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Spreading Hegel's Wings

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Introduction to the Reading of Hegel

by Alexandre Kojève, edited by Allan Bloom, translated by James H. Nichols Jr.
Basic Books, 287 pp., \$8.95

Studies on Marx and Hegel

by Jean Hyppolite, translated by John O'Neill
Basic Books, 202 pp., \$6.50

Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays

edited by Alasdair MacIntyre
Doubleday, 348 pp., \$2.50 (paper)

Hegel's Theory of the Modern State

by Shlomo Avineri
Cambridge University Press, 252 pp., \$4.95 (paper)

Hegel

by Raymond Plant
Indiana University Press, 214 pp., \$7.95

Introduction to Hegel's Metaphysics

by Ivan Soll
University of Chicago Press, 160 pp., \$2.25 (paper)

Hegel's Idea of Philosophy

by Quentin J. Lauer S.J.
Fordham, 159 pp., \$4.50 (paper)

Hegel's Concept of Experience

by Martin Heidegger, translated by Albert Hofstadter
Harper and Row, 155 pp., \$5.00

The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought

by Emil Fackenheim
Indiana University Press, 274 pp., \$9.50

Hegel's Science of Logic

translated by A.V. Miller
Humanities Press, 844 pp., \$21.00

I

Hegel's reputation in the English-speaking world was at its lowest ebb in 1945. That was the year of Russell's *History of Western Philosophy*, with its generally dismissive treatment of Hegel, and of the stormy invective of the Hegel chapter in Karl Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. In Britain the last embers of resistance to analytic philosophy, itself inaugurated at the turn of the century by Russell and Moore in total rejection of British neo-Hegelianism, had been stamped out. Collingwood had been dead for three years and had left no visible disciples. Idealism had, indeed, one distinguished exponent, the immaculately courteous and stylish Brand Blanshard at Yale. But his loyalty was not so much to Hegel as to F.H. Bradley, the most

original and Hegelianly unorthodox of late-nineteenth-century British idealists, who, in fact, respectfully disowned Hegel. Like Bradley, Blanshard was more a critic of empiricism than a constructive practitioner of speculative philosophy. In all branches of philosophy Hegel's ideas were not thought worth consideration even as an exemplary form of error, except in political philosophy, a field which analytic philosophers avoided and whose controversies thus proceeded, to the extent that they proceeded at all, in the idiom of an earlier age.

Hegel had fallen from grace in Europe by 1840, a decade after his death and long before he was known at all in the English-speaking world. But the chief initiators of the post-Hegelian philosophies of the nineteenth century, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, and Marx, critical as they were of

Hegel, all agreed with him that philosophy should be done in the grand manner. Schopenhauer preserved his all-inclusively systematic aims; Kierkegaard followed his antiscientific concentration on the higher spiritual activities; Marx, claiming to be a scientist, understood by science a Hegelian, dialectical form of thinking. So although his European supplanters voted against Hegel, they accepted his agenda. But the brief interruption of idealism in Britain had no lasting effect on the national tradition of conceiving the philosopher, in the words of Locke and the practice of a host of others, as an underlaborer to the scientist, or, with Moore and the linguistic philosophers, to the common man.

What has done most for the restoration of Hegel's fortunes, both in continental Europe and the English-speaking world, has been an increasing sense of the need for a new Marx. The official Marx of the interwar years, discredited as the theological ornamentation of Stalin's slave state, was the late, scientific Marx of *Das Kapital*, as interpreted by the naïvely positivist Engels, whose task it was to generalize Marx's theory of history and society into the comprehensive philosophy of dialectical materialism. The recovery, by 1930, of Marx's more Hegelian and philosophical early writings of the 1840s, from the Paris MS to *The German Ideology*, drew attention to a Marx, altogether more libertarian and less deterministic than the sage of Highgate, and, in its emphasis on man as the creator of himself and the world, much more attractive to ardent reforming spirits.

In Europe the revival of Hegel came about at much the same time as the philosophical revision of Marx and in much the same way: by attention to the earliest writings, which had for the most part been newly discovered. The *Realphilosophie* of Hegel's Jena period provided a new approach to *The Phenomenology of Spirit* as did Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* to *The German Ideology*. Kojève's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, now available in English, is a version of his famous and influential lectures of the 1930s. These awakened an interest that was further fed by Hypolite's translation of the *Phenomenology* (1934), his long commentary on it (1946), and the essays of

1955, now available in John O'Neill's translation as *Studies on Marx and Hegel*.

