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Weber and Hegel on authority, bureaucracy, and capitalism. The missing normative link

Abstract: Detailed comparisons between Weber and Hegel's political and social thought are rare and are usually written by sociologists and legal theorists. Also, not infrequently, they tend to generate more problems than they solve. This contribution aims to compare Weber's and Hegel's views on authority, bureaucracy and capitalism from a broader political-theoretical perspective, taking into account especially such issues like normativity, freedom, political economy and religion. The overall aim of this article is to argue that Weber and Hegel have both less and more in common than is usually thought. In particular, my purpose is to argue in favour of a claim that normativity, understood here in a prescriptive, i.e. ethical, and not the juridical sense, should be read as a key element in understanding the differences between the two thinkers in the areas of political theory and political philosophy.

Keywords: freedom, reason, ideology, political economy, religion.

Introduction

The intellectual and scientific endeavors that strive to analyze different aspects of Max Weber and G.W.F. Hegel's political and social thought are rather scarce. The majority of existing comparisons of Weber's and Hegel's political and social thought are written by sociologists, and usually are quite profound and relevant. There are positions that stress the important social and political continuities between Weber and Hegel (Just 2017; Spicer 2009; Oittinen 2014; Sager, Rosser 2009; Gale, Hummel 2003; Knapp 1986; Parsons 1966; Avineri 1994, 160). There are also analyses of the powerful and often neglected differences that set apart Weber's social thought from that of Hegel (Tijsterman, Overeem 2008; Welty 1976; Jackson 1986; Shaw 1992).

Still, as I will try to point out in this article, many issues are left so far unanswered. Take, for instance, the question of normativity (which is understood in this paper in ethical, speculative Hegelian terms, as the distance between effectivity and the Idea): Shaw approaches it when he writes about Aristotle's distinction between technical and practical rationality and how Weber embraced the first while Hegel embraced the

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latter (1992). However, the problem is not dealt with to its last consequences. In order to do so, one must advance on the realm of the philosophy of science. Here, Weber's positivism becomes very clear, although it seems to be tempered, on the whole, by some (ambiguous) preferences for Nietzscheanism – while Hegel's philosophy of science is specifically critical towards positivism. But normativity is at the core of what separates Weber from Hegel. It also explains why the writings of the first never toyed with ontological matters, even if Weber himself did not pursue this specific goal, but Hegel's philosophy most certainly did. Beside these aspects, Shaw's argument is deeply flawed, as I will argue below, from an ideological point of view, this being in direct continuity with our normative argumentation. This shortcoming reverberates upon his entire theoretical construction and, ultimately, does not make Hegel and Hegelian studies a favor, but on the contrary, it disadvantages them.

Next, authority, bureaucracy and freedom are brought into discussion. Weber's traditional, legal (rational) and charismatic ideal types of legitimacy, along with his ethics of moral conviction, respectively his ethics of responsibility, are confronted with Hegel's political philosophy. It turns out that the two are compatible to a certain point, although Weber's preference for modern democracy and universal suffrage goes beyond, from a strictly procedural point of view, to that of Hegel. Their approaches of bureaucracy, law and nationalism are also taken into account, thus bringing forward new similarities, and, nevertheless, new disagreements. This section ends with a debate on topics best described as belonging to political economy, a highly important field of knowledge neglected by the above-mentioned authors in their comparisons between Weber and Hegel. In this particular aspect, the differences separating these two highly seminal German thinkers outweigh from afar the points of convergence.

Capitalist political economy is ascribed such an important role in the argumentative economy of this paper that the following section is dedicated entirely to it. Adam Smith's concept of the 'invisible hand' appears to be, in economy, identical to Hegel's concept of the 'cunning of history', at a larger ontological scale. As a liberal, although a pretty peculiar one, Weber is fond of Smith's invisible hand and its capacity to generate social order in the absence of a predeterminate purpose in this regard. Nevertheless, Weber accurately acknowledges the limits of the market and the easiness with which it can transform itself into a suppressor, from a presumable guarantee of freedom. Hegel, on the other hand, although he mentions favorably Smith's invisible hand in one of his early works (Hegel 1979, 172-173), his cunning of history is far more complex and dialectical than the invisible hand. Moreover, Hegel was a critic of capitalism, in his own, speculative way, but, overall, explicitly, while Weber accepted managerialism, even if

reluctantly, as the guiding modern principle of both economy (market) and politics (bureaucracy).

Finally, the topic of religion, which substantially preoccupied both thinkers and must be taken into account in order to shed new light on their visions upon capitalism - is discussed in the last section of the paper. Even if Weber and Hegel insist that religion, especially Christianity, is inextricably linked to reason and thus induces secularizing effects, there is an enormous difference between Weber's account of religion, which leads to capitalism, and Hegel's historical and philosophical theology, which induces emancipation, progress, and ultimately the self-creation of spirit from its yet not superseded fallacious exteriority.

Every section of the paper makes use of the different semantics of rationality in the case of each thinker, a fact that explains their divergent positions on core issues, respectively their formal and partial agreements on other issues, extremely important as well; hence the title of the article: the missing normative link. Yes, the missing normative link, because the normative position assumed (Hegel) or rejected (Weber) by the two intellectual protagonists of this essay represents the basic premise of a successful comparative analysis of their concepts of authority, bureaucracy, and capitalism. After decades of approaching the issue almost exclusively from sociological positions, the Weber-Hegel intellectual relation needs more than ever to be consolidated from the side of philosophy and political science.

Methodology

As Peter Knapp pointed out more than three decades ago, Hegel's influence upon social sciences is huge; however, 'Hegel's influence operates prior to the differentiation of the social science disciplines and is often diffuse, indirect and disguised' (Knapp 1986, 606). This is obviously puzzling, since the numerous convergences that appear between the positions of these two intellectual giants are not supported by an epistemological common ground. Consequently, what sets them apart prevails in comparison to what makes them compatible, at least in certain respects. Yet, as the conclusion section stresses, they are both authentically, in their own ways, committed to scientific, politic and economic modernity.

The main research questions of this scientific endeavor are the following: why do Hegel and Weber seem to belong together with reference to issues like authority, bureaucracy and capitalism, only to discover immediately after that they are two entirely different continents? How, through what means can we obtain a grasp of these similarities/differences? Do Weber and Hegel share the same general ideological position? Last, but not least, how can one make sense of their engagement with modernity,

since they are epistemologically incompatible, politically contradictory and socially contiguous?

As announced in the introduction, the main hypothesis of my paper is that, in order to properly distinguish the social and political assumptions of both authors, and especially those referring to authority, bureaucracy and capitalism, it is best to start with a normative investigation. This leads – the secondary hypothesis, to the types of rationalities assumed by Weber and also by Hegel, rationalities that are understood as normativity expanded by means of political theory and political philosophy and which may seem continuous but, after a certain point of no return, they become utterly incompatible. Hence the substantial distances and also the occasional proximities between their tackling of authority, bureaucracy and capitalism. Furthermore, and this anticipates the paragraph where the methodology is going to be outlined, another important premise, that basically wraps up the entire stake of the paper is that the Weber-Hegel connection, if there is one after all, must be approached also from a philosophical and political science angle, and not left entirely to the sociological ‘camp’.

