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# American Hegelianism and its Impact Upon Indian Boarding School Policy

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## Abstract

In early 2021, a Canadian investigation revealed the discovery of over a thousand grave sites of indigenous children on the grounds of Indian residential schools across Canada. These discoveries prompted US Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland to announce a similar investigation into the ongoing legacy and intergenerational impact of federally sponsored Indian boarding schools in the United States. In addition to documenting the legacy of abuse, neglect and dominance of indigenous peoples, we believe that such reflection upon the impact of Indian boarding schools should also include the justifications that were used to promote the government policy of compelling indigenous children to leave family, tribe, customs and even language behind to be acculturated in remote boarding schools far from home or reservation. For while in hindsight these policies can be both deplored and regretted, they were not crafted in a philosophical vacuum. Specifically, it might come as a surprise to scholars today that Hegelian thought actually featured in the support and promotion of such policies. We propose to tell at least part of this story, by focusing on the leading American Hegelian of the time, William Torrey Harris, who—as director of the famed Concord School of Philosophy and also longtime US Commissioner of Education—was highly influential in both philosophical and educational circles. In that latter capacity, Harris penned a defence of the boarding school system, which drew upon broadly Hegelian ideas and language. So while we have elsewhere defended and lauded Harris and the St Louis Hegelians for their contributions to American philosophy and democratic educational thought, here is one respect in which this influence has not stood up well to the test of time.

## I. Introduction and motivation

In early 2021, a Canadian investigation revealed the discovery of over a thousand grave sites of indigenous children on the grounds of Indian residential schools across Canada. These discoveries prompted US Secretary of the Interior Deb



Haaland to announce a similar investigation into the ongoing legacy and intergenerational impact of federally sponsored Indian boarding schools in the United States. According to Secretary Haaland's memo, the Canadian discoveries 'should prompt us to reflect on past Federal policies to culturally assimilate Indigenous peoples in the United States' (Haaland 2021: 1).<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, much of the subsequent federal efforts to assess this impact have focused upon locating, compiling and preserving records of those who attended the federally operated and supported Indian boarding schools, records that in many cases are hard to find, if not lost altogether. Of special concern are details of the identities and tribal affiliations of those who perished while in attendance, along with any indications of where their remains could be found for possible repatriation. The initiative also seeks to document (or to record any details of) the experiences of those who, often under compulsion, attended one of the federally funded Indian boarding schools.

However, in addition to documenting the legacy of abuse, neglect and dominance of indigenous peoples, such reflection upon the impact of Indian boarding schools should also include the justifications that were used to promote the government policy of compelling indigenous children to leave family, tribe, customs and even language behind to be acculturated in remote boarding schools far from home or reservation. For while in hindsight these policies can be both deplored and regretted, they were not crafted in a philosophical vacuum. Specifically, it might come as a surprise to scholars today that Hegelian thought *actually featured in the support and promotion of such policies*. We propose to tell at least part of this story, by focusing on the leading American Hegelian of the time, William Torrey Harris, who—as director of the famed Concord School of Philosophy and also longtime US Commissioner of Education—was highly influential in both philosophical and educational circles. In that latter capacity, Harris penned a defence of the off-reservation boarding school system, which drew upon broadly Hegelian ideas and language. So while we have elsewhere defended and lauded Harris and the St Louis Hegelians for their contributions to American philosophy and democratic educational thought, here is one respect in which this influence has not stood up well to the test of time.

## II. The origin of the off-reservation boarding schools

From nearly its inception, US government officials viewed education as a promising means of indoctrinating and integrating its indigenous population into the broader culture. Federal support of tribal education goes back to 1819, largely in the form of support for missionary schools. As part of their evangelical mission, some of these schools, especially those administered by the Baptists, even

attempted to provide a portion of their instruction in tribal languages, and to translate religious material (typically from the Bible) into the same (Neuman 2013: 36). As a result of treaty obligations throughout the 1800s, the federal government also established day and boarding schools on reservations (Adams 2020: 33ff). However, both missionary and reservation schools were largely seen as failing to achieve their overall aim at integrating indigenous peoples into ‘civilized’ Anglo-American society. Such institutions were viewed as too closely tied to reservation and tribal life, which itself was considered to be the primary barrier to social assimilation. Educational reformers increasingly saw off-reservation boarding schooling as the best means of gaining control over Indian youth and breaking the tribal influence (Adams 2020: 38ff; Vučković 2008: 13).

The history of federally administered *off-reservation* Indian boarding schools begins with the founding of the Carlisle School by Richard Henry Pratt in 1879. Pratt, a veteran of the American Civil War later stationed in Indian Territory, came to the idea following his experience in 1874 conducting seventy-two indigenous prisoners, thought to be the most troublesome young ringleaders of their respective tribes, under guard from Fort Sill in Indian Territory to Fort Marion in Florida for confinement. There he put them to work, at first manufacturing curios for tourists and then placing them in various industries around St. Augustine. Impressed by their intelligence and industry, he arranged for them to attend classes in English fluency and literacy. Eventually, Pratt dispensed with the military detachment altogether, organizing instead the younger men into a company of their own to guard the fort (Adams 2020: 41–47).

After their three-year period of confinement, twenty-two of Pratt’s charges requested further schooling in the East. Pratt was able to place seventeen of them in Hampton Institute (now Hampton University), an agriculture and industrial school founded after the Civil War to provide education to freedmen. The progress of these men impressed government officials enough to allow Pratt to recruit several more indigenous students to Hampton from agencies along the Missouri River. However, Pratt thought that his experiment in educating native peoples would be better conducted if he were allowed to recruit a greater number of students, and that they be afforded a school of their own. Accordingly, he proposed the creation of such a school under his direction and suggested the recently decommissioned barracks at Carlisle, PA as a suitable location (Adams 2020: 50–56).

Then, as now, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was under the Department of the Interior. At the time, the Secretary of Interior was the former German revolutionary and Union major-general Carl Schurz. An aspiring intellectual, Schurz had gained notoriety during the revolutions of 1848 by engineering the daring escape of his professor, Gottfried Kinkel of the University of Bonn, from the Spandau Jail.<sup>2</sup> Pratt drew upon Schurz’s history of exile from his native land ‘as one of the best examples of what we ought to do for the Indian’. ‘It would have been

impossible for you to accomplish your elevation if when you came to this country you had been reserved to any one of the solid German communities we have permitted to grow up in some sections of America' (Brunhouse 1939: 76–77).

Pratt eventually secured approval for his plan, and the school enrolled its first class in 1879, composed primarily of young members of tribes from the northern plains, on account of their perceived restlessness and hostility. Since some of these original students were children of tribal leaders, such as the Sioux chiefs Red Cloud and Spotted Tail, these children effectively served as hostages. From its beginning, Carlisle included both girls and boys. In keeping with his own background, Pratt conducted the education on the model of military schools, with standardized uniforms and regimented daily routines under a strict code of conduct. Students were prohibited from retaining any of their former cultural practices, including their speech. This ban was facilitated in part by deliberately intermixing members of different, even hostile tribes. In addition to primary schooling in English, vocational training was part of the curriculum. The school had its own shop and farm, with the intention that students would eventually take what they had learned about 'modern' agricultural methods and industrial trades back to their home reservations. Students were also placed in surrounding families, ostensibly in order to immerse them in a more 'civilized' way of life (Adams 2020: 56ff; Lomawaima 1994: 4–5).

