

Ruptured by Love...?

A radical theology annotative encounter with McGowan's *Emancipation after Hegel*

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Contextual Preface

This article proceeds as an annotative reading of McGowan's *Emancipation after Hegel*. In one way it could be considered a type of annotative dialectic, a dialectic on the page written out of the provocations and – it could be said – emancipation occasioned by reading this most stimulating work. It is also the annotations of a radical theologian whose starting point is 'the death of god' and who then attempts (for too many years now) to think through to what this might mean. In this essay I am thinking and annotating, in direct encounter with McGowan's *Hegel*, what emancipation might arise. [All references to the text are signaled as EH]

The annotative encounter...

We start with the opening statement of Philosophers enduring catastrophes in their afterlives [EH:1]. What we need to remember is that in such a case the catastrophe is what happens when thought gets captured by power – and so loses its critical power and its emancipatory potential. In many ways this is the message of this book: that Hegel got captured by power, and in this case the power was a split into Left and Right Hegelians. The question that will concern this annotative reading is what – if any– emancipation from Right Hegelianism is possible, to enable in turn an emancipation of radical theological thought from Right Hegelianism? For these annotations will proceed from a claim that 'the death of god' is an act of emancipation – but only if we think it through to its fulfilment.

While the Right Hegelians may have “disappeared into history” [EH:1] they existed as a type of Hegelian underground and have re-emerged into the 21st century to claim a politics left open in many ways by the failure of Left Hegelianism as state politics. This has resulted in the end in what can be termed (but not dismissed) as a Left Hegelian legacy as the politics of critique.

As McGowan observes, the failure of Left Hegelianism as a state system is (perhaps) because Left Hegelianism was in no way as radical as it thought it was – and in fact, by dismissing the Right Hegelian elements of Christianity and State, a Left Hegelianism that attempted to institute a state was in fact doomed to failure. In short, Left Hegelianism was never Hegelian enough to succeed because, without what can be termed the central radical claim of Right Hegelian Christianity, Left Hegelianism was never as radical as it thought – or claimed. Therefore, the emancipation after Hegel is in many ways actually an emancipation of Hegel, an emancipation away from the limitations of either a Left or Right Hegelianism. As McGowan notes, central to Hegel is Christianity because it enables his philosophy to be “most modern” – and this is because of what Christianity “does to God” [EH:3]. We can argue that Christianity is “most modern” because – via Marx – ‘all that is solid melts’ when confronted with Christian love; but also, that the solidity of God melts in that Christianity reveals the lack of solidity of God.

Who is emancipated?

So how might we think through the statement of what Christianity is for Hegel? That is, as “the first religion to reveal the divine as a divided subject, when God appears as the figure of the Christ and dies on the cross” [EH:3]. We need to take the claim of death seriously and this means recognizing that the death of God means that Christianity is atheism – and exists as atheism to previous concepts of God – and that Christianity itself needs to recognize that it is atheism. In many ways this is where death of God theology gets to and then expands upon. As Hegel is quoted (from *Philosophy of Religion*): “the highest estrangement of the divine idea ... is expressed: God has died, God himself is dead – is a monstrous, fearful representation, which brings before the imagination the deepest abyss of cleavage” [EH:4-5]; a cleavage McGowan describes as “God’s self-division” [EH:5].

We can think of this as God confronted by God’s own antithesis via the cleavage; or rather God (thesis) confronted by humanity (antithesis) results in the synthesis of Christianity in which – in a position exceeding Hegel and also in fact Christian self-conception – *both* God and humanity die. For in what is a thought too far for both Hegel and for Christianity as it has come to be is that ‘in Christ’ not only