In the English-speaking world the process began much later and was less dramatic. Starting from J.N. Findlay's presidential address to the Aristotelian Society of 1955, "Some Merits of Hegelianism," the revival was inspired less by an interest in the proto-Marxian aspects of Hegel's social and political thought than by a desire to reinstate metaphysical speculation after its long prohibition by positivism. In his substantial, if somewhat idiosyncratic, *Hegel: A Re-examination* (1958), Findlay, indeed, dismisses Hegel's political theory with an air of embarrassment. "Hegel's theory of the state," he says, "is an unedifying piece of writing, largely lacking in thought and argument." But against Hegel's more strenuous detractors he protests, in a Wittgensteinian turn of phrase, "there is nothing vile in his political philosophy. At its worst it is small-minded and provincial, at its best it achieves the level of inspiration of an average British backbench conservatism."

In the United States the revival of interest in Hegel was initially the work of Walter Kaufmann, first in the Fifties in a series of articles, of which the most notable is "The Hegel Myth and Its Method" (included in Alasdair MacIntyre's useful compilation, *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays*), an analysis of Popper's attack that is all the more effective for the general sympathy it shows to Popper, and later, in 1965, in the slightly inchoate mixture of translation, commentary, and general discussion that makes up his *Hegel*.

Kaufmann's interest in Hegel is part of his general project of rescuing post-Kantian philosophy in Germany from the largely unsubstantiated charge by Anglo-Saxon philosophers that it is intellectually grotesque and morally outrageous. Hegel took second place to Nietzsche in this project, Kaufmann's aim being to dissociate the intellectual tradition in which they stand at either end from the Heideggerian philosophy, which in his view really merits the blanket reprobation given to all German philosophers since Kant (cf. chapter 18 of *From Shakespeare to Existentialism*, "German Thought after World War II").

As the list of books under review suggests, these first springs of reawakened interest in Hegel in Britain and America have now swelled. Indeed the preparation of this article has been delayed by a kind of Tristram Shandy effect. The influx of new material has steadily outstripped the reviewer's ability to cover it. As a result the reviewer has attempted to select from the output on Hegel of the past five years.

Even if much of the current interest in Hegel derives from his proximity as a social philosopher to the original and allegedly essential Marx, only in Europe did the Hegel revival begin from that interest. In Britain and America it is Hegel the systematic metaphysician that was first exhumed. How far can the social philosopher and the cosmic metaphysician in Hegel be separated? Lenin took a strongly negative line on this issue: "You cannot completely understand Marx's *Capital*, and in particular its first chapter, without having studied and understood *all* the *Logic* of Hegel." While the battle of the Marne was in progress in the autumn of 1914 he settled down to this agonizing and perhaps impossible task himself.

Certainly Hegel's social and political theory can be considered almost without reference to his metaphysics and still be treated in an informative and intelligible way, as is done by Shlomo Avineri in *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*. But Raymond Plant, whose excellent *Hegel* appears in a series of books on political thinkers, says that "an understanding of these [central metaphysical] doctrines is...a necessary condition of making his writings on political philosophy intelligible."

An argument for separating the two aspects of his work might be drawn from the fact that Hegel's metaphysics was not worked out until he had devoted much philosophical attention in his early years to politics and to religion, conceived as a decidedly social phenomenon and not, in the manner of Whitehead, as "what the individual does with his own solitariness." But that argument would be cogent only if the metaphysics inspired by his early concrete studies of religion and politics had not influenced his subsequent handling of society, politics, and history. Much systematic philosophy has been inspired by more detailed investigations.

From Plato to Russell many distinguished philosophers have started out from mathematics. Aristotle was a biologist, Locke a doctor and political theorist. But, in general, philosophies produced in this way are not mere epiphenomena of the more specific interests that inspired them. Hegel's metaphysics and social philosophy are at any rate congruous and each presents so many obstacles to understanding that it is only sensible to make use of either to help make the other more intelligible.

All the same I am inclined to think that the two ought to be separated in what might be regarded as Hegel's own best interests. The reason is that it is only the epistemological or methodological part of Hegel's metaphysics that has a direct bearing on his social philosophy. The substantive, cosmological part has no more than a general affinity of style with the social philosophy. It is also extremely ambiguous because of the desperate vagueness of its foundations and in either of its more natural interpretations it seems pretty absurd. I am inclined to believe that Hegel's theory of method was first derived from the consideration of human and social questions, the subject of his *Phenomenology* and of the concluding part of his *Encyclopedia*, the *Philosophy of Mind*, a field to which it is plausibly applicable, and that he then projected this theory on to the even larger concerns of cosmology, namely the relations of nature, man, and God, to which it is not plausibly applicable. If I am correct, the extraordinary character of the resulting substantive theory of the cosmos is neither surprising in itself nor necessarily damaging to the dialectical account of the human and social world on which he based his reflections.

