

cannot see that Strawson says anything to show the inadequacy of Geach's view in the case of 'Raleigh smokes', though I do not engage myself positively to defend Geach's position. Maybe Geach's account can be bettered and maybe Strawson betters it, but if Geach's account is somewhat crude, then so is the distinction of which it is an account, in its traditional employment. The truth is surely that all the terms which Strawson has to use at this stage of his discussion are slippery and uncertain; thus, to quote a passage which raises no philosophical dispute, he says on page 215: '[This] gets some support from ordinary grammar. The sentence "It is snowing", for example, has no grammatical subject.' Strawson puts this forward as uncontentious and it is indeed not worth disputing, but prior to reading Strawson I would unhesitatingly have said that 'It is snowing' had got a *grammatical* subject, which was 'It', and I would have said that the fact that one could not sensibly ask what was snowing, while it might show that there was no *logical* subject, made no difference to the point of grammar. In fact nothing here is stable or settled. Strawson himself, indeed, though he starts by giving a grammatical account of the subject-predicate distinction, places the main weight on a 'category' distinction. The points he makes show his invariable subtlety and ingenuity. His main contention is that in such assertions as 'Raleigh smokes' or 'The man next door does not smoke', I must know some fact about the subject terms, Raleigh and the man next door, that Raleigh is the man who . . . and that there is a man next door for example, if I am to make a successful communication, whereas the predicates 'smokes' and 'does not smoke' can form part of a successful communication without requiring any more knowledge than that of the meaning of the words involved; he further uses this distinction to illuminate Frege's distinction between saturated and unsaturated expressions. But valuable as it is it is doubtful if it is part of a successful accomplishment of what Geach, Quine and others have unsuccessfully attempted.

But too much attention must not be given to the overall inconclusiveness of Part II. It remains true that Part I forms a remarkably coherent and subtle argument and that the whole book is full of acute observations and novel lights on old and important issues. It is a book to be read and re-read by anyone with any interest in philosophy; if it does not always bring full conviction it will never fail to fertilize and instruct.

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Hegel: A Re-examination. By J. N. FINDLAY. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958. Pp. 372. 30s.

THIS book should prove a real help to those who want to study Hegel. There are separate chapters on 'The Notion of Spirit' and

'The Dialectical Method'; two chapters analyse the *Phenomenology* in some detail; three take up the *Logic* in similar fashion, and two, respectively, Hegel's 'Philosophy of Nature' and his 'Psychology'; one chapter deals with Hegel's social philosophy; and in the final chapter, his aesthetics, philosophy of religion, and history of philosophy receive about twenty pages between them. The book abounds in quotations from Hegel, in the author's translations; and for the convenience of students references are given not only to the original texts but also to the standard English translations.

Previous works on Hegel are deliberately ignored, although Findlay indicates his awareness of such 'standard commentaries and critical works on Hegel' as Stace's, Mure's, McTaggart's, and Hyppolite's. There is no indication that he is familiar with the German Hegel literature or that he has read the essays of the young Hegel which have become the focal point of much recent discussion. Nor is Findlay interested in Hegel's influence: Marx and Kierkegaard are only mentioned in passing; Croce and Royce in an enumeration; Sartre not at all. In these respects the book fits into the pattern of most of the British Hegel literature.

Still, there are some striking differences, emphasized in chapter one, section i, which protests against five widespread misconceptions. Findlay argues that Hegel is not 'a *transcendent metaphysician*' and suggests that 'there never has been a philosopher by whom the *Jenseitige*, the merely transcendent, has been more thoroughly "done away with", more thoroughly shown to exist only *as revealed* in human experience'. Secondly, Hegel is 'misconceived as some sort of *subjectivist*, one who thinks the realm of nature or history exists only *in* or *for* someone's consciousness, whether . . . ours, or . . . God's. Thirdly, Hegel was not 'some sort of manic *rationalist*, one who seeks to *deduce* or to *foresee* the detail of nature and experience'. Fourth, 'the extraordinary language in which he expresses his thought is not wholly devoid of illumination and justification', and his thought does not violate 'essential logical principles'. Finally, he was not 'a thoroughgoing political reactionary'. The last two misconceptions, of course, are peculiar to Hegel's more extreme critics, but the first three are very widespread, and Findlay's able criticism of all these misinterpretations deserves serious attention.

This section of the book closes with the claim that 'the main contemporary importance of Hegel lies in his recognition of the "open texture", the unclear corners of all living notions, the fact that they *imply* more than they clearly cover, and in the further fact that it is natural for them to move or develop in certain ways as soon as they are subjected to unwonted pressures. . . . Only while modern thought ascribes this freezing, exaggerating action to the *misunderstanding* by philosophers of the fluid forms of our language, Hegel ascribes it to the "Understanding", the faculty of "hard-and-fast" abstract thought, which he opposes to "Reason", the more fluid and accommodating thought-faculty. Wittengstein says: "Philosophy is a

battle against the bewitchment of our understanding through the instruments of our speech." Hegel says in highly similar language : " The battle of Reason consists in this, to overcome the rigidity which the Understanding has brought in." "

This section—the first half of the first chapter—is perhaps the best part of the book. The remainder of the chapter, which deals with 'Hegel's Life and Writings', is certainly the worst. It abounds in utterly petty and unnecessary errors. It is implied that Schelling was born a year earlier than he really was, and in the case of three of Hegel's four books, mistakes—all of them small—have crept into the dates of publication. Moreover, there is no indication whatever, either here or later in the book, that Hegel's *Encyclopaedia*—the only work that presents the whole 'system'—went through three editions (1817, 1827, 1830), and that the second of these differs so markedly from the first that it may almost be considered a new book. Findlay merely says that the book was published in 1816, which is wrong.

What little is said about Hegel's early essays, which were published posthumously, is seriously misleading. We are told that 'Hegel started by assuming that the "message" of Christianity must have been in essence one with the moral law as set forth by Kant.' In fact, Hegel started with a vitriolic contrast of Christianity and Greek folk religion and speculated about the possibility of a wholly rational folk religion. A little later, he wrote a life of Jesus, and very pointedly opposed Christianity, utilizing Jesus as the mouthpiece of a wholly rational Kantian ethic. This curious work must surely be considered an attempt to write a scripture for a rational folk religion. Hegel did not publish it and was presumably aware of its grotesqueness. Next, he wrote an essay on 'The Positivity of the Christian Religion'. Of this, Findlay says erroneously : 'Like many later thinkers, Hegel was unwilling to ascribe this "positivity" to the founder of Christianity.' In fact, Hegel, unlike practically all previous critics of Christianity and, for that matter, most modern critics, too, finds the seeds of the 'positivity of the Christian religion'—by which he means its authoritarianism and its opposition to reason—precisely in Jesus's own life and teachings. To be sure, he considers the limitations of Jesus's Jewish audience among extenuating circumstances, but the radicalism of his critique is equalled only by the power of his language, which is vivid, full of concrete illustrations and striking contrasts—and worlds removed from Hegel's later manner.

Findlay mentions a couple of Hegel's early journal articles, but does not at all refer to the essay on *Glauben und Wissen* or to the posthumously published drafts for Hegel's later works. Happily, this section is not representative of the rest of the book, which contains much that is excellent. The discussion of Hegel's dialectic, for example, should help to lay to rest some legends. Again, a few quotations may summarize some of Findlay's major claims.

‘Hegel would have regarded practically all British realism, empiricism and analytic philosophy in the present century as a philosophy of the Understanding, and would probably have admired it for being uncomprehendingly so. Perhaps, too, he would have seen in the thought of Wittgenstein its inevitable dialectical “overcoming”. Moore’s emphatic quotation from Butler, “Everything is what it is and not another thing” . . . is a typical expression of Understanding’ (62 f.). A little later, Findlay quotes Hegel’s central pronouncement, from the *Encyclopaedia* (§ 82): ‘A speculative content cannot express itself in any one-sided proposition’ (67). Findlay notes that ‘the triads of Hegel’s system vary vastly in their make-up’ and that ‘there are many more triads in which the third member emerges out of the second member *alone*, than triads in which it emerges out of the two previous members conjointly’ (72f.). If anything, the moral is not drawn emphatically enough: Hegel’s dialectic is *not* analysable into a progression of theses, antitheses, and syntheses—and the only place in his works where the three terms occur together is in a discussion of Kant, where Hegel finds fault with Kant on this score.

Similarly, the claim that Hegel’s ‘transitions are only necessary and inevitable in the rather indefinite sense in which there is necessity and inevitability in a work of art’ (74) is good as far as it goes but might have been made even stronger. Too many writers on Hegel have blandly assumed that the dialectic is what it plainly is not—and so, alas, did Hegel himself. He used ‘necessary’ as a synonym of ‘natural’ and as an inclusive antonym to ‘arbitrary’, as if every development for which some reason can be given, if only after the event, had thereby been shown to be ‘necessary’.

When it comes to ‘the presence of contradictions in thought and reality’, Findlay proclaims the surely sound principle that we ought to be guided by Hegel’s ‘use of the concept, and not by what he says about it’ (77). Findlay goes further: ‘Hegel’s notion and use of contradiction . . . embodies one of the most important of philosophical discoveries, whose full depth has not even yet been properly assessed . . . that our notions do carry with them a certain natural shading into other notions . . .’ (79). ‘And where Hegel makes his supreme contribution is in holding that *all* these dialectical tendencies need to be made fully explicit before we can achieve the reasonable, the philosophical result’ (80). Hegel is then said to have not merely anticipated Wittgenstein but to have gone beyond him: instead of reverting to our ‘original speech-forms’ he incorporates his findings ‘into our final mode of speaking’, and thus ‘Hegel’s last form of reasonableness is quite different from his first’ (80 f.).

