Revista Internacional de Educación y Análisis Social Crítico
Mañé, Ferrer & Swartz.
ISSN: 2990-0476
Vol. 2 Núm. 2 (2024): Noviembre

Max Stirner and G. W. F. Hegel on the "Struggle for Recognition" in education

Max Stirner y G. W. F. Hegel sobre la "lucha por el reconocimiento" en la educación

Max Stirner e G. W. F. Hegel sobre a "luta pelo reconhecimento" na educação

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Abstract

In this paper, I compare and contrast what Max Stirner has to say about the philosophy and politics of education in two of his works, a not so well-known text entitled The False Principle of Our Education (1842), and the much better known The Ego and its Own, which was published three years later. In both of these works, Stirner engages critically with the philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel. However, Stirner's relationship to Hegel is ambivalent. Although in a number of respects his thought is recognizably Hegelian, nevertheless he rejects as much from Hegel as he accepts. This is especially true of Stirner's views on education. Two aspects of Hegel's thought are relevant for an understanding of Stirner's theory of education. The first is what Hegel has to say about mastery-and-slavery and the 'struggle for recognition' in his Phenomenology of Spirit (1807). The second is the theory of education which Hegel sets out in his Philosophy of Mind, or the third volume of his Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences (1817), and which he repeats four years later in his Philosophy of Right (1821). Hegel does not himself connect these two things together. It is later thinkers, including Max Stirner, who have done that. My argument is that although the views expressed in both of Stirner's works were inspired by a particular reading of Hegel, nevertheless in The False Principle of Our Education the reading in question is very different from and superior to that of The Ego and its Own because it is not nihilistic. The theory of education that is set out in The False Principle of Our Education is a significant intermediary between the philosophy of Hegel and the far more critical approaches to pedagogy, which emerged in the 20th Century, especially in the writings of Paolo Freire and Ivan Illich.

Keywords: Anarchism, authority, educational history, Hegel, slavery, Stirner, philosophy education, political education.

Resumen

En este artículo comparo y contrasto lo que Max Stirner tiene que decir sobre la filosofía y la política de la educación en dos de sus obras, un texto no tan conocido titulado *El falso principio de nuestra*

educación (1842), y el mucho más conocido *El único y su propiedad*, que se publicó tres años después. En ambas obras, Stirner aborda críticamente la filosofía de G. W. F. Hegel. Sin embargo, la relación de Stirner con Hegel es ambivalente. Aunque en varios aspectos su pensamiento es reconociblemente hegeliano, sin embargo, rechaza tanto a Hegel como lo acepta. Esto es especialmente cierto en lo que respecta a las opiniones de Stirner sobre la educación. Dos aspectos del pensamiento de Hegel son relevantes para comprender la teoría de la educación de Stirner. El primero es lo que Hegel tiene que decir sobre el dominio y la esclavitud y la "lucha por el reconocimiento" en su *Fenomenología del espíritu* (1807). La segunda es la teoría de la educación que Hegel expone en su *Filosofía del espíritu*, o en el tercer volumen de su *Enciclopedia de las ciencias filosóficas* (1817), y que repite cuatro años después en su *Filosofía del derecho* (1821). Hegel no relaciona por sí mismo estas dos cosas. Son pensadores posteriores, incluido Max Stirner, quienes lo han hecho. Mi argumento es que, aunque las opiniones expresadas en ambas obras de Stirner se inspiraron en una lectura particular de Hegel, sin embargo, en *El falso principio de nuestra educación*, la lectura en cuestión es muy diferente y superior a la de El único y su propiedad, porque no es nihilista. La teoría de la educación que se expone en *El falso principio de nuestra educación* es un relativo término medio significativo entre la filosofía de Hegel, y los enfoques mucho más críticos de la pedagogía, que surgieron en el siglo XX, especialmente en los escritos de Paolo Freire e Ivan Illich.

Palabras clave: Anarquismo, autoridad, historia de la educación, Hegel, esclavitud, Stirner, filosofía de la educación, política educacional.

Resumo

Neste artigo comparo e contrasto o que Max Stirner tem a dizer sobre a filosofia e a política da educação em duas das suas obras, um texto não tão conhecido intitulado *The False Principle of Our Education* (1842), e o muito mais conhecido *O único e a sua propriedade*, publicado três anos mais tarde. Em ambas as obras, Stirner aborda criticamente a filosofia de G.W.F. Hegel. No entanto, a relação de Stirner com Hegel é ambivalente. Embora em vários aspectos o seu pensamento seja reconhecidamente hegeliano, ele rejeita Hegel tanto quanto o aceita. Isto é especialmente verdade quando se trata das opiniões de Stirner sobre a educação. Dois aspetos do pensamento de Hegel são relevantes para a compreensão da teoria da educação de Stirner. A primeira é o que Hegel tem a dizer sobre o domínio e a escravidão e a “luta pelo reconhecimento” na sua *Fenomenologia do Espírito* (1807). A segunda é a teoria da educação que Hegel expõe na sua *Filosofia do Espírito*, ou no terceiro volume da sua *Enciclopédia das Ciências Filosóficas* (1817), e que repete quatro anos depois na sua *Filosofia do Direito* (1821). Hegel não liga estas duas coisas sozinho. Foram pensadores posteriores, entre os quais Max Stirner, que o fizeram. O meu argumento é que, embora as opiniões expressas em ambas as obras de Stirner tenham sido inspiradas numa leitura particular de Hegel, no entanto, em *The False Beginning of Our Education*, a leitura em questão é muito diferente e superior à de *O único e a sua propriedade*, porque não é niilista. A teoria da educação exposta em O falso começo da nossa

educação é um meio-termo relativamente significativo entre a filosofia de Hegel e as abordagens muito mais críticas da pedagogia que surgiram no século XX, sobretudo nos escritos de Paolo Freire e Ivan Illich.

Palavras-chave: Anarquismo, autoridade, história da educação, Hegel, escravatura, Stirner, filosofia da educação, política educativa.

Introduction

In this paper I compare and contrast what Max Stirner has to say about the philosophy and politics of education in two of his works, a not so well-known text entitled *The False Principle of Our Education* (1967 [1842]), and the much better known *The Ego and its Own,* which was published three years later (1982 [1845]). In both of these works, Stirner engages critically with the philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel. John Clark has rightly claimed that the influence of Hegel on Max Stirner's ideas generally is 'inescapable;' Stirner's thought, he maintains, is 'shaped from beginning to end by its relationship of opposition to the 'Hegelian system' (Clark, 1976, p. 10). Clark gives his readers the impression that Stirner rejected everything that Hegel stood for. In fact, though, Stirner's relationship to Hegel is more nuanced than Clark suggests. Indeed, it is decidedly ambivalent. It might be said that Stirner accepts as much from Hegel as he rejects, and that in a number of respects his thought generally is recognizably Hegelian in terms of its underlying assumptions (De Ridder, 2008; Stepelevich, 1976; 1985; 2006). This is true of Stirner's views on education. Stirner may be said to be a follower of Hegel in some sense of the term. And yet he is also a strong critic of a number of Hegel's ideas, not least of his views on education.

