

SECTION 4. HUMANITARIAN, CULTURAL, AND COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSIONS OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

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WAR AND PEACE IN THE WORKS OF G. W. F. HEGEL

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The philosopher who expressed his views on the topic of war and peace is also the important and highly productive classical German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel. This philosopher covered the entire range of systematic philosophy from logic to ontology, social philosophy to aesthetics. He was also a philosopher of the history of philosophy. In addition to various topics of social philosophy, which Hegel explained exhaustively, he also expressed his views on the issue of war and peace. The philosopher of history par excellence also tackled this complex issue, which is still relevant in every historical period. Hegel, who has been commented on and interpreted many times, was considered a theorist of militarism. We do not agree with this superficial statement.

Hegel is the author of a large number of longer and shorter works. Likewise, the theme of war and peace is not concentrated in one work, but is scattered in several works. These are both monographs and shorter texts, recorded lectures and fragments. Due to the limited scope of the contribution, I will only deal with larger works. Hegel's philosophy of panlogism and justification of any face of reality reflects this feature in the field of social philosophy as well. As things happen, they are also rational, reasonable and purposeful. The human perspective of ethical categories is diametrically different from the dynamics of the world spirit.

His direct predecessors Fichte and Schelling also expressed their views on the issue. Fichte, as is known, took a step towards action, rejecting the thing in itself. He saw man as fully developing in the state, similar to Kant. Fichte considers peace to be a permanent good from the point of view of social life. Fichte spoke of territorial integrity, peaceful foreign policy, and the uniqueness and independence of states with the right to their internal policy. He considers defensive war to be lawful and just [10]. He

distinguishes between the war of ruling families and the war of a nation for freedom. Schelling, like Kant, anticipated the UN. He speaks of a common areopagus of nations, which would intervene in the event of unlawful action by a state.

Hegel's philosophy is very distinctive and specific. The absolute object is completely dominant over the subject. As I outlined above, the theme of war and peace was also discussed by Hegel in well-known and larger works. In particular, these are the Philosophy of Right, the Philosophy of History, and the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline. Certain connections and relevant passages can also be found in the Phenomenology of Spirit. In addition to them, he also treated the subject in other shorter writings, such as Real Philosophy, the Jena Manuscripts, and the First Program of the System of German Idealism. These texts form the basis for his own answer to the conglomerate of questions that are connected with the complicated theme of war and peace.

In connection with his philosophy of spirit, Hegel perceives each nation as a certain stage in the development of the world spirit [10, p. 205]. This development is both rational and sensible. In terms of an ideal state system, Hegel considered constitutional monarchy to be the optimum. The spiritual principle is not the same in every nation and as such does not have the same value. In this he is diametrically different from, for example, Claude Levi-Strauss.

It is good to look for elements of the relationship between man and the world in the work Phenomenology of Spirit. Hegel also mentions war in this work, in the case of ancient Greek philosophy. According to Hegel, the community of the Greek polis is too natural, the state must limit the family, in which private property develops. In the family, the individual manifests itself in its individual aspect. The state succumbs in the fight against this individuality. The principle of individuality over the state manifests itself in war. It is in this war that the individual is suppressed in favor of the whole, but at the same time, war gives the opportunity to stand out to the individual, who is powerful and gifted [9, p. 36]. In the government, the community is considered an individual. The government is a concentrated person of moral substance. The community can develop in different ways. As long as these community systems develop in a way that they seek profit and enjoyment. This is the negative essence and simplicity of such systems, which Hegel perceives negatively. "In order not to let them get rooted and settled in this isolation and thus break up the whole into fragments and let the common spirit evaporate, government has from time to time to shake them to the very centre by War" [1, p. 455]. The individual must feel death. He must not aim for personal security and for being for himself, says Hegel. A decline would mean a move from moral to natural existence. "These formulations, in all their intensity, can be taken as the unmitigated consecration of the force of

war, and it might appear from them that there is no distinction between Hegel and the formulations of Treitschke or even those of the Fascists" [4, p. 468]. His statements and assertions should not be seen in isolation, but in context, that is, in accordance with his metaphysics and social philosophy. Hegel cannot be considered a militarist or a principled supporter of military regimes.

In the same work, Hegel again discusses war. This is a passage dedicated to the decomposition of the moral being. He perceives the community as the essence of human law. Womanhood, as that which essentially belongs to the family, is in a hostile relationship to the community, which often disrupts family happiness, transforms the general purpose of government into a private one. The community must resist this, because here it is already about private benefit, enjoyment and pleasure. Hegel considers this principle of individuality and privacy as a priority to be bad. It is a detachment from the general purpose. One of the aspects of the community is the suppression of the individuality of individuals. „War is the spirit and form in which the essential moment of ethical substance, the absolute freedom of ethical self-consciousness from all and every kind of existence, is manifestly confirmed and realized. While, on the one hand, war makes the particular spheres of property and personal independence, as well as the personality of the individual himself, feel the force of negation and destruction, on the other hand this engine of negation and destruction stands out as that which preserves the whole in security“ [1, p. 475].

