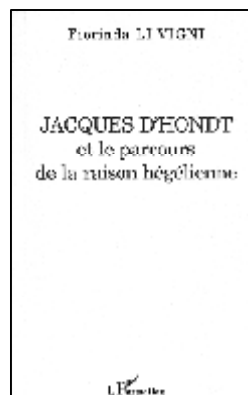


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Jacques D'Hondt et le parcours de la raison hégélienne

(Fiorinda Li Vigni, *Jacques D'Hondt et le
parcours de la raison hégélienne*,
L'Harmattan, Paris, 2005)



This book, *Jacques D'Hondt et le parcours de la raison hégélienne* was born – as Fiorinda Li Vigni confesses – from the disciple's affection and the gratitude towards his mentor. In this way, one can explain the fact that the author, a well known researcher at the Instituto Italiano degli Studi Filosofici din Napoli, does not only offer a simple review of the conception of Jacques D'Hondt, but also, in a true exercises of admiration, as Cioran used to say, she takes something from the unique style of this exquisite interpreter of the hegelian philosophy.

Once he published *Hegel secret: recherches sur les sources cachées de la pensée de Hegel*, Jacques D'Hondt became one of the top researchers in the field of hegelianism. That is why, from the very beginning of her book, Fiorinda Li Vigni evokes the discoveries of Jacques D'Hondt in his *Hegel secret*, discoveries that undermine some of the clichés about the writer of the *Phenomenology of Mind*. Like a police investigation, Jacques D'Hondt's inquiry on the hidden sources of Hegel's philosophy discloses also the reasons of this concealment.

In the first part of her book, Fiorinda Li Vigni presents in an exquisite manner, the already classical contributions of Jacques D'Hondt concerning Hegel's relations with the Freemasonry. Fiorinda Li Vigni notes down: "To Jacques D'Hondt, one preliminary condition to understand Hegel is the re-establishment of the historical and cultural distance which separates us from the philosopher". (p. 23). Hegel must

be understood in relation to his age, an age of censorship which made him use a double language, not to mention the names of the forbidden or dubious authors in Germany, not to speak about his encounters with „dangerous” people. In this way, the legendary „obscurity” of Hegel’s texts gets a new meaning. „The dissimulation proceedings are necessary for the expression of his thought, a tactic that ends by encreasing the ambiguity that surrounds his life and his work” (p. 27).

In the second chapter, *Hegel and the French*, Fiorinda Li Vigni resumes Jacques D’Hondt’s idea that a French researcher of Hegel enjoys a privilege. The task of clarifying the hidden sources of the German author could not be accomplished but by a Frenchman, because during the second half of the XVIIIth century and at the beginning of the XIXth century, France was the *leadership* in Europe. (p. 47). Hegel’s philosophy was deeply influenced by the work of some French authors linked to the freemasonry of that age: Volney, Mercier or Rabaut, who were forbidden in Germany because of their revolutionary ideas and, later, forgotten even in their own country. Jacques D’Hondt’s inquiry concerning Hegel’s links to the revolutionary France contributed a lot to Hegel’s „rehabilitation” and to the abandoning the cliché of seeing him as a conservator thinker and as a defender of the Prussian state.

The second part of Fiorindei Li Vigni’s book focuses on Jacques D’Hondt’s steps in understanding Hegel’s dialectics, as it is to be found in *The Philosophy of History*. Dialectics is the one to make the difference between what is dead and what is alive in Hegel’s philosophy, if we are to use Croce’s well-known expression. „For Jacques D’Hondt, Hegel’s dialectics is an eternal conquest for the universal heritage of philosophy” (p. 109).

The interview with Jacques D’Hondt, taken by Fiorinda Li Vigni in 1999, as well as the bibliography mentioning not only the French writer’s works, but also their translations – in Romanian and in many other languages – confers to the presently discussed book, *Jacques D’Hondt et le parcours de la raison hégélienne*, a specific, fascinating and provocative character.