

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Who am "I"?

**Dr Diego Bubbio of the School of Humanities and Communication Arts is examining the concept of the "self" using the work of two prominent philosophers, Hegel and Heidegger. This project is funded by the Australian Research Council through its Future Fellowships scheme.**

'I am myself ... But what does that really mean?', says Dr Bubbio. 'One of the tasks of philosophy is to put such supposedly common-sense understandings under scrutiny. The concept of "self" is central to our lives. And with increasing multiculturalism, globalisation and internet "virtual" identities, this question of what that means becomes more pressing and our understanding of the concept ever more complex. Each one of us has multiple cultural roles in society, belongs to different groups, and is subject to competing demands on us to define one's self. To what extent is our sense of self constructed by others? The 19<sup>th</sup> century philosopher G. W. F. Hegel and the 20<sup>th</sup> century philosopher M. Heidegger provide us with an important, but so-far neglected, understanding of what it means to be an "I". Recent reinterpretations of their thoughts expose a previously hidden continuity between Hegel's idealism and Heidegger's concept of existence. In light of these thoughts, we're able to bypass traditional oppositions between "subjective" and "objective" accounts of the "I" and shed fresh light on one of the most fundamental of all philosophical and psychological notions.'

Critical analyses will include Heidegger's notion of "mineness" and Hegel's conception of personal freedom as "being at home with oneself in another" with the purpose of identifying their respective views on the notion of the "I". An international conference in Sydney will be convened, bringing together Hegel and Heidegger scholars around the topic of *The Self in Hegel and Heidegger*.



Focusing on Hegel and Heidegger, this project will offer a richer account of the "I" than we currently have access to; one that avoids individualism and allows the development of the concept of the self as more of a collective process. This will allow a greater understanding of the conception of the self and its implications, especially in relation to Australia's capacity to interpret and engage with its culture and society. Identity can be *transformed* without *losing* it in this fast-changing modern world.

**Project Title:** The quest for the "I": reaching a better understanding of the self through Hegel and Heidegger.

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