

José Porfirio Miranda de la Parra

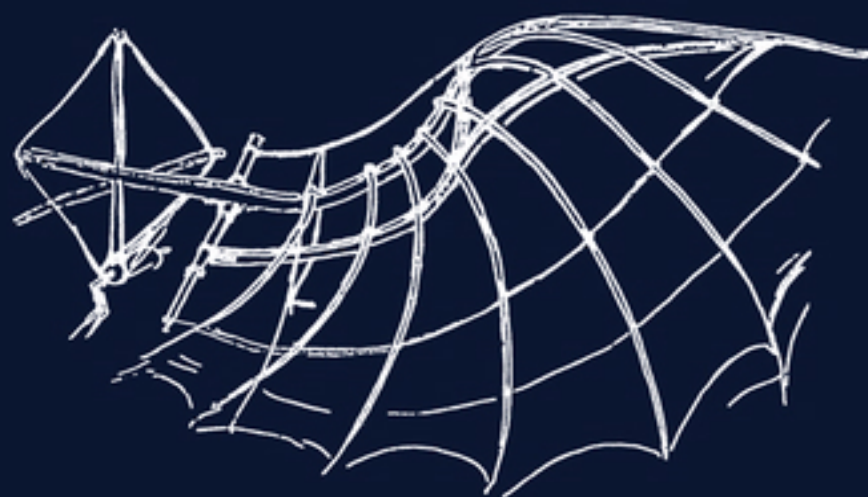
# Hegel was right

The Myth of the Empirical Sciences

Translation by  
Eduardo Charpenel Elorduy

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Europäisches Denken  
in  
Deutscher Philosophie



PETER LANG

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# Foreword to the first English edition (2011)

**T**he English translation of Porfirio Miranda's *Hegel was right* is of critical importance for contemporary philosophy as well as for world affairs, since its contribution for the scientific analysis and ethical transformation of present societies is of universal reach.

Miranda's work goes beyond description and commentary of Hegel's thought, by providing a thorough integration into Hegel's propositions of the developments taking place within different disciplines during the last two centuries, and by the systematic reconstruction and amplification of his thesis in the context of XX century philosophy. The result is an illuminating confirmation of the central thesis proposed by Hegel, based on historical events during this period, as well as on Miranda's own arguments.

Following a strict logical and ontological demonstration, which is a necessary condition for all philosophy, Miranda's work provides contemporary arguments for the understanding of the human essence and the State. The importance of revealing the reality of the State is crucial for an objective description, analysis and judgement of the swift transformations of human societies in the XXI century and their corresponding public and civil society institutions.

Human beings are the reality and finality of the State, and it has to be distinguished from government. This Hegelian idea is fully demonstrated

in its rational and historical content by Miranda, providing a well supported alternative to the limitations of widely accepted theories of society and culture.

Following Kant and Hegel, Miranda states that human beings are an end in themselves, and should not be considered as means for anything, such as power or the accumulation of wealth. The rational demonstration of this ethical imperative as an absolute truth, has enormous consequences for the present and future human history, challenging notions of the individual, the subject, the nature of ethics and freedom, accepted by the postmodern, self-centered and materialistic theories of society.

The recognition that ethical rationality develops gradually over the centuries lays the foundation for a critical, yet optimistic view of human existence in history. After the demonstration that self interest defines the natural human tendency, Miranda argues over the importance of raising the level of ethical consciousness in all subjects, in order to expand the ethical exercise of individual freedom.

This message is of decisive importance at the present time of world history, when the dominant technological system which is based on the digital convergence, the global scale of production processes and markets, and the unparalleled concentration of wealth and production by large corporations and a handful of individuals, set in motion significant contradictions within the nation states as the locus of democracy and human rights compliance.

According to Miranda, since we are neither good nor human by nature, the process of becoming a human being requires the ethical development of each individual, and the ethical transformation of the social order, as well as of all human beings. The guidance of Miranda for this enormous, yet compelling task, is now open for readers of the English language.

Dr. Alberto Montoya Martín del Campo

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## Foreword to the third Spanish edition

**M**ore than twelve years ago, the Metropolitan Autonomous University (Iztapalapa campus) published for the very first time this work, which goes far beyond a scholarly study of the Hegelian philosophy. Now, after a long time, this work comes again to light, as brilliant and important as always.

