

Journey of Subjectivism in German Idealism Philosophy:

From Kant to Hegel

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The ground of philosophizing is thus a striving after the thought of a ground. Ground is not, however, a cause in the literal sense — but rather a constitution — connection with the whole.

Fichte Studies, Novalis 1795-1796¹

There are many strands of insight, tendrils of thought, and entanglements of friendships, collegial relations, critiques, and rebuttals that occurred among the German Idealists in the twenty-five years spanning Kant's first *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1806-07). Many important philosophical themes were posited and explored, such as the identification of one primary and originary principle, the extension of what could and could not be known by human thought and reason, how such knowing came into being, the role and presence of God or the Absolute (for which some got labeled atheists), and the evolution of the subjectivist view and its relationship to and treatment of "object" or that which is not "subject" or the "I."

The inception of such dualistic thought (subject-object) came as part of the scientific revolution and was first articulated by Galileo in *The Assayer* (1623) as primary and secondary qualities.² His thoughts were followed some fourteen years later with Descartes' *Discourse on the Method* whereby the mind was separated from body, and animals and plants were placed into what he termed the extra-mental realm that "was and always had been, exclusively answerable to the laws of mechanical causality."³

¹ Novalis, *Fichte Studies*, ed. by Jane Kneller (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 164-169, quoted in Marina F. Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader: Ideas, Responses, and Legacy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 241.

² Martha Bolton, "Primary and Secondary Qualities in Early Modern Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2022/entries/qualities-prim-sec/>>.

³ Owen Barfield, *What Coleridge Thought* (Oxford: Barfield Press, 2014), 65.

For the German Idealists, all their philosophical unfolding occurred within the political-social context of heavy-handed orthodox religious control, violent American and French Revolutions, and the evolving Industrial Revolution with its capitalistic hue that embraced the idea of disposable humans, animals, and nature as part of its mechanistic process. This idealistic period closed with the spirit of a General-Emperor on the back of a horse taking over the known Prussian-Germanic world. (Appendix, Figure 1.)

Roughly two hundred-plus years later, we find ourselves immersed in a comparable degree of world-wide political and social unrest with the additional dimension of impending planetary collapse and human annihilation. The dualistic bifurcation of nature in its most general sense — subject-object, body-mind, human-nature, men-women, cisgender-transgender, colonialist-indigenous peoples, believer-atheist. etc. — runs rampant. There are of course many potential causes for this cacophony of chaos, especially as regards this generalized bifurcation of nature and loss of any one unifying principal or super-sensuous source. Today, it often presents as a kind of buffered isolationism that is strongly imbued with an “us vs. them,” “me vs. it” tonality.

One contributor to the buffered isolated dualism of our modern era could be considered the very epoch under consideration with the subject-object division antecedently led by René Descartes, and followed by the likes of the German Idealists, such as Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottlieb Fichte. However, this paper will argue a different perspective. It will explore how the German Idealistic period with all its philosophical entanglements and theoretical propositions was and is analogous to Hegel’s circling spiral of absolute idealism. Each scholar and savant (of which there were many within this rich milieu) had a reason and purpose in the scheme that led

from Kant's initial foray into new philosophical waters and culminated with Hegel's philosophic "end of philosophy."

Yet, the end is not the end. As Eckhart Förster notes in *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy* there is an "open path"⁴ that is the opportunistic culmination of these pivotal twenty-five years. To arrive at this conclusion, an understanding of the evolution of the subjectivist view is crucial since it awakens awareness of the presuppositions lurking in the background that are still at play in our current belief systems. It also promises to expose the discarded gems from past times that may serve as talisman for finding and navigating this pathway.

Immanuel Kant: The Discursive Turn to Transcendental Idealism

Immanuel Kant kicked off his self-proclaimed philosophical revolution based on a completely new conception of the human subject in relation to an object-filled external world which could be perceived, but not truly known in and of itself. Firstly, it is crucial to acknowledge the brilliance of Kant's intellectual and political feat. With the publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1781, he elegantly threaded a camel through the eye of a needle.

