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Foreword: Remembrance through Disenchantment

DAVID S. PACINI

The subject of this book is the transition from Kant’s transcendental philosophy to Hegel’s idealism, and most narrowly, the different conceptions of the subject that emerged during this period, whose hallmarks, but by no means the limits, of the work that German philosopher Dieter Henrich has undertaken over the past half-century. In 1973, while still professor of philosophy at Heidelberg, Henrich traveled to Harvard University’s Emerson Hall to present the findings of his research, including interpretations of hitherto then newly discovered manuscripts dating from the period of classical German philosophy (1781–1844). The course of lectures he offered there forms the basis of this book. Apart from scholars specializing in this philosophical period, Henrich was then little known to the English-speaking world. But within these specialist circles, he had already established a reputation for path-breaking scholarship on Kant, Fichte, Hölderlin, and Hegel, particularly with his paper on the problems of self-consciousness.

The presence of an interpreter of the intricacies of German idealism

in the Harvard philosophy department in the early 1970s was a notable anomaly. The analytic mindset of the department at that time harbored a skepticism, deriving in part from G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell, toward the tradition Henrich was interpreting: their wariness deemed such thinking little more than a pastiche of metaphysical phantasmagoria. Yet it was precisely such a skepticism that Henrich sought to address. If he could convince skeptics of the philosophical value of his material, then he and his peers would join others of the importance of conversation that might begin to bridge the divide between the so-called “Anglo-American” and “Continental” traditions of philosophy. By joining insights from the “Anglo-American” tradition to his critical, but appreciative, interpretation of Kant and the post-Kantians, Henrich advocated for a critical philosophy. In lectures and writings, which these traditions might inter into dialogue. In later years at Columbia University and Harvard (1975–1984), Henrich undertook a sustained effort to advance this agenda.

The climate of the time was largely unreceptive to his solicitations. The principal reluctance—to the extent that the sentiments of many in Emerson Hall were illustrative of the larger outlook of analytic philosophy—was the critical consideration of this material in an attempt to design a theory of subjectivity. See Dieter Henrich, Bewusstes Leben. Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von Subjektivität und Metaphysik (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1999).


3. The terms “Anglo-American” and “Continental” are imprecise, if not misnomers. Although considerable scholarly discussion has surfaced around this topic, the terms nonetheless remain of certain currency. For example, if one says “Historicization of Analytical Philosophy,” one means “Historicization of Analytical Philosophy: Four Genres,” and “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind,” by Wilfrid Sellars (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 1–12. I have therefore adopted a convention of placing these terms in quotation marks to signal their problematic character, but also to emphasize the deeper point that the exact nature of the split between the philosophical traditions remains a matter of debate.
sprang from the general assumption that the philosophical problems of German idealism, in general, and of subjectivity in particular, were no longer pertinent.4 More focused opposition arose from those for whom even the mere hint of these topics caused more chill than Cambridge’s winters, and who were bemused that students would endure either of these elements merely to hear Henrich. So encumbered, Henrich’s hopes for dialogue were not substantially realized at that time.

What did materialize, however, were privately circulated but unpublished transcripts of the lectures that students prepared with Henrich’s consent.5 Even though Henrich had worked largely from memory, his lectures nevertheless provided detailed accounts of philosophical materials largely unknown to all save a few. Within his lectures, as well, were the rudiments of a philosophical position that would later evolve into what is now known as the “Heidelberg school.”6 Although word of the existence of these transcripts would occasionally circulate, eliciting surprise and interest, even this news seemed to remain within the confines of specialist circles. In the main, the lecture transcripts had been consigned to the archives of a few scholarly libraries and were largely forgotten.

In the past three decades since Henrich presented his lectures, patterns of scholarship have significantly changed. There is now a mounting body of “Anglo-American” scholarship in the fields of philosophy, literary and cultural studies, and theology on Kant and the post-Kantians.8 New scholarly...
editions of the works of principal figures from this period have become available in English translation, many for the first time. In Europe, increased interest in the methodological insights of the “analytic” tradition, which Henrich has helped foster, is now evident. In 1985, Henrich initiated the Jena Project, an extensive program involving numerous scholars in the reconstruction of the intellectual situation in Jena during 1789–1795. The initial results of this project have contributed to further reassessments of this philosophical era.

Owing in part to these developments, appeals for overcoming “the divide between traditions” have become more a matter of course. Peter Dews, Michael Dummett, Manfred Frank, Michael Friedman, Jürgen Habermas, John McDowell, Hilary Putnam, Richard Rorty, and Ernst Tugendhat are now number among those issuing such invitations. A transatlantic conference held in the spring of 1985 in Berlin brought together Robert Franke, Kathryn Frese, and Thomas Risse-Kappen; a second conference was held in Cambridge in 1986, with participants including Andrew Bowie, Michael Friedman, John McDowell, Jürgen Habermas, and Thomas Risse-Kappen; and a third conference was held in Jena in 1987; participants included Andrew Bowie, Michael Friedman, Manfred Frank, and Jürgen Habermas. A fourth conference, held in 1989 in Frankfurt am Main, brought together participants from all of these conferences.


lantic research project involving American and European scholars of German philosophy is well under way and has begun publishing its work.\textsuperscript{12} Many of these new endeavors routinely cite Henrich’s findings as standards of interpretation against which their work must measure. Moreover, an increasing number of philosophers from the analytic perspective have taken up and shared Henrich’s concerns with the problems of self-consciousness.\textsuperscript{13} With this climate, it seems likely that the publication of his “forgotten” lectures might now enjoy the receptive hearing and prompt the far-ranging discussion that earlier they did not.

The developments of the past three decades also make it possible to appreciate the perspicuity of Henrich’s work in a way that none of us who attended his courses could even have imagined. Henrich’s concern with the constitutive role of history in the formation of modes of rationality stands as both a criticism of and an antidote to certain trends that have achieved currency in philosophical circles. Henrich’s thinking poses an alternative to the ahistorical stance earlier “analytic” philosophy held, as is evident from its reading of past philosophers in strictly contemporary terms, just as it does to the historicist idea that “paradigm shifts” circumscribe historical thinking within the limits of particular discourses. Henrich’s work compels us to question a primary assumption of this ahistorical standpoint: the rejection of tradition. He is not thereby proposing some grand return to “History” or “meta-history.” For Henrich, anything—whether “History” or...
some other meta-term—that purports to be possessed of an immanent meaning, and to unfold according to a single principle, is suspect. At the same time, he is equally wary of postmodern pronouncements that “History” or “modernity” has ended and lies in wait of a decent burial. What is missing in all of these perspectives, according to Henrich, is an account of the genesis and formation of the actual issues that constitute philosophical modernism. Such an accounting is inseparable from the archival research and, according to Henrich, is a central concern of responsible history. What is absent from the perspectives Henrich criticizes is a clear accounting for the genesis and formation of their authors’ own distinctive motives. Such motives not only drive these authors’ theorizing, but also become inscribed as presuppositions of the problems philosophical modernism pursues.

Though Henrich views these perspectives as distinct, he also sees them located within a constellation of related problems, in part because he discerns on their fringes the specter of Martin Heidegger’s philosophical problematic—one revivified by Jacques Derrida and Richard Rorty, among others. Heidegger claimed that the development of Western rationality consists in the “forgetfulness of Being,” which culminates in strategies of domination by the modern subject. Heidegger’s modern metaphysics both stands in a direct line with Greek metaphysics (as the continuation of its potentialities of relating to Being) and distances itself from it through the notion of the “worldview” (Weltanschauung). Heidegger interprets the modern metaphysical worldview as the objectivization of the subject’s self-assertion, one that no longer grasps the truth of Being. By linking modern metaphysical notions of the self, worldview (as objectified self-assertion), and will to power in a single constellation, Heidegger can contend that our distance from, and forgetfulness of, Being has led to self-assertion in the form of a confused struggle to gain world domination. Thus he insists on the surpassing of metaphysics in favor of the question of Being: “Why are there beings at all and why not rather Nothing?”