II

Hegel saw his own work as the culmination of the whole history of Western philosophy, and with that in mind one should perhaps start any attempt to place and account for it with the pre-Socratics. One must at least go back to Kant's uneasy critical synthesis of the seventeenth-century rationalism that culminated in Leibniz and the British empiricism that achieved its fullest development with Hume. The rationalists held that the real nature of the world, the existence and characteristics of God,

nature, and the soul, could be ascertained by pure reason, working deductively from self-evident first principles. Sensation for them is only “confused thought” and its mangled deliverances provide no more than illusion-riddled appearances of the reality that reason alone can penetrate. For the empiricists knowledge of what really exists can be acquired only from the senses; pure reason is competent to discover only the formal relationships between concepts.

Kant agreed with the empiricists that the senses are necessary to knowledge of reality, but denied that they are sufficient. The intellect has an essential part to play: not as an alternative and superior mode of access to reality, the task of reason as the rationalists conceived it, but *in conjunction with* the senses as a source of organizing principles which order and arrange the initially chaotic “manifold of sensation” yielded by the senses into a world of persisting substances, causally related to one another.

In this more modest, organizing employment the intellect is called by Kant “understanding,” not reason. It enables us to construct a common world from our respective sensations because the apparatus of forms, categories, and principles with which it operates is common to all men, a “consciousness in general” whose identity in all minds Kant takes to follow from the indisputably universal necessity of formal logic. The world of the human understanding is thus objective, in that it is the same for all; but it is not transcendent, not something lying beyond our sensations, since it is composed of them. We can have no knowledge of things-in-themselves, according to Kant, apart from the fact that there are some; both physical and mental it would seem.

Half of Kant’s chief work is taken up directly with the project of its title: the critique of pure reason. Thought alone, or reason, gives no real knowledge. Its purported proofs of the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the infinite extent and divisibility of nature are all invalid. These seductive forms of intellectual self-deception Kant calls, with pejorative intention, dialectic. But when thought is applied to the raw material of sensation, on the other hand, it gives us real knowl-

edge of a phenomenal but nevertheless objective world, a world described by pure mathematics, Newtonian physics, and, it would seem, although Kant does not work this out much, empirical psychology.

In a famous phrase Kant described himself as limiting knowledge to make room for faith. Even if theoretical reason is powerless to prove the existence of God and the freedom and immortality of the human soul, these attractive beliefs can still be reinstated, if less securely, as presuppositions of our experience of moral obligation. Even if God and the soul are not theoretically knowable they can still be proper objects of *belief*, at least as regards their existence, although we can know nothing of their properties. On the one hand, then, Kant rejects things-in-themselves or noumena, at any rate as objects of philosophically demonstrable knowledge. On the other hand he lets them back in: God and the soul as presuppositions of morality, material things-in-themselves, more tentatively, as the unknowable source of the sensations that our understandings work up into a common world.

Kant’s German successors—Fichte, Schelling, and, above all, Hegel—accepted most of what he has positively to say as a starting point but fastened critically on his uncomfortable doctrine of things-in-themselves. In a way that they reasonably argued to be more consistent with his basic assumptions than his own conclusions were, they rejected noumena, conceived as entities altogether beyond the reach of experience, and contended that the reality which reason apprehends with its dialectic is the infinite and all-inclusive whole of which the analytic understanding grasps only the parts. The reality that reason dialectically explores is not, therefore, something wholly distinct from experience. It is the organized totality whose separate and abstracted details are known by the understanding. The work of the reason is not a leap from the level of the understanding into a scrutiny of the inaccessibly transcendent: it is the comprehensive completion of that work. Thus “reason” and “dialectic,” which had been terms of disapprobation in Kant’s mouth, came to be re-equipped with their ancient Platonic dignity.