The essence of a moral being must not rest on strength and luck, otherwise the moral being will perish. The community as a community of individuals who live only as private individuals will disappear. The fight for recognition is, according to our philosopher, a fight to the death. “The fight for recognition which takes place before history begins is a fight for the impossible; no lasting satisfaction is possible through a struggle to the death” [5, p. 575]. Recognition has, according to Hegel, an existential meaning. War is one of the ways in which citizens recognize themselves as citizens, but it is not the only way [6].

Hegel looks at the problem of good and evil differently from most ethicists. He perceives it through the prism of dialectics and philosophical theology. Historically, the firstborn son of light was responsible for the fall from good. In contrast, the Son exists, it is the simple thing that knows about himself as an essence. Hegel ultimately perceives evil as the concentration of the natural being of the spirit into itself. He perceives good as that which emerges from itself into reality and reveals itself as a self-consciousness that has an essence. These ethical categories in Hegel do not have a traditional content, as in the vast majority of ethical systems. Evil as an event is essentially alien to the divine being, the association of evil with this being is artificial, futile and fruitless [1, pp. 777–778]. In the *Phenomenology of*

Spirit, he seeks to grasp evil and good in the sense of its ontology, not through the prism of axiology.

The theme of war and peace is also found in other well-known works of our philosopher. He also discusses it in his book *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Although war involves killing, war and killing have their own rules. "In law and war, to kill is not only a right but a duty; but in these cases there is an accurate description of the circumstances under which, and also of the kind of men whom it is permitted or enjoined to kill" [2, p. 124]. The prohibition of killing is very vague. War brings conditions under which killing is not only possible, but even mandatory. On the contrary, certain things considered harmless in times of peace are considered harmful in times of war [2, p. 184]. It cannot be said that Hegel takes a negative view of war in this book. He emphasizes the role of war in history, for example, a son did not automatically inherit from his father, but had an unwavering right to the property he acquired in war [2, p. 151]. Similarly, the problem of the independence of colonies resulted in war, which, if it made the colony independent, had positive results. He sees the independence of the colony as positive for the original mother country as well. If even a province is conquered after a war, then it is expected to rise up against the conqueror and his master, it is not a state union and Hegel does not consider it unlawful (he means natural law) and immoral.

Hegel is not a militarist, but he is very far from pacifism. Hegel considered war to be a force that is purposeful. It operates in the life of states and nations [10, p. 207]. Hegel perceives the state as something more than just a community that is supposed to ensure order and security. "War is not to be regarded as an absolute evil" [2, p. 258]. The accidental disappears in favor of the necessary. In war, the idealization of the concrete takes place, the futility of temporary things is dealt with. Efforts considered by someone to be final make war unstable; according to Hegel, war preserves the ethical health of nations. Hegel does not believe in the possibility of a world without wars, although he is not a promoter of war, he is its apologist as a natural means by which the world spirit carries out history. According to him, war is a necessity that humanity cannot avoid. It also sees war as inevitable from the perspective of its dialectical ontology. The world spirit also wages war against itself, especially if it alienates itself and passes into otherness. Hegel defends war as a political means, which, according to him, if successful, can prevent civil strife and strengthen the internal power of the state. "So, too, peoples, who have been unwilling or afraid to endure internal sovereignty, have been subjugated by others, and in their struggles for independence have had honour and success small in proportion to their failure to establish within themselves a central political power; their freedom died through their fear of its dying" [2, p. 259]. States much smaller than their neighbours survive

because their internal arrangements can be such as to exclude both peace and external security. A modern example is Israel.

Hegel does not adore or promote war, but he sees it as a natural element of the movement of human history. He is its defender. "In peace the civic life becomes more and more extended. Each separate sphere walls itself in and becomes exclusive, and at last there is a stagnation of mankind" [2, p. 259]. Particularity thus becomes more ossified, fixed. Eternal peace can be seen as some kind of ideal. Hegel speaks of Kant's proposal for a society of states, which was to settle conflicts. He sees a connection between Kant's idea and the Holy Alliance. Unions of states and alliances also create enemies. War strengthens nations, and states that engage in foreign wars gain peace at home. Even though war causes devastation of property and its insecurity, Hegel considers it a necessity. He also considers it a duty to make a sacrifice in the form of sacrificing one's life during war for the individuality of the state. If a state is in a situation where it could realistically lose its independence, then it is the duty of the citizens to stand up for its defense. When the defenders begin to attack the conqueror's territory, on their part, a defensive war turns into a war of conquest, according to Hegel.

