

encounter if they continue to allow their prayer to be divorced from human insights and the world of today. The key for the author is that prayer is not some self-contained 'problem to be solved', but rather is the *whole* of life—a 'venture to be lived out'. Engagement and Passion are the words he uses—what matters is what men are passionate about, what they are really engaged in. The Incarnation and Passion of Christ are taken as the context within which Christian prayer must work—in other words, *within* the world to which Christ is passionately engaged. That is, that we must be convinced that God *can* be found in the world made continually new; that we can accept, without being scandalised, Christ's total engagement and have the courage to follow. Only then can we really pray.

As Alan Ecclestone says, only in a kind of poetry can we penetrate the human process and see God's engagement in its midst. *Yes to God* in fact has a lot to say about literature and art, and poetry in particular, for it is artists and poets who can help in awakening the Spirit, enabling us 'to see and to touch with new innocence of perception'. The various literary examples on which Alan Ecclestone draws are used, gently but effectively, to lead us to free ourselves from the 'seeming appearances of things'—to perceive a real 'revelation' in the world around us. It's a pity that Newman's adage: 'with Christians a poetic view of things is a duty' has been largely ignored and that as a result the Church finds itself impoverished and removed from wide areas of human experience.

Not that the author's poetic vision leads him to ignore the reality of a world which is often unattractive. His prayer, as he says, 'means finding ourselves somewhere between living in a runaway world and running away from life'. Christians are not an untouched or untouchable elite—the Passion of Christ in which we must share is also here and now in the world of today and all its troubles. I particularly liked the book's attempt in two of its chapters to come to terms with 'prayer and the world of men' and 'spirituality and sexual love'. The need is to discover again what being 'Corpus Christi' means and that love, human and divine, has one face, not two—for all love is sacred, is sacrament.

I don't think there is much point in detailing what Alan Ecclestone has to say—the book is too rich in language and ideas to do it justice in this way. It is a poetical book, not to be skipped through—ultimately not to be ticked off as 'read', but pondered over. What is so refreshing is that it does not use the language of 'bringing Christ to the world' (by implication a world from which he is absent), but rather pleads for a reinvigorated search for the Christ who is already in the world—committed in his continual incarnation. And when *we*, the Christians, have discovered him again, our job is to show him to those who do not see—the persecuted, those in prison, the underfed, the misunderstood.

PHILIP SHELDRAKE SJ

*Editorial note: Since this review was written this book has won the Collins Religious Book Award.*

HEGEL, by Charles Taylor. *Cambridge University Press*, 1975. 580 pp. £12.50.

Despite the continuing misdirection of every new generation by Karl Popper's vituperative travesty of Hegel in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, so readily available in paperback and seeming so temptingly authoritative to minds permeated with British liberal empiricism, we are not badly off for intelligent studies in English to help us approach that formidable corpus of writing which marks a watershed in subsequent Western thought. Apart from reprints of an old stand-by like Stace, and recent translations of Kojève and Hyppolite, the former far too unaware, and the latter much too redolent, of Hegelian veins of thought particularly open to Marxist

and existentialist exploitation to provide satisfactory points of entry, we have attempts at complete interpretations by Herbert Marcuse (a Marxist of the Frankfurt School working in the State Department at the time), by Walter Kaufman (who demolishes Popper), and by J. N. Findlay (a disillusioned Wittgensteinian gone over to Husserlian transcendental phenomenology). More recently, Ivan Soll has provided a short introductory exposition (1969), and there is a particularly noteworthy essay by Raymond Plant (1973), important for the connections he makes with theology as well as with political theory. The famous study of 'the young Hegel'

by George Lukács has just appeared in English, simultaneously with a translation of the second part of *Il Marxismo e Hegel*, in which Lucio Colletti argues, against Marxist and non-Marxist interpreters of Hegel but especially against his fellow Marxists, that Hegel's thought is an exercise in Absolute Idealism rooted in supernaturalist theology (what else had those who never read Hegel always thought?). The only other studies of Hegel which one would like to see translated into English as soon as possible are Ernst Bloch's attractive introduction (written before he left the German Democratic Republic for the West), and, especially for theologians, the seven hundred pages by Hans Küng, *Menschwerdung Gottes*, 'an introduction to Hegel's theological thought as prolegomenon to a future Christology' (1970).

To that little library must be added this fine book by Charles Taylor. Now at McGill University, Professor Taylor was associated with the original 'New Left' in Britain while he was a graduate student at Oxford, and he has since run several times for the Canadian Federal Parliament. In his earlier book, *The Explanation of Behaviour* (1964), Taylor showed his mastery of the familiar kind of Oxford analysis and argument. The preface to his new book acknowledges a special debt to Isaiah Berlin; it is via the history of ideas that Taylor approaches Hegel's *oeuvre*, then, not by seizing eclectically upon themes with which a logical analyst would feel at ease (as some recent interpreters of Kant seem to prefer).