This counter-Kantian reevaluation of reason and understanding is the fundamental principle of Hegel's theory of knowledge or method. For him the understanding, conceived much as Kant conceived it, does not yield true knowledge but, rather, practically useful rules of thumb: abstract, partial, but convenient for practice. Understanding is the analytic, abstractive order of thinking to be found in the sciences and in everyday practical thought. Reason, on the other hand, as Hegel conceives it, does give true knowledge of reality by apprehending things in their concrete interrelatedness with other things. The understanding extracts items of particular interest from the systems of relationships that make them what they are so that they may be more readily manipulated in thought and action. Reason, however, seeks to grasp things in their unitary wholeness: its aim is totality, not artificially abstracted parts. For Hegel, as for the law courts, the only real truth is the whole truth.

As applied to human society this presumption has some interesting consequences. The domain of politics cannot be circumscribed and confined to an investigation of the machinery of government; its ingredients cannot be conceived as conscious human artifacts with clear, antecedently assigned purposes. A state is more than a set of formal institutions. Such institutions interact so thoroughly and intimately with the whole social existence of a people as to be inseparable from it. Again the tendency of all traditional social theory, culminating in that of the Enlightenment, to see institutions as quite distinct from an eternal human nature considered in the abstract, fatally ignores the fact that the institutions of an age are an expression of the human nature of that age. Thus the totalities that reason studies are essentially historical in character.

This body of doctrine is not a complete novelty. Selected elements of the thought of Rousseau and Burke are to be found in it: the idea that human nature is formed by society from Rousseau; the idea that the present condition of men crucially embodies the historic past of society from Burke. But Hegel arrives at something quite different from Rousseau's democratic primitivism and from Burke's reverent conservatism: a kind of historical realism about state and society, which, while committed to the inevitability of change, acknowledges

that such change can occur only within well-defined, if hitherto little understood, limits. Hegel is as much of an anti-utopian as Marx, as much convinced that most men's notions of what is socially possible are ludicrously and wishfully exaggerated.

The substantive cosmology produced by the method of reason is a much less digestible affair. The all-inclusive whole of reality is *Geist* or Spirit, which some would prefer to translate as "Mind." For Hegel ultimate reality consists not of individual minds or spirits, but of Spirit in general. And how can this reality be apprehended by reason? It presents itself to philosophical reflection (and, by implication, in fact) first in the form of the abstract categories of logic: "spirit in itself." Spirit in this form then "externalizes" itself as nature, in which, so to speak, the bare bones of logic take on spatio-temporal flesh: "spirit for itself." Finally, mind proper comes on the scene, "spirit in and for itself," first as individual consciousnesses, then as social institutions, lastly as art, religion, and philosophy, and, in the end, spirit reappropriates the world of nature which it has mistakenly regarded as external but which is really its own unconscious product.

These mysterious, if suggestive, assertions pose two main problems of interpretation. First, what is to be understood by "Spirit," and, in particular, is it to be identified with God? Secondly, what are we to understand by the "externalization" of the Idea in Nature, and, in particular, is it some sort of creation?

The more conventional view is that Hegel's Spirit is a kind of world-soul, of which particular finite minds are fragmentary, and thus not wholly real or self-subsistent parts, but which goes beyond them. Interpreted in this way Spirit is pretty much like God, although it is the God of pantheism not of theism, since this God is not distinct from the world but *is* the world, truly conceived as a unitary whole. Furthermore, this God is not a person since it is not, to start with, self-conscious, but becomes self-conscious only through diversifying itself into the plurality of finite minds. If the sequence Idea-Nature-History is taken in a literal, chronological way this position approximates to the idea that

God proper is not so much the originating source as the ultimate, evolutionary goal of the history of the world.

An alternative, more secular interpretation is that Spirit is no more than the integrated totality of all actual finite minds, past, present, and future. This, which is more or less the view of the young or left Hegelians, departs a good deal further from ordinary religious belief than the more conservative interpretation. It also implies a measure of naturalism, an abandonment of the idealist principle that the constituents of material nature can exist only as objects of some mind. For the greater part of what everybody (including Hegel) would acknowledge to exist in nature is not the object of any finite mind. So either nature has to be reconstrued as a grotesquely patchy and fragmentary residue of what we ordinarily take it to be or the dependence of nature on mind for its existence has to be given up.

The crucial passage comes at the very end, section 244, of Hegel's *Logic*. He says of the Idea, "in its own absolute truth it resolves to let the 'moment' of its particularity...the immediate idea, as its reflected image, go forth freely as Nature." The natural interpretation of this is that the Idea actually makes Nature, or a bit more offhandedly, lets it go by some metaphysical process of secretion. Somehow or other Spirit, in its raw, original form, produces Nature.

