

What is Living in Hegel's Logic?

Workshop with Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer

University of Paderborn

July 14 and 15, 2017

In a recent article published in *Philosophische Rundschau*, Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer writes that myths on Hegel and his thought are still diffused today. Some authors define the dialectical project an “intellectual dream from which philosophy had to wake up“, an “ethnocentric way of thinking”, the failed aspiration to build a “system of all systems” or a not further specified “philosophy of the absolute”. That Hegel was simply crazy or incompetent (Gauß 1844) is still granted by many, and jokes about the obscurity of his thought are universally known. “Hegel described his philosophy as an attempt to teach philosophy to speak German”, Durant wrote around 1933, and commented: “He succeeded”. This situation is peculiar: also modal logic or the infinitesimal calculus are difficult, but it does not occur to anybody to laugh about them.

In this panorama Stekeler-Weithofer aims at suggesting the good way to read Hegel, and to distinguish what is dead from what is still living in his philosophy. The point is to go to work “soberly” (*gediegen*). “If we do not proceed soberly, formidable problems arise”. Reading Hegel soberly means, in other words, to be aware of the temporal gap that divide ours from Hegel's language, and to reconstruct the semantics of fundamental dialectical concepts such as “idea”, “concept”, “truth”, “the absolute”. It may be objected that this is a common scientific procedure in philosophy, well known to the hermeneutical tradition. Stekeler-Weithofer further specifies this approach, pointing out that one should not present Hegel's views as a doctrine, but rather work in the full awareness that what Hegel was aiming at was the *logical analysis of the complex semantics of words such as “truth”, “knowledge”, “reason”, “mind” etc.*

The workshop tries to meet this desideratum and discusses the question “what is living in Hegel's logic?” through a confrontation with Stekeler Weithofer's works on Hegel's logic. The *Science of Logic* is, possibly, the thorniest among Hegel's works and the one whose meaning for contemporary logic and metaphysics is still not fully assessed. Stekeler-Weithofer's works are important contributions in this direction. Starting from his *Hegels Analytische Philosophie* (1992) Stekeler's aim has been to interpret Hegel's logic assessing its meaning for contemporary logic and philosophy. Nowadays Stekeler is working on a

commented edition of Hegel's Science of Logic, which is to be published by Meiner in the next months.

The workshop will consist of one inaugural lecture by Stekeler-Weithofer followed by papers chosen with a Call for Papers. Papers are intended to be comments and discussions of texts by Stekeler-Weithofer. Abstracts should be sent by April 30, should be of not more than 200 words and specify the texts (chapters of books or articles) by Stekeler-Weithofer the author wishes to discuss. This will allow preparing a reader with all the texts to be discussed during the workshop. A full list of Stekeler-Weithofer's publications can be found here:

http://www.sozphil.uni-leipzig.de/cm/philosophie/mitarbeiter/pirmin_stekeler/

Abstracts should be submitted to

elena.ficara@upb.de

by April 30, 2017.