

Monothematic Block:

Philosophy, Politics and Religion: Continuities and Ruptures with Hegelianism

Introduction

Hegel's philosophy carried out a diagnosis and balance of the history of philosophy, particularly of Enlightenment thought. Transcendental philosophy represented the most finished contribution of the Enlightenment, which did not manage, however, to avoid the abstract dualism of the understanding. In order to overcome it, Hegel proposed a metaphysics that aimed at dissolving the divisions between phenomenon and noumenon, sensibility and understanding, civil society and state, appealing to a totalizing procedure of dialectical reason. The young Hegelians criticized this approach for various reasons. While the "old Hegelians" (Rosenkranz, Haym, Erdmann, Fischer) were interested in preserving Hegel's philosophical legacy, the "young Hegelians" (Feuerbach, Ruge, Marx, Stirner, Bauer, Kierkegaard) sought to transcend it. In the view of these authors, Hegelianism itself generated abstractions that hypostatized reality and eliminated mystery. Both from a political perspective and from a religious point of view, they critically evaluated the results of the method that had attempted to overcome the abstract point of view of Kant's philosophy.

In this monothematic issue the presence of Hegel in the thought of the old Hegelian Rosenkranz is analyzed. The young Hegelians Feuerbach, Kierkegaard and Stirner are discussed from the perspective of the critique of different aspects of the cultural apparatus of Hegelianism and, finally, the topicality of Hegelianism is considered in the debate between the Hegelian Pippin and two representatives of the "Ljubljana School" (Žižek-Johnston).

Norbert Waszek, concerned with the historical place of post-Hegelian philosophy, examined Rosenkranz, whom Ruge considered "the freest of the old Hegelians." Rosenkranz takes a dim view of the split between theory and praxis that the philosophy of the young Hegelians represents and promotes the continuation/improvement (*Verbesserungen*) of Hegelianism, which aimed at the unity of theory and praxis, taking method as its starting point. Waszek does not

engage in a discussion of Rosenkranz's aesthetics but concentrates on the philosopher's theological and political studies in order to evaluate both their results and their relation to Hegel. He masterfully describes the multifaceted figure of Rosenkranz, a prolific author devoted to the most varied subjects, history, art, philosophy, theology, literature, topography of cities and politics, who also writes about Kant, Diderot and the Enlightenment and edits together with Schubert the works of Kant. Finally, he concentrates on showing how, from the 1850s onwards, Rosenkranz not only tries to reproduce Hegel, but also to renew him.

Pablo Uriel Rodríguez deals with a relationship little examined by researchers, namely, the link between Kierkegaard and Stirner. Probably, the fact that Kierkegaard's philosophy has been promptly received by existentialism and that Stirner's ideas have been associated with the anarchist tradition, prevented the establishment of theoretical connections between the two authors who not only shared the same time but also the same cultural environment. Although they may not have influenced each other, Kierkegaard and Stirner shared a critical perspective regarding the solutions that Hegelianism and post-Hegelianism offered to the crisis of modernity. Rodríguez seeks to determine whether these authors agree on the need for a new beginning of post-idealist philosophy, taking as a starting point Arvon's thesis, according to which the singular individual and the unique are concepts that produce the same liberating effect against the cultural influence of Hegelianism.

Alejandro Peña Arroyave interprets the Aesthete A of Kierkegaard's *Either/Or* from the point of view of the Hegelian unhappy consciousness. His main problem is the experience of boredom, which he tries to avoid by a method of discipline similar to that of the ascetic man. According to Arroyave, the figure of the aesthete is an expression of a religious man who has failed in his search for the absolute. This failure becomes evident because his method turns out to be the secularization of religious categories. Therefore, the religiosity in the framework of which the aesthete separates himself from the world results in an aestheticized religion. Arroyave examines carefully the "Ultimatum," the third part of *Either/Or*, where the pastor from Jutland argues that before God we are always in error. Faced with the certainty of human imperfection, there are two alternatives: to accept it with joy or to reject it with despair. Aesthete A, the advocate of the modern position, is inclined to the second. In the religious position we find a passive self that accepts an order that is alien to it, and in that of aesthete A an active self that renounces the world, but depends on this renunciation to constitute itself. According to Arroyave, the religious perspective that the aesthete has in mind as a possibility of salvation is in reality a resigned and

passive religiosity. Therefore, both aestheticization and resignation turn out to be two ways of expressing the same phenomenon, namely: the unhappy consciousness.

Maximiliano Dacuy attempts to solve the problem implied by “the head of state” in Feuerbach’s *Provisional Theses for the Reform of Philosophy* (1842), as a figure that makes praxis and politics impossible. The author interprets this figure in terms of the “representative of humanity,” understood as the mediator of intersubjectivity in the exercise of praxis and representative of the genus in the political community, which is developed in *The Essence of Christianity* (1941). The head of state is an individual who represents the totality, but unlike God, he is not an immediate unity but functions as a mediator of individuals in particular states. This difference is substantive since what distinguishes God and the head of state is precisely what differentiates religion from politics.

Kobe Keymeulen is concerned with investigating the debate between Robert Pippin and the “Ljubljana School” in order to understand what it means to be a Hegelian today and to assess the relationship of Hegelianism to psychoanalysis. In this way, he does not seek to determine which reading best fits the letter of Hegel, but rather, to emphasize the importance of the “Ljubljana School” in the contemporary reception of Hegel’s work. Keymeulen carefully analyzes the confrontation between the “academic” reading of Hegel and transcendental materialism, which thinks of Hegel from the perspective of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Marxist political theory. In describing the evolution of the debate, he emphasizes the discussions concerning the reception of the *Logic* as either metaphysics or ontology in order to suggest that a deepening of this question would involve an important development of contemporary Hegelian studies.

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Guest Editor