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Methodological Reflections on the Philosophical Reception in Latin America: The Case of Hegel in Argentina

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Abstract. The research explores the specificity of philosophical reception in Latin America by examining the case of G.W.F. Hegel's reception in Argentina, which we consider representative of other reception studies in the region. Through this analysis, we aim to address the challenges associated with investigating reception, which reveal the limitations of this concept when applied methodologically in the philosophical domain. We argue that philosophical reception studies cannot abandon the critical pretension inherent to all rigorous philosophical work. To this end, we first outline the main difficulties related to studying Hegel's reception in Argentina. Second, we present a brief history of this reception based on our research in the field of Hegelian studies. Third, we address the problem of archive construction. Fourth, we consider the disciplinary framing of such research. Ultimately, we aim to define the philosophical boundaries of the concept of reception.

Keywords: philosophical reception, Argentine philosophy, Latin American philosophy

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Методологические размышления о восприятии философии в Латинской Америке: на примере Гегеля в Аргентине

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Аннотация. В исследовании рассматривается специфика рецепции философии в Латинской Америке на примере рецепции Г.В.Ф. Гегеля в Аргентине, которую мы считаем репрезентативной для других исследований рецепции в регионе. Посредством этого анализа мы стремимся решить проблемы, связанные с исследованием рецепции, которые выявляют ограничения этой концепции при методологическом применении в области философии. Мы утверждаем, что исследования рецепции в философии не могут отказаться от критического подхода, присущего всем строгим философским работам. С этой целью мы сначала обрисовываем основные трудности, связанные с изучением восприятия Гегеля в Аргентине. Во-вторых, мы представим краткую историю этого восприятия, основанную на наших исследованиях в области гегельяноведения. В-третьих, мы рассмотрим проблему создания архива. В-четвертых, мы рассматриваем дисциплинарные рамки такого исследования. В конечном счете мы стремимся определить философские границы концепции рецепции.

Ключевые слова: философская рецепция, аргентинская философия, латиноамериканская философия

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Introduction

In recent decades, reception studies have proliferated significantly to the point where much historical research in philosophy has adopted this methodological framework. This trend may stem from methodological reasons related to contemporary approaches to reading classical texts. Today, philosophical interpretation is often seen as a form of “use” of a thinker’s ideas by another, serving philosophical and extra-philosophical purposes that often diverge considerably

from the “original” intentions of the interpreted author. This mode of appropriation is initially shaped by two factors: the manifest purpose of the interpretation and the historical and cultural particularity in which this purpose is situated.

Philosophy in Latin America has developed mainly through the reception of European thought. Historical reasons led many early philosophical explorations in the Americas to involve transplanting European ideas or concepts. The appropriation of Enlightenment notions, for instance, was crucial to the emergence of sovereign revolutions and the birth of nation-states in the 19th century. This fruitful connection between Latin American philosophy and European thought was viewed in the 20th century in various ways, ranging from passive and uncritical reception to outright denial as a condition for developing a genuinely American philosophy.

At first glance, the study of philosophical reception in Latin America presents a challenge due to its multiplicity. Geographic, historical, and cultural diversity pose obstacles to a unified consideration of reception. However, examining a representative case could offer insights into the specificities of Latin American philosophical reception. The reception of Hegel’s philosophy in Argentina can serve as an exemplary case for studying philosophical reception in Latin America.

An initial examination of Hegel’s reception in Argentina reveals, on the one hand, the philosopher’s constant presence in philosophical debates and, on the other, the methodological difficulty of precisely delimiting this presence. References to Hegel appear in the writings of 19th-century thinkers, but his figure only gained prominence in the early 20th century, achieving a particular centrality in intellectual debates by mid-century. Despite this persistent presence, there are few and belated records of studies addressing Hegel’s reception in Argentine philosophy.¹ This difficulty is replicated in other Latin American countries regarding reception studies of other classical philosophers. Generally, there are very limited bibliographic precedents for conducting research of this nature. It is even common for no prior work to exist on the reception of a classical philosopher in certain Latin American countries.

