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Jeanne Morefield: **Covenants without Swords**

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Oxford Liberalism and the Return of Patriarchy

IN 1938, GILBERT MURRAY ARGUED IN *Liberality and Civilization* that liberalism was “not a doctrine; it is a spirit or attitude of mind . . . an effort to get rid of prejudice so as to see the truth, to get rid of selfish passions so as to do the right.”¹ Murray had suggested something similar fifty years earlier, while a young fellow at Oxford in 1888. In an unpublished speech to the Russell Club, he suggested that the foundational logic of what he described as the “new liberalism” was an emerging consensus that something other than self-interest—something other than what Murray then called “that negative way the old Liberals got their enthusiasm”—must motivate liberal social theory.² Murray’s consistency on this matter demonstrates the profundity of his belief that liberalism ought to be understood as an essentially spiritual and deeply selfless approach to politics and to life, an antidote, in fact, to almost all the problems of modernity. In the final analysis, it was this faith in liberalism as essentially transformative (a faith shared by Zimmern) that would map out the contours of Murray’s political theory and shape his approach to internationalism. It would also lead to future charges of utopianism.

And yet Murray’s particular formulation of liberalism was hardly particular. It was, rather, conditioned by a reformist tradition within British liberalism, associated most directly with T. H. Green and his students and colleagues at Oxford, a tradition that arose out of what these earlier thinkers perceived as a deep crisis within liberal theory. For scholars such as Green, Bernard Bosanquet, Edward Caird, David Ritchie, John Muirhead, and Henry Jones, the kind of economic and political liberalism long associated with the Locke, Smith, Ricardo, and Bright had, by the mid-nineteenth century, brought about positive political change only at the cost of generating massive economic disparities, widespread poverty, and appalling working conditions for millions. These disparities had themselves led not only to class conflict but also to the rise of socialism and its “absolute negation” of the individual.³ For Green and his colleagues, liberalism could weather this crisis only if it were rearticulated in “con-

¹ Gilbert Murray, *Liberality and Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 33.

² Bodl. MS Gilbert Murray (489) fol.4 (“Liberalism Old And New,” 1888).

³ Edward Caird, “Individualism and Socialism,” *The British Idealists*, ed. David Boucher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 179.

structive” terms.⁴ Such a constructive, new liberalism would seek to combine an appreciation for individualism and laissez-faire economics with a theory of moral responsibility. It would stretch liberal political theory to encompass both a notion of freedom and a commitment to the common good. Ultimately, it would explain why individuals in a liberal society should care about one another and about their community.

And in this quest, the Oxford liberals were not alone. Many of their contemporary liberal brethren (including John Stuart Mill and the American Progressives) also sought to move liberalism in a more social direction. What distinguished the first generation of Oxford liberals (those who had worked and studied with Green) both from a slightly later cohort of “new liberals” and from other socially oriented liberals in Britain (particularly those associated with Cambridge at the turn of the century) was their explicit decision to look for philosophical remedies to a perceived liberal crisis within Hegelian idealism.

While the extent to which nineteenth-century liberals embraced Hegel has been disputed, historians have long acknowledged the presence of what Charles Taylor has termed an “oddly transposed variety” of Hegelianism in the social theory of thinkers like Green, Bosanquet, and Ritchie.⁵ Many contemporary scholars of this particular form of idealist liberalism argue that these thinkers drew upon Hegelian logic specifically to theorize a more proactive role for the state in a liberal society.⁶ Likewise, these scholars see the turn of many idealist liberals toward organicism in the later half of the nineteenth century as a means through which idealistically inclined liberal theorists could naturalize the moral state, and, in essence, smuggle Hegel into liberal political thought.

This chapter takes a slightly different approach to the relationship between Hegelian state theory and the social philosophy of the idealist liberals, and, in so doing, casts a different light on some of the more fundamental discrepancies at work in the Murray’s and Zimmern’s liberalisms. I maintain that what motivated the Oxford liberals’ move toward the organic was not merely a philosophical need to justify Hegel’s state theory but, more importantly, a liberal desire to avoid excessive state authority. Organicism, in this context, provided a terminology for imagining an alternative social organism beyond the state, one animated by a Hegelian inspired notion of Spirit. The language of the organic thus

⁴ Green, “Letter to the Editor,” 3.

⁵ Taylor, *Hegel*, 537; Frederick Philip Harris, *The Neo-Idealist Political Theory* (New York: King’s Cross Press, 1944), 2.

⁶ For examples of contemporary scholars who view liberal Hegelianism in this light, see in particular Andrew Vincent and Raymond Plant, *Philosophy, Politics, and Citizenship* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984); Michael Freedon, *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1978); Robbins, *The British Hegelians*.

allowed these scholars to theorize a moral community and yet avoid the totalizing implications of state as the “ultimate expression of Spirit in the world.” But through the process of embracing Hegel, rejecting his state theory, and evoking the organic, many of these scholars were caught in an ironic philosophical cycle that ultimately brought them to a vision of society that looked both pre-liberal and pre-idealist, a place where family relations—rather than a liberal equality of citizenship—governed the political order.

The bulk of this chapter critically examines the tensions between liberalism, Hegelianism, and organicism in the work of some key nineteenth-century idealist liberals to set the stage for a closer analysis of a similar disquiet that haunted the social theories of their intellectual legates, Murray and Zimmern. In its historical capacity, this chapter highlights the particularities of the liberal social theory that still dominated Oxford (and specifically the *Literae Humaniores*) while Murray and Zimmern attended New College in the 1880s and '90s. It is most concerned, however, with developing the unique theoretical argument that thinkers like Bosanquet both accepted key ideas from Hegel and then rejected his state theory in favor of a more organic approach to community, and that this philosophical turn helps explain many of the idealist liberals' support for a paternalistic—indeed, almost pre-liberal-looking—politics. Establishing the historical and philosophical foundations of this liberal turn toward the organic and the paternal ultimately provides us with the critical perspective necessary to trouble Murray's and Zimmern's own unarticulated linkage between liberalism, spirit, and the hierarchical social whole.

But this chapter should not be read simply as a template for understanding Murray's and Zimmern's internationalisms; both liberal reformism and the Oxford movement would go through a variety of changes toward the end of the century, ultimately resulting in an overall purging of Hegelian thought from liberal social theory more generally. And yet as chapter 2 demonstrates, despite these changes the liberalism of their youth still influenced Murray and Zimmern, an influence that compelled them to articulate their own visions of the liberal polity in terms remarkably similar to those of an earlier generation. Specifically, Zimmern's emphasis on nationality as primarily spiritual and familial reflects the tendency of some idealist liberals to read state and national communities through the lenses of the Darwinian family. Likewise, Murray's belief in a fixed, paternalistic world order mirrors a similar philosophical move made by the earlier idealist liberals, one that ultimately jettisoned liberal equality and replaced it with hierarchical holism.

Thus, in asking similar questions about the relationship of liberalism to the global community that an earlier generation had asked about the relationship of liberalism to the social whole, Murray's and Zimmern's

internationalisms evoked many of the same ideological stresses endemic to nineteenth-century Oxford liberalism, stresses that clustered around the disconnect between liberal universalism and patriarchy. In many ways, Murray's and Zimmern's internationalisms widened this political fissure by projecting it outward, toward the world.

THE ORIGINS OF LIBERALISM AND HEGELIANISM AT OXFORD

Scholars have historically most closely linked nineteenth-century idealist liberalism as a philosophical school with the works of T. H. Green. While Green's works and teachings were fundamental to the development of this philosophy in Britain, however, and while Green is perhaps the best known of these scholars, he was part of a much larger intellectual community that included (among others) Edward Caird, F. H. Bradley, Henry Jones, and Green's students, Bernard Bosanquet, John Henry Muirhead, and David George Ritchie. Most of these men were associated with Balliol and New Colleges at Oxford (hence the decision to sometimes refer to them as "Oxford liberals") and the Scottish universities. They shared a vision of themselves as emphatically public intellectuals and as strong supporters of nineteenth-century liberal causes. In fact, the connections between these scholars, their academic institutions, their voluntary and political organizations, and their relationships with various factions of the Liberal Party from the 1860s through the 1906 election, trace a spider web of complex intellectual, political, and personal linkages.⁷

Liberalism at Oxford began its rise to prominence in the 1830s and '40s, perhaps most significantly because many of the colleges moved away from institutional preference and toward competition in entrance examinations.⁸ During this period, the number of liberal faculty gradually increased such that by 1865 Charles Roundell could claim that a generation of liberal fellows was now "in possession" of the colleges.⁹ At the same time, the influence of philosophical and political liberalism also increased at Cambridge. The unique characters of the two universities, however,

⁷ For some excellent historical analyses of nineteenth-century idealist liberalism as a living complex of relationships continually challenged and influenced by the politics of the day, see Eugenio Biagini, *Citizenship and Community: Liberals, Radicals, and Collective Identities in the British Isles, 1865–1931* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Sandra Den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation: A Study in Late Victorian Thought* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1996); Vincent and Plant, *Philosophy, Politics, and Citizenship*; Freedman, *New Liberalism*; Melvin Richter, *The Politics of Conscience: T. H. Green and His Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

⁸ Christopher Harvie, *The Lights of Liberalism* (London: Allen Lane, 1976), 56.

