
HETEROGENEITIES, SLAVE-PRINCES, AND MARSHALL PLANS: SCHMITT'S RECEPTION IN HEGEL'S FRANCE*

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*This essay examines the French reception of the Carl Schmitt's thought, specifically its Hegelian strand. Beginning with the early readings of Schmitt's thought by Alexandre Kojève and Georges Bataille during the mid-1930s, it attends to the partial adoption of Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction and his theories of sovereignty and neutralization in Kojève and Bataille's Hegelian writings, as well as to their critical responses. The essay then turns to examine the reading of Kojève by the Jesuit Hegelian résistant Gaston Fessard during the war, a reading specifically intended to delegitimize Vichy as a "slave-prince," resistance to whom would be legitimate. The final section returns to Bataille and his 1948 book *The Accursed Share* in order to propose that his Maussian understanding of the Marshall Plan suggested an overcoming of the friend/enemy distinction, a suggestion that was later made explicit in a 1957 talk by Kojève at Düsseldorf before Schmitt and a group of his supporters. At stake throughout are both the thoroughly critical reception of Schmitt, the particular political inflection of Hegel carried out by and in Kojève's reading, and certain methodological links between conceptual history and the reception history.*

On the evening of Monday 28 May 1934, Georges Bataille attended a lecture by Alexandre Kojevnikoff. This was the opening semester of what would become a six-year lecture course on Hegel's Religious Philosophy, the semester when Kojevnikoff set out many of the recurrent themes he would return to time and again: the idea that the human is what forever transcends itself, that it is what cannot be grounded or determined in full, that it is historical and has a history

* This essay is based on research carried out at the archives of Alexandre Kojève and Georges Bataille at the Département des manuscrits occidentaux of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and the Fonds Fessard at the Archives Jésuites in Vanves. My thanks to Nina Kousnetzoff and Robert Bonfils (SJ), for their help and permissions.

marked by struggle, desire, and violence.¹ The Russian émigré who had called himself Koschewnikow in Germany and who would become a master thinker in French philosophy under his naturalized name, Kojève, had begun his explication of the *Phénoménologie des Geistes*, and over the course of twenty-one lectures in the spring and summer of 1934 proceeded through to “Stoicism, Skepticism and the Unhappy Consciousness”—in other words, he completed chapters I to IV. The lecture of the week before had been dedicated to the problem of self-consciousness and desire, and on this 28 May Kojevnikoff lectured for the very first time on “Lordship and Bondage”—the section of the *PhG* that his thought would come to be identified with.²

Bataille’s notes from the lecture bear out his recollection of Kojevnikoff’s lectures as leaving him “bursting, crushed, killed twice over: suffocated and transfixed,”³ or, as he would put in 1950, *médusé*.⁴ The notes indicate that on that evening alone, Kojevnikoff spoke of a staggering number of motifs—of life and death, of a victor versus a “prisoner of war,” of Rome and barbarians, of classes, of the religious signification of the master/slave dialectic, of the relationship of God and man in Judaism, of mediation, of the slave’s failure to become human by relating directly to the master. Kojevnikoff even declared that the dialectic of Lordship and Bondage may lend itself to a revolutionary interpretation à la Marx, but that—crucially—it is “in fact reactionary.”⁵ And there, in the margin of notes on how a Desire that has accepted slavery remains an “inessential” consciousness no superior to that of an animal, Bataille scribbled, “Contre Carl Schmidt [*sic*].”⁶

Did the student add this aside of his own, or did the lecturer propose that these comments should be understood as critical of the influential German jurist? This is unclear: no record exists of Bataille’s checking Schmitt’s writings out of the Bibliothèque nationale where he worked, and Kojevnikoff’s preparatory reading list for these lectures does not mention Schmitt.⁷ Yet, however speculative the discussion that follows here may be, there is considerable evidence of a

¹ BNF, Fonds Bataille, 13-D “Hegel: Notes de cours,” 111.

² Of Kojève’s own (extensive) notes, only the last lectures of that first semester survive, as “L’idée de la mort dans la philosophie de Hegel”, in Al. Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (Paris, 1968), 529–75.

³ M. Surya, *Georges Bataille* (London, 2002), 189.

⁴ BNF, Fonds Bataille, Enveloppe 18, “Preface à Kojève.”

⁵ BNF, Fonds Bataille, 13-D “Hegel: Notes de cours,” 90. This suggested a central motif of Kojève’s analysis, namely that the master should not be understood as easily overcome by the slave in a struggle for liberation and for the overcoming of alienation.

⁶ BNF, Fonds Bataille, 13-D “Hegel: Notes de cours,” 88.

⁷ See Bataille, “Emprunts de Georges Bataille à la Bibliothèque Nationale”, in *Oeuvres complètes 12* (Paris, 1988), 549–620. “Plan des premiers cours sur Hegel, 15.Aug.33,” in BNF Fonds Kojève, Boite 10, chemise *Premiers cours sur Hegel*.

shared interest in Schmitt, as both thinkers engaged with and used him in their writing. Bataille probably knew of Schmitt's influence in Catholic and Romantic circles, and in any case he would repeat his spelling mistake "Schmidt" when referring to Schmitt a couple of years later.⁸ For his part, the young Kojevnikoff most likely had a more than passing familiarity with Schmitt's writing thanks to his studies in Heidelberg and Berlin. The library he left behind includes a copy of the 1928 French translation of Schmitt's *Political Romanticism* and a copy of the 1928 publication of Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political* as an article in *Politische Wissenschaft*.⁹ In 1932, shortly before Kojevnikoff began his lectures, his close friend Leo Strauss published his famous critique of Schmitt's *Concept of the Political*;¹⁰ at the time, Kojevnikoff was translating Strauss's article "The Political Philosophy of Hobbes" and was in frequent correspondence with him.¹¹ The mature Kojève would further address Schmitt explicitly in his *Esquisse d'une phénoménologie du droit* (Outline of a Phenomenology of Right) of 1942, where he provided a succinct and faithful explanation of Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction: Kojève treated it as a "fundamental, specifically political" and "existential" category,¹² which he sought to make use of in discussing the appropriate premises of a theory of governance in a state whose citizens are (politically speaking) *concitoyens*, friends. Later in life, Kojève would suggest to Jacob Taubes that Schmitt was the only thinker worth engaging with in Germany.¹³

Indeed, over the three decades following the 1934 lecture, Kojève and some of his "students," notably Bataille, Gaston Fessard, and Raymond Aron, would formulate an interesting series of responses to Schmitt's writing on sovereignty and the political.¹⁴ This essay proposes to examine the presence of Carl Schmitt's

⁸ Martin Jay, offering an excellent discussion of Bataille, Schmitt, and their respective theories of sovereignty, in his book *Force Fields* (London, 1993), notes the only other known reference to Schmitt in Bataille's work, which dates to 1937.

⁹ C. Schmitt, *Romantisme politique*, trans. P. Linn (Paris, 1928); Schmitt, "Der Begriff des Politischen", in *idem*, *Politische Wissenschaft*, Heft 5: *Probleme der Demokratie* (Berlin, 1928). My thanks to Nina Kousnetzoff for sending me a list of Schmitt's works in Kojève's library (which is now partially catalogued in the Bibliothèque nationale).

¹⁰ On Kojève and Schmitt see R. Howse and B.-P. Frost, "Introductory Essay," in Kojève, *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right* (Lanham, MD, 2000), 1–27; and Er. de Vries, "Discussion: Kojève–Schmitt Correspondence, and Kojève, 'Colonialism from a European Perspective'," in *Interpretation* 29/1 (Fall 2001), 91–4.

¹¹ L. Strauss, "Quelques remarques sur la science politique de Hobbes," in *Recherches philosophiques* II (1932–33), 609–22. On Kojève's translation, see Fl. de Lussy, ed., *Hommage à Alexandre Kojève. Actes de la "Journée Kojève"*, 28/1/2003 (Paris, 2007), 100.

¹² Kojève, *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*, 134.

¹³ J. Taubes, *Ad Carl Schmitt* (Berlin, 1987), 24.

¹⁴ In this group I should also include Raymond Aron, who also corresponded and engaged critically with Schmitt in his later writings, but whom I will not discuss here, for reasons

thought—and the critiques targeting it—within the Hegelian framework of these “responses,” and also, conversely, to present these responses as a particular strand of the French reception of Schmitt.

Schmitt was quite well known in France in the 1930s. A translation of *Political Romanticism* appeared in 1928, and *Legalität und Legitimität* was translated and published in 1936.¹⁵ He was in touch with Charles Maurras and Jacques Maritain, and was a clear influence behind the latter’s *Integral Humanism*.¹⁶ He was, moreover, a frequent focus of debates in legal and juridical philosophy as well as on Nazism.¹⁷ The line I would like to draw here concerns figures who worked Schmitt into a Hegelian understanding of modernity; they provided a reception that found his thinking formative yet was profoundly anti-Schmittian and served in some ways as a serious critique of his thought, not to mention his politics.

Schmitt’s French Hegelians (especially Kojève and Bataille) have found an important place in recent accounts of sovereignty and subjectivity (for example in Giorgio Agamben’s writings), yet a fuller presentation of the history of this reception can still offer much by way of historical and philosophical clarification, as the lack of such an account has two consequences.¹⁸ First, the arguments proposed by Kojève and Bataille continue to be seen as outliers to major traditions in political philosophy, with the result that they are accorded a specious place in

of space and as he did not offer a Hegelian response to Schmitt. See notably Aron, *Penser la guerre: Clausewitz* (Paris, 1976), English translation by N. Stone as *Clausewitz: Philosopher of War* (New York, 1983), 363–71. For Aron’s relationship to Schmitt see J.-W. Müller, *A Dangerous Mind* (New Haven, 2003), 98–103. On Kojève’s influence on Aron see E. Kleinberg, *Generation Existential* (Ithaca, NY, 2005), 87–95.