Although Henrich judges Heidegger’s account as the only consistent alternative to ahistorical or historical-developmental perspectives, he nonetheless detects in it a “critical rejection of civilization.” Heidegger’s program cannot account for “world-historical lines of development having equal right and nevertheless being able to meet in a process amounting to more than a global loss in the essenceless (Wesenlose).” Henrich’s judgment, in part, from his assessment that Heidegger collapses the twin principles of modern philosophical thinking—self-preservation and self-consciousness—into Baconian self-assertion. Heidegger’s historiography, rooted in a questionable conception of fate and destiny, thus shows itself to be driven by a programmatic agenda. Such an agenda, in the words of Richard Rorty, is “self-justificatory.” Such, Heidegger deploys the Baconian condensation to legitimate his own critique of modern Western rationality. Henrich maintains that the twin principles of modern philosophical thinking issue not merely in a will to power, but also in an awareness of our dependence on unfathomable conditions not subject to our control. For this reason, a variety of perspectives arise in modern thought that move beyond the Baconian self-assertion toward others, in which the modern subject finds its being. Some of these focus on the subject’s sense of being at home in a totality that is much like it (Leibniz and Hegel), some on the undemonstrable conditions on which the subject is dependent (Schultz and Jacobi), and others on the subject as an epiphenomenon of a more fundamental life process (Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud). In light of these varying responses, Henrich’s aim should cause no surprise: he wishes to provide the philosophical basis for a perspective that respects what is to be learned from the Heideggerian critique of modern Western rationality, but that ultimately extends beyond it. He seeks a basis that, above all, resists ahistorical, historicist, or programmatic-historical perils.

In what follows, I propose to offer some explanatory remarks about Henrich’s historiography that will simultaneously throw light on the Heidelberg school of interpretation. I will then offer a brief sketch of the intel-
lectual framework within which he interprets classical German philosophy. Finally, I will suggest that Henrich’s interpretation of recollective thinking as *remembrance* provides a helpful challenge to Heidegger’s interpretation—one that might also apply to certain trends in current philosophical and theological thinking.

**Historiography**

Towards the end of his lectures, Henrich proposed a title change. Originally called “From Kant to Hegel,” he now urged that they be called “Between Kant and Hegel.” This shift reflected his conviction that the alternatives engaged during the period of classical German philosophy remain open prospects for current exploration. He has no brief in any story that advances in advance a study progress from “Kant to Hegel.”

Despite declarations from nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers who tell such stories and claim that they have “solved” problems left unanswered by their predecessors, Henrich remains convinced that these estimates are overblown. Further work within these perspectives is not only possible but also necessary, albeit from methodological approaches that differ from those of their originators.

This commitment to the viability of further exploration rests on a second conviction: historical artifacts—literary fragments, correspondence, manuscripts, and other archival records—teach us that a linear, stage-developmental interpretation of the relation among philosophical perspectives does not do justice to their actual evolution. Neither developmental nor its variant, the “paradigm” or “discourse” typology of historical interpretation, is structured to take into account the full range of historical artifacts. As a result, such schemes remain fragmented or incomplete. For Henrich, evidence garnered from these artifacts—as, for example, from some of Reinhold’s neglected papers—is necessary because it introduces different interpretations of the relationships among theoretical perspectives. Furthermore, it opens the question of the ongoing viability of heretofore dominant philosophical stances.

In Henrich’s view, artifacts body forth everyday attempts to give “form” to certain questions that have dogged us. In so many, there are

our interests in self-preservation, in our relation to others, and in our relation to the universe. Artifacts not only embody particular conceptual forms, but also something of the preconceptual or pretheoretical dimension of life that first motivates the desire to shape answers to fundamental questions. By this Henrich means that all of us, in some elemental way, are given to philosophical questioning or to the penchant for fashioning speculative thoughts that integrate the experience—social and intellectual, relational and theological. Historical interpretation at its best keeps in view both the preconceptual motivations and the specific constellations of the ordering that artifacts embody. Here Henrich appropriates an insight from the historian and philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey, whose influence on the Heidelberg school remains formative for the theorization of social and the individual arts. Artifacts are commensurate with but distinct from, the ends of rationality and corresponding theoretical concepts that we articulate in response to them. Dilthey urges us both to protect this distinctiveness from metaphysical exploitation and to uphold empirical patterns or connections (that endow life experiences with meaning) as candidates for historical scrutiny.

Dilthey's insight illuminates those features of empirical investigation that work against the encroachments of metaphysical foundationalism. In Henrich's estimation, however, Dilthey's later emphasis on patterns of meaning tended to overshadow, if not subsume, the difference between life situations and the modes of rationality that emerge in the course of interpretation. The reason for this reservation is clear, while the patterns and connections that endow experience with meaning serve as a "frame of consciousness," or what Dilthey called "worldview type," and as an initial point of departure for historical interpretation, they also conceal the enabling conditions, inner motivations, and theoretical possibilities that lead to the development of new perspectives.24 This historical framework Dilthey provides lends itself too readily to the dissolving of certain oppo-


sitional elements crucial for the interpretation of “conflictual” situations, such as the development of inner motivations. For Henrich, Diltsey’s discovery of the structural and conceptual parallelism between the teachings of the Stoa and the forms of modern thought is a case in point. In Diltsey’s accounting, both exhibit a parallel departure from a concept of nature as a self-sufficient dynamic system and develop into an ethic of self-knowing activity, which has virtue as its goal. While upending the view that modernity could trace its origins to Descartes’ assault on Pyrrhonist skepticism, Diltsey’s analysis nonetheless failed, in Henrich’s view, to penetrate the theoretical potential of the tension between self-consciousness and self-preservation. Such tension not only motivated Stoic thought, but also holds together the dual, yet separate, principles on which the modern subject attempts to confirm its being.

Just as Diltsey’s account overlooked the issue of motivating potential, his paradigm framework “discourses,” and “developmental approaches” fail to incorporate the range of motivating factors at play in the historical formation and interpretation of problems. To correct this oversight, Henrich invokes another formative influence on the Heidelberg school: Max Weber, who radicalized and recast Diltsey’s insight. By claiming that reason emerges from conditions that are not of its own devising and that it does not fully comprehend, Weber could infer that reason remains bound to material facts that both limit it and make its distinctive features possible. He directed this assessment toward methodological considerations within the social sciences, including both the interests of the investigator and the historical circumstances that determine the orientation of the investigator and the historical circumstances that determine the orientation of the investigator.

these interests. To those of his Heidelberg students who read him as a philosopher, this insight was necessarily applicable to Weber’s own life, as well. They observed that the conditions necessitating and guiding his reflections were manifested in the “restrained pathos” permeating his entire work. Weber’s way of grasping in a single thought both talk of fate and of the postulate of a rational order governing both knowledge and life, without making the relationship explicit, struck them as necessary and philosophical implications. Doubtless, there was latent in his thinking an organized whole of possible knowledge. Weber made no attempt, however, to establish such a relation between fate and rational order in terms of some cognitive totality. Consequently, his Heidelberg readers discerned in Weber’s themes resonances with Kant’s notion (in his theory of ideas) that though we never can grasp a totality concretely, we nonetheless bend every effort of our understanding toward what remains an unattainable outcome.

With this notion in mind, Weber’s philosophical interpreters recognized the impossibility of assigning any objective scientific status to self-understanding. They understood that even the “person,” insofar as it signifies an idea of totality, resists concrete objectification and unification. Henrich interprets these early appraisals to mean that Weber’s “restrained pathos,” precisely by eluding objectification, expresses a dimension of conscious experience that cannot be excluded from historical analysis. The immediacy of this pathos, however, can only be mediated through artifacts. Thus literary and aesthetic creations, as material conditions affecting the limits and distinctiveness of a rational order, have a distinct place in the interpretation of motivating forces within a particular ethos. Henrich’s account of Hölderlin’s success in prevailing upon Hegel to abandon a Kantian interpretative framework turns on considerations of this order: Hölderlin argued that Kant’s theory could not capture or convey the enthusiastic sympathy generated by the French Revolution, which had ignited the intellectual fervor of their seminary days.