⁹ *Ibid.* 52.

ensured that the particular type of liberalism that flourished at Oxford differed significantly from its collegial counterpart. While Cambridge was historically associated with rationalism and scientific inquiry, Oxford was known for its commitment to philosophy and classical studies, to the “sovereignty of Aristotle and the Authority of Antiquity.”¹⁰ The Oxford honors course of study, the *Literae Humaniores* (also known as the Greats curriculum) helped institutionalize this belief in the eternal lessons of antiquity.¹¹ In turn, the emphasis of the *Literae Humaniores* on ancient and classical philosophy combined with the university’s longstanding interest in theology led many of its most powerful liberal-minded scholars to stress the importance of moral philosophy in their curriculum and in their politics. And it was this concern with moral philosophy that initially propelled a number of these same thinkers toward the work of G.W.F. Hegel.¹²

Classics scholar Benjamin Jowett is largely responsible for bringing Hegelianism to Oxford. Jowett’s interest in Hegel centered on his interpretation of Plato’s “unity of difference,” a concept he read as a direct precursor to Hegel’s own notion of unity through Spirit.¹³ Jowett drew upon this Platonic-Hegelian conception of Spirit to criticize radical liberal individualism and utilitarianism, a critique that came to have considerable influence over his students, T. H. Green and Edward Caird. After Caird left Oxford for Glasgow University in 1866, Green rose to prominence as the leading moral philosopher on campus and, eventually, more greatly inspired a generation of Oxford students than did Jowett. Indeed, throughout the 1870s until his death in 1882, Green exercised at Oxford

¹⁰ Ernst Barker, quoted from V. R. Mehta, “The Origins of English Idealism in Relation to Oxford,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 13(2) (1975): 178.

¹¹ Frank M. Turner, *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 6.

¹² While Oxford scholars’ incorporation of Hegelian thought into nineteenth-century liberalism marked the apex of German influence on British philosophy, it was certainly not the only instance of this kind of intellectual borrowing. The first half of the century is widely regarded as an era of cultural and intellectual exchange between Britain and Germany. [Paul Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860–1914* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1980), 110]. This atmosphere of open cultural exchange prompted a number of scholars, such as Sir Walter Scott, to become interested in the work of Immanuel Kant. At hotbeds of this newfound interest in Kant, such as the University of Edinburgh, students learned German, formed German literary societies, and made extended visits to Germany itself. [Den Otter, *British Idealism*, 22]. An interest in Hegel followed in the 1850s with the publication of James Hutchison Stirling’s *The Secret of Hegel, Being the Hegelian System in Origin, Principle, Form and Matter*, widely considered incomprehensible. As one Oxford professor was rumored to have put it, “If Mr. Hutchinson Stirling knew the secret of Hegel he had managed to keep it to himself.” [John Muirhead, *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo Saxon Philosophy: Studies in the History of Idealism in England and America* (New York: Macmillan, 1931), 171].

¹³ Benjamin Jowett, *Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 3 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1871), 353.

what Richard Bellamy has described as an “influence of almost Parisian dimensions” over his students.¹⁴ In contrast, while Jowett sympathized with liberal causes, his politics tended to be more reserved and his focus on institutional (rather than societal) reform. And yet in many ways the institutional reforms begun by Jowett—primarily, his insistence that the *Literae Humaniores* be pushed to engage modern writers and contemporary issues—set the stage for Green’s own transformation of both the Greats curriculum and liberalism on campus.¹⁵

Through Green’s efforts, the *Literae Humaniores* introduced an essay on Kant in 1875. During that same year, it required a paper on logic that, for the first time, asked candidates to comment on Hegel’s notion of the “real” and the “rational.”¹⁶ By the mid-1870s, a knowledge of German philosophy, as interpreted through the Classics, had become an established feature of the Greats curriculum, precisely at a time when a young generation of thinkers like Bosanquet, Ritchie, and Muirhead were beginning their studies with Green. For these thinkers (and for others who were to come up at Oxford’s more progressive colleges in the following decades), the study of ancient philosophy, contemporary liberal ethics, and German idealism were deeply intertwined even after the specifically “German” character of this idealism had etiolated significantly.¹⁷

This fusion of contemporary ethics and philosophical inquiry prompted Green and his students to develop a profoundly *public* ideology, one that called on its adherents to actively live their philosophical commitments.¹⁸ As R. G. Collingwood later noted in his autobiography, “The school of Green sent out into public life a stream of ex-pupils who carried with them the conviction that philosophy, and in particular the philosophy they had learnt at Oxford, was an important thing and that their vocation was to put it into practice.”¹⁹ In this spirit, Green founded the Cooperative Society at Oxford in 1872 to encourage students and fellows to establish greater links with the community by extending educational opportunities to the poor.²⁰ Out of the cooperatist movement grew a number of

¹⁴ Richard Bellamy, “T. H. Green and the morality of Victorian Liberalism,” *Victorian Liberalism*, ed. Richard Bellamy (London: Routledge, 1990), 133.

¹⁵ Harvie, *The Lights of Liberalism*, 34.

¹⁶ Mehta, “The Origins of English Idealism in Relation to Oxford,” 183.

¹⁷ This tradition continued into the twentieth century, prompting one observer to note in 1932 that Oxford students exhibited “a tendency to study the classics not in and for themselves, but in relation to modern thought and modern life.” [Turner, *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain*, 6].

¹⁸ Ken Dyson, *The State Tradition in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 191.

¹⁹ R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 44.

²⁰ Den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation*, 194.

influential liberal associations, including the University Extension Movement and the Workers Educational Association (WEA).²¹ In true Oxford liberal style, one of the key educational goals of the University Extension Movement and the WEA was to expose the working class to what these thinkers argued were the deeply unifying standards of moral citizenship.²²

Green and Jowett began a school of thought at Oxford that quickly transformed itself into a movement of scholars and activists who eventually—according to a growing number of contemporary historians—had a profound effect upon the development of the welfare state in Britain.²³ These thinkers’ social theories were by no means identical, and in fact differed considerably from one another in terms of their levels of commitment to liberal individualism, German idealism, organicism, nationalism, and Social Darwinism. On a philosophical level, however, despite these differences, a common goal united the idealist liberals at Oxford: each sought to theorize a more collectivist liberal society through the Hegelian notion of Spirit.

A LIBERAL PREDICAMENT

For Green and his students, orthodox liberalism clearly placed too great an emphasis on the individual, resulting in a kind of hyper-subjectivism, a general disregard for morality among both politicians and philosophers, and economic disparities. And yet as committed political liberals and firm believers in laissez-faire economics, these thinkers intended neither to call the entire legacy of liberalism into question nor to develop a theory that might provide ammunition for Tory politicians and their Burkean longing

²¹ Richter, *The Politics Of Conscience*, 361.

²² See Bernard Bosanquet, “Three Lectures on Social Ideals,” *Social and International Ideals* (New York: Books for Libraries, 1917), 1967. As Richard Bellamy, Jeffrey Weeks, and others have argued, these supposedly transcendent standards were often simply rearticulated middle-class Victorian values, which stressed the power of individual “character” over structural critiques of the capitalist economy. Note too that the WEA and other educational societies (including the educational projects sponsored by the Fabians) that the elite organized for the benefit of the working class emerged *after* many working-class organizations and trade unions had established their own schools and reading rooms in the 1840s and ’50s. [Neville Kirk, *The Growth of Working Class Reformism in Mid-Victorian England* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 211]. It is perhaps not unfair to speculate then that much of the emphasis that middle-class reformers in the mid- to late nineteenth century placed on working class education was in response to what they saw as the revolutionary potential of class consciousness as taught in schools run by trade unions and Chartists.

²³ Martin Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1982), 136–37.

for tradition.²⁴ At the same time, Green and his colleagues viewed socialism with dread as “the reduction of the individual under the control of society.”²⁵ In the end, they hoped to achieve the creation of a philosophical “middle way” between these alternatives.

