Master Thesis Defense

Abstract

Hegel's Critique of Contingency in Kant's Principle of Teleology

by

Kimberly Zwez

This research is a historical-exegetical analysis of Hegel's reformulation of Kant's regulative principle of teleology into a constitutive principle. Kant ascribes teleology to the faculty of reflective judgment where it is employed as a guide to regulate inquiry, but does not constitute actual knowledge. Hegel argues that if Kant made teleology into a constitutive principle then it would be a much more comprehensive theory capable of overcoming contingency in natural science, and hence, bridging the gap between natural science and theology. In this paper I argue that Hegel's defense of the transition from natural science to theology is ultimately unsuccessful because it is based on an "instinct of reason" which is the instinctive feature of human rationality to transition beyond the contingency remaining in our empirical understanding of nature to a theological understanding of nature in which all aspects of nature are necessarily related.

Date: March 26, 2014
Time: 12:00 pm.
Place: University Park, DM 358

Department: Religious Studies
Major Professor: Dr. Whitney Bauman