God dies but humanity dies also. Hegel – and McGowan – get to the point whereby “God becomes a subject with the death of Christ” [EH:4]; that is, the cleavage where the death is the death of God as separate from humanity. But we need to think this as it were backwards as well, whereby the death of God in Christ is also the death of humanity separate from God. The ‘free subject’ is in fact far freer than either Hegel – or McGowan – can recognize; for the death of humanity in Christ is essentially a freedom unthought of and this is why true Christian freedom is unrealized. For most atheism is ‘not free’ because it is either in reference to God ‘not dead’ – that “idea of a substantial and indecipherable God located in the beyond who survives the crucifixion” [HE:4] – or, in most versions of what can be termed ‘Christian atheism’, in reference to *only* God dead. For what is – and should be termed – “the radicality of the Christian event” [EH:4] is more than just that current limit of thinking position of “God the divided subject”. We must emancipate further because God the divided subject is now also forever linked with humanity the divided subject – and this is what is always forgotten. For not only does the infinite now appear as the finite but now humanity invested in/tied to the infinite must now radically confront its own finitude. For finitude is where freedom is experienced, or rather, to be *worked for* – or we could say, enacted; and so, in Christ we see freedom (that is, emancipation) as an apparent contradiction.

Emancipation also takes us back to Marx, because as McGowan via Hegel observes, the state also “plays a crucial role in the subject’s freedom” [EH: 5]; yet for Left Hegelians and into Marxists, the state “seems like an unfortunate necessity which is why Marx proposes its eventual withering away” [EH:6]. But I am annotating from a society (or that thing of which there is meant to be ‘no such thing’ according to Thatcher) which has been neo-liberal since neo-liberal reforms inaugurated by the Left in 1984; which raises the question: does Marxism divided within itself (or we could say, Left Hegelianism as divided subject) leave open the possibility of neo-liberalism with its call to wither away the state? However, as McGowan observes, to remove either the state or Christianity from Hegel’s philosophy has “pernicious effects”, for without the state or something akin to it, subjects remain attached “to the illusions of their private world” [EH:5].

In short, removing Christianity *or* the state is problematic enough for the subject in Hegel’s philosophy, but to remove *both* Christianity and the state means the subject loses all possibility “to recognize its freedom”. This sets up the paradox whereby the secular neoliberal, the one who on the face of would proclaim they are the ‘most free’ subject is revealed via Hegel to be the subject least free, the one in need of Right Hegelian double emancipation. Yet, via Left Hegelianism, such

contradiction becomes something to be overcome, not something requiring effort to further [EH:6] – and is this not the issue, because emancipation is found and experienced in contradiction? Therefore, to seek to end/overcome contradiction is in fact (within Hegel's philosophy) both anti-emancipatory and anti-philosophical.

This occurs because of what McGowan argues “is the central contention of Hegel's philosophy – that being itself is contradictory” [EH:6]. We can state that this is what the Christ event reveals: not only is God's being contradictory but so is humanity's – *and both* contradictory experiences of being are, in Christ, emancipated into the new contradictory experience of being, whereby it is revealed (via McGowan & *Science of Logic*) that “identity is not purely itself” [EH: 7]. This is what happens *to both* God and humanity in Christ whereby “Identity depends on what negates it” [EH: 7]; or, as we could say: via love, in Christ identity depends on what emancipates it. Therefore, we agree with the quoted Žižek that this involves the acceptance of “contradiction as an internal condition of every identity” [EH:7], but do so because the basis of modern identity is the contradictory identity event of Christ. McGowan rightly notes that Žižek “doesn't go far enough in the direction of contradiction” [EH:7]; but then neither, I would argue does McGowan nor indeed, it would seem, does anyone – and the reason is that we don't take our *atheism* far enough. That is, as we will see, because we stop our (Christian) atheism at God. For if we consider the central role of contradiction, even – as did Hegel – at the absolute we find contradiction in Christ wherein the contradiction is not only that of God but that of humanity. Therefore, Hegel's uncovering of contradictions [EH:9] is what we can term an emancipation in itself, for in this we actually also uncover thinking.

After emancipation?