The absence of precedents constitutes one of the methodological challenges of studying philosophical reception in Latin America, but it also allows for delineating its regional specificity. Given the lack of relevant precedents, an initial approach to studying Hegel’s reception in Argentina, for example, requires the construction of an archive. This necessitates a kind of “archaeology” of Hegelian studies in the country, which in turn demands bibliographic tracing and the use of qualitative social research tools such as interviews and the reconstruction of academic trajectories in the face of disappearing sources. This implies a hybridization between the techniques of professional philosophy and qualitative social research, which raises additional methodological problems. This is because the archive’s

¹ Only in this century can three precedents be identified: [1–3]. In 2021, we edited a *dossier* in the journal *Tópicos. Revista de Filosofía de Santa Fe* (Argentina), which expands knowledge on this topic: [4–8].

sources appear to belong to cultural history, the history of ideas, and the history of philosophy, necessitating a specification of the field to which the inquiry into the uses of Hegelian thought pertains.

In delimiting the philosophical reception of Hegel in Argentina as an object of study, it is necessary to reconsider the very notion of reception to account for its cultural and historical meaning without undermining the critical and reflective character it entails as part of an active and specific philosophical operation. The notion of reception, while attempting to distance itself from a passive conception of readings, risks stopping at mere description, placing interpretations on equal footing even when substantial differences in their philosophical quality might exist. In philosophical reception studies, it is impossible to avoid taking a position on the correctness of a given interpretation, and it is even desirable to do so. To approach reception as a creative reading deployed for new purposes in unforeseen contexts, this article develops the methodological considerations of Hegel's philosophical reception in Argentina.

Through this analysis, we aim to thematize a series of methodological difficulties related to this type of historical research in the field of philosophy. At the same time, we seek to problematize the very concept of reception because, as we will argue later, it acquires peculiar characteristics when applied in the philosophical domain. To this end, we first present a brief history of Hegel's reception in Argentina, drawn from our research in the national field of Hegelian studies. Based on this historical reconstruction, we identify the constitution of specialized archives and disciplinary framing as specific methodological problems. These issues highlight the limitations of the concept of reception. As we will argue, philosophical reception studies cannot abandon the critical pretension inherent to all rigorous philosophical work. Since Hegel's reception in Argentina can be representative of other reception studies in Latin America, the considerations in this article can be generalized and prove beneficial for preliminary explorations in such studies.

Historical Overview of Hegel's Reception in Argentina

The historical development of Hegel's philosophical reception in Argentina can be divided into four periods.² Temporally delimited, these periods are as follows: from the 19th century to 1918; the second period begins in 1918 and extends to 1949; the third spans from 1949 to 1983; and the fourth from 1982/83 to the present. The first period covers the hundred years from Hegel's appointment to the Chair of Philosophy at the University of Berlin in 1818 to the University Reform in Córdoba in 1918, a pivotal event in Argentine university life. During this century, readings of Hegel were indirect and occurred within the framework of eclectic spiritualism [9]. References to Hegel's work are scarce and scattered,³ and other

² In this section, we follow the guidelines of the following article [5].

³ For example: [10. P. 243] or [11. P. 301–303].

German philosophers, such as Herder or Kant, had a more significant impact [12; 13]. Given this indirect engagement, it is possible to assert that the proper reception of Hegel in Argentina effectively begins in the second period.

During that period, philosophy in the country experienced a process of academic professionalization. [14]. In that context, an “anti-positivist reaction” [15. P. 40] created favorable conditions for the rediscovery of German idealism, the revaluation of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. These trends were intensified by cultural exchanges between Argentina and Europe, both through the arrival of Spanish and Italian exiles to the region⁴ and the educational travels of Argentine philosophers to Germany.⁵ In 1931, on the centenary of Hegel’s death, Carlos Astrada and Alejandro Korn published articles in homage to the German philosopher [16; 17], inaugurating Hegelian studies in the country by initiating direct, critical and academic readings of Hegelian sources. Toward the end of this period, Hegel’s presence was evident in one of the central moments of the professionalization of Argentine philosophy: the First National Congress of Philosophy in 1949, where Juan Domingo Perón’s closing speech included references to the German philosopher [6].

The period of Hegel’s reception in Argentina from 1949 to 1982–1983 was marked by disputes over the figure of the German thinker. In a time of significant national turmoil, characterized by frequent interruptions to democratic order, Hegel’s thought was both appropriated and contested, serving as a reclaimed part of the philosophical tradition and a primary target of criticism. During these years, interpretations proliferated, dividing into existentialist, Marxist, Peronist, and liberation theology readings. Whether vindicated or criticized, Hegel was a central figure for a philosophy shaped by the major philosophical and political currents of the era.

