

merito di non astrarre dall'atto del porre mediante cui l'essere e il pensiero sono messi in rapporto.

Nel XVI e ultimo capitolo, *Le rôle de la dimension esthétique dans la question de la fondation, entre romantisme, idéalisme allemand et philosophie transcendante*, Alessandro Bertinetto mette in risalto il ruolo che la filosofia dell'arte assume nella problematica della fondazione. L'articolo prende in considerazione il pensiero di Kant, dei primi romantici, di Schelling e di Hegel, per poi puntare il focus dell'indagine su Fichte: l'esperienza artistica, in quanto sviluppo dell'immaginazione, costituisce il nesso tra il piano empirico e quello trascendentale; detto altrimenti, la dimensione estetica è il modo in cui il soggetto impara a produrre nuove possibilità.

Nonostante il presente volume costituisca un contributo importante agli studi sulla filosofia tedesca successiva alla svolta criticista, non ci si può esimere dal rilevarne un grave limite: tutti e sedici i contributi rispondono alla domanda sul *come* fondare la filosofia, ma nemmeno uno di essi affronta la questione del *perché*. Nemmeno un articolo è dedicato a ricostruire la genesi storica del problema, a illustrare come la ragione dell'*Aufklärung* si ritrovi schiacciata, dalla disputa sullo Spinozismo e dai prodromi dello *Sturm und Drang*, tra l'accusa di nichilismo e l'appello all'irrazionale. Inoltre, nessuno dei sedici articoli è dedicato esclusivamente – perché tale sarebbe lo spazio richiesto – alla filosofia kantiana, a chiedersi, nello specifico, se per Kant quella del fondamento fosse davvero una lacuna da colmare, se costituisse o meno un problema. E, in quest'ultimo caso, a spiegare perché l'assenza di un ulteriore livello riflessivo della ragione nell'impresa critica non fosse una dimenticanza distratta del filosofo, né una debolezza del sistema filosofico da lui proposto, ma una condizione necessaria al concetto di scienza che quel sistema intende realizzare.

(Arianna Longo)

PAOLO DIEGO BUBBIO, *God and the Self in Hegel: Beyond Subjectivism*, Albany NY, SUNY Press, 2017, pp. 228 (ISBN 9781438465258).

Can the perspective angle of Hegel's philosophy of religion shed significant light on his idealistic metaphysics as a whole? The articulation of a positive answer to this question is the ambitious task Paolo

Diego Bubbio undertakes in his work *God and the Self in Hegel: Beyond Subjectivism*. Through the inquiry into the status of religion in Hegel's thought, the author aims to defend a reading of Hegel's philosophy as a *post-critical metaphysical* project. This interpretative strategy is quite unique: while defying the common trend in Hegel scholarship to marginalize philosophy of religion, the book addresses the much debated issue as to whether Hegel's enterprise identifies a metaphysics, from an unusual (and hitherto scarcely explored) viewpoint.

The perspective adopted is functional in investigating the extent to which Hegel's reconceptualization of some key religious notions (e.g., "God", "Christ", "trinity", etc.) impacts on the formulation of his post-critical metaphysics. Bubbio's additional aim consists in explaining why such a reconceptualization allows Hegel to frame a philosophical proposal able to overcome subjectivistic positions about the relation between the I and the (metaphysical) world. In the author's view, both aspects (the conceptual transformation of religious notions and the consequent overcoming of subjectivism) are essential in clarifying why Hegel's reflection on religion still has great relevance today.

In what follows, I will provide an overview of the main interpretative operations and theses that constitute Bubbio's proposal. I will then outline how these conceptual trajectories are developed in the eight chapters of the book.

The central aim of Bubbio's study is to demonstrate «that religion is an essential component of Hegel's idealist project to develop a *post-critical metaphysics*» (p. 8). Such tenet compels the author (and generally anyone inquiring into this field) to confront the main positions within the debate on Hegel and metaphysics: namely (1) the traditional metaphysical interpretation; (2) the revisionist non-metaphysical (or post-Kantian) view; and (3) the revised metaphysical view (or conceptual realism). Via a critical analysis of each of these stands, Bubbio justifies his preference for a fourth interpretative viewpoint, which he calls, following Paul Redding's suggestion, the *qualified revisionist reading*. According to this position, Hegel takes up, radicalizes, and overcomes Kant's transcendental philosophy, while being committed to a metaphysical project. In line with Beatrix Longuenesse's assumption, metaphysics «after Kant is a science of being as being thought» (p. 6) and, as Redding argues and Bubbio stresses, it is «a discipline in which reason is

concerned with its own products» (p. 79). This basically means that metaphysical objects are objects of reason.