Perhaps the first emancipation after Hegel is in fact the recovery of the necessity of Right Hegelianism that McGowan emphasises [EH:10], for it is only this recovery that can restore the revolutionary status of Hegel's philosophy. The reason for this is that, in a contradictory fashion to Left Hegelians, only Right Hegelianism is the basis for revolution because it is the basis of emancipation. This in turn raises the contradictory question of whether it is actually Left Hegelianism that is counter-revolutionary, because it too easily becomes a counter-revolutionary positivism? However, we wish to push the issue of the revolutionary Hegel past this early question of Right versus Left Hegelianism, because *even Hegel only sees one side of the revolutionary act* because to take the event of the incarnation seriously is to be confronted not only with the death of God but also with the death of humanity. This occurs because “every position ultimately undermines itself by exposing its own

internal division” [EH:12] and in Christ, the issue is that the internal division is in fact only discussed and confronted on one side of the internal division, that is an internal division on the side of God. It is this limitation in our thinking of contradiction and division that means even in the Absolute we see only one confrontation within one contradiction and so the emancipation in the Absolute as expressed by Right Hegelians is in fact only an emancipatory contradiction within the Absolute within Christ. What we must however express, if we are to experience full emancipation (could we say ‘true emancipation’? – but that raises too many questions of truth and emancipation to be discussed here) is an emancipation as contradiction within humanity within Christ. For the Absolute confronts its own contradiction in Christ – and so, we could say, experiences emancipation. But humanity, whether Left or Right Hegelian, limits the emancipatory contradiction to the Absolute in Christ, forgetting – in what we could say is a deliberately counter-revolutionary fashion because we do not want to confront the emancipation of a fully revolutionary position – that the division within Christ is also enacted as division wherein humanity also confronts its own contradiction. This could be on the one hand the “speculative proposition” [EH:16] within what we could term ‘the ordinary proposition’ of the Christ event, but McGowan and Hegel take us further, into the question of Identity.

Let us consider the identity of Christ wherein humanity becomes what it is as does God whereby Christ as event doesn’t overcome contradiction (the contradiction between God and humanity) but expresses this contradiction as emancipation for both God and humanity. McGowan develops this – to a point – in his discussion of Hegel’s religion as expressed in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* [EH:19]. Here the example is of “the most extreme contradiction imaginable: God appears on the cross in the completely humiliated and debased form of Christ on the cross.” [EH:19]. Yet consider how so much thought and discussion of Christ is on God *as*/God *in* Christ, or in this case “God appears...in the form of Christ”. Is Monophysitism actually too often the Philosophical position – either explicitly or implicitly? That is, in the person of Christ the divine nature subsumes the human nature into a singular (mono) nature – and we could argue this is where most death of God thought reaches the limits of its contradiction. Yet is subsuming an emancipation of humanity? For is the death of God an emancipation for humanity – even it may be a contradictory one for God?

It is in fact the limit in our thinking that limits our understanding of the Christ event as being the absolute contradictory emancipation. For humanity also “appears in the completely humiliated and debased form of Christ on the cross” and it is this contradiction in Christ – a contradiction for both God and humanity – that enables what can now – and only now – be described as “the most extreme contradiction

