



JOHN FINDLAY

# John Niemeyer Findlay

## 1903–1987

JOHN NIEMEYER FINDLAY was born on 25 November, 1903 in Pretoria in the Transvaal, then a British Crown Colony, into a family of mixed Scottish, Welsh, Suabian, Hessian, Dutch, and French Huguenot ancestry. He was to make his home in many places, but always retained a deep attachment to South Africa. His parents were throughout his life objects of admiration as well as of intense affection and he acknowledged continuing intellectual and moral debts to his older brother, a distinguished South African barrister. It was his brother who, when he first became an undergraduate at the University of Pretoria, made Findlay a gift of his own copy of Wallace's translation of Hegel's *Logic*, a book which Findlay described as 'my constant companion throughout my life'.

As a child he became fluent in Dutch—not Afrikaans—and he taught himself French at a remarkably early age. Later he was also to teach himself German, a language in which he subsequently became as fluent as he was in English. And, when from the age of eleven he attended the High School for Boys in Pretoria, he received a first-rate education in Greek and Latin language and literature from James Lang, formerly a scholar of Queen's College, Oxford. At the University of Pretoria, which he entered in 1919, he continued his classical studies, but worked mainly in philosophy, where his teacher was W. A. Macfadyen, another member of the cohort of early twentieth-century teachers in the academic outposts of the British Empire for whom Greats had been a formative influence. Macfadyen introduced Findlay to the idealism of Green and Bosanquet. More importantly Findlay received from him an excellent

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grounding in the history of both ancient and modern philosophy. Findlay brought to his undergraduate studies already well-formed philosophical interests and views that derived from his attachment to the doctrines of Theosophy, doctrines which he had embraced at the age of sixteen. It was under theosophical influence that he read a variety of Hindu and Buddhist texts and, more significantly for his future development, engaged with Neoplatonism. So at an early stage in his philosophical education he had already become impatient with accounts of mind that do not allow adequately for the range and variety of modes of thought and types of introspective experience. It was characteristic of Findlay that he taught himself sufficient Sanskrit to read the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

In 1924 Findlay arrived at Balliol as a Rhodes scholar. In 1926 he achieved a First in Greats, largely as a result of his papers in ancient history. He found himself able to learn little from his philosophy teachers at Balliol and the only Oxford philosopher of that time for whom he had any great respect was Pritchard. Nevertheless during his stay in Oxford he found reason to change some of his philosophical views. He had for some time previously adopted a version of Fichte's idealism and this he now abandoned, having been convinced not only by Pritchard, but also by his own sometimes painful and frustrating interactions with the world around him, that his mind was one thing and the world quite another, let alone a Fichtean posit of his ego. It was also an effect of his reading of Pritchard that he became aware of both the importance and the difficulty of interpreting Kant accurately, while the Greats syllabus provided him with an opportunity for a close reading of the major Greek philosophical texts. But what he gained most from his time at Oxford was a set of lasting friendships.

Between 1927 and 1948 Findlay held a series of appointments in philosophy departments, first as a lecturer in the University of Pretoria, next from 1934 to 1945 as Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at Dunedin in New Zealand, and then from 1945 to 1948 again in South Africa, first at Grahamstown and finally at the University of Natal at Pietermaritzburg. Among the duties of the Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at Dunedin was that of teaching psychology. So Findlay prescribed for himself a course of reading not only in the philosophical psychology of Brentano and Husserl, but also in the writings of the great German experimentalists, so that he secured a close acquaintance with work as various as that of Wundt, of Kohler, and more especially of the Würzburg psychologists, Mayer, Orth, and Marbe concerning *Bewusstseinslagen*. What he learned from them reinforced his view of the

accessibility of the mind to examination by systematic and disciplined introspection.