¹⁵ C. Schmitt, *Légalité, légitimité*, ed. W. Gueydan de Roussel (Paris, 1936).

¹⁶ Jacques Maritain was at least aware of Schmitt already in the mid-1920s, and would cite him and clearly show his influence throughout the 1930s. See Karl Muth’s 1926 letter to Schmitt, cited in Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (Cambridge, MA, 1988), xiv; see also Maritain’s very influential *Integral Humanism* (New York, 1968), 100, 145, 170. Maritain, in *Man and the State* (Chicago, 1951), 50–52, would offer a critique of sovereignty that clearly if implicitly targets Schmitt. Regarding Maurras: Schmitt cited Maurras in his *Roman Catholicism and Political Form* (Westport, CT, 1996), 5; see the discussion of Schmitt and Maurras in G. Balakrishnan, *The Enemy: An Intellectual Portrait of Carl Schmitt* (London, 2000), 55–56. As quoted and discussed by Jay in *Force Fields*, Bataille also identified Schmitt with Maurras in defending Nietzsche from National Socialism. M. Jay, *Force Fields*, 49.

¹⁷ The sociologist Georges Gurvitch wrote repeatedly on Schmitt. Gurvitch also cited Schmitt in a response to J.-T. Delos’s conception of right in the *Annuaire de l’Institut international de philosophie du droit et de sociologie juridique* (1936), 219. For an account of legal debates surrounding Schmitt in 1930s France see P.-A. Taguieff, *The Force of Prejudice: On Racism and Its Doubles* (Minneapolis, 2001), 342 n. 83.

¹⁸ Cf. G. Agamben, *Homo sacer* (Stanford, 1998) and *idem*, *The Open* (Stanford, 2003).

modern thought, sometimes derided as capricious and downright offensive to liberal sensibilities, at other times celebrated as bearing an exceptional diagnostic force. Conceptual context has much to offer here, particularly in explaining the place of Schmitt.

Second, lack of such an intellectual genealogy leads to a muting of the strong critiques—especially the political ones—that the same French thinkers directed against Schmitt. As a result, it is easy to underestimate the extent to which Schmitt's ideas can be assimilated or included in a system of thought that is at times hostile to his own, and, as with other receptions, his is at times mistakenly derided as an insufficiently critical discipleship. A more useful frame for this reception is proffered by the compatibility of Schmitt's understanding of liberal modernity and Hegel's history of Spirit.

Therefore, third, what matters perhaps more than the inflection of Schmitt is the inflection of Hegel thanks to Schmitt, and this even though Schmitt was by no means the only influence on Kojève's Hegel. I will suggest throughout this essay that the shared understanding of modernity as fundamentally structured by (a) a political separation and struggle of existential significance, as well as (b) a movement toward a homogeneous equality, formed a central motif of this particular strand of a reception of Schmitt. Its importance was dual: not only did it coordinate the anthropologization of Schmitt's thought, and the critique of its perceived limitations, it more importantly structured a matrix of problems that is usually attributed to Kojève's reading of Hegel. According to Kojève's own matrix, political and human relations are basically founded on a struggle for domination and recognition, *yet* Hegel's end of history and his homogeneous state have in all essentials come to being. If regarded as specifically Hegelian, this argument seems to be not only somewhat imposed on Hegel but also arguing two contrary points at the same time. Kojève would be using Hegel to foreground a modern world that is both empirically and metaphysically in the midst of great struggle, while also treating this same contemporary world as expressing Hegel's conviction in the overcoming of struggle; allowing for the homogenization of society, yet also calling for some sovereignty to emerge. Now, bringing Schmitt into this matrix does not make it more stable, but it does make it less capricious. For if Kojève were adopting a friend/enemy distinction as well as sovereignty as linked to exception and political decision, then one could grant him a greater margin for his reading of Hegel. This is a claim whose hermeneutic use trumps the admittedly incomplete evidence on which it is based. The flip side of Hegel, who endorsed a historical movement toward homogeneity, right, and universal recognition, would be Schmitt, who deplored liberalism as a decline that levels and even erases the properly political grounds of human existence. The flip side of Schmitt's theory of sovereignty as a matter of political decision, exception, and, fundamentally, state theory would be Hegel's theory of mastery as a normative

foundation for sovereignty and a matter of human existence. Kojève and Bataille could then be seen as balancing these parallel, if sometimes opposed, tendencies, at times in positive terms, at other times sounding distinctly more desperate. They need not be seen as contradicting themselves, but as working with a broader spectrum of options.

What follows here is divided into three parts. The first concerns Kojève and Bataille's 1930s writings, particularly their inflections of Schmitt's thinking of sovereignty, friend/enemy, and neutralization. The second section concerns wartime, in particular Gaston Fessard's tracts in favor of Catholic *résistance*, where he articulated and advocated resistance to Vichy and to Nazi Germany in Schmittian terms—most significantly referring to the status of Vichy in international law as that of a “slave-prince.” The final section returns to Bataille and his 1948 book *The Accursed Share* in order to offer a reading of his Maussian understanding of the Marshall Plan, which he implicitly posited as tripping up the friend/enemy distinction and its construction of a future of the political, and closes by turning to Kojève's 1957 talk at Düsseldorf, where, in front of Schmitt and a group of his supporters, Kojève, echoing Bataille (and Mauss) advocated the use of Marshall Plan-style economic gifts to the developing world.

ACT ONE: 1934: SOVEREIGNTY AND HETEROGENEITY

Schmitt's theorization of the political in terms useful for my purposes here first appeared in his *Der Begriff des Politischen* (The Concept of the Political), which was published in book form in 1932, right before Kojève began his course. Schmitt's book offers three main points of interest from the perspective of the French interlocutors:¹⁹ first, the famous distinction of *friend* from *enemy*—which for Schmitt grounded and formalized the political—indeed offered the alphabet of political ontology; second, the question of sovereignty, which Schmitt here expanded from his 1923 discussion in *Political Theology*, where he had famously identified the sovereign with the one who “decides on the exception”;²⁰ third, Schmitt's treatment of neutrality and neutralization as the effect of liberalism's modern rise, and the heart of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century political illusion of peace.

Though certain parallels between Kojève's version of the master/slave dialectic and Schmitt's are hard to miss, reading his work as a response to Schmitt requires some careful moves and remappings.

¹⁹ Its original publication in 1927 is as an essay in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* 58/1 (1927), 1–33.

²⁰ C. Schmitt, *Political Theology* (Chicago, 2005), 5.

First, Kojève, like Schmitt, elaborates an ontology of conflict, which can be said to carefully inflect the friend/enemy by inserting into it issues of sovereignty and power. As is well known, Kojève highlights the “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage” section of Chapter IV of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, treating the struggle between two Desires as fundamental to the emergence of humanity. This struggle creates two figures: one an autonomous and sovereign master who mediates his existence first by way of his successful face-to-face encounter with death and then by way of the second figure, the slave, who has recognized him; the other, the slave, gradually comes to mediate his own humanity by way of his work for the master, by way of his transformation of nature. It is, moreover, this struggle—and particularly the slave’s coming to self-consciousness—that guides history toward its end (an end which should be understood in the French term *fin*, pointing as much to “goal” as to “end”).

The master/slave dialectic does not quite map on the friend/enemy distinction—but the comparison is at the very least suggestive. While master and slave corner the self into a relation with *one* other (master or slave), friend and enemy divide the world of one’s *others*, thus adding a third term (the friend).²¹ Friend/enemy is also not a dialectical relationship.

That said, their position at the base of the political and of politics is clear: for Kojève, the master/slave dialectic is *anthropogenetic*, it finds or *engenders* man. The emergence of a master and a slave out of the conflict of opposed desires brings about the hominization of the species *Homo sapiens*, and sparks

²¹ Typically, moreover, Kojève is seen as a Marxist, and from his naturalization in 1938 onward he used the identification of his thought with Marxism with as much strategic as shock-value purposes. This has led to surprise regarding their exchange (see E. de Vries, “Discussion”, 91). Yet his famous February 1939 interpretation of “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage” (“Autonomie et dépendance de la conscience de soi”, in *Mésures*, 14 Jan. 1939, republished as “En guise d’introduction” in *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (Paris, 1968) 3–30), which occasioned the Marxist reading of his thought by the use of an epigraph from Marx (Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*, 9), does not even acknowledge the Marxist argument that the slave’s work leads to his alienation from the objects he produces, and lacks any sense or hint of an ethics centered on the slave’s liberation. Together with his friend the islamologist and Heidegger translator Henri Corbin, Kojève had co-translated Hendrik de Man’s *L’idée socialiste*, a fundamental moment in the Belgian socialist’s self-distancing from Marxism (H. de Man, *L’idée socialiste, suivi du plan de travail*, trans. H. Corbin and A. Kojevnikov (Paris, 1935)). And in a June 1939 letter to Fessard, on the occasion of the publication of the latter’s book *Epreuve de force*, Kojève noted, “I do not need to tell you that I subscribe without reservation to the *political* aspect of your book—you know that” (“Kojève-Fessard Documents”, trans. H. Gillis, in *Interpretation* 19/2 (Winter 1991–2), 187, original emphasis), again noting distance from communism.

history and the political.²² This suggests, moreover, that relations of *hierarchy* and *domination* found the political. Kojève could be seen here as radicalizing Schmitt, not rejecting him, insofar as he inserts the problem of sovereignty into the political, into the relationship with an enemy.