imaginable". For the contradiction is that Christ on the cross is not humanity doing this to the contradiction of Christ as only or primarily or now God; rather the contradiction is that Christ on the cross is humanity doing this also to humanity in Christ. How might we think this contraction? Via Hegel on poetry [EH:21] we can perhaps consider Christ on the cross as poetics in that poetry doesn't eliminate contradiction (that is the contradiction within Christ of God and humanity is not overcome) "but reveals that contradiction as such is impossible to overcome" [EH:21]. We could therefore argue that Christ enacts the reconciliation with its own internal contradiction [EH:21] of God and humanity. So, in Christ event occurs a unity within but also "a recognition that the position is opposed fundamentally to itself, that it involves itself in what it is not" [Eh:21]. Therefore, what we could term 'the Christ position' is not only a unity *within* but also a recognition *out* to God and humanity. But this actually can't be a recognition out to God as God is dead – which is the limit of Christian atheism. But if we locate the death of God in Christ, does this not mean that humanity in contradiction to God-now-dead is itself also dead? For unless humanity in contradiction to God dies when God in contradiction to humanity dies we have humanity continuing to live in reference to dead God. Therefore, the contradictory emancipation of Christ event is only emancipation for God, but not emancipation for humanity. Emancipation for humanity is the recognition that humanity in contradiction to God died also in Christ event; and so, whatever we are post Christ event we are not humanity in contradiction to God; that is, not humanity as we were, rather *humanity now truly emancipated*. Or as McGowan expresses Hegel's resolution: "the resolution of contradiction does not eliminate it but complicates it" [EH:32]. That is, from a radical right Hegelianism: it is Christ as contradiction, as contradiction event, that complicates the contradiction of existence – the existence of God and humanity who are now, in a contradictory fashion, *both dead upon the cross*.

As McGowan – via Hegel – observes: "when we reach the absolute, we run out of future possibilities" [EH:53] This is because the contradiction is that of the contradictory state of being that we now experience in Christ; that is, our being is that of contradiction which is the tension of Christ as God and humanity joined whereby the contradiction is in fact the death of them both. This is why "[a]t the point of the absolute, we recognize that there is nothing outside contradiction" [EH:55]; and that means neither God nor humanity exist outside contradiction, not outside the contradiction of the double death event of Christ. It is only from that contradiction of the absolute, that is the contradiction of death, that emancipation is possible – which is why Right Hegelianism is necessary.

How might we think this, or rather how might we reason this? For reason is – for Hegel – “the ability to think and internalize contradiction” [EH:59]. To reason the Incarnation is to think Incarnation as reason, or perhaps, Incarnation is reason as absolute – wherein Incarnation is also the death of God. However, this does not involve emancipation because we refuse to employ reason to accomplish the death of humanity. We can see this in that Left Hegelianism only wants to kill God off, but does not want to engage in the contradiction that the death of God is actually act of God; but more so, Left Hegelianism does not want to engage in the contradiction that the death of God also involves the death of Humanity.

Where might this take us, especially when – via McGowan and Hegel – “we encounter contradiction through reason rather than existence” [EH: 65] raises some interesting issues regarding thinking the Incarnation. For to think the Incarnation is to reason the Incarnation, but as noted we only think one side of the contradiction. Why do we not want to think through to the *full* contradiction of the Incarnation and crucifixion? The answer is clear: because to do so is to undermine *our* identity. This can be linked to the discussion of the repression of the metaphysical question [EH: 69], the repression that “creates a gap within the field of understanding” [EH:69]. We can again ask a troubling or annoying question, that is: what does today’s repression of the theological question do? I offer that this is linked to “the involvement of nonbeing in existence” [EH: 69], for theology is precisely the question of nonbeing in existence, and none more so than in the Incarnation.

It is these issues and questions that link the Incarnation and crucifixion into the discussion of the freedom, the emancipation of self-division, of being torn asunder [EH: 72-73]. For it is God’s tearing Godself away from itself in the Incarnation and crucifixion that exposes the site of division, a self-division now able to be recognized as emancipatory. But again, I would argue we do not think this event of torn asunder through to the full expression and experience of emancipation. For we too often stop in our radical thinking with God being emancipated by being torn asunder, forgetting the self-division that also occurs in this event in humanity. That is, humanity is also torn asunder in the Incarnation and crucifixion and this is also an act of emancipation. For a start, “the subject must come to regard the being absolutely torn asunder that the understanding produces as the source of freedom” [EH: 73]. This is, the understanding of the torn asunder of the crucifixion that tears asunder God and humanity and the use of reason “does not eliminate the violence of the understanding” [EH:73]. For we do not find true emancipation in Christ unless we too are torn asunder – that is, we recognize that humanity has been torn asunder in this event and that humanity, not only God, has died.