In 1941 he married Aileen Hawthorn (née Davidson), a New Zealander. No one has ever been more happily married and Findlay's devotion to his wife and to their children—a first child to her parents' great grief died at the age of eight months, but he was delighted throughout his life by the achievements of Paul and Clare—strengthened an independence of mind and spirit that had its roots in the continuing happiness of his family life. That independence sometimes manifested itself in sharp impatience, even cantankerousness, with views or attitudes which he took to be merely silly or, worse still, pretentious. But he never required agreement with his own views as a condition of either friendship or collegiality. And he encouraged a similar independence in his students. I knew him for thirty-six years during which I had good reason to admire his patience with what he took to be the wrongheadedness of my views both on Aristotle and on Wittgenstein.

Between 1929 and 1939 Findlay's periods of teaching in South Africa and New Zealand were punctuated by a number of visits to Europe and North America, some relatively brief, such as those to Berlin and to Cambridge in late 1929 and early 1930, some more extended, such as his two stays in Graz in 1931 and 1932 and his visits of several months duration, first in the United States, where he went to Berkeley, and Chicago, New York and Harvard in the first part of 1939, and then in England to Cambridge, first in May and June 1939 and later for the whole of the autumn term, with the summer spent in part in Freiburg and in part in Scandinavia. During some of these visits Findlay had philosophically fruitful encounters with Carnap, Quine, and Heidegger, but by far the most important of these periods were those spent at Graz and at Cambridge, the former because it allowed Findlay to complete a book about the thought of Alexius Meinong, *Meinong's Theory of Objects and Values* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933; second edition, 1963), the latter because he was able to become a member of the group that met with Wittgenstein each Tuesday. Findlay's very different responses, on the one hand, to the thought of Meinong's teacher, Brentano, and of Meinong himself, and on the other to Wittgenstein's practice of philosophical enquiry, each played a crucial part in enabling Findlay to develop his own distinctive point of view.

What he accepted from Meinong were the basic elements of Meinong's account of the relationship of thought to its objects. Brentano had insisted on intentionality as the distinguishing characteristic of the

mental, meaning by this that each mental state or act is directed towards some object, an object which is that about which we think or judge, or towards which we take up an attitude, an object that may or may not exist. So I may think about the tallest mountain in the Himalayas or about a mountain made entirely of gold. And about such objects of thought I may form positive or negative judgements. Towards them I may take up different types of attitude and express feelings of love and desire or of hate and aversion. Brentano's pupil, Kazimierz Twardowski, developed Brentano's account further by distinguishing the psychological content (*Inhalt*) of a mental state or act from its object. The content consists of those inner occurrences and states of which we can become aware by introspection, but only if we turn our attention away from the objects of our thought or feelings and attend instead to the thought or feelings themselves. Meinong had then further extended Brentano's and Twardowski's enquiries, both by investigating a wider range of types of objects that are possible objects for thought and by raising questions about the ontological status of such objects. It was the former part of Meinong's work that fascinated Findlay, by enriching his conception of the range and variety of mental objects. Consider that range.

It includes individuals and their properties, both existent and non-existent, both possible and impossible, negative and positive states of affairs, both possible and impossible, and relations and structures of varying kinds and degrees of complexity. Such objects of thought may or may not exist outside the mind. But, whether they do so or not, they have the characteristics that they have independently of their being thought of by some particular thinker. It is of course true that nothing can be a possible object of thought except in so far as it is a possible object of thought for particular minds. But objects of thought do not derive their characteristics from the minds that attend to them and they are in this way not private objects.

From the early nineteen-thirties onwards Findlay was committed to these Meinongian theses with their uncompromising realism about the objects of thought and their trenchant view of the accessibility of those objects to examination and enquiry. He did not however endorse Meinong's ontological positions, according to which the objects of thought, although they might not be said to exist, as do those objects in the physical world that are independent of thought, had instead had conferred upon them strange types of quasiexistence. By detaching Meinong's conception of the objects of thought from his ontology, Findlay was able to remain unmoved by Gilbert Ryle's dismissive conclu-

sion that Meinong's achievement was nothing but a brilliant *reductio ad absurdum* of the positions that he defended.<sup>1</sup> For that conclusion depended on supposing that Meinong's ontology was integral to and inseparable from his philosophy of mind.