Two aspects of Hegel's thought are relevant for an understanding of Stirner's theory of education. The first is what Hegel has to say about mastery-and-slavery and the 'struggle for recognition' in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Hegel, 1977 [1807], §§166-230, pp. 104-38). The second is the theory of education which Hegel sets out in his *Philosophy of Mind*, or the third volume of his *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (Hegel, 1971 [1830]), and which he repeats four years later in his *Philosophy of Right* (Hegel, 1979 [1821]). Hegel does not himself connect these two things together. It is later thinkers, including Max Stirner, who have done that. This is one of the reasons why Stirner's philosophy of education is of interest. Dennis Carlson has drawn attention to Paolo Freire's view, given in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* that Hegel's idea of a struggle for recognition does have an application to education (Carlson, 2002; Freire, 1972). However, Carlson overlooks the fact that Max Stirner is a precursor to Freire in this regard.

The paper has three parts. In the first, I discuss the views of Hegel on the struggle for recognition in the *Phenomenology*, and his views on education in the *Philosophy of Mind* and the *Philosophy of Right*. In the second part of the paper, I examine Stirner's engagement with Hegel's philosophy in *The Ego and*

its Own. In the third, I turn to consider Stirner's reliance on Hegel's ideas in *The False Principle of Our Education*. My argument is that although the views expressed in both of Stirner's works were inspired by a particular reading of Hegel, nevertheless in *The False Principle of Our Education* the reading in question is very different from and superior to that of *The Ego and its Own.*

1. The Philosophy of Hegel

1.1 Hegel on the Struggle for Recognition

In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel distinguishes between two types of recognition (*Anerkennung*), which he refers to as false recognition and true recognition respectively (Hegel, 1977 [1807], §§182-88, pp. 112-14). He associates the idea of false recognition with that of inauthentic consent. This is the type of consent which he thinks sometimes exists between masters and their slaves. Hegel contrasts this with true recognition. As Hegel understands it, true recognition is based on the acceptance by two individuals that they are equals, given that they are both human beings or moral persons. As such, they both appreciate that they have a moral if not a legal right to treat one another and be treated by one another with equal dignity and respect. In his *Philosophy of Mind,* Hegel says that where true recognition exists each individual behaves 'towards others in a manner that is universally valid, recognizing them -as he wishes others to recognize him- as free, as persons' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §432, pp. 172-73). Hegel assumes that in a society that is based on the principle of true recognition there would be no masters or slaves.

In the *Philosophy of Mind,* Hegel argues that the struggle for recognition takes place in what is usually referred to as the 'state of nature' (*Naturzustande*), prior to the creation of human society (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §433, p. 173). He maintains there that it is the final resolution of 'the battle for recognition' and 'the subjugation' of the slave 'under a master' which leads to 'the emergence of man's social life' generally, as well as to 'the commencement' of their 'political union' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §433, 173).

In the *Philosophy of Right,* Hegel argues that the outcome of the struggle for recognition in the state of nature is not merely the creation of human society but also, more specifically, that of the hierarchical social institutions that compose it. In Hegel's words, 'the objective ethical order posits within itself distinctions' which endow it 'with a stable content.' These distinctions are 'absolutely valid laws and institutions' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §144, 105). These are, Hegel maintains, associated with 'duties' which are 'binding on the will of the individual.' Hegel was a firm believer in the principle of my station and its duties (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §148, remark p. 106). Ethical life, as Hegel understands it, has as much to do with what today would be regarded as professional ethics, or with the relative duties which are associated with one's place or station in society, as with the universally valid rules and associated duties which human beings owe to one another as abstract moral persons.

Hegel associates the emergence of human society with the parallel emergence of relationships of authority. As both Alan Patten and Renato Cristi have pointed out, Hegel's views regarding the subject

of authority are not consistent (Patten, 2005 [1999]; Cristi, 2005). When speaking of authority, Hegel usually has in mind the ethical right of a superior to command, and the corresponding ethical duty of subordinates to obey those commands, which he thinks exists in all hierarchical social institutions. In the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Philosophy of Mind,* although not elsewhere, Hegel tends to assume that those who possess *de facto* authority also possess it *de jure*. In other words, he thinks that they ought also morally speaking to possess it. Their subordinates, therefore, may be presumed to have a moral duty or obligation to obey their commands. In these texts, Hegel assumes that respect for those in authority is a necessary precondition for social cohesion, or for the preservation of social order. He holds that it is respect for authority, at every level, which holds societies together.

In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel refers to the 'specific forms of ethical life' that exist within social institutions. He alludes to the authority relationships and the role obligations which individuals possess in consequence of their social identity as members of those institutions. Regarding the question of how these individuals gain knowledge of where their duty lies, Hegel is critical of the Kantian idea of a philosophical 'doctrine of duties.' He insists that it should not be necessary that knowledge of one's own social identity as a corporation member should be 'supplemented in each case by the addition that "therefore men (sic) have a duty to conform to"' the ethical demands which '"this institution"' makes upon them (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §148, remark p. 106). Despite his criticisms of Kant's views on this subject in general, Hegel does at least agree with Kant's opinion that, in Hegel's words, 'I should do my duty,' freely and conscientiously, 'for duty's sake' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §133, p. 253).

In the *Philosophy of Right,* although not elsewhere, Hegel associates authority with freedom or liberty. He argues there that liberty and authority are compatible with one another, provided the notion of liberty is conceptualised in a certain way. For liberty is not a matter of doing what you want, or of acting as you please, as some people maintain. Following in the tradition of Plato (1997), Aristotle (1984), and John Locke (1978 [1690]), Hegel associates that view with the notion of license, not that of liberty properly understood (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §95, pp. 259-60; §149, p. 107; §150, p. 107). According to Hegel, true liberty necessarily involves conscientiously carrying out the relative duties which are associated with one's place or station in society and its institutions. This includes obeying the commands of those who have authority over you.

1.2 Hegel on Education

Hegel's commitment to the principle of my station and its duties lies at the heart of his views on education, as well as his social and political thought more generally (Allen, 1946; Carlson, 2002; Lilge, 1974; Palmer, 2001; Tubbs, 2005; 2008). His views on education in the *Philosophy of Right* (1821) are much the same both as those expressed earlier in the *Philosophy of Mind* (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §151, *Zus* p. 260; §153, remark p. 109; §174, p. 117; §174, *Zus* p. 265; §175, pp. 117-18; §187, remark pp. 125-26; §187, *Zus* p. 268; §209 remark p. 134; §319, remark p. 206; Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, pp. 55-

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ISSN: 2990-0476
Vol. 2 Núm. 2 (2024): Noviembre

64). Hegel's theory of education is developmental. Arguably following Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric* (Aristotle, 1984, II, 12-15, 1388b32-1390b15, pp. 2213-2215), Hegel assumes that there is a 'series of distinct stages through which the individual as such passes' in education from childhood to mature adulthood (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55).