The exhaustion of the last civic-military dictatorship (1976–1983) and the beginning of the democratic transition ushered in a period more conducive to professional philosophical research. The start of this fourth period of Hegel’s reception was marked by the publication of the first doctoral theses dedicated to the philosopher.⁶ In the last quarter of the 20th century and the first decades of the 21st century, the field of Hegelian studies in Argentina consolidated, as evidenced by a series of indicators specified in Section 4.

This brief overview of Hegel’s reception in Argentina highlights his constant and dominant presence in the national intellectual landscape, from the professionalization of philosophy after the University Reform and especially

⁴ For example, José Gaos to Mexico in 1938, Manuel García Morente to Argentina in 1938, José Medina Echeverría to Mexico in 1939 (he later moved to Colombia in 1945, to Puerto Rico in 1946, and to Chile in 1952), Rodolfo Mondolfo to Argentina in 1939, José Ferrater Mora to Cuba in 1939 (later to Chile in 1941).

⁵ In 1926, Nimio de Anquín; in 1927, Luis Juan Guerrero and Carlos Astrada; and Coriolano Alberini in 1930.

⁶ We refer primarily to [18–20].

following the restoration of democracy. We propose considering the history of Hegel's reception in Argentina in the 20th and 21st centuries as the process of constituting and consolidating a specific field within academic philosophy: the field of Argentine "Hegelian studies."

Archive Construction as a Methodological Problem

Gaos argued that reconstructing the development of ideas in a given period requires an archive containing testimonies, documents, books, articles, and letters from that time [21. P. 26]. The archive involves collecting, preserving, and organizing both direct and indirect sources related to the topic under investigation. Without a constituted archive, the inquiry into the development of an idea relies on the historian's arbitrary selection, resulting in a partial and vague [22]. Therefore, the construction of a thematic archive is a prerequisite for rigorous historical and philosophical reconstruction.

The initial challenge of researching Hegel's reception in Argentina is the absence of a consolidated archive on the topic. By this, we mean there is no systematized and shared archive to document the various uses of Hegelian philosophy in Argentina. No exhaustive chronologies exist of works dedicated to Hegel's philosophy that have been published in Argentina or written by Argentine researchers and subsequently published abroad. Nor are there bibliographic repositories that record such works.

The lack of a bibliographic corpus is evident in the first period of reception we have delineated, but it also appears in later periods. During the 19th century, references to Hegel by Argentine intellectuals were general and indirect, based on allusions rather than systematic studies. Reconstructing this early reception of Hegel in Argentina, considering its dynamics and consequences, requires a bibliographic archaeology to trace these allusions and references.

Hegel's presence in Argentine thought became more pronounced in the other three periods but remained fragmented. The political instability that marked the country – and much of the region – during the 20th century led to fluctuating regulations for preserving sources and bibliographic materials in libraries and research institutes. This persistent instability resulted in the loss of books, articles, academic writings, and curricula directly or indirectly related to Hegelian thought. It also disrupted the continuity of Hegelian ideas in the country. Addressing this fragmentation may require reconstructing academic trajectories to document the German philosopher's integration into the professionalization of philosophy in Argentina. Additionally, interviewing key academic and cultural figures involved in his reception could help project a unified development.⁷

⁷ In our research, we have partially carried out both the bibliographic tracking and the use of qualitative tools in social research. We compiled a fairly complete chronology of the Hegelian bibliography, including both monographs and translations into Spanish [23]. We interviewed senior

Field Determination as a Methodological Problem

Another difficulty in researching the philosophical reception of Hegel in Argentina is determining the disciplinary field to which it belongs. Answering that this field is philosophy might resolve the problem, but it does not. The philosophical field is too broad and thus vague and nonspecific. Moreover, as noted earlier, the use of techniques not typically employed in philosophical research (archive work, interviews, academic trajectory reconstruction) might lead to the conclusion that such research does not belong to the field of philosophy but perhaps to history or the social sciences. It could be a historical study of the role of Hegel's reading in the professionalization of philosophy in Argentina. Although its object would be philosophy, the approach would be historical. Another possibility is that our research falls under the category of "Argentine philosophy" – or "Argentine thought" – as it is often referred to in many university programs in Argentina. Nevertheless, in this case, the primary interest lies in 20th century Argentine philosophers and their engagement with Hegel's work, rather than in Hegel's ideas or the interpretations of his work produced in Argentina during that century.

