

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The scientific objective is to frame the issue of negativity in G.W.F. Hegel's philosophy and in S. Žižek's dialectical materialism as its contemporary interpretation. Negativity is one of the crucial ideas in Hegelian philosophy that has been overlooked and dissembled in the traditional commentaries. For this reason, the project at the very beginning denies stereotypical and common exegesis of Hegel, which has depicted his system as a peek of metaphysical rationalism, an absurd doctrine that conceives the whole universe as a self-realization of the Absolute Idea. In such perspective, the philosopher seems old-fashioned and outdated thinker who has nothing to offer to contemporary readers. On the contrary, I will prove that in Hegel's writings, one can find inspiring and original answers to the questions philosophy asks today.

The road to discover this "other", more contemporary, Hegel leads through analysis of the role and function of negativity in his philosophy, what is at stake in Žižek's interpretation of Hegelian dialectics (that also founds his own ontology). Therefore, the project is divided into three main parts to present the complex overview of the issue of negativity in Hegel (emphasizing its importance for contemporary discourse):

1. The first stage concerns history of the idea of negativity before Hegel, which will be reduced only to those contexts that had or might have had direct impact on philosopher's development (i.e. Greeks, speculative mysticism and German Idealism);
2. At the second stage, the issue of negativity will be analyzed on three fields of Hegel's system: ontology, philosophy of self and social philosophy);
3. The third stage involves investigation of relation between Hegelian negativity and Žižek's thought, what enables to engage Hegel into the contemporary philosophical discussion

The intended outcome of the project is reinterpretation the basic concepts and categories of Hegelian system (such as dialectic, idealism, Spirit, absolute knowledge, subjectivity, freedom and so on) through the lenses of the Hegel's and Žižek's theory of negativity. It allows to present Hegel's philosophy as a current theoretical proposition with critical and emancipatory potential.

The project methodology will be an exegesis of philosophical texts connected with the topic of negativity in Hegel and Žižek. The mode of reading implemented in the project will be dialectical reading that reveals antagonisms and inconsistencies hidden in the analyzed text, in order to create the possible mediation between those contradicted elements.

The reason for proposing the project is lack of systematic elaborations on researched topic. Until now there are no systematical monographs on the subject of Hegelian negativity or on the Žižek's materialistic interpretation of Hegel's thought. Therefore, we have only little critical material (mainly single articles and book chapters) concerning central task of this project. In Polish philosophy the complex problems of Hegelian ontology are not exhaustively investigated. Thus the project will not only provide much needed research on Hegel's ontology, but also create a new field for philosophical and interdisciplinary investigations, which will enable to rethink the speculation as a current critical theory adequate for contemporary discourse. Therefore, the outcome of the project will be reinterpretation of negativity in speculative tradition, which could be the matrix for the new models of ontology, social critique and understanding contemporary philosophy.