Thus mastery inflects sovereignty, introduces it as a problem in any political relation across history. Across history, when applied to relations between political forces (whether within a state or between states), the friend/enemy distinction slides toward the master/slave dialectic. Kojève proposes a situation of force and *sovereignty* as emerging already at every point where difference and conflict appear.

The progress of history compounds the utility of Schmitt. Kojève identifies *modernity* with *homogeneity*, something akin to Schmitt's *neutrality*. Kojève would make this argument in both ontological and historical terms.²³ Ontologically speaking, first, Kojève emphasizes that the world that man experiences is ontologically homogeneous, and that man's experience is itself fundamentally homogeneous: it does not offer situations radically different from one another or elements of this experience that would be a priori experienced *differently*.²⁴ In other words, man experiences a world bereft of true alterity, of radical transcendence. In this sense, homogeneity is not as such problematic (as Schmitt's *neutrality* is). It indicates that diversity within experience does not per se allow for a radical, transcendent opening in it: experience is fundamentally the same. Historically speaking, second, during the course of the 1930s Kojève became convinced that the goal of history in Hegel was the construction of a homogeneous universal state, in which men lived virtually indistinct from their given environment, action "produced" few changes in this environment, and human satisfaction was the norm.²⁵ In the full overcoming of relations of the master/slave type, in its *neutralization* or *homogenization*, humanity comes to its conclusion, to the end of history as the end of tensions and violence, to universal citizenship.

In other words, the young Kojève echoed and radicalized a set of historical concerns about modernity that he shared with Schmitt. Like him, he saw

²² Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*, 19, 30.

²³ For a longer discussion of Kojève's treatment of homogeneity, see my *An Atheism That Is Not Humanist Emerges in French Thought, 1926–1954* (Stanford, 2010), chap. 3. Kojève discusses homogeneity in *L'Athéisme* (Paris, 1998) and in his unpublished 1929 typescript "Zum Problem einer diskreten 'Welt'."

²⁴ Kojève emphasized this in his writings on the philosophy of science from the late 1920s and on the phenomenology of religion (*L'Athéisme*, 1931), as problems concerning the world that man experiences—the dependence of this world on man, its internal cohesion, its offer of a fundamentally *homogeneous* realm to man.

²⁵ Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*, 110, 146, 148–9.

modernity's end to history as bringing forth neutralization and homogenization, but in a sense that is not pejorative. Kojève's is a sense characterized by the emergence of citizens who to each other are *concitoyens*, not-enemies, even friends. He suggested that modernity as the triumph of homogeneity involves the end of the conflict that has driven history—the master/slave. Conversely, it is important to emphasize that the master/slave dialectic has stood at the base of a structure for human history that would operate in parallel terms to the friend/enemy distinction. Yet while mastery and slavery tend toward their own ultimate overcoming, for Schmitt it was liberalism that was centrally responsible for the erasure of sovereignty. By Schmittian standards, Kojève looked like a liberal.

At stake, in other words, in Kojève's adoption is not so much the identification of friend and enemy, as the development, thanks to it, of relations of authority and force. Kojève saw these as inherent in Hegel, i.e. as underwriting any distinction between self and other or between political forces. This meant that while he agreed with Schmitt that the end of history has a distinctly antipolitical character, nevertheless man continued to grapple with questions of sovereignty, the persistence and survival of subjectivity and authority. By identifying the end of history with the homogenization of humanity and the ending of conflict, Kojève complicated any straight identification of this modern homogenization with liberalism and saw it as an essential effect and consequence of historical conflict. In other words, the idea that a Hegelian march of history toward its end was tempered by a sense of continuing enmity and struggle echoes at least in part Schmitt's double understanding of modernity, marked *at once* by the persistence of the friend/enemy distinction and the need for sovereignty *as well as* by the liberal destruction of the properly political grounds of human existence. Where Schmitt saw in liberal neutralization a major danger to politics and to reason of state,²⁶ Kojève thought these effects to be characteristic of the modern world and certainly applicable as much to liberal as to illiberal regimes.

In general terms, then, Kojève can be read as treating as isomorphic the Hegelian and Schmittian meta-histories of the emergence of modernity, with the Hegelian one presented as ostensibly more fundamental, more far-reaching, more effective, more properly ontological. "Hegel" thus effects a regrounding of Schmitt's understanding of sovereignty and the political, maintaining the latter's essential problems of political rivalry and underwriting them by introducing conflict and division. Recasting (a) the friend/enemy into master/slave, (b) neutralization into the culmination of history, and (c) sovereignty into a subspecies of the persistence of authority that concerns subjective experience

²⁶ On neutrality and liberalization see C. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago, 1996), 35, 70, 78.

as much as political anthropology, allows Kojève to implicitly offer a number of particular responses to Schmitt. For Kojève, conflict and desire underwrite Schmitt's "fundamental" political division of friend from enemy; neutralization needs to be understood instead as a process of the emergence of the modern universal state, and is as essential to political questions pertaining to sovereignty and homogeneity in the state as to phenomenological questions concerning subjective experience. More significant than a legal theory of the control of the state was a question of who could come to hold such control, and why them and not someone else. The "Schmitt" produced by the young Kojève's mapping of Hegel's master/slave allows for a subjective and ontological as much as a political and anthropological comprehension and use of his thinking of sovereignty, homogeneity, and subjectivity. It would become a frame for much of the ensuing reception of Hegel and Schmitt both.

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For the most part, Georges Bataille was less invested the sovereign as a political force and more in an ontological sense of sovereignty, that is to say in the subject's desire to accede to sovereignty over himself, as well as in the deceptive appeal to this sort of sovereignty made by political systems and regimes, notably by fascism. His central question concerned the sovereign/subject binary from two perspectives: *first*, the capacity of the subject to emerge from its subjection—the possibility and hope of self-sovereignty amidst a field of political and social forces that denied it; and *second*, the theological and social structure of a form of power that organized a political subject's social relations.²⁷ Bataille's approach was much influenced by his reading of Nietzsche, as well as by Kojève's 1930s anthropotheism and theorization of homogeneity. For Bataille, sovereignty (like heterogeneity) became a category that concerned *subjects*, or rather those who, rejecting the homogeneity of modern bourgeois existence, sought to overcome their subjectivity by becoming self-sovereign. For these human beings, heterogeneity and sovereignty constituted the fleeting exception to a by and large homogeneously lived experience.²⁸ In *Inner Experience*, Bataille aimed for the self to reach a "summit" in which the self overcomes both itself and its homogeneous tie to things and others in favor of a radically *other* relation to them. This aim exemplifies Bataille's paradoxical kind of sovereignty wrested

²⁷ This is a guiding thread of *Inner Experience* and *Guilty*, and also of major essays from the 1930s; see my "An Anthropology of Exit" in *October* 117 (Summer 2006), 3–24.

²⁸ In his later writing, Bataille explicitly reinterpreted sovereignty as something experienced by man in an instant (and hence not exactly experienced at all). See his *Sovereignty*, in *The Accursed Share*, vols. 2–3, trans. R. Hurley (New York, 1991).

in a movement of escaping all determinations, a movement away from everyday life and politics. This was an ontological kind of sovereignty much influenced by Kojève but retrieved specifically in the refusal of modern subjectivity—in the refusal of Kojève’s acceptance of the effacement of ontological heterogeneity.

Yet Bataille also addressed the *political* kind of sovereignty in essays dedicated to fascism, Nietzsche, and Schmitt. In 1937, and seeking to distance Nietzsche from fascism, Bataille would contrast Alfred Rosenberg, the “ideological expression closest to Nietzsche” and the one he disdained the most, with Carl Schmidt (*sic*), whom he saw as “alien” to Nietzsche’s influence, as fundamentally Catholic, indeed “Maurrassian.”²⁹ Three years earlier (about the time of the Kojève notes), Bataille was preparing his “The Psychological Structure of Fascism,” an essay centered on fascist claims on sovereignty and authority in which his treatment of Schmittian themes became much more elaborate even as the reference remained implicit. Though Durkheim was the clear implicit referent for Bataille’s thinking of fascism in terms of religion and the sacred, and Freud was an explicit one,³⁰ Bataille seemed also to refer to Schmitt (or at least to his “Schmidt”) when he retheologized fascism:

The chief as such [of the fascist state] is in fact only the emanation of a principle which is none other than that of the glorious existence of a nation raised to the value of a divine force (which, superseding every other conceivable consideration, demands not only passion but ecstasy from its participants).³¹

In this text, Bataille echoes Schmitt in two ways. First, like Kojève, he conceptualizes homogeneity in a way that mirrors Schmitt’s understanding of neutralization, which in modernity has overrun genuine sovereignty: “as a rule, *homogeneous* society excludes every *heterogeneous* element, whether filthy or noble.”³² Second, fascism’s “chief” is heterogeneous for Bataille in that he offers a new form of sovereignty that *supersedes* that of traditional nobility and army

²⁹ Bataille, “Nietzsche and the Fascists,” in *idem, Visions of Excess*, ed. A. Stoekl (Minneapolis, 1985), 189.