It seems to me that this kind of more or less literal reading of Hegel's account of the relation between Spirit and Nature must represent what he really had in mind. Nothing else is consistent with the radically idealistic starting point of his philosophy, in particular his rejection of Kant's transcendent thing-in-itself, conceived as a reality independent of mind and yet somehow causally underlying the sensations out of which our beliefs in an external nature are constituted.

But it is unattractive to two classes of Hegel's admirers: to those who wish to disentangle what they see as the humanly and socially valuable parts of Hegel's thought from involvement with religion, the left Hegelian party in general; and also to those philosophically purer spirits, like J.N. Findlay, who

simply find it unintelligible that a God as flimsy, sketchy, and potential as the Idea, or Spirit-in-itself, endowed with neither consciousness nor will, could create anything. Findlay's alternative is to say that Hegel meant no more than that Nature exists *for* Spirit. But this is no help. For either it means no more than that Nature is the indispensable condition for the emergence of Spirit, which every naturalist would happily affirm and only the most mystical kind of spiritualist would deny, or it means that some intelligent being produced nature as part of a project the completion of which is the production of actual minds, and that brings us back to conception of the Idea as creative, however passively and unconsciously, with which we started.

I conclude, then, that Hegel's substantive metaphysics is essentially religious in character, a watered-down, and on that account less persuasive, version of the Christian theory of an omnipotent personal creator. By diluting the naïveté of the traditional conception of the creator as a person, he turns it into a system of abstract logical notions whose power to create anything is hard to understand. If this residual religious element is interpreted out, Hegel's substantive metaphysics gets turned into a kind of evolutionary naturalism like the philosophy of Samuel Alexander, a matter of redescribing ordinary empirical facts about nature in a misleadingly spiritualistic and teleological idiom. But that does not affect Hegel's social philosophy or his doctrine of method, in so far, at least, as it is confined in its application to the human and social domain.

III

Most of the books I am concerned with here deal with Hegel not as a substantive cosmic metaphysician but as a philosopher of mind and society, the author, that is, of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the *Philosophy of Mind* (the third part of the *Encyclopedia*), the *Philosophy of Right*, the *Philosophy of History*, the *Philosophy of Art*, the *Philosophy of Religion*, and the *History of Philosophy*. The most notable of the exceptions is Ivan Soll's *Introduction to Hegel's Metaphysics*. This seems to me by far the best introduction that there is to the metaphysical side of Hegel's work. It is brief, lucid, and sympathetic to

its subject. It is not critical on a large scale; hair-raising Hegelian claims do not cause Soll to raise even an eyebrow. But there is a critical element in the selection of topics, and from time to time some mild internal criticism is voiced, as when Soll observes that Hegel's identification of absolute knowledge with knowledge of the absolute is not much of an argument. (One might as well identify inadequate knowledge with knowledge of the inadequate.)

He considers four main topics. First, the forms of alienation or estrangement from the world enumerated in the section on Consciousness in the *Phenomenology*: the master-slave relation, stoicism, skepticism, and the unhappy consciousness. Secondly, Soll examines the Kantian notion of the thing-in-itself, the philosophical expression of this estrangement, and Hegel's particular objections to it, as an object, something that exists, that is nevertheless not an object, something that is unknowable. In the third chapter he investigates Hegel's view that philosophy must seek to overcome the duality of subject and object. Finally, he presents Hegel's resolution of the duality in which subject and object both turn out to be the absolute. The resolution occurs in the activity of true philosophizing, where the philosopher who has transcended his particularity by recognizing his identity with infinite Spirit takes infinite Spirit as his object of thought.

Throughout Soll's exposition large questions arise that demand a critical consideration that they do not receive. But it is quite clear what the questions are. Soll seems to assume here Hegel's fundamental premise as beyond question: that there can be such a thing as absolute knowledge of the truly, all-inclusively infinite. But given this assumption, Soll succeeds in presenting Hegel's main metaphysical theses as a coherent sequence of thoughts.

Hegel's *Idea of Philosophy*, by Father Quentin J. Lauer, seeks to introduce readers to its subject by translating and commenting on Hegel's introduction to his *History of Philosophy*, from the Hoffmeister edition of 1940, and not Michelet's of 1831, the original of the standard translation by Haldane and Simson. Hegel's history of philosophy, says Lauer, is great philosophy, even if no

longer great history of philosophy; and its introduction is, because of its clarity and comprehensiveness, the best introduction to Hegel's philosophy.