### III. William Torrey Harris, St Louis Hegelian and Commissioner of Education

Immersive education, then, without any trappings of tribal identity, was to be 'the solution of the vexed Indian problem' (Brunhouse 1939: 77).<sup>3</sup> Following the perceived success of the Carlisle experiment, the US federal government began a campaign for a dramatic expansion of the off-reservation boarding school system (Adams 2020: 60; Vučković 2008: 13). Seeking congressional approval for the funding of this expansion, the Department of the Interior called upon support from the Bureau of Education. At the time, this office had not been elevated into its own department, but, like the Bureau of Indian Affairs, was housed in the Department of the Interior. This is where Hegelianism enters explicitly into our story. The then US Commissioner of Education was William Torrey Harris, a well-known and respected educational philosopher, who was equally known for being a proponent and translator of Hegel's works. Indeed, none other than William James had labelled Harris 'the foremost American Hegelian' (James 1882: 198).

Along with Henry Conrad Brokmeyer, Harris was one of the original St Louis Hegelians, a group of intellectuals devoted to German Idealism in general, and the philosophy of Hegel in particular, who have largely—and we think unfortunately

—faded from general memory, at least in contemporary philosophical circles.<sup>4</sup> They are probably best known for their publication of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* (*JSP*) (1868–93), which has been characterized as the first journal devoted specifically to philosophy, not only in North America, but also the English language (Schaub 1936: 51; Good 2006). In addition to English translations of Hegel and his German followers, along with (generally friendly) interpretations and commentary, the *JSP* served as an early publishing outlet for several prominent American philosophers. C.S. Peirce, G.S. Morris, Josiah Royce, John Dewey and even William James (despite his evident distaste for ‘Hegelizing’) all had important early publications in the *JSP*.

The current, relative obscurity of the St Louis Hegelians likely stems from the fact that many of them had professional lives outside the colleges and fledgling universities of the time. Several, like Harris, were affiliated with primary and secondary schools rather than institutions of higher learning. As such they were particularly interested in Hegel’s thoughts on education and *Bildung*. For instance, Susan Blow was among the first to combine Hegel’s philosophy of education with Froebel’s methods for the instruction of young children. Together with Harris, she founded (in St Louis) the first public kindergarten in the US and became one of the leading advocates for the kindergarten movement.

Rather than work from inside the traditional academy, the St Louis Hegelians took their mission more to be one of elevating the general cultural literacy of those – such as women, labourers, immigrants and Westerners—who lacked ready access to traditional higher education. Thus another St Louis Hegelian, Denton Snider, served in Jane Addams’s Hull House before directing short-term literary schools throughout the Midwest, as well as founding an evening college for adult learners in St Louis. Thomas Davidson likewise established the ‘Breadwinners College’ in New York City for the similar purpose of providing educational opportunities for newly arrived immigrants from central and southern Europe. He had financial backing from his good friend, the newspaper editor Joseph Pulitzer—yet another erstwhile member of the St Louis Philosophical Society (Swanberg 1967). As superintendent of the St Louis Schools, Harris oversaw normal (teacher-training) schools for both white and black teachers.<sup>5</sup> His editorial assistant for the earliest issues of the *JSP*, Anna Brackett, served as principal of the normal school for white teachers, the first woman to serve in such a capacity. She would become well-known for her efforts to advocate for educational and professional opportunities for women, including especially the elevation of the teaching profession.<sup>6</sup> When Harris was called back to his native New England to direct the Concord Summer School of Philosophy, one of its chief functions was to provide an outlet for intellectual discourse for women who were otherwise excluded from the existing colleges and universities. Finally, during his fifteen-year career in Missouri politics (in which he rose to the position of acting governor), Henry Brokmeyer—the

founding inspiration and first president of the St Louis Philosophical Society—drafted the 1875 constitution of the state of Missouri, significant in that it guaranteed education for *all* between the ages of six and twenty. His example shows that the concern amongst the St Louis Hegelians for education and cultural elevation applied equally to indigenous peoples. After failing to secure a nomination for U.S. Senate, he ventured to Muscogee in Indian Territory (in what is now Oklahoma) where, according to at least one source, he spoke on philosophical topics with prominent members of the Muscogee (Creek) tribe and took an interest in developing their schools (Snider 1920: 102).<sup>7</sup>

Harris, of course, was not the first follower of Hegel to assume a prominent leadership role in education. For much of the early nineteenth century, Hegel's student Johannes Schulze oversaw a period of great reform in German educational practice as Privy Councillor and Director of the Department of Education in the Prussian government.<sup>8</sup> The leading philosopher of education in Europe at the time was another Hegelian, Karl Rosenkranz, who occupied Kant's former chair at the University of Königsberg. Portraying Hegel as a liberal reformer, Rosenkranz was a 'Centre' Hegelian, opposed to both the conservative 'Old' (or Right-wing) Hegelians and the revolutionary-minded 'Young' (or Left-wing) Hegelians.<sup>9</sup> Like Schulze and Rosenkranz, the St Louis Hegelians preferred to read Hegel as a progressive social reformer, though one that emphasized the need to carry out reforms not through violent revolution, but rather within established institutional structures. They preferred the more mature (and conservative) strains of the *Logic* over Hegel's youthful exuberance in the *Phenomenology*.<sup>10</sup> Rosenkranz became an auxiliary member of the St Louis Philosophical Society, and Harris had G. Stanley Hall (one of Dewey's mentors at Johns Hopkins) translate Rosenkranz's 'Hegel as Publicist' for the *JSP*. Given his prominence in educational circles, it is little surprise that Rosenkranz would attract the attention of the St Louis Hegelians. Anna Brackett translated several sections of his *Die Pädagogik als System* for the *JSP*, which Harris would later publish, alongside his own extensive commentary, as the first volume of his Appleton International Education Series under the title *Philosophy of Education*. In 1890 (a year after he became Commissioner of Education), Harris fulfilled a longtime ambition of the St Louis Hegelians, namely that of 'making Hegel speak English', by publishing a commentary on Hegel's *Logic*. Harris's own *Psychologic Foundation of Education* came out in 1898. John Dewey wrote a critical, though generally positive review (Dewey 1898).<sup>11</sup>

#### IV. The commission's report: 'Indian Education'

Given their general progressiveness about education, how, then, does the Hegelianism of Harris and the St Louis Hegelians bear upon the implementation

of the Indian Boarding Schools? As part of its efforts to secure funding for the expansion of the off-reservation boarding school system, the Department of the Interior commissioned the Bureau of Education, along with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to write a report on Indian Education. This report, which came out in 1889, was chiefly written by Commissioner of Indian Affairs T.J. Morgan, but also contained an enthusiastic introduction by Harris (Morgan 1889; Harris 1889).<sup>12</sup>

Before turning to Harris's endorsement, it is important to call attention both to its timing as well as to some passages from the report's main body. The proposed expansion to off-reservation boarding schools was motivated in part by the passage of the General Allotment Act of 1887. This act (also called the 'Dawes Act') sought to break up the reservation system by granting tribal members individual land allotments and citizenship (and then opening up the remaining tribal land for homesteading by non-natives). However, in order to prevent tribal members from being dispossessed of their land, reformers appreciated that those receiving such allotments would need to become accustomed to private enterprise. Off-reservation schooling, ideally fully immersive and compulsory, would be the vehicle to convey such economic know-how (Lomawaima 1994: 3). As Pratt put the new economic mission driving the expansion of non-reservation schooling: 'The present reservation system worked at "colonizing" Indians, whereas [schools like] Carlisle worked at "individualizing" them' (Adams 2020: 57).