Equally compelling for Henrich’s historiography is an insight gleaned from Karl Jaspers. In his 1916 and 1917 essays on the sociology of religion, which joined comparative studies of rationality types with an examination of underlying life-forms that embody various modes of world rejection,
Weber had effectively linked *in a new way* two dimensions of Kant’s framework: the theory of ideas and the theory of antinomies.\(^{32}\) Jaspers made this connection explicit and began to interpret Weber’s revisionary insight anew. By Jasper’s lights, Weber’s claim could now be seen to mean that the understanding’s unending effort to comprehend the whole inevitably collides with irreconcilable antinomies. The latter, in turn, determine the way in which the individual undertakes his or her endeavors. Henrich retrieves Jaspers’s formulation in a resistance to superficiality that serves as a necessary socratic technique that moves “through a work.”\(^{33}\)

By holding in view the antinomies that both make possible and limit a distinctive form of rationality (whose ground we therefore cannot penetrate), Henrich commends an overview of an epoch’s “problem condition.”\(^{35}\) Such an overview requires us to respect the making of an historical distance from those in the initial throes of discovery. Without such distance and without new methods of inquiry, he argues, we would become subject to the pitfall of captivity both to the methods used to the conclusions that theorists within the era proposed. In such captivity, we would likely fail to take into account documents of “minor” figures—for example, Gottlob Ernst Schulze\(^{36}\) and Immanuel Carl Diez\(^{37}\)—or the suppressed traditions of Spinozism (as Protestant sects practiced it in the Netherlands), the popular philosophy of love (of which Anthony, third Earl of Shaftsbury is a representative), or the popular theology of the spirit (which Lessing tried to bring to academic attention). We

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\(^{32}\) D. Henrich, *KJ*, p. 536.


\(^{34}\) D. Henrich, *ATS*, p. 112; English: *OTS*, p. 35.

\(^{35}\) D. Henrich, *ATS*, p. 113; English: *OTS*, p. 36. See also the report of the Jena Project in Dieter Henrich, *Konstellationen. Probleme und Debatten am Ursprung der idealistischen Philosophie (1789–1795).*

\(^{36}\) G. E. Schulze, *Aen.*

would also overlook the resurgence of the popular “philosophy of unification” (Vereinigungsphilosophie) whose Platonic outlook found notable proponents in Franz Hemsterhuis, Johann Gottfried Herder, and Friedrich Schiller. Because each of these strands sprang up largely outside academic philosophy, they have tended to escape philosophical notice. Only as we delineate the history of philosophical discovery within this period does it become clear that these other tendencies, despite their peripheral status, enjoy significant influence.38

Such an overview of the epoch’s constellation of problems, which forms the keystone of Henrich’s historiography, also avoids a second pitfall. Rather than leading us into a questionable “notion of unity that both absorbs all these underlying tensions and frees them from it,”39 the historical interpreter should delineate the relationships among various concepts and principles of philosophical discovery and imbue their form with a new notion of unity. This unity is not “absorption” because it embraces the working together of irreducible parts for a common end. We saw earlier that Henrich argues against the uncritical adoption of perspectives held by authors in the initial throes of discovery; now we also see him challenge the idea that a single, all-absorbing unity can dominate a given era. To grasp this distinction between different kinds of unity is to recognize the implausibility of those historical interpretations that revolve around epochal paradigms. It is to see that there is a profoundly unstable relation between (1) the pretheoretical antinomies of life situations and (2) objective life situations themselves, including the conceptual organization of the world. From this perspective, it is clear that those who assume that a self-evident unity governs a given time period are thus mistaken. Henrich’s work repeatedly shows that we stand at the threshold of the disappearance of a conception of “The One” in which we previously saw all unity, and so we enter the prospect of a different “one” emerging before us and also of a “new voice.”40

Henrich has shown, for example, that Karl Leonhard Reinhold’s 1789 Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögens (Attempt at a New Theory of the Human Faculty of Representation) and

Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi’s expanded Über die Lehre des Spinoza (Concerning the Doctrine of Spinoza) engendered an enthusiastic reception among their younger contemporaries, precisely because these works introduced the possibility of new philosophical voices. Even though the two books exhibited no material or conceptual relation to one another, some readers found in them the intimations of a constellation of ideas that might bring new conceptions into relation.

Let me draw together the distinctions Henrich—and by extension, the Heidelberg school—strikes in his historiographical outlook. These are (1) between life situations that introduce their own requirements and conceptual schemes that humans devise to address these requirements; (2) between the historically mediated immediate pathos of an epoch and the forms of rationality to which it lends both limits and distinctive features; (3) between the inscrutable ground of irreconcilable antinomies that determine a mode of reasoning and the factors conceptually organizing the world and structuring knowledge; and (4) between a preconception of “The One” in which we see all unity and the “one” or altered conception of unity that emerges when life moves us into a rationality in which we are not fully at home. We may readily recast these distinctions, derived from reflection on empirical observations, into methodological principles. These principles require us to place documents in historical context and to interpret antinomies as factors that not only inform the shape of conceptual schemes but also generate new theoretical possibilities. Grounded on these principles, Henrich’s historiography attempts to provide a versatile and differentiated means of orientation to the problems of the classical period of German philosophy. By avoiding far-flung flights into metaphysical speculation, the reductive pitfalls of ahistorical or historicist paradigms, and the oversights of programmatic history, Henrich offers an alternative to dominant historiographical trends in the last century of philosophy. His historiography depends neither on a methodological “new beginning” nor on the dismissal of certain philosophical problems as illusory or nonsensical. Instead, it explores the concrete formations of the philosophical problems of modernity in their variance and complexity, and it does so by employing artifacts culled from both well-known and suppressed traditions.

Intellectual Framework

The above principles commend to our attention the relation between the constellation of ties and tensions that connect life situations to theoretical frameworks and “an overview of the problem condition of an epoch.” At the least, this linkage suggests that life processes stand as integral to what counts as a “problem” in the historical interpretation of philosophy. Philosophy is incomplete in Henrich’s view, when a historical interpretation of the formation of problems within their life contexts. His view also implies the thematic importance of recollection as a process by which philosophical thinking holds such problems in mind—an issue that Henrich thinks requires urgent consideration in contemporary philosophical contexts. In the sections that follow, I will take up each of these questions in turn.

In his lectures, Henrich coordinates his interpretation around five theoretical problems that accrue to the modern subject of knowledge and the life situations within which they were formed. While not unknown to other philosophers, these issues became distinct in Henrich’s presentation by the manner in which his historiographical framework delineates their multiplicity of interrelatedness. The first issue is whether there is a principle that unifies all reason. In Henrich’s interpretation, this problem emerges in the conflict between Kant’s belief that “the advance of knowledge is the honor of all mankind” and his belief, taken from Rousseau, that “to honor man, one must contribute to the rights of mankind.” In service of the first, Kant posited a solution to the riddle of metaphysics—why it failed to make steady progress as knowledge—which he anchored in the principle of self-consciousness. Therefore, we need not become lost in metaphysics as an “ocean without banks”; metaphysics has appeared to be a riddle simply because, until now—it fails to grasp the necessity of the combination of our faculties.

In service of his second belief, Kant taught that moral awareness consists in a sufficient ideal of reason. He placed the principles of all knowledge (self-consciousness). Therefore, we need not become lost in metaphysics as an “ocean without banks”; metaphysics has appeared to be a riddle simply because, until now—it fails to grasp the necessity of the combination of our faculties.

In his lectures, Henrich developed a second interpretation from the perspective of practical reasoning. For Henrich’s own investigations into knowledge and other epistemological themes, see...
in the spontaneous double act of giving ourselves the law of just conduct and a capacity to fulfill this law. To overcome the conflict between a theory that assumes a necessary combination of faculties in our knowledge and a theory that assumes an independence from necessary combination in our moral awareness, Kant attempted to prove that freedom is a principle both of insight and of real connection. As a principle of insight, freedom is the awareness of our capacity to act from law (duty) alone. As a principle of real connection, freedom provides systematic links among understanding, reason, and the total compatibility of all human actions. To safeguard this claim from mystical speculation, Kant carefully circumscribed the limits of rational inquiry to the principle of self-consciousness. Even so, his definition of freedom as a spontaneous activity that in some way links recollection and autonomy is, in Henrich’s opinion, a decisive consideration that recurs subsequent theoretical formulations of the modern subject. The second problem concerns the nature of the activity of the knowing subject. Karl Leonhard Reinhold attempted in his 1789 Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögens (Attempt at a New Theory of the Faculty of Representation) and in his 1790 Neue Darstellung der Hauptmomente der Elementarphilosophie (A New Presentation of the Main Aspects of Elementary Philosophy) to strengthen Kant’s critical philosophy with a principle of methodological monism. He aimed to rebuild the entire conceptual apparatus of the critical philosophy, deriving it from foundational justifications and definitions that Kant had never clearly provided. Gottlob Ernst Schulze’s searing criticisms of these attempts appeared in Aenesidemus, a book without apparent influence on Reinhold.


but with considerable impact on subsequent thought. Its shattering effect on the Kantian convictions of the young Johann Gottlieb Fichte prompted a forceful response. In his *Aenesidemus Review*, Fichte contended that Reinhold's first principle of consciousness was conceptually faulty. At the same time, he pointed out that Schulze's empirical orientation had blinded him to the basic self-referential character of the mind—that is, to the fact that the mind can only be understood in terms of mental activity. These considerations pressed Fichte beyond the limitations Kant had established for inquiry into the principle of self-consciousness. He moved toward the recognition that the basic act of mental life is not a synthetic unity, as Kant had supposed, but an opposition that precedes unity. Fichte's elaboration of the life of the mind—its imagining, longing, and striving, together with its sequences of self-images—in terms of this oppositional structure of activity constitutes a considerable portion of Henrich's analysis.