It was important to Findlay's philosophical development that the resources that he had acquired from his reading of Meinong enabled him to respond to his encounters with Wittgenstein with constructive originality. The extreme character of some of his later remarks about Wittgenstein, for example that 'the magic of Wittgenstein proved to be very largely a magic of personality rather than one of ideas' or that his accounts of meaning are 'schizoid and surrealistic' suggest by their vehemence how very difficult Findlay had found it to resist identification with Wittgenstein's standpoint. In 1939 he had attended Wittgenstein's seminar on memory. Wittgenstein assigned to him the task of raising as many objections as possible and lent him the handwritten copy of the first one hundred and forty or so sections of the *Philosophical Investigations*. And Findlay responded by writing two articles, one intended to communicate the power of Wittgenstein's treatment of philosophical issues and the other to extend that same treatment to issues concerning time ('Some reactions to Recent Cambridge Philosophy' in the *Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy*, December 1960 and April 1961, and 'Time: A Treatment of some Puzzles', in the same journal, December, 1941). Findlay, however, from the beginning understood the implications of Wittgenstein's work in a way that put him at odds with other Wittgensteinians. For, although in these two articles he followed Wittgenstein closely in emphasising the extent to which our philosophical perplexities and our attempted solutions to them arise from misuses of language, from attempts to give expression to what cannot be said meaningfully, he also emphasised the illuminating character of these attempts, and the value of the philosophy that resulted from them.

Wittgenstein, as Findlay remarked in his 1955 review of the *Philosophical Investigations* in *Philosophy*, had shown us in a new way the character of those philosophical difficulties that arise from a misunderstanding of the forms and rules of language and he had done so by providing a systematic overview of the workings of language. But he had found no place for philosophy as a reconstructive or creative discipline, one that would enable us to develop new more perspicuous forms of speech that would capture more adequately what needed to be said. Later

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford Magazine*, 26 October, 1933.

on Findlay was to carry this criticism a good deal further. He continued to agree with Wittgenstein that there is a linguistic aspect to the problems of philosophy. But those linguistic strains and confusions to which Wittgenstein directs our attention are expressions of 'deep stresses among the categories in terms of which the world and our interpretation of the world are necessarily structured'. 'They have their roots in the articulation of being, and not primarily in that of human language' and they direct us towards 'completions of reality and experience which go far beyond what we ordinarily perceive or conceive' ('My Encounters with Wittgenstein' in *Studies in the Philosophy of J. N. Findlay* ed. R. S. Cohen, R. M. Martin and M. Westphal (Albany, NY, 1985, pp. 68–9).

Findlay's second large disagreement with Wittgenstein concerned the nature of mind and of mental experience, and here the influence of Meinong is evident. Wittgenstein had rightly insisted that the standards that govern the uses of language by which each of us refers to our own thoughts and feelings must be shared, public standards. Findlay retorted that we are able to understand each other's reports of our thoughts and feelings only because of our awareness of what they have in common with our own; that the language that makes the reports of introspection available has to be made adequate to the discoveries made by introspection. Moreover, the line between the public and the private is not what Wittgenstein had taken it to be. For what we apprehend of the public world depends upon how mind apprehends it: 'we cannot say anything about the order of nature without implying correlative statements as to the way in which that order is given to us' (*ibid.*, p. 69). It was to be through his development of these thoughts that Findlay's own philosophy of mind was to emerge.

In 1948 Findlay left South Africa for England, where he became professor of philosophy at King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne, from which in 1951 he moved to the chair at King's College, London, and remained there until 1966. In London his main impact was upon the teaching of the history of philosophy for the BA. He arranged that the courses in the history of philosophy should be university rather than college courses, given at the Senate House. And together with Professor H. B. Acton of Bedford College, he overcame A. J. Ayer's opposition and had Hegel named as Special Author for two successive years. Ayer responded generously by inviting Findlay to contribute a book on Hegel to a series that Ayer edited for Penguin Books, so that the students might have a more adequate commentary than was then available in English. And this was the origin of Findlay's book on Hegel—a somewhat

Wittgensteinian Hegel, as it turned out—although it was in the end published not by Penguin, but by Allen and Unwin.

