

Dobiašová, Soňa: *Idea v Hegelovej politickej filozofii (The Idea in Hegel's Political Philosophy)*. Bardejov: Fotopress. 2017. 94 pages. ISBN 978-80-89577-01-9.

The reviewed monograph written by Soňa Dobiašová *Idea v Hegelovej politickej filozofii* (“The Idea in Hegel’s Political Philosophy”), published by Fotopress in Bardejov in 2017, reflects the key elements of ideological concepts focusing on the issue of state presented by Hegel, a prominent representative of German classical philosophy of the late 18th and early 19th century. We suppose that, by their content, Hegel’s ideas have significantly exceeded their time and their effects can be found in different forms up until the present, not only in social-political thinking.

The aim of the author defined in the monograph is to point out that the philosophy of Hegel is an integral part of systemic considerations, and that the conceived theory of the state represents a concept integrating elements of theoretical and practical nature. In the context of this focus, the publication is divided into six main chapters gradually passing from the basic characteristics of the life of the German philosopher and the description of the environment as well as the period he grew up in, through the introduction of key papers and the categorization of its specific ideological concepts subsequently subjected to the analysis of their selected attributes.

According to the author, various elements of Hegel’s thinking were influenced by the relatively turbulent period of the revolutionary years, bringing different views on the functioning of society as well as its structure. In addition, Hegel was also influenced by ideas of ancient scholars such as Thukidides, Sofokles, Herakleitos, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, French enlighteners Rousseau and Montesquieu as well as his German colleagues Schelling, Hölderlin, Fichte and Kant. The first part of the monograph is devoted to this issue where we also find a retrospective view of his work with an extraction of key attributes characterizing the given text. In this context, the author creates individual categories regarding the place of action in a specific timeframe. As a result, she defines several periods: the early work in Bern, the “Frankfurt” period, the “fruitful” period in Jena where Hegel was also habilitated, a short period in Bamberg, Nuremberg, Heidelberg followed by “Berlin” period.

The following part of the monograph the author devotes to defining understanding of constructs, such as mind (the central notion of philosophy defined in relation to the concept of wisdom, where mind is above wisdom and is identified in some way with spirit), idea (also a key element of philosophy defined in relation to the concept), history, which should be realized in

accordance with mind, and (not only) the spirit bound on them, where in this context we find a connection to the issue of the state: “The completion of the whole process of history is an absolute spirit that becomes conscious in human cognition and flows into the idea of a modern state as an area of realization of the highest freedom” (Dobiašová, 2017, p. 21). The author also looks for the interconnection of these constructs in the presented Hegel’s concept and delivers specific interpretations that make it possible to draw a given understanding. Here is therefore a reflection on selected problematic aspects of their restriction and fit into the context conceived by Hegel itself. It is mainly based on the work of Philosophy of History, Science of Logic I., Elements of the Philosophy of Right, Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences – Logic.

When analyzing Hegel’s thinking, Dobiašová does not neglect his view on the category of freedom and the question of self-awareness. Here she draws attention to the problem and inconsistency in understanding of the concept of freedom in individual periods, and by concrete scholars. It is also appropriate to add that this category, central not only for the field of philosophy, is also marked by some often-discontinuous shifts by some authors, which S . Dobiašová also finds in Hegel. It is here interpreted as an essential element of human needs, but at the same time a certain element of a problem in relation to an individual who has to manifest his consciousness, that is to say, “a certain commitment to responsibility for this precious gift” (2017, p. 24) By analyzing selected Hegel’s works, such as The Phenomenology of Spirit, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, Encyclopedia or chapters named The Concept of The State, an explanation of his understanding of the category of freedom in different perspectives, and also of his (freedom categories) interconnection with self-awareness, will, mind, and last but not least with the spirit is found. In addition, S. Dobiašová draws attention to Hegel’s inclination rather to specific freedom and does not neglect the restriction of the so called political freedom through his metaphysical approach.

In the author’s characteristic of Hegel’s thinking, we also find emphasis on selected areas of political philosophy, pointing out the need to place the individual in the social context, as well as the need to form a socio-political entity. However, his political views as a whole cannot be said to be unambiguous in the opinion of S. Dobiašová. She recommends considering the historical perspective and taking into account his probable conservatism in the period. She therefore rejects his designation as an advocate of totalitarianism, a defender of the Prussian state, and so on. The author points out that the key aspect of his political philosophy is the theory of the state in which he integrates the concept of a modern and moral state, which is also referred to as the “objective spirit”, as well as the relationships between man and state, states with one another or the

issue of ownership. In connection with Rousseau and Kant, we find in Hegel's ideas a critique of the natural law concept and the contractual concept - the existence of a society relates to reason rather than willfulness. In addition, S. Dobiašová recalls the selected attributes of Hegel's philosophy of law, which is connected with the philosophy of history where the category of freedom is equally present (political freedom and internal freedom), which Hegel links to the emergence of society and the state (in the natural state - no conditions are created for it), and its development is connected with history as well as moral issues, the related category of good (and evil) or the concept of morality defined in relation to Kant's moral philosophy, and the notion of morality. Here we also find the characteristic of the triad of concepts of family, civil society and the state that Hegel attaches to the issue of morality, as well as their definition in a comparative perspective with the understanding of Kant and Fichte. In this section we would like to draw attention to the importance of Hegel's approach to political thinking in the sense that as one of the first, as pointed out by S. Dobiašová, Hegel brings a modern understanding of civil society clearly defined in relation to political society and therefore, also to the state. In addition, he places corporations between civil society and the state that bring "a merger of subjective needs with the interests of the state." (Dobiašová, 2017, p. 59)

In the last part of the monograph, the author adds another specification of Hegel's theory of the state and thus; of a modern moral state, which has been linked to the world's history and the existence of a nation. She presents more closely, for example, the very principle of the organization of power relations, including the division of power (following Montesquieu), the issue of the constitution and its forms, as well as the hierarchical form of the particular structures of the state (he describes the state as a highly centralized with some elements of decentralization - thus; we do not talk about absolute centralization). In this context the author also draws attention to Hegel's inclination to the constitutional monarchy. We believe that an important component of this part is the accentuation of Hegel's connection between the theory of the state and ratio, the category of freedom, the concept of law, and also the concept of world history.

We assume that he reviewed monograph provides an extensive analytical view of the state concept presented by Hegel and thus it provides an important material for every reader who is interested in this issue.

Jakub Bardovič
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava