

Gott - Mensch - Zeit. Geschichtsphilosophisch-Geschichtstheologische Erwägungen zu Christentum und Neuem Humanismus im Ausgang von Bibel, Hegel und Musil

von Kurt Appel

God - Human - Time: Reflections on the Theology and Philosophy of History in the Light of the Bible, Hegel and Musil

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Abstract

The article develops a notion of the human that ought to precede every approach to humanism and that is linked to a certain understanding of the holy, of the concept of time and of history. To arrive at this notion, three texts are brought into dialogue: the Bible, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and Musil's *Man Without Qualities*. The author shows that these texts are intertwined through a great sensitivity for vulnerability, the non (re)presentable Other and a time beyond the chronological sequence of meaningless moments. The section on the Bible shows that the seventh day (Shabbath) of the first creation story transcends chronological time and thereby hinders time to become a totality under the grasp of human control. In Hegel's *Phenomenology*, the religious stage is one in which the subject experiences the loss of a world that serves as its mirror as it comes to realize that its relationship to being implies a displacement of the Self from its validity-claims and representations which opens otherness and renders the Self vulnerable. In this sphere of absolute tangibility and vulnerability of the Self, Hegel locates God. Finally, Musil's *Man Without Qualities* is shown to reveal characteristics of a post-apocalyptic world that, in defying a chronological presentation of time and in dismissing all images of self-representation of the worldly powers and of strong subjects, discloses a new gaze for the human and for the Saint. The corresponding time of this postapocalyptic world is neither a chronological time under the dominion of the present nor an utopian one under the dominion of the future nor a melancholic one under the dominion of the past, but an anachronistic time which corresponds to the displacement of the Self from its invulnerable idolatrous images. Thus, a contribution of Christianity to a new humanism is related to breaking away from abstract images and grand but empty words (produced by theology, the church, politics and the sciences) and to recognizing a culture of tangibility and vulnerability of being.

Keywords

New Humanism, Postapocalyptic World, Eschatology, Philosophy of Time, Philosophy of History, Theology of History, Phenomenology of Spirit, Gen 1,1-2,3, Gen 3, Tree of Knowledge, Musil's *Man Without Qualities*, The Seventh Day, The Fall of Man