Hegel asserts in the *Philosophy of Right* that 'education is the art of making men (sic) ethical' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §151, *Zus* p. 260). Like Plato in his simile of The Cave in the *Republic* (Plato, 1997, VII, 514a-520a, pp. 1132-37), as well as the Stoic philosophers of Greece and Rome, Hegel maintains that education leads to liberation or emancipation from a certain form of slavery. Hegel associates this condition of servitude partly with a lack of knowledge and partly with the idea of reason losing control over the passions or emotions. It is this, in his view, which leads to a life of egoism and injustice, rather than one of virtue and justice. Hegel refers in his *Philosophy of Right* to 'the hard struggle against pure subjectivity of demeanour, against the immediacy of desire, against the empty subjectivity of feeling and the caprice of inclination' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §187, remark pp. 125-26). Like a number of his predecessors, Hegel maintains that liberty or freedom, properly understood, requires self-discipline. He insists that the view that 'freedom as such means freedom to do as we please' is childish. It is associated with what he considers to be 'wholly uneducated, crude, and superficial ideas' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §319, remark p. 206).

So far as the first stage of development (that of childhood) is concerned, Hegel argues that the purpose of education 'is to break down the child's self-will and thereby eradicate his purely natural and sensuous self' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §151, *Zus* p. 260). In the *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel is insistent that 'to allow children to do as they please,' or to be 'so foolish as to provide them into the bargain with reasons for their whims,' is 'to fall into the worst of all educational practices.' This is so because, far from inculcating the value of and capacity for self-discipline, this approach to education encourages children to develop what Hegel considers to be 'the deplorable habit of fixing their attention on their own inclinations, their own peculiar cleverness, their own selfish interests, and this is the root of all evil' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60). Self-will, he argues, is the 'germ of evil.' For this reason, it 'must be broken and destroyed by discipline' in and through the process of education (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60).

In the *Philosophy of Mind,* Hegel argues that in the first stage of development, the demands of ethical life are presented to the child in the concrete 'shape of something given, of an individual, an authority,' for example a parent, or a teacher. What the child learns is therefore necessarily in the first instance something which is 'given to him on and with authority' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60). Hegel associates the notion of authority with that of superiority. In the *Philosophy of Mind*, he observes that child in question 'has the feeling that what is thus given to him is superior to him.' Hegel insists that 'this feeling must be carefully fostered in education' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his *Émile: Or, Treatise on Education,* insists that 'no man is free from a man's first duty,' which is to think for oneself and not allow oneself to be guided by the judgment of another; according to Rousseau, 'no one has a right to depend on another's judgment' (Rousseau, 1974

[1762], IV, p. 270). From which it follows, of course, that in Rousseau's view no moral agent could be said to have a duty to defer to authority. We should, Rousseau maintains, 'yield nothing to human authority' (Rousseau, 1974 [1762], IV, p. 278). Arguing in the same vein, Immanuel Kant observes, in his essay 'What is Enlightenment? (1784), that the motto of the Enlightenment is 'Sapere Aude!' or 'dare to know,' that is to say, think for yourself, have the courage to use your own understanding (Kant, 2006 [1784], p. 54). Hegel's attitude towards the idea of enlightenment, understood in this way, was ambiguous (Hinchman, 1984; Sinnerbrink, 2007; Winfield, 2013); he does at times, for example in the *Philosophy of Right,* endorse the idea of thinking for oneself, which he associates with the value of subjective freedom (*PR,* §125, p. 84; §261, *Zus* p. 280; §273, *Zus* p. 286; §317, *Zus* p. 294). On the other hand, however, when making these positive remarks about the value of subjective freedom, Hegel usually has mature adults in mind. He was reluctant to accept that this is a principle which ought to apply within the sphere of education. Children must of course, he grudgingly acknowledges, be encouraged 'to think for themselves,' provided they think in the right way. The seriousness of 'the matter in hand' should not, he argues, 'be put at the mercy of their immature, vain understanding' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60). Hegel maintains that the approach to teaching which attaches over-riding importance to encouraging children to think for themselves is likely to also encourage them 'to indulge in argument and disputation' with their superiors; It is, he argues, 'a method recommended' only by 'unintelligent pedagogues' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60), by which Hegel seems to have had in mind Rousseau and his followers.

In Hegel's view, this progressive approach to education places teachers on students on the same level. He regards as 'preposterous' the idea that 'the educator' should 'lower himself to the childish level of intelligence of the pupils' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60). He insists that if teachers and pupils are assumed to be at the same level, and do not relate to one another as superiors and subordinates, then the authority of the teacher, as he understands the concept, would completely disappear. In Hegel's opinion that would be a bad thing.

Against the views proposed by Rousseau in *Émile,* Hegel argues that 'we must not expect to achieve' the aims of education 'by mere goodness' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §174, *Zus* p. 265). He assumes that coercion and punishment have an important part to play in the education of children, not only as it currently exists, but also as it ought to exist. He disagrees fundamentally with Rousseau on this issue. 'The punishment of children,' he argues, is 'to deter them from exercising a freedom still in the toils of nature' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §174, p. 117). 'So far as children are concerned,' Hegel maintains, 'universality and the substance of things reside in their parents, and this implies that children must be obedient;' If 'the feeling of subordination' to authority generally 'is not fostered in children then 'they become forward and impertinent' (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §174, *Zus* p. 265). This lack of respect for those in positions of authority will then be carried over into later life. As a result, it poses a threat to social cohesion and the preservation of social order.

As Aristotle suggests in his *Politic*s, Hegel maintains that the pupil must first 'obey in order that he may learn to command' (Aristotle, 1984, III, 4, 1277b8-13, p. 2027; Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60). It is only through obedience to an authority figure that 'such a will is enabled' to inwardly 'accept the authority of the rational will coming to it externally,' and, thereby, 'gradually to make this its own' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 60). In this way, education aims at preparing children for a future life of obedience to those who occupy positions of authority in social institutions.

In the first stage of development, that of childhood, Hegel argues that reason has not yet emerged or become fully developed. Although both conscious and self-conscious, and possessing a mind, nevertheless the child is a creature of emotion, instinct and will, and not of reason. In this stage the mind of the individual child is entirely self-absorbed, or 'wrapped up in itself' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], p. 55). In this stage, also, individuals are for the most part satisfied or contented. They see nothing fundamentally wrong with the world and are happy with their lot in life. Hegel argues that childhood is 'the time of natural harmony, of the peace of the individual with himself and with the world' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 57).

By way of contrast, in the second stage of life, that of youth, we find the 'antithesis' of the first stage. In this stage, we see the emergence within the individual of certain 'ideals, fancies, hopes, ambitions' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55). It is in this stage that the individual youth becomes restless, discontented or dissatisfied, both with the world generally and with his (sic) own situation within it. Hegel talks about the emergence of a kind of conflict, or of a 'strain and struggle,' at this time (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55). This is a conflict between individuals and the world, but also, perhaps, an inner conflict within these individual themselves, leading to restlessness and unhappiness. 'The youth,' Hegel argues, 'unlike the child, is no longer at peace with the world' or himself (sic) (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 62).

In this second stage of development the individual who goes through it is no longer entirely self-absorbed and becomes aware of the existence of others and of wider, more general or 'universal' moral issues and concerns; The world 'as it exists,' Hegel argues, 'fails to meet his ideal requirements,' or his individual moral ideals, which reflect a 'universality which is still subjective' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55). The kind of thinking which Hegel associates here with youth is idealistic, in the sense of being both excessively altruistic and also impractical. It is what some people, especially those who disapprove of it, would regard as utopian. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel associates this mind-set with the notion of 'the beautiful soul' and the rebelliousness of youth (Hegel, 1977 [1807], §§632-71, pp. 383-409). In the *Philosophy of Right* he connects it with the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and with political radicalism. He also associated it with what he considered to be the dangerous political ideals of the French Revolution of 1789 (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §258, pp. 156-57).