Emancipation via death

So why the centrality of the incarnation – is this just the return of (at least one part) of Right Hegelianism? That charge could be made – yet I would argue that this is actually centrally linked to what McGowan terms “Hegel’s great ontological insight” that enables “An ontological Hegel ...[to be] a contemporary Hegel” [EH:85]. Consider the incarnation through this statement by McGowan: “For Hegel, nothing simply is. Everything is also what it is not and has its identity in what negates it” [EH: 85]. We can express this as: God and humanity negate each other and this negation is negated in Christ which is in turn an internal negation expressed in the emancipatory freedom of the death of *both* God and humanity. Perhaps this is why we may prefer to remain alienated, because we do not fully accept or understands the contradiction in incarnation? We can view this an “ontological contradiction, not an epistemological failure” [EH: 95]; that is, the contradiction that has its “condition of possibility in being” [EH: 95]. This possibility of being that is made manifest in the incarnation is *only* understood by the *crucifixion*, that is by the emancipatory death of *both* God and humanity.

That is this is possible is because we can think it [EH; 96]; that is, we *can* think the death of humanity in the crucifixion, *but we don't want to*. However, we need to put this in context, for while we are far more easily able to think the death of God, many don't yet want to undertake this act of partial emancipation either.

As McGowan observes: “Revelatory contradictions appear only when we push thought to its end point, when we go to the absolute” [EH:96]; so, is the double death of the crucifixion the “revelatory contradiction” of the absolute – which is why we do not want to think the double death for that would be to be challenged by true, full emancipation? On the one hand we could suggest that within orthodox, non-radical Christianity, the contradiction of the incarnation and crucifixion is too easily thought and talked of as reconciliation. However, if we proceed via Hegel then we reach a position whereby reconciliation is “the great achievement of thought” [EH:97] for, “through the act of reconciliation, thought adopts a relationship to contradiction that being cannot attain. It doesn't overcome contradiction but grasps its necessity” [EH:97]. Incarnation is therefore an act of reconciliation, a *thought-act*. But why do we not want to think this through to the full limit of reconciliation as a double-death? It is because we do not want to grasp the *full* contradiction of the thought-act of the incarnation.

It is this basis in revelatory contradiction that, I argue alongside McGowan, enables Hegel to be a “the first modern secular philosopher to make love the point of departure” [EH:99]. If Love “provides the avenue for granting contradiction a

privileged ontological position” [EH; 99] then incarnation is an act of love that results in the contradictory death of both God and humanity and it is this that enables Christianity to become, for Hegel, “ a revolutionary religion due to its substitution of love for the law”[EH: 103]

The rupture of love

To fully appreciate what Hegel – and Hegel via McGowan – offers, we need to focus on the statement that love is “a profound disturbance for the subject’s identity” that is expressed and experienced as a “radicality”, as “a disturbance of the self” [EH: 105]. To put this in terms of incarnational love, in Christ God encounters humanity as disturbance of Godself *and* Humanity encounters God as equal disturbance. The nature of this disturbance is love, the message of love and the act of love that equally disturbs God and humanity; it is this disturbance that survives the deaths of God and humanity and it is this disturbance of love that can be renamed the resurrection wherein love as the Holy Spirit holds the community together [EH:107]. That is, both the resurrection and the Holy Spirit is the love expressed between humanity in the name of Christ and this is not – and cannot be – external to humanity otherwise it undoes both the crucifixion and the resurrection. The seeming paradox that humanity survives the death of Christ in a way God does not, yet humanity has also died in Christ, can be expressed as the Hegelian “necessity of contradiction” [EH:107]. Wherein humanity after the crucifixion is itself humanity resurrected *to the extent that it is now bound together by love*.