It is interesting to note that part of the bibliography on a classical author like Hegel is regarded simply as secondary literature on the author. At the same time, other works are classified as "reception" and marked as "Argentine" (or associated with another national philosophy, typically from peripheral countries). We will address this use of the reception concept in the next section. Here, we highlight the second classification, which is linked to national contexts. What makes an Argentine academic who produced philosophical texts about Hegel not be referred to as a Hegel specialist but as an "Argentine philosopher"? This shift is significant because it results in their texts not being integrated into the theoretical frameworks of specialized research on Hegel's philosophy (even in Argentina). At the same time, interest in their Hegelian readings is often confined to the field of Argentine philosophy or thought. This displacement excludes their work from the international field of Hegelian studies while reducing interest in their output to strictly national terms, as if it could only concern their compatriots.

However, we understand the philosophical production on Hegel by Argentine academics (or those of any other nationality) as part of the international field of Hegelian studies. By including their work in this field, we promote the expansion and enrichment of a secondary bibliography on Hegel while limiting interest in their production to its relation to Hegel's reading rather than the author's biography or the national historical context in which they lived. The latter explains why research on Hegel in Argentina does not belong to the historical field of Argentine philosophy but to the philosophical field of Hegelian studies. This does not imply a disregard for history but rather subordinates it to proper philosophical interests, such as the interpretation of classical texts within the discipline.

researchers in the field, which has provided us with valuable insights into our understanding of the process of consolidating Hegelian studies in Argentina since the last quarter of the 20th century.

This specification of the philosophical field should not be seen as a manifestation of the “coloniality of knowledge” or the validation of peripheral philosophical work based on its alignment with the “Western philosophical canon.” On the contrary, positioning national philosophical production on equal footing with a secondary bibliography produced in central countries can reclaim that production by situating it within the context of multicultural philosophical discussion and international cooperation, thereby providing a rigorous understanding of the work of a classical author like Hegel. At the same time, it could elevate the work of Argentine specialists who, not having produced what is considered an “original philosophical work,” are also not studied within the field of Argentine philosophy.

Having identified the field of our inquiry as Hegelian studies, it is important to specify its definition further. First, Hegelian studies should be understood as a specific area of specialized philosophical research akin to traditional philosophical disciplines (logic, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of law, etc.), histories of philosophy (ancient philosophy, modern philosophy, history of ethics, Argentine philosophy, Eastern philosophy, etc.), or philosophical specializations (feminist philosophy, Critical Theory, pragmatism, etc.). Hegelian studies, like Kantian or Heideggerian studies, do not correspond to any traditional philosophical discipline because they address all these disciplines simultaneously. Hegel’s work has been studied from epistemological, ethical, logical, and other perspectives. It has not always been approached historically, so Hegelian studies cannot be said to belong to any history of philosophy, such as modern or contemporary philosophy, as when they are identified with the period of “German Idealism” or, more recently, “Classical German Philosophy.”

While much Hegelian research can be subsumed under historical inquiry, other work cannot, as it invokes Hegel to discuss current problems in theoretical or practical philosophy – for example, when critiquing Kantian epistemology or using Hegel’s organicist arguments to defend ethical and political communitarianism. Again, what defines the field’s boundaries is not a set of more or less constant philosophical problems (as with traditional philosophical disciplines) or historical interest or geographic location (as with histories of philosophy). What organizes the field of Hegelian studies is, more simply, Hegel’s life and work, its meaning, context, the readings it has received, the appropriations it has undergone, etc.

The concept of “Hegelian studies”⁸ is descriptive, not normative. It does not seek to justify the need for a research field but rather to account for a concrete reality. The field of Hegelian studies already exists. At least in Argentina, it is part of the professionalization of philosophy, alongside Kantian or Heideggerian studies; it is a field of specialization or a philosophical specialty.

⁸ *Hegel-Studien* or *Hegelforschung* in the German context; Hegelian Studies or Hegel Studies in the Anglo-Saxon world; *Études hégéliennes* in French academia; *Studi hegeliani* or *Studi su Hegel* in Italy; *Estudos hegelianos* in Brazil; *Estudios hegelianos* in Spanish.

