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## Hegel's critique of Kant's concept of reason: the problem of different demands

### 1. Introduction

According to Habermas, it was Hegel, who provoked the discourse of modernity (concerning the question, which principle should be the main point of orientation in philosophy) by creating an overwhelming concept of *reason* as *absolute knowledge* or *absolute idea*.<sup>1</sup> While this notion of reason should be strong enough to solve the problems of the modern times – such as divide between society and religion, between concept and reality etc. – and lead to the *reconciliation* (*Versöhnung*) of different entities, it turned out to be unfit to analyze recent occurrences in a satisfactory way. The Hegelian system seemed to omit the facticity and to devalue actuality as “‘occidental’, ‘transient’, ‘insignificant’, ‘fleeting’, ‘stunted’ existence of a ‘bad infinity’”<sup>2</sup>. From this point on we can recognize at least two important directions which had an impact on the philosophy of the last century. On the one hand, the Left and the Right Hegelians tried to use the richness of Hegel's thoughts and structures by means of a *modest* concept of reason in the sense of *rationality*. Nietzsche, on the other hand, started the project of the farewell to modernity by trying to unmask the reason as an unhealthy form of the *will to power* – which was continued by Horkheimer, Adorno, Heidegger and the French post-modernists.<sup>3</sup>

Habermas' analysis of different ways of dealing with the concept of reason, as well as his own program of *communicative reason*, does not pay enough attention to the *problem of different demands*. This is however important to consider the specific value and function of a position or a counter position. *Demands* or claims are imaginations of certain tasks, which a per-

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<sup>1</sup> See Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, translated by Frederick Lawrence, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1987, 41–44 and 53.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 53–54.

<sup>3</sup> See Michael Lewin, “Psychologischer Skeptizismus. Nietzsches Kritik am Deutschen Idealismus”, in: *Coincidentia. Zeitschrift für europäische Geistesgeschichte* 8/2 (2017), 383–406.