Some of this may be overly enthusiastic on Findlay’s part—no less than the reference to Hegel’s ‘brilliant and informed *Philosophy of Nature*’ (75). Findlay is at his best in exploding misconceptions about Hegel, as when he says of some passages in the *Phenomenology*: ‘Those who seek a strict deductive necessity in Hegel’s transitions will do well to ponder the above passages: in them Hegel may

be said to laugh at their pains' (109). He is much less persuasive in his attempts to establish Hegel's importance. Findlay approximates Nietzsche's brilliant observation, in the *Dawn* (§ 193) : 'Of the famous Germans, perhaps none had more *esprit* than Hegel ; but for all that he too feared it with a great German fear, which created his peculiar bad style. The essence of this style is that a core is wrapped around, and wrapped around again and again, until it scarcely peeks out, bashful and curious—as " young women look through their veils ", to quote the old woman-hater, Aeschylus ; that core, however, is a witty, often pert perception about the most spiritual things, a delicate and daring connection of words, such as belongs in the company of thinkers, as a side dish of science—but in those wrappings it presents itself as abstruse science itself, and by all means as the most highly moral boredom. Thus the Germans had their permissible form of *esprit*, and they enjoyed it with such extravagant delight that Schopenhauer's good, very good, intelligence froze at the mere sight : all his life he stormed against the spectacle offered him by the Germans, but never could explain it to himself.'

Findlay does not storm, but one sometimes wishes he might, if only a little—or, better yet, laugh. After all, if Hegel's pretentious deductions are discounted and we see him as a brilliant thinker who forced a wealth of insights into the strait-jacket of an allegedly rigorous but really spurious method, the resulting picture, particularly when we consider the monumental British Hegel literature, calls either for the acid wit of Nietzsche or the gentler humour of Andersen's ' The Emperor's Clothes '.

Very occasionally Findlay misses the boat entirely. On page 155, for example, he ignores Hegel's elaborate distinction between ' being ' and ' existence '. And in his effort to defend Hegel's treatment, in the *Phenomenology*, of Sophocles' *Antigone*, Findlay becomes much more objectionable than Hegel. After speaking of ' the profound *guilt* that the individual brings upon himself by violating *either* branch of the ethical order, a guilt not removed by the plea that one acted for the best ', Findlay goes on to say : ' so too might the ghosts of those murdered at Auschwitz [*sic*] spurn all specious self-exculpatory pleas' (118). And a few lines later : ' It is plain that Hegel has nothing to learn from modern psychology as to the inexorable, unreasoning, contradictory pressures of the " Super-Ego " ' A detailed discussion of Hegel's treatment of *Antigone* and of what Freud's successors might call his ' tradition-directed ' ethic would certainly be worthwhile, but Findlay's unsubstantiated suggestions that the victims of Auschwitz had violated some ethical order and that Hegel anticipated the Freudian theory of conscience do not help at all. Most of the people murdered at Auschwitz were presumably much less impressive than *Antigone*, but unlike *Antigone* they could not proudly acknowledge a ' crime '.

In sum : Findlay's book is very helpful. But it is not exciting because it concentrates on paraphrase and summaries instead of

making us rethink important problems. To that extent, it is a historical rather than a philosophical study. But it comes nowhere near being an exciting or definitive historical work because it lacks all historical perspective. The book does not represent any attempt to rewrite history and does not resemble, as some historic works do, a detective story or the report of an archaeological expedition.

The occasional comparisons of Hegel with Wittgenstein are interesting but quite insufficient to establish Hegel's historic significance. What is still wanted is a good book on Hegel that shows how he dealt with many of the problems with which Marx and Kierkegaard, sociologists and theologians, pragmatists and existentialists, analytic philosophers and literary critics have been dealing since. To do justice to the rare scope of Hegel's thought, one would have to be much more radical than Findlay. He suggests that Hegel's methodical triplicity has been overrated and that the sequence of Hegel's expositions is rather arbitrary; but then he goes to extreme lengths to paraphrase two of Hegel's books, play by play; and in an Appendix he presents the alleged 'Dialectical Structure of Hegel's Main Works' in a dozen pages of outlines, offering us triad upon triad where Hegel did not present triads. The needed book on Hegel might well say at the outset that there is a lot of dead rot in his works—a lot of stuff that it is simply stuffy to paraphrase—but that there are also scores of interesting suggestions; and then such a study might concentrate on a few of these.

Completeness is out of the question anyway. Instead of coming close to feigning completeness by compressing the contents of big books into big chapters, one should single out what is especially important: important insights and important errors; views that, whether right or wrong, have had historical significance by giving subsequent thought new directions; and ideas which, although not influential so far, ought to be considered. Findlay's book does some of this, but not enough. It is one of the best books yet written on Hegel, and it may help to stir up enough interest in Hegel to lead someone else to write an even better one.

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