As McGowan notes, to understand this – or more so, the Hegelian rupture that gives rise to this – means we have to think through what this means as a rupture from Judaism [EH: 107]. One way to rethink this is that Christianity was not and is not a rupture *from* Judaism, but rather a rupture *within* Judaism whereby Christianity emerges as an extension of Judaism into the gentile world: love is extended. However, there does remain the central question of what does Christianity mean *for* Judaism? And the honest answer is a deeply troubled and problematic history whereby Christianity denies love, whereby Christianity refuses to enact “the actualization of love” [EH: 7]. This refusal to enact love means that Christianity is too often *not Christianity* for it refuses to enact love – and this can be expressed as a Hegelian paradox. If Christ “breaks with all religion of the law and introduces a religion of love” [EH:109] then the revolutionary break is actually a revolutionary break from *all religion* – and this includes an ongoing revolutionary break from Christianity as religion wherein

Christianity too easily seeks to become and enact itself as a religion of law. So, the critique expressed as the rupture of love must continue to be versus Christianity as long as it continues as a religion. For, Christianity begins and should be expressed and experienced as the rupture of love, not as religion – and this is the paradox: Christianity as religion is not religion. Rather, as the rupture of love, Christianity “enacts the subject’s reconciliation with the other” [EH:111] and this “Love has no limits” [EH: 111]. This is the love that gets expressed as the Holy Spirit: that love that arises from the contradiction that is the death of God *and* humanity in Christ. That God and humanity died in Christ does not overcome the difference of the other; rather the rupture of love that was Christ continues to be experienced as the rupture of love – now termed the Holy Spirit – that is expressed as reconciliation between humanity.

While Hegel does not get to this point, that he enables us to proceed to this point is why McGowan is correct to state that “In Hegel’s hands, Christianity becomes the most revolutionary religion ever conceived” [EH: 113]. We can proclaim that Christianity is even more radical than Hegel perceived and more radical than the church perceives and perhaps only at the limit of the death of God theology of Thomas Altizer do we begin to perceive what true radicality is involved. For Christianity is more radical than we can really conceive or perceive: for the double death in Christ is the starting point whereby there is a new way of being humanity *after God*.

If, as McGowan’s reading of Hegel proclaims, love announces the subject as divided in itself and thereby “invaded by the other” [EH:113] then in Christ, God was invaded by humanity as much as humanity was invaded by God and we can therefore now rethink the Holy Spirit as *the love that invades*. It is this that enables the demand of Christianity “that identity is constantly involved in what would negate it” [EH: 114]; that is, we can say, love – as Holy Spirit experienced between humanity – is a rupture of itself. This is why this rupture of love, this rupture by love, this rupturing love can only proceed from the rupture of humanity and God that is the death of God and humanity in Christ.

This rupture is therefore the rupture of ideology because “time and space are the primal forms of ideology” [EH: 117]. The Christ event, crucifixion and resurrection are the rupture of time and space which then proceeds as the ongoing rupture of the Holy Spirit which is the contradiction of Christ now experienced as the contradiction between humanity. That is, Christ as the death of God *and* the death of humanity is the contradiction of love that ruptures the ideologies of time and space – and having ruptured them, ruptures, as love, all ideologies. This rupture is the basis of Hegelian

contradiction in opposition to Deleuzean difference and can be traced back to the proclamation of *Matthew 10:34-39*.