With the risk of becoming redundant, the research steps are as follows: first, I introduce the normative dimension that is at stake in the present discussion. Second, the political views of both thinkers are compared and placed into perspective. Third, I will insist upon issues pertaining to political economy that were largely neglected until now when it came to the comparison of certain political and social aspects existent in the work of both thinkers – to show how the normative aspect can shed a new light upon this dimension of our discussion. Forth, the rationalities that both Weber and Hegel claimed to have identified within religion are brought into question, along with the significant contrast that lies between them, in order to offer more weight to their stances on capitalism. Finally, the two types of commitment to modernity that both Weber and Hegel unquestionably share are stated. The methodology I make use of to highlight these steps is mainly anchored in political philosophy, political theory, and comparative politics.

The main results this paper delivers were already mentioned in the above introductory remarks. Weber and Hegel do not share the same epistemological ground, hence the substantial differences between their political and social views. However, as deeply modern thinkers, they tried to offer solutions that met and even went beyond the challenges posed by the huge transformations brought by modernity. Consequently, by taking this into account, one can understand and circumscribe better their similitudes when it came to political and social matters, particularly to authority, bureaucracy and capitalism.

Literature review

The literature partially pertaining to the topic analyzed here is thoroughly discussed within the next sections of the paper. I will single out the contributions that I consider to be the most relevant: Carl Shaw's article, 'Hegel's Theory of Modern Bureaucracy', Sebastiaan Tijsterman and Patrick Overeem's article 'Escaping the Iron Cage: Weber and Hegel on Bureaucracy and Freedom', and Gordon Welty's conference 'Hegel and Weber: From Transcendence to Rationalization'. Since these contributions, along with many others, are tackled in length as the argumentative economy of the present paper unfolds, and given also the question of redundancy, combined with the already appreciable dimensions of my article, I think it is best to cut short this already lapidary literature review here.

Normativity: Hegel's speculative logic and Weber's positivism

Although Shaw (1992) openly acknowledges the normative dimension that separates Weber and Hegel, he does so in an incomplete way, because he does not take this argument further, placing it where it belongs, into the field of philosophy of science. It follows that Shaw did not fathom this train of thought enough to call Weber a positivist, even if a *sui-generis* one (Shaw 1992, 381).

As mentioned in the introductory section, this practical approach of normativity (not only) in the case of bureaucracy differentiates Hegel from Weber, which favors a purely technical, instrumental one, but also points out, although indirectly, Shaw not being aware of this – to the conclusion that Hegel would have somehow embraced conservatism. Why? Because this Aristotelian distinction between practical and technical rationality is internalized by Shaw from the works of the prominent conservative philosopher Michael Oakeshott, who already offered his own normative-ideological flavor to the Aristotelian distinction when he analyzed what he called rationalism in politics, advancing the conclusion that modern political knowledge on the whole is technical, lacking empathy and the capacity to take into account different historical and cultural contexts, while conservative political knowledge, found in ancient and medieval times and, to a worrisome less degree in modern times, is a practical one, purged of idealism and of the homogenizing calculability that supposedly pervades all modern political projects (Oakeshott 2010). However, as I will argue in detail in the next section, Hegel was not ideologically indebted to conservatism, which he openly criticized, although some of his political stances may resemble from afar conservative aspirations.

However, Hegel was not a positivist either, and this conclusion is not fully endorsed by Shaw, even if it is directly anticipated, unlike the

ideological conclusion mentioned above. Positivism's main tenets are that it distinguishes between facts and values, on one hand, and that the researcher not only can, but he must also detach itself from the object of his research. This being said, experience and what it teaches us, experience devoid of ideology and of what Weber calls 'value-judgements' (Weber 1949) is the central assumption of modern positivism, positivism that has infused greatly the sociological thought in the making of the 19th century and, although to a lesser extent, continues to do so today.

Hegel is far from the methodological ambitions of positivism. Writing, as Knapp observed (Knapp 1986), before the modern differentiation of social sciences, he somehow anticipated their tendency towards fragmentation and their preference for calculability and mechanization; this evolution worried him, and he criticized it especially in his philosophy of mathematics, physics and nature. But this critique was not confined to scientific purposes alone: it entailed, as it will be argued below, consistent normative, ideological and ultimately political assumptions (Copilaş 2017). For him, experience can never prove anything in itself (Hegel 1984, 138). This is because experience is always inherent to a certain philosophical, a certain normative vision of the world; in itself, in the absence of a value-oriented teleological purpose, experience is not possible. Furthermore, modern sciences and their ambitions to isolate themselves from one another, each considering it is solely in possession of some kind of 'truth' are utterly mistaking: as Hegel wrote in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the truth is always the whole (Hegel 1977a). This amounts to recognizing the fact that modern sciences are not separated, and they are produced by a unitary modern vision of the world, a vision weakened and simultaneously propelled by its specific contradictions (Hegel 2004, 103).

Mediation is a key term in Hegel's philosophy. In order to think in a concrete way, one must take into account the many facets of a certain problem, event, conflict and so on; in the common understanding, the concrete, practical approach of facts is referred to exactly in the opposite, unilateral way. However, 'facts' cannot be isolated from the webs of mediations that made them possible in the first place, anticipated them and sublated them as well in new dialectical unfoldings. By proceeding so and isolating facts from the environments that caused them in the first place, and caused them like accidents, because things could have turned out in many other ways, one misses in fact the encounter with the issue at stake, because that issue, approached isolatedly, no matter how detailed, vivid and pertinent that approach is, is bound, sooner or later, to err. Separated from the ultimate truth, the whole, this will certainly be the case at some point (see Harris 1979, 3-96 in Hegel 1979).

As far as Weber is concerned, this kind of argumentation is utterly disposable, obscure philosophical nonsense that definitely impedes the possibilities of a proper social science to develop. While he concedes Hegel that every social phenomenon must be analyzed from as many angles as possible in order to be accurate and that passion is a necessary ingredient in teaching (Weber 1949, 2, 68-71), although Hegel offers passion a central place in history and far beyond history (Hegel 2011), Weber dismisses value-judgements as setbacks in the process of developing a true, empirical science, and he also fears that teachers who spice up their 'lectures stimulating by the insertion of personal evaluations will, in the long run, weaken the students taste for sober empirical analysis' (Weber 1949, 9). Furthermore, 'in the cultural sciences, the knowledge of the universal or the general is never valuable in itself'; this 'Hegelian panlogism' (Weber 1949, 80, 86) which inspired the Marxism that Weber never missed an opportunity to criticize – rests rather on faith than on accurate scientific premises (Weber 1949, 54-55).

Next, a real scientist, a sociologist, to follow Weber's train of argumentation, advances his hypotheses by identifying empirical patterns within the social field and confronting them to already construed 'ideal-types'. This method allows him to pursue various 'deviations' from the ideal type chosen in a certain analysis and to counterfactually pronounce himself regarding what the rational course of action might have been (Weber 1978, 6). As I will detail further, Hegel would definitely not agree with this approach. It must not go unnoticed, however, that Weber borrowed the 'ideal-type' concept from Georg Jelinek, a legal theorist that used it in a more normative and far-reaching way, applying it to both social and natural sciences (Machlup 1978, 236-239).