Judging by the amount of Hegel's own work currently available in English, an interpretation as extensive and comprehensive as this will easily find readers. The four principal works which Hegel himself saw published are all in print, often in very good versions. The Baillie version of the *Phenomenology* in the Muirhead Library, that opaque and recalcitrant text that has killed the enthusiasm of many an eager student misled into regarding it as the best place to start reading Hegel, will eventually give way to the translation being made by Kenley R. Dove, but for the present it holds its own. A fresh version of *Science of Logic*—the 'Greater Logic'—came out in 1969; while Wallace's sturdy version of two thirds of the *Encyclopedia*—the 'Lesser Logic' and

the *Philosophy of Mind*—has at last been completed with the intermediary *Philosophy of Nature*, thus providing what is surely by far the most accessible entrance to reading Hegel. Knox's version of the *Philosophy of Right*, the only other book which Hegel saw into print, remains available. In addition to this, the four great posthumously edited lecture cycles are also in print: the *Philosophy of Religion* and the *History of Philosophy* each in three-decker photocopied Victorian editions, the *Philosophy of History* in an American paperback, and finally the *Aesthetics*, superb in a new translation by Knox (Oxford University Press, two volumes, £30 the set). The English reader of Kant is as well served as this, but of what other major German thinker can it be said that so much of his work is so readily accessible? It certainly cannot be said of Fichte or Schelling, and given the unsatisfactory nature of so many of the translations it cannot be said of Marx or Nietzsche either.

The one work by Hegel that seems difficult to come by at the moment is Knox's version of his *Early Theological Writings* (last heard of as an American paperback in 1961). This is a pity, because nowhere else can there be such concise documentation of the shift from eighteenth-century rationalism to nineteenth-century romanticism. In the space of three years, from 1795 to 1798, as these manuscript drafts show, Hegel moved from the Enlightenment dream of the reign of Reason (Jesus as founder of a religion of virtue based on the autonomy of *Vernunft*), to a promonitory vision of the dichotomy (*Entzweiung*) and estrangement (*Entfremdung*) that mark social and individual consciousness (the transcendent Lord of Judaism as expropriating and alienating the human spirit). In his extraordinary pages on 'the Spirit of Judaism' Hegel finds the language for alienation that we now all use. As Charles Taylor puts it, in his splendid opening chapter, the tension in Hegel lies in the conflict between the self-defining autonomous subject of Kantian rationalism and the almost biological desire of the Romantic generation for integration in an all-embracing wholeness. With the collapse of the ancient view of the universe as a text in which man could find the same *logos* as he bore in himself, the knowing subject was

left having to make what sense it could of the objects of consciousness. The duality of subject and object to which this led in Kant was found intolerable by Hegel. Sustained by a vision of social and personal integration, he was determined to incorporate the irreducible difference between self and other in a larger identity. The famous Hegelian claim to establish the identity of identity and non-identity—what Taylor speaks of (page 49) as ‘perhaps the central and most “mind-blowing” idea of the Hegelian system’—he persuasively presents as something of perennial and recurring interest in our civilisation: namely, the attempt to combine the Romantic dream of overcoming all alienation in total and all-embracing unity with the Kantian insistence on rational autonomy.

For so many of the Romantics, the dream of the integrated man reconciled with nature meant abandoning the Kantian notion of rationality. As Taylor says, the pattern repeats itself in our own day. Theologians, certainly, should be made to read and re-read the Preface to the *Phenomenology*. The main thrust of that text is to demonstrate the *Wissenschaftlichkeit* of philosophy—its claim to be regarded as the highest form of human knowledge. Written in 1807, just as any such claim was about to be displaced by unprecedented advances in human knowledge (Hegel, in his *Philosophy of Nature*, is the last great philosopher to be able to master all the sciences of his time), the Hegelian vision of philosophy as *the* ‘science’, indeed the *only* science that can fully engage the human mind on its mettle, reaffirms the conception of philosophy in Plato and Aristotle. The only *episteme* that satisfies *nous* becomes the only *Wissenschaft* fully to employ the mind as *Begriff*. There is no other ‘science’ sufficiently demanding to excite the capacity of the mind for conceptual thinking. However hubristic this claim, and in spite of the fact that in Hegel that grandiose tradition of intellectual endeavour (with the aristocratic and ethnocentric assumptions about man and society which it implies) begins to come to an end, now no *other* way of thinking worthy of what the human mind can achieve can abandon the Hegelian concept of ‘concept’—of *Begriff*. As he says in the Pre-

face to the *Phenomenology*, contemporary apologists of religion were relying not on conceptual analysis but on enthusiasm (*nicht der Begriff, sondern die Ekstase*), or else on feeling and intuition (*Gefühl und Anschauung*). But this leads us straight into ‘the night in which, as we say, all cows are black’: any evasion of the exactingness of conceptual thinking means surrendering differences and distinctions. In another famous phrase, such an approach then ‘lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience and the labour of the negative’. For Hegel, always, the power of the human mind comes out primarily in negation, in differentiating, in conceptual analysis, and no ‘synthesis’ gained by dissolving antitheses and contradictions could ever be worthwhile.

The trouble is, however, that by his own standards the labour of the negative is identified with an altogether too optimistic vision of the process of history as the unfolding of a cosmic rationality which seems on the one hand to be inextricable from a certain ‘demythologised’ and ‘secularised’ pantheism, and which seems on the other hand unacceptably intimate with a very restricted circle of men (*men*, certainly) in every generation. As one would expect, Taylor concludes that Hegel’s view of things is ‘just about unrecoverable even by the most optimistic of our contemporaries’ (page 545), above all because, despite his fright at the Terror, he believed that the horrors and nightmares had gone from European history. The labour of the negative was to demand much more seriousness, suffering and patience than Hegel ever realised, and the labourers would not be philosophers. But if that conclusion is not unexpected Professor Taylor leads us to it by way of an unfailingly clear exposition of Hegel’s ideas which will not be surpassed for lucidity in the foreseeable future—this book must now be the standard commentary on Hegel. In addition to that, without ever forcing parallels or imposing ‘relevance’, it is a commentary on the continuing struggle to overcome the multiple estrangements of which we are victims, a struggle that requires the most exacting use of the powers of reason with which we are endowed.

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