³⁰ Bataille, “The Psychological Structure of Fascism,” in *The Bataille Reader*, ed. F. Botting and S. Wilson (Oxford, 1997), 146 n. 11. Bataille’s reference is to Freud’s *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 139. The language of ecstasy is closer to Durkheim and Schmitt’s exception than to Freud’s conceptualization of identification with the leader in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

³² *Ibid.*, 132, original emphasis. Bataille was critical of the traditional emergence of state sovereignty: “the state is in reality only the abstract, degraded form of the living *having to be* required, at the top, as an affective attraction and royal agency: it is simply vague *homogeneity* become a constraint.” *Ibid.*, 133, original emphasis.

leadership. Indeed, he writes that Mussolini and Hitler, or rather the figures of the Duce and the Führer,

derive their fundamental power not from their official function in the state, like other prime ministers, but from the existence of a fascist party and from their personal position at the head of that party. In conjunction with the duality of heterogeneous and homogeneous forms, this evidence of the deep roots of power precisely maintains the unconditional supremacy of the heterogeneous form from the standpoint of the principle of sovereignty.³³

Fascism emerges from class, nation, and traditional power, but it fuses sovereignty with them in a radically new fashion that “maintains the unconditional supremacy of the heterogeneous form.” Here, Bataille echoes Schmitt’s understanding of the sovereign who is not bound by the law; fascism superimposes the source of authority (the party) onto the state and situates the leader as an absolutely heterogeneous force of decision, power, and action, guarding this source as external, exceptional to the state apparatus.

This new sovereign form generates an order not only for the sovereign but for the subjects as well; society here changes as a whole, and its members participate with “not just passion but *ecstasy*.” Unlike “traditional” Western societies, “the fascist unification is not simply a uniting of powers from different origins and a symbolic uniting of classes: it is also the accomplished uniting of the *heterogeneous* elements with the *homogeneous* elements, of sovereignty in the strictest sense with the state.”³⁴ With the exception of Islam, Bataille suggests, fascism has no parallel in forms of a sovereign and even divine power emerging from homogeneous classes and undoing their homogeneity. But he also calls fascism more radical in its ability to forge sovereignty in a chief in such a way that the ideological, military, national, and class foundations of this sovereignty remain irreducible to traditional forms and serve as the ground for a single forceful and unbound sovereign. It is clear that Bataille writes this from a perspective as fearful of as it is impressed by fascism.

In these formulations, and starting from a worry about the weakness of socialism and the need for “an organized understanding of the movements in society, of attraction and repulsion,” which can aid “the deep subversion which continues to pursue the emancipation of human lives,” Bataille contrasts Schmitt’s conception of the sovereign with an understanding of the emergence of a radically modern form of governance and especially *domination*.³⁵ Schmitt’s sovereign—that figure who decides in, before, and beyond the law, is figured

³³ Ibid., 141–2.

³⁴ Ibid., 140, original emphasis.

³⁵ Ibid., 145. Bataille addresses this weakness also in his novel *The Blue of Noon* (New York, 2002), 49. See also his “Que faire?” (“What do we do against fascism given the insufficiency

here as a specifically fascist “success.” For Bataille as for Schmitt the leader acquires qualities of a god—the sovereign is to be radically distinguished from the subject. But this leader is precisely the figure Bataille is suspicious of, for it forces all non-führers, all non-gods into abject subjection. Fascism’s (re)heterogeneization of homogeneity does not a priori emancipate from the heterogeneity of the leaders, does not allow for the creation of any *self*-sovereignty, even though that emancipation and that creation is what fascism promises. On the contrary, Bataille continues, fascism’s imposition of sovereignty, regardless of its supposed promise, works precisely to stifle any possibility of emancipation, any self-sovereignty. In this politicized context, Bataille suggests, historical homogeneization and the state-level engagement with sovereignty mark an erasure of the struggle within a subject; and, in a somewhat speculative fashion, one can say that the modernity postulated by Schmitt’s political theology and Kojève’s end of history shine through here as forms of this erasure. Insofar as Bataille follows Schmitt and Kojève on the neutralization and homogenization of modernity, he wishes to keep as sovereign those figures or men who seek to escape from it, those who seek to escape subjectivity and rule themselves—and he wishes for a politics that would allow such a kind of self-rule. Kojève’s stance on mastery and violence neither postulates nor suggests any such “subjective” sovereignty. Schmitt’s sovereign, deciding on the exception, transforms in Bataille’s text, with a tinge of Heideggerian authenticity and Nietzschean revaluation of all values, becoming a figure who can govern his existence and escape from the homogeneity of everyday life. Sovereignty for him is authentic existence unbound by subjectivity and homogeneity—a kind of existence that has become impossible, that fascism pretends to promise yet makes all the more impossible.

ACT TWO: 1942: AUTHORITY, RESISTANCE, AND VICHY (GASTON FESSARD)

The “National Revolution” of Vichy and the occupation opened a second act in reactions to Schmitt, this one occurring during the occupation of France and the “National Revolution” of Vichy. In his *Summa Atheologica* of 1943–5 (*Inner Experience, Guilty, and On Nietzsche*), Bataille took an explicit “inward” turn away from political problems.³⁶ Kojève, in his 1942 *La notion de l'autorité* (The Notion of Authority) and his 1943 *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*, came

of communism?”) attached to a letter to Michel Leiris of April 1935, in G. Bataille, *Choix de lettres 1917–65* (Paris, 1997), 105.

³⁶ At the beginning of *Guilty*, in a fragment written in September 1939, Bataille writes, “I won’t speak of war but of mystical experience”; a month later, Bataille could also write the politically ambiguous sentence “Once war broke out, there was no way I could wait

to focus explicitly on questions of right and authority, addressing Schmitt in formal theorizations rather detached from the latter's major concerns. Another of Kojève's "students," however, Gaston Fessard, an early and major theorist of Catholic *résistance*, used Schmitt to delegitimize Vichy's claims to sovereignty in pamphlets and mimeographs, while theorizing it in longer texts, unpublished at the time. My concern in the pages that follow is with the ways Fessard addressed the problem of Vichy as a theologico-political problem and as an opening toward a thinking of modern sovereignty, using Schmitt's understanding of resistance and the internal enemy to facilitate a Catholic Hegelian argument for *résistance*.

Fessard's theory of sovereignty, though obscure today, was significant at the time, and deserves elaborate attention.³⁷ Fessard is best known for a resistance tract he authored in 1941, "France, prends garde de perdre ton âme!" ("Take care, France, not to lose your soul!"), often considered the founding document of French Catholic resistance. It protested loudly against Vichy anti-Semitism, and effectively launched the *Témoignage Chrétien* series of pamphlets, the major organ of Catholic resistance set up by the Jesuit Pierre Chaillet.³⁸ A Jesuit himself, Fessard had encountered Kojève at the beginning of the latter's Hegel course, which he followed assiduously. He was a little older than Kojève (as was Bataille) and he had considerable experience in Hegelian matters: during his studies he had attempted a translation of the long Chapter VII (Religion) of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (in 1929, even though he was repeatedly discouraged by his superiors from engaging with contemporary German philosophy before completing his theological studies).³⁹ Much invested in philosophical and political concerns, Fessard was close to Raymond Aron (also a Kojève "student"), whose famous dissertation defense he recorded and published;⁴⁰ to Gabriel

any more . . . for the liberation which this book is for me." G. Bataille, *Guilty* (Venice, CA, 1988), 28.

³⁷ See the intellectual biography of Fessard by Michel Sales, in Fessard, *Hegel, le Christianisme et l'histoire* (Paris, 1990), 17–21.

³⁸ Fessard, *France, prends garde de perdre ton âme!* (also known as *Témoignage Chrétien* 1 (Nov. 1941)). On *Témoignage Chrétien* see J. Jackson, *France: The Dark Years* (Oxford, 2001), 418–19. Noting the significance of *France, prends garde*, Robert Paxton also writes, "The major point is that no Catholic authority in France or in Rome gave public support to *Témoignage Chrétien*'s protest against Vichy's own anti-Semitic measures." Robert Paxton, "France: The Church, the Republic, and the Fascist Temptation", in R. J. Wolff and J. K. Hoensch, eds., *Catholics, the State, and the European Radical Right, 1919–1945* (Boulder, CO, 1987), 84.

³⁹ See Archives Jesuites, Fonds Fessard, 29 E, "F. Mollat à Gaston Fessard (March 10, 1930)." A letter from Jean Wahl, dated Dec. 1929–Jan. 1930 testifies to the interest of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and the *Revue philosophique* in publishing Fessard's translation. See Fonds Fessard, 29 E, and also Fessard's correspondence files with Wahl.

⁴⁰ Cited in Kleinberg, *Generation Existential*, 91.

Marcel, whose lifelong confessor he quickly became and on whom he wrote as early as 1938;⁴¹ and to the very influential Jesuits Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Henri de Lubac. He was also one of the most active Catholic followers of philosophical developments, writing on structuralism, phenomenology, and political thought well into the 1970s.