The third problem around which Henrich orients his lectures is the tension between the activity of the knowing subject and its relation to the self. Also emerging amid the reception of Reinhold's *Attempt at a New Theory of the Human Faculty of Representation*, this issue acquires a distinctive form with the simultaneous reception of Jacobi's expanded *Concerning the Doctrine of Spinoza*. Reinhold's attempts to clarify the concept of representation incorporated the idea of a subject that both relates to and is distinguished from representations. His definition implied that even the subject's representation of itself must somehow follow the same procedure of relating and distinguishing. In a different manner, Jacobi questioned the relation between the conceptual structure underlying our knowledge of finite objects and an oppositely constituted structure underlying our mode of knowing. This latter structure is immediate and thus not susceptible to ordinary conceptual analysis. Rather than merely restricting the applicability...
tion of conceptual structures to particular spheres, Jacobi went a step further. He tried to limit the validity of all conceptual structures on the basis of their internal constitution.\textsuperscript{52} Although he thought ‘knowledge’ of the immediate could never be explained, he nonetheless asserted that conditioned knowledge of our own existence is simultaneously related to a ‘knowledge’ of the unconditioned.\textsuperscript{53} This implied the possibility for Henrich in an exceptional epistemology in which a discrete relation to the unconditioned spheres with consciousness were unconditioned. In this way, one stood in no opposition to Reinhold, who sought a single or first principle of philosophy.\textsuperscript{54}

For the young Friedrich Schelling and Friedrich Hölderlin, who read Reinhold and Jacobi at the Lutheran seminary in Tübingen, even more needed to be said. The seminary teacher, Gottlob Christian Storr, had conceived of a way to indenture Kantian moral theory to the service of theological orthodoxy.\textsuperscript{55} With unswerving devotion to the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord, Storr devised demonstrations of the certainty of revelation for finite knowledge. His proposals insisted that the biblical canon must be studied from a particular dogmatic perspective. As Schelling and Hölderlin saw matters, Storr’s conception of Christian moral theory subordinated Kant’s proposals, subordinating everything to the immediate consciousness of freedom. In resistance to such orthodoxy, the seminarians tried combining Reinhold’s notion of the consciousness of spontaneous activity with Jacobi’s notion of the unconditioned (which was now conceived as the basis of spontaneity and as operative through spontaneity). If they began with the unconditioned as the basis of consciousness at both as well as consciousness at nonethe less as internal to it, then Schelling and Hölderlin might be able to dissolve the oppositions between God and freedom that Storr had exploited. But this would require an “exceptional language.” Such a language must be comprehensive enough that the subject’s activity is understandable as constituting a consciousness through which activity and its productions are comprehended.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{52} D. Henrich, ATS, pp. 159–165; English: OTS, pp. 75–81.
\textsuperscript{53} D. Henrich, ATS, pp. 159–165; English: OTS, pp. 75–81. Consistent with the pietist leanings of his upbringing, Jacobi steadfastly construed such knowledge of the unconditioned as belief in the personal God of theism.
\textsuperscript{54} D. Henrich, ATS, pp. 159–165; English: OTS, pp. 75–81.
\textsuperscript{55} D. Henrich, ATS, pp. 159–165; English: OTS, pp. 75–81.
As Henrich has shown in his later scholarship, both seminarians would attempt to fulfill this requirement in distinct yet related ways. 56

To introduce the fourth problem, let us recast the third as the problem of overcoming dependence on the mode of conceptualizing through which we ordinarily comprehend the activity of the subject. Recognizing this dependence, thinkers sought a distinctive way to signify the immediate and unconditioned relation of the subject to itself. Theological discourse, which Henrich defined as mediated knowledge of the subject's activity in the world, could then be relocated to the arena of the unconditioned, alongside discourses of freedom. So understood, however, the third problem poses an implicit opposition between the language of the subject's relation to itself and that of its relation to the world. The fourth problem emerges from this positioning of the third: How can the opposite of self and world be joined? For Henrich, such a question requires a principle of unification that is distinct from the consciousness of the modern subject. 57

Henrich locates just such an approach in Hölderlin's theoretical sketches. 58 The approach Hölderlin pursued effectively distanced him from any search for a first principle and from the inferences one might draw from the premise of his view merged with the intellectual structures he endured while studying at the Tübingen Stift. At first he found mere solace in Jacobi's Spinoza book, which he studied and discussed with friends. Shortly thereafter he encountered Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre, which gave him a real hope. Fichte's conception of the unconditioned differed from Jacobi's in its refusal to subscribe to the personal God of theism. Fichte's conception offered Hölderlin a substantial alternative to Storr's questionable linking of autonomous freedom and biblical revelation. Yet on further reflection, Hölderlin retrieved from Jacobi a way to articulate the "immediate" or unconditioned that Fichte could not provide, inasmuch as Fichte's model of the oppositional character of conscious activity was one of reciprocal conditioning. In effect, Hölderlin took Jacobi to mean that

57. D. Henrich, HUS, p. 78; English: HJB, p. 75.
something unconditioned must precede Fichte's first principle of opposition. Consequently, a different philosophical approach from the one Fichte had developed was now required.

Steeped in the thought of Jacobi, Spinoza, Kant, Plato, and Fichte, and experimenting with poetic writing in a manner akin to Schiller, Holderlin wondered how or if all these considerations fit together. His peculiar way of weaving these thinkers into a single tapestry is evident in a fragment he composed on the flyleaf of a book. Subsequently titled “Judgment and Being,” the fragment counterposes the original unity between subject and object—“Being”—with separation—“judgment.” Since he conceives of judgment (Urteil) as the original division between subject and object, Hölderlin is free to strike the distinction between object of knowledge and subject in a manner explicitly diverging from Fichte. Fichte’s Being predates the relation between subject and object and thus cannot become an object of knowledge. In his treatise, Hölderlin’s claim is this: Being, to the extent that we apprehend it, is grasped through an “intellectual intuition” that is fundamentally unlike the intuition characteristic of self-consciousness.

By posing the distinction between Being and self-consciousness in this way, Hölderlin’s proposed solution to the opposition between the subject’s relation to itself and its relation to the world assumes the form of an ongoing longing for reunification with Being. The finite subject cannot overcome her separation from an original unity. Nevertheless, she relates to Being through (1) building a rational world; (2) transcending finite objects by recollecting her origin and subsequent history; and (3) surrendering her mind, without losing her freedom, to the beautiful objects of the world that symbolize the unity she seeks. In each of these, the subject strives to move beyond the boundaries of her enworldedness. Her embrace of the beautiful, that which intimates the complete truth, arrests and captivates her. The surrender of love helps her escape the domination of the greatness of freedom and thereby manifests true freedom. But the conflict between the subject’s active nature and receptivity to love perdures, marking the course she traverses.

59. F. Hölderlin, US; English: JB.
60. D. Henrich, HUS, p. 78; English: HJB, p. 75. For an interpretation alternative to Henrich’s, see Andrzej Warminski, Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger, intro. Rodolphe Gasché (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
In his final lectures, Henrich introduces the fifth problem accruing to the modern subject of knowledge. What conception of unification is appropriate to overcoming the oppositions between the subject’s relation to itself and its relation to the world? Is the unification that overcomes this opposition (between the modes of the subject’s relating to itself and relating to the world) best understood in terms of “primordial being” or in terms of the modes of interrelatedness within which it is unified? If one appeals to primordial being that precedes conceptuality, then integration of consciousness remains indeterminate and, in some way, incomprehensible. But if one appeals to modes of interrelatedness, then perhaps there is a basic theoretical concept, which understands opposed elements in terms of a “totality” that emerges from their exchange, that is well-suited for analyzing rationality. Defining such a concept, however, would be tantamount to the achievement that we define the concept of relation itself.

On Henrich’s account, Hegel was consumed with this task of defining “relation” in a way that overcomes the opposition between the subject’s relating to itself and relating to the world. Caught between the convictions of freedom (experienced in seminary with Hölderlin and Schelling) and the illustration of Kantian teaching to serve a particular theology, Hegel sought an escape. While critical of Kant, Hegel’s early theoretical proposals had done little to move beyond a fundamentally Kantian outlook. Conversations with Hölderlin and others convinced him, however, that in order to advance beyond Kant, he would have to reject the “I” as the highest principle of philosophy. In doing so, Hegel would encounter much of what Kant and Fichte had embraced. Hegel argued that no primordial unity or totality precedes the opposing elements; thus he rejected Hölderlin’s idea that origin and end are identical. In place of this unity, Hegel experimented with the idea that oppositions lead to an increasing resolution through production in unity. Pivotal for this claim is Hegel’s governing rule for the determination of relation between opposites: namely, “negation.” In Henrich’s estimate, negation is the basic theoretical concept propelling the process of making the indetermi-

minate (the groundless or emptiness) determine the production of reality. totality is thus simply the process itself, rather than consciousness of an “I” as antecedent to production. This amounts to the claim that the process itself is ‘the true,’ rather than a presupposition. Hence the modes of relating to the self and relating to the world are not primordial characteristics of subjectivity clarified by reflection, but are the later outgrowth of a clarification of negation. In short, for Hegel, it is indeterminacy which relates to the self and the opposition as the beginning of the process of rationality. The indeterminacy shapes by virtue of its indeterminacy and without presupposition. Only thus does it become manifest in thought. So viewed, the process internalizes and transforms the past, and also presents it in a new way. In order to the meaning of the record, the consciousness of the self is now considered, as well as the general sphere of intelligence, this continuum must be seen as a possible object of thought. It thereby acquires any integration into the system of reason.

In summary, the problems linked to the emerging theory of the modern subject—the principle that unifies reason, the activity of the subject, the tension between the subject and its relation to the self, the unification of the opposing relation to the self and relation to the world, and the theoretical concept of unification suitable for analyzing the rationalities of relation to the self and relation to the world—form the constellation within which Henrich pursues his interpretation of classical German philosophy. Brought into view by a historiography that upholds irreconcilability, this constellation constitutes what Henrich calls the “problem condition of the epoch.” In virtue of his method, we view these problems at a distance. We discern in them not only conceptual issues but also conflicts in what Dilthey would call their life situations. Within these conflicts we recognize, in a manner reminiscent of Weber, both the limitations of and openings for theoretical possibilities. In the interpretation of life processes. Henrich’s historiography becomes us to incorporate in our conceptual thinking, but also make it remember, intimacy, and possibilities of transformation. Henrich would attempt to thematize this epoch and its problems must take all of these into account. Such reckoning alone would show that the search for unity within classical Ger-

man philosophy is not, contrary to some critics, a homogenous drive for one idea. Instead, it is a distinctively nonunified endeavor; it remains intrinsically dialogical and multiple. Yet to conceive and understand such a complex of events and motivations presupposes both recollective thinking and a critical stance toward the theory of recollection—and its variants—lying at the core of classical German philosophy.

Remembrance

Hölderlin invokes the term “remembrance” (Andenken) to cast a particular light on recollection (Erinnerung). He stood as the fortunate heir to a new theory of recollection whose tenets, as fleshed out by the following New prospects, insight emerge when recollection figures in thinking as a fundamental dimension of experience, and when memory brings things together or rather stood in the case of recollection, as they appeared in the ruminations of imagination. Recollection allows us to hold before our eyes what is not “forever past” and to imagine a unity that holds life situations together. It helps transition both our self-understanding and our grasp of the condition under which we stand, so that we see a world in a new light. Hölderlin’s use of “remembrance” to refine “recollection” intimates that remembrance preserves what is dear (Angedenken), while recollection preserves what is burdensome. As Henrich points out, Hölderlin was not alone in his misgivings about recollection. The ways in which recollective thinking should be conceived, together with the manner in which its insights could be understood, remained disputed. Despite agreement that recollective insights sometimes surpass their originating events, theorists within the classical German period diverged in their accounts of the recollective process. Further, they differed in their estimates of the significance of recollective insight.

When Kant defined the original spontaneous act of consciousness as synthesis, he did not merely apprehend but also recollect. If apprehension is only of events that would soon become forever past, we would never be able to form a comprehensive interconnection of our present conditions and motivations. Apprehension, for Kant, looks rather at something upon to be lost and something to be won. For Hölderlin...
Precisely because we presuppose in all experience the interconnectedness this thinking establishes, recollection figures as the fundamental dimension of experience that makes understanding possible. To the extent that recollection points to what is universal, extending over the entirety of conscious life, it makes possible the higher form of understanding, which defines those ends toward which life might be directed. Only as recollection intimates the universal do we become capable of inquiring into those ends and forming critical stances toward them in order to determine their possibilities, we might say, Kant’s view, detached from sensibility and understanding to the various manifestations of reason. Within these manifestations the interconnectedness—or better, the unity—of reason through “freedom” gradually becomes evident.

For Fichte, the primordial activity of consciousness is oppositional rather than synthetic. Hence, recollection is more than a matter of understanding for purposes of recognition. As Henrich’s interpretation shows, he also discerned in recollection an intimation of the productive power of the imagination; what is the same, the production of indeterminate intellectual intuition. Fichte emphasized the reciprocal roles—at a level distinct from the mediated knowledge of understanding—of productive and reproductive imaginative acts as constitutive for the process of recollection. Only in terms of both imaginative acts could a thoroughly interrelatedness between indeterminate and determined intuition arise. For him, this interrelatedness gives form or unity to conscious human life. Further, it allows recollection to become a universal faculty of conscious human life.

Considerations of recollection need not be limited to aspects of conscious life pertaining to concept formation or knowledge of objects. One could examine how recollection constitutes insight through questioning to the constitution of conscious life. Such a focus, championed by Jacobi, helped to fundamentally question the notion of knowing as distinct from mediated knowing. As Henrich’s lectures suggest, Jacobi concluded (in a deeply problematic way) that immediate knowing is simultaneously...
knowledge of the unconditioned. This implies that recollection is inextricably bound to problems posed by immediate knowing: the disclosing significance of the subject's relation to itself always eludes the conceptual structures of its relation to the world. Jacobi construed this disclosing significance as belief in the personal God of theism. For this reason, recollection as the recognition of the unconditioned, of the living God, is from the beginning grounded in an orienting belief. As such, recollection indicates that the certitude shining through the limits of explanation is self-certitude, that emerges only as we attain awareness of the unconditioned.

In a related way, recollective thinking may assume the form of a metaphysics whose structural contours do not require an external formulation of belief, as in Jacobi's construal of the unconditioned as the living God. According to Henrich, Hölderlin's point of departure is the multiplicity of orientations to conscious life. Together these illustrate the ways in which life strives to establish relation to that from which it has been separated. Whether striving to build a rational world, transcending finitude through recollection of history, or surrendering to the beautiful, each bespeaks a profound human effort to unite with a withdrawn origin. Hölderlin's is a gaze akin to Shakespeare's admonition in "King Lear:" "Look with thine ears." He grasps the legitimacy—indeed, the indispensability—of each particular orientation. Despite their irreconcilability, each remains essential to the stabilizing and securing of conviction in the face of dejection, futility, doubt, and lost love—or in Hölderlin's words, to the work of overcoming a lost unity with God.

To enter these orientations, however, belongs to the purview of poetry. For Hölderlin, poetry alone can unite antagonistic tendencies as they resound with feeling. His confidence in the poetic endeavor hinges on his displacement of visual metaphors with those of tonality and rhythm. Poetic endeavor, committed to incorporating the tonalities of intimate experience, cultivates a consciousness that grasps life's tendencies in a way that differentiates their distinctive moods and tones. Awareness of this unity momentarily interrupts and sharpens these tones. Rather than dissolving oppositions among these resonances, however, poetry preserves them. It holds incompatible and antagonistic tendencies in a fragile harmony so that each distinct tone may "rightly assert" itself. In this manner, the totality of the poem is known within the poem, evolving a form that literally bears out: "so that in the primordial foundation of all works and acts of man we feel..."
ourselves to be equal and at one with all, be they so large or small..." Poetic 'insight' is, as such, first and foremost recollective: it listens to the ways in which life's necessities unfold over the 'eccentric' course we have traveled, grasps the 'spirit' of their infinite connectedness, and helps us internalize them in a way that prompts our thankfulness for life as a whole.