He supports this claim, in some prefatory remarks on Hegel's system, by the reasonable argument that since for Hegel philosophy can be reached by a dialectical and historical progression upward from lower grades of thought, Hegel's history of philosophy is really his philosophical theory of philosophy. In the progressive development that is the history of thought, thought produces its own objects and becomes increasingly aware of the fact, to the point, in Hegel's own philosophy, at which it recognizes its identity with infinite spirit and with its object, the consummation of freedom and reason. The infinite object, which religion represents pictorially as external, is grasped directly by philosophical reason as internal to it. Philosophers, one might say, have previously been content to imitate Aristotle; with Hegel they turn to imitating Aristotle's God, the pure thinker whose only object is himself.

Another piece by Hegel which is sometimes chosen to serve as an introduction to his work in general is the preface (a substantial affair, seventy-two pages in Baillie's translation) of *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. A new translation of it forms the last main chapter of, and largest chunk of Hegel proper in, Kaufmann's *Hegel*. Just after it in the *Phenomenology* comes an introduction, seventeen pages in Baillie, a somewhat vertiginous critique of the idea that philosophy is an investigation into the nature of knowledge. How, Hegel asks in effect, can we seriously inquire whether certain beliefs are knowledge unless we have already made a presumption about what knowledge really is? So any examination of knowledge must also be an examination of the standard or criterion by which claims to knowledge are assessed.

Heidegger's *Hegel's Concept of Experience* prints this introduction on its left-hand pages, the right-hand pages being given up to some commentary by Heidegger himself. Those hungry for enlightenment are met with such observations as this: "the absoluteness of the Absolute—an absoluteness that being absolvent absolves itself—is the labour of uncondi-

tional self-certainty grasping itself.” The general impression conveyed is that Hegel, for all his bad ratiocinative habits, inwardly realizes that the Absolute is present “within” us. This is, we may presume, another plug for “openness toward Being,” whatever precisely that may be.

In *The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought*, Emil Fackenheim defends the more or less traditional reading of Hegel against the idea that Hegel is some kind of proto-Marxist existentialist. The central problem in Hegel is, for Fackenheim, the relation of life, in particular religious life, to philosophical thought. He raises various intelligible questions arising out of Hegel's doctrines: does the conception of philosophy as absolute knowledge imply that the philosopher somehow *is* God? Is Nature contingent and self-subsistent or wholly dependent on Spirit? How much of Christianity is left by the Hegelian philosophy which claims to be the truth that Christianity imaginatively represents (Fackenheim argues that Hegel is more a Christian than a speculative pantheist)? Does the “fragmentation” of the modern, post-Hegelian world show his attempted reconciliation of religion and speculative philosophy to have failed?

The argument is carried on in a bold, forthright manner and in a persuasive form, enriched with plentiful material from the history of religion and philosophy. But I have the feeling that it could have gone on indefinitely in its dialectical way, ever new contradictions emerging and importunately demanding reconciliation. Once an intelligent man like Fackenheim has grasped the Hegelian vocabulary and the liquid procedures of quasi reasoning appropriated to its use, there is really nothing to stop him. Thinking about the infinite slides readily into infinite thought.

Before we leave Hegel the metaphysician, mention should be made of A. V. Miller's new translation of Hegel's *Science of Logic*. This was first translated into English in 1929 by Johnston and Struthers, and has not, perhaps, been read much. Nevertheless Miller (who has also translated that contentious and hitherto unavailable work the *Philosophy of Nature*) was prepared to undertake this arduous labor. It reads well, as well as it possibly can, no doubt, if faithful to its original. In par-

ticular great trouble has been taken to avoid reproducing the objectionable chunks of German word-order which the fatigue of Hegel translation often causes to slip by.

There are good reasons why Hegel's metaphysics, for all the obscurity of its presentation and the elusiveness of the general picture of the world it seeks to convey, should exert a continuing fascination. It claims to provide a rigorously reasoned foundation for a spiritualistic account of the nature of things, in place of such flimsier supports as mystical intuition or magical anecdotes or communications from the dead. Its extraordinary scope, the breadth and variety of its creator's learning, and the integrity of his admittedly baffling intellectual style endow it with a formidable quality that demands attention. It was said of J. H. Stirling's *Secret of Hegel* (1865), the first substantial book on Hegel in English, that its author knew how to keep the secret to himself. The secret is still far from fully revealed. In the concluding part of this article, I shall go on to consider recent studies of the other, the social, political, and historical, sides of Hegel's work, which are much more accessible than his account of the universe.

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)