To do so, these scholars argued that liberal theory needed an infusion of publicly oriented thinking, a new perspective that would simultaneously champion individual responsibility and transcend class politics. Green and his colleagues turned to German idealism, and in particular to the works of Hegel, to help them imagine this theory. In this context, the conceptual language of Hegel’s *Geist* allowed these scholars to theorize the existence of an objective good found in both individuals and in the universal realm beyond. Green, for instance, argued for the existence of an explicitly Hegelianized “Spiritual Principle,” and Bosanquet a “world consciousness.”²⁶

Because idealist liberals emphasized the ability of the Spiritual Principle to unite the individual with both a higher intelligence and the broader social whole, many of them ultimately elaborated a core political philosophy that emphasized social relationships rather than abstract individualism. In the words of Green, men “in detachment from social relations . . . would not be men at all.”²⁷ Likewise, for Henry Jones, “an individual has no life except that which is social.”²⁸ These thinkers believed that the atomistic individuality of orthodox liberalism was actually contrary to the very nature of humanity. This critique was itself informed by Hegel, who in *The Philosophy of Right* had accused liberalism of conflating that which was “fundamental, substantive, and primary” with the “will of a single person.”²⁹ In following Hegel on this point, idealist liberals called into question one of the key assumptions at the heart of liberalism, namely, that human beings are fundamentally constituted by a hypothetical genesis in a *pre-social* era and that their rights as individuals can be traced back to these origins. Instead, they argued that the rights as well as the duties of individuals originated in, and ought to be directed toward,

²⁴ Thomas Hill Green, “Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract”, *The Works of Thomas Hill Green*, ed. R. L. Nettleship (London: Longmans, Green, 1906.) In Green’s view, the abuses of the capitalist system (e.g., poverty and child labor) directly resulted from liberalism’s *uneven* emphasis on the private as opposed to the public good, rather than something inherent in the free-market approach itself. Competition was not, according to Green, inherently bad and could have a moralizing influence on the individuals involved.

²⁵ Caird, “Individualism and Socialism,” 179.

²⁶ Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, par. 141. Bernard Bosanquet, *Science and Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1927), 379.

²⁷ Green, *Prolegomena*, par. 288.

²⁸ Henry Jones, “The Social Organism”, *The British Idealists*, 9.

²⁹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), par. 33.

the community or “the public good.”³⁰ Green and his colleagues differed from Hegel, however, in their often contrary attitudes toward the relationship between this public good and the state.

For Hegel, a clear, dialectical connection linked this unfolding of Spirit in the world and the modern state. As articulated in *The Philosophy of Right*, *Staat* embodied two meanings. On the one hand, it referred to the practices of governmental institutions in relation to civil society; on the other, to the holistic workings of *Sittlichkeit* or the ethical system of Spirit working through individuals and social institutions. *Staat*, as understood in this first context, looked almost liberal insofar as it contained “pluralist” institutions to which individual citizens devoted themselves not out of feeling (as in the family) but out of rational thought.³¹ In its second manifestation, however, *Staat* appeared both transcendent and organic, ultimately based on the primacy of communal bonds.³² Hegel believed that it was within this latter notion of *Sittlichkeit*—of the state as holistic ethical system—that the subjective wills of individuals and the objective will of Spirit were dialectically reconciled and found their “concrete meeting point.”³³ Thus, the state in this form was “an end in itself . . . the actuality of the ethical idea.”³⁴

The state made this actualization possible by systematically breaking down society into three autonomous but interrelated spheres: the family, civil society, and the legalistic state apparatus. For Hegel, within these separate realms the subjective and objective wills were nurtured, revealed at their most contradictory, and, ultimately, dialectically resolved. Hence, in the family, human beings understood themselves as *members* rather than individuals and, correspondingly, loved blindly. To become a free, thinking individual, however, the male citizen had to leave the family and

³⁰ Bernard Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 8th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1889), 102.

³¹ A number of contemporary Hegel scholars argue that, in contrast to the widely held nineteenth-century view of Hegel as an apologist for modern totalitarianism, Hegel’s practical state was perfectly compatible with modern ideas of individual autonomy and liberal constitutional politics. See, for instance, Allen Wood’s comparison of Hegel’s state theory to John Stuart Mill’s notion of “collective good” [Allen Wood, *Hegel’s Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 29].

³² Communitarian thinkers like Charles Taylor tend to emphasize this reading of Hegel’s state. Taylor, for instance, argues that Hegel’s community-oriented notion of “*Sittlichkeit*” provides an alternative interpretation of traditional, liberal notions of atomistic individuality. For Taylor, the doctrine of *Sittlichkeit* “is that morality reaches its completion in a community.” This, Taylor argues, “is the point where Hegel runs counter to the moral instinct of liberalism then and now.” [Taylor, *Hegel*, 377].

³³ G.W.F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, trans. Leo Rauch (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1988), 26.

³⁴ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 257.

become a participant in civil society.³⁵ In contrast to the family, civil society was conditioned by particularity and movement, by economic and social relationships. Within the “complexity” of these relationships and “social ties,” Hegel argued, male individuals strove to have their autonomy “recognized” by others.³⁶ But the very “complexities” of these social and economic interactions created the need for an external organization to protect individual interests. Hegel conceived of this external organization (*Staat*, in its first, legalistic manifestation) as more than the protector of individual interests; it also came to embody the reconciliation of universal and particular wills. Human relationships were defined in this moment in terms of membership, but membership was based on a rational self-consciousness and a knowledge of the state’s laws and constitution rather than on love, the guiding principle of the family.³⁷

At times, liberal proponents of Hegel spoke a language of statehood remarkably similar to Hegel’s second conception of *Staat* as an ethical unity. In these instances they argued for a more complex, ethical approach to the state that could provide a moral alternative to orthodox liberalism’s detached “night watchman.” Because they agreed with Hegel that rights originate within society rather than in an imaginary state of nature, idealist liberals sometimes shared Hegel’s commitment to a state that acted as the embodiment of self-consciousness.³⁸ For Henry Jones, this meant that “no State can be alien to the individuals that compose it.”³⁹ In this context, the state became a moral extension of society and an expression of the public good or the Spiritual Principle.⁴⁰ Likewise, many idealist liberals were also critical of liberal individualistic accounts of state coercion. According to Green, the liberal obsession with the state’s coercive power resulted from a faulty logic that dualistically pitted a “supreme coercive power on the one side” and the “individuals, to whom natural rights are ascribed, on the other.”⁴¹ For Bosanquet, the state itself was an essential “organ of the community” that must have the coercive power to maintain “the external conditions necessary to the best life.”⁴²

³⁵ Hegel’s exclusion of women from civil society will be discussed later.

³⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 214, 219.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, par. 257.

³⁸ Schlomo Avineri, *Hegel’s Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 181.

³⁹ Jones, “The Social Organism,” 24.

⁴⁰ In Bosanquet’s words, “the end of the State . . . is the end of Society and of the Individual—the best life, as determined by the fundamental logic of the will.” [Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 173].

⁴¹ Green, *Lectures on Political Obligation*, par. 114.

⁴² Bosanquet, “The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind,” *The British Idealists*, 271.

Perhaps the best-known aspect of idealist liberal social theory was this belief that the state had a commitment to make these “external conditions” a reality through some level of social and economic intervention.⁴³ “Our ideal state,” Muirhead argued, “must provide that free scope for individuality which is the most modern feature of modern politics.”⁴⁴ The state was thus obliged to expand possibilities for human freedom by creating equality of opportunity (as opposed to equality of experience) through such programs as universal education and national healthcare. As Green argued, the state had a moral responsibility to use its power “on the part of the citizens as a body to make the most and best of themselves.”⁴⁵

Despite this holistic account of the relationship between the individual, society, and the state, most of the Oxford liberals were unwilling to follow Hegel’s dialectic to the moment of resolution, when the individual and the universal concerns of the ethical state became one. At this point, many of these thinkers abandoned what they had initially found attractive in Hegel’s notion of *Sittlichkeit* and instead evoked a more liberal and legalistic sense of the state—that stood apart from both individuals and the social good—a state with the potential for tyranny.

The relationship of private property to the state offers an interesting example of this parting of ways. Hegel and the many of the Oxford liberals agreed that in the context of civil society the movement of a free market economy allowed individuals to develop and refine their moral autonomy through competition and recognition. Thus, both opposed the idea of state-managed, collectivized economies. In the context of *Sittlichkeit*, however, Hegel argued that private property was inherently social and contained no innate ethical qualities besides those that accrued to it when it came in contact with ethical institutions.⁴⁶ Green used similar language when he argued that the “right to property” made sense in society alone.⁴⁷ Hegel maintained, however, that because private property was so intimately linked to the realization of freedom in civil society, some redistribution (although not an equal distribution) was necessary.⁴⁸ In contrast, Green argued that the “uncontrolled” and unequal accumulation of property was not necessarily anti-social, and that when such accumulation

⁴³ A number of contemporary scholars argue that this notion of a proactive state best represents the idealist liberal legacy. [See, for instance, Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics*, 136–37].

⁴⁴ Muirhead, *The Platonic Tradition*, 195.

⁴⁵ Green, “Liberal Legislation and the Freedom of Contract,” 372.

⁴⁶ In particular, property and capital became ethical within the context of the family. [See Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 170].

⁴⁷ Green, *Political Obligation*, par. 216.