In the main body of his report, Commissioner Morgan echoes the idea that the means by which Native Americans are finally to become fully assimilated in civil society rests in education:

If, under any circumstances, compulsory education is justifiable, it certainly is in this case. Education, in the broad sense in which it is here used, is the Indian's only salvation. With it they will become honorable, useful, happy citizens of a great republic, sharing on equal terms in all its blessings. Without it they are doomed either to destruction or to hopeless degradation. (Morgan 1889: 9)

This passage is striking in its affirmation of an ideal of equality. The kind of education it advocates should be aimed not *just* to provide vocational and economic opportunity sufficient to mollify a recalcitrant populace, but *also* to produce citizens capable of full participation in civil society. Morgan elaborates:

When we speak of the education of the Indians, we mean that comprehensive system of training and instruction which will convert them into American citizens, put within their reach the blessings which the rest of us enjoy, and enable them to

compete successfully with the white man on his own ground and with his own methods. Education is to be the medium through which the rising generation of Indians are to be brought into fraternal and harmonious relationship with their white fellows, and with them enjoy the sweets of refined homes, the delight of social intercourse, the emoluments of commerce and trade, the advantages of travel, together with the pleasures that come from literature, science, and philosophy, and the solace and stimulus afforded by a true religion. (Morgan 1889: 8)

Pointing to the perceived successes at Carlisle and a handful of other similar experiments, Morgan continues with a dramatically optimistic assessment of the power of education to place indigenous peoples on an equal footing with their European counterparts:

That such a great revolution for these people is possible is becoming more and more evident to those who have watched with an intelligent interest the work which, notwithstanding all its hindrances and discouragements, has been accomplished for them during the last few years. It is no longer doubtful that, under a wise system of education, carefully administered, the condition of this whole people can be radically improved in a single generation. (Morgan 1889: 8)

## V. Harris's endorsement

Harris's introduction to Morgan's report is equally upbeat and optimistic. However, one also finds within it a strident (and troubling) insistence that indigenous children had to be isolated from tribal influences. As Harris saw it, efforts over the years to assimilate or 'civilize' most of the indigenous tribes of the American West had largely failed on account of their perceived intransigence to elevate their culture. There was a form of life 'not founded on productive industry' (Harris 1889: 3). At the same time, Harris stressed that efforts to consign native peoples to lives of shiftless poverty and dependence upon reservations—or worse, to outright eradication—equally had to be avoided:

We owe it to ourselves and to the enlightened public opinion of the world to save the Indian, and not destroy him. We cannot save him and his patriarchal or tribal institution both together. To save him we must take him up into our form of civilization. (Harris 1889: 5)

Roughly, this is Harris's more judicious way of expressing the thought that Pratt had when he infelicitously glossed, 'Kill the Indian in him, and save the man' (Pratt 1892: 46).<sup>13</sup> Both agreed that a dramatic change to indigenous ways of life was called for, including especially a general dismantling of tribal culture:

Modern studies in ethnology have made us acquainted with the depth to which the distinctions of civilization penetrate. We do not now expect to work the regeneration of a people except by changing the industrial habits, the manners and customs, the food and clothing, the social and family behavior, the view of the world, and the religious conviction systematically and co-ordinately. (Harris 1889: 3)

Encouraging results from experiments like that at the Carlisle, Chemawa and Haskell schools had shown that individuals within the tribes were just as fit as Europeans to lead productive lives, participate in civil society, and even gain citizenship. Harris agreed with Morgan that the ultimate aim was to secure full citizenship for those of native descent. Moreover, Harris took to heart the recommendation found in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* to the effect that good citizenship can be incubated only from within the correct social environment: 'To a father seeking the best way to bring up his son, a Pythagorean, or some other thinker, replied, "Make him a citizen of a state which has good laws"' (PR: §153, 196).<sup>14</sup> However, Harris regarded the natural, tribal environment to be one that is particularly un conducive to productive citizenship and private enterprise. In Harris's eyes, the tribal influence was the key roadblock standing in the way of forming such future productive citizens:

To work out this thorough system in all its details, it is found necessary, or at least desirable, to obtain control of the Indian at an early age, and to seclude him as much as possible from the tribal influence. The boarding school has thus far been quite effectual in forming new habits and new wants and desires in the pupil. It has kindled in him aspirations which would permanently transform him if he lived in an environment of civilization. But it has been found that when the pupils return from their boarding schools to their native tribes on the borders that they often succumbed to the influences of the old environment. They are not strong enough to withstand the aggregate influence of old and young men and women who have retained the old forms and who look upon innovation as idle and useless, not to say sacrilegious.

It is evident that the only remedy for this defect is to be

found in the course recommended by General Morgan in the report herewith presented. The Indian youth must be educated *en masse*. They must be educated in the thorough manner of the boarding-school, and they must all be educated, so that the environment of each individual shall be favorable to his persistence in the habits formed at school. (Harris 1889: 4)

If, then, ‘The Indian’ (individually and collectively) were ever to attain prosperity and participate as industrious citizens within our society, then Harris thought their removal from the tribe was required. Instead, as Pratt had written to Schurz, ‘they can only reach this prosperous condition through living among our people’ (Brunhouse 1939: 77). Just as Schurz and other immigrants had had to leave their old ways of life behind in order to adapt to the demands of the New World, so too indigenous individuals would have to leave their tribal culture behind in exchange for a *Bildung* fit for an American civil life.