Hegel associates his second stage of development with the idea that those concerned are not yet mature 'independent' adults; As such, the individual is 'not yet fully equipped for the part he has to play in society' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55). He is not yet reconciled to his social role and its attendant duties,

which he considers to be an unwarranted intrusion on his freedom or liberty. This state of affairs leads to a third stage of development, that of mature adulthood. Hegel's adult human beings, in the third stage of their development, are members of the corporations of civil society, the structure of which is based on an economic division of labour. It is as such that they live an ethical life, in accordance with the principle of my station and its duties. Hegel insists that men (sic) 'can find satisfaction and honour in all spheres of their practical activity if they accomplish throughout what is rightly required of them in the particular sphere to which they belong either by chance, outer necessity, or free choice' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 63).

Hegel associates the transition to his third stage of personal development with a move from spiritual or idealistic concerns of youth to the temporal interests and concerns of adult life. He notes that youth 'seems to possess a nobler sense and greater altruism than is displayed by the man who attends to his particular, temporal interests' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 62). The adult who is actively involved in the temporal affairs of civil society 'is no longer wrapped up in his particular impulses and subjective views.' On the contrary, by occupying a particular place or station in society, he satisfies a definite social need. In so doing, Hegel argues, 'he has plunged into the Reason of the actual world and shown himself to be active on its behalf' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 62).

According to Hegel, in their mature adulthood individuals return, in manner of speaking, to the condition of their own childhood, in one sense at least, in that they become once again reconciled with the world and with their own situation in society and in life. In this stage, each individual finally comes to recognize what Hegel considers to be 'the objective necessity and reasonableness of the world as he finds it' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55). The individual who has gone through the process of education has now entered the economic sphere, or the world of work, labour and 'occupations' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55). He (sic) has become a 'somebody,' with a definite place or station, as a contributing and a valued member of civil society. As a result of the prevailing social division of labour in society, he now contributes, in his own particular way, his 'share' to the 'collective work' of society as a whole. Consequently, he gains 'an effective existence and an objective value,' as well as certain form of independence and 'security' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 55).

To summarize, when talking about education, Hegel has in mind education in its institutional form, as it currently existed in the society of his day. He approved of this, not in spite of its emphasis on respect for authority, enforced by coercion and punishment, but because of that emphasis. Hegel's focus is on the roles and the role obligations or relative duties of teachers and students. However, he regards institutionalized education as having a wider social and political significance than appears to be the case at first sight. This is so because for Hegel education involves preparing pupils and students for working life, so that they will in the future voluntarily carry out the duties which are associated with their place or station in the institutions of his civil society, whatever that might be. It is to this end, he argues 'that the education of the adolescent' should be devoted, in order that he will 'resolve to earn his subsistence himself,' and that he should 'begin to be active on behalf of others' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, p. 63).

The most significant lessons to be learned through education, in Hegel's view, are cultivation of character, virtue, self-discipline, my station and its duties and respect for those who are in positions of authority. Hegel does not himself explicitly connect his views on education to the theory of recognition set out in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. It is later thinkers who have done that, beginning with Max Stirner.

2. Stirner on Hegel in *The Ego and its Own*

2.1 Stirner on Hegel and the Struggle for Recognition

Stirner's political thought owes a great deal to his engagement with the writings of Hegel, especially to what Hegel has to say about mastery and slavery in his *Phenomenology of Spirit.* In *The Ego and its Own*, Stirner argues that 'each thing cares for itself and at the same time comes into constant collision with other things' (1982 [1845], p. 9). This is, as it were, the law of nature, which is very far from being a moral law. Stirner assumes that this law applies universally, throughout both the natural and the social worlds. So far as it applies to human beings, this 'combat of self-assertion,' he says, 'is unavoidable.' The outcome must be either 'victory or defeat.' In this situation, as Hegel argues in the *Phenomenology,* 'the victor becomes the lord' and the vanquished becomes 'the subject' (p. 9).

Like Friedrich Nietzsche, Stirner does not moralize about this state of affairs. He maintains in *The Ego and its Own* that in this new situation, the victor 'exercises supremacy and "rights of supremacy",' whereas the defeated one 'fulfils in awe and deference the "duties of a subject"' (p. 9). The speech marks are necessary here, given that Stirner rejects outright the moral point of view, and, consequently, does not think that anybody should take language of this kind at all seriously, when assess on its own terms.

Hegel, in the *Philosophy of Right*, says that 'to "appropriate" means at bottom only to manifest the pre-eminence of my will over the thing and to prove that it is not absolute, is not an end in itself,' and therefore not to be valued or respected as such (Hegel, 1979 [1821], §44, *Zus* p. 236). The concept of appropriation, understood in this way, lies at the heart of Stirner's political thought. Indeed, it neatly summarizes it. Stirner regards man as a being who is by nature an appropriator (Wisser, 1987). Like Hegel, Stirner maintains that to appropriate something in general is to make it my own, to possess it. It is to transform it into an item of property, something to be used instrumentally by me when pursuing my own interests as I understand them. Stirner assumes that the orientation of the individual towards the world generally, whether the natural world or the social world, the sphere in which exist others who in pursuit of their own interests enter into conflict with me, is to see everything within it as being there potentially for my own use. This applies to just as much to other people, as it does to inanimate nature and to non-human species of animal.

In the case of other people, Stirner says that 'I am told' by moralists 'that I should be a man among "fellow-men"' and that 'I should "respect" the fellow-man in them;' however, he goes on, for me no one is a person to be respected: on the contrary, even my so-called 'fellow man' is for me 'an object in which

I take an interest,' a 'usable or unusable person,' hence 'I regard him, equally with all other beings, as my property' (1982 [1845], p. 311). Stirner says that 'I do not want to recognize or respect in you anything' but, rather, 'to use you' (p. 105). He also says that 'to me you are only what you are for me – to wit, my object; and, because my object, therefore my property' (p. 139).

From the time of Aristotle onwards slaves have always been regarded, at least by their owners, as being nothing more than items of property, or, as Aristotle says, a 'living tool' (Aristotle, 1984, VIII, §11, 1161b4, p. 1835). For Stirner, as for Saint Augustine and Hegel before him, and for Friedrich Nietzsche and Jean-Paul Sartre after him, the drive or the desire to dominate and control others, to subject them to our will, in short to own and enslave them, is a fundamental law of life, or of all human existence. It is endemic to the human condition. It is indeed the motor of history.

Like Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his discussion of slavery in *The Social Contract* (1975 [1762], I, IV, p. 172), Stirner maintains that the peace, order and stability that is usually associated with life in society, in sharp contrast to life in the war-like state of nature, is a sham. He too argues that in this situation the conflict that formerly existed in the state of nature continues to exist in the hierarchical institutions of civil society. However, it takes place covertly rather than overtly. He says that both the one who is victor and the one who is defeated 'remain enemies, and always lie in wait: they watch for each other's weaknesses' (1982 [1845], p. 9).