⁴⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 49A.

came about through hard work and a respect for the property of others, the result would be the betterment of society as a whole.⁴⁹ Thus Green's "ideal state" required no redistribution of property. Bosanquet voiced a similar opinion when he argued that "absurdity results" if the distribution of private property "is transferred to functions of the State."⁵⁰

Both Green and Bosanquet finally backed away from Hegel's vision of the state as a holistic, ethical system. In other words, while they might have envisioned a state that was, in Bosanquet's words, "the guardian of the whole moral world," they also seemed to believe that the state could behave immorally (as in the case of slavery). Likewise, while these thinkers often argued for a state that was more than a "night watchman," more than a coercive power dualistically pitted against the interests of self-serving individuals, they also clearly believed that the redistributive state could illegitimately stand in opposition to the individual's right to own property.⁵¹ As a result, while support for a moral, interventionist state is perhaps the best known of all the idealist liberal principles to emerge from the Oxford school, it was also perhaps the least philosophically consistent. This inconsistency would reemerge with renewed vigor in Murray's and Zimmern's liberalisms.

The central irony here is that while Green and his colleagues initially turned to Hegelian theory as, in Peter Robbins' terms, a "metaphysical consolation" for liberalism's lack of a unifying center, their simultaneous rejection of Hegel's *Sittlichkeit* on liberal individualist grounds gave rise to a critical question that remained unanswered in their theory: Is the state an instrumental political formation somehow dissociated from the individuals who compose it, or is it a holistic, spiritual, and moral community? Hegel resolved these problems by declaring the state both, the latter ultimately taking precedent over the former.⁵² In the final analysis, the state as an ethical whole—as Spirit actualized—superseded the state as mere externality.⁵³

Liberals sympathetic to idealism could not support Hegel's decisive elevation of one form of state over another. In effect, they wanted it both ways. In some instances they were drawn toward a theory of the state as ethical whole; in others, toward an anti-statist politics of liberal individualism. While Hegel addressed both of these impulses by positing them as

⁴⁹ Green, *Political Obligation*, par. 221. Green also argued that the only form of property to pose a true danger to society was property generated from landed estates, whose owners lived off the "unearned increment" of the soil.

⁵⁰ Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 242.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 302.

⁵² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 157.

⁵³ Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought*, 29.

moments in the dialectical movement of Spirit toward its final manifestation, most Oxford liberals were never completely comfortable with this, and thus never seemed to make up their minds about the exact relationship between the individual, society, and the state. As a result, their works are filled with unresolved antinomies. For many idealist liberal authors, these frayed ends were immensely troubling, and their writings reflected this underlying note of anxiety as if they were frantically trying to pull together the loose threads of a theoretical fabric that they themselves had unraveled. In the end, several sought to address this predicament by reimagining the social, reconstituting a more coherent philosophical framework on the terra firma of the natural world.

AN ORGANIC SOLUTION: THE SOCIAL BODY

Ironically, while some of the fundamental contradictions in nineteenth-century idealist liberal thought resulted from the decision *not* to follow in the direction of Hegel's state theory, many of these thinkers (most prominently Bosanquet and Ritchie) nonetheless drew largely upon a Hegelian notion of the organic to address these contradictions. Although English philosophers had made analogies between the human body and the body politic for centuries, the notion lost favor in Britain during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the ascendancy of liberal individualism. It reemerged in mid-nineteenth-century Britain via a variety of routes. The influential social theorist Herbert Spencer made explicit comparisons between modern industrial societies and animal organisms.⁵⁴ In addition, an increased interest in the writings of Plato encouraged philosophical support for the notion of holism, or the unity of different parts.⁵⁵ Finally, like so many of the ideas fundamental to the social theory of the idealist liberal school, the notion of organic unity was reintroduced through a heightened fascination with Hegelian philosophy.⁵⁶

For Hegel, the utility of the body metaphor lay in its capacity to express both the significance of society's individual parts and their inability to function without the animating presence of the whole. As Hegel argued,

⁵⁴ For Spencer, societies, like natural organisms, were subject to the same laws of evolution as were individuals. Thus, he argued, as they evolved toward higher levels of industrial development, these societies also became more internally differentiated, complex, and interdependent. See Herbert Spencer, *The Evolution of Society; Selections from Herbert Spencer's Principles of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

⁵⁵ Den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation*, 45.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 156.

the “limbs and organs . . . of an organic body are not merely parts of it; it is only in their unity that they are what they are and they are unquestionably affected by that unity, as they also in turn affect it.”⁵⁷ The ethical unity of the state *writ large* (*Sittlichkeit*) was a “dependent organism” and, like “the so called ‘parts’ of an animal organism,” members of a state were “moments in an organic whole whose isolation and independence spell disease.”⁵⁸ This notion of ethical unity, however, not only implied a relationship between individuals and society but also insisted upon the organic relationship between social institutions. Hegel referred to institutions such as families and corporations as the “cells” within which the “actuality of the ethical idea” was first developed.⁵⁹ Thus, the concept of organic union necessitated an interdependence between these “cells” and the ethical whole of the state.

Many idealist liberals, including Ritchie, Bosanquet, and Jones, were explicit in their debt to this Hegelian notion of a complex, ethical organicism. Spencer’s notion of the social whole, they argued, never amounted to more than an aggregate entity, life-like rather than alive, a collection of individuals and economic practices with no ethical end. In contrast, Ritchie and Jones in particular argued for a Hegelian notion of social embeddedness. For these thinkers, not only must a deeper notion of the universal good guide the social organism but, in addition, individuals had to come to know themselves as part of that universal good through participation in social institutions, what Jones termed their “stations.” In contrast to Plato’s holism, they argued, Hegel’s organicism addressed both ethical relations and freedom of movement, and thus, in Ritchie’s words, gave “the completest expression to that organic conception of human society.”⁶⁰

And yet while these thinkers embraced an organicism inspired by Hegel, their particular approach differed from Hegel’s in its attitude toward the state. Whereas Hegel repeatedly described the individual moments that composed the ethical system of the state (e.g., family, civil society, and “external” or legalistic state) as united in one organic body, these idealist liberals took a much more Spencerian approach when they employed images of the living, dead, or diseased body to describe *society*

⁵⁷ Hence, he argued that the organs and limbs of the body “become mere parts, only when they pass under the hands of the anatomist, whose occupation, be it remembered, is not with the living body but with the corpse.” [G.W.F. Hegel, *Logic*, trans. William Wallace, 3rd ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1989), par. 135].

⁵⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 276, 278.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, par 276 (add.), par. 257.

⁶⁰ David Ritchie, *The Principles of State Interference* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1891), 156.

in distinction from the state. In making this argument, this chapter parts ways with many scholars of nineteenth-century British liberalism and idealism, most of whom maintain that idealistically inclined liberals of this period used the notion of the organically linked social whole primarily to expand the role of the state in liberal society. For these scholars, the conceptual framework of the organic allowed many idealist liberal thinkers to root their vision of a more interventionist state within the intricate workings of the social body.⁶¹ But something distinctly *anti-statist* lurked in the lure of the organic. In other words, nineteenth-century scholars like Ritchie, Muirhead, Jones, and Bosanquet might have used the language of organicism to describe those moments when it was appropriate for the liberal state to intervene in society, but they also used the same language to indicate clearly when state intervention was *not* appropriate. Contrary to establishing the life of a state as existing prior to its members, organicism allowed some Oxford liberals to theorize a social whole distinct from the state. In essence, rather than smuggling an interventionist state into liberal theory via idealism, organicism made it possible for these thinkers to vacate idealism of the totalizing state to liberalize it, to address their discomfort with parts of Hegel's theory and still imagine a moment of quasi-Hegelian resolution separate from, and prior to, the political state. Instead of unfolding within the overall rubric of *Sittlichkeit*, as in Hegel's system, the moment of resolution between the universal and the particular manifested itself within the organic body of society. The state could potentially interact with this social body in such a way that it too became a holistic extension of the organic community, but the prior existence of that community ultimately bestowed legitimacy upon the state itself.

In this manner, Bosanquet excused himself from liberal critics' charges that his notion of the moral state was implicitly authoritarian by grounding his state theory in the existence of a "social whole" whose origins predated the state and whose members constituted the "parts or organs of a living body."⁶² The state was thus moral insofar as it reflected this social whole. In the introduction to the second edition of *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, Bosanquet spoke directly to his critics on this issue by setting himself apart from presumably Hegelian theories in which

⁶¹ For example, Vincent and Plant argue that the new liberals' organicist approach to society assumed that the state was "deeply involved" in the body politic as a kind of nerve center or brain, a "responsible repository of stimuli." [Vincent and Plant, *Philosophy, Politics and Citizenship*, 91]. Freedon echoes this argument, noting that new liberal organicism primarily regarded the state as *prior* its members. [Freedon, *The New Liberalism*, 94]. For Robbins, many British followers of Hegel ultimately espoused the analogy of organic growth in order to explain history's progression toward the "rational state." [Robbins, *The British Hegelians*, 11].