Sooner or later, everything that is fundamental becomes a classic, and that is the case of this book, for we can find in it a series of analyses, argumentations and theses which have a significant connection with an entire philosophical tradition of twenty-five centuries that goes back to Plato and that is continued by Aristotle, Descartes and Kant, and is later recovered by Hegel. This tradition stands out for its belief in truth; a belief that is not based on blind recourses or arguments of authority, but rather on demonstration itself. In this text, Dr. Miranda reminds us that there are many things which have been demonstrated for all times, and precisely in that their actuality consists.

It is relevant in many ways that theses which are taken as truths are demonstrated: first, because it makes explicit the departure of irrationality, of the primitive magical thought and of the aesthetic mentality: all subjects which have been addressed in this text, taking off from the fact that we come from the animals and that rationality is not natural to us. Second, it becomes manifest that civilization has to do with

the progress of rationality in the world, and that would be impossible without truth and the apodictic character of it. Another of its features is the development in philosophy of what has been expressed in Christian theology “Truth shall make you free” (John 8, 31). But, in what sense can a man be free other than in self-knowledge? (*Nosce te ipsum*) How can we choose without knowing? How can we know without truth? How can we have truth without having proofs?

The denial of truth, as it has been expressed by superficial skepticism, has had on axiological and psychological terms a disastrous effect—one speaks in our time of the Generation X—for the only thing it has achieved is that lies, mental confusions and contradictions are now surreptitiously considered as absolute truths.

The important thing is that, without truth, no true compromise can exist, and without the latter a fundamental ethical attitude cannot exist either—a fundamental ethical attitude that compels us always to make this world more just and worthy.

Basing himself on his clinical data, post-kleinian psychoanalyst Wilfred R. Bion wrote that truth is the nourishment of the soul, for only by means of it one can modify and improve the mental, emotional and material quality of life among humans. On the contrary, says Bion, lies are venom. Modern skepticism has taken charge of spreading this widely. *Hegel was right* is a powerful antidote against that venom.

In our times of economic globalization, it seems imperative that those of us who are impacted by it are capable of a critical revision of such process, and that is only possible if thought itself is not global or economic. In other words: we are only capable of advancing solutions and of proceeding accordingly if reason itself can be autonomous from the material and psychical pressures which can be exerted upon human beings.

The work the reader has in his hands offers many important subjects: it is impossible to address each of them in this introduction, so I will only mention a few:

1. The difference between science and literature, which consists, namely, in that the former is compelled to demonstrate the truth of its statements, while the latter is not.
2. The lack of synonymy between beauty and truth. It becomes evident hereby that a work or a thesis can be beautiful and pleasant, but there is a great difference between that and something being true.

3. The synonymy between science, philosophy and the common substance, which consists in defining and demonstrating.
4. The non-empiricity of scientific concepts and, consequently, the participation of the subject in their coinage.
5. The impossibility of obtaining *a posteriori* the concept of science, which means it is impossible to obtain that by the means of observation and generalization that scientists commonly employ.
6. The refusal of the widespread Rousseauian story of natural goodness. The argument we find here is that man makes himself by means of cultural and historical development and not by a purportedly natural determination.
7. Self-determination or freedom which is nothing more than the substance that we call spirit (*Geist*).
8. The ethicity as a self-reflective and constitutive phenomenon of being.
9. The family, the society and the State.

The sequence of chapters in this work offers a transition from philosophy of science and ontology to natural sciences and political philosophy. The link between the different chapters is perfectly logical. Thus, *Hegel was right* is a long and yet rewarding travel that touches not only the writings of Hegel but the most fundamental themes in the history of Western philosophy. One cannot think the way one used to do after reading this book.

The history of Professor Miranda begins in 1924, in the city of Monterrey, Nuevo León, and it is a history full of intellectual and practical braveness. It goes from the powerful critiques of his *Hunger and Thirst of Justice* to his *Marx and the Bible* —which made of him a pioneer of the Liberation Theology— to his demolishing refutation of the positivism of Comte and the Vienna Circle in his *Appeal to Reason*.

A thorough revision of contemporary philosophy would be incomplete without the pages that Dr. José Porfirio Miranda has bequeathed us. Thank you for this valuable heritage.

Héctor Villanueva