Weber insists in his magnificent and central work, *Economy and Society*, that sociology must take every measure possible in order to differentiate itself from history, which is a narrative science, based on causal relations, evenimental analyses and on amplifying the role of political and military personalities within different courses of action. Sociology, on the other hand, is preoccupied mostly with highlighting social structures and processes and how their interaction gives way to diverse outcomes, outcomes in which politics and military affairs play an important, but not necessarily decisive part. Those structures and processes are filtered from the beginning through the lens of a certain 'ideal-type' (Weber 1978, 19-21, 29). While the shortages of the 19th century type of positivist history are a thing of the past, even if Weber was probably not aware that his sociology shared with this methodological branch of history basically the same normative and epistemological assumptions – had he researched the philosophy of history thoroughly, like Hegel did – not necessarily history as processes and events of the past, an area in which Weber no doubt excelled

– he would arrived sooner or later to the conclusion that counter-factualism is rather an obstacle in the research of history than a successful method of analyzing it. It almost goes without saying that Hegel was deeply aware of that.

Furthermore, in order to simplify his sociological method, Weber considers that states, corporations, associations, unions and different organizations should be treated as individuals in the course of social action because they possess agency, which is not to be treated subjectively, as an end in itself, but only as a means of further deciphering social action, how it relates, in other words, to the surrounding social structures and processes (Weber 1978, 13, 22). As I will argue below, Hegel deeply disagrees with the former and agrees with the latter. Also it is worth noticing that, in this respect, Weber anticipates the highly influential sociological theory of agency, later developed by sociologists like John Langshaw Austin, Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, Anthony Giddens, and also by philosophers like Jürgen Habermas or political theorists such as Nicholas Onuf.

But maybe most important methodological and also normative contribution of Weber lies in the distinction he makes between formal and substantive rationality. The first one is technical, based on quantifiable premises and outcomes, and is exemplified by the managerial approach that has pervaded social sciences, especially economics, and also politics. In reverse, substantive reason amounts to what Hegel called truth as the whole: a plenary reason that aims to reconcile, never completely, however, all social classes, and all conflicting interests existent in society. While this is for Weber a utopian ideal – ‘As far as the dream of peace and human happiness is concerned, the words written over the portal into the unknown future of human history are: *‘lasciate ogni speranza’* (Weber 1994, 13-14) – he nevertheless accepts it, at least in the form of a metaphysical, divinely inspired need for justice impossible to put in practice in a world where conflict and what Kant called heteronomy represents the norm (Weber 1978, 110-111, 138, 140, 183-184).

So, counterfactually speaking – with all the vested risks associated to counter-factualism, which I fully assume, in order to be able to unfold the argumentation contained in this paper - how would Hegel relate to Weber’s normative and epistemological assumptions? First, while he would not deny at all the need for objective methodological criteria in modern sciences, he probably would, in a phenomenological manner anticipating to a surprising extent that of Husserl (Kojève 1969; Bondor 2013, 137-158) – conclude that every scientific and methodological endeavor is conditioned and predestined almost entirely by the type of consciousness and thus philosophical awareness belonging to that particular author. Acknowledging this does not necessarily equate with a matter of faith, only with the impossibility of integrally separating faith from science, a fact which,

according to Hegel's speculative totality, enriches them both and simultaneously places them in new perspectives.

Next, Hegel would certainly defend the personal evaluations of teachers of the pedagogical material as a means of actualizing and thus facilitating the understanding of the audience, even if this latter goal was not the core of his pedagogy, Hegel being a very exigent but also sympathetic teacher (Pinkard 2000). Regarding the universal, which for Weber must not be the goal of an empirical science, and of any science, to be precise, Hegel would also agree, arguing that universal is construed also against the voluntary scopes of those sciences, just like history uses the passions and the narrow personal interests of individuals as dialectical fuel for greater emancipatory purposes. However, following their specific methodological paths, all sciences should at least allow a glimpse of the universal to make them aware of the fact that their philosophical scaffolding is, on the long run, general human progress and emancipation.

Referring to the ideal-types that Weber valued so much, we must take into account the possibility that Hegel would consider them isolated mental abstractions produced by a far reaching but also surprisingly obtuse intellect. Nothing solid can proceed from the pen of an author, no matter how important; it has to be forged in the arena of social conflict. This is why, as a parallel, Hegel rejected the concept of the 'state of nature' that other hugely influential philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant enthusiastically endorsed. Because it places theory before practice: those authors were already the products of specific social and cultural environments, and their understanding of politics was deeply tributary to those contexts. How could they pretend, in these circumstances, to imagine and describe a supposedly pre-political reality that they could only think of with the modern ideas that shaped their argumentation? If we appeal to Hegel's logic, this theory coming before practice amounts to quantity coming before quality, necessity before liberty, intellect before concept and nature before reason. But quality is first because it arises as differentiation within quantity, as limit, consciousness, as need to overcome it into something new, something which is not outside quantity in itself, but something that fathoms the differences within quantity under the form of concept and thus propels quantity to go beyond its initial, static condition, to sublimate itself into something more dynamic, more rewarding. Quality is therefore quantity approached in a different way, and not metaphysics, not the beyond of quantity (Hegel 2010; Hegel 1986; Hegel 1984, 492-493).

Even if Weber clearly stated otherwise (Weber 1949), I incline to think that for Hegel Weber's ideal type would pretty much precede real, empirical knowledge and it would thus be nothing more than a mere intellectual abstraction, just like the state of nature. I am not arguing that Hegel rejected any kind of typology; on the contrary, he acknowledged the utmost

importance of classifications and hierarchies of all sorts, but these classifications must result from facts, even if those facts are unavoidable normatively inscribed, not pose facts as their result. Typology is a consequence of effectiveness, not its cause. This supposed approach of Weber's ideal type by the Hegelian logic has much to do, as I will argue later, with Hegel's interpretation of Kantian political philosophy.

Weber's historical sociology would surely be appreciated by Hegel, who on his turn insisted that history is much more than events and personalities; to the extent the latter exist, they are the embodiment of a historical stage of spirit, not isolated monads thinking and acting for themselves, even if they perceive themselves in this way (Hegel 2011). There is, however, one problem: the already mentioned counter-factualism. Hegelian dialectical rationality lies in things, not outside them: pure thinking is only and abstraction. It follows that dialectic is a philosophical method that proves its validity only retrospectively, not prospectively. To think how things could have unfolded in a more rational way than they did, this is for Hegel and incommensurable enormity: as we recall from the preface of the *Philosophy of right*, the Owl of Minerva spreads its wings only in the evening, after the trepidation of the day has passed (Hegel 2003).

Hegel would probably also disagree with the Weberian methodological simplification that would allow sociologists to treat states and collectivities like individuals in vice-versa. The individual, the isolated intellect, can never be, by himself, a substitute for the universal, politically incarnated by the state. Yes, the individual is the phenomenological vehicle of reason, but that reason is superior to him, even if it is dependent on him; political reason compels citizens to understand themselves as parts of complex and ever-changing webs of mediations, not as selfish intellects that pursue exclusively their own interests and believe they have no duty whatsoever towards the community. However, this is not to say that Hegel endorsed arbitrary state behavior towards its citizens; far from neglecting what liberals call negative liberty, he clearly stated in his philosophy of right that subjectivity is the basic tenet of modernity, but that subjectivity never reaches its full potential outside the community, but only as a part of community, as a part of the state, which for Hegel ultimately has a theological nature (Hegel 2003). I will return to this aspect later.