⁶² Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 20.

the social is subsumed by the state.⁶³ Instead, according to Bosanquet, the relationship of society to the state “is like that by which a tree makes its wood, or a living body deposits its skeleton. The work of the State is *de facto* for the most part . . . setting its *imprimatur*, the seal of its force, on what more flexible activities or the mere progress of life have wrought out in long years of adventurous experiment or silent growth.”⁶⁴ These organic processes occurred before the state and beneath the state, and explained both the “co-operation” of human beings and state power itself. Ritchie made a similar argument in which he maintained that society, as separate from the state, was no mere aggregate of individuals but rather a “spiritual body animated by that love which is the highest religious conception of Deity.”⁶⁵

Ultimately, for Bosanquet, Ritchie, and others, it was this holism that explained the need for human self-sacrifice and charity. Isolation resulted in the death of the social organism and the reduction of the individual to a bloody stump of flesh, a “mutilated fragment” for Bosanquet, a “severed limb” for Jones, and “a hand cut off from a living body” for Caird.⁶⁶ For these thinkers, the social whole was analogous to a “living body, and not . . . a dead body” precisely because it was animated by a unifying spirit that was present only when all “tissues,” “currents,” and “organs” were responding to one another.⁶⁷

In sum, the move to embrace organicism helped Bosanquet, Ritchie, and many of their cohorts address some of the indurate tensions embedded in their particular idealist liberal ideology, tensions that accumulated around the relationship of the autonomous individual to the state. Organicism spoke to these tensions by removing the unity of community from the realm of the state and relocating it within the organic body of the social. It was society, then, and not the state, that naturally called for human duty and sacrifice. And yet, however different this social vision was from Hegel’s, these Oxford liberals up until this point had drawn upon a tradition of organicism inherited from Hegel himself that used the natural realm *metaphorically*. These thinkers truly parted company with Hegel in their more explicit borrowings from the biological sciences, and in particular from theories of evolution. In so doing, they were both reflecting and challenging one of the most dominant intellectual influences of the nineteenth century: Social Darwinism.

⁶³ Ibid., xxxvii.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ David Ritchie, “Darwin and Hegel,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 1 (1891–92): 73.

⁶⁶ Bosanquet, *Science and Philosophy*, 42; Jones, “The Social Organism,” 9; Caird, “Individualism and Socialism,” 183.

⁶⁷ Jones, “The Social Organism,” 13.

AN ORGANIC SOLUTION: THE STATE, NATURAL SELECTION,
AND THE FAMILY

The idea that Darwinian laws of biological evolution could be used to explain social, political, and economic phenomena was a dominant theme in mid- to late nineteenth-century British thought. For the Social Darwinists, Darwin's notion of the "survival of the fittest" both explained and justified the economic inequalities of industrial society and gave credence to a kind of laissez faire social theory.⁶⁸ Social Darwinists argued for the inevitability of human evolution and insisted that the natural laws of competition and individualism be allowed to function freely. In this context, any kind of "artificial" state intervention in society or in the economy necessarily tampered with the rhythms of evolutionary progress by disrupting natural selection and thus encouraging the survival of those weaker members of the species.⁶⁹ True social and ethical progress, according to Herbert Spencer (who actively embraced Darwinism in the 1850s), could occur only once the strongest and cleverest of individuals, the "highest type" of human beings were allowed to "live more in the presence of [their] fellows."⁷⁰

For many nineteenth-century new liberals, this approach to evolution lacked both a moral purpose and a sense of spiritual cohesion. As Ritchie argued in *Darwinism and Politics*, Spencer's focus on individual adaptability disentangled human beings from their social matrix, resulting in an amoral, individualized vision of society where "nothing succeeds like success."⁷¹ And yet his criticism of Spencer led him not to reject Social Darwinism outright but to couple it with a Hegelian understanding of Spirit. Thus, Ritchie took seriously Hegel's adage that the "real is the rational" by arguing that "reality" was more than a mere reflection of current conditions—it was, moreover, an expression of the Spiritual Principle itself.⁷² In Hegel's teleological vision, Spirit harbored within it the divine idea of the world in its totality.⁷³ In like manner, Ritchie identified a similar force of reason behind the natural development of the species, a movement toward an ethical and moral universe that became clearer as time progressed. Ritchie also argued that the Darwinian concept of natu-

⁶⁸ Harold Vanderpool, *Darwin and Darwinism: Revolutionary Insights Concerning Man, Nature, Religion, and Society* (Lexington, MA: Heath, 1973), xxi.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Herbert Spencer, *Data of Ethics* (New York: William Allison, 1879), 31.

⁷¹ Ritchie, *Darwinism and Politics*, 13.

⁷² Ritchie, "Darwin and Hegel," 68.

⁷³ Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, 21.

ral selection provided the historical contingencies and variety of experience necessary for Spirit's journey through time. Therefore, according to Ritchie, "natural selection is a perfectly adequate cause to account for the rise of morality," a point on which Bosanquet agreed.⁷⁴

Ritchie and Bosanquet, however, were also faced with the same logical dilemma that dogged most proponents of Social Darwinism: how does a particular social vision come to fruition in the absence of state intervention? How does the social engineer encourage some members of society to thrive while still insisting that the evolutionary struggle for existence be allowed to play itself out, unencumbered by the state? Some idealist liberals responded to this tension by making a distinction between universal social reform and state interference in the *individualized* process of natural selection. Bosanquet, for example, argued that the moral state should facilitate the common good by creating universal programs that intelligent individuals could take advantage of, rather than providing poor relief for the weakest members of society whose poverty was attributable to their failure to participate in the "social mind."⁷⁵ Similarly, for Ritchie, state interference was justified if it was *nonspecific*.⁷⁶ In many ways, this universalism masked what was often an erratic approach to state intervention by wrapping it in the mantle of an overall scientific vision of human progress.

Finally, some idealist liberals argued that Darwinism offered an explanatory framework in which the ultimate direction of the Spiritual Principle was conclusively *knowable* through scientific investigation. Just as the science of evolution exposed the processes of the natural world, so too could it expose the logic of reason working through nature. For Ritchie, "knowing a system of nature" and discovering the will of the Spiritual Principle were one in the same.⁷⁷ Reason, in this context, was observable within the workings of the natural, within "our apprehension of a single object and our view of nature as a whole."⁷⁸ This belief that the "real"

⁷⁴ Ritchie, "Darwin and Hegel," 63; Bosanquet, "Socialism and Natural Selection," *The British Idealists*, 54, 57.

⁷⁵ Bosanquet, "Charity Organization and the Majority Report," *International Journal of Ethics* 20 (1910): 397.

⁷⁶ Ritchie, *Darwinism and Politics*, 29.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁷⁸ Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, 275. By grounding their theories of reason and the Spiritual Principle in scientific naturalism, Ritchie and Bosanquet moved in a distinctly different direction from both Green's and Hegel's approaches to the universal. Green, in fact, had explicitly rejected both evolutionary theory and naturalistic social explanations in a series of articles published in 1878 entitled "Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. G. H. Lewes: Their Application of the Doctrine of Evolution to Thought." [*The Works of T. H. Green*, 373–541]. According to Green, scientific naturalism obscured real knowl-

was the “natural” (and that the closer to nature a political or social phenomenon was, the more it had to tell us about the true course of Spirit in the world) became a kind of unifying logic for the more Darwinian-oriented of the idealist liberals. In the end, this faith in nature supplied the philosophical groundwork for these thinkers’ particular fascination with the family.

For Hegel, the family was both historical and naturally timeless.⁷⁹ While the family *form* may have developed and changed historically, Hegel maintained that the reproductive process so integral to the family remained rooted in a timeless, natural shell.⁸⁰ Thus, Hegel referred to the bonds of the father-mother and parent-child relationships as the “natural unity of the family,” or as that moment when “ethical mind is in its natural or immediate phase.”⁸¹ Hegel argued that this natural immediacy was necessary because only through an instinctual knowledge of blood ties, rather than civic ones, could a male citizen experience the first moment of the dialectic.⁸² Thus, the “natural ethical community” of the family played a crucial role in Hegel’s system as both the source and protector of the developing individual.⁸³

Those idealist liberals most sympathetic to German idealism, particularly Bosanquet, Jones, and Ritchie, borrowed extensively from Hegel’s theory of the family. They too argued that the family was closer to nature than any other social institution, that it stood “nearest to the natural world, and has taken, so to speak, the minimum steps into the realm of purpose and consciousness.”⁸⁴ The chrysalis of the family was thus rooted in the preconscious, in the spontaneous acts of kindness and love that Hegel himself described as Mind in its immediate phase. Muirhead argued that human beings first developed their “social qualities” within the fam-

edge by dividing the world into discrete, observable pieces, which amounted to a mere “aggregate” of consciousness rather than a singular, rational conscience capable of resolving the particular and the universal [Green, “Mr. Spencer on Subject and Object,” 407].

⁷⁹ To be sure, Hegel was well aware that this particular form of family organization was an historical development rather than a fixed biological formation. In fact, he insisted that the historical withering away of older forms of familial cohesion—such as families or clans—enabled the full, dialectical development of the individual. At the same time, however, despite its historical existence, the institution of the nuclear family—with “the husband as its head”—was closer to nature than any other social realm. [Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 171].