This leads Stirner to reject Hegel's communitarianism, together with his philosophy of history. Like Alexandre Kojève, Stirner attributes to Hegel the view that the history of human civilization involves a progression towards the emergence of a community within which there will no longer be any masters and slaves and the drive to dominate and enslave others will no longer operate. According to this reading of Hegel's views, he argues that the idea of such a community represents the 'end' of human history, both as its telos or final goal and as its terminus. Against that view, Stirner maintains that given the nature of human nature 'community, as the "goal" of history hitherto, is impossible' (p. 311).

In *The Ego and its Own*, Stirner rejects the idea of morality in general, understood by reference to the idea of reciprocal self-restraint between individual agents. He maintains that as an egoist he has no moral duties, no general or universal duties of that kind. However, he also refers to the special or relative duties which individuals might be thought to possess because of their place or station in society. He characterises these as 'social duties.' As a moral nihilist, he rejects the idea that he has any duties of this kind also. He states at one point that 'as regards "social duties" in general,' 'neither God nor humanity prescribes to me my relation to men.' For Stirner this amounts to saying that 'I have no duty to others at all,' neither universal ones in relation my fellow man nor particular ones relating to my fellow members of a given society and its institutions (p. 318).

Stirner disagrees with what he takes to be Hegel's assessment of the relationship which exists between liberty and authority. In *The Ego and its Own,* he assumes that these two things are incompatible with one another. Criticizing Hegel's views, as he understands them, Stirner offers a defence of individual liberty against the principle of authority which, in any and all of its forms, he associates with slavery.

Steven Byington's translation of *The Ego and its Own* appropriately adds the sub-title, *The Case of the Individual Against Authority.* In effect, the criticism which Hegel makes of the institution of slavery in the *Phenomenology* is take up by Stirner and applied to all of the hierarchical institutions of Hegel's civil society. Stirner disagrees fundamentally with Hegel on the issue of the legitimacy of the principle of authority within the hierarchical institutions of the society of his own day.

Stirner observes that for Hegel 'the "servants" (sic) are the free.' Hence, subordinates who are subjected to the commands of those in authority are not slaves at all. On the contrary, their dutiful obedience to the commands of their superiors is the hall-mark of their freedom. According to Hegel, then, 'the obedient servant' is a 'free man!' He possesses 'true freedom;' Stirner considers this view to be preposterous: he states 'what glaring nonsense!' Hegel talks (p. 105). Stirner claims that, when talking about this issue, Hegel gets things the wrong way around. In his opinion, which is the direct opposite of that of Hegel in *The Philosophy of Right*, those who perform the relative duties of their place or station in society are nothing more than slaves.

The clear implication of Stirner's engagement with the ideas of Hegel is that, in his opinion, hierarchical social institutions and the particular duties with which their social roles are associated are incompatible with the value of liberty properly understood. On the contrary, they constitute the enslavement of the individuals who occupy them. Stirner holds that if what passes for education is oriented towards the principle of my station and its duties then its goal is very far from being emancipation. On the contrary, its aim is to promote a life of servitude.

2.2 Stirner on Hegel and Education

As has been noted on more than one occasion, Stirner's chapter 'A Human Life' follows closely Hegel's views regarding education and human development, or the different 'ages of man,' which are set out in §396 of his *Philosophy of Mind,* the third volume of his *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §396, pp. 55-64). Marx and Engels, for example, point out in *The German Ideology* (1845) that 'the prototype of the entire structure of human age groups' in Stirner's 'A Human Life' had 'already been depicted in the third part of Hegel's *Encyclopädie*' (Marx & Engels, 2010 [1845], III, IV, p. 129). Henri Arvon has also claimed that, when talking about the different stages of a human life, in *The Ego and its Own Stirner* 'borrowed this idea from Hegel' (Arvon, 1954, p. 56). And Lawrence S. Stepelevich has said that Stirner's account of the stages in a human life was 'not only congruent with Hegel's presentation' in the *Encyclopaedia,* 'but also played a powerful role in the formation of his own thought' (Stepelevich, 2006, 166).

There is evidently something to be said for the claim that Hegel's views on education provided a stimulus for those of Stirner. It is important to appreciate however that here, as elsewhere, Stirner engaged critically with Hegel's work and did not simply repeat what Hegel had already said before him. The conclusions which Stirner draws are very different, indeed the opposite, of Hegel's.

In ‘A Human Life’ Stirner takes Hegel’s views regarding ‘the struggle for recognition’ in the *Phenomenology* and applies them, within the field of education, to an understanding of the relationship which exists between parents and their children within the family. So far as that relationship is concerned, Stirner observes that ‘both remain enemies, and always lie in wait: they watch for each other’s weaknesses,’ the ‘children for those of their parents’ and the ‘parents for those of their children.’ Stirner’s conclusion is that there is no happy resolution to the type of conflict which both he and Hegel associate with the struggle for recognition. For, he says, ‘either the stick conquers the man, or the man conquers the stick’ (1982 [1845], p. 9). That is to say, either the parent conquers the child, or the child conquers the parent. One or the other must be master. The only question here, in his opinion, is which?

On this issue, Stirner’s critique of Hegel’s views on education yet again appear to have been inspired by his reading of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Émile*. There Rousseau claims that it is primarily through education that the young man, growing up in society, ‘must learn his paces like a saddle horse, and be shaped to his master’s taste like the trees in his garden.’ He maintains that, almost from birth, a struggle goes on within the family between parents and their children. Either we, the parents, he observes, ‘do what *he* wants, or we make him do what *we* want’. We must ‘submit to his whims or subject him to our own.’ There is, Rousseau suggests, ‘no middle course.’ The child must either ‘rule or obey.’ Thus, the earliest ideas of any child ‘are those of the tyrant or the slave’ (Rousseau, 1974 [1762], I, p. 5).

Stirner associates the egoism of children with what is proclaimed by their parents to be a ‘fight against reason’ (1982 [1845], p. 10). Like Rousseau in *Émile,* Stirner argues that children ‘care nothing at all’ about reason. They ‘admit no reason.’ Hence they are ‘deaf to good arguments,’ or to any appeal to ‘principles,’ or the claims of either morality or ethics. They do, however, understand what is involved in ‘punishment’ (p. 10). He refers in this connection to ‘the father’s stern look’ and to ‘the mysteriously-dreaded might of the rod’ (p. 9). He contrasts this with the ‘obdurate courage’ of the child. He observes that in resistance to the ‘sharp command of parents,’ as well as that of other ‘authorities,’ at a certain stage in her or his development, the child eventually arrives at a point when confronted by that which ‘formerly inspired in us fear and deference we no longer retreat shyly,’ but, rather ‘find our courage,’ our own ‘superiority’ (p. 10).

Stirner also refers to the ‘stern life-and-death combat’ which, in ‘a new phase’ of development later on, will take place between egoism and desire, on the one hand, and reason, virtue and the claims of morality on the other. This, Stirner, suggests is the conflict which exists between the individual and society, between egoism and altruism, and between liberty and authority, a conflict which might also be thought of as taking place within the individual psyche of mature adults.

Stirner associates lack of deference to authority generally, of which he approves, with the notion of ‘mind,’ or of thinking for oneself, something that is also valued by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, and even Hegel at times, although that is not how Stirner understands Hegel’s views. ‘Mind,’ Stirner argues, represents the first challenge of reason, properly understood, to the grip which ‘the uncanny, the spooks,’

or ‘the “powers above” have on those who are subjected to the claims of authority, in any and all of its forms. The youth, as opposed to the child, or indeed the mature adult, ‘defers to nothing’ (p. 10).