## VI. *Bildung* and tribal cultures

Harris’s professed enthusiasm for Morgan’s plan likely has much to do with the philosophy of education that he took from Hegel and his followers. For Harris, ‘Man is born an animal, but must become a spiritual being [...] Man, therefore, has an ideal of culture which it is his destiny or vocation to achieve’ (Harris 1898: 235). This talk of destiny calls to mind Hegel’s claim that ‘Human beings do not arrive by instinct at what they are destined to become; on the contrary they must attain this by their own efforts. This is the basis of the child’s right to its upbringing’ (*PR*: §174, 211). Following Hegel, Harris took the primary goal of education to be much more than the mere transmission of information. Rather, the fundamental aim of schooling is that of acculturation or *Bildung*. Through education, one acquires ‘the tools of thought by which to master the wisdom of the race’ (Harris 1893: 276),<sup>15</sup> putting them thereby in touch with the spirit of the age. As Hegel understood it, such education is a self-driven process marked by conflict resulting in ‘the laborious emergence from the immediacy of substantial life’ (*PbG*: Preface ¶4, 3). *Bildung* requires individuals to overcome and shed their original, natural inclinations and adopt instead ‘elevated’ habits that have been transformed or mediated by the ‘higher’ influences that are part of one’s cultural heritage. Hegel famously spoke of education as cultivating a *second*, more refined nature: ‘Education [*Pädagogik*] is the art of making human beings ethical; it considers them as natural beings and shows them how they can be reborn, and how their original nature can be transformed into a second, spiritual nature so that this

spirituality becomes *habitual* to them' (PR: §151, 195). Harris puts essentially the same thought as follows:

Since man's true nature is not found in him already realized at birth, but has to be developed by his activity, his true nature is his ideal, which he may actualize by education. Hence the deep significance of this process. Man must estrange himself from his first or animal nature, and assimilate himself to his second, or ideal nature, by habit. (Harris 1891: vii)

Note, in anticipation of what is to come in a following section, the prominent role that estrangement plays in this passage.

This conception of education or *Bildung* as a process by which individuals and peoples overcome instinct or animal nature explains in part Harris's denigration of Native American cultures. Like Hegel, he viewed human civilizations along a hierarchy, with tribal cultures at the bottom and European civilizations at the top. Though this idea was prevalent amongst Anglo-Europeans in America, Harris articulates it in a particularly Hegelian fashion:

The history of the individual and the history of the race present to us a record of continual emancipation from nature, and continual growth into freedom, i.e., into ability on the part of man to know himself and to realize himself in the world by making the matter and forces of the world his instruments and tools. (Harris 1891: 1)

The trouble Harris had with indigenous cultures was their stubborn attachment to what Hegel called 'natural simplicity' (PR: §187, 225; Harris 1891: 280). 'Man is not only an animal [...] but he is a spiritual being in opposition to Nature' (Harris 1898: 256).<sup>16</sup> Subscribing to the Hegelian view that indigenous cultures in the Americas were relatively young or undeveloped (PH: 81ff), Harris writes:

Man, as a child or a savage, is an incarnate contradiction; his real being is the opposite of his ideal being. His actual condition does not conform to his true nature [...] his actual condition is irrational, for it is constrained from without, chained by brute necessity, and lashed by the scourges of appetite and passion. (Harris 1898: 256)

The 'savage mind' characteristic of societies based upon hunting and gathering was too attached to perceptual immediacies for discerning the true play of physical forces and social (or spiritual) currents swirling around them (Harris 1898: 265), or for comprehending their place in the course of human history. Hence their resistance to what Harris called 'productive industry' (Harris 1889: 4)—Harris's code for private enterprise or property. As a result, tribal culture did not have a

complexity that required grand divisions of labour or the institution of the private ownership of land.<sup>17</sup> Since it was tied so closely to nature, tribal life was precarious—subject to such things as the vicissitudes of weather and the abundance of game. Harris thought this attachment contributed to their being static or frozen in a sensuous state of consciousness. It was just as hostage to the whims of nature as it had been for generations (Harris 1898: 300). Although it might be ‘free’ in a brittle, negative sense, that is not the genuine freedom of enhanced capacity, a freedom marked by a mastery or understanding of the natural world that affords one some measure of autonomy or security against nature’s occasional caprice, as well as the reflective power to direct one’s overarching values. Since spirit stood in such opposition to nature, the natural world was not an environment merely to be lived in; it needed to be overcome, transformed, and developed. This idea was to be reflected in the curriculum and culture of the Indian boarding schools (Vučković 2008: 100).

Thus, one of Harris’s proudest accomplishments as commissioner of education was his introduction of reindeer husbandry to the indigenous peoples of Alaska (Leidecker 1946: 479–84). This might seem an odd accomplishment for one in such a position, until one realizes that one of the few places in which the Bureau of Education had direct oversight was in the residential schools of the Alaska territory. At the time, the native peoples of Alaska, especially those along the coast, were threatened with existential crisis. The whaling industry in particular had depleted the natural game and resources crucial for maintaining their traditional, hunter-gatherer ways of life. Harris thought that their salvation depended upon their adopting a more ‘elevated’ form of living. Cultural change, in the form of a transition to a more secure herding and ranching lifestyle, was seen by him and others to be the lifeline for the Alaskan indigenous peoples.

Similarly for the tribes of the American West. Harris took their nomadic ways of living and using land—centred, for instance, around the American bison—to be much too simple and close to original nature for integration into ‘mainstream’ (that is, European) society. As a result, tribal cultures had always given way to pressures from European settlement, just as Hegel had maintained in the *Philosophy of History* (*PH*: 81). Harris’s reaction was unabashedly paternalistic. There was nothing inherent to prevent indigenous people from participating in American society on equal footing with Europeans. What was required, however, was their systematic and extensive exposure to ‘civilized’ (or fully acculturated) ways of living, which was to be effected by bringing indigenous children into non-tribal settlements and even homes. As Pratt put it: ‘We make our greatest mistake in feeding our civilization to the Indians instead of feeding the Indians to our civilization’ (Adams 2020: 57). Only through such means would Native peoples be prepared for a truly democratic, *American* way of living.<sup>18</sup>

## VII. Literacy and newspapers

At the beginning of an address to the NEA, entitled ‘Newspapers in Indian Schools’, Harris remarks: ‘one of the most important, perhaps the most important object in the school of modern times is to prepare the pupils to read the printed page’ (Harris 1902: 876). Literacy, in Harris’s eyes, was the primary avenue by which achievements of the past are preserved for and transmitted to future generations, and so the means by which civilizations progress over time and solidify their mastery over their natural environs. Though many cultures, including Germany, taught largely through oral methods, Harris thought that ‘American educators have blundered upon what may be defended as the correct method, namely, the textbook method’ (Harris 1893: 272). Compared to the passive reception of lectures, education by means of textbooks requires greater self-direction and self-activity on the part of students, and thus promoted more ‘education by insight’ than that of authority; it also fostered a form of auto-didacticism (Harris 1902: 875). Harris thus stressed literacy as one of the chief functions of all levels of schooling. Literature, grammar and written history were three of his famous ‘five windows of the soul’ (Harris 1893: 276; 1898: 322).

Though not explicit in his introduction to ‘Indian Education’, it is evident from other work that Harris takes a chief shortcoming of tribal culture to be the absence of the written word. In an address to the 1895 Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian, Harris similarly maintained:

An ability to read and write, a smattering of geography and arithmetic, constitute the meagre outfit furnished by the schools: but even this is sufficient to make the newspaper available, and, once the habit of daily reading is formed, the individual is at school for the rest of his life, and will continue his growth, although it be not rapid. (Harris 1896: 34)

This reference to the newspaper is no small matter for Harris. In those same remarks to the Lake Mohonk conference, Harris stresses that a democracy as vast as ours had to be ‘a newspaper civilization’ (Harris 1896: 33). For it is by means of the newspaper that the ordinary citizen ‘lifts himself above the consciousness of his vocation into the life of the world, and beholds the spectacle of universal humanity in its eternal process’ (Harris 1898: 287):<sup>19</sup>

The person who reads the daily newspaper, who sees before him the whole world in its process of development, who discusses the movement of nations instead of village gossip, he is epical enough, and more than enough, to make up for the loss of that emphasis laid by the savage man on the epical vocations

of hunting and war which he follows in the patriarchal [tribal] State. This point is to be kept in mind in dealing with the races that belong to the lower stadia of civilization.<sup>20</sup> (Harris 1896: 35)

Harris thus echoes the importance of converting indigenous children to the culture of the daily paper: 'Every Indian school should have the newspaper' (Harris 1902: 876).