Hegel is a sympathizer of a professional army, for which he has technical reasons due to the necessity of ensuring the defense of the state. It involves higher expenses and taxes, but he considers it a necessity. In connection with the class of soldiers, Hegel speaks of bravery. "True bravery in civilized peoples consists in a readiness to offer up oneself in the service of the state, so that the individual counts only as one amongst man" [2, p. 251]. Bravery includes the complete renunciation of one's own opinion and considerations, as well as complete obedience. Bravery is not risking one's life, thieves, robbers and murderers also do that. It is the self-deployment of combat-ready forces for the defense of the state. Here Hegel reminds us that decisions about war and peace should not be made by one person, or perhaps a small group of people, but that war should be decided by the classes of citizens who are responsible for the money funds.

From the point of view of the existence of a state, its recognition by other states is important, Hegel believes. At the same time, he believes that a state should not interfere in the internal affairs of another state. Hegel criticizes Kant's idea of a community of states, which should resolve potential disputes between states by agreement without violence and armed conflict. He recalls that this Kantian idea carries the assumption that states are in agreement. According to him, such an agreement can be disrupted at any time by a random element. Hegel does not consider Kant's solution to be realistic. "Therefore, when the particular wills of states can come to no agreement, the controversy can be settled only by war" [2, p. 264]. Very often, wars are provoked by insults between states. Hegel is definitely not a principled pacifist, like Tolstoy, for example. He does not think of the justification of

wars as a principle, but rather their outbreak when the welfare of the state is wronged or threatened.

According to Hegel, certain rules apply in times of war. First of all, he states respect for the state, which, even as an adversary, retains the status of a sovereign country. Every war also contains the possibility of peace. "War is not to be waged against internal institutions, or the peaceable family and private life, or private persons" [2, p. 265]. Modern wars are humane, says our philosopher. Wars are not full of personal hatred, they are about fulfilling duties. In spite of everything that happens, states, nations, and their individuals are unconscious instruments of the world spirit.

Law is the embodiment of the idea of freedom. Hegel perceives violence in history as a fundamentally natural process. It is a phenomenon that is completely legal and necessary. The unity and struggle of opposites, the negation of negation as basic dialectical laws are an expression of movement and change in history. Violence is the executor of changes in society, a *conditio sine qua non* for historical movement. Society is not static. "Thus, violence can change society, social development, as long as they are not changed by the knowledge of the "forward-moving spirit"" [10, p. 206]. Not all inhabitants have subjective freedom. According to James, very poor people do not have it because they are too limited by the external environment [7].

According to Hegel, war is an inhibitor of many changes that can be positive. Science and its support are often supported by the states themselves. Very often, power ambitions are behind this, Hegel points out. At that time, wars brought impulses to the field of science and technology. We can mention the advances in welding in World War II, which were also used in peacetime technology, e.g. in welding bridges, in welding the rocket with the first cosmonaut, but the military significance of the use of welding in the armoring of tanks and their automatic production was paramount. Wars can therefore also be an inhibitor of scientific progress. According to Hegel, war simplifies the contradictions in the state and unites the population.

An important philosophical work of Hegel is the work *Philosophy of History*. Hegel understands history as a process with a goal and direction. History, as is known, is perceived in certain stages. When discussing the stages of history, Hegel again comments on the issue of war and peace. As a polymath in the sense of having knowledge from all scientific disciplines, Hegel also had an excellent overview of history. Here he comments on historical wars many times. War in a democracy must maintain the constitutional procedures for its conduct. The state is the materialized spirit of the people and is animated by it in various actions, including wars. According to Hegel, wars themselves took place even before the emergence of states, but they did not give rise to history. A nation is great and moral when it is dedicated to the realization of its great goals. Especially if independence is at stake, bravery can be shown during war. Hegel gives

several examples, such as the nascent army of the North American sovereign colonies, or the Dutch troops under Philip II. According to our philosopher, blacks are also very courageous. This is because they do not have enough respect for life. This courage is manifested, for example, in their wars with Europeans. Hegel writes very interestingly about the states and history of black Africa.