As for substantive and formal reason, Hegel is definitely a partisan of the first, considering the latter to be only procedural reason, extremely important but perpetually haunted by the danger of becoming self-sufficient, isolated and considering itself to be above the society which produced it in the first place. But for Weber, as we have seen, precisely the opposite is the case, substantive reason being especially a utopian ideal (even if, however, relative to non-European religions, Weber shows how substantive reason actually works by shaping the behavior of individuals and

groups and thus molding societies ‘imaginaries’ and political institutions – Weber 1978). I am not arguing that Weber exalted formal, bureaucratic-managerial reason: he reconciled with it in a rather existential, deferent and defensive way, but he never rejected it to the extent as Tijsterman and Overeem consider (Tijsterman, Overeem 2008, 80-83). And yes, for Weber ‘formal rationality is occupied with the problem *how* to obtain certain goals, while material (substantive, m.n.) rationality defines *what* these goals are’ (Oitinnen 2014, 45-46; emphasis in original), but this does not mean at all that for Hegel, formal rationality ‘is the idea of subjectivity as the main principle of modern life forms and especially philosophy’ (Oitinnen 2014, 48). Even the syntagma ‘subjective rationality’ is deeply problematic for Hegel, and it is not to be confounded what he calls ‘subjective spirit’, which is to be understood more as concept than as reason (Hegel 2015). Formal rationality, managerial rationality is for Hegel a form of rationality nevertheless, of collective thinking and action, but it has technocratic, undemocratic and regressive, quantitative implications that may endanger the progress of spirit on the whole.

To sum up, this different perspective on normativity that infuses both Weber’s sociology (formal rationality) as well as Hegel’s speculative logic – the Idea that gives birth to nature out of itself and then dialectically supersedes it as itself other – (substantive rationality), lies on the basis of their divergent, albeit contiguous, to some point – epistemological and ontological grounds. As we are about to see in the next sections, this normative difference, which is ultimately a difference of rationality and, in political terms, of ideology, infuses to a great extent what both authors have to say on authority, bureaucracy, and capitalism.

Authority, bureaucracy, freedom

Weber’s notorious typology of political authority – traditional, rational (legal), and charismatic (Weber 1978, 36-38, 142, 215, 219, 244-245; Weber 1994, 311-312), on which Hegel might have expressed doubts, due to the fact that is a particularization of the ideal-type method discussed above – advanced the idea that, in the modern world, rational authority prevails, traditional authority is on withdrawal, and charismatic authority is a hybrid, synthetic type of authority that will incline, after a certain point, either towards traditionalism, or towards legalism.

Forged along the rise of the industrial revolution and capitalism, the rational authority that gave birth to ‘mass democracy’ functions on bureaucratic principles. This is what Weber calls a calculable type of authority, one that also is in close connection to capitalism, with the need of the market to convey qualities into quantities in order to function according to its internal, standardized logic. Simply put, modern democracy and

capitalism share the same working principles of formal rationality: 'capitalism is the most rational economic basis for bureaucratic administration and enables it to develop in the most rational form, especially because, from a fiscal point of view, it supplies the necessary money resources' (Weber 1978, 224); 'Looked at from a social-scientific point of view, the modern state is an 'organization' (...) in exactly the same way as a factory; indeed, this is its specific historical characteristic' (Weber 1994, 146, see also 147-148). I will return to this argument in detail below.

Being a (dialectical) critic of capitalism (Hegel 2003; Hegel 1983, 139-145), Hegel cannot agree with substituting capitalist principles for democracy. This actually weakens democracy and, reifying it as technocracy, can easily turn it into an authoritarian regime. While Weber acknowledges on his own part the authoritarian tendencies of the market and the treat it poses to our democratic freedom (Weber 1978, 731), he nevertheless insists that interests, not ideas, rule the world (Weber 1978, 183-184). But for Hegel, this is an incomplete, non-dialectical conclusion: interests are not something alien to ideas, but ideas void of their concepts, ideas that perceive phenomenological scissions as permanent, when they are merely transitory. This type of ideas is specific to the intellect that did not yet reach, and may never reach, speculative intelligence (Hegel 1977b). Be that as it may, reason advances in history most of the times against individuals, without needing their cooperation. A very practical example Hegel offers us in this regard is the construction of a house: the elements used for construing it pull down, due to gravity, yet they are used to erect something against their natural condition; fire can burn the house down, but it also helps the building process by melting metal for nails, among other things; wind, which fuels fire and thus contribute to the house being done, is latter prevented from blowing freely by the walls of the house, and so on (Hegel 2011).

Hegel is keenly aware of the unstoppable fragmentation political modernity brings about, and he tries to overcome it by appealing to constitutional monarchy. In incipient forms, all Weberian types of authority are present in Hegel's political philosophy, especially the traditional and the rational one. In general, charisma is reserved to military and political heroes which Hegel perceives as the embodiment of spirit in different historical stages; consequently, they are used by reason for its universal purpose, even if they are aware of it or not, and thus act especially as concepts, not as isolated and obtuse intellects (Hegel 1988a). In the modern age, charisma almost disappears in the face of the relentless drive towards formal rationality, both in politics and in economics. But because nothing great in history cannot be achieved in the absence of passion, of charisma, and the impersonal, procedural charm of bureaucracy, the instrumental scaffolding of both modern democracies and capitalism, cannot give birth to a proper

charisma – Hegel argues that constitutional monarchies are the solution to this problem. They preserve both the institutional advantages of democracy and the charisma embedded in the person of the monarch. In this way, progress is not hindered: the people can maintain personal fidelity towards the king/queen and the royal family, something which is harder to do in the case of abstract institutions and processes, while the political repressiveness and arbitrariness of old, divine-right monarchies is replaced by democratic elections (Hegel 2003).

But Hegel is also circumspect in matters like universal suffrage, for example, not to mention women's vote, and this approach renders him more like a thinker with demo-protective rather than democratic propensities. He stresses the fact that the modern electoral process induces apathy and disinterest within the electorate, an aspect which deeply compromises the quality of democracy. Not only that: left to the arbitrary of intellects, citizens that are improperly educated (most of them) in political matters and tend to pursue only their personal interests, the universal institutionally embodied by the state is once again endangered (Hegel 2004, Hegel 2009).

On his turn, Weber acknowledges both the shortcomings and the benefits of the universal suffrage. The relentless bureaucratic homogenization driven by capitalist interests that occurs in modern democracies can be viewed by citizens as a threat, and they may vote in favor of stronger political regulations of the market. But this is just a social-democratic trap: parliaments are not able to maintain capitalism in leash no matter what they do. The danger of resorting to the state for this outcome resides in the fact that capitalism will pervade state institutions and will impose its priorities to a greater extent than in the case it would remain in the sphere of the market and be challenged by the state in various other ways (Weber 1994, 105). In the same time, universal suffrage allows citizens to exercise some kind of influence upon the bureaucratic machinery that imposes on them all sorts of regulations and may even send them to die, in case of war (Weber 1994, 105-106).