In keeping with the qualified revisionist reading, Bubbio sees Hegel as developing an *entirely normative* metaphysics, whose constitutive aspects are epistemological and practical openness, namely *perspectivism* and *recognition*. Both have been recently emphasized by Redding's interpretation of Hegel, which not only considers their social and political dimension, but also their cognitive and epistemological side. On this view, metaphysics is for Hegel the realm of (self-realizing and self-correcting) norms and concepts as products of reason. Their generation is dependent on intersubjective acts of mutual recognition among human agents, a process involving the historical and cultural dimensions, which in turn makes the very constitution of self-consciousness possible.

Bubbio contends that, despite first appearances, this normative conception of metaphysics does not contribute to subjectivism (the idea that no underlying 'true' reality exists independent of the cognitive agent's activity). On the contrary, it brings about the vanquishing of such a position. This occurs via the dismantling of the myth of both an 'underlying true reality' and a direct epistemology of objects, together with the confutation of the pretension to conceive of the subject's cognitive activity in isolation from, and opposed to, the world. Counter to these views, Hegel would instead justify the *necessarily* mediated objectivity of (metaphysical) knowledge and objects.

'Mediated objectivity' represents a pivotal notion in the book: it designates the reality of metaphysical objects. Indeed, to examine how Hegel's thought about religion influences his entire philosophical project means to firstly answer the following question: How should we understand the *objective reality* Hegel ascribes to metaphysical objects and particularly to religious notions (e.g., the idea of God)? Defining such reality as *mediated objectivity*, Bubbio refers to an objectivity that «reflects the relational unity between subject and object» by taking into account «the contribution of our self-conscious mind for the establishment of the content of that metaphysical object» (p. 6). This mainly means, once again, that content is generated within recognitive inter-subjective processes, in an ongoing mediation between subjectivity and objectivity.

Within Bubbio's interpretation, the notion of mediated objectivity particularly emerges in Hegel's philosophy of religion: it substantiates

his *reconceptualization of God* (which goes together with a reconceptualization of the self) and the consequent *restoration of content to religion* after Kant's critique of metaphysics. According to the author, thinking of the reality of God in terms of mediated objectivity leads to conceive of God and the self in their co-constitutive relationship. This provides significant tools to discard the dualism between a purported mind-independent reality and human consciousness.

To summarize, what marks the influence of Hegel's philosophy of religion on his metaphysics is precisely this reconceptualization of God in terms of the encounter of subjectivity and objectivity. This operation cultivates a new understanding of metaphysical reality as mediated objectivity, which is co-essential to a new theoretical and practical paradigm of the relation between God and the I, able to overcome both theological and philosophical subjectivism.

In the book, the author progressively 'unpacks' and articulates the points outlined so far.

Consistent with the idea of Hegel extending Kant's philosophical proposal, the first chapter – *Christ as Symbol in Kant's Religion* – is devoted to the examination of the Kantian theory of grace and conversion. The analysis is aimed at identifying the lines of both continuity and discontinuity with respect to Hegel's subsequent elaboration. Particular attention is paid to the figure of Christ as a symbol (or prototype) for the application of the pure idea of moral perfection to the world. Through an in-depth investigation of the meaning and implications of Christ's sacrifice – encompassing the central notions of 'vicarious punishment,' 'openness to forgiveness,' 'redemption,' and 'truthfulness' – Bubbio proceeds to highlight the merits and limits of the Kantian proposal. On one hand, Kant introduces philosophically innovative aspects, such as the use of a kenotic conceptuality, offering a theorization of the proximity of God and the human subject via the symbol of Christ. On the other hand, Kant's theory still requires a conception of a God's eye view: a (judging) perspective external to the subject. Hegel would move towards a complete integration of the two parts involved, by building on the Kantian basis (especially on the meaning of kenotic sacrifice) and by elaborating on the significance and usage of religious symbols.