Hegel describes the Trojan War as a kind of unification of the Greek poleis. Similarly, he speaks very positively of the Greek-Persian wars. "This war, and the subsequent development of the states which took the lead in it, is the most brilliant period of Greece. Everything which the Greek principle involved, then reached its perfect bloom and came into the light of day" [3, p. 276]. Hegel continues to calculate the positive consequences of the Greek-Persian wars. "The Athenians continued their wars of conquest for a considerable time, and thereby attained a high degree of prosperity; while the Lacedaemonians, who had no naval power, remained quiet [3, p. 276]. Neither the Trojan nor the Persian wars elevated the poleis to a unified and Hellenic state. The struggle for hegemony destroyed this idea. Although science was already developed at that time, Hegel perceives the impact of the Peloponnesian wars much more negatively than in previous cases, despite the fact that it is also associated with the life of Socrates. Hegel evaluates the Punic wars as the noblest period in the history of Rome. "The second Punic War thus eventually established the undisputed power of Rome over Carthage; it occasioned the hostile collision of the Romans with the king of Macedonia, who was conquered five years later" [3, p. 325]. He does not consider the first periods of Rome as such, he describes them as the plunder of the state, in which everyone was a soldier. For a long time, the only way for a plebeian to acquire property was to share in the spoils. The greatness of Rome was manifested in war and conquest, the wealth and glory from these wars held the Roman population together [3, p. 323]. The Roman art of war had its peculiarities, Hegel appreciates the phalanxes and legions. Despite this, this state did not achieve what Greek culture did. "There does not follow, as among the Greeks after the Median wars, a period of brilliant splendor in in culture, art and science, in which Spirit enjoys inwardly and ideally that which it had previously achieved in the world of action" [3, p. 326]. The principle of Roman life was not very concrete, which is why it did not succeed. Roman unity was too unspiritual. Triumphs, treasures and captives of various origins are not enough for a sufficiently concrete spiritual basis of unity. Hegel also describes and metaphysically evaluates other internal and external Roman wars. He always values external wars more than civil wars, since the state has great value for Hegel. He values the level of Roman law, as well as social wars for the freedom and elevation of the individual.

It happened that some civil wars achieved positive results. As an example, our philosopher cites Magna Charta Libertatum. Hegel also highlights the

Seven Years' War, through which Frederick II. consolidated Prussia. Hegel does not consider smaller states to be truly independent, since their existence and peace are guaranteed by their neighbors.

Not everyone, however, believes that Hegel cultivates a philosophy of history. I have no reason to doubt it. "If one were to adopt the weaker thesis that history is a game we may choose to play, Hegel would certainly advocate that we continue to play it" [8, p. 317]. Hegel has provided his original and full-fledged philosophy of history. I do not consider it a good idea to evaluate this philosophy of history from the point of view of Hegel's metaphysics with the idea that it will be applied to practice, especially in the area of peace and war. It is not at all relevant to present such metaphysical reasons as relevant in the philosophy of history, because it presupposes many premises. A metaphysical system is not usually a good general guide to the philosophy of history. "And the Hegelian advice to treat him as an embodiment of pure spirit is, in fact, the reverse of helpful" [11, p. 82].

Conclusion

In our paper, we presented Hegel's view of war and peace. We focused on more extensive well-known works due to the limited scope of the paper. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel also analyzes the topic of war and peace. In war, the individual is suppressed against the whole, but he still has the opportunity to demonstrate his potential. Hegel evaluates the principle of individuality and privacy negatively, connects it with women and contrasts it with the relationship to the state. One of the ways of recognizing a citizen lies in war. Hegel also talks about war in the *Foundations of the Philosophy of Law*. He mentions that war has special rules of conduct, while the command to prohibit killing is general and vague, in war one must kill. According to him, war is a regular political means. War heals nations in an ethical sense. He does not believe in Kant's idea of eternal peace. He appreciates defensive war, as well as the independence of a colony from a dependent state. He sympathizes with a professional army. War should not be used to affect civilians, especially civilians. The existence of a state is conditioned by other states and is often obtained through war. He considers violence in history to be natural. Many progressive changes in the field of science or social wealth occurred precisely on the basis of war as a stimulus. Hegel also writes about our problem in the *Philosophy of History*. Here he highlights the importance of the Trojan War and the Greco-Persian Wars in favor of the Greek poleis. He says that the Romans were unable to transform the positive results of wars into the same prosperity as the Hellenes. He justifies this with a few specific principles of life among the Romans. He states that many wars won many legal achievements. Hegel is not a promoter of war, he is an advocate of it as a means of real politics. He cannot be characterized as a theorist of militarism, even though pacifism is alien to him. Based on his own metaphysics, which justifies reality, he tried to perceive in wars and violence in history that which

led to progress, that which liberated, that which led to the emergence of state formations as good. He understood the rest as a necessary rational and reasonable reality, which ultimately leads to a higher stage of the world spirit. This metaphysical characteristic of it necessarily led him to its acceptance and justification.

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