In 1955, when he began his book on Hegel, Findlay was aged fifty-one. From then on the key to the narrative of his intellectual life is the relationship between, on the one hand, the tasks of translation, interpretation and commentary that he undertook and, on the other, the development of his own highly distinctive system of thought. The authors with whom he engaged by way of translation and interpretative commentary are Hegel, Husserl, Plato, and Kant. To each he was indebted for certain central features of his own thinking, but the constructive enterprise to which these features contributed was his own. Yet it was because of the ways in which his own projects developed that he recurrently brought to his readings and rereadings of those authors new questions that resulted in new interpretations. Findlay's reflection on substantive philosophical issues and his reflections on the history of philosophy contributed to a single body of achievement.

Findlay's enterprise was not only alien to, but in varying kinds of conflict with the central projects of English philosophy at that time: Austin's investigations of language, Ayer's empiricism, Popper's philosophy of science, and a set of responses to Wittgenstein that were deeply incompatible with Findlay's. One effect of this was to make Findlay feel at times somewhat more of an outsider in the English philosophical world than he had hitherto taken himself to be. When he presented views on particular topics that were at odds with the prevailing orthodoxy, as he did, for example, at a Joint Session of the Mind Association and the Aristotelian Society in a symposium on 'Use, Usage and Meaning' in 1961, his arguments were apt to evoke responses that were apparently dismissive, a symptom perhaps of an incomprehension of the point and purpose of Findlay's own philosophical enterprise. Yet Findlay was not after all, in any ordinary sense, an outsider. He had been elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1956, an honour that he valued precisely for the collegial recognition that it implied. He was chosen as Gifford lecturer at St Andrews in 1964–5 and 1965–6. And what he took to be the refusal of others to take his views seriously was in part at least a reaction to what those others took to be Findlay's refusal to take their views seriously.

Findlay's definitive statements of his own point of view are made in three books, *Values and Intentions*, published in 1961, *The Discipline of the Cave*, published in 1966, and *The Transcendence of the Cave*, published in 1967 (the latter two were first delivered as Findlay's Gifford lectures). *Values and Intentions*, which Findlay always took to be his most

important and original book, had been a long time in the making. While at Dunedin in the nineteen thirties he had made some progress with a manuscript on values and duties, but his own thought had been in flux during that period, and in 1937 he had felt unable to continue with the manuscript. Twenty years later he took up once more two themes of that abandoned project in his Henrietta Herz Lecture, delivered to the British Academy in 1957, *The Structure of the Kingdom of Ends*.

Findlay distinguished his enquires from those of the most influential English moral philosophers of that period in two ways. He argued that the conception of moral philosophy as a methodological study of first-order moral language had led to a misconstrual of our moral concepts, to a failure to recognise both the range of items that may fall under a single concept and the diversity of more or less loosely related uses to which a concept may be put. It is this feature of concepts that renders them capable of development, so that what had been merely implicit becomes explicit and the relationships between central uses of a concept and its more peripheral employments are more and more adequately articulated. 'If what I am saying sounds like an attempt to rehabilitate the Hegelian "universal in action" or "the concrete and dominant universal" I shall not deny the impeachment' (*The Structure of the Kingdom of Ends*, reprinted as an appendix to *Values and Intentions*, p. 442).

Secondly, Findlay held that most recent moral philosophers had paid too much attention to rules and to the making of immediate decisions in the light of rules, and not enough to those larger and less immediate goals, which are the ends of our actions and the object of our desires. They had treated the question 'What shall I do or avoid?' as though unrelated to and independent of the question 'What shall I in all earnestness wish or not wish?' What, on Findlay's view, makes this latter question the important one to ask emerges in *Values and Intentions*.