The question of the cultural and institutional conditions for constituting a scientific field far exceeds the competencies of researchers from academic philosophy. We are more likely to find knowledge on this topic in sociology or history.⁹ However, based on a general understanding of academic work, the constitution of a specialization field requires precise institutional conditions. The most basic of these is institutional stability – that specialists can conduct their research professionally in an environment that respects their societal contributions and with a predictable horizon for the continuity of their work. The institutional instability that marked Argentina's 20th century is likely the main reason why the process of constituting the field of Argentine Hegelian studies took so long to consolidate and only stabilized when general living conditions for Argentines also stabilized with the restoration of democracy, which has been uninterrupted to this day.

Unlike institutional stability, other conditions are indicators of a field's consolidation rather than strict conditions for its constitution, continuity, and growth. These indicators include: (1) the formation of research groups and centers, as well as academic societies in the specialty; (2) the existence of specialized journals; (3) the holding of periodic meetings (congresses, conferences, etc.); (4) the presence of the topic in curricula; (5) full-time research positions in the field; and, above all, (6) the development of "philosophical lineages," meaning that at least one generation of specialists has trained another in the same specialty, verified through the supervision of doctoral and postdoctoral research grants and the direction of undergraduate and graduate theses. Tracing these philosophical genealogies requires particularly interviews with field referents, which help reconstruct academic trajectories, map the ties between "teachers" and "disciples," and outline the respective academic "families."

These indicators establish the existence of an international field of Hegelian studies. The numerous research groups on Hegel's philosophy worldwide, the Hegel-Archiv in Bochum, and various academic societies, including the Internationale Hegel-Gesellschaft and the Ibero-American Society of Hegelian Studies, correspond to the first indicator. Journals like *Hegel-Studien* (Germany), *Hegel-Bulletin* (UK), *Studia Hegeliana* (Spain), *Estudos Hegelianos* (Brazil), *The Owl of Minerva* (USA), *Hegel-Jahrbuch* (Germany), and *Antítesis* (Spain) account for the second. The same applies to the third indicator, regarding periodic meetings, and the last three indicators.

It thus seems unproblematic to assert that an international field of Hegelian studies indeed exists. The more relevant question, however, is whether this field has also been established in Argentina. Except for the second indicator, all others were met in the last period of Hegel's reception in Argentina (from 1982–1983 onward). The first Hegelian groupings emerged, such as *Diálogica*, the Section of Studies on Hegel's Philosophy at the National Academy of Sciences of Buenos

⁹ Bourdieu's work is the most appropriate place to find a sociological conception of scientific fields. See, for example: [24].

Aires, which has organized ten symposia to date. Other academic meetings in the specialty were also held, such as the Jornadas de Filosofía Alemana (Congress of German Philosophy), with a strong presence of Hegel's philosophy, at the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences of the National University of Litoral; the Germano-Latin American Congress on Hegel's Philosophy, organized by the Germano-Latin American Research and Doctoral Network in Philosophy (FILORED); the Workshop on the Actuality of Classical German Philosophy at the University of Congreso and the National University of Cuyo (Mendoza); the International Symposium on Classical German Philosophy, organized by FILORED and the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina; and the Conference of the Hegelian Studies Group at the University of Buenos Aires.

Regarding the fourth indicator – the presence of the topic in curricula – it is relatively straightforward to ascertain how much Hegel's philosophy is taught in most university philosophy programs, as well as in philosophy courses within psychology, sociology, law, economics, and other disciplines. The differences lie in degree: whether Hegel is taught more or less than in other historical moments, whether it is taught sufficiently, or whether more or less time is dedicated to him compared to other classical authors. The presence of a philosopher in curricula is significant as an indicator because it implies that educational institutions have faculty with the philosophical training necessary to teach these contents, which in turn presupposes the existence of a specialization field enabling such training.

Concerning the fifth indicator – full-time research positions in the specialty – the period beginning in 2003, with substantial state investment in scientific research and development, particularly in the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), marks a time when doctoral and postdoctoral grants, as well as full-time research positions addressing Hegel's philosophy, multiplied. This intensified the production of doctoral theses and the publication of specialized books and articles on the topic. Finally, the sixth indicator – the possibility of establishing philosophical lineages within the field – is particularly evident from the 1982–1983 generation onward, which, as noted, was the first to produce doctoral theses on Hegel. However, philosophical genealogies can be traced back at least to the generation of Carlos Astrada and Alejandro Korn in the 1930s.