Hölderlin’s perception that the character of recollection is a preservation subject to demands of faithfulness was a formative impetus for Hegel. Yet, Hegel rejected Hölderlin’s metaphysics of a lost unity from God: on Henrich’s recounting, Hegel came to believe that the goal of unification (not the sorrow of alienation from a divine origin) impels us to preserve the infinite within us, to ensure the infinite unification once we understand the modes of relation that give rise to the possibility of unity. Recollection that unifies is a process rather than a lost ground to which we long to return. In contrast, Hölderlin’s Hegel saw recollection as an overcoming of the past. Such an overcoming transforms the past into something new for us into which we may venture freely.

While these stances differ markedly from one another, less obvious are the ways in which each corresponds to one of the theoretical problems accruing to the theory of the modern subject. For example, we could no more grasp Kant’s conception of the unity of reason apart from his theory of recollection than we could Fichte’s conception of the activity of the subject apart from his. Kant and Fichte, just as much as Jacobi, Hölderlin, and Hegel, described the “withheld,” the “lost,” or the “withdrawn” in competing ways that befit their unique and embedded pathos—the rancor of lived conflict and the intimacies of, if not the union with, what they held most passionately. At a minimum, then, what we may take from these observations is this: any interpretation of the theory of the modern subject within classical German philosophy that fails to attend to distinctions among conceptions of recollection is bound to fall short of the mark. Henrich’s historiography indicates that such attempts will be historically anemic; they will lack the vitality born of incommensurable experiences and the perceptive hues such antagonisms produce. From this vantage point, ahistorical and historicist thinking appear to preclude such matters: what they gain by way

of reductionism, they lose by way of historical profundity. In the end, they fail to make the theory of modern subjectivity comprehensible.

Once we recognize the extent to which these conceptions of recollection differ, it becomes possible for us to bring into view not only a fuller conception of the dynamics of the theory of the modern subject, but also to notice an aspect of Henrich’s historiography that earlier escaped our notice. Henrich’s historic method aims at an internal structural examination of those attitudes, but once conceptual and preconceptual—what make up particular sense of the world and of the development of this sense over time. As such, Henrich’s historiography is an implicit recapitulation of a mode of recollection that Hölderlin deemed remembrance. So understood, it brings forth a different theory, which was also, in question the interpretative stance of “programmatic history.” Precisely because Henrich’s reading of classical German philosophy adhered to this thematic, it became evident that his observation, Hegel’s programmatic notion of the “forgetfulness of being.” Specifically, in asking how the attitudes of the modern world are related, Henrich points out what might otherwise remain overlooked: the Hegel’s conception collapses this question from his analysis. Consequently, the force of Henrich’s study is to show how Hegel’s presupposed his analysis of self-empowered, unconditioned domination of self-consciousness in his interpretation. Moreover, the reach of Henrich’s observation extends, in principle, to other programmatic histories, particularly those anchored in assumptions about the natural-scientific worldview and its physicalism. These, too, assume an understanding of the relations among formative attitudes (as segments of the networks of causal relations) but do not inquire into their philosophical underpinnings.

Accordingly, to read classical German philosophy from Henrich’s position is to see its emergence against the backdrop of modern thought forms and ideas. Included in this backdrop are political anthropology (Thomas Hobbes), ethics (Benedict de Spinoza), metaphysics (René Descartes), international jurisprudence (Hugo Grotius), and economics (Adam Smith). These thought forms shared a lesson from their Stoic legacy: self-definition does not depend on a preexisting telos but arises out of the individual’s striving. In turn, this led

to the decisive insight that, in the absence of an order of being proscribing the ends toward which humans must aspire, individual cognition must incorporate the capacity to devise its own aims, dreams, and ends.

At the end of the eighteenth century, alongside theoretical changes writ large in the French Revolution, a new philosophical doctrine of recollection emerged as just such an incorporation. However much individual conceptions of recollection differed, each attested to the plight of humans not at home in their world. Each, accordingly, could not conceive of recollection apart from foreseeing. This joining of recollection with envisioning was not mere apprehension about the future. Instead, it was foresight into the soon-to-be-past and thus of recollection, the soon-to-come. Recollection was not simply a remembrance of what had been; it was an intuitive recalling of what will be and, in turn, of what will one day be lost. In the immediacy of transforming moments, thinkers of this period recognized that what now remains open to them could later become a treasured—even if tragic—memory, an event around which they might make sense of themselves and their time.

Despite obvious differences, theirs was a shared conviction whose force comes best into view by way of contrast with the great Augustinian conception of remembrance that had dominated premodern Western thinking. Augustine’s view was that the shaping of the soul, the *distensio animae*, holds in an eternal present the not-yet and the no-longer. Because the soul and its form are gifts from God, the individual possesses confidence in the divine order of being (to which souls bear witness in their recollective form and illumination) embraces all things. These moderns, however, were convinced that the hour of Augustinian recollection had passed. They could no longer share his confidence that they were possessed by God, and attempted instead to glean from the work of recollection insight for their own fragmented experiences. These moderns attaining not only to the diverse orientations of conscious life, but also to the questions these orientations posed about a possible interconnectedness, in the wake of Augustinian confidence, these moderns seemed fated both to attempt to bring these orientations together and to remain aware that the unity appearing in the throes of a truncated recollection will

always bear the marks of the ‘withheld,’ the ‘withdrawn,’ and the ‘inscrutable.’

In the conclusion to his lectures, Henrich invokes Fichte’s confession: “We began philosophy in our wantonness. We discovered our nudity, and since then we have been philosophizing in an emergency, for our salvation.”

Here Henrich returns to his initial point of departure: “As the American suspicion of ‘Continental’ philosophy and the concurrent need to reinforce the known theoretical tradition. Now, however, his solicitous gestures give way to a clarity that comes only with a knowledge of the materials and the perspectives in which they appear.

After reading Henrich’s lectures, one finds it difficult to dismiss questions about subjectivity on the basis of ahistorical, historicist, or programmatic historical claims. Indeed, the temptations of such claims may give way to an invitation to enter an alternate and potentially transformative perspective. Beckoning from the pages of Henrich’s 1973 course lectures is a view in which theological or religious motifs remain immanent to our thinking about (at the very least) classical German philosophy. Henrich’s evocation of his point of departure implies that to follow the path of this period is to encounter distinctly religious dimensions at every turn. More precisely, to follow the contours of classical German philosophy is to experience competing claims as discordant tonalities that admit to little promise of resolution. Included among these claims are, of course, the polemics of nineteenth-century theologians, awash in crises of conceptual legitimation.

Moreover, because Henrich locates the theoretical problems of modern subjectivity in antinomies that embrace the pretheoretical and the theoretical in their tensive relations, his historiography commends to us the modulating tones of pathos. In other words, immediate and mediated modes of knowing. Guiding these tones, Henrich impels us to engage in a distinctly kind of remembrance. Having shown that when upheavals interrupt pathos, human longings achieve a distinct pitch and in consequence, a certain kind of ‘knowing’ emerges, Henrich directs our attention to the paths traversed by classical German philosophy. These thinkers’ way of knowing was a
kind of interior certitude, a securing of convictions bound to adverse contingencies. It was also a knowing through which something transcendent emerged. Today we might call such knowing an “attunement” around which forms of life orient themselves. To incline our ear to this attunement would be to attend to that which lies beyond all places of dispute, but which is nonetheless manifest through local features of pathos. However much this attunement may provoke our proclivities toward inscription, it also evade our reach. For while a knowing of this kind remains bound to place, it is also placeless. As a mode of remembrance, it moves beyond the location wherein it has revealed itself toward a lasting insight.

Admittedly more poetic than philosophical, this insight shines through an insuperable conflict between modern thinkers’ need to assert themselves against the world and their profound sense of being steeped in loss. Weber rightly named this conflict “disenchantment,” or the sense of anomie that issues from an insurmountable conflict of values that destabilize one another.74 Within the domain of disenchantment, the path of classical German philosophy moved forward and backward. Barred from access to traditional theological discourse, it nonetheless remained suspicious of the strictures of scientific rationality. Searching for a way to name what had become for them nameless, these philosophers seemed fated to invoke, through the resonances of their pathos, (theological) language that had already passed its time. Only through the interruption of these resonances could silence transform a beleaguered consciousness into one of gratitude, for what had gone before. As disparate opposing thoughts that had struggled to name this “word,”75 so construed, remembrance through disenchantment brings thinking to a place of quiet acknowledgment. Such thinking does not forget the struggles of the past—or of the future. Rather, it remembers its ‘wantonness’ before the silence of the withdrawn God, where a new voice dare to speak.


