

THE VALUE OF COLLEGIAL DISCUSSION

Philosophical thought has always thrived on discussions, friendly and controversial conversations, the confrontation of different opinions, and helpful criticism. While philosophical exchanges can take various forms, it is always welcome when spontaneous discussions shift into an institutional framework. There is no better opportunity for dialogue than the publication of either original monographs or translations of important texts. Such talks are becoming a tradition at the Institute of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Discussions in the form of seminars have taken place dedicated to Hans-Herbert Kögler's *Critical Hermeneutics*, Axel Honneth's *The Idea of Socialism*, and André Gorz's *Ecology as Politics*. The discussions at these events have enabled the Institute's research fellows, as well as colleagues from other departments, to refine their positions on current problems in contemporary philosophy. Of course, the most productive stimulus for discussion is always the publication of a book by a colleague whom one can question directly about the methodology and approach of their work.

Jon Stewart's book *Hegel's Century: Alienation and Recognition in a Time of Revolution* (Cambridge University Press 2021) occupied a special position in the series of seminars on contemporary philosophical problems. The peculiarity of this debate stemmed from the book's focus, method of research, and presentation. After all, the ideas formulated by Hegel and his followers have vastly determined our thinking. Many thinkers have tried to develop and use his ideas to orient themselves in the contemporary world, while others have criticized and dismissed them as an obstacle to an adequate understanding of the present. Either way, there can be no denying Hegel's influence on philosophy today. The most striking characteristic of the current changes in philosophical thought is the diversification of viewpoints. Hence solid knowledge of the history of philosophy – not least of all during the 19th century, the dynamic period treated by Jon Stewart's book – is one of the most productive ways to access contemporary thought.

One final remark: the seminar on Jon Stewart's book took place in Bratislava on January 19, 2023. The participants agreed to publish the papers presented in the fruitful debate. The previous management of the journal *Filozofia* gladly supported the idea and offered publication space for a monothematic issue dedicated to the seminar. However, after the plans had been made and the editors had already reserved space for publishing the papers, there was a change in the editorial management, and our colleague Jon Stewart was named editor-in-chief of *Filozofia*, beginning with the May issue. Immediately after taking up this position, he expressed reservations about

having a discussion of his book published in a journal he heads. Nonetheless, we managed to persuade him to respect the commitments made by the previous editors and agree to publish the articles that had been written based on the discussion of his book. Out of respect for the previous agreement and the wishes of the authors and guest editor, he conceded on the condition that his involvement in the production of the issue be kept to a minimum.

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