Weber and Hegel's notion of modern democracy bear striking resemblances. Hegel would almost surely approve of Weber when the latter writes that politics is essentially a struggle between classes and individuals and that democracy and demagoguery are inseparable (Weber 1994, 219-220). Acknowledging that democracy may mean 'an infinite variety of things', Weber defines it as the juridical situation in which 'no formal inequality of political rights exists between the individual classes of the population' (Weber 1994, 275). Like Hegel, he too is worried by the tendency of democracy to sabotage itself and calls for a political aristocracy to prevent it from happening. The aristocrat prevents the intrusion of emotions into public life, something the democratic 'masses' are by definition unable to

do; he is also more malleable and more accessible than the monarch, he possesses the political education needed in order to make things work and, most importantly, he possesses the means to live satisfactorily in the absence of a salary. He is not as corruptible as a bureaucrat is. ‘The most elementary, precondition of all is that an aristocrat should be able to live *for* the state and should not have to live from it’ (Weber 1994, 109-110; emphasis in original; see also 26).

However, despite these elitist corrections of democracy, neither Hegel nor Weber can be considered conservative thinkers. This is especially visible in the case of Weber, and much less so in the case of Hegel. With all his critiques towards modern democracy, Weber remained a firm liberal, although a rather melancholic, existentialist one. His (tempered) preference for Nietzsche may explain his favorable stances towards aristocracy (Weber 1978, 494, 934-935, 1134; Weber 1994, 122). Hegel, although considered by authors like Karl Popper or Bertrand Russell a fierce conservative, an enemy of democracy and even a fascist (Popper 2013, 242-290; Russell 1972, 730-746), he was none of that, despite the fact that, unlike Weber, he was not a liberal either. Even if his discontents with democracy breed more conservatism than those of Weber do, and also even if he favored more strong states that Weber did, who warned explicitly against the glorification of the state (Weber 1949, 46-47), Hegel was an adept of progress more than Weber was, who considered progress an impossibility (Weber 1949, 35). Last but not least, would a conservative criticize aristocracy with such conviction as Hegel did in the following passage?

‘Old right’ and ‘old constitution’ are such grand and beautiful words that it sounds like a sacrilege to rob a people of its rights. However, whether that which goes by the name of the old right and constitution is right or wrong cannot depend on its age. The abolition of human sacrifice, of slavery, of feudal despotism and of countless infamies was also always a cancelling of something which was an old right (Hegel 2009, 65).

Furthermore, would a conservative praise the French Revolution to the extent that Hegel did? ‘The beginning of the French Revolution must be considered as the struggle of the rational right of the state against the mass of positive rights and privileges which had oppressed it’ (Hegel 2009, 65).

Taking all these into account, we can move on to how both thinkers related to bureaucracy and to why Shaw’s remark that Hegel’s bureaucracy adopts normative stances while Weber’s bureaucracy does not, adopting a formal rationality and only implementing political decisions that are exterior to it – is, as announced in the introduction, incomplete and ideologically flawed (Shaw 1992). The Aristotelian distinction between practical and

technical rationality that Shaw extracted from Oakeshott's work on rationalism in politics is not an abstract, ahistorical one; on the contrary, it comes imbued of Oakeshott's conservatism. While Shaw acknowledged correctly that Hegel's bureaucracy is more than a managerial elite that follows the orders of politicians without ever thinking of contesting them, like Weber's bureaucracy is, he misses the ideological implications of the issue: after reading his article, one is left with the impression that Hegel is a conservative who challenges Weber the liberal and teaches him how politics should work. This is deeply untrue, since Hegel was not a conservative, Weber was not the serene liberal portrayed here, and many nuances of the relation between the two are overlooked.

Moreover, if we accept Shaw's indirect premise that Hegel was a conservative, this has normative implications that may make his departure from Weber clearer, but it does so on false grounds. In this case, to use Weber's terminology, Hegel may appear as a defender of traditional authority and Weber as a reluctant supporter of rational authority. Hegel is different from Weber on both normative and epistemological grounds; if we extrapolate this issue on ideological coordinates, the distance between them remains, but is placed in a new perspective: Weber's half-hearted liberalism comes face to face with Hegel's patriarchal pre-social-democracy infused, but never engulfed by liberalism.

As both Spicer and Welty observe, Weber and Hegel were greatly influenced by Prussian bureaucracy and by the strong, impersonal state Frederick the Great had built in the 18th century (Spicer 2004, 99-101; Welty 1976). This is yet another argument that favors the hypothesis that Hegel had conservative sympathies. Moreover, Hegel accepted a highly influential bureaucratic position in 1818, when he became rector of the Berlin university. What both Spicer and Welty fail to mention is that Hegel occupied this top position within the Prussian bureaucracy after a new rulership of Prussia, inspired by Napoleon's administrative reforms and the ideas of the French Revolution, proposed him to take this office (Hegel 1984, 377). Not out of opportunism, so to speak. His letters reveal that, from this posture, he was a very normative bureaucrat, not one that uncritically complied with all the political interests the Berlin university and Prussia itself were, up to that point, part of. Years earlier, he even entered a conflict regarding the (partial) censorship of the press requested by the French administration, a censorship affecting one of the papers he was working with. True to his maxim the philosophy is impossible in the absence of political (and mediatic) freedom, Hegel thus stood against his political hero, Napoleon, which, therefore, he did not admire uncritically, but only to the extent he acted in favor, not against freedom (Hegel 1984, 173, 587).

Continuing on the topic of bureaucracy, Sager and Rosser observe that Weber and Hegel share important common features when it comes to it: hierarchy, meritocracy, impersonality (Sager, Rosser 2009, 1142). Bureaucracy represented a new social class, one that was in the service of the universal and also stood above petty personal interests (Tijsterman, Overeem 2008, 74). Drawing from Shaw's account of Hegel's normative, moral bureaucracy, Tijsterman and Overeem consider that, in liberal theoretical terms, Hegel's concept of negative, personal freedom is less outlined than Weber's, even if they judiciously stress that is not at all absent, but on the contrary; when it came to positive freedom, however, Hegel was undoubtedly at the forefront and Weber lacked the usual intellectual precision in formulating his concept of positive freedom. This is because Weber did not believe, like Hegel, that objective freedom is possible: for him, there exist only conflicting normative visions upon the world, and none of them is neither imposed democratically, nor freely chosen. The public sphere is for Weber deeply and permanently heteronomous; here, his Kantian moral influence is most evident (Shaw 1992, 384; Jackson 1986, 152-153). According to Tijsterman and Overeem, 'Weber's political writings could be seen as disenchanting the Hegelian state and its pretention to represent objectively the public interest and to bring about human freedom' (Tijsterman, Overeem 2008, 80). Furthermore, 'for Weber, bureaucracy poses a threat to liberty' and, more importantly, there is no free will at all in social structures, because 'Every political structure of society predetermines choice and thus cannot be chosen freely, even if one personally agrees with it and would choose it if there was a choice' (Tijsterman, Overeem 2008, 80-81).

Despite Tijsterman and Overeem's seminal interpretation of the Weber-Hegel connection in terms of freedom and bureaucracy, they address neither Hegel's critique of Kant, which would have been particularly helpful, since Weber was, according to Shaw (1992, 384), a neo-Kantian, nor Hegel's deep awareness of how society predetermines individual choice, which can still remain a free and meaningful choice. Kant is criticized by Hegel both in his logic and also in his philosophy of nature. In the first because his use of reason is reduced to the intellect, and thus the power of reason to know and emancipate is severely damaged, and in the second because Kant reduces also space and time to the intellect as well, to subjective and therefore limited and isolated perception, without taking into account that time and space can only be understood in motion, space being sublated into time as history unfolds itself spiritually (Hegel 2010; Hegel 1970). For Hegel, heteronormativity is an abstract mental device that can only exist from the perspective of the intellect with his undialectical thinking and narrow understanding of the world; from the perspective of reason, heteronormativity is necessity as former, reified liberty and also as future,

prospective and mature freedom, a freedom that can only succeed through necessity, not by going around it.