In childhood, Stirner argues, ‘we defer to parents as a natural power’ (p. 10). As Hegel suggests in his *Philosophy of Mind*, in that first stage of development authority rests not so much on moral principles which are rationally apprehended, but upon a psychological association, or a relationship of dependency, of the child on a particular authority figure. Later on, in the second stage of development, that of youth, ‘father and mother are to be forsaken,’ and all of the ‘natural power’ that they possess in relationship to the disciplining of their children is ’vanquished.’ In youth, we follow the commands of our own thoughts, ‘just as before we followed parental, human ones’ (p. 11). In this second stage ‘our course of action is determined by our thoughts (ideas, conceptions, faith),’ rather than, ‘as it is in childhood,’ by ‘the commands of our parents’ (p. 11). Here, ‘a renunciation of the influence of parents, brothers’ and of authority figures in general ‘makes its appearance’ (p. 10). Like Hegel, Stirner associates this rebelliousness of youth with the emergence of discontent and unhappiness, or with a certain feeling of loneliness, disconnectedness or ‘emptiness’ (p. 12).

Like Hegel, Stirner associates the second stage of youth with moral and political idealism, indeed utopianism. Here notions such as those of ‘truth, freedom, humanity,’ and so on, ‘illumine and inspire the youthful soul’ (p. 11). In this stage, Stirner argues, mind or spirit ‘wants to spread out so as to found its empire - an empire that is not of this world’ (p. 11). In contradistinction to the demands of society, and the claims made by those in positions of authority, youth imagines and seeks to create a better world. The youth, driven by the fervour of idealism, sets himself against society and the principle of authority, arguing that ‘one must obey God rather than men’ (p. 11). From this lofty standpoint, Stirner says, as Hegel did before him, to the youth ‘everything “earthly” recedes into contemptible remoteness’ (p. 11). Stirner associates this youthful idealism, and its ‘resistance’ to ‘the laws of the world,’ with the emergence or the development of the moral conscience. ‘[I]n everything that he proposes,’ he goes on, the youthful idealist ‘is met by an objection of the mind, of reason, of his own conscience’ (p. 11).

Stirner associates the emergence of a moral conscience in this second stage of development with the idea that youth consents to and is therefore responsible for its own enslavement. In this stage, it is ‘not the might of the avenging Eumenides,’ he claims, and ‘not Poseidon’s wrath,’ or that of God, or indeed ‘the father’s rod of punishment’ that ‘we fear, but conscience’ (p. 11). Like Hegel, Stirner suggests that this is a stage of development which must be and is eventually overcome. However, what Stirner has in mind by this is very different from Hegel’s account of the transition to the third stage of human development, that of mature adulthood.

In Hegel’s account of that third stage the individual is eventually reconciled to the demands of society, and to the claims of authority, whereas in that of Stirner, the individual releases himself from the dictates of the moral conscience, and from the claims which those in positions of authority had formerly made upon him (sic). For Stirner, then, far from being associated with the notion of ethical life, as Hegel

Revista Internacional de Educación y Análisis Social Crítico
Mañé, Ferrer & Swartz.
ISSN: 2990-0476
Vol. 2 Núm. 2 (2024): Noviembre

understands it, this third stage of development is associated with the emergence of egoism and with moral nihilism.

As Hegel does in the *Philosophy of Mind,* Stirner argues that in this third stage 'the man is distinguished from the youth by the fact that he takes the world as it is, instead of everywhere fancying it amiss and wanting to improve it,' or 'model it after his ideal' (p. 12). He associates this third stage of development with a transition from a concern with the moral idealism of youth to the emergence of what he characterises as 'bodily, personal, egoistic interests' (p. 13). The standpoint of the mature adult is that 'one must deal with the world according to his interest, not according to his ideals' (p. 12).

In this third stage, Stirner argues, the individual 'has fallen in love with his corporeal self.' Consequently, he 'takes a pleasure in himself as a living flesh-and-blood person' (p. 13). The moral and political idealism of youth, therefore, is replaced by hedonism or the pursuit of bodily pleasures, and by associated economic or material interests. It is, Stirner argues, 'in mature years' that one sees the emergence of a 'personal or egoistic interest,' or a 'selfish interest' (p. 13). Later in the text, he suggests that in this third stage 'my relation to the world is this: I no longer do anything for it "for God's sake," I do nothing "for man's sake," but what I do I do "for my sake" (p. 319).

Contrary to the claims made by Hegel, Stirner argues that in this third stage I come to regard the world 'as my property' (p. 14). I come to appreciate that the world and everything that it contains, including other people, is there to be used by me in pursuit of my own egoistic interests. In his account of the third stage of human development, Stirner claims that whereas 'the youth was idealistic,' the 'egoistic man' of mature adulthood 'deals with things and thoughts according to his heart's pleasure, and sets his personal interest above everything' (p. 14).

Hegel argues that in this third stage the youth has finally grown up. He associates the principle of egoism, with the immaturity of childishness. In his account of human development, this is replaced by the moral conscientiousness and political idealism of youth, which is not yet the ethical frame of mind of the mature adult. It is in the third stage of development that the individual finally leaves behind him (sic) his youthful idealism, together with his commitment to political radicalism, which had threatened to over-turn the existing hierarchical social order. Stirner is critical of Hegel's account of this third stage. The difference between the views of Stirner and those of Hegel here is that according to Stirner egoism is to be associated, not with childhood, but with mature adulthood. In *The Ego and its Own* Stirner rejects outright Hegel's view that education is and ought to be a vehicle for restraining egoism.

3. Stirner on Hegel and Education in *The False Principle of Our Education*

In *The False Principle of Our Education: Or, Humanism and Realism* (1842), Stirner sets out his own views regarding the nature and aims of education, as he understand it. As in the case of *The Ego and its Own,* what Stirner says in this essay, about the relationship which in his opinion ought to exist between teachers and their students, is also based on a reading of what Hegel says about the struggle

for recognition in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. However, the reading in question differs significantly from that of the later and better known text. For example, in the essay, like Hegel in the *Phenomenology,* but unlike *The Ego and its Own,* Stirner envisages the possibility of a happy outcome or a resolution of this struggle, that is to say, a consensual agreement that is based on the principle of the true recognition, which Hegel thinks can in principle be achieved by all those who regard one another as equals.

In *False Principle* Stirner argues that education as it currently exists (and as it was defended by Hegel) is associated with the inculcation of respect for the principle of authority, understood as involving coercion and punishment. Seemingly inspired by Rousseau's theory of education in *Émile,* Stirner contrasts this with what he considers to be education, properly understood, which he thinks ought not (sic) to be based on respect for authority and which is consensual rather than coercive. Like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, but unlike Hegel, Stirner thinks that education properly so-called and coercion are incompatible with one another. True education involves a relationship that is based on freely given consent or, in Hegel's terminology, true recognition. However, what currently exists and passes for education is inherently authoritarian. As such, it is based solely on coercion and punishment. Stirner talks in this connection about the 'necessary decline of non-voluntary learning' in education (1967 [1842], p. 28).