However, Harris did not find literacy to be adequately valued in tribal environments.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, the tribes' incapacity to appreciate the written word had long been an avenue for their exploitation. As a result, tribal culture lacked the means to appreciate or establish the social institutions, such as treaties, constitutions, legislative bodies and courts, that Harris thought to be fundamental for democratic culture. Rather than waiting for a literary culture to develop organically amongst the tribes, the most effective means of instilling a culture of literacy among the indigenous people was to immerse them instead in environments where literacy and traditions predominate. When they eventually returned home, the thought was that they would bring an appreciation for written communication along with them, 'and save them from the slow progress of the ages' (Harris 1896: 36–37). In a somewhat chilling encapsulation of his vision for Indian education, Harris closes his remarks to the Lake Mohonk conference with the following imagined plea to indigenous elders:

Give us your children and we will educate them in the kindergarten and the schools. We will give them letters, and make them acquainted with the printed page. With those come emancipation from mere personal authority, from the authority of the master, from the authority of the overseer and the oracle. With these come the great emancipation, and the school shall give you that. We know that you are an epical race, but we must destroy your ideals in that respect. There are to be no more beautiful tribal relations. You will need not only education in letters, which has such significance, but you have to correct also your tribal notions of industry. (Harris 1896: 37)

### VIII. Education and self-estrangement

In the previous sections, we pointed out that one reason Harris favoured the plan to expand Indian boarding schools likely had much to do with his view that tribal attachments to an undeveloped, untrammelled nature had left them in a state of consciousness unfavourable to productive industry and private enterprise.

Cultural progress depended upon their rising above lives dominated by natural and sensuous immediacy. They needed to be willing to modify, and so to develop, both their natures and their environs. One thing in particular that they required was a system and tradition of literacy, which Harris thought could not be fostered under the conditions of tribal life. Much of this thinking can be traced directly to Harris's embrace of Hegelianism. However, there is a related Hegelian idea that was equally as important for reinforcing Harris's support of the Indian boarding schools: that of self-estrangement.

According to Hegelian philosophy of education, education is a conflict-driven process by which one's natural, brute, or subjective inclinations are refined through contact with a more encompassing objective reality. As Allen Wood puts it, 'it is a process of liberation achieved only by means of initial frustration, struggle, and an altered conception of oneself' (Wood 1998: 304). A child encounters an unfamiliar object, for instance, and is stymied and stumped by its strange and unexpected behaviour. The learner then studies its alien ways and habits, in an attempt to regain familiarity—and eventual mastery—over it. Bending reality to one's will requires in turn that one's will be modified and developed by reality. By understanding the capacities of the object, including especially the ways in which it influences and is influenced by other things around it, learners increase their own capacities. And as learners become 'at home' with the initially unfamiliar, they come to see their own history of struggle and labour in the objects overcome or grasped by their understanding. Their wills expand and they become increasingly self-reliant and self-sufficient; they are in harmony with their surroundings, and achieve greater autonomy.

The same applies to a child's accommodation to social realities. In acculturation or *Bildung*, an individual consciousness comes into contact with objective spirit in the form of the expectations placed upon them in their social milieu. Rather than resisting this reality, individuals must acclimatize themselves to it by integrating these expectations into their habitual or 'second' natures. At this point, an individual becomes an 'ethical' instead of a merely 'natural' being (*PR*: §151, 195). Once again, they come to feel at home again with their 'second' nature, though their home now encompasses a wider expanse of objective spirit. Harris described the process as follows:

But education, since it mediates between the natural individual and the social individual, performs the office of taking the individual out of his familiar or native state of mind and making him acquainted with something that is strange and familiar to him. Hence Hegel calls education of culture (*Bildung*) the self-estranged spirit (*der sich-entfremdete Geist*). Through self-estrangement the individual becomes ethical in the true sense.

He gives up his inclination and adopts the prescribed forms. At first this is an act of obedience to an external mandate. But education gradually converts blind faith into ‘pure insight’ (*reine Einsicht*) and the individual discovers his own rational necessity under the alien commands. In short, he finds the ethical laws reasonable, and therefore to be that which harmonizes with his own insight. He would announce these laws himself if he did not already find them announced. (Harris 1890: 99)

In his commentary on Rosenkranz’s *Pädagogik*, Harris writes: ‘Self-estrangement, as here used is perhaps the most important idea in the philosophy of education’ (Harris 1891: 27). And in his own *Psychologic Foundations of Education*, he claims: ‘The process of self-estrangement and its removal underlies all education’ (Harris 1898: 289). In order to raise itself to a higher, more encompassing level of consciousness, the developing mind must make itself foreign to itself through its immersion in unfamiliar environments or encounters with unfamiliar objects and customs. Continuing a passage quoted earlier from Harris’s preface for Rosenkranz:

At first all things that belong to culture are strange and foreign to his ways of living and thinking. Education begins when he puts aside what is familiar and customary with him, and puts on the new and strange—that is to say, begins his ‘self-estrangement’. (Harris 1891: vii)

Put roughly in today’s parlance, the idea is that by being pushed past their ‘comfort zones’, learners eventually acquire increased autonomy in the form of greater adaptive resilience or self-sufficiency. Their mastery of a material is demonstrated by their adaptation to the affordances provided by their changed circumstances, which signals that they have come to be ‘at home’ in their new circumstances. Despite the various discomforts of such self-alienation and forced adaptation, Rosenkranz thought that young learners are naturally inclined to such exposure to the unfamiliar:

The necessity of the mind’s making itself foreign to itself is that which makes children prefer to hear of the adventurous journeys of Sinbad rather than news of their own city or the history of their nation. On the part of youth this same necessity manifests itself in their desire of traveling. (Rosenkranz 1891: 28)

Thus, Harris continues his commentary with a strong recommendation for exposure to distant ways of life, either in literature, or through travel, or through the

press. By doing so, learners are given opportunities to grasp the universal in human nature, as opposed to the particularities of their specific circumstances:

The explanation of the effect of the study of classics, pure mathematics, the effect of foreign travel, of the isolated life of students at universities, of wearing special garbs that distinguish one's order from the rest of the community, in short, of any study of strange and far-off phases of the world—the explanation is to be found on the principle of self-estrangement, and its annulment by changing what was foreign into what is familiar.<sup>22</sup> (Harris 1891: 27)

Harris then equates this sense of self-alienation to that of the wonder Plato claimed to be characteristic of philosophy in general, the exposure to which he claims to be the most effective means of achieving the primary aim of education, that of 'mastering the wisdom of the race'.

