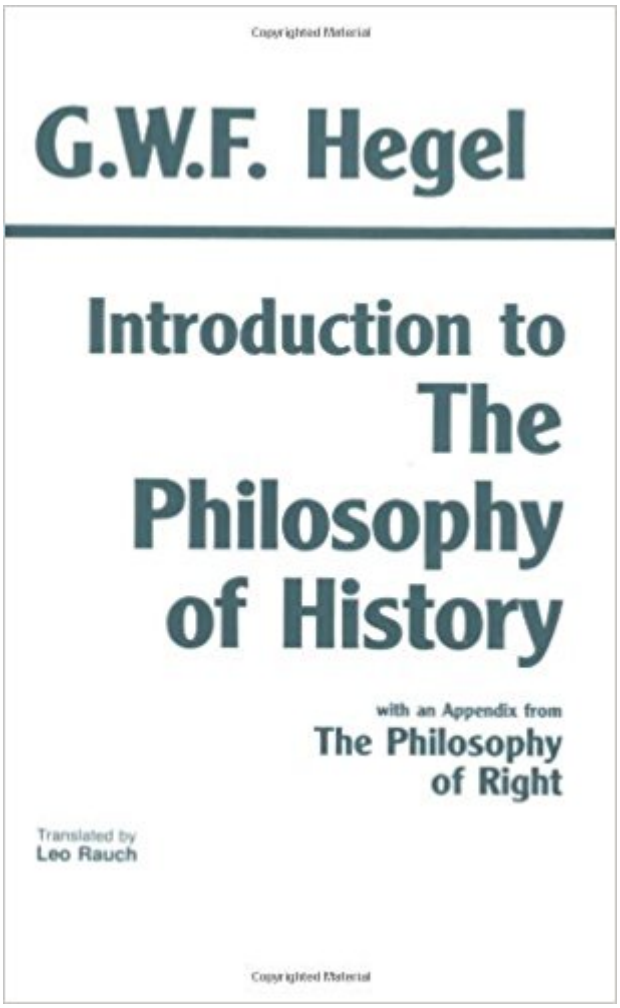
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Introduction To The Philosophy Of History: With Selections From The Philosophy Of Right (Hackett Classics)



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Synopsis

. . . eminently readable . . . admirably picks up the spirit of what Hegel is saying. . . . more readable and accurate than Hartmann's, and it transÃ Â- lates a more readable text than does Nisbet's. It includes (as Hartmann's does not) an excerpt, which serves as chapter five, from 'The GeoÃ Â- graphical Basis of History' (particularly interesting for what it says of America), and a brief chapter six, entitled 'The Division of History.' The volume closes with an appendix, translating Ã Â§Ã Â§341Ã¢â ¬â œ360 of HegelÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Philosophy of Right and deals directly with the very concept of 'World History.' It constitutes a big help in coming to grips with what Hegel means by 'Spirit.' --Quentin Lauer, SJ, Fordham University, in International Philosophical Quarterly

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

. . . as felicitous as a translation of Hegel can be --H. S. Harris, York UniversityAn elegant and intelligent translation. The text provides a perfect solution to the problem of how to introduce students to Hegel in a survey course in the history of Western philosophy. --Graham Parkes, University of Hawaii

Text: English, German (translation)

The translation is wonderful, and the additional introduction by the translator and selections from

Hegel’s Philosophy of Right are a nice bonus. Whether or not you agree with Hegel’s ideas (they are rather unconventional, which makes them all the more interesting) the text is likely the most straightforward of his notoriously obscure and abstract works, hence the ideal place to begin a study of Hegel’s philosophy and Rauch’s translation makes it a smooth entry for those willing to take the time. Despite what one of the other reviewers may think (won’t say who) I feel many, many teachers of philosophy would probably agree; they would definitely agree that Hegel was a huge influence on philosophy in the 19th century and anybody interested in the history of philosophy (and the philosophy of history, for that matter) cannot ignore this work.

This is a very readable and clear introduction to some of the basic tenants of Hegel’s philosophy and is a good place to begin rather than with the more daunting "Phenomenology of Spirit." The key ideas (in direct quotes from the text) are below:*Reason rules the world and world history has therefore been rational in its course.*World history is the progress in the consciousness of freedom....The final goal of the world is Spirit’s consciousness of its freedom and hence also the actualization of that very freedom.*It is the final goal -freedom- toward which all the world’s history has been working.*A state is well constituted and internally strong if the private interest of the citizens is united with the universal goal of the state.*In world history the outcome of the human action is something other than what the agents aim at and actually achieve, something other than what they immediately know and will. They fulfill their own interests, but something further is thereby brought into being, something which is inwardly involved in what they do but which was not in their consciousness or part of their intention.*The great men in history are those whose own particular aims contain the substantial will that is the will of the World Spirit...These heroic individuals, in fulfilling these aims of theirs, had no consciousness of the Idea at all. On the contrary, they were practical and political men.*Humans are ends in themselves with respect to the content of the goal of Reason.*This essential being is itself the union of two wills: the subjective will and the rational will. This is an ethical totality, the state. It is the reality wherein the individual has and enjoys his freedom - but only insofar as he knows, believes and will the universal...As against this negative concept of freedom, it is rather law, ethical life, the state, and they alone that comprise the positive reality and satisfaction of freedom.*The subjective will -passion- is the actuating element, the realizing force of Reason.*Only the will that is obedient to the law is free, for it obeys itself and being self-sufficient, it is free.*For the True is the union of the universal or general will and subjective will.*The ethical is the union of the subjective and the universal will.As an aside, Kojeve’s "Introduction to Hegel" is also an excellent volume.

Introduction to the Philosophy of History is a short posthumous publication of Hegel's lecture notes pertaining to the nature of history (There are several similar publications of Hegel notes, e.g. The History of Philosophy, The Philosophy of Art. Georg Hegel was one of the most popular and influential German idealists of the ninetieth century. This short book (approximately 100 pages also includes an excerpt from the The Philosophy of the Right. I offer the following thoughts to potential readers.Rauch's translation is readable and makes Hegel about as accessible as he gets. Generally, my view is that readers should interact with historic thinkers through their own work - with Hegel this can be frustrating given his style. His use of ambiguous metaphysical terminology such as "the World Spirit" and his teleological or progressive view of history may be difficult for the contemporary reader. As a result, an overview German idealism may be helpful before approaching Hegel directly.Personally, German idealism has always struck me as a somewhat tedious and uninteresting aspect of modern philosophy. Reading this short work was an attempt on my part to re-examine this period and challenge my assumptions - unfortunately it has only reinforced my earlier impressions. Depending on one's perspective Hegel either represents the zenith or nadir of German idealism. While there is no doubt that Hegel was an able thinker much of his written work comes across as empty and highly speculative. Although I am not a positivist Hegel's type of sophistry likely contributed to the appeal of analytical philosophy in the early twentieth century. To be fair to Hegel, however, his work did influence some significant later thinkers such as Marx and may be worth a look for that reason alone.Overall, probably only for readers well versed with Hegel. For those interested in a survey of German Idealism, Pinkard's German Philosophy 1760-1860 is a solid book.

Shame on any teacher who can not think of anyone better to require (force) their students to study. What a waste of time for students to read such FANTASY in a philosophy class, it is really more SCI-FI; I do not care if this guy was a notable philosopher at some point, centuries past, Hegel was at least EXTREAMLY strange and possible crazy. ONE STAR IS NOT LOW ENCOUGH!!!

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