Stirner insists that if I am a teacher, I must not 'defend myself against' a disobedient student 'by using the convenient rampart of authority' (p. 26). He claims that whoever is a 'complete person,' as he understands that expression, 'does not need to be an authority.' In his opinion, 'he is very weak who must call to authority for help.' Like Rousseau in *Émile,* Stirner thinks that a teacher or educator 'does wrong (sic) if he thinks to improve the impudent' by adopting a strategy that 'makes him fearful,' because it is based on coercion and the threat of punishment (p. 26).

According to Stirner, the new way of thinking about education that is advocated by Rousseau, of which he approves, aims 'to eliminate the priesthood of the scholars and the laity of the people' (p. 15). This involved an effort to become 'equal to others,' that is to say a struggle on the part of those who are going through the process of education to be regarded as the equals of the educated rather than their inferiors. This in turn was associated with the demand to be 'emancipated from their authority' (p. 15). As a result, the concept of freedom itself came to be understood in that particular way. In Stirner's words, 'freedom appeared indeed as independence' from all 'authorities,' both within education and outside of it (p. 16). This view of the relationship between authority and freedom is the opposite of that which is defended by Hegel in his *Philosophy of Mind* and *Philosophy of Right*.

Stirner associates freedom with egoism and he contrasts both of these with servility. The aim of education as it currently exists and as it is defended by Hegel is, he maintains, to mould, shape or encourage those who go through it 'to reconcile oneself to the positive' (p. 23). In Stirner's thought, on the other hand, the idea of freedom is connected to that of 'opposition,' resistance and saying 'No!' to those who claim to have authority over you. He maintains that in current educational practice the principle of opposition 'is not allowed to put a word in edgewise.' Rather, educators, in the name of

society and its hierarchical institutions, only 'want submissiveness,' or unthinking 'subservient people' (p. 23).

Stirner claims that because, as Hegel rightly argues in his *Philosophy of Right*, 'the idea and impulse of modern times is free will,' it follows that 'the aim of the education' should be the development of 'free personality' (p. 27). Teachers today, Stirner argues, 'want to educate us to adhere to [the] positive laws of morality' which exist in our own society, whatever that might be, a practice which, as we have seen, is defended by Hegel in his writings. Against that view, Stirner argues that 'I want the strength of opposition to be awakened and the self-will not to be broken, but rather to be transformed' (pp. 27-28). He refers in this connection to the natural 'obstinacy and intractability' of children, or their 'natural strength of the will,' which leads them into 'opposition' with those who claim to possess authority over them. He values this capacity for resistance, or this spirit of rebellion, and claims that it has 'as much right' to be encouraged both by teachers and by philosophers of education 'as childlike curiosity' (p. 26). Stirner states that if 'a spirit of opposition' in the student is 'strengthened in place of the subservience which has been cultivated until now,' this involves students thinking and acting autonomously for themselves. He agrees with Hegel that if this were to happen then the authority of the teacher would be brought into question. The teacher would cease to be an authority figure and would become a 'fellow worker,' that is to say the equal of the student (p. 23). In such a situation, the equality of teachers, and their students, would be reciprocally recognized by them both. It would be understood that there are no superiors or subordinates, but only equals who are engaged together in the joint pursuit of the goal of education.

Stirner suggests in *The False Principle of Our Education* that the determinate social identities with which all institutional roles are associated, for example 'teacher' and 'student' in the sphere of education, are the badges of their servitude. Unlike in *The Ego and Its Own*, he implies that this is just as true in the case of teachers as it is in that of students. By arguing in this way, Stirner follows a line of reasoning that can also be found in the writings of both Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Hegel before him, and in those of the anarchist Michael Bakunin after him. Rousseau states in *Emile* that 'master and slave become mutually depraved' (Rousseau, 1974 [1762], I, p. 49). And, in the eighth of his *Letters from the Mountain* (1764), he says that 'whoever is [a] master cannot be free' (Rousseau, 2001 [1764], p. 261). Hegel repeats this idea in his *Philosophy of Mind.* There he states that 'I am only truly free when the other is also free and is recognized by me as free' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §431, *Zus* p. 171). He also maintains that 'it is only when a slave becomes free that the master, too, becomes completely free' (Hegel, 1971 [1830], §436, p. 176). Similarly, in his *God and the State,* Bakunin argues that 'a slave master is not a man but a master. By ignoring his slave's humanity, he ignores his own' (Bakunin, 1973 [1871], 147). Stirner takes up this idea and applies it to the relationship between teachers and their students in education. The logical consequence of his appeal to Hegel's theory of recognition, in that text, is that if the relationship between two individuals is based on the principle of true recognition then, morally speaking, just as they could not possibly relate to one another as 'master' and 'slave,' so too

they could not possibly relate to one another as 'teacher' and 'student,' at least not as these identities and roles are currently understood.

Although it was evidently inspired by a reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, especially Hegel's notion of true recognition, Stirner's idea of a relationship of mutual recognition and respect between teachers and their students based on the assumption of their underlying equality is absent from Hegel's theory of education in the *Philosophy of Mind* and the *Philosophy of Right*. As we saw earlier, Hegel took the view that thinking in this way about education would undermine the authority of the teacher, together with respect for authority more generally. There is a sense in which Stirner agreed with Hegel on this point. The difference between them is that he thought that this would be a good thing, whereas Hegel did not. There is a tension or a contradiction in Hegel's theory of education. Hegel makes three claims which are logically incompatible with one another. The first is that the notion of authority is associated with that of obedience that is secured by consent and not by coercion. The second is that, nevertheless, teachers can and do employ coercion and punishment in their interactions with their students. And the third is that their doing so actually reinforces rather than undermines their authority. Stirner's theory of education in *The False Principle of Our Education* may be regarded as a not entirely successful attempt to resolve this contradiction. Stirner suggests that if Hegel's theory of recognition is taken seriously and applied within the field of education, then it would be necessary to abandon Hegel's proposed justification of the use of coercive punishment there. The relationship between teachers and students should be consensual. Moreover, it should also be a moral relationship that is based on the principle of reciprocal recognition between equals.

This might be thought to imply that for Stirner the teacher-student relationship ought morally speaking to rest on the principle of authority alone, that is to say, the exercise of a form of non-coercive authority by teachers, and which is associated with their possession of expertise in a particular area of knowledge. However, that is not in fact how Stirner argues. Rather, against Hegel's defence of the principle of authority, Stirner maintains that teachers should not regard themselves, and should not be regarded by their students, as being authority figures in any sense of the term. Stirner evidently thought the teacher-student relationship, as it currently existed, is analogous to the master-slave relationship as Hegel understood it.

When discussing education in *The False Principle of Our Education*, Stirner has a tendency to identify authority and authoritarianism. He finds it difficult to imagine the possibility that there might be a form of authority that does not involve the exercise of coercion: a non-authoritarian form of authority (see Clark, 1976, p. 5; 1984; De George, 1978, pp. 99-100, 102; Gaus & Chapman, 1978, pp. xix-xx; Miller, 1984, 2, pp. 14-16, 25). Michael Bakunin's example of his deferring to the authority of doctors, or of 'specialists' possessing expertise more generally, springs to mind at this point (Bakunin, 1973 [1871], pp. 132-33). Michel Foucault (1994) has also expressed a similar view. In his remarks about the notion of 'the care of the self,' Foucault states that 'I see nothing wrong in the practice of a person who, knowing more than others' 'tells those others what to do, teaches them, and transmits knowledge and techniques to them.'

