

A BRIEF REPLY

BY WALTER KAUFMANN

The editor has very graciously invited me to comment on Mr. Crites's review article on my *Hegel*. Crites offers many extremely generous observations and provokes no keen desire for a polemical response. But I welcome this opportunity to clarify a few points.

Crites expresses some reservations about my book but does not offer many specific or incisive criticisms. The first specific objection I find is that my criticism of Hegel is "sometimes . . . scarcely to the point. Hegel's complex view of the history of philosophy as the *dialectical* development of philosophical truth . . . , for example, is interpreted in terms of Leibniz's remark. . . ." But on p. 87ff., to which Crites refers, I was not discussing Hegel's "complex view" but one of his earliest articles, and it is Hegel who quotes and agrees with Leibniz's remark.

Crites's next criticism also misses my point. Whoever looks up the passage about *Antigone* and *Oedipus Tyrannus* which he quotes from my book will find that my criticism of Hegel at this point was decidedly not that he was too "pontifical."

Crites goes on to accuse me of sometimes "dismissing serious issues," but as soon as he becomes specific he becomes unclear. He agrees with what I say but wishes I had said more about "the problem of historical fulfillment." He tells us that this lies "at the heart of Hegel's philosophy of history," but not what precisely the problem is.

On another point, too, I am said to be right, but I don't "go on to discuss what actually made history a 'theodicy' in Hegel's eyes: the development through twenty-five centuries of the cultural embodiment of the Graeco-Christian logos. . . ." I cannot find this formulation superior to what I did say about this subject.

The matter of Hegel's relationship to Christianity is too involved to set straight in this brief reply: again there is a dearth of specific criticisms, and what is specific does not quite stand up. My remark about Hegel, "He had not always been a tired old man," begins a new paragraph and has a different ring in my context and in Crites's. Nor do I arrogate the rôle of "arbiter of Christian orthodoxy" when I note that "Hegel was not a supernaturalist" (so far Crites evidently agrees) and thus remote from "traditional Christianity." Moreover, Hegel's conception of Christianity as an inadequate but remarkable anticipation of his own philosophy contrasts sharply not only with St. Thomas's view of the relation of philosophy to Christian faith, and with Luther's and Calvin's, but even with Tillich's and Bultmann's. Bultmann considers the latest philosophy (Heidegger's) an inadequate but remarkable adumbration of Christian doctrine. When Crites says, "So the upshot seems to be that Hegel was no more Christian than" these theologians, this strikes me as an odd way of summarizing my attempt to show how he was much less of a Christian. That "Hegel is doing 'philosophy' . . . nowhere more certainly

than in his lectures on the philosophy of religion" is, I think, wrong: these lectures, like most of his lectures, tend more toward edification than, say, the *Science of Logic*. Nor do I use the word "reprehensible" in the manner suggested, and, Crites's claim notwithstanding, my book surely makes it clear that I do not consider Hegel a hypocrite.

"Kierkegaard . . . was more familiar with Hegel's own work than Kaufmann implies," says Crites and devotes his long second footnote to showing this. I probably exaggerated Schelling's influence on Kierkegaard, but Kierkegaard's image of Hegel *was* formed by reading others about Hegel before he read Hegel himself. And there is no evidence that Kierkegaard ever studied any of Hegel's books—except for the lectures on aesthetics, published posthumously and badly edited by Hotho.¹

Crites suggests quite rightly that one should not belabor Kierkegaard or Heidegger for their differences with Hegel, or cite Hegel as an authority against them. I trust I did neither. In my *From Shakespeare to Existentialism*² I included detailed critiques of Kierkegaard (Ch. 10) and Heidegger (Ch. 17), and elsewhere I have dealt at length with Heidegger's analysis of death.³ In none of these places did I invoke Hegel against them. But in my *Hegel* I wanted to show in passing that (1) Kierkegaard lampooned a caricature of Hegel and not the historical Hegel; (2) one can find in Hegel passages that sound as if they had been written about Kierkegaard; (3) it is far from obvious that Hegel is dated by Heidegger, but on the contrary it is arguable that Heidegger's discussion of being is worse for ignoring some of Hegel's insights; and (4) Heidegger is far from "reviving the Hegelian philosophy of Nothingness"⁴ and more nearly

