

Hegel's Hellenic Ideal. By J. GLENN GRAY. New York: King's Crown Press, 1941. Pp. viii + 104. \$1.50.

Reason and Revolution. Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory. By HERBERT MARCUSE. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941. Pp. xiv + 431. \$3.75.

There was a time when Hegel's philosophy, much criticized and little read, appeared as the apex of abstrusity and as the most striking example of the divagations of a philosopher who cared nothing for facts. The Neo-Hegelian school, prominent mainly in England and in Italy, did not attract much notice outside of its own circles. Today, things have become somewhat different. We are sufficiently distant from Hegel to view him in the historical context in which he belongs, and sufficiently objective, one may hope, to acknowledge what is great and what is true in Hegel's conception. Studies of serious criticism, based on a thorough knowledge of Hegel's intellectual world, and attempts at an appreciation of his philosophy have become more frequent in recent years.

Mr. Gray's little book is such an objective and scholarly contribution to our understanding of Hegel. Anyone who is even slightly acquainted with the ideas of this philosopher is impressed by the great place Greek thought, Greek art, and Greek civilization hold in his mind. Though not blind to the disadvantages of ancient Greece and fully aware of the progress achieved by history since Periclean times, Hegel still felt that these ages came closer to some ideal than any others. Of him is especially true what Mr. Gray states as a general characteristic of German idealism, that its "permanent value consists in its poetic apprehension of empirical phenomena, its artistic appreciation and religious insight." The interest of this school focussed on "the meaning of events, their relevance to human experience, not on recording and interpreting facts."

Mr. Gray starts with a clever analysis of Hegel's vision of history, his conviction that human affairs prove, in the ultimate and long term, to be rational, his basic conception that history is mankind's march towards a more and more perfect freedom to be achieved by the gradual actualization of the spirit. The fundamental categories of Hegel's philosophy of history are clearly stated. Chapter II deals with young Hegel's discovery of the Greek. He was then inclined to evaluate Greece, its history, and civilization more highly than he did in his mature years. At first, he had no very clear view of the progress Christianity achieved. Later, the influence of Hölderlin, Schiller, and other prophets of classic beauty wore away. The retrospective mood of romanticism was replaced by a strong emphasis of forward movement. But he could not conceive of history as a wholehearted progress. If Christianity had freed the individual and enhanced the dignity of the human person, something also had been lost, that is, the harmony and the

unity of society, the beauty pervading everyone's life, and, most of all, the awareness that freedom can be realized only if the individual is thoroughly embedded in the life of the community, that is, the state. It was Hegel's idea to bring about a perfect synthesis of modern freedom and the Greek idea of realization of the individual within and through the community.

Not less learned than Mr. Gray's book, Mr. Marcuse's work is of a different nature. The book has two main theses, although they are not announced explicitly. One is that to evaluate Hegel one has to consider his philosophy as a precursor of Marxian dialectics; the other is that Hegel is quite unjustly reproached for having paved the way for totalitarianism.

The book has two parts. The first deals with "The Foundations of Hegel's Philosophy." The author develops in a very instructive way the various stages of Hegelian thought, and makes extensive use of the writings of Hegel's youth. The reader will profit much by following the progress from the earliest conceptions to the philosophy of politics and of history. This exposition, although striving for objectivity, is in a way "colored" by the first of the propositions mentioned above. Hegel's philosophy is, perhaps, envisioned too much from the angle of social philosophy. True, hardly any thinker before Hegel gave as much attention to the phenomena of history and of social life, but one might question the notion that society and history represent the truly basic aspects of this philosophy.

The second part describes "The Rise of Social Theory." While Hegel, notwithstanding his interest in social philosophy, remained essentially a philosopher, there developed, principally through his influence, a true theory of society as a science, as a system based on facts and not mainly on ideas. Hegel's dialectic took on another shape in the hands of Kierkegaard. The chapter on this philosopher is, to the present reviewer's mind, not very satisfactory. Another development is characterized by the names of Feuerbach and Marx. There follows an interesting chapter on "Positivism and the Rise of Sociology," Saint-Simon, A. Comte, the positive philosophy of the state as conceived by F. J. Stahl, and, finally, the foundation of sociology by Lorenz von Stein are analyzed.

The concluding chapter has for its title "The End of Hegelianism." The British Neo-Idealism, of Bradley or Bosanquet, appears to the author as a dead end. On the other hand, Marxian dialectics underwent a profound change in the hands of the Revisionists. The alleged relation of Italian Fascistic philosophy (Gentile) to Hegel is mere appearance. The basic ideas are utterly different from those Hegel himself held. Nor is German National Socialism an offspring of Hegelian Idealism. On the contrary it is eminently antagonistic to the latter, so much so that Hegel has been severely criticized and his philosophy declared incompatible with the new ideology. It is, therefore, so the author concludes, not possible to

see in the recent developments in Germany the result or the continuation of Hegelianism.

The facts, of course, must be admitted. The antagonism referred to by the author evidently exists, but this is not a sufficient proof of essential independence. Although Hegel's conception of the state is not the one advocated by Rosenberg and others, and although these writers oppose *Volk* to *Staat*, there is indubitably a great similarity between the way they conceive of *Volk* and the way Hegel conceived of *Staat*. Dependence, in things ideological, does not necessarily mean wholesale acceptance. Also a negation may depend on a position it negates and be inconceivable without this position preceding it. Hegel alone cannot be made responsible. It is quite true that he would have repudiated the modern conceptions and considered them as a serious falling back to a lower level of history. But without Hegel and his successors, however far their ideas may be from those of the Rosenbergs, Schmidts, and others, one hardly can imagine these ideas to have arisen.

Though the Marxist slant in Mr. Marcuse's book somewhat falsifies the outlook on Hegel's world, one may recommend this work to anyone desirous of getting a comprehensive view of Hegelianism and its subsequent developments. A not too extensive, yet useful, bibliography is added.

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