In other words, there is nothing necessarily wrong, in Foucault's view, about a teacher being an authority, or possessing authority in some non-coercive sense of the term. According to Foucault, the potential problem in such educational 'practices,' where power, which he says 'is not in itself a bad thing,' must 'inevitably come into play,' is 'how to avoid' a situation of 'domination,' in which a student 'is subjected to the arbitrary and unnecessary authority of a teacher, or a student put under the thumb of a professor who abuses his authority' (pp. 298-99). Like Bakunin, the later Foucault was not opposed to authority as such, but only to authoritarianism, which he associated with domination, that is to say, attempted enslavement of students by their teachers. The important distinction between the concept of authority and that of authoritarianism is absent from Stirner's essay.

As an alternative to Stirner's outright rejection of the principle of authority, Alasdair MacIntyre's suggestion that an appropriate model for thinking about education is the relationship between master craftsmen and their apprentices during the medieval period is a fruitful one (MacIntyre, 1990, pp. 61-63; MacIntyre, 2006, p. 70; MacIntyre, 2007 [1981], pp. 258; MacIntyre, 2016, pp. 52, 74, 132; see also Dunne, 2003, pp. 355, 358, 360, 364; Dunne, 2020, p. 1150; Higgins, 2003; Murphy, 2013, pp. 186, 190; Serrano & Kreber, 2014; Smith & Dunstall, 2022, pp. 1176, 1182). MacIntyre suggests the possibility of steering a middle course between the two extremes of Hegel's authoritarian approach to education, on the one hand, and Stirner's complete hostility to all forms of authority, on the other.

There are six important take-aways from the theory of education which Stirner sets out in *The False Principle of Our Education.* First, it does rely on a critical engagement with the Hegel's views on education. Second, although Stirner is critical of some of Hegel's ideas he does not reject them outright. In particular, he takes the idea of mastery-and-slavery and that of the struggle for recognition that is put forward in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and applies it to the relationship between teachers and students within the sphere of education. Third, Stirner's theory of education in this text makes an appeal to considerations of morality. It is grounded in a view of how teachers and students ought morally speaking to relate to one another. Fourth, the theory of morality in question is based on an assumption of an underlying equality, according to which teachers and students should be regarded as 'fellows' who are engaged in the joint pursuit of the goal of education. Fifth, there is no place in education for coercion and punishment. The relationship between teachers and students should be both mutual and consensual. Sixth, and last, in Stirner's view this approach to education is subversive of the idea that authority (as he understands the concept) has a part to play in the sphere of education. This is so because Stirner associates the notion of authority with that of a command of a superior that is associated with the demand for blind, unquestioning obedience and backed up by coercion and the threat of punishment.

Conclusion

There are definite similarities between what Stirner says about education in *The False Principle of Our Education* and *The Ego and its Own.* For example, whereas in general Hegel approved of institutionalized education as it existed in the society of his own day, Stirner did not. In both texts, he strongly disapproves of it. At the same time, however, there are also very significant differences between the two texts. These have to do with the specific nature of Stirner's assessment of Hegel's views regarding mastery-and-slavery and the struggle for recognition, and their relevance for the theory of education. For example, whereas in *The Ego and its Own* Stirner takes up the standpoint of immoralism or moral nihilism, in *The False Principle of Our Education* he writes as a moralist who has a view of what the relationship between teachers and students ought to be.

Like Hegel, Stirner associate the process of education as it currently exists with restraint on egoism, the disciplining or 'breaking of the will' of the individuals who go through it. Moreover, he too attaches importance to the value of freedom or liberty, both within education and also outside of it in the institutions of civil society. Stirner agrees with Hegel that education, properly understood, necessarily involves the emergence of an appreciation of the value of liberty on the part of those who are educated. Education may therefore be associated with the notion of liberation or emancipation from some form or other of slavery. However, Stirner's understanding of what this involves is very different from that of Hegel. Despite the differences between their respective arguments, this is true of both *The False Principle of Our Education* and *The Ego and its Own*.

The use to which Stirner puts Hegels ideas in *The False Principle of Our Education* is similar to that of Paolo Freire in his *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. It is, therefore, very different from that of Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre and indeed Stirner himself in *The Ego and its Own*. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire presents his readers with a humanistic theory of education for emancipation, a theory which aims for the liberation of the oppressed (students) from domination by their oppressors (teachers). Moreover, like Max Stirner, he too bases this theory on Hegel's treatment of the master-slave relationship in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and especially on the notion of true recognition which Hegel defends there (Freire, 1972).

Like Stirner, Paolo Freire criticises a theory of education, according to which 'the teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite.' On that view, in Freire's account of it, the teacher 'by considering their ignorance absolute' thereby 'justifies his own existence.' In this situation, Freire argues, the students are 'alienated like the slave in the Hegelian dialectic.' As a result, they 'accept their ignorance as justifying the teachers existence' and 'never discover' that it is in fact just as much they who 'educate the teacher,' as it is the teacher who educates them (Freire, 1972, p. 46). According to Freire, the aim of true education, which is necessarily libertarian education, 'lies in its drive towards reconciliation' of the opposition between teacher and student. Freire maintains that education must aim at 'the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction,' so that 'both are simultaneously teachers and students' (p. 46). This view is identical with that of Stirner in *The False Principle of Our Education.*

As in the case of Stirner's *The False Principle of Our Education*, Paolo Freire's approach to education, although also inspired by Hegel's treatment of mastery-and-slavery in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, nevertheless arrives at a very different conclusion from that which is drawn in Stirner's *The Ego and its Own.* This conclusion is also very different from that which is drawn by Hegel himself in his discussion of education in the *Philosophy of Mind* and in the *Philosophy of Right.*

Stirner's libertarian approach to education in *The False Principle of Our Education* has an affinity with anarchism and with anarchist views on education (Amster et al., 2009). However, the anarchism in question is not the egoistic anarchism of *The Ego and its Own.* Rather, it is social anarchism (Baldelli, 2010 [1971]; Bookchin, 1995; 1996; Ehrlich, 2013). It is similar to the anarchist critique of institutionalized education that is developed by Ivan Illich (who was a close friend of Paolo Freire) in his *Deschooling Society* and his *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution* (Illich, 1973a-b; also Gartner, 1973; Kahn, 2009; Kahn & Kellner, 2007; Watt, 1981). Illich's notion of 'de-schooling' education, which might be better thought of as de-institutionalizing it, is relevant in this context. Similar ideas can also be found in works devoted to the notion of 'critical pedagogy' (Darder & Torres, 2017), a number of which draw attention to the significance of the ideas of both Paolo Freire and Ivan Illich (Kyrilo, 2013; Panizzon, 2013).

For those of us who are not nihilists, Stirner's *The Ego and its Own* has very little that is positive to offer to a potential critique of the abuse of power in social institutions, either in education or more generally, in wider society. However, that is not true of *The False Principle of Our Education*. The use to which Stirner puts Hegel's theory of recognition in that text is far more constructive than that of *The Ego and its Own*. It is also a significant intermediary between Hegel and the critical pedagogy of a number of 20th Century educational theorists, including Paolo Freire and Ivan Illich.

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