and developments unrolling in a single direction. Hegel offers no explanation for the unretrievable nature of history, for the invasion of the totally novel, for the emergence of the unforeseen and the unforeseeable, for the appearance of the accidental and irrational. Such phenomena would be too prone to pierce the walls of his closed structure. To save it he has to let history come to an end with the onset of the fourth stage, the Christian and Germanic empire. All configurations of the Objective Mind - law, morality, family, civic society, and state - have reached perfection in the Prussian monarchy of the Restoration. For the Prussian state philosopher historical progress ends at Potsdam.

## VI

By pressing the course and outcome of universal history into the straightjacket of an ephemeral and parochial scheme, Hegel remains true to the main stream of the Christian tradition. "All Christian history is theology"<sup>28</sup>. In the theology of the fathers of the church the "drama of world history" fills but one chapter. Croce is right in pointing out that history turning into the "history of the truth with Christianity, . . . recognizes its own proper law, which is no longer a natural law, blind fate, or even the influence of the stars, . . . but rationality, intelligence, providence"<sup>29</sup>. The ancient idea of the cycle is now replaced by the linear conception of history<sup>30</sup>. The line thus revealed, however, in neither infinite nor open towards the past or the future. On the contrary, it suggests a definite distance marking a unique lapse of time from the creation of the universe (5499 B.C. according to the earliest Christian Chronography of Sextus Julianus Africanus<sup>31</sup> or October 28, 4004 B.C. according to the famous chronology of Archbishop James Usher in his Ana-

27) Cf. the final remarks of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, transl. J.B. Baillie, second ed., New York 1931, p. 807 f.

28) E. Salin, *Civitas Dei*, Tübingen 1926, p. 205. "... as mythology it did not unite, but indeed confounded, metaphysic and history." (B. Croce, *History, Its Theory and Practice*. Tr. D. Ainslie, New York 1921, p. 213).

29) B. Croce, *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

30) Cf. E. Salin, *Op. cit.*, pp. 201 ff.

31) Cf. H.E. Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing*, New York 1937, p. 46.