*Values and Intentions* opens with an account of the different modes of the intentionality of conscious experience and of how our thought and beliefs, on the one hand, and our passions and desires, on the other, tend to take form and to develop. The movement of consciousness is towards the completion of thoughts by articulating their content, by bringing them into relationship with one another, so that questions of coherence and consistency arise, and more generally by revising them and reformulating them, so that we are able to assent to our judgements as justified by appeal to impersonal standards, standards in the light of which we can then present those judgements to others as deserving of their assent and respond in the light of those standards to others who communicate their

judgements to us. This movement is not inevitable, it is not constant nor always consistent, but it is a drift or tendency of every consciousness, a tendency towards becoming focused and directed, so that our thought becomes over time more and more systematic.

As with judgements and beliefs, so it is too with wishing and willing. Wants are diverse. The simplest and central cases of wanting are those in which the want is for such and such a state of affairs to obtain and the want is satisfied when a belief that such and such a state of affairs does in fact obtain is justified. From this starting-point Findlay constructs a complex account of the various kinds of want and wish, proceeding from accounts of aversion and frustration and of what it is to prefer one object of wanting to another and more generally of what it is to order our wishes and wants, to an account of those wants that are satisfied by the having of experiences, or by knowledge, or by art. Our wants find expression in our emotions and our emotions are constituted in part by feelings of which we are aware, feelings that are directed towards what is presented to us so that we see things as terrifying or attractive, as mean or marvellous. Feelings of pleasure are 'our immediate awareness of the deep *fit* between wants and circumstances', feelings of displeasure our awareness of a deep misfit (p. 177).

Wanting may be warm or cool, and cool wanting may be long-term and may become deep-seated, so that we acquire a general plan of preferences, one that is implemented in our particular thoughts and feelings on particular occasions. And so we move towards a state of what Findlay calls 'whole-mindedness' in our practical lives, 'the complete seriousness of the cool style of wanting' (p. 186). To have become whole-minded about one's wishes and goals enables one to become reflective about what it is that makes the objects that one pursues desirable. And in our reflection upon the relevant features of those objects, we consider them in abstraction from 'all that is extraneous, contextual, or merely instrumental' (p. 206), so that we identify a set of desirability-characterisations, itself perhaps a multifarious, not wholly consistent set. To treat something as desirable is to value it and we test our valuations by considering not only to what they would commit us in a variety of types of situation, but also by the confirmation or disconfirmation that they receive from the valuations of others.

The search for a sympathetic resonance with the desires and valuations of others operates in us, so that we tend to eliminate those of our own desires and valuations that are incompatible with those of others. And we may discover in ourselves at this point a higher-order desire for

an impersonal measure of value, a wish 'to free oneself from whatever is peculiar, personal, merely contingent in one's first-order wishes', so that one wishes 'nothing but what would be wished by anyone *whatever* his first-order wishes' (p. 214). If the impersonal standards thus arrived at, are to amount to anything, they must be more than purely formal. They must have a determinate content, the outcome of a reflective sifting that leads to 'a fairly uniform set of results' (p. 215).

Much of the rest of *Values and Intentions* is devoted to enquiring into those results under the three headings of welfare, justice, and duty. Findlay reaches interesting morally substantive conclusions on a number of topics. We have so he argues, for example, a duty to increase welfare, but not at great personal cost, although we always do have a duty to prevent preventable ill-fare, even if this does involve considerable personal cost. Findlay's positions in moral philosophy are not easily classified under the conventional labels. He was neither a utilitarian nor a Kantian nor an Aristotelian. But the philosophical influences that led him towards those conclusions are not difficult to identify.

Much that Findlay says about the objects of thought and feeling is taken directly from Meinong. His account of the articulation over time of the concepts with which he is concerned is indebted to Hegel. Yet the project of moving from what is desired by me to what is desirable as such, not by way of logical inference, but through the development of enlarged sympathies, towards the impersonality of a standpoint that is no longer merely mine, cannot but remind us most of all of Hume. And there are in fact more references to Hume in Findlay's text than there are to Meinong. The philosophical psychology of *Values and Intentions* is very different from that of Book II of *A Treatise of Human Nature*—Findlay was later to call Hume the 'worst of phenomenological observers'—but the purposes to which the psychology is put are close to Hume's.

