

The Philosophy of Hegel Seventeen of the most important books on Hegel's philosophy reprinted in sixteen volumes. Edited by H. S. Harris, York University. Garland Publishing, 136 Madison Avenue, New York, 1984.

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Editor's Introduction

The earliest Hegelian influence in the English speaking world came from the theological left among Hegel's German disciples. It was evidenced by the translations of Marion Evans (George Eliot) [*The Essence of Christianity* by Ludwig Feuerbach (1854) and *The Life of Jesus, Critically Examined* by David Friedrich Strauss (1846)], and in the essays and *Biographical History of Philosophy* [1845-6] written by her subsequent life-partner G. H. Lewes. But it was the theological right that made important converts in the British academic world; and this came about largely through the publication of Hutchinson Stirling's *Secret of Hegel* in 1865. Stirling set the mold for the study of Hegel in English-speaking circles during the next sixty years. The whole period is surveyed in the work of the Indian scholar Hiralal Hadar which is included in the present series. The nature and shape of the mold can also be seen in Stirling's last book *What is Thought?* (1900), the only really important book that he published after the *Secret of Hegel*.

Stirling saw Hegel's system as the completion of what was only promised in Kant. Hegel provided for him, and for the academics who came after him, the true "Religion within the bounds of reason alone": Henry Brokmeyer taught the same type of Hegel interpretation to the St. Louis Hegelians, so that there was an audience of in the USA ready to welcome the *Secret of Hegel* by the time that it appeared. In America, too, the interest of the professors followed after that of gifted amateurs. After Stirling was rejected as a candidate for the Moral Philosophy Chair at Edinburgh in 1868, he was offered an appointment at Harvard – but the endowment of the proposed chair proved to be impossible. But both of the American studies of Hegel's logic included in this series – that of W. T. Harris on the *Science of Logic* (1890) and J. G. Hibben's introduction to the *Encyclopedia Logic* (1903) bear the marks of Stirling's influence.

Everyone who studied Hegel deeply in this first generation was making his own interpretation of a "secret" doctrine. All of them consciously "corrected" Hegel in one way or another. Thus Harris remarks that at the end of the *Science of Logic* "one might naturally suppose that we had arrived only at the correct formal views about method ... Hegel has bent his followers in the formal direction and thus well-nigh ruined the influence of his philosophic school for a time". But the most remarkable corrections were offered by McTaggart. He was the only one who broke the mold of Stirling's monism (which is a Fichtean rather than Hegelian) in favour of a social concept of the Absolute (which is more authentically Hegelian). But he also rejected Stirling's far sounder appreciation of the importance of history in the Hegelian synthesis. In his view, Hegel

had discovered the true method and ideal of philosophy, and of metaphysical system; but he had then applied it to actual experience in a quite mistaken and obviously indefensible way. McTaggart's *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology* thus provided the foundation for his own independent study of *The Nature of Experience* [1921, 1927].

The writers of the next generation were less personally involved with the Hegelian "secret" and more historically concerned with what Hegel actually taught, and how he arrived at his views. J. B. Baille's two books serve very well to mark this transition. Although his own *Idealistic Construction of Experience* shows that he looked to Hegel as a personal "master of life", the fact is that even after eighty years his book on the origins of Hegel's logic retains almost all of its validity as a work of scholarly analysis and criticism (in spite of the immense advances in our knowledge of Hegel's intellectual biography). The valuable monogram of Watts Cunningham, *Thought and Reality in Hegel's System*, displays a similar objectivity. The work of the French Jesuit Henri Niel (who was not, of course, a Hegelian "believer" at all) forms a kind of climax to the work of this generation, being inspired by the Anglo-Americans Hegelians rather than by the later trends represented by Jean Wahl. All of these expository works – like Hibben's – are to be preferred, in my opinion, to Stace's *Philosophy of Hegel* (1927), which was never allowed to go out of print.

As early as 1910 G. P. Adams wrote a perceptive study of the mystical element in Hegel's early writings based on the manuscripts published by Nohl in 1907, and influenced by Dilthey's pioneering work on Hegel's early development. But a real interest in Hegel's early years had to wait for another twenty years. It was Jean Wahl in his monogram on the theme of the "unhappy consciousness" who made us recognize the immense significance of the early manuscripts; and J. Glenn Gray's Columbia University thesis, *Hegel's Hellenic Ideal* (1941), marked the dawn of the latest age in our historic consciousness of Hegel.