The second chapter – *Hegel's Conception of God* – starts exploring this line of inquiry through the analysis of some meaningful Hegelian

passages. The focus is on Hegel's reconceptualization of God via a reconceptualization of the very relation between God and the human subject. Decisive aspects of this theoretical operation are the process of kenosis realized by both human subjects and God (in the incarnation of Christ), and the themes of recognition and forgiveness. In the analysis, we gradually progress towards a concept of God as the encounter between Godself and subjectivity. This is the place where the notion of *mediated objectivity* first emerges, in its application to the knowledge and reality of religious objects. It is precisely at this level, contends the author, that we can start appreciating how Hegel's conception of God influences his entire metaphysical project.

The third chapter – *The Reality of Religion in Hegel's Idealistic Metaphysics* – concentrates on some crucial aspects of the whole book: the objective reality of God, the key features of Hegel's normative metaphysics, and the appropriateness of a *figural reading* of religious representations (firstly of Christ, the «religious *Gestalt* par excellence», p. 74). This chapter begins to disclose the precise core of Bubbio's argument: «Hegel's kenotic Christian» conception of God «is consistent with an account of metaphysics as *perspectival* knowledge of *ideal* objects» (p. 51). According to Bubbio's reading, this kenotic view presents decisive consequences for metaphysics, as it promotes a *perspectival* position both on an ethico-political and an epistemologico-metaphysical level. This helps us understand the sense in which the content of Hegel's metaphysics is entirely *normative* (and therefore does not coincide with the naturalistic knowledge of a mind-independent world). Since the «generation of norms» as objects of reason – that is, as metaphysical objects – «is dependent on recognition» (p. 77), the reality of such objects is *mediated* objectivity: it is the result of an ongoing relation between subject and object. This very same status belongs to God and religious representations: the reality of the concept of God actualizes itself in the encounter and recognition with human subjectivity (especially in the recognitive practice of reconciliation in the religious community). With respect to the recognition-based constitution of metaphysical reality, particular attention is devoted to the historical and cultural dimension of the transformation of the concept of God: both God and human consciousness cannot be thought of separately from the (also historical, social, and cultural) consciousness' movement of thinking Godself.

In the fourth chapter – *Hegel's Version of the Ontological Argument for the Existence of God* – Bubbio aims to clarify in what sense the Idea of God as the actualization of the concept of God (i.e., the full realization of the unity between the human and the divine) necessarily involves God's existence. This requires considering Hegel's revaluation of the ontological argument, in order to account for the transition from the concept of God to its existence. In Hegel's perspective, the latter should not be understood in terms of empirical being, but as the existence of a self-realizing concept: a 'system' «capable of developing self-consciousness through recognition» and able to fulfill its «goal or normative status» (p. 93). The objectivity of a self-realizing concept is mediated objectivity. God's self-actualization inevitably involves the recognition process realized in the religious community as well as the cultural and historical movements intrinsic to the process of thinking about God. In this sense, Hegel's treatment of the ontological argument is crucial to demonstrate the circular constitution of God and the self. Hence, Hegel's operation makes the (mediated) knowledge of God possible and sheds light on its content: God as the absolute Idea has «been shown to be in an intrinsic relation with human subjects» (p. 102). The content at stake can be expressed as God's relationality, both *outwardly* and *inwardly*, in the play of the trinitarian persons.

Hegel's analysis of the trinitarian structure constitutes another key element not only in restoring content to religion but also in forging a new metaphysical paradigm. Chapter 5 – *The Trinity and the "I"* – illustrates the relevance of Hegel's conception of the Trinity with respect to the overcoming of subjectivism (both theological and philosophical) and the rethinking of the 'I'. The main claim is that the Trinity serves as the «*exposition* or *presentation* (*Darstellung*) of the relational and recognitive structure of the "I"», thus illuminating on «the role of intersubjective acts of mutual recognition for the genesis of self-conscious thought» (p. 107).