I do not mean by this that Findlay's account of these values is naturalistic in the way that Hume's is. But Findlay begins by exploring in a remarkably Humean way how far we can advance within a naturalistic framework, and only then sets himself to show that the terms afforded by that framework are in the end inadequate for the expression of what needs to be said, just because, as our use of these terms develops, we discover a variety of incoherencies and strains in those uses, so that finally in order to develop a fully adequate view we have to move beyond the initial naturalistic framework towards an absolute standpoint. Findlay's initial strategy in his two sets of Gifford lectures is very similar, but leads to more radical conclusions.

Our experience, he argued, is shaped and articulated by a set of directive ideas: ideas of space and time, of body, of mind, of social relationships, of meaning, and of value. As we explore each of these ideas, we discover that each necessarily is open to development in some ways and not in others, that the framework that each provides for our particular experiences may, as our understanding of it develops, exhibit incoherences, or allow for incompatible possibilities of development, and that we encounter a set of conceptual antinomies in which we seem to find ourselves committed to asserting that such-and-such must be the case *and* that such-and-such cannot be the case.

So, for example, we cannot but think of bodies in purely mechanical terms and yet we also cannot but think of bodies in terms which exclude a purely mechanical understanding. We cannot but think of thought as transcending its boundaries in its encounters with what is external to it, and yet we also cannot but think of the objects of thought as internal to thought. We cannot but think of the thoughts and feelings of others as knowable by us, yet we also cannot but think of those thoughts and feelings in terms that entail the impossibility of ever knowing the mind of another. To attempt to resolve such conceptually deep-rooted antinomies by finding reasons for asserting one alternative and denying the other is always to make a philosophical mistake. And to remain within the forms of thought and experience that generate them is to be in the condition of those imprisoned in Plato's cave.

We move beyond that condition by understanding how such antinomies are generated and how the concepts that generate them point beyond themselves, enabling us to identify an absolute point of view, the standpoint of impersonal reason and value. So we transcend the partiality, the one-sidedness, the motivation by our own particular desires and interests, the finitude and contingency of our own particular situation and become able to identify with that absolute standpoint. But, in so doing, we do not leave behind those forms of understanding that involve partiality, finitude and contingency, but we now understand them as foreshadowing and pointing towards the possibility of transcending their limitations. The discipline of the cave prepares us for the transcendence of the cave.

To transcend the cave is to begin to move in thought towards that necessary completion of thought and experience towards which we are directed and of which we have intimations even at earlier stages. What we are now directed towards is a knowledge of archetypes, of the patterns of things that exist by nature, patterns exemplified, although only imperfectly, in the regularities and universalities of our experience, patterns

that explain the necessity that we cannot but ascribe to some of these regularities and universalities. Findlay is here deliberately reiterating positions taken by Plato and Plotinus. And he follows them still further in asserting not only that there are Forms, but also in defending the possibility of ascent beyond the Forms to the One.

These philosophical enquires into the kind of completion and unification of our experience which an adequate phenomenology shows to be necessary, if we are not to ignore or to distort key features of that experience, enable us to understand why individuals who have reached a certain point in their progress towards the One can only provide an account of that progress in the language of mysticism. And Findlay drew happily upon both Buddhist and Neoplatonic accounts to illustrate the kind of discourse that is needed.

What such philosophical enquires also disclose is the inadequacy of the conceptions of God dominant in the major religions. Findlay's treatment of those conceptions, and more especially of the God of Christianity, draws heavily upon Hegel's philosophy of religion. For only if we are able to translate such theologies into philosophical terms, and in so doing to correct their mistakes, can we arrive at a concept of the divine that is other than misleading. And Findlay had a peculiar dislike both for those Christian thinkers who have denied the possibility of such translation, such as Kierkegaard and Barth, and for those who have held that the God discovered by philosophical enquiry is identical with the God of Christian orthodoxy, such as Aquinas.