³⁴“Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and a man’s foes will be those of his own household. ³⁷He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it. “(RSV)

Hegelian contradiction is the proclamation of the rupture of love that goes against peaceful coexistence. For what is the basis of this called ‘peace’? Existence lived out of love is not ‘peaceful’ because pure difference (that which Deleuze favours [EH:124]) is overcome once and for all in the incarnation. It is this that locates Hegel’s contradiction within a radical Christianity, which is amplified by the recognition that for Hegel we “reach truth through thought and not experience’ [EH: 126] and it is this that makes Christianity *not* religion because we do not experience it, rather we have to think it. For Christianity is the contradictory rupture of love that, because it is contradictory, *is first and foremost thought*, only from the thought can we attempt to express the thought as an experience *for others*. This is how we undertake the thought of the absolute concreteness of the contradiction of Christ, whereby the “conceptualization of the experience occurs within the experience itself and serves as its contradiction of possibility” [EH: 129]. The rupture of love is both the experience and its conceptualization. At the basis of this is the contradictory, emancipatory death of God and humanity in Christ, which expresses “Hegel’s interpretation of life always involving death for the contradiction to become visible”[EH: 130].

This is why the contradiction of the death of the incarnation is the basis for emancipation, for freedom is the freedom of the subject within contradiction for “there is no being without contradiction” [EH:134]; and the basis of the contradiction of being is that contradiction of the rupture of love by death of God and humanity in Christ – which can only be thought and not experienced.

It is from here we can proceed to the end of history, for “[a]s Hegel sees it, freedom can be the only possible end of history because being itself has given it to us”[EH: 137]; or as we can annotate: *we are condemned to freedom in Christ, a*

freedom which is accessible for all [EH:137]. Therefore, the end of history occurs when we accept the end of humanity in Christ – that is, the full development of the concept of freedom. So, we can say history has ended – and ends in Christ; but we are not aware of this or prepared to accept why this has happened. The death of God results in the end of history – and the death of God becomes realized in modern Europe; but in a contradictory manner we do not want the end of History because we do not want freedom, for this freedom becomes thought only with the thought of the death of humanity in Christ. Therefore, the contradiction that is the end of history *has* occurred and yet has not for humanity: history ends with the death of God but history *won't* end until we recognize this – *and that it involves the death of humanity*.

This is the emancipatory rupture of love, the end of history. That is, we are all free in the thought of Christ and this involves the contradiction of the double death that is the radical thought of radical Christianity. Therefore, *Hegel's Christianity is in fact not radical enough, nor contradictory enough*, because he – like so many others, in Christianity sees only the death of God. If – contra Hegel – we proceed only to the limit of the humiliation of God in Christ, we do not fully experience freedom, for we have a humanity that has not suffered humiliation and death in Christ; only God has. Therefore, such one-sided thought of death is, in the end, only a one-sided freedom. For freedom to be fully emancipatory, for freedom to be the end of history, involves not just the end of God; rather, the rupture of love that is the death of God must also be the death of humanity in Christ.

It is from here that we can fully begin to understand the thought that “[f]or Hegel, the subject is free because is there is no substantial Other that can function as a determinative authority for it” [EH: 161]. What this means is that “[a]s long as the subject believes that an autonomous and independent Other exists, it cannot truly conceive itself as free” [EH: 161]. That is, after the death of God we are not free unless we can see that this death also requires the death of humanity who lives in response to the authority of God. For if only God dies but we live and think *as if* God is not dead then we are not free but divided (but not ruptured by love) within ourselves.

This rupture must also be the rupture of the thought of Christian particularity for the “path to universal freedom lies through thinking absolutely” [EH: 195]. For Christian particularity does not think through to the absolute contradiction, which is that not only God dies but that humanity does too. Therefore, Christianity that seeks to exclude does so from the claimed experience but not the contradictory thought of Christianity. What such Christianity (deliberately?) forgets is that the thought of the double death ends any claim to experience particularity. For there cannot be particular love that is emancipatory; rather, emancipatory love is experienced and

expressed as contradictory because it is a contradictory thought of the rupture of love in the death of god and humanity in Christ.

Concluding Statement.

The emancipatory rupture of love is therefore how we think to live within contradiction: a rupture of love that is thought and expressed *for others*. This is what reconciling ourselves to contradiction, reconciliation as revealing a divine rupture [EH: 220] entails...