Regarding how society predetermines individual choice which is, therefore, according to Tijsterman and Overeem's Weber, never free, Hegel would dismiss this argument without hesitation. First of all, because he agrees with it in the sense that the way in which an individual thinks and acts is always historical, always contextual: you cannot think beyond your time any more than a man can crawl outside its skin, Hegel affirms in his history of philosophy (Hegel 1995). To think otherwise, that a metaphysical liberty, separated from the society or societies you were formed in, separated from the cultural and political stakes of your own epoch – is possible, means to create, out of your illusions, a chimera, something seductive, but impossible. However, this is not a fatalist stance stating that authentic liberty cannot exist, because it is always in conflict with the social order in which it occurs; what Hegel is saying is that this particular conflict as well is a product of that order and acts like a function of it.

Moishe Postone's argument regarding how time and teleology, and work as well, are products of capitalism, may be very useful for this discussion (Postone 2003). It follows that liberty is nevertheless possible, both for and against a particular *stan-quo*; but a liberty that goes beyond every social order imaginable is nonsense, for the same reasons the state of nature taken into account above is nonsense: it is a product of a political community, with all its contradictions, merits and discontents. Politics can never be fully separated from freedom, just as history, the politics of the past, cannot; you may wish it, but then again you can also wish to be a millionaire, and think you are not entirely free if you do not become one. The world we seek is one thing, and the world that exists is another; the first can be brought closer to the second only through the second, only through work, the essential human activity that helps us to overcome the alienation that it produces in the first place, just like Hegel's concept of original sin, which came to be through knowledge and can only be historically overcome also through knowledge (Hegel 1988b). While this work always reproduces a certain social order, one cannot affirm, like Just does (Just 2014), that in the modern, rational state, work as man's activity of taming and exploiting nature is, for Hegel, over. While Hegel's understanding of work, is of course, a feature of intellectual modernity, just like his entire philosophical system is, Hegel links work with freedom, property and recognition. The struggle for recognition is permanent and it cuts across classes and epochs, taking various shapes; this struggle for recognition does not come to an end within the modern state; it is just extrapolated within new parameters. The quest for freedom, for property, that links subjective freedom to the rational, objective freedom of the state, is the main driving force of spirit: indeed, history ended in modernity because it just had barely begun, after

centuries and even millennia of metaphysical obstacles. This is why Hegel's notion of work, as historical as it is, also offers us, through recognition, a glimpse outside his era of emergent capitalism, towards a future that can never be anticipated and, most importantly, 'may take forms never contemplated in the system' (Hegel 1984, 53, 99, 337, 540).

From bureaucracy and freedom, we arrive at law, another major component of both Weber and Hegel's political thinking. For Weber, according to Tijsterman and Overeem, 'As part of the process of rationalization, laws themselves become more and more rational, but they do not have moral worth. The laws are contrary to freedom' (Tijsterman, Overeem 2008, 83). Here, as in many other respects, Hegel sharply disagrees: law is the rational, contextual form of political freedom. It is the culmination, rather than end of freedom, and it has ethical, not necessarily moral (individual) value. These being said, Tijsterman and Overeem's Weber is probably too pessimistic and antagonistic when he posits bureaucracy in reverse proportion with freedom. If they would have investigated more the Kantian side of Weber, they would have found out that heteronomy is not incompatible with an existing social order; it just functions as a reminder of the impossibility of that particular order to fully understand and reconcile with itself. Heteronomy is thus for politics what the unconscious is for psychoanalysis: the incapacity of the individual to fully know and assume himself, to deal once and for all with all the traumatic experiences that shape his existence, experiences that he makes sense of using signifying channels that parallel and intersect one another and eventually lead to what Jacques Lacan called 'symbolic overdetermination', which is, in the first place, the main reason for the existence of the unconscious (Lacan 2006, 88). Hegel also recognizes that societies cannot reconcile with themselves integrally in politics, but only in philosophy, religion and art, but he does not consider this a motif for abandoning this quest (Hegel 1983, 176-177; Pinkard 2000, 494, 603-604). Or, like Weber wrote, 'All our experiences teach us that "history" is unremitting in spawning ever new "aristocracies" and "authorities" which anyone can cling to if he feels he (or the "people") needs to do so' (Weber 1994, 69).

This Kantian Weber, one that arrives at terms with modernity when he writes about the 'free market', is definitely not the bitter, existentialist Weber that Tijsterman and Overeem endorse. Weber and Hegel's remarks on capitalism were neglected by the above-mentioned authors who compared their political, social and administrative thinking. Yet this is a crucial aspect, one that makes their normative and epistemological departure so visible, I have decided to treat it in a separate section of the paper.

As a side glance, nationalism is another theme on which both Hegel and Weber pronounced themselves in fruitful manners and, like capitalism, is a topic that remained unexplored in the comparisons made on different political and social themes existing in their works. Both thinkers share a deep distrust towards this modern ideology, even if in Hegel's case this aspect is often neglected, or worse, confounded with his ancient Greek inspired form of patriotism. But if one takes into account Hegel's stinging ironies towards political romanticism, his negative attitude towards nationalism becomes clearer (Moland 2011; Hegel 1988a; Hegel 1984). Weber also acknowledges that fact that nationalism is not to be overlapped with a language, a territory, or an anthropological type, but with memories of a common political past, respectively a common political 'destiny' (Weber 1978, 922-925). However, Hegel and Weber also believed in strong, 'aristocratic' nations which can play leading role on the international stage; Weber even calls them 'nations of masters', but he quickly points out that the only valid criteria to assert that mastery are cultural and democratic (Weber 1994, 269), while Hegel refers rather to civilizations than nations that have, in history, different spiritual missions (Hegel 2003).

Finally, Hegel would probably endorse Weber's distinction between the ethic of intentions and the ethic of responsibility, that suggests that a politician should be judged not by his intentions, but by his concrete results and how they benefit the society that elected him (Weber 1994, 359-360). This shows a more pragmatic, mature side of Weber's liberalism, which is nevertheless liberalism: 'We are "individualists" and partisans of "democratic" institutions 'against the tide' of material constellations' like Marxism or capitalism, for example (Weber 1994, 69) or, more explicitly, 'The present author', after voting for the conservative party at the end of the 19th century, 'now writes for liberal papers' (Weber 1994, 133-134).

Enter capitalism. The invisible hand and the cunning of history: similar but not the same

Weber's distinctive branch of liberalism that fiercely criticizes capitalism while stressing the advantages of a proper politically kept in check market resembles Fernand Braudel's and Karl Polanyi's understandings of capitalism as a monopoly which slowly paralyzes the competitive dynamic of the market while expressing itself in the same time in its name (Weber 1994, 69; Braudel 1992; Polanyi 2001).