In the meantime it was Italian influences that were principally responsible for the creation of a new picture. Croce's *What is Living and what is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel* upset the prevailing view by proposing that Hegel's philosophy was not properly a speculative theology but a methodology of historical judgement (the opposite extreme from McTaggart, so to speak). The next generation of English idealists – of whom R.G. Collingwood was the most important – studied Hegel under Croce's influence. They are represented here by Michael Foster and by T.M. Know, the best Hegel translator in English.

The political sympathies of the Anglo-American Hegelians ranged from constitutional conservatism to radical liberalism. But a deep suspicion of the *totalitarian* tendency of Hegel's practical philosophy has always been present among his Anglophone critics. By far the best critique of Hegel from this point of view was that offered by Foster in *The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel*. With Pelczynski's essay on *Hegel's Political Writings* and W.H. Walsh's little book, *Hegelian Ethics*, we have reached a more balanced standpoint in this sphere of critical appreciation. But Foster's critique will long continue to deserve careful attention. And the reprinting of *Hegel's Political Writings*

will make it easier to arrive at a just view of what Hegel's own political ideals and attitudes actually were – and to see how they developed from the “Hellenic ideal” of the young revolutionary of 1797 to the “Protestant principle” of the quietist critic of the July Revolution of 1830.

Finally, Löwith's book on Hegel's own revolutionary influence in continental thought will help us to put the mainly conservative and constitutional influence of Hegel in the Anglo-Saxon world into a world-context in which the Hegelian Left has played a far more prominent part than it has so far played among us.

This collection illustrates the varied fortunes and interpretations of Hegel in the philosophical tradition since his death. In doing so it provides the essential means for an integrated understanding of his work and its influence. In the present resurgence of Hegel studies this is especially important for the establishment of the balanced historical judgment to which we now inspire. Everyone seriously interested in Hegel should have ready access to these books, and many will wish to have them on their own shelves.

H.S. Harris

THE LIST of TITLES

Adams, George Plimpton, see Gray, Jesse Glenn

1.

Baillie, Sir James Black

THE ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HEGEL'S LOGIC

(*London, 1901*) 398 pages

This was the first serious attempt to adopt a genetic approach to Hegel's thought in English. Though he was handicapped by the lack of many of the documents, even Baillie's early chapters remain valuable. His chapters on the *Phenomenology* were the first critical examination of that book in English (and are still preferable to much later interpretation – or misinterpretation – of that work). The approach to Hegel's logic through its genesis gives Baillie's work a methodological emphasis often lacking in later discussions.

2.

Baillie, Sir James Black

THE IDEALISTIC CONSTRUCTION OF EXPERIENCE

(*London, 1906*) 364 pages

Advancing from his lectureship at Dundee to the Regius Professorship of Moral Philosophy at Aberdeen, Baillie published in 1906 this interesting volume of free variations on the themes of Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Perhaps because it is presented as his own independent theory of experience (beginning with three chapters on the significance of the Kantian transcendental turn in philosophy) this book has never been widely known or properly appreciated. In fact it was Baillie's apprenticeship for the task of translating the *Phenomenology*; and all who have appreciated the insights that

Baillie's rendering of Hegel contains (even at its freest moments) will find much value in his own prior attempt to imitate the Hegelian project.

3.

Croce, Benedetto

WHAT IS LIVING AND WHAT IS DEAD IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF HEGEL

(Translated by Douglas Ainslie, London, 1915) 245 pages [original Italian text 1907]

The appearance of this book made an epoch in Anglo-American studies. Croce was principally concerned with defining the "errors" of Hegel which he had corrected in his own "Philosophy of the spirit". But the claim that "what is living" in Hegel is precisely the elements of his own philosophy, entailed the view that Hegel's system was a conceptual ontology, not a theological metaphysics. In Croce's view the Hegelian system was a theory of philosophical method – and since the philosophy of nature was a complete mistake, the living philosophy of Hegel was a methodology of historical judgement. Croce's affirmations are certainly of wider interest (and of a more lasting import) than his negations.

4.

Cunningham, Gustavus Watts

THOUGHT AND REALITY IN HEGEL'S SYSTEM

(New York, 1910) 151 pages

Watts Cunningham interprets Hegel in the perspective of the "Neo-Hegelian" school – i.e., he assumes that Hegel's "system" is a demonstration of the existence of a "personal" God. But his discussion of the fundamental problem of Hegel's theory is so beautifully clear and balanced, so well founded in the texts, that it retains all of its validity even for readers who do not make this ontological assumption. This book (which was never widely known) deserves serious study by all students of Hegel, beginners and experts alike.

5.