⁸⁰ Mary O’Brien, “Hegel: Man, Physiology, and Fate,” *Feminist Interpretations of G. W. F. Hegel*, ed. Patricia Jagentowitz Mills (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), par. 187.

⁸¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 157, 175.

⁸² *Ibid.*, par. 167.

⁸³ Rudolf Siebert, *Hegel’s Concept of Marriage and the Family* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1979), 5.

⁸⁴ Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 250.

ily.⁸⁵ These thinkers agreed that because the family embodied that first moment of total and unconscious obligation and sacrifice, it was both precious to and necessary for the moral development of society. In Bosanquet's words, "the co-operative individual, as demanded by civilized life, can only be produced in the family."⁸⁶

This belief in the uniqueness of the family as an ethical realm led both Hegel and the Oxford liberals to a seemingly similar conclusion about the relationship between the family and society, and the family and the state. To maintain its socializing and moralizing qualities, they argued, the integrity of the family must be upheld in distinction from both the state and civil society. But while both Hegel and the idealist liberals could agree that, by virtue of its very naturalness, the family required protection from the public realm, their assumptions about nature itself led them to somewhat different conclusions about the family's social role.

Thus, Hegel argued that the second moment of the dialectic—the male individual's development of an autonomous, self-conscious will—depended on the first: that is, it required the individual's prior and total immersion in the natural, ethical immediacy of the family. While for Hegel Spirit might sometimes work through nature, it was never reducible to nature itself.⁸⁷ In contrast, for many idealist liberals, nature was not inherently irrational. In evolutionary terms, they argued, nature was a fully rationalized, scientific engine of progress, capable not only of promoting the movement of the Spiritual Principle in the world but of improving the species and the race as well. As that social unit most closely attached to the natural, the family became for them the undisputed terrain of evolutionary development. Bosanquet reasoned that "being thus 'natural,' the idea of the family has a hold like no other upon the whole man."⁸⁸ The primeval struggle to "realize the conditions of true family life," he argued, pushed humankind toward perfection. Interfering in this struggle would result in the "extinction of the stock" or in a population riddled with disease and dominated by the mentally feeble.⁸⁹ But for Bosanquet it was not just the struggle to achieve "true family life" that ultimately improved the species but also what happened within the monogamous nuclear family unit itself. As that social sphere closest to the "very animal roots of life," the evolutionary cradle of the family gave rise to a healthy

⁸⁵ John Henry Muirhead, "The Family," *Ethical Democracy: Essays in Social Dynamics*, ed. Stanton Coit (London: Grant Richards, 1900), 112.

⁸⁶ Bosanquet, "Socialism and Natural Selection," 61.

⁸⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 146.

⁸⁸ Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 279.

⁸⁹ Bosanquet, "Socialism and Natural Selection," 61, 63. Here Bosanquet invokes the famous Jukes family. An example often cited by eugenicists and Social Darwinists, the socially deviant Jukes supposedly gave rise to 1200 "mentally feeble" and criminal descendants.

population and to ethically and morally pure individuals. Evolutionary principles present in the family, he argued, aided in the process of “soul molding” by which individuals not only became ethically autonomous but also learned their responsibilities to the common good.⁹⁰ Thus, social interaction with others in the natural community of the family created socially conscious individuals. Perhaps Muirhead put it best when he argued that “society depends for the strength of its tissue on the health and strength of the cells that compose it, and especially of the primeval cell we call the family.”⁹¹

This underlying dependence on the family as the natural source of evolutionary progress led a number of idealist liberals to reinsert a kind of family morality writ large into society by proposing it as a model for both the political state and the cultural nation. In so doing, these thinkers ultimately evoked a social theory that in key ways began to look not only pre-liberal but also pre-Hegelian in its approach to the state. For instance, Hegel argued that the family was essential to both the male individual’s quest for self-fulfillment and the unfolding of Mind in the world. Nevertheless, he also maintained that to be resolved dialectically with the universal, the family and its natural foundations must first be transcended in favor of reason and the competition of individuals in civil society, and then actively dissolved into civil society once the male children “have been educated to freedom of personality.”⁹² In this sense, Hegelian idealism and classical liberalism were in full agreement. John Locke, for instance, argued that political legitimacy was constituted through the explicit or tacit consent of free and equal (male) individuals rather than through any notion of a divine “paternal right” based ultimately on family loyalty.⁹³ While for Hegel the transcendence of the family was necessary for the eventual resolution of the individual with the state, for Locke the family had to be carefully circumscribed to avoid the abuses of a capricious monarchy. Despite this fundamental difference, however, both of these thinkers argued that mapping the morality of the family onto the “external world” evoked an earlier, historical phase in the development of the mature state.

For many idealist liberals, however, the natural origins of the family were never dissolved in favor of civil society. Rather, their writings on the subject suggest that precisely because of the family’s closeness to nature—and because nature itself was identical with the evolutionary progress of

⁹⁰ Bosanquet, *Principle of Individuality and Value* (London: Macmillan, 1912), 91. [i.c., Den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation*, 100].

⁹¹ Muirhead, “The Family.”

⁹² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 119.

⁹³ John Locke, “Second Treatise on Government,” *Locke: Political Essays*, ed. Mark Goldie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 70.

reason—the nuclear family ought to serve as a kind of permanent social laboratory for evolutionary and moral progress. In this sense Bosanquet, Ritchie, Muirhead, Caird, and others all agreed that, as Caird noted in 1897, “a pure domestic life and the sanctity of the home are the indispensable basis of the moral as well as the economic organization of society.”⁹⁴ Because of the “*permanent* utility of the family as the unit of social life,” these thinkers supported a social vision that shuttled between the sanctity of the home and the larger society, a society that included other social communities, such as voluntary organizations, trade unions, and schools.⁹⁵ Thus, rather than transcending the intimacy of the family, as Hegel insisted participants in civil society do, idealist liberals stressed that an ethically mature citizen actively take the lessons learned in the family and apply them to their interactions with the community. In a paradoxical manner, then, these thinkers simultaneously saw the family as “cell” in the healthy social body—that is, a permanently enshrined social institution—and as a source of moral and civic energy that influenced both the community at large and the state itself.

The philosophical and political results of this osmosis took different forms in the various social theories of idealist liberal scholars. Ritchie, for instance, argued that the state “must be regarded as one with the family.”⁹⁶ For Ritchie, the naturally moral, evolutionary power of the nuclear family not only provided the individual citizen with the critical social lessons necessary for the creation of a good state but also acted as a *model* for that state through a dehiscence of the “ethics of the family” into the public realm. In explicit opposition to liberal individualism, Ritchie argued that family ethics provided a better foundation for the state than the disinterested image of the “night watchman.” “The family ideal of the State,” he argued in 1891, “may be difficult of attainment, but, as an ideal, it is better than the policeman theory. It would mean the moralization of politics.”⁹⁷ Ritchie’s family ideal of the state ultimately rejected “any abstract principle of equality” and replaced it with the hierarchies of the family, resulting in a social theory that treated working-class and colonial peoples as children under the tutelage of their benevolent state parent.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Caird, “Individualism and Socialism,” 181; Muirhead, “The Family,” 112.

⁹⁵ Muirhead, “The Family,” 116 (emphasis added). As Caird argued, an ideal society ought to be constructed out of the “round of duties that seem commonplace and secular—these family ties, this college companionship.” [Caird, *Lay Sermons and Addresses* (Glasgow: James Maclehouse and Sons, 1907), 70].

⁹⁶ David Ritchie, *Natural Rights: A Criticism of Some Political and Ethical Conceptions*, 3rd ed. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1916), 262.

⁹⁷ Ritchie, *Darwinism and Politics*, 73.

⁹⁸ Ritchie, *Natural Rights*, 262. Also see Ritchie on colonialism in “Ethical Democracy.”

Other thinkers—namely, Bosanquet, Caird, and Muirhead—explicitly rejected the more authoritarian themes apparent in Ritchie’s vision of the family state. For these thinkers, differentiating between the political state and the spiritual, organically conceived *nation* to which the state was closely related was essential. As “the highest really organic society,” the nation embodied both the power of blood origins and the same kind of feelings of good will as those generated by the nuclear family but did not carry the totalitarian overtones of the family state.⁹⁹ Thus, according to Bosanquet, “in a modern nation the atmosphere of the family is not confined to the actual family. The common dwelling place, history, and tradition, the common language and common literature, give a colour of affection to the every-day citizen-consciousness, which is to the nation what family affection is in the home circle.”¹⁰⁰ Feelings of intimacy and affection generated within the family, which Hegel believed to end at the door of the home, for Bosanquet “colored” the everyday interactions within the nation, creating what Muirhead and Hetherington called “common sentiment.”¹⁰¹ Patriotism itself, which Bosanquet described as “an immense natural force, a magical spell,” arose first and foremost from “family and kindred—the tie of blood.”¹⁰² Like family love, patriotism was natural and thus both rational and inherently unifying. Thus, states must wrap themselves around the authentic core of the national family to be truly legitimate. In the end, communal unity itself could be achieved through “nationality alone.”¹⁰³

Writing during an era of intense nation-making activities in Europe and throughout a period when British nationalism was defining itself vigorously in opposition to the expanding colonial empire, the Oxford liberals’ choice of the term “nation” to describe the natural, ethical community is hardly surprising. What is surprising in a political sense is how much this notion differs from the nationalism more common to British liberals of the time, a nationalism grounded in the concept of self-determination. According to this liberal imaginary, a “people” became a coherent nation in that moment when they voluntarily claimed themselves as such and not because of any *a priori*, natural existence.¹⁰⁴ In contrast, by explicitly drawing out the prepolitical, organic qualities of the nation, idealist liber-

⁹⁹ Caird, “The Nation as Ethical Ideal”, *Lay Sermons*, 111.