In short, Harris's enthusiasm for mass off-reservation boarding education for indigenous children would also seem to be motivated in part by the positive role he saw self-estrangement playing in education generally. Alienation and its attendant discomfort were necessary for the cultivation of educated citizens fully prepared for our democratic way of life. Hegelian *Bildung* is supposed to involve elements of alienation and discomfort, precisely because it requires taking up broader perspectives outside of one's home environment. Unlike the security provided by the tribe and family, civil society is not held together by ties of love and kinship. To prepare an individual for productive civic life, it is necessary and fitting to remove them from their families. The Indian boarding schools were Hegelian self-estrangement *par excellence*.<sup>23</sup> As a result, Harris appears susceptible to overlooking the boarding schools' negative aspects and to turning a blind eye to the importance of maintaining feelings of comfort and security in the educational environs. For indigenous children, exposure to non-native ways of life was bound to be a shock, but Harris thought such shock to be typical for the educational experience, and especially required of those acquainted only with tribal ways. The ultimate aim was to produce individuals having a perspective that transcended such narrow, parochial perspectives. Those individuals, Harris contended, would naturally become the leaders of their people. Of those who successfully complete their courses of instruction, Harris optimistically predicted that they

will fit themselves for directive power among their people at home, and will powerfully aid in civilizing their fellows. From the higher educated persons will naturally come the chieftains, and in general the men who make combinations and manage work that requires systematic co-ordination [...] And these

educated agents will create the forms of doing and acting, and thereby effectively furnish the directive power. (Harris 1889: 5)

That is, they would return home and transform their people, much as Harris himself had done when he returned to New England to direct the Concord School and thereby enrich its native transcendentalism with a sound measure of Hegelian institutionalism.<sup>24</sup> Unlike the children of European immigrants, students coming out of the boarding schools would be expected to fulfil an additional function of the schools: that of transforming the tribal life at home into ‘a form of society founded on productive industry’ (Harris 1889: 4). More than enlarging the consciousness of individuals, Indian boarding education was meant to alter the social consciousness of an entire people.

## IX. Concluding remarks

The US Congress largely accepted the Morgan report and Harris’s recommendation, and agreed to a dramatic expansion of the Indian boarding school system in the early 1890s (Adams 2020: 62).<sup>25</sup> While education in such schools was not compulsory, school officials and agents often used coercive and deceptive tactics to drive up and to maintain enrolment levels. In 1893, Congress empowered the Bureau of Indian Affairs to ‘withhold rations, clothing, and other annuities from parents and guardians who refuse or neglect to send and keep the children of proper school age in some school a reasonable portion of each year’ (Vučković 2008: 37). Federal funding of the schools (based on enrolment) was never adequate to properly staff, equip, and supply the schools. As a result, the schools often had to rely upon student (indeed child!) labour to maintain their operations and cover expenses. As a result, the program fell far short of the lofty educational ideals articulated in the Bureau of Education’s report. Instead of the broad humanistic education envisioned by Morgan and Harris, several of the Indian boarding schools could support little more than rudimentary primary education and basic training for vocations that were rapidly becoming obsolete (e.g, blacksmithing, coopering and wagon-making).

Though Harris’s thoughts about Indian education do not appear to be guided by any overt animus toward individual Native Americans, the legacy of the Indian boarding schools has not been good—a sobering reminder that the Owl of Minerva ‘takes flight only at dusk’. While the owl is often associated by Westerners with wisdom, for many native Americans the Owl is instead a figure portending death or some other evil. Accordingly, indigenous children who subsequently underwent schooling through the system commonly report the suffering and death they witnessed on account of lack of adequate (or even minimal)

nutrition, clothing and medical care. Others recount the abuse, neglect and excessively harsh discipline they had to endure. And many comment upon the humiliation and loss of esteem they felt having to shed the various tribal heritages into which they were born. Some further report that the experience left them caught in an intolerable space between cultures, alienated from and unable to identify with either European or Native American ways of life (Zitkala-Ša 2014). These days, the Indian boarding schools are commonly regarded as extending a broad pattern of colonial violence and cultural genocide instigated against Native Americans and their societies.

In retrospect, there are several aspects to Harris's case for the boarding schools that are troubling, not the least of which are the plan's lack of safeguards. That the plan did not allow for sufficient oversight and monitoring by those with the greatest concern for the welfare of the children—namely, the tribes and parents—is obvious. Indeed, this shortcoming is so apparent that it hardly warrants further comment, except for the fact that Hegel's attitude reflects a similar prioritization of the state over parental interests (*PR*: §187). Furthermore, the various logistical problems implementing the plan should have been foreseen, including the extent to which it would have been corrupted by those who did not have the interests of indigenous peoples at heart.

Moreover, the results of the initial experiments by Pratt led to over-optimism regarding the degree to which indigenous children and their families would embrace the alienation of the boarding schools. It is one thing to claim, as Rosenkranz did, that children like to take flights of fancy and contemplate places and customs far from their own. It is quite another to uproot those same children from their homes and to immerse them in environments where they have little to no command of the prevailing customs and language, and in which they are subject to abuse, malnutrition, and disease. Put simply, even tritely, there are limits both to the extent to which individual humans (especially children) can tolerate alienation, estrangement and bodily threat, and also to the extent that parents may reasonably be expected to hand their children over to state control for the same. Any policy that sought to discourage, if not obliterate, tribal identities was bound to breed mistrust, resistance and subversion among students and parents alike. However, steeped as they were in an educational philosophy that emphasized alienation and estrangement, educational theorists like Harris were far too dismissive of endeavours to protect or 'coddle' children as too protective to serve the educational needs and interests of either the individual or the social whole.

However, the most serious concern with Harris's defence of the Indian boarding schools surely has to do with his insistence that 'it is found necessary, or at least desirable, to obtain control of the Indian at an early age, and to seclude him as much as possible from the tribal influence' (Harris 1889: 4). For this is the conclusion that drove efforts within the Indian boarding schools to erase any

vestiges of particular tribal heritages. And this is the thought that most lends credence to claims that the Indian boarding schools served as instruments for discouraging tribal identification and for promoting cultural annihilation. This aspect of the plan also turned out to be self-defeating, for many reported that the alienation of the boarding school experience only compounded into a secondary, subsequent estrangement from their original culture; theirs was a double alienation. Consequently, they were altogether unable to return home to assist in the transformation of their native tribes so desired by Harris and other architects of the plan (Zitkala-Ša 2014; Vučković 2008: 250). Moreover—and perhaps more significantly—several commentators have observed that by educating children of different tribes together en masse, the boarding schools, far from erasing Indian heritage altogether, actually heightened cultural awareness and fostered instead the spread of new *Pan-tribal* forms of Indian identity (Adams 2020: 366–67; Vučković 2008: 216; Lomawaima 1994: 129).