Selected Bibliography of Recent Work on Kant and the Post-Kantians

Works on Kant and post-Kantian thinking with attention to the definition of modernism:


Discussions of the pantheism controversy initiated by Jacobi:


Literary appropriations of classical German philosophy, with particular attention to the relevance of post-Kantian romantic theory:

Foreword xxxix


Contemporary explorations of classical German thought:


Critical appreciation of the idealistic tradition:


Introduction

The time between the publication of the Critique of Pure Reason in 1781 and the 1844 publication of Kierkegaard’s *Concept of Anxiety*—the same year in which Marx wrote the *Early Economic Philosophical Manuscripts*—is just sixty-three years. Shorter still is the time from the publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* to the final step Hegel made in his philosophical development: the establishment of speculative logic as the fundamental discipline of his system and not simply a negative introduction into it. This happened in 1804, the same year in which Kant died. What is astonishing about this very short period of time is that within it, the entire development from Kant through Fichte and Schelling to Hegel occurred. This unique development that unfolded during the late lifetime of Kant both invites and resists interpretation.


1. I. Kant (1724–1804), *KrV* A; English: *CPR*.
4. G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831), *SPh*.
point of view, thinkers during this period made exaggerated claims for philosophy. They also appear to have made weak and loose arguments that lack a critical attitude toward the basic concepts with which they were working. Owing in part to these reservations, there has been relatively little good scholarship in the English language on the period, except on Hegel.6

By way of contrast, Continental philosophy has maintained that during these two decades philosophers did excellent work. For them what distinguished this time was outstanding productivity. Many people have said—not the least was Heinrich Heine, and Karl Marx repeated—that what happened in France in reality happened at the same time in Germany in thought.7 Marx wanted to unify these two efforts, building political reality on philosophical ideas.
These divergent attitudes notwithstanding, this philosophical period was, from an historical standpoint, possibly more influential than any other. Three of its contributions continue to have a bearing on the ways in which we think today.

First, in Johann Gottlieb Fichte's *Science of Knowledge*, 9 the romantic theory of art and poetry originated, which was the first modern poetic theory in terms of which we can still interpret many works of art from the nineteenth century. The early romantics considered themselves to be students of Fichte. They felt that without being deeply versed in Fichte's *Science of Knowledge*, it would have been impossible to develop the kind of poetry they were writing.

Second, Marxism is the product of the collapse of Hegel's philosophy. That alone would be a sufficient reason to study this period. In fact, that is what Marx himself claimed more than 150 years ago. While the philosophers of the new wave of positivism and materialism in Europe were virtually ignoring Hegel, Marx did not. Instead, he maintained that he was the

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8. "The only practically possible emancipation of Germany and the emancipation based on the principle which holds that man is the supreme being for man. In Germany emancipation from the Middle Ages was the only and simultaneous emancipation from the partial victories over the Middle Ages. In Germany no form of bondage can be broken unless every form of bondage is broken. Germany, emancipated of fundamentals, can have nothing less than a fundamental revolution. The enormous task, which is the emancipation of man in Germany, his emancipation is philosophy, its heart is the proletariat. It is only by an emancipation of the proletariat that the bond can be abolished without preceding actualization of philosophy." K. Marx, "Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung" [1844], in *MEGA*, vol. I,2, pp. 175–176; English: *MEPW*, pp. 62–64.


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*Science of Knowledge*
only one who did not read Hegel as a “dead dog.” (This is a phrase stemming from Lessing, who opined that we should not treat Spinoza as a dead dog, as many had in the eighteenth century.) By virtue of his willingness to take Hegel seriously, Marx was able to write *Das Kapital.*

Third, existentialism is the product of the collapse of idealism, and it is impossible to understand any basic doctrine of Kierkegaard without a virtu with Hegel and Fichte; one can even say the existentialism and a is the complementary outcome of the collapse of Hegel’s system. Nevertheless, existentialism is the philosophy of mind isolated from the philosophy of nature and history. Marxism is the philosophy of history and society isolated from the Hegelian and Fichtean philosophy of mind.

The universal claim in Hegel’s system was that it integrated at least aspects of theories that became equally influential, and continuously so, after the collapse. Therefore, understanding Hegel’s system is a precondition to understanding what happened afterward.

There is a second reason for interpreting this period of philosophy that follows partly from the historical one I have just given. We can understand an interpretation as an introduction to Continental philosophy. Philosophy had a single origin in Greece (if one discounts runs from the logic of Hinduism and Buddhism), and it also enjoyed a single tradition from its origin up to the end of the eighteenth century. This means in part that the philosophers whom we could call “great” were connected with each other, irrespective of political borders or the boundaries of language. It also means that philosophy had a language. At first, the language was Greek; then, with the rise to dominance of the Roman Empire, the language of philosophy became Latin, which endured until the eighteenth century. This situation changed entirely at the end of the eighteenth century with the appearance of Fichte. At that time a split took place that has since separated two worlds of philosophy: Anglo-Saxon, which is basically empirically oriented, and what is called Continental philosophy, which understands itself as having in a tradition that emerged at the end of the eighteenth century. Of course, there were exceptions between the two traditions, and “emergency entrances,” so to speak, remained open for “refugees” from the other side. But there was no real cooperation, except for two decades be-

fore World War I. For more than a century, both sides exhibited a deep inability to understand each other.

This split, which originated with Fichte, was then reinforced during World War I, when for the first time philosophers tried to define their work politically. Anglo-Saxon philosophers defended reason and humanity against what they construed as an aggressive systematic spirit. They interpreted this spirit as an attempt to organize all of life primarily by force instead of insight. For their part, Continental philosophers resisted what they deemed to be superficiality. They opposed the naive integration of the deep experiences human beings have into shallow economic and social perspectives.

The arguments, in turn, are connected with the experiences not only of philosophers, but also of the people on the Continent and in the Anglo-Saxon countries. On the Continent, a feeling of crisis grew out of the ruin wrought by the war, a crisis that philosophers found themselves ineluctably drawn to the task of shaping a new form of life. Such was the experience, for instance, from which Heidegger started. On the other side of the channel, a certain feeling of nostalgia—a longing for a return to the eternal and unchanging foundations of all experience that survives the war unshaken—developed in England and the United States that was critical of any speculative approach to philosophy. This criticism felled English Hegelianism, which was already tottering under the impact of the arguments Russell and Moore had lodged.

The difference between these two experiences echoes the divergence of opinion between Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Edmund Burke. Early in his philosophical career, Fichte wanted to develop an apology for Jacobinism in politics, which in this context meant the attempt to build a new life in much the same way as an architect builds new houses. Just as the architect provides a blueprint from which to build the house, so also the political philosopher, at least the theoretical political philosopher, provides a design from which to create a new society. Burke, on the other hand, taught that this "architectural" attitude toward political life rested on a fundamental mistake—the aggressive imposition of a design for life on a people—that every sound philosophy had to target for criticism.

1. Edmund Burke emphasized the necessity of taking into account the historical circumstances peculiar to a situation before proposing the establishment of laws and government.
These two attitudes continued to predominate in both Anglo-Saxon and Continental philosophy until the early 1960s. Then the lingering effects of World War I began to dissipate, and the gap between the two traditions became narrower. On the Continent, the Heidegger wave was over. It had been very strong, but philosophers finally realized that, despite his promises, Heidegger was unable to accomplish the revision of the conceptual framework within which philosophy had been undertaken. Instead, Wittgenstein and his successors who pursued similar project attracted attention. Meanwhile, on the Anglo-Saxon tradition of philosophy, the need for a comprehensive analysis of modern life and society began to make itself felt again.