¹⁰⁰ Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, 273.

¹⁰¹ Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 262.

¹⁰² Bosanquet, “The Teaching of Patriotism,” *Social and International Ideals*.

¹⁰³ Bosanquet, “The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind,” *Social and International Ideals* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries, 1967 [1917]), 294.

¹⁰⁴ For an excellent example of this type of nineteenth-century liberal nationalism see John Stuart Mill, “Considerations on Representative Government.”

als like Bosanquet evoked a much more Germanic notion of a national community knit together by blood relations.

And yet while this notion of a blood-based or family-based nation might have more closely resembled the German notion of *Volk*, it was emphatically *not* Hegelian. Hegel had argued in the *Philosophy of Right* that “nations” (the standard English translation of “*Völker*” or “peoples”) begin as families, as extended kinship groups.¹⁰⁵ Hegel was also clear, however, that the inchoative links between the family and the nation were not enough to legitimate statehood. Instead, he argued, the transition from *Volk* to *Staat* required the realization of the ethical idea of state. In this context, nations were simply proto-states, whose mere existence was not, in itself, a reason for sovereignty.¹⁰⁶ For Hegel, then, no such thing as a dialectically realized “nation state” existed because such a state could not become the “actuality of the ethical idea”; it merely reflected the national community.¹⁰⁷ For Bosanquet, in contrast, the familial idea of the nation was the moral foundation upon which the state justified its actions. It not only naturalized the need for social cooperation, it naturalized the form of the nation-state and explained why “men are distinguished into separate adjacent political bodies instead of forming a single system over the whole earth’s surface.”¹⁰⁸ In contrast to Hegel’s belief that *Staat* superseded *Volk*, Bosanquet thus argued that *Volk* predetermined *Staat*. In the end, the family was not just incidentally related to the national community in a symbolic, Andersonian sense as part of the “deep, horizontal comradeship” that characterizes nationalist imaginaries.¹⁰⁹ It was the central, organizing principle of the national community and justified the existence of the state itself.

Ultimately, however, this theoretical coupling of the family with society at large—whether Ritchie’s family-state or Bosanquet’s family-nation—did not always blend seamlessly with these thinkers’ liberal political commitments. Because they had rooted their theory of organic community in the loving shelter of the nuclear family and the familiarized nation, the

¹⁰⁵ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 181. Note that Hegel rarely used the German word “*Nation*.” When he did so, it was almost always in reference to a more limited notion of “customs” rather than an organic sense of “peoples.” [See, for instance, par. 339 of *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Leipzig, 1911)].

¹⁰⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 279.

¹⁰⁷ In this instance, Knox’s translation of “*Das Volk als Staat*” as “nation state” is extremely misleading [i.c. par. 331]. A more appropriate translation would be “the people as state,” that is, a people who have reached that historical moment when the realization of State as “Mind” is possible, rather than a state that exists as a mere reflection of a national community.

¹⁰⁸ Bosanquet, “The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind,” 275.

¹⁰⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 1991) 7.

nineteenth-century controversy over the increased movement of middle- and working-class women (seeking employment, education, and the vote) away from the family now placed these thinkers in an awkward position. On the one hand, they were drawn toward a vision of society with inherently conservative undertones, a vision composed of cohesive nuclear families that required fulltime domestic maintenance. On the other hand, these thinkers were also politically aligned with a liberal politics that supported expanded economic, educational, and political opportunities for women. In the end, idealist liberals like Bosanquet and Ritchie chose the more conservative response. Their social theory in this regard required a sustained level of interference by charity organizations in the lives of working-class families and a policy agenda based on the perceived needs of families rather than of individual citizens.

THE POLITICS OF LIBERAL PATERNALISM

Both Hegelian idealism and classical liberalism argued for a separation between the family and the state, but the theoretical shape and depth of this separation was quite different. On the surface, for liberals like Locke, the nuclear-family form was important not so much for its particular qualities as for its *absence* from public life. While feminist historians and political theorists have rightly demonstrated that Locke's vision of the family was riddled with untheorized, gendered assumptions about the emerging dominance of the nuclear-family form in European society and the leadership role of husbands and fathers within this family, these assumptions were not linked expressly to an overall vision of liberal society.¹¹⁰ Historically, Lockean liberalism, and liberalism more generally, has thus held out the possibility of an equality-based politics for women—a possibility that Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill drew upon extensively—while at the same time assuming that men, as the “abler and stronger” of the two sexes, would dominate both family relations and politics.¹¹¹

Hegel, by contrast, avoided this contradiction by theorizing both the necessity of the monogamous nuclear family to the evolution of the modern state and the essential differences between the sexes that grounded women permanently in the home. According to Hegel, only through making a monogamous commitment—when a man and a woman consented

¹¹⁰ See, for instance, Linda Nicholson, *Gender and History: The Limits of Social Theory in the Age of the Family* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 133–166; Carol Pateman, *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism, and Political Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 118–40.

¹¹¹ Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, par. 82.

“to make themselves one person”—did the male citizen obtain the “substantive self-consciousness” he needed to enter civil society.¹¹² Women, however, never developed “substantive self-consciousness” themselves because of their “intellectual and ethical differences” from men.¹¹³ Echoing the Western philosophical conviction that women were intimately linked to feeling rather than rationality and to nature rather than history, Hegel concluded that woman “has her substantive destiny within the family.”¹¹⁴ This rootedness of women in the family, however, was hardly incidental. Instead, women’s inherent association with the family played a critical role in Hegel’s overall dialectical system by providing the family with a permanent connection to nature. Women ensured the constancy and “natural immediacy” of family life that the male citizen was born into, moved away from, and ultimately resolved with at a higher level of universal Spirit. Women were the heart, the essence of life, the fixed, natural objects that the maturing male citizen consumed as, in Judith Butler’s words, “self-consciousness eats its way through the world.”¹¹⁵

The philosophical underpinnings of Oxford liberalism provided its proponents with a slightly different set of theoretical and political problems with regard to women. Thus, their explicitly Hegelian-influenced belief in the nuclear family as an essential component in the overall health of the social body led them to a rather conservative set of assumptions about women’s relationship to the family. And yet these thinkers associated themselves politically with the more progressive elements in the Liberal Party, elements that actively lobbied for women’s suffrage throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and contributed an average of 68 percent of the total suffragist vote in Parliament during this period.¹¹⁶ As a result, while most of these thinkers supported a more liberal individualist approach to both women’s suffrage and women’s education, they tended to undercut this support with an insistence on women’s fundamental connection to the home.

To their credit, thinkers like Bosanquet and Ritchie did attempt to correct Hegel’s unconditional relegation of women to the family sphere. Bosanquet, for instance, consciously added women to his description of Hegel’s civil society in *The Philosophical Theory of the State*.¹¹⁷ For Bosanquet, sexual difference did not necessarily mean difference of mind.

¹¹² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, par. 162.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, par. 166.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 39.

¹¹⁶ Brian Harrison, *Separate Spheres: The Opposition to Women’s Suffrage in Britain* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978), 39.

¹¹⁷ Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, 253.

Instead, in the liberal tradition of Wollstonecraft and Mill, he argued that education played a large part in determining social role.¹¹⁸ Bosanquet and most idealist liberals agreed that women should be granted access to both education and the same political and property rights as men.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, they also believed that it was the exceptional woman who would not or could not be married. Such women should be allowed to find “in the life of the school mistress or the government clerk, an attractive alternative” to marriage.¹²⁰ Such an alternative would prevent unmarried girls from turning into “sour old maids.”¹²¹ Most women, they assumed, should remain in the home as mothers, the role for which they were biologically and evolutionarily suited.¹²²

And yet in reality, by the mid-nineteenth century, unmarried middle- and working-class women were leaving the home in record numbers to work for wages.¹²³ At the same time, female literacy rates and school attendance increased sharply.¹²⁴ Accompanying these two phenomena was the emergence of an entirely new public role for some women, the “suffragette,” whose militancy and outspokenness inspired untold amounts of anxiety amongst both Liberal and Conservative “antis.”¹²⁵ Likewise, during this period working-class women began to organize publicly through trade unions.¹²⁶ By the late nineteenth century, the emergence of women into the public sphere resulted in a liberal theory and politics profoundly at odds with itself. John Stuart Mill, for instance, argued for women’s full enfranchisement and equal access to economic and educational opportunities but drew the line at the prospect of married women working outside the home.

