
Hegel's Theory of Organism

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Abstract

The Organism Problem between Life Sciences and Philosophy of Nature around 1800 (Duchesneau, Gambarotto, Illetterati)

The contribution highlights the key features of Hegel's theory of the organism emphasizing the importance Hegel assigns to externality with regard both to the environment and to other individuals. Moreover, it will be shown how the structure of the organism implies for Hegel the apparently contradictory connection of lack and completeness: the organism is itself only as far as it is unfulfilled and there is life only as long as there is a lack. For this reason, in very general terms, living beings can thus be defined as the activity of a lack. In this respect, life itself displays for Hegel a reflective structure. The second element that will be emphasized is the emergence of the notion of freedom in the field of living nature, which seems to be particularly relevant with regard to the contemporary discussions on naturalism: although the idea of a "natural freedom" may look like like an oxymoron, it is what allows to think of the sphere of freedom as not opposed to that of nature.

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