Traditional expectations for philosophers then began to reemerge. Among these, for instance, was the condition that philosophy should not be just a theoretically important but otherwise irrelevant activity whose motivation is demonstrating brilliant and analytical abilities. Instead, philosophical interpretation of human life in general should be consonant with the way in which life already understands itself before it turns to philosophy. Evidently, this expectation makes it important for us to understand the implicit standard toward which philosophy orients itself. The philosophy of idealism, as well as what we are calling Continental philosophy, has standards of a sort that, as we can see, became relevant within analytical philosophy during the late 1960s.13


13. Among the analytic philosophers of this period who were receptive to such standards are Stanley Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1969);
One of these—that philosophy should not alienate itself from understanding life—I have just mentioned. Another standard is that philosophy should offer a universal theoretical project applicable to various fields in basically the same way. This implies that the philosopher should not be a specialist. We can also understand this difference by saying that Continental philosophy takes the relationship between the transcendental constitution of the person and the concept of philosophy as constitutive of the definition of philosophy, whereas empiricist philosophy tends to emphasize scientific and critical standards primarily, and even, at times, exclusively. But there are reasons to agree with Plato that there is no necessary incompatibility between these two endeavors. One need only be circumspect about what one can accomplish. We can connect the first and second standards. In order to probe the primordial experience of life, philosophy has to employ a universal framework. Just as a person has to have an integrated approach to the problems they present themselves in life, so also must a philosophical framework permit this kind of integrated approach. If philosophy does not offer this universality, it will not be able to coincide with what the person experiences.

A third standard bears on a philosophy's capacity to interpret itself. To do so with depth, a philosophy must be able to appraise its context, which includes history and the development of society, as well as the development of art. This is why the Continental philosophers are always in an implicit competition with the artist. A philosophy that is unable to say something about the unarticulated intentions of artists of its time does not fulfill this important standard.

In my view, there is a feeling developing among some analytical philosophers that these standards should be accepted. Embracing these standards might well justify the hope that the narrowing gap between the Anglo-Saxon and Continental philosophical traditions will eventually close. We find evidence for this joining of the traditions in the development of Kant.
discussions in analytic philosophy that Peter F. Strawson’s books has initiated.\textsuperscript{14}

These two motivations—the perduring historical influence of two decades in the late eighteenth century and an introduction to Continental philosophy—stand behind my desire to develop this specific philosophical interpretation. On the problems that were the most important for the successors Kant, I shall speak at later points. But I would like to mention two problems—one historical and one systematic—to which I shall give special attention.

Let me begin with the historical problem. The shortness of the period poses three questions for the interpreter. The first is the question of the relationship between the philosophical system that succeeded Kant’s and the idealism that succeeded it. Fichte and Hegel considered themselves to be the successors of Kant. Each claimed that only his philosophical program ultimately clarified Kant’s position, making it coherent and superior to all alternatives. Kant (who lived until Hegel’s position was finally elaborated) did not agree at all with either claim. He flatly denied that Fichte’s \textit{Science of Knowledge} had anything to do with the position he defended in the \textit{Critique of Pure Reason}. So one problem of the history of philosophy of this period is to make intelligible how this development from Kant to Hegel, which took place during Kant’s life, is possible. What unity, if any, keeps Kantian and Hegelian thinking together as positions inside one period of philosophy? Hegel, of course, had an explanation. He claimed that the development from Kant through Fichte and Schelling to himself was a necessary development from a beginning (when it was not yet possible to understand the basic implications of Kant’s position) toward the end in which idealistic philosophy became coherent and universal. But this Hegelian interpretation, although widely accepted, is indefensible. The historian who deals with this period has to give another account of its unity.

The second historical question for interpreting this period is how to delineate the relationships among the idealists themselves. We can portray the entire period in terms of the major controversies that occurred between students and their teachers. These include the disputes between Fichte and the Kantians, between Fichte and Schelling, and between Hegel and...

\textsuperscript{14} Peter F. Strawson, \textit{The Bounds of Sense: An Essay on Kant’s “Critique of Pure Reason”} (London: Methuen, Ltd., 1966). In \textit{The Bounds of Sense}, Strawson takes traditional Kantian themes and raises them from the perspective of the analytic tradition, for example, in \textit{Two Faces of the Critique of Pure Reason}, pp. 15–24.
and Schelling. Early on, it was the students who mounted these controversies with attacks on their teachers. Fichte, for example, considered himself to be the successor of Kant, but Kant vehemently dismissed this claim. Similarly, a tension developed between Fichte and Schelling. Initially a student of Fichte, Schelling purported to advance the case for his teacher’s idealistic system. But later he distanced himself from Fichte’s position, describing it as only an insufficient predecessor to his own “true” idealism. Fichte hotly contested this, and a rancorous debate on their disagreement ensued, with the appearance of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, yet another of these rifts erupted—this time between Hegel and Schelling.

At a later point, those who had been the teachers retaliated, mounting attacks on their former students. In this controversy with Schelling, Fichte developed a “new” philosophy which, to a certain extent, could be seen as a reaction to what Schelling had criticized in his earlier system. Fichte and Schelling fell into querulosity over the intellectual origin of this “new” philosophy. Schelling, too, developed a late philosophy that he claimed to be a corrective to the misuses to which Hegel had subjected his own philosophy.

We might describe the entire period in terms of these and other minor controversies. In this way, we could develop an image of the relationships among the philosophers that differs entirely from the one Hegel presented and that still dominates the literature today. This is the view that each philosophical position from Kant through Hegel is like a step in a staircase that we ascend as we leave previous steps behind. By way of contrast, in the image I am proposing here are three comparable and competing positions that cannot be reduced to each other. To see the period in this way, we have to understand the late philosophy of Fichte and Hegel’s system and the late philosophy of Schelling. Here, I propose to concentrate on the late Fichte and Hegel in particular, since I consider them most important. The question has to do with the continuation of the entire period as it is elementally collapsed. We would want to know what happened when idealistic philosophy suddenly broke down and existentialism and Marxism emerged in the wake of its demise. These are the historical questions I want to attempt to answer.

The systematic problem I earlier mentioned is that during this period, new types of philosophy also appeared without accounts either of what they were or how to describe their systematic form. In order to write an account of the systematic form of Kant’s philosophy, for example, we have
to collect many occasional remarks that he made, and draw from them in
the absence of any complete statement from Kant. We encounter a similar
situation with Fichte’s contributions to the philosophy of mind. He incor-
porated into his system very interesting ideas and arguments for a new the-
ory of consciousness and the concept of the self. We have to develop a way
to assess the value of these contributions that does not depend on his suc-
sess in them building. This means trying to bring into view the rudimen-
tary, less systematic structure that Fichte was unable to complete satisfac-
torily, as I believe is true of Hegel’s Logic, as well. I want to try to
discuss those parts of its structure that Hegel had not fully worked out. We
know that the concept of negation has a fundamental role in his Logic. We
could say that Hegel bases his concept of negation on a typology of various
cases of double negations. In the course of my interpretation of this per-
sonal philosophy, I propose to integrate a new reading of the Logic in
terms of the underlying typology.

This book consists of five parts. The first will consider the systematic struc-
ture of Kant’s philosophy. The second will discuss the early critics of Kant,
whose arguments—especially the influential ones of Karl Leonhard Rein-
hold—led to the development of the Science of Knowledge. Actually, there are three
main lines that led from the Kantian position into the idealist philoso-
phy. We can understand how these lines connect, but we also need to separate
them. First, of course, is the foundation of the Critique of Pure Reason; sec-
ond, the controversy over Kant’s ethics and the relationship between duty
duty and inclination; and third, the development of Kant’s philosophy of reli-
gion, in which the concept of God is subordinated to the concept of free-
edom and is actually developed in terms of concepts of freedom, of reason,
of legal law. These lines, we said, met in Hegel’s Science of Knowledge. Accord-
ningly, in the third part of my interpretation, I shall consider two of the numerous versions of the Science of

15. For more on the systematic structure of Kant’s philosophy, Henrich recommended
the “First Introduction” to the Critique of the Power of Judgment. This is the only publication
in which Kant wrote explicitly about the systematic form of his entire work. In it, “Erste
Einleitung in die Kritik der Urteilskraft” [1790], in HN, pp. 195–251; English: “First Intro-
duction to the Critique of the Power of Judgment,” in CJ, pp. 1–51. It contains those critical writings that remain available in old German editions, although
scholarship is increasingly devoted to making them more accessible.
Knowledge: the early one, which was influential, and the second one, which Fichte never published and so was without any influence. It is, nevertheless, a deep and interesting theory. I shall turn, fourth, to the arguments of the friends of the young Hegel against the systems of both Kant and Fichte, as well as to the process that led to the formation of Hegel’s system. Finally, in the fifth part, I shall develop an interpretation of the underlying structure of Hegel’s Logic.

17. J. G. Fichte, GgW; English: SK.