This brief overview of the leading indicators of a philosophical field's constitution allows us to conclude that a field of Hegelian studies indeed exists in Argentina, comparable to its counterparts in the region and globally. This field is the object of our research – and, at the same time, the context in which our research takes place. Our work thus represents an immanent reflection on the field itself. As actors within it, we investigate the conditions of its constitution, delineate its disciplinary boundaries, trace the philosophical genealogies that traverse it, systematize its philosophical production, and draw conclusions about the specificity of Argentine Hegelian studies and, more broadly, about Hegel's presence in national culture.

As is clear, this type of inquiry can only be conducted when an academic field is consolidated or in the process of consolidation. It is also evident that this inquiry is not specifically historical, sociological, or reducible to the history of Argentine philosophy. It pertains to a strictly philosophical concern about Hegel's work and is likely to achieve better results if carried out with rigorous philosophical training specialized in Hegelian studies – supplemented, of course, by empirical social research techniques not typically part of professional philosophers' toolkits today but invaluable for reception studies like ours.

The Methodological Limits of Philosophical Reception

The concept of reception can be understood as an attempt to address a historical and philosophical problem. It seeks to shift the focus of interest from an author's intention in writing a text to its recipient, who reads and interprets the text, whether in its "original" context (the author's time and place) or, as noted, "out of place" (in a different time and place).¹⁰ As Peter Burke observed, the term "reception" is older than commonly believed; it finds antecedents in terms like "tradition," "afterlife" (*Nachleben*, *Fortleben*), "*fortuna*," "legacy," "transmission," and of course, "influence" [26. P. 22]. The latter term, however, conveys the idea of a mark left by the author on a reader or group of readers and has thus been set aside by scholars, as it suggests a unilateral action (the author's impact on the reader) without significant reciprocity (e.g., the new meanings introduced through reading or the unforeseen uses of a concept or theory in a new context).

What was novel toward the end of the 20th century, when reception studies began to proliferate, was precisely the attempt to move away from this idea of influence and, under the concept of reception, explore a more active view of readers. Thus, less emphasis was placed on the survival of an author's ideas and their continuity among readers – which the older concepts of tradition, legacy, and influence presuppose – and more on the originality of readings [26. P. 21–23].¹¹

The idea that the same concept, read in a different historical and geographic context, can come to mean something very different from what its author intended – without this necessarily representing a "misreading" or "misinterpretation" – has had very positive effects on reception studies, particularly in peripheral nations like those in Latin America, where European ideas, generally dominant in Western culture, are always "out of place." For this reason, Jorge Dotti once remarked that "reading foreign texts inevitably generates autochthonous responses; moreover, receiving and concretizing discourses originating in other spheres is always an original gesture, no matter how Menardian it may be"

¹⁰ On this, see: [25].

¹¹ It was the intellectual context of post-structuralism and postmodernity in the last quarter of the 20th century that weakened the concepts of influence and legacy, shifting interest toward the productive and original uses of readings. Ideas such as the "death of the author" [27] or the relativization of the author's role in interpreting philosophical and literary texts [28] opened the door to a genuine hermeneutics of reception.

[29. P. 98]. The adjective “Menardian” refers to Jorge Luis Borges’s 1939 short story “Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote.” Pierre Menard, an imaginary author, rewrites parts of Don Quixote. However, the result is identical to the original. Yet, for the critic who read it, Menard’s version was infinitely superior: “Cervantes’s text and Menard’s,” Borges writes in the story, “are verbally identical, but the second is almost infinitely richer. (More ambiguous, its detractors will say; but ambiguity is richness)” [30. P. 449]. Dotti’s point is that no matter how faithful an interpretation may be to a text, the mere act of rereading it creates a new text, produces something original – especially if read “out of place.”

This way of viewing readings shifts the focus to what a reader does with a foreign text rather than what the author might have intended to say and, crucially, beyond the problem of whether readers “read well” or “read poorly.” That problem becomes irrelevant; what matters are the potentially infinite, always original interpretations a single text can generate among its readers. The concept of reception highlights what is done with the text, underscoring the reader’s active and creative role. Reception, therefore, does not refer to passively welcoming another’s ideas but to “using” or “appropriating” those ideas for unforeseen and always legitimate purposes, regardless of how distant they may be from their purported “original meaning.”