In the 1930s Fessard penned two books of importance for contemporary politics, the first a response to the communist policy of a “hand outstretched” to Catholics, and the second an account of the perils of the international scene.⁴² Among Kojève’s students, he was perhaps the most critical of Kojève’s approach, seeing in the famous passage of Paul’s epistle to the Galatians 3:28–9: (“There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus”) the definitive moment of Hegelian reconciliation and sublation, and thus identifying Hegel’s modern anthropology with a thoroughly Christian one.⁴³ During World War II and parallel to his resistance engagement, Fessard strayed somewhat from his basic motif of reconciliation to be found in a Christian *Aufhebung* of different political, theoretical, and cultural tendencies, to write at length on Vichy’s politics and supposed sovereignty. Fessard deployed this theorization in several works—some of them short individual tracts, others long essays. Besides “France, prends garde,” these included the “Tract of the Slave-Prince” (1943) a long essay, *Authority and the Common Good* (*Autorité et bien commun*, 1938–42), “What is a Legitimate Government?” (“Qu’est-ce qu’un gouvernement légitime?”, 1942) and *Journal of the French Conscience* (*Journal de la conscience française*, 1940–44).⁴⁴

Fessard specifically addressed authority and sovereignty from a perspective influenced by Schmitt and Kojève. Starting with the immediate problem of the German occupation and the institution of Vichy, Fessard sought to offer a “proper” Catholic reaction to Europe’s suffering, a reaction that would be at once political and theological. Both fascism and the general “crisis of authority” to which it responded were fundamentally structured around the theologico-political: Nazism was a spiritual totalitarianism,⁴⁵ a “*Weltanschauung* . . . as intolerant as a religion” founded on mysticism; its pretense to rationalism rested on racism, and any collaboration with it amounted to nothing less than

⁴¹ See G. Fessard and G. Marcel, *Correspondance, 1934–1971* (Paris, 1985).

⁴² Fessard, *La main tendue? Le dialogue catholique–communiste est-il possible?* (Paris, 1937). Fessard, “*Pax nostra*”: *examen de conscience international* (Paris, 1936).

⁴³ See Fessard, *De l’actualité historique*, vol. 1 (Brussels, 1960), 53–5, 215–29.

⁴⁴ Fessard, *Autorité et bien commun* (Paris, 1944), 10 n.

⁴⁵ Fessard, “France, prends garde de perdre ton âme!” in *Au temps du Prince-esclave* (Paris, 1989), 70–71.

commitment to “the triumph of its principles.”⁴⁶ In “France, prends garde,” Fessard emphasized National Socialism as a political ideology that systematically “identified” and assaulted the internal enemies (especially the Jews) that it designated at will and arbitrarily.⁴⁷ He further identified the ideological basis of Nazism with Hitler and Rosenberg’s writings, and he insisted on it as a mystical and a specifically anti-Christian political system.

Though not referenced in these writings, Schmitt inflects them in a more complex fashion than Hitler or Rosenberg. Fessard was not only aware of Schmitt, but owned copies of *The Concept of the Political*; *Staat, Bewegung, Volk* (1935); and *National-Sozialismus und Völkerrecht*,⁴⁸ as well as a signed copy of Schmitt’s “Der Staat als Mechanismus bei Hobbes und Descartes.”⁴⁹ What indicates the inflection are two sets of detailed handwritten notes Fessard made on *The Concept of the Political* as well as on a 1934 essay by Kurt Wilk on that book, and before returning to read Fessard’s *écrits résistancialistes* more closely I would like to emphasize what it is that Fessard takes from and focuses on in his readings.

In his notes on Schmitt’s *Concept of the Political*,⁵⁰ Fessard points out Schmitt’s following passage: “the requirement for internal peace compels [the state] in critical situations to decide also upon the internal enemy.”⁵¹ This question, concerning the sovereign’s de jure and de facto internal powers, the extent to which different factions within the state may declare each other enemies, and the possible legitimacy of a liberatory struggle, is central to Fessard’s position. Furthermore, in his notes on Wilk’s “La doctrine politique du national-socialisme: Carl Schmitt,” Fessard took into account Wilk’s effort to distinguish, in Schmitt, civil war from liberatory struggle.⁵² Wilk suggested that Schmitt’s casting of international treaties and the League of Nations as a liberal international order offered a dual understanding of Europe: from Germany’s perspective, its struggle to remove the sanctions imposed by the Versailles treaty was liberatory; from the perspective of European democracies, Germany was carrying out a European civil war. The distinction of civil war from liberatory struggle became important during Vichy, as the resistance countered the Laval government’s

⁴⁶ Ibid., 92.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 86–7.

⁴⁸ Schmitt, *National-Sozialismus und Völkerrecht* (Berlin, 1934).

⁴⁹ Archives Jésuites, Fonds Fessard, box 77. The dedication is dated 10 Aug. 1937.

⁵⁰ See Fessard’s handwritten notes, “Der Begriff des Politischen”, in Archives Jésuites, Fonds Fessard, box 77, 2.

⁵¹ Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 46.

⁵² K. Wilk, “La doctrine politique du national-socialisme: Carl Schmitt: Exposé critique de ses idées”, in *Archives de philosophie de droit et de sociologie juridique* 4/3–4 (1934), 169–96. Fessard’s notes can be found as “Sur Carl Schmitt . . .”, in Archives Jésuites, Fonds Fessard, box 77.

accusation of treasonous sabotage aimed at civil war through the argument and conviction that it was a liberatory struggle on behalf of humanity. By seeing Germany as seeking its liberation from the liberal international order, Schmitt (in Fessard's reading of Wilk) was offering a legal foundation for Nazism's mystical anti-Semitism: in a comment that draws out the implications of this stance during World War II, Fessard wrote in his notes that because Schmitt's theory grants the state the right to decide on the "extermination of the internal enemy," it "reduces humanity to Germany—people of masters—commanding slave nations."⁵³ In other words, Nazi Germany's "liberatory struggle" against the League of Nations had morphed into a mastery of Europe tied to the extermination of all those diagnosed as enemies.

Fessard's aim in "France, prends garde" was precisely to demonstrate that no system of sovereignty deserving of a population's obedient acquiescence could be glimpsed in Vichy France.⁵⁴ Acquiescing to Vichy's rule by force amounted not to following a canonical structure of authority, which was bound to working for the country's and the universal "common good" (*le bien commun*), but to collaborating with Nazi ideals. In his 1943 "Tract of the Slave-Prince," Fessard went further, advocating the legitimacy of a struggle of liberation against a "slave-prince" who lacked any real sovereignty, who could not be obeyed "without reservation" and whose purpose and power was only collaterally attached to the people's "common good."⁵⁵ The emphasis on a liberatory struggle as opposed to a civil war remains. A vanquished nation could resign itself to being governed by a (foreign) sovereign but, while accepting its material dependence, had to seek the "common good" separately from him and refuse the values imposed by him.⁵⁶ By offering a criterion for governmental authority, Fessard emphasized not only the political and moral, but even the *juridical* legitimacy of a resistance struggle against such a slave-prince and the disinterested foreign master who would exterminate *his* internal enemies. Moreover, by offering a criterion steeped in Catholic tradition, Fessard offered a religious response to official Catholic authorities from a perspective that mitigated Catholicism through a Hegelian lens—asking what the common good is and how it may be achieved through but also above a particular present time. Fessard understood the common good, by reference to Pope Leo XIII's 1892 declaration that the "common good is the creative

⁵³ "Sur Carl Schmitt . . .", point 6, Archives Jésuites, Fonds Fessard, box 77.

⁵⁴ In his *Autorité et bien commun*, Fessard had argued that it had been evident already by 1925 that French society had faced a crisis of authority—a crisis involving both those who rule and those who obey. This crisis "by itself" explains the cause of the French defeat of June 1940.

⁵⁵ Fessard, "Tract dit du Prince-Esclave", in *idem*, *Au temps du prince-esclave*, 108, 106.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 105.

principle and conservative element of human society” and that it is “in society, after God, the first and last law,” as a religious and communitarian counter to the “general interest.”⁵⁷ Again and again, Fessard sought to show that a struggle for liberation and for the common good was not only possible but politically and religiously reasonable if not obligatory: “the citizen will have thus to resign himself to material cooperation, when this appears to avoid the worst evils. But in all other cases he will also have to courageously resist the ‘collaboration’ so that material cooperation does not become formal.”⁵⁸ The victor remains an enemy so long as he does not allow for governance centered on the “common good” of the vanquished—which in effect means so long as he does not desist from governance and withdraw. If resistance was a genuine “revolutionary” response to a situation defined by persecution and by a sovereignty reduced to force, this was because the slave-prince could hold no undoubted legitimate authority, but would be a sovereign that lacked all Schmittian sovereignty and even Kojévian authority.

In this argument, Fessard turned Schmitt on his head, using a strongly Christian and Hegelian language to restrict his appropriation of Schmittian themes. If the references to a “common good” and the sovereign’s obligation to the values of his nation mattered, this was because they offered a decisive negation of Schmitt’s understanding of the sovereign. Schmitt had argued that a sovereign could not be obliged, for that would restrict, hence deny, the precise capacity of the sovereign also to stand outside the legal order. Fessard countered that in the wartime’s international situation, and especially given the occupation of France, sovereignty was fundamentally imperiled when it lacked the ability to demonstrate and practice its aim toward the “common good.”

By denoting Vichy as a slave-prince, Fessard imported Hegel and Kojève’s understanding of master and slave, using the adjective “slave” to denote precisely the limitation of powers forced upon an otherwise sovereign prince. Not only did he echo his notes on Wilk’s reading of Schmitt, concerning Germany’s command of “slave nations.” With expressions such as “the vanquished nation is in the situation of a slave who, with his progressive liberation in mind, can withstand the orders of his master, but can also consent to them to the degree that they do not clash with his conscience,” Fessard further implied the master/slave dialectic to be central to the relationships of sovereignty and enmity he was discussing.⁵⁹ The denotation of slavery thus had a further effect. Not only did it counter the Schmittian argument that the state may work toward the “extermination of the internal enemy,” and suggest the resistance to be liberatory struggle

⁵⁷ Fessard, *Autorité et bien commun*, 53.