The market, however, is a rather different story than capitalism. The market spontaneously entails processes of standardization, simplifying and homogenizing human economic behavior in predictable and calculable ways. Market induced standardization is very valuable in sociological terms, since it offers patterns of analysis that are much more coherent (and

inflexible) than traditional habits voluntarily practiced in a community. Furthermore, the way in which individual, personal interests seem to contribute to the edification of a harmonious social whole is, for Weber, appealing (Weber 1978, 30). But Weber agrees with Adam Smith that the market, even if it produces formal rationality, also contributes to substantial irrationality, by amplifying the already heteronomous conditions in which it activates in the first place: the market should not overlook the poverty and social displacement created in its name. A society in which the majority of the population is poor is not a well governed society; also, in a capitalist society, capitalists can pursue their interests more convincingly than worker, because they are fewer, more educated and have way more political and mediatic influence than workers (Smith 2009). Indeed, Smith warns us, way before Polanyi and Braudel did, that the market can be easily overthrown by the monopolistic interests of big capitalist investors who adopt its discourse on freedom and meritocratic competition while following exactly the opposite and sabotaging it from inside.

Following this line of thought, Weber was keenly aware not only of the almost inevitable overlap between capitalism and market, the suppression of competitiveness by monopoly, that is, even if he strongly criticized the Marxist solution to this outcome and Marxism in general on the grounds that it was too economically unilateral and deterministic (Weber 1978, 687-688; Weber 1994, 103-104)– but also of the authoritarian tendencies that are deeply imbedded in the market's internal logic (Weber 1978, 731). In Hegelian terms, the market contains the seeds of its own dialectical negation: competitiveness is negated by monopoly and freedom by authoritarianism. And, because, 'Every rational course of political action is economically oriented', respectively 'the modern economic order under modern conditions could not continue if its control of resources were not upheld by the legal compulsion of the state' (Weber 1978, 65) – this market authoritarianism becomes, through managerial bureaucracy, a political authoritarianism as well.

Once again, Weber is not the classical, serene liberal that considers competitive, market freedoms to contribute to general political freedoms. On the contrary, he points out the despotic tendencies present in both modern politics (bureaucracy) and economics (market), tendencies that are amplified, not tempered, by technological process.

Hegel is also at odds with capitalism. According to his dialectical logic, capitalism is quantity born from a previously quality that was reified due to its unavoidable internal contradictions, present-day necessity that occurred, centuries ago, as a form of liberty in the overcoming of feudalism. While capitalism is socially and economically violent, it is not to be understood as modernity in itself, or, as Teshale Tibebu argues, as the end of the master-servant struggle for recognition (Tibebu 2010). Just like in the above

discussed case of work, the struggle for recognition is never-ending, cutting across classes and historical contexts; only its forms are historical. Its drive, its dynamic content, not. Capitalism's existence is immoral, but it is nevertheless justified from an ethical (political, in Hegelian terms) standpoint. Phenomenological existence, the inconsistent effective diversity, is both a negation of spirit and also its particular and deficient vehicle towards the universal. Earned historical existence is tantamount to the right to presence, even as necessity. Liberty would be unconceivable in the absence of necessity just like, in sociological terms, agency cannot exist outside structure. But necessity cannot be sublated into something new only through outbursts of moral, individual indignation; however righteous, however rational particularity can become, it amounts to nothing if it remains isolated and cannot convert itself into an ethical stance. Simply put, the capitalist political economy cannot be replaced through isolated moral protests, but only through joint and significative political action. And yes, capitalism must be balanced by strong states with social acumen, by those states will unavoidably amplify capitalist contradictions (Hegel 1983, 139-140).

It is clear by now that for both Weber and Hegel, the political economy of modernity is deficient. Both understand and criticize the social effects of markets gone authoritarian wild, both understand that states can only limit to a certain extent this tendency, and in any case not reverse it, yet both, Weber too, as it will be shown, favor strong political leaders that can keep in check the turmoil created by capitalism, wars and so on. In short, the turmoil entailed by internal and international contradictions, preventing them from becoming too disruptive and threatening for the very existence of the state (Weber 1994, 270-271).

All these being said, Weber's Kantianism makes him accept the market with its formal rationality, its powerful contradictions and the permanent heteronomy that it entails, while Hegel too reconciles with capitalism in his own speculative way. Why, then, the invisible hand that drives the market and the cunning of history through which spirit exteriorizes and apparently negates itself in order to dialectically sublimate this alterity he produced into a propelling force – remain so different? Why Hegel and Weber cannot agree, after all, that they share the same basic understanding of general social dynamics? Did not young Hegel dedicate some sympathetic lines to Adam Smith' concept of invisible hand and had he not accepted, in his entire philosophy of economics, as Marx did, Smith's labor theory of value (Hegel 1979, 172-173; Hegel 2003, 411)?

Because, to use one again Weber's distinction, the invisible hand pertains to formal rationality and the cunning of history to substantive rationality. Major turning points or catastrophes in history reveal the absence, or even the opposite of reason. Still, reason does not disappear, but, according to

Hegel, uses even the most irrational materials out there to enforce its mundane, historical soteriology (Hegel 2011). From a psychoanalytic perspective, Lacan interprets the cunning of reason not teleologically, but individually, by making use of another Hegelian concept from the *Phenomenology*, the beautiful soul, which complains about the disorder the world is and the immorality it contains, without understanding how he substantially contributes to these regretful results. As he begins to understand the major role he plays in the world he so convincingly denounced, the beautiful soul becomes more rational, this being history's dialectical trick to make him aware of the phenomenological and spiritual mediations that circumscribe his entire existence (Lacan 2006). However, this approach of the cunning of history is made from particular, psychological positions, not by rational positions, and it actually represents a limitation of this fertile Hegelian concept.

Moreover, the spurious dialectic of the invisible hand makes its presence felt only to a certain phenomenological extent, even if its influence goes well beyond the field of economics and thus amplifying the problems it already produces there. It does not overlap Hegel's total and historical dialectic. It is only a form of incomplete necessity that stands in contrast with proper dialectical freedom. It lacks, furthermore, the historical continuity of successions and also the totality of simultaneousnesses of the Hegelian space – nature. Isolated from the speculative totality that nurtures it, and even aiming to replace it, the dialectic of the invisible hand thus becomes an abstraction and, in comparison to the wholeness of truth, an error. In Weberian terminology, even if formal rationality is more practical than substantive rationality and also is, in modern times, what makes the world go around, when it tries to become self-sufficient by separating itself from that all-encompassing substantive reason, or simulate it, it will fail.

The rational content of religion: capitalism as spirit?

Another theme that remains to be explored in order to stress out the stake of this paper resides in Weber and Hegel's also similar, but different approaches of religion. Taking into account the arguments I have presented so far, their different views upon the rational content of religion will hopefully emerge in a clearer perspective.

Weber's position on how the protestant ethic gave birth to capitalism is probably one of the best-known theoretical contributions he has ever made. Yet, from Hegel's perspective, is superficial. Weber stresses out how the Calvinist doctrine of predestination triggered, for its followers, an extremely powerful psychological conflict. Since God decided from the beginning of time, before the Earth itself was created, who will go to Heaven and who will go to Hell, your fate was determined even before you

were born, and your deeds could not have altered it no matter what. To think that you could have pleased God through your good deeds in order to pacify your conscience amounted, for Calvin, to a sacrilege. However, and this produced not only capitalism, but a whole new philosophy of work, according to Weber – the believer could ease this debilitating psychological drama in two continuous ways. First, to even think of it was regarded as a sign of a diabolical presence aiming to corrupt the soul of the Christian, preventing him from his daily routine. Second, this daily routine became overwhelmingly important in establishing some sort of contact with divinity, in contrast to the meditation, solitude, ascetism or the activity of caring for the poor, the crippled, the vulnerable, advocated until then by Catholicism and Orthodoxy. To become successful in your profession meant to honor God in the most effective way possible and thus to obtain a certain confirmation that you, as a believer, were chosen to spend eternity in Heaven rather than Hell. No pragmatism, no stinginess was involved in this spiritual equation, at least for now. Later, as generations passed, fortunes that were amassed in the beginning from purely religious reasons constituted the infrastructure of emergent capitalism and thus entered a process of secularization, despite their religious origins (Weber 2005; Weber 1978, 556-588).