By emphasizing the notion that they did not appear to keep written records of their historical and folkloric achievements, Harris appears to have overlooked the actual cultural attainments of indigenous peoples, as well as the degree to which the tribes had already undergone major changes since initial contact with Europeans. The tribes were not nearly as static or incapable of adjustment as Harris supposed. One need only think of the changes wrought by the introduction of the horse. Though many, if not most, tribes had not developed a system of schools by which indigenous children could attain literacy, there is nothing inherent in tribal culture to prevent it. The example of the so-called ‘Civilized Tribes’ of Indian Territory should have served as a particularly poignant example for Harris, of how the tribes themselves, through their own initiative and self-activity, could elevate their culture without erasing their cultural heritage. For not only had those tribes adopted written constitutions of their own, all while maintaining their tribal legacies, they had also begun to develop the means to record their own traditional practices and lore, and to write in their own languages. Their school systems and tribal literacy rates surpassed those of their white neighbours, and speaking to Harris’s devotion to the daily paper, they even had their own bilingual newspapers, such as the *Cherokee Advocate* (Neuman 2013: 13).

Harris should not have been oblivious to these developments. As mentioned earlier, Henry Brokmeyer—the very inspiration for Harris’s Hegelianism—had taken up residence in Indian Territory and, at least according to one account, had established a philosophical society there. Denton Snider recounts that ‘Once at Muscogee in the Indian Territory I heard him [Brokmeyer] explaining the deeper philosophy of deer-stalking in a pow-wow with some Creek Indians. They all seemed to hail him as one of themselves: “Big Indian, Good Indian”. And he looked it’ (Snider 1920: 102). Both Brokmeyer and Harris taught at one of the literary schools Denton Snider conducted in Milwaukee in 1886. There Snider further recounts that Brokmeyer, fresh out of Indian Territory and

apparently looking the part, appealed to native American concepts to elucidate themes from Faust (Snider 1920: 427).<sup>26</sup> In comparison to Harris, then, Brokmeyer seems to have been more appreciative of the cultural achievements of native Americans. For instance, in *The Mechanics Diary*, he remarks on the evident sophistication of the society that had created the Cahokia Mounds, located just across the river from St Louis (Brokmeyer 1910: 41). Aware of how much control native Americans already exercised over their environments, he also commented on their use of fire to make their environments more hospitable to preferred game and foodstuffs. Snider further mentions Brokmeyer sharing fragments of a thesis on native American philosophy that he aspired to complete (Snider 1920: 427). In short, rather than erasing native American concepts from the funded capital of civilization, Brokmeyer seemed far more aware than Harris was of the potentialities of Native American culture, and far more interested in incorporating them into a larger, more inclusive and universal whole.

Beyond Snider's accounts, we have scant details on Brokmeyer's activities in Indian Territory (Pickens 1967). However, it coincides tantalizingly with the establishment of several schools in the vicinity of Muscogee, including the Indian Nations University and the Henry Kendall College.<sup>27</sup> Such institutions could, and arguably should, have provided Harris with an altogether different model of Indian education, one which kept individual tribal heritages intact. Indeed, one might argue that this would have been the truer Hegelian route to pursue, for a bona-fide Hegelian might well insist that tribal particularities and identities are not to be erased, but rather respected and incorporated within a more encompassing social whole.

Though it took the greater part of a century, and not without struggle, that is roughly the route that eventually prevailed. The Carlisle School closed in 1918 to accommodate soldiers returning from the first world war, and enthusiasm for off-reservation boarding schools further deteriorated in the wake of criticisms arising from the Meriam Report of 1928. The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 turned the administration of the remaining federally operated boarding schools over to particular tribes, where a few, such as the Chemewa School in Oregon, persist as such to this day. Others continue under altered missions. A portion of the Stewart School in Nevada, for instance, has recently been reopened as a museum. The Haskell Institute in Kansas is now an Indians Nations' University, noteworthy in that it is not attached to any single tribe, but rather administered for all tribes under its own board and the auspices of the Bureau of Indian Education.

In closing, note that we are not claiming that the Indian boarding school system owes its entire existence to either Hegel or Hegelianism. It is entirely likely that the system would have been implemented in some form or other, whether or not the Commissioner of Education in 1889 had been a Hegelian. Nevertheless, we

have shown that Hegelianism was a particular congenial framework for the defence of such a system, and the particular character of its justification in the 1889 Report of the Bureau of Education would likely have taken on a much different form had Commissioner Harris not been so devoted to the study of Hegel. Reflecting upon Hegel's *Bildung*-based conception of human education, Allen Wood writes:

But Hegel's conception of *Bildung* takes for granted modern society's conception of a whole series of oppositions, which are now often questioned. Among these are: undevelopment/cultivation and backwardness/progress. Such questioning may arise from a recognition of the way in which the practical application of these distinctions has led to the brutal destruction of non-European cultures in many parts of the world, whose wisdom, art and social institutions surely had much to contribute to the education, cultivation and progress of the human species. And their barbarous suppression in the name of those very values has surely been a serious step backward. (Wood 1998: 314)

This paper is meant in part to underscore the very point Wood is making. Moreover, it is meant to provide a concrete illustration of the way in which professed Hegelians had a part to play in the unfortunate cultural destruction and colonial brutality to which Wood alludes. In the current efforts to assess the legacy of the Indian boarding schools mentioned in our opening paragraph, we hope the role that American Hegelians played in shaping this policy does not get lost.<sup>28</sup> For if anything, it is good to be reminded that, for good or for ill, the rational is real, and that philosophical thought really can make a material difference after all.<sup>29</sup>

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The first investigative report of the Federal Boarding School (Newland 2022) was released in May 2022 during the drafting of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Though well-known as a writer and historian in his own right, Schurz is not as closely associated with Hegel as other ‘forty-eighters’ (refugees from the failed revolutions of 1848). Nevertheless, he had deep and enduring connections with Hegelians of various stripes, including the ‘Ohio Hegelians’ Johann Stallo and August Willich, as well as several in the St Louis movement, for whom he served as Senator following the Civil War.

<sup>3</sup> See also the Annual Report of the Commission of Indian Affairs for 1886.

<sup>4</sup> As we and others have elsewhere argued, the St Louis philosophers played an important, but largely forgotten role bringing together New England transcendentalism with Hegelian Institutionalism, which culminates in Deweyan progressivism and American pragmatism. See Ervin, Beisecker and Özel (2021) and Beisecker and Ervin (2022).

<sup>5</sup> These normal schools were eventually merged with a historically black college (Stowe College) and still operates as Harris-Stowe State University, an HBCU in St Louis.

<sup>6</sup> For sketches of the intellectual histories of both Brackett and Blow, as well as how various members of the St Louis Philosophical Society advanced the careers of women both in and adjacent to professional philosophy, see Rogers (2005).

<sup>7</sup> We shall have more to say about Brokmeyer and developments in Indian Territory in our concluding section.

<sup>8</sup> Schulze also edited the 1841 edition of Hegel’s *Phenomenologie des Geistes*.