⁵⁸ Fessard, “Tract dit du Prince-Esclave,” 107.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 106.

rather than engagement in a civil war that the state had reason and right to target; it also specifically suggested not only that resistance was legitimate, but that resistance was required precisely for the restoration of a proper and unproblematic sovereignty. In other words, the return of legitimacy even in a strict Schmittian sense of “deciding on the exception” came to depend on the restoration of a non-slave-prince, on the end of occupation. One could also go so far as to argue that Fessard imagined in his evocation of Kojève’s master/slave dialectic the ultimate freedom of the slave, and through the rhetoric of the common good specifically offered a reasoning for it.

In other words, Fessard rested his understanding of legitimate government on a clash of Hegel with Schmitt and an effort to contrast a certain, modified Schmitt with the Schmitt that had chosen Nazism. This clash offered a particular approach to the Catholic prioritization of Christianity over the political that for others had allowed and supported the legitimacy of Vichy. Fessard’s turn to Hegel and Schmitt offered the ground for a different Christian reaction to Vichy; in it, Schmitt provided both a reasoning of how Germany operated over slave nations and a way to conceptualize resistance, while Hegel provided the framework for the slave’s lack of sovereignty and his potential (revolutionary) overcoming of his bondage. Through these, the Catholic language of the common good could be raised anew in a specifically *résistant* fashion targeting official Catholicism as much as Vichy.

LAST ACT: MARCEL MAUSS, GEORGE MARSHALL, AND CARL SCHMITT

The third phase of the Hegelian engagement with Schmitt took place after World War II, when Schmitt was a pariah in Germany, banned from teaching, when Bataille retreated decisively from his politically experimental phase of the 1930s and became an editor and theoretical guide behind the journal he founded, *Critique*, and when Kojève himself became a functionary in the economic section of the *Quai d’Orsay*, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

What is interesting and significant about this third phase is that Schmitt would serve no longer as a foundation of Bataille and Kojève’s political anthropology. Instead, he became an addressee of their effort to rethink politico-economic relations concerning sovereignty and enmity, and indeed a thinker to be *overcome* through these efforts. While the Hegelian foundation of world history and the subject’s place in it would persist, the theorization of homogeneity and the state that both thinkers had developed, partly thanks to Schmitt’s thought, would require a new foundation so that the Schmittian proclamation of a leveling liberalism as the foundation of modernity could be overcome.

In his 1949 book *The Accursed Share*, Bataille offered his most detailed analysis of modern capitalism and communism, taking up Max Weber's description of capitalism's reliance on Protestantism and R. H. Tawney's modifications of Weber's treatment. Bataille's concern was dual: on the one hand, to understand capitalism's grounding of the modern exchange system, a system that refused luxury, excess, heterogeneity of any sort, and condemned the West to an inward, homogenizing spiral; on the other hand, to think of the then-present situation, of Europe caught in pincers between America and the Soviet Union. Bataille's main concern was with the fate of the "accursed share," with what appears as waste from a classical economic perspective, but from the perspective of human life *in toto* is nothing less than the reason that justifies and makes enjoyable the experience of economic relations. Through the notion of general economy (which applies as much to individuals as to economies and states), Bataille offered an interpretation of subjective and political existence through *vital energy*—a sort of vital Helmholtzianism, a vital thermodynamics.

This approach led Bataille to argue that modern capitalism involves a closing off of possible forms of pleasure to the benefit of mere accumulation. The world of the bourgeois becomes a world without intimacy, without hope, without self-consciousness.⁶⁰ Reducing the worker to "a thing," capitalism helps bring about a homogenization of society and existence, a reduction of everything to a thing-like condition, which effaces the possibility of sovereignty. The possibility of "being in a sovereign manner" is at once what capitalism violates in oppressing a sovereign existence to a thingly one, and what it is threatened by.⁶¹

Bataille further argues that "at the present moment" it is the Soviet world that dominates the thinking of the future thanks to a project that reinstates a kind of sovereignty through the radical and violent industrialization of man. By contrast, Western capitalism is fragmented and contradictory, unwilling and unable to offer a real alternative:

Doubtless man on this side is not necessarily bound to follow the imperious ways of the USSR. For the most part he is exhausting himself in the sterility of a fearful anticommunism. But if he has his own problems to solve, he has more important things to do than blindly to anathematize, than to complain of a distress caused by his manifold contradictions. Let him try to understand, or better, let him admire the cruel energy of those who broke the Russian ground; he will be closer to the tasks that await him. For, *on all sides, and in every way, a world in motion wants to be changed.*⁶²

⁶⁰ Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, vol. 1 (New York, 1989), 132, 142, 134.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 168, italics his.

What could offer this change? If conventional capitalism had proven itself sterile, was this to advocate communism in its wake? Not quite. Bataille articulates violence as constitutive of the Soviet system and essential to its radical industrialization, but also as undermining the possibility of subjective self-sovereignty and thus as a mark that capitalism was not overcome in it.⁶³ Most damningly from this last perspective, for him “Soviet communism closed itself firmly to the principle of nonproductive expenditure.”⁶⁴ It thus amounted to an imperial industrialism.⁶⁵

Like many of his contemporaries concerned with the status of postwar Europe and thought, Bataille framed the current predicament by reference to war.⁶⁶ He feared the possibility of such a conflagration, which (without reference to nuclear weapons) he saw as a form of mutually assured destruction: for Europe, World War III would bring “total annihilation.”⁶⁷ And amidst these worries that Western capitalism had failed to offer a plausible alternative to the Soviet model, Bataille turned toward one Western project that could offer an answer—an answer that was based as much on Marcel Mauss’s theory of *potlatch* as on his readings of Schmitt and Hegel. This was the Marshall Plan, which he saw as opening the possibility of a giant *potlatch*, a gift that could not and would not be repaid, and asserting a sovereignty that capitalist accumulation could not foresee.

Bataille relies not on critics of the plan—who decried it as a plan for the capitalist “vassalization” of Europe—but on its supporters, notably his friend Jean Piel (executive editor at *Critique* and author in 1948 of *La fortune américaine et son destin*) and the well-known economist François Perroux.⁶⁸ Bataille enthusiastically introduces the Marshall Plan as “a historical event of exceptional importance,” and quoting Perroux claims that with it begins “the greatest economic experiment . . . bound to go beyond the boldest and most promising structural reforms advocated by the various workers’ parties on the

⁶³ Ibid., 159.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 158.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 151, 167.

⁶⁶ See, for example, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who in *Humanism and Terror* described the immediate postwar period as all but preparing for war, and felt it essential to remind himself and his readers in his conclusion that “we are not in a state of war.” See M. Merleau-Ponty, *Humanism and Terror* (Boston, 1969), xlii, xlv, 181–2.

⁶⁷ Bataille, *Accursed Share*, vol. 1, 170, 186.

⁶⁸ See F. Perroux, *Le plan Marshall ou l’Europe nécessaire au monde* (Paris, 1948); and J. Piel, *La fortune américaine et son destin* (Paris, 1948). Piel’s book appeared in the short-lived book series *L’usage des richesses* at Éditions de Minuit that Bataille directed and in which he published *The Accursed Share*. See M. Surya, *Georges Bataille*, 564 n. 8. See also a book review that treats Perroux’s, Piel’s, and Bataille’s books together: J. Vernant, “Une interprétation du plan Marshall”, *Politique étrangère* 14/6 (1949), 575–80.

national level'. . . it would constitute a veritable revolution, indeed '*the* revolution that matters in this season of History.'⁶⁹ Even if Bataille worried that the Marshall Plan did not go far enough and remained a response to the Kremlin's "imperialism," he still argued that the plan and the Truman Doctrine would, *by their very principles*, offer a new form and possibility of sovereignty—one that goes against the capitalist tendency toward ascetic closure and (implicitly) against Schmitt's founding of the political on relations of enmity.

Mankind, Bataille wrote, "is at the same time . . . a manifold opening of the possibilities of growth and an infinite capacity for wasteful consumption."⁷⁰ This is almost exactly his description of the Marshall Plan, this "unsecured investment:"

it . . . anticipates *an ultimate utilization for growth* (needless to say, the general point of view implies these two aspects at the same time), but it carries this possibility over *to an area where destruction . . . has left the field open*. In other words, *its contribution is that of a condemned wealth*.⁷¹

Thus the new sovereignty would not be of the United States, but of an economic system that would move beyond Weberian capitalism. As he put it, "Mankind's accomplishment [would be] linked to that of the American economy"; a generalized Marshall Plan would lead to an overcoming of capitalism toward a self-consciousness of "pure expenditure" that would be analogous to "the transition from animal to man (of which it would be, more precisely, the last act)."⁷² As such a realized self-consciousness not bound to need, man would not be a tool or element of state exchange and social organization, but an agent freed from capitalist and state-based homogeneity, and capable of the creation of other such agents.

Mauss is a crucial referent of this dream: in the conclusion of his analysis of gift-giving in the famous *Essai sur le don* (*The Gift*), he had called for a reconceptualization of social relations away from economic relations and toward an intersubjectivity that was crucial to the most archaic and original societies and today was so often taken for granted as to be almost invisible—an intersubjectivity of gifts that can allow man "to emerge from self, to give, freely and obligatorily," to "return to the enduring basis of law, to the very principle of normal social life":⁷³

⁶⁹ Bataille, *Accursed Share*, vol. 1, 175, Perroul's emphasis.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 182, italics mine.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 190.