Foster, Michael Beresford

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF PLATO AND HEGEL

(Oxford, 1935) 220 pages

Unlike most of Hegel's English critics, Foster appreciated the magnitude of Hegel's achievement. He wrote a (German) doctoral thesis on Hegel's philosophy of history at Kiel in 1929; and his interpretation of Plato's *Republic* in this book is valuable for its insight into Hegel's own view of Plato. Foster sees the *Philosophy of Right* as a theory of man's political "nature"; and in his view the great weakness of the Hegelian theory lies in its Platonic-Aristotelian inspiration – and in the consequent absence of a properly Christian concept of "creation" in Hegel's political ontology. This thesis is highly controversial, but Foster's analysis of the classical influence is so clearly sound that all students of Hegel's social theory must continue to wrestle with his interpretation of Hegel.

6.

Gray, Jesse Glenn HEGEL'S HELLENIC IDEAL

(New York, 1941)

bound with

Adams, George Plimpton

THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT IN HEGEL'S THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS

(Berkeley, California, University of California Publications in Philosophy vol. 2, no.4, Sept. 24, 1910, pp. 67-102) 149 pages in total

Hegel's Hellenic Ideal remains the only good general account in English of the influence of Greek culture upon Hegel. Gray depended on the best German work of the 1920s and 1930s (Rosenzweig, Häring, Hoffmeister) as well as on Dilthey; and he did an excellent job in relating Hegel's early essays to the Berlin lectures on aesthetics and the history of philosophy. Before Gray's thesis the only discussion of the *Jugendchriften* in English was that of G.P. Adams (who depended mainly on the pioneering work of Dilthey). Adams was more concerned with the Judeo-Christian influence in Hegel's early thought. Between them, these two short works provide a picture of Hegel's intellectual formation that is still remarkably accurate – as well as a vivid illustration of how our knowledge of that formation has evolved.

7.

Haldar, Hiralal

NEO-HEGELIANISM

(London, 1927) 501 pages

This was the first historical survey of the influence of Hegel in the British Commonwealth. It is "a study rather than a history", for Haldar was himself a part of the movement. Only the influence of Hegel really interests him. He accords each of the British Idealists separate treatment – and just one of their critics, L.T. Hobhouse. All are treated with respectful objectivity, offering a birds-eye view of how varied the interpretation of Hegel was among his first followers.

8.

Harris, William Torrey

HEGEL'S LOGIC. A BOOK ON THE GENESIS OF THE CATEGORIES OF THE MIND

(Chicago, 1890) 433pages

W.T. Harris was the editor of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* (in which many of the earliest essays on Hegel and German idealism in English were published).and the organizing genius of the remarkable group of philosophical amateurs known as the St. Louis Hegelians. This book was the fruit of more than thirty years of study and meditation inspired by the translation of Hegel's *Science of Logic* made by Henry C. Brokmeyer. Harris possessed an outstanding talent for identifying and exposing *structural* patterns and relationships. Apart from being a milestone in the history of American philosophy it is also a careful analysis of Hegel's first "System of Science" – for it embraces the *Phenomenology* as well as the *Science of Logic*.

9.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich
HEGEL'S POLITICAL WRITINGS

(Oxford, 1964) 342 pages

Edited by Z.A. Pelczynski, translated by T.M. Knox. This volume contains translations of the draft for an essay on the German Constitution (1799-1802) and the published essay on the *English Reform Bill* (1831) with a judicious abridgement of the essay on the *Württemberg Estates* (1817). The translations were made by T.M. Knox "to illustrate and support Dr. Pelczynski's essay" on Hegel as a political writer (which in turn serves to introduce them). Quite apart from the intrinsic of the topics, the volume is of crucial importance because it helps to correct the prevailing tendency to view Hegel as a pure theorist who viewed everything *sub specie aeternitatis*.

10.

Hibben, John Grier
HEGEL'S LOGIC: AN ESSAY IN INTERPRETATION

(New York, 1902) 323 pages

Hibben was Professor of Logic at Princeton, and later President of the College. It is the future college president who declares categorically that the "*Hegelians of the left* ... must be regarded as a perversion of Hegel's teaching". Apart from this prejudice (which he shared with all the academic Hegelians) the professor of logic was truly open minded; and no one has ever written more clearly about Hegel. Hibben's book is avowedly an *introduction*, and any careful student of Hegel will find himself going beyond it even as he uses it. But, however far beyond Hibben he goes, he will always find it worth returning, because in order to correct the admitted simplifications of Hibben properly, one must continue to formulate the more complex truth as plainly as he did. Hibben's book remains one of the best *elementary* discussions of a Hegelian text ever written.