Not only that: Weber pertinently singularizes the social embeddedness of religious feelings according to their class dimension with a meticulousness and accuracy that Hegel's philosophy of religion never achieved, although it never prioritized this specific theoretical objective (Weber 1978, 491).

This secularization process that developed on capitalist coordinates seems to have strong dialectical underpinnings. Why, then, Hegel would not have agreed with Weber's explanation regarding the religious origins of capitalism, with his account on how the (formal) rational content of Protestantism developed into something new, shedding its (already) religious form and becoming market rationality?

As already mentioned, Hegel theorizes the original sin in a manner very similar to work: both as the beginning and as the cure of the process of alienation, be that capitalistic or historical. God is spirit to the extent that it is disenchanted, to use Weber's term, and it is forced to renounce its metaphysical position that separated him from humanity in order to become the fuel of moral and social emancipation. God is knowledge, but not simple, representative, alienated thinking, in the form of religion; God is knowledge available for everyone in the form of concept (Hegel 1988b). Besides that, religion's ability to nurture progress, a notion that Weber strongly disagreed with, is nevertheless limited when compared to that of philosophy, because religion is valuable on moral, individual grounds; in modern times, the public role once played by institutionalized religion is taken over by the state, with its ethical and civic attributes that foster proper

citizens: moral, yes, but first of all ethical, aware of their duties towards the society and its political expression, the state (Hegel 1984, 572; Hegel 1961, 95-98). If states try to behave like religious institutions and enforce moral duties to their citizens they become ridiculous, because trust must first arise in order to be recognized, and not the other way around (Hegel 1961, 98).

For Hegel, Weber's account of religion becoming more and more rational contains two major weaknesses. First, market rationality and the capitalism it produces if not politically contained is formal rationality, technical rationality, while Hegel is, as already argued, a supporter of substantive rationality, way more socially and historically complex than bureaucratic rationality, despite its economic and/or political form. Second, to consider Protestant mentality the main premise of capitalism suffers, for Hegel, from the same deficiency the theory of the state of nature did: it places the cart before the horse. Minerva's owl only flies when the night falls, and its flight does not produce, neither does accelerate the day's end in any way: it just embraces and tries to make sense of it, retrospectively. As strange as this may seem for Hegel, often considered an abstract philosopher that valued rambling theoretical constructions and stylistic inflation above everything, ideas alone do not change the world, even if, of course, the world is changed through ideas. In Marx's terms, who followed Hegel's dialectical method closely, structural reality changes not only by super-structural means, but by a permanent dialectic between the two. Better yet, structure always changes faster than superstructure, hence the latter's inability to make sense of the metamorphoses of the former in time, but always tardively. Quality can never understand quantity by isolating itself from quantity and pretending to enlighten it from above, when it is only a limit, a differentiation within quantity that places it in a new ontological perspective. Protestant ideas and protestant spirituality may have contributed to a great extent to the development of capitalism, but they did not create capitalism out of their sheer intellectual power. Among other scholars, Fernand Braudel questioned Weber's theoretical assumption in depth (Braudel 1992) So would have Hegel, I presume, had he lived a century after his time.

Conclusion: two different commitments to modernity

Given the length of this article, and in order to avoid redundancy, I will summarize the conclusions as much as possible. I will start by noticing once again that my research is indebted in the first place to Shaw's use of the Aristotelian distinction between practical and technical rationality when comparing Weber and Hegel's understanding of bureaucracy (Shaw 1992) – a distinction acknowledged in Weber's own works as a differentiation between formal and substantive rationality, but that Shaw's use of this

finding is both schematic and ideologically flawed. Schematic, because bureaucracy is not enough if we are to thoroughly compare Weber and Hegel's political and social thought and see this distinction producing its full-size effects. Political economy, religion, nationalism, among other issues, must be taken into account. Ideologically flawed, because Shaw extracts his argument from the political philosophy of Michael Oakeshott, a leading conservative thinker. However, one of the main endeavors of the present paper was to argue that Hegel was not a conservative thinker, as he was neither a liberal nor a progressive, although he somehow inclined towards a sort of paternalistic, proto social-democracy. If we would accept Shaw's premise without taking into account its conservative, Oakeshottian background, it would follow that Hegel was also a conservative, anti-modern philosopher, while Weber was not, hence the fundamental ideological separation between them, end of story.

But this is not the case at all, since Hegel was a philosopher deeply attached to intellectual and political modernity. So was Weber, although the extent of his commitment to modernity never reached the totalizing ontological implications existent in Hegel's philosophical system. As already argued in the paper, Weber's commitment to modernity is indebted to the Kantian tradition, although Weber and Hegel alike had their discontents with modernity, especially Weber. Unlike Hegel's, Kant's political philosophy accepted heteronomy as one of its main premises, not as a temporary defensive posture reason is coerced to take in order speculatively unfold its historical possibilities. In other words, Hegel's trust in reason was firmer than Kant's and his followers, including Weber, even if Kant specifically warned about the antinomies of reasons, which Hegel dismissed maybe too easily as dialectical and dynamic contradictions.

Overall, Weber and Hegel are both deeply and seminal modern thinkers. What pulls them apart in the end is the internal, dialectical dynamic of modern reason itself, which oscillates between practical positivism and an also practical, but nevertheless contemplative inducing totalizing allness. Between two epistemological positions. This internal dynamic of modern reason can ultimately be understood as a perspective issue, as a question of normativity. Last but not least, this is why the conclusions reached by Weber and Hegel about authority, bureaucracy and capitalism may seem similar, but, in the end, reflect, as this last section is entitled, two relatively deeply different commitments to political, social and economic modernity.

I am very aware that this article could have very well been shorter and more focused on, let us say, only the problem of authority, or bureaucracy, or capitalism, as it is dealt with in the writings of the two German intellectual titans brought together – abruptly, at times – by my paper. But that would have equally entailed a sort of analytical and

conceptual impoverishment of the whole endeavor. By narrowing a research topic too much, one can miss important and fertile parallels and also discontinuities identifiable in different comparative analyses that can substantially enrich the topic of one's paper and place it in new and challenging perspectives. Or maybe this whole effort can be reduced to a methodological issue: sociologists and administrative theorists, researchers who approached so far Weber and Hegel's positions with reference to bureaucracy, and rarely advanced beyond this matter – endorse empirical research strategies that are narrower and more applied, while political scientists and political philosophers consider that a more inclusive (not necessarily shallow) method is needed in order to adequately grasp the whole implications that are at stake in this kind of intellectual effort. Far from representing a dilemma, I actually consider this multidisciplinary approach the best way of encountering and exploring a scientific subject, the best way of fostering intellectual progress.

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