Chapter 6 – *The Death of God and Recognition of the Self* – expands upon the connection between Hegel's reconceptualization of God and the elaboration of a recognition-based metaphysics. As stated by Bubbio, a pivotal notion in this respect is the *death of God*, in that it expresses the interdependence between the idea of God and the idea of the Self. Through a discussion of the main interpretations available, Bubbio tackles the question of the reality status of this very notion,

arguing for the necessity «to think of God as effectively dying as an abstract being in order to reconceptualize God in modernity» (p. 127). The incarnation and death of God must be read as the cause of the overcoming of the dualistic and subjectivistic positions about the human–divine relationship. This new understanding of God comes together with the formation of the modern Self, and leads to framing a new conception of normativity, which is at the basis of Hegel’s idealistic metaphysics: «the ideas of God and of the “I” are in mutual equilibrium in forging the normative framework for the use of reason» (p. 144).

Chapter 7 – *Beyond Subjectivism* – puts forth the conceptual framework for rethinking the I in the context of Hegel’s metaphysical project. Bubbio disagrees with the majority of contemporary stands about the concept of the Self, arguing that they still presuppose an opposition between objectivity and subjectivity. Hegel would provide, instead, the theoretical tools apt to overcome subjectivism with respect to the I. In the author’s view, Hegel’s philosophical proposal establishes the conditions under which to understand the Self as the product of social, intersubjective acts of mutual *recognition*, which cannot abstract from historical and cultural contexts. Bubbio’s conclusion is that «Hegel’s idealist metaphysics provides a new sense in which the “I” can be regarded as (idealistically, that is, mediately) “objective”» (p. 158).

After having argued in favor of the importance of Hegel’s philosophy of religion for a recognition-based metaphysical project, the chapter culminates in the claim that philosophy of religion itself is to be reconsidered and acknowledged, as it «addresses questions and problems that are crucial for the way we think of ourselves as cognitive and moral agents» (p. 159). Consequently, chapter 8 – *The Relevance of Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion Today* – tries to further explore this issue. After a discussion of the two extreme positions dominating the current debate in philosophy of religion – namely, the new atheism (or scientific atheism) and the new theism – Bubbio illuminates on the way in which Hegel’s post-critical and hermeneutic philosophy of religion can provide significant contribution to our world today. This mainly happens through Hegel’s treatment of the «nature of religious representations, concepts, and norms» (p. 171) and results in the fostering of cognitive humility and awareness of the historical and cultural stratifications of concepts and beliefs; the avoidance of an «immediate or

unconceptualized approach to religion» (p. 175); and the production of conceptual tools able to penetrate a series of religious phenomena, such as the emergence of religious extremisms.

From an overall perspective, Bubbio's book belongs to a series of contemporary attempts to elucidate the relevance of Hegel's thought for present philosophical and non-philosophical debates. Bubbio's endeavor is noteworthy for several reasons. For one thing, he traces a path deemed to be original in many respects, that offers a re-reading of Hegel's metaphysical project through a viewpoint – that of philosophy of religion – which has mostly been neglected and misunderstood, and which cost Hegel the labels of obscurantism and mysticism.

In addition, Bubbio's position tries to go beyond the standard division between the revised metaphysical and the post-Kantian interpretations, taking up convincing arguments from both and showing how their alleged divergence is often a verbal matter.

Furthermore, Bubbio's book addresses some key themes of present Hegel scholarship, intersecting debates on realism, idealism, metaphysics, hermeneutics, naturalism, and normativism. A decisive point is the emphasis on the recognition process and the historical dimension of concepts as crucial parts of their self-realization.

Another central issue of Bubbio's work is the notion of reality, in connection with the topic of subjectivism. Bubbio tries to reassess this very notion, which is neither meant as a dimension completely independent from subjectivity (that is, from normative dynamics of recognition) nor as the product of the subject's arbitrariness. Through the idea of mediated objectivity, Bubbio offers an explanation of how to interpret the status of what, for Hegel, deserves the name of reality in the first place: metaphysical objects as objects of reason.

(Giovanna Miolli)

GIUSEPPE DUSO, *Libertà e costituzione in Hegel*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2013, pp. 266 (ISBN 978-88-204-4705-2).

Il fatto che, hegelianamente, la filosofia costituisca «*il proprio tempo appreso col pensiero*» fornisce le coordinate per comprendere la peculiarità del confronto che, all'interno di quest'ultimo testo, G. Duso instaura