⁷³ M. Mauss, *The Gift* (New York, 1990), 71, 70. It is significant to note that though the *Essai sur le don* had only been published in the Durkheimian *L'année sociologique* in 1924, it was not republished in book format until 1950—that is, after Bataille completed his study.

The system that we propose to call the system of “total services” . . .—the system in which individuals and groups exchange everything with one another—constitutes the most ancient system of economy and law that we can find or of which we can conceive. It forms the base from which the morality of the exchange-through-gift has flowed. Now, that is exactly the kind of law, in due proportion, towards which we would like to see our own societies moving.⁷⁴

Still, Hegel and Schmitt are no less present in Bataille. Bataille playfully situates Kojève the Hegelian sage at the heart of his analysis, clearly portraying him when he describes mankind as “embodied in a manager, an administrator of the Economic Cooperation Administration” who would disburse “the [creditor’s] investment through constant negotiations” but “without having to stay within the limits of the creditor’s interest.”⁷⁵ Hegel is, moreover, present in the fundamentally dialectical effort to surpass the communism/capitalism division so as to open up capitalism and communism’s “restricted” economies of accumulation and industrialization toward a general economy that would operate by turning wealth into a gift and this gift into greater capacity for sovereignty—for the ending of subjection and economic slavery. And the use of the gift here targets Schmitt’s friend/enemy by suggesting that the giving of a Marshall-Plan-style gift grants the giver a mastery that is not reducible to struggle in relations of *enmity* or *competition*, nor to a Schmittian neutrality. For it proposes an economic “war” based on principles not only of competition and accumulation but of investment without economic dividends in return—a war for an ultimately moral and historical superiority. Sovereignty here lies in the overcoming of enmity and especially of war by way of an accumulation that would satisfy *both* the Hegelian hope of universal equality *and* the distinction of sovereignty from actual mastery. Thus this is not to erase Schmitt from the picture: without him, the force of an international order presently divided into friends and enemies would be merely elided. The goal, for Bataille, was precisely to foreground and overcome this order, to stop looking at modern man by way of the simple overcoming of lordship and bondage toward a universal citizenship, and to turn instead to suggest that sovereignty must lie with an increase of vital energy, with an increase of sovereignties opposed to mere need or survival. To speak in the terms set forth by the Bataille of the 1930s, this move dislocates sovereignty from a political heterogeneity opposed to the homogenization of society: it reinjects an alterity into homogeneous relations by seeing the self (or the same) as sovereign precisely when it moves away from the economy of the self:

⁷⁴ Mauss, *The Gift*, 70.

⁷⁵ Bataille, *Accursed Share*, vol. 1, 178.

man is not just the separate being that contends with the living world and with other men for his share of resources. The general movement of exudation (of waste) of living matter impels him, and he cannot stop it; moreover, being at the summit, his sovereignty in the living world identifies him with this movement; it destines him, in a privileged way, to that glorious operation, to useless consumption.⁷⁶

If, for Bataille, both capitalism and communism treat man as thing-like, reducing him to an object or tool, if Soviet industrialization and its violence contrast but do not overcome the relations set forth by capitalism's ascetic spirit, then the Marshall Plan offers the possibility of relations premised on giving, and thus on an ethics that would be truly human. In the final footnote to *The Accursed Share*, Bataille acknowledges the apparent strangeness of his stance: "It will be said that only a madman could perceive such things in the Marshall and Truman plans. I am that madman." Mad or not, Bataille's overcoming of capitalism would in his eyes allow for a different (to paraphrase Schmitt's later term) *nomos of the earth*: an order in which distinguishing friends from enemies as the ground of political decision, alliances, and war would give way to economic and anthropological strategies of a different sovereignty allied to an antiutilitarian ethics of self-overcoming.

Moreover, Bataille was hardly the only "madman" here. His stance was shared—albeit in terms more grounded in policy and finance than anthropology and mysticism—by Alexandre Kojève.

* * *

The early relationship between Bataille and Kojève was framed at least in part by Kojève's teaching and his intentional assumption of the role of an intellectual master, a master thinker; Bataille's famous "Letter to X, Lecturer on Hegel" and other pieces of correspondence suggest that while their relations were very friendly, Kojève clearly installed himself as an authority over the Hegelian corpus that left Bataille writhing to overcome. Kojève's response to Bataille's *L'expérience intérieure* of 1942 was supportive but patronizing—praising Bataille's *Story of the Eye* instead as "one of the best porno books," Kojève compared Bataille to Christian mystics (St Benedict and St Bonaventure) and offered no indication that he could see Bataille's effort toward communication and a transcendence of subjectivity as anything that challenged Hegelian Absolute Knowledge.⁷⁷ (Bataille probably did not take kindly to this reaction, which paralleled Sartre's, and Kojève's letter survives in crumpled form in Bataille's archive).

⁷⁶ Ibid., 23.

⁷⁷ Kojève, "Lettres à Georges Bataille", in *Textures* 6 (1970), 61.

But from 1947 on, the two thinkers made considerable and frequent efforts in relation to one another. Bataille, who with Eric Weil published in *Critique* the now-famous Strauss/Kojève debate on Xenophon's *Hiero* and tyranny, also wrote repeatedly on Kojève, whether in appreciation ("Hegel, l'homme, l'histoire") or in heightened critical distance ("Hegel, la mort et le sacrifice"). It appears that after the war the two (or at least Bataille) dreamt up a publication to which Kojève would contribute about a hundred pages on Hegel, and Bataille a long introduction, "Hegel in the Present World".⁷⁸ Similarly, in 1950, Kojève wrote an ultimately unpublished "Preface to the Work of Georges Bataille" which now concurred that Bataille's work situated itself beyond Hegel's "circular discourse" and wondered in what way a Hegelian might recoup it—as a form of discourse or silence.⁷⁹

Yet perhaps the most striking conclusion to this friendship is offered in the visit Kojève paid to Carl Schmitt and the talk he gave at the Rhein-Ruhr Club in Düsseldorf on 16 January 1957, when he sought to found a policy of "giving colonialism" that was in all essentials founded in Mauss and Bataille.⁸⁰ After a first letter from Schmitt in 1955, Kojève maintained with him an intensive two-year correspondence in the mid-1950s which seems to have slowed after the 1957 visit. Following a discussion of Kojève's reading of Hegel, Schmitt started sending Kojève articles related to his *Nomos of the Earth* project and invited Kojève to speak.⁸¹ The talk, which Schmitt later declared had influenced "20 young, intelligent Germans," concentrated on "Colonialism from a European Perspective," and related quite closely to geopolitical concerns (particularly the question of the developing world) that Kojève had been working on at the Quai d'Orsay.⁸²

Kojève introduced colonialism as a problem by noting that communism had in no way overcome capitalism. In his argument, Capitalism is a nineteenth-century term, given a precise political and economic significance by Marx, who correctly understood its internal opposition but wrongly prognosticated its simple demise

⁷⁸ BNF, Fonds Bataille, Env.16 and Env. 18, "Preface à Kojève."

⁷⁹ BNF, Fonds Kojève, Boite XII: "Préface à l'Oeuvre de Georges Bataille."

⁸⁰ Kojève, "Colonialism from a European Perspective", in *Interpretation* 29/1 (Fall 2001), 94–130. Though I will generally quote from the English rendition, my analysis follows the phrasing of Kojève's original French typescript, in BNF, Fonds Kojève, Boite 13, Dossier "Colonialisme dans une perspective européenne—Conférence en allemand faite à Düsseldorf 16/1/1957."

⁸¹ As Heinrich Meier notes, in 1957, Schmitt further cited the exchange between Kojève and Strauss on tyranny, republished in book form in 1954. H. Meier, *Carl Schmitt & Leo Strauss: The Hidden Dialogue* (Chicago, 1995), 8 n. 8.

⁸² Carl Schmitt to Alexandre Kojève, 31 Jan. 1957, in Kojève, "Colonialism from a European Perspective", 113.

rather than anticipate its sublation of this internal opposition. Marx was also wrong in that he assumed that the “blindness” of capitalist economists and bourgeois intellectuals would continue. The answer to the Marxist challenge came in the “ideology” of Henry Ford, “the only grand authentic or orthodox” Marxist of the twentieth century.⁸³ The effect of this was that the only surviving *classical capitalist* country of the highly industrialized world is the USSR, which calls its nineteenth-century capitalism by the name of socialism.⁸⁴ In other industrialized countries, technics/technology certainly facilitated a transformation inasmuch as it made possible this socioeconomic adaptation. If classical capitalism has not been fully *supprimé* (sublated), this was because it survived in the USSR and its satellites, “but also and above all because it unfortunately survives in the Western World where in our day it is precisely called ‘colonialism.’”⁸⁵ In Marx’s time, Kojève continued, the order of the world was European; more or less equivalent to the “world” of a Roman economist—unless the US was implied in this *orbis terrarum*.⁸⁶ Yet today the world has to be understood not only in Euro-American terms: the central problem diagnosed by Marx, namely relative impoverishment without any rise above the *minimum vital absolute*, still exists.