This understanding of reception – and, with it, the type of study conducted when analyzing one author’s interpretation of another – is methodologically pertinent and, as noted, has yielded valuable results. The problem, for us, is that reception is conceived as non-philosophical or at least as an intellectual activity not intrinsically philosophical. This may indeed be the case: not all reception, simply by being reception, must be understood as a philosophical operation. The problem arises when the reception study in question concerns something intrinsically philosophical, such as a philosopher’s reading of another philosopher’s work. Does the fact that the appropriation of a philosophical concept is carried out as part of a philosophical endeavor by a philosopher does not alter the meaning of reception at all?

The answer to this question is affirmative: when what is received is a philosophical concept or argument within a philosophical reflection, the very notion of reception undergoes substantial modification. Judgments about the correctness or incorrectness of an interpretation, which are part of philosophical practice, are not only permissible in a reception study but should not even be avoided. These correct judgments are inherent to philosophical criticism. When the reception is of a philosophical work, the reception itself is philosophical; thus, the critical pretension of judging the correctness of the interpretation, use, or appropriation of philosophical ideas cannot legitimately be suppressed. This critical element, which is not recommended in reception studies in general, is inevitable and even desirable in the context of philosophical reception studies.

Axiological neutrality, or the suspension of judgment regarding a given interpretation, is not admissible in philosophical work. Analyzing the interpretation of a philosophical text simultaneously involves judging its correctness. Hence,

Dotti violated his methodological precept when, for example, he stated that “Alberdi uses Kant, a thinker he has not read and interprets in a philologically debatable way” [13. P. 38]. This “philological” weakness – which could well be called “philosophical” – does not, however, diminish the value of Alberdi’s appropriation because “what from the standpoint of scientific knowledge of the Kantian text might be described as an exegetical error acquires, instead, another meaning – valid in itself – due to the sociopolitical function it fulfills” (*loc. cit.*).

This specific example from Dotti’s work marks the limits of philosophical reception. While not renouncing the critical element of philosophical analysis, the persistence of criticism does not imply the invalidation of an interpretation. If readings are always original, no matter how Menardian they are, it is also true that their originality often stems from misinterpretation, shifts in horizons of meaning, or even the distortion or instrumentalization of specific ideas for philosophical or extra-philosophical purposes foreign to their author and original context.

Conclusion

Delimiting Hegel’s presence in Argentine philosophy entails particular methodological challenges that replicate those of many reception studies of a classical philosopher in Latin America. First, the study must confront the absence of a consolidated archive. The initial approach to Hegelian studies necessarily begins with an “archaeology” of mentions and uses of the German philosopher in the country, which in turn requires bibliographic tracing and the use of qualitative social research tools, such as interviews and the reconstruction of academic trajectories.

A problem linked to the difficulties of assembling an archive is that this hybridization between professional philosophy techniques and qualitative social research creates disciplinary indeterminacy. Hegelian studies in Argentina, following the analyzed case, present special characteristics that demand a combination of philosophical exegesis, analysis, and criticism alongside specific historical and social research instruments, such as archival work, interviews, or academic trajectory reconstruction. Analyzing philosophical texts alone is insufficient because they are not systematically interconnected or part of a unified “discussion.” Often, they do not account for the actual appropriation of Hegelian philosophy in the public sphere and Argentine culture. Thus, other sources are necessary, including personal memory. However, this does not mean the interest lies in describing mentalities, reconstructing the evolution and circulation of concepts in a given society, or mapping the ideas prevalent in an era, as intellectual history often does. This peculiar combination of history and philosophy, which affects reception studies in the field of philosophy, is problematic and thus demands disciplinary demarcation – though this does not entail outright rejection of interdisciplinarity. In the case of Hegel’s reception in Argentina, the object of

research and the research itself are philosophical and belong to the same field: Hegelian studies.

In conclusion, given the specificity of the delimited object, it is necessary to reconsider the very notion of reception to account for its cultural and historical meaning without undermining the critical and reflective character it entails as part of an active and specific philosophical operation. The notion of reception, while attempting to distance itself from a passive conception of readings, risks stopping at mere description, even when substantial differences in philosophical quality might exist among them. One of this article's conclusions is that when reception studies are conducted in the field of philosophy, it is not only impossible to avoid taking a position on the correctness of a given reading or interpretation but also desirable to do so.

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