11.

Löwith, Karl
FROM HEGEL TO NIETZSCHE

(Translated by David E. Green, New York, 1964) 477 pages [original German text 1941]

This is one of the most important studies of Hegel's influence. Beginning with an insightful essay on the reciprocal influence and relation between Goethe and Hegel, Löwith presents a vivid panorama of the Hegelian schools (especially of the Hegelian left). Then he characterizes the opposite reactions of Kierkegaard and Marx to the "School Hegelians" and examines the relation of Nietzsche to both Goethe and Hegel. The second part of the volume offers topical surveys (the concept of the bourgeois, labour theory, education, and philosophical anthropology) for the same cultural world-period; and finally a long essay on "the problem of Christianity". Löwith focuses on the main theme that binds the volume together.

12.

McTaggart, John McTaggart Ellis
STUDIES IN HEGELIAN COSMOLOGY

(Cambridge, 1901) 312 pages

McTaggart grasped the Hegelian concept of spirit as rational community more clearly than any of his contemporaries, but he set himself resolutely against the temporal interpretation of it which occupied so much of Hegel's own attention. For McTaggart the philosophy of spirit was an ontology – and it was the ontological theory of spirit. Rather than the philosophy of nature that he meant by “cosmology”. In these “Studies” he sought to work out the metaphysical foundations of ethics and religious experience which, for some “curious” reason, Hegel had failed to provide. Not everyone has accepted this view of what Hegel was doing. – though Russell and Moore (alas!) did so. But even for those who regard McTaggart's project as itself a curiosity, his conceptual analyses of Hegelian concepts such as “personality”, “pleasure”, “punishment” and “love” retain their value, because in McTaggart a predilection for the mystical depths of human experience was combined with one of the most incisively rigorous minds of his generation.

13.

Niel, Henri

DE LA MÉDIATION DANS LA PHILOSOPHIE DE HEGEL

(Paris, 1945) 381 pages

We have still no comprehensive survey of Hegel's thought

And work in English that has *all* the virtues of this remarkably objective and sympathetic review by a French Catholic believer. Niel sees the problem of man's relation to God as the central focus of Hegel's concern from his university years onwards. Thus the crucial concept of Hegel's thought is (for Niel) that of the “mediation” which resolves this religious problem. Every phase of Hegel's activity is viewed as an aspect of the evolution and application of this focal concept. Niel's own religious commitment makes it possible for him to view all the controversial questions with admirable objectivity. He traces the history of Hegel's final synthesis; and then for him the story of how the synthesis fared after Hegel's death becomes its court of judgement.

14.

Stirling, James Hutchinson

WHAT IS THOUGHT?

(Edinburgh, 1900) 432 pages

Unlike *The Secret of Hegel*, Stirling's last work ranges over the whole history of philosophy. He was one of the first to perceive a kinship between Hegel and the high tradition of the later Scholastics (about which Hegel himself knew very little). In the main, however, this book deals positively with the relation of Kant to Hegel, and negatively with the relation of Hegel to Schelling. Stirling's discussion of the initial breach between Hegel and Schelling still deserves our attention; and the discussion of Schelling's later critique of Hegel, though extremely polemical, is insightful. Stirling identified the Hegelian *Begriff* with the Ego, and was quite prepared to attack Hegel's own formulations when they deviated from his essentially Fictean interpretation.

15.

LA MALHEUR DE LA CONSCIENCE DANS LA PHILOSOPHIE DE HEGEL

(Paris, 1951) 215 pages

This essay (first published in 1929) has achieved general recognition as a classic of Hegelian scholarship. Wahl focussed attention on the crucial moment (both historically and logically) in the emergence of Hegel's mature theory of the logical and spiritual *Begriff*. From this vantage point he studied both the evolution of the concept in Hegel's early manuscripts, and its sources in his romantic contemporaries. For Wahl himself, as an existentialist, these "elements primitifs" of Hegel's thought were "peut-être plus précieux que le système". However that may be, it is certain that the romantic generation in which Hegel's thought was born has never been more vividly evoked.

16.

Walsh, W.H.

HEGELIAN ETHICS

(*London, 1969*)

This little book is the most important study of Hegel's ethics that has appeared in English. It is based on a complete survey of Hegel's ethical thought from the early theological manuscripts to the essay on the English Reform Bill; and it displays a clear consciousness of the development of Hegel's thought. Walsh is very sensitive to the complexity of the relation between Hegel and Kant, which provides the main thread of his argument. He offers also some valuable notes about Hegel's influence on T.H. Green and F.H. Bradley. .