Kojève proceeded to suggest that the way to a policy that could avoid the “world problem and . . . mortal danger” of colonialism lay in giving.⁸⁷ In direct terms, this could be accomplished in three ways: alterations in the terms of trade, essentially for primary materials—paying for work not the minimum, but the absolute maximum, which he saw as the goal of commodity agreements, accepted “at least in principle in the industrialized world”; direct reinvestment in less than highly industrialized countries; and direct operations at the level of national cadres.

But the theoretical work behind this was specifically a response to Schmitt’s *nomos*, which Kojève explicitly cited:

I just read, in one of the most brilliant essays that I have ever read, that the ancient Greek *nomos* develops from a triple root: from *taking*, from *sharing* and from *grazing*, i.e. from consumption. And that seems to me to be absolutely right. But the ancient Greeks did not know that the modern *nomos* also has a fourth root which is perhaps its main one: namely, *the gift*.⁸⁸

Like Bataille and Mauss before him, Kojève found a superior ethics in the gift—the possibility of a different colonialism, one that would refuse exploitation. Kojève

⁸³ Ibid., 117, amended to conform with original typescript.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 117–18.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 118, amended to conform with original typescript.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 118.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 122.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 123, amended to conform with original typescript.

had followed Marcel Mauss's course on the gift in the late 1920s, but here he was proposing the gift, much in the way Bataille had supported the Marshall Plan, as a form alternative to classical capitalism and the all too easy politics involving the elision of friend/enemy toward master/slave.⁸⁹

This could be carried out in two ways: either in terms of direct gifts, or in terms of goods to be consumed (as in the Marshall Plan). Kojève advocated instead a way he saw as preferred by France and Britain, that of direct investment, something that he saw as occurring already and in need of expansion. What matters in this context is not the aptitude or lack thereof to be found in Kojève's diagnosis of modernity—but rather the formal organization of this diagnosis into principles for policy and a theorization of the *nomos* that Schmitt had organized differently. Here, Kojève was confirming the neutralization of classical politics by rendering it subservient to an economics tied to the progress of world history—not to the achievement of an end of history, but rather of a legal and economic system that would no longer allow for this *nomos* to be defined through war, classical sovereignty, and mastery:

The old, taking capitalism, which gave the domestic masses as little as possible, was rechristened “socialism” in Russia (at least after it was nationalized). But our modern, giving capitalism, which gives the domestic masses as much as possible, still has no name. At least, not insofar as it is giving. For insofar as it is taking, even if only from abroad, it is called “colonialism.” And who does not know this name nowadays? But the very latest thing . . . which gives the backward countries more than it takes from them, is still anonymous. It is, to be sure, only a newborn child (thus small and weak, but is it not also unusually beautiful?) . . . the *nomos* of the modern Western world is, for me, undoubtedly what I have called, in an improvised and thoroughly bad way, “giving colonialism.”⁹⁰

CONCLUSION

This study has concerned a particular line of the French reception of Carl Schmitt—or, rather, a line of thinkers that engaged intensely with Schmitt without ever giving him the last word. The course of this line of reception that I have traced, I hope the reader will agree, carries surprises—not least Fessard's use of Schmitt for a theory of the resistance and Kojève's use of Mauss and Bataille in a face-to-face insult to Schmitt's *nomos*. Perhaps one should speak not of a French Schmitt, but, following Bataille, of Schmidt—the spelling mistake wearing on it both the adoption of Schmitt's thought and the resistance to it. In the early stage of this resistance, Schmitt enters the Hegelian stage of Paris with a full conceptual armamentarium that gets partly adopted and partly transformed

⁸⁹ His notes from Mauss's course can be found in BNF, Fonds Kojève, Boite IV.

⁹⁰ Kojève, “Colonialism from a European Perspective”, 123.

by the other actors on the stage for purposes of an ontology of conflict and a rethinking of subjective sovereignty. In a second act, the tension mounts as Schmitt's thought is coopted for a philosophy of right as well as a theory of sovereignty and resistance directed against Nazi Germany's Vichy puppet. In the final act, with Marcel Mauss as the *deus ex machina*, Schmitt's French Hegelian readers offer a response to Schmitt's proposed *nomos*—Bataille in an argument as implicitly critical of Schmitt's friend/enemy as of Kojève's master/slave, and Kojève in explicit reference to Schmitt's limitations.

Kojève's "school"—if such a thing there was—suggests a kind of appropriation of Schmitt that kept him as a background figure of influence and indeed one worthy of engagement; while using his insights against both his politics and the perceived limitations of his thought, they included them in a Hegelian conception of history that highlighted both violence and its modern resolution. In each of the three "acts," Schmitt's positions were translated into somewhat different problematics:

- (a) In 1934, Kojève's introduction of force and mastery into the friend/enemy distinction, and also Bataille's call for a theorization of self-sovereignty amidst a world of neutralization. At this stage, Schmitt's legal-political thought of enmity and leveling liberalism is anthropologized and existentialized for a narrative concerning both the origins of modernity and the experience of modernity's divisions and oppressive homogeneity.
- (b) In 1942–3, the delegitimation, by Gaston Fessard, of Vichy's claims to rightful authority. At this stage, the use of Schmitt that matters most is the claim to legitimate authority and the evocation of liberatory struggle toward a "Common Good."
- (c) In Bataille's 1949 *The Accursed Share* and in Kojève's 1957 talk in Düsseldorf, the use of the gift as a form of undermining both traditional sovereignty and the friend/enemy distinction, which offers a way out of Schmitt's sense that the "liberal" world is deprived of genuine sovereignty and persists in an inward and downward spiral.

The *political* oppositions to Schmitt accompanying the substantive ones at each of these stages are palpable. Indeed, the use of Schmitt that was coupled with the opposition to his thought is useful first for showing both the clear awareness of his Nazism among his readers, and, more importantly, their sense that this Nazism did not delegitimize his thought per se. It all but begged for uses of his thought against itself and its politics, but at the same time it foregrounded its utility for a theory of conflict and resolution that could structure Hegelian history, and theorize the French state. As a result of this structure, not only did it become possible for Hegelians to adopt a range of political positions, but more importantly it also became possible if not imperative for them to read Hegel

himself as having something to say about questions of contemporary political and metapolitical concern. Ontological questions were further inflected by the duality of conflict and homogenization that Kojève adopted from Schmitt: for Kojève, Bataille, and Fessard, the need to balance the existence of conflict with the subject's ontologically homogeneous condition amidst a world postulated to move toward sameness. To repeat: if Kojève's articulation of Hegel as a thinker concerned not only with history and its conclusion but with the reproduction of master/slave situations has seemed arbitrary and self-contradictory, then the influence of Schmitt helps explain these opposed tendencies. Both the ensuing theorization of subjectivity by Bataille, as either succumbing to a homogenizing world or capable of self-overcoming and sovereignty, and the theorization of the place of authority by Fessard, which fuses Catholicism and Hegelianism into a justification of disregard for an authority that lacks proper sovereignty's ties to the "common good," further direct the possibilities and value of this historical and political articulation.

In this light, the concluding act of this reception, in which Mauss's legacy eclipsed Schmitt's, deserves serious note, and does not merely signify the abandonment of Schmitt. *The Gift* allowed Bataille and Kojève to imagine a way for capitalism and the Cold War structuring of friends and enemies to be overcome, and thus for Hegel's conclusion and a new nonpolitical sovereignty to emerge. If Bataille remained ambivalent toward the Marshall Plan, Kojève clearly presented "giving colonialism" as a way out of not only traditional colonialism but Schmitt's *Nomos of the Earth*, imagining both the possibility of a worldwide equality and the space for the end of history to emerge unbound by the radical politics of the second quarter of the twentieth century. There, the reign of the end of history, and the denial of pure heterogeneity, are redirected for the possibility of a sovereignty that would not be political, but again ontological and ethical, that would foreground and preoccupy itself with a worldwide equality that would be economic as well as legal.

So-called "left Schmittianism," the left-wing adoption of elements from Schmitt's thought, has frequently struggled with the accusation of partaking of his politics. This essay has shown that things need not be that simple. Insofar as this is a fragmentary study and does not pretend to offer an exhaustive account of the Schmitt reception (the figures of Maritain and Aron are notably absent, precisely because they lacked the Hegelian framework), I do not wish to make broad methodological claims concerning reception history. But if the course of this Schmitt reception includes surprises, still, methodologically speaking, this "Schmidt" is not surprising. The model it suggests for understanding relationships between (a) the influences intellectuals are marked by, and (b) the projects they elaborate, is in many ways characteristic of the French attention to contemporary German philosophy in the post-World War I period. Much of

the influence of Husserl in the 1930s and 1950s (among Koyré, Cavailles, Sartre, Levinas, Derrida, Ricoeur), and of Heidegger in the same period (Koyré, Kojève, Sartre, Hyppolite, Merleau-Ponty, Levinas), routinely involves a redeployment of major elements of the original source's project in ways critical of the project itself.

Schmitt was, then, not so much a *doyen*, master thinker, or *éminence grise* in this strand of French political anthropology, as he was the one to begin the *potlatch*. He offered the theory of sovereignty that was not only compelling enough to insert itself and displace a host of other competing theories of authority and politics only to prove to be even more compelling as a theologico-political target precisely to those of his readers engaged politically and philosophically with the issues he raised. Schmitt gave both form and force to the contemporary uses of Hegel—showing them to have operated from the perspective not only of desire, but also of a disappearing political and existential sovereignty. Despite himself, thus, Schmitt offered inspiration to theories of struggle, of subjective resistance to a world homogenizing individual existence, and of resistance opposed to the very regime he himself supported.