While Mill believed that full-time mothers were essential to child rearing, his discussion of the issue in “The Subjection of Women” was suggestive rather than alarmist. By contrast, for liberals of a more idealist bent like Bosanquet, Ritchie, and Muirhead, the specter of married women working outside of the home raised the possibility of not only familial

¹¹⁸ Bosanquet, “The English People: Notes on National Characteristics,” *International Monthly* 3 (Jan. 1901): 91.

¹¹⁹ Ritchie even stretched this notion of equal opportunity to include military service. [*Darwinism and Politics*, 74].

¹²⁰ Muirhead, “The Family,” 120.

¹²¹ Bosanquet, “The English People,” 92.

¹²² See Ritchie’s discussion of women, motherhood, evolution, and Malthusian logic in *Darwinism and Politics*, 73–82.

¹²³ Steven Mintz, *A Prison of Expectations: The Family in Victorian Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 1983), 16.

¹²⁴ Mintz, *A Prison of Expectations*, 16.

¹²⁵ Harrison, *Separate Spheres*, 27.

¹²⁶ Sonya Rose, *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in Nineteenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 181.

but social collapse. “Undoubtedly the family idea has been threatened by the long hours of factory work, and the working of married women,” argued Bosanquet in 1901. This “weakening hold of the family,” he continued, resulted in higher rates of alcoholism, juvenile crime, and a general “failure to form the mind to the notion of a social place.”¹²⁷ Likewise, for Muirhead, the fact that women’s employment was “bound to act unfavourably on the health, cleanliness, and moral influence of the home needs no proof.”¹²⁸ For these thinkers, the movement of large numbers of women into the workplace would necessarily have antisocial and unnatural consequences. As a result, dire warnings of social chaos tempered the call of these Oxford liberals for some measure of sexual equality. For instance, Ritchie argued that the “responsibility of the husband” could not be compromised without wreaking havoc on the evolutionary drive to improve the species.¹²⁹ The patriarchal family was, he insisted, the “chief bond of cohesions” found amongst “all those peoples that have developed high civilizations.”¹³⁰

Some of the idealist liberals were driven by a fundamental fear that the movement of large numbers of women away from the home would lead inevitably to social disease and the death of the society as a whole. Bosanquet concluded that when “family responsibility” was weakened, “the race is less robust.”¹³¹ Similarly, for Muirhead, any “decline” in the family would result in a similar decline in the social body “defined by the physiologists as the ‘diminution of the formative activity of an organism.’”¹³² Ultimately, for these thinkers, gendered assumptions about the ethical and evolutionary functions of the family overpowered their liberal political support for women’s equality.

At the same time, many idealist liberals were also heavily involved in charity organizations that encouraged women to stay at home. Bosanquet in particular translated his vision of family morality into social action through his involvement in the Charity Organization Society (COS), with which he had a long-time association and which became one of the most influential late nineteenth-century philanthropic societies in Britain. The COS championed the moralizing qualities of the nuclear family and a vision of ethical domesticity that it sought to imprint onto the working class. Prompted by the mid-nineteenth-century upswing in the number of working-class women working outside the home, the COS began a campaign to encourage a sense of “family responsibility” among

¹²⁷ Bosanquet, “The English People,” 113–14.

¹²⁸ Muirhead, “The Family,” 123.

¹²⁹ Ritchie, *Natural Rights*, 262.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 261.

¹³¹ Bosanquet, “Socialism and Natural Selection,” 63.

¹³² Muirhead, “The Family,” 126.

working-class men while at the same time extolling the virtues of domestic life for women.¹³³ In the view of the COS, the creation of morally pure families among the working class was an organizational rather than an economic issue. “The great problem with this class,” argued Helen Bosanquet, “is how to bring them to regard life as anything but a huge chaos. The confusion that reigns in their minds is reflected in their worlds.”¹³⁴

Thus, the key to bringing domestic order into the “huge chaos” of the working-class family was to teach wives the skills of organization and thrift, skills the COS argued would make it possible for them to stay at home. This could be accomplished, the COS maintained, only through the direct intervention of privately trained case workers in homes rather than through government programs.¹³⁵ Bosanquet and his colleagues promoted this case worker approach for distinctly Darwinist reasons. In other words, Bosanquet believed that as the most natural seat of evolutionary progress and as that place where the moral souls of human beings were first molded, the monogamous family unit had to be left to evolve as it would, free from state interference (although not free from the uninvited visits of the private philanthropist). Bosanquet thus argued that the case worker approach was vastly superior to “external reconstruction or regulation” because it avoided state intervention in the natural realm of the family and thus helped promote the survival of the most fit. “It is our method and our method only,” he insisted, “that goes to the centre of the great fight.”¹³⁶

The long-term policy and cultural effects of the COS were many. For instance, its case worker model justified direct intervention into the lives of working-class people by middle-class philanthropic organizations throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹³⁷ In addition, the COS actively reinforced the notion that middle-class women’s own public roles in society should be restricted to philanthropic rather than political work and over the years produced a number of prominent anti-suffrage women activists, including Octavia Hill.¹³⁸ Finally, as an organization that enlisted the help of a large number of reformers, politicians, and academics, the COS helped shape British social policy toward the poor through its influential membership.¹³⁹ In particular, its close association with the Poor Law Guardians guaranteed that the COS and its

¹³³ Lewis, *Women In England: 1870–1950*, 12.

¹³⁴ Helen Bosanquet, *Rich and Poor* (quoted in Lewis, *Women in England*, 37).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Bosanquet, “Philosophy and Casework,” *Social and International Ideals*, 181.

¹³⁷ Lewis, *Women in England*, 82.

¹³⁸ Harrison, *Separate Spheres*, 84.

¹³⁹ Den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation*, 180–81.

local affiliates exercised an extraordinary amount of power in deciding which individuals—and, more importantly, which *families*—were worthy of financial relief.¹⁴⁰ Paradoxically, while they presupposed that private caseworkers rather than the state ought to be pressing working-class families in a moral direction, idealist liberal members of the COS were successfully able to powerfully influence the state by convincing it to pick and choose among its citizens based upon a model of nuclear family cohesion.

CONCLUSION

Eventually, the idealist liberals came full circle in their desire to create a liberal social theory that, in Sandra Den Otter's words, "persuasively enhanced communitarian ends."¹⁴¹ What began as an attempt to draw upon idealist insights and address the problems of liberalism resulted in a liberal rejection of the Hegelian state and a social theory riddled with what Hegel himself would have called "unbridgeable distinctions" between the individual, the state, and society. A number of thinkers sought to address these contradictions both through an organic analogy inherited from Hegel himself and from the new science of Darwinism. Embracing organicism, however, gave rise to its own set of philosophical and political contradictions. Philosophically, the decision by Bosanquet, Ritchie, and their colleagues to naturalize society led them to emphasize the family as the primary moral cell within the social organism. Consequently, these thinkers arrived at a theory of family morality that overflowed its banks, filling up the nation and the state with an ethical unity that looked both pre-liberal and pre-idealist. The result was an ambiguous political ideology that nominally espoused equality for men and women, supported a philanthropic movement that consistently violated the private lives of working-class families, and pushed the emerging welfare state in Britain to recognize families, rather than individuals, as the fundamental bearers of rights.

As chapter 2 elaborates, Oxford scholars Murray and Zimmern eventually incorporated many of these same ambiguities into their liberalisms. One sees in their political theories a Greenian affinity for the metaphysical, for a quasi-Hegelian, dialectical-like Spirit capable of reconciling individual freedom with the social and communal whole. At the same time, Murray's and Zimmern's liberalisms contained a number of the

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Sandra Den Otter, "Thinking in Communities: Late Nineteenth-Century Liberals, Idealists and the Retrieval of Community," *The Age of Transition: British Politics 1880–1914*, ed. E.H.H. Green (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 68.

same competing philosophical and political claims that drove many of their idealistically inclined liberal forebears toward their conservative reliance on the organic and the familial, most importantly, a liberal discomfort with state power. Likewise, the most notable aspects of their internationalism—their fear of a world state, their belief in the concept of international Spirit, Murray’s commitment to an organic world community, Zimmern’s conflation of national morality with families—mimic the political and theoretical imaginings of an earlier generation of Oxford intellectuals.

But the linkages between this earlier generation of explicitly Hegelian thinkers and Murray and Zimmern is not an easy chain to follow, particularly since both men went to a good deal of trouble to distance themselves from what had become by the early twentieth century a school of thought widely associated with Prussianism. Chapter 2 reveals these connections. In the process, it demonstrates that the difficulties Green and his colleagues faced in their attempt to theorize community without rendering their own liberal beliefs “abstract” did not disappear with the new century.¹⁴² Rather, they were transfigured by Zimmern and Murray into questions of international politics and international ethics.

¹⁴² Ritchie, *Studies in Political and Social Ethics*, 37.