Findlay's continuing strong interest in Buddhist thought is evident in his Gifford lectures. It was strengthened by a two-month's visit to Japan in 1964, where he gave lectures at Kyoto and was deeply impressed by the spirituality of Buddhist architecture. And he also found in Japan an interest in Hegel that he took to be akin to his own. That interest in Hegel had made him a major participant in debates among Hegelian scholars. And this led him into new friendships, especially with Klaus Hartmann, then an assistant at Bonn. It was in Hartmann's apartment in the spring of 1960 that he had first met John R. Silber, a notable exponent of Kant's moral philosophy, then at the University of Texas. He and Silber became close friends and when, in 1966, Findlay retired from his chair in the University of London, it was Silber who persuaded him and his wife to emigrate to the United States.

During the academic year 1966–7 Findlay taught at Texas. In 1967, he became Clark Professor of Metaphysics and Moral Philosophy at Yale and, when he reached the then retiring-age of sixty-eight, he moved to

Boston University, where Silber had become President, and where Findlay was to become the first holder of the Borden Parker Bowne Chair of Philosophy. His life as an academic philosopher in North America delighted Findlay. He travelled widely, read papers and gave lectures in many universities, and developed excellent relationships with his colleagues. To his younger colleagues he was unfailingly supportive. He delighted especially in the graduate teaching that he undertook and he gave classes on topics drawn from all his main areas of interest: seminars on Hegel's *Phenomenology* and Hegel's *Logic*, on the phenomenology of Brentano, Meinong, and Husserl, and on the theory of value that he had expounded in *Values and Intentions*, and lecture courses on Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Moore, Russell, and Wittgenstein.

In 1970 he published his two-volume translation of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, on which he had been at work for many years. It is a superb example of success in translating a difficult text, and only someone who was both philosophically in deep sympathy with Husserl and also completely at home in the German language, as Findlay was, could have achieved this kind of success. It was for him a partial repayment of his debt to Husserl's earlier writings.

Some of his own writings in this period developed further or supplemented what he had already published. His *Axiological Ethics* (1970) is a study of those whom he took to be his own predecessors in the theory of value; Brentano, Meinong, Scheler, and Hartmann in Germany; Rashdall, Moore, and Ross in England. Papers in *Ascent to the Absolute* (1970) concern matters already discussed in the Gifford Lectures and elsewhere. And *Wittgenstein: A Critique* (1984) was his final statement of his quarrel with Wittgenstein.

Findlay's two books on Plato, *Plato: The Written and Unwritten Doctrines* (1974) and *Plato and Platonism: An Introduction* (New York, 1978) challenged the prevailing orthodoxy in Platonic interpretation by insisting on the importance of Plato's unwritten teaching and by attacking the dismissive treatment of Aristotle's reports of Plato's views that had become common among commentators on Plato. The Plato who emerges from Findlay's account is much closer to Plato as understood by Plotinus than is the Plato of most modern commentators, although there are important coincidences between Findlay's views and those developed at Tübingen by Hans Joachim Krämer and others.

Findlay's book on Kant is a remarkable piece of work. It provides through a close reading of the relevant texts an interpretation of what Kant meant when he wrote of things-in-themselves and of their

indispensability in the first *Critique* to, for example, the first and second Analogies and to his refutation of idealism. In the perspective that Findlay's view affords, the relationship between Kant's moral and religious views and his epistemology becomes much less puzzling. Findlay had felt the need to come to terms with Kant ever since he was an undergraduate. When he finally published his book on Kant, he was seventy-seven years old.

Findlay continued to teach until shortly before his death on 27 September, 1987, at the age of almost eight-four. His old age was marked not only by continuing intellectual vigour, also by the very great pleasure that he took in his relationships to his own children, to his wife's children by her former marriage, and to his grandchildren. He remained a lively and stimulating conversationalist and a casual encounter would often result in splendid conversation in which he would move from arguments about Kant or Plato to anecdotes about his grandchildren in South Africa and then back to Kant or Plato. He had played a distinctive part in the history of twentieth-century philosophy and both his former students and his former colleagues have remained in his debt.

ALASDAIR MACINTYRE

*Fellow of the Academy*