¹ "The claim is not exaggerated: practically everything that Kierkegaard says about Hegelianism and speculation during these years has come to him second-hand" [Emanuel Hirsch, *Kierkegaard-Studien*, I (1933), 14, n.4]. And Roos says, referring to these pages in Hirsch: ". . . in 1835 he had a ready-made opinion about Hegel though he only began to study him in 1837." Crites's two page references to Hirsch in his footnote 2 do not change this picture. Hirsch says (501) that the first indication that Kierkegaard has finally read something by Hegel himself is furnished by a quotation from his lectures in the *Journals*, November 1838. And on p. 591 Hirsch says that for his dissertation in 1841, on *The Concept of Irony*, Kierkegaard studied the lectures on aesthetics thoroughly and also found all references to irony in *The Philosophy of Right* and in Hegel's review of Solger. But he adds that there is no trace of any acquaintance with Hegel's lectures on the philosophy of religion—nor any evidence that he read the *Logic*. The *Encyclopedia* (which contains the system) and the *Phenomenology* Hirsch does not even mention. In other words, by 1840 Kierkegaard had finally looked into one of Hegel's four books—to find the references to irony in it, which take up six consecutive pages! Later in his life Kierkegaard also looked into some of Hegel's other writings—to corroborate the impression he had formed earlier.

² Beacon Press, 1959; rev. ed., Anchor Books, 1960.

³ "Existentialism and Death" in *Chicago Review*, XIII, 2 (Summer 1959), esp. 75–87. Part of the critique of Heidegger was omitted in the version of this essay incorporated in Ch. XII of my *Faith of a Heretic* (1961).

⁴ This formulation, not referred to in my *Hegel*, is found in Sir Karl Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1950), 270.

Hegel's antipodes than his follower, especially as concerns being and nothing. Even though few Hegel scholars had to be told any of this, many others had been misled about these matters.

Finally, when Crites says that one must "approach the system with something like the methodological rigor which its author brought to its construction," he echoes myths I sought to discredit. There simply is no rigorously constructed system. And it is not true that "'being' and 'nothing' have no meaning on Hegel's terms other than that conferred on them by the peculiar dialectical tensions of the system." Hegel's analysis of these two terms in the *Science of Logic* (1812) is quite comprehensible apart from the system which was not published even in its initial form until five years later, and radically revised in 1827 and again in 1830. Crites's alternative of the rigorous system and sundry "pert observations" is utterly misleading. (He seems fascinated by the word "pert," which I recall using once in my book and which he uses five times in his review.) Consider Hegel's insistence that "infinite" and "beginning" and other such terms do not only get us into trouble when we apply them to the world as a whole or to the soul or to God but also in other contexts, his demand that philosophical concepts require careful analysis, and his own attempts to offer such analyses: these are among his major contributions to philosophy. And I doubt that there is another philosopher to whom the conception of a history of ideas owes so much.

Princeton University.

BOOKS RECEIVED

THE UNITY OF MANKIND IN GREEK THOUGHT. By H. C. Baldry. Cambridge University Press, 1965. Pp. vii, 223. \$7.50.

PAIDEIA: THE IDEALS OF GREEK CULTURE. Vol. I: Archaic Greece, The Mind of Athens. By Werner Jaeger. Trans. from 2nd ed. by Gilbert Highet. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965 (1939¹). Pp. xxix, 510. \$2.50.

ORPHEUS. By G. R. S. Mead. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1965. Pp. viii, 208. \$6.50.

PRINCIPIUM SAPIENTIAE: The Origins of Greek Philosophical Thought. By F. M. Cornford. Edited by W. K. C. Guthrie. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965 (1952¹). Pp. viii, 270. \$1.95.

THE PHILOSOPHERS OF GREECE. By Robert S. Brumbaugh. New York: Crowell Co., 1964. Pp. xi, 276. \$5.95.

TEOPRASTO: E la sua Aporetica Metafisica. By Giovanni Reale. Brescia: La Scuola, 1964. Pp. 223.

THE GROWTH OF THE ATHENIAN ECONOMY. By A. French. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1964. Pp. 208. \$6.

ECONOMIC LIBERALISM. By William D. Grampp. New York: Random House, 1965. Vol. I: The Beginnings. Pp. xxi, 186. \$1.95; Vol. II: The Classical View. Pp. xxi, 153. \$1.95.

THE DEATH OF VIRGIL. By Hermann Broch. Trans. by Jean Starr Untermeyer. Introd. by Hannah Arendt. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1965 (1945). Pp. 493. \$2.95.