<sup>9</sup> The German revolutionary and intellectual-in-exile Arnold Ruge characterized Rosenkranz as the most centre of the Left-wing Hegelians. The St Louis Hegelians would be well aware of this distinction. Far from a frontier backwater, St Louis had at the time become a cosmopolitan centre and destination for many of the refugees from the Revolutions of 1848–49. Prominent among them was Franz Sigel, who as a veteran military leader of the failed revolutions and was indispensable for rallying Germans to the Republican and Union cause, especially during the Camp Jackson affair. Like Carl Schurz, he then served (with mixed and declining distinction) as a Union General. Before the war, however, Sigel had spent his first years in exile in Britain serving as a personal assistant to none other than the aforementioned Arnold Ruge. At the outbreak of the war, he was a principal and a board member for the St Louis Public schools. Thus he would have been well-known to both Harris and Brokmeyer. The St Louis Hegelians, however, contemptuously distinguished themselves from the German Revolutionaries and their radical Republican politics; they proudly proclaimed themselves as ‘Fifty-eighters’ rather than ‘Forty-eighters’ (see Snider 1920: 29). In this respect, they differed from the so-called ‘Ohio Hegelians’, Johann Stallo and August Willich, who were much more closely aligned with Schurz and his brand of Liberal Republican politics.

<sup>10</sup> See Buck-Morss (2009: 67–74) for discussion of Hegel’s conservative shift from the *Phenomenology* to the *Logic*. While the St Louis Hegelians’ preference of gradual institutional reform over violent revolution might help to explain their diminished reputation among later Hegelians, at the same time it might also show how attentive readers of Hegel they actually were.

<sup>11</sup> Dewey’s chief criticism of Harris was that he had failed to keep up with and incorporate recent advances emerging from the ‘new psychology’.

<sup>12</sup> See Adams (2020: 66ff.) for more details about Commissioner T. J. Morgan.

<sup>13</sup> A more complete contextualization of the claim is perhaps in order, as Pratt himself is explicitly distancing himself from outright genocide:

A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man (Pratt 1892: 46).

<sup>14</sup> Abbreviations used:

PH = Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001).

PbG = Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

PR = Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet, ed. A. W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>15</sup> Harris's friend and neighbour, John Dewey, expressed a similar thought when he said that a primary aim of education was to put one in touch with the 'funded capital of civilization' (Dewey 1973: 311)..

<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, Harris's opposition to Rousseau's conception of education, with its valorisation of the natural state, closely parallels Hegel's several rejections of the same (Harris 1891: 283).

<sup>17</sup> Later on, Dewey picks up on this as a principal reason for why primitive cultures have little need for, and have largely not developed, schools or similar educational institutions (Dewey 1916: Chapter 1). Also see Dewey (1902).

<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Harris speaks of how, through domestic servitude in European homes, Africans have come to acquire 'the Anglo-Saxon consciousness [...], thoroughly imbued with nearly all ideals and aspirations which form the conscious and unconscious motives of action with the white people among whom he lives' (Harris 1892: 722–23). Harris further writes that the possession of such consciousness thereby justifies their entitlement to education on a par with European settlers and immigrants. See also Harris (1896: 36).

<sup>19</sup> The importance the St Louis Philosophers placed upon newspapers and journalism is reflected in their close attachments to Joseph Pulitzer. Before becoming editor of the *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, the émigré Pulitzer was an avid student of the 'Universität Brokmeyer' and, as already mentioned, a great friend of Thomas Davidson (Snider 1920: 161ff; Swanberg 1967: 6, 10)

<sup>20</sup> This passage calls to mind Hegel's similar devotion to the daily newspaper, encapsulated by his Jena Aphorism: 'Reading the newspaper in early morning is a kind of realistic morning prayer'. Harris would have been familiar with it through Rosenkranz's biography of Hegel, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegels Leben*. For discussion of this devotion, see Buck-Morss (2009: 49–50). Interestingly, Buck-Morss takes Hegel's reverence for newspapers as evidence that his famous 'Master-Slave' dialectic was informed by the Revolution in Haiti, and so should be

taken quite literally in the context of an actual slave uprising. Similarly, the St Louis Philosophers also took that same dialectic to frame their understanding of the overthrow of slavery during the American Civil War (Snider 1906).

<sup>21</sup> The so-called ‘Civilized Tribes’ in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) were an exception. They had largely developed a literate culture, even (thanks to efforts like those of Sequoia) in their own languages. As such, they were not included in the original plan for education in the off-reservation boarding schools. More on this later.

<sup>22</sup> This recommendation dovetails nicely with his justification for publishing the JSP as a means by which American readers can be exposed to ‘the greatest thinkers of all ages and all times’ (Harris 1867: para. 4). By way of comparison, it is worth pointing out how dramatically this recommendation contrasts from Emerson’s cautions *against* foreign travel and immersion in foreign culture generally in ‘The American Scholar’.

<sup>23</sup> We must credit this phrase to an anonymous reviewer, who provided us with invaluable assistance directing us to sources fleshing out our history of the Indian boarding schools.

<sup>24</sup> The theme of American transcendentalism heading out west and returning in the form of St Louis Hegelianism is the overarching theme of Pochmann (1948).

<sup>25</sup> Harris demurred from involving himself much in the administration of the Indian boarding schools, on the grounds of its politicization. However, he gave addresses at Carlisle on at least two occasions (1896 and 1899), and he delivered papers on Indian Education to groups of Indian educators and the NEA (Leidecker 1946: 485), including the 1895 Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian (Harris 1896).

<sup>26</sup> Though Brokmeyer published his updated ‘Letters on Faust’ (1887) in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, there is unfortunately little there to indicate what Snider was talking about.

<sup>27</sup> The latter was later relocated to Tulsa, where it eventually formed a core of the present-day University of Tulsa. The former continues to this day as Bacone College. See Neuman (2013) and Williams and Meredith (1980). So far, we have yet to uncover any evidence of a direct connection between Brokmeyer and either institution, though he was evidently closely associated with Pleasant Porter (eventual Chief of the Creeks), whom we understand to have been a particular friend of the Kendall College. One of our continuing aims is to investigate Brokmeyer’s activities with respect to Native American thought and education, with the hope of eventually uncovering any extant portions of his planned treatise on Amerindian Philosophy. In this, we might find a more positive story to tell about the relationship between Hegelianism and indigenous peoples.

<sup>28</sup> The preliminary report on the Indian Boarding School initiative, released during the drafting of this paper (Newland 2022), leaves a little to be desired. Relying heavily upon the 1880 and 1886 Annual Reports by the Commission of Indian Affairs, it altogether fails to mention the 1889 report on ‘Indian Education’ penned by Harris and Morgan, even though that is the one that appears immediately prior to Congressional approval for expanding the Indian boarding schools. Overall, the preliminary report’s historical narrative is marred by its intermingling of passages from disparate timeframes (ranging from 1803 to well into the twentieth century), as if the particular purposes, justifications and scopes of the boarding school system remained constant throughout.

<sup>29</sup> We wish to thank Jasmin Özel, Miika Jaarte, Tomas Stølen and the participants of the 2022 workshop on ‘Racism and Colonialism in Hegel’ for kind commentary on earlier drafts of this work. Thanks as well to the editors of this themed issue for organizing the issue and the workshop. The feedback from two anonymous referees for *Hegel Bulletin* was not only generous, but immensely helpful. Finally, we would like to acknowledge Leroy Thompson and Kevin Neal of Bacone College for their hospitality during a recent research visit to Muskogee.

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