His new philosophy looked at the world via a Copernican turn. He posited that prior to any act of human cognition there existed: two *a priori* sensibilities (space and time) for the given intuition of objects distinguished from the self; twelve pure categories providing the *a priori* condition of empiricism; and three pure ideas of reason — the absolute unity of the subject (rational psychology), the absolute unity of series of conditions of appearance (rational

⁴ Eckart Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy: A Systematic Reconstruction*, trans. Brady Bowman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 372.

cosmology), and the absolute unity of conditions of thought in general (rational theology).⁵
(Appendix, Figure 2.)

Kant sought first and foremost to save metaphysics by ensuring that it became a bone-fide science:

It [the *Critique of Pure Reason*] will therefore decide as to the possibility or impossibility of metaphysics in general, and determine its sources, its extent, and its limit—all in accordance with principles.⁶ ... Since it [metaphysics] is a fundamental science, it is under obligation to achieve this completeness [via the *Critique*]. We must be able to say of it [the *Critique*]: *nil acutum reputans, si quid superesset agendum*, i.e., nothing more from here on out needs to be done!⁷

At the same time, he needed to outflank his rivals. His work reigned in the rational speculations of the dogmatists which made metaphysics super-sensible in nature, and who felt that ideas were inherently innate. The dogmatists included Leibniz, a pure rationalist who felt the mind was acted upon from an out-there kind of heavenly place.⁸ In this time of emerging scientism, such a rationalistic view ensured the death of metaphysics. Kant also wanted to counteract the undermining scorn of the empiricists who believed that ideas were given by objects acting on a blank-slated mind.⁹ The empiricists included Hume, a skeptic, who Kant claimed had initially awoken him from his own dogmatic slumber.¹⁰ For the empiricists and rationalists alike, Kant wanted to provide proof that knowledge had valid and true deductions and theoretic principles. (Appendix, Figure 3.)

⁵ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 17-40.

⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (Courtesy of Internet Archive), quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 41.

⁷ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 44.

⁸ Marina F. Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader: Ideas, Responses, and Legacy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 32.

⁹ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 32.

¹⁰ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 31.

In threading the needle, Kant skillfully moved the super-sensual areas of God and the soul out of his *Critique of Pure Reason* and relegated them (and other such abstract ideas like “freedom”) to the realm of practical cognition. He acknowledged these areas, which he called *noumenon* in the *Critique*, but noted how they fell outside its scope:

If we are pleased to name this object *noumenon* for the reason that its representation is not sensible, we are free to do so. But since we can apply to it none of the concepts of our understanding, the representation remains for us empty, and is of no service except to mark the limits of our sensible knowledge and to leave open a space which we can fill neither through possible experience nor through pure understanding. ... What we are then left with is a mode of determining the object by thought alone—a merely logical form without content, but which yet sees to us to be a mode in which the object exists in itself (*noumenon*) without regard to intuition, which is limited to our senses.¹¹

He also caveated *noumenon*'s lack of inclusion heavily in the preface of the *Critique* (First Edition) while simultaneously establishing his idea of appearances versus things-in-themselves. He wrote:

“For we are brought to the conclusion that we can never transcend the limits of possible experience, though that is precisely what this science is concerned, above all else, to achieve.” and “...such knowledge has to do only with appearances, and must leave the thing in itself as indeed real per se, but as not known by us.”¹²

Through this turn, he had accomplished a great deal. He had: 1) kept himself from appearing to be an atheist (a bad thing at that time); 2) moved thinking and knowledge into the realm of discursive thought that sought to prove the existence of *a priori* concepts of objects in general (i.e., the mind is not a blank slate); 3) squelched the unfounded super-sensual sourcing of speculative dogmatists; and 4) prioritized the need to deter the skeptics, and then subsequently addressed the super-sensible (morals and *noumenon*) as part of practical cognition.

¹¹ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 56.

¹² Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 43.

In the Second Edition of the *Critique* (1787), Kant adds sections §§15-27 into the *Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding* in which several sections emphasize the necessity of the “original synthetic unity of apperception” or the distinctive “I.” In other words, that there is one consciousness that is *a priori* and to which all else is subject.¹³ With this inclusion of the “I am” Kant claims a subject-object distinction that is different from René Descartes’s earlier *cogito, ergo sum*. For Kant the object is crucial and necessary for the human subject (“I am”) to distinguish and know himself, and to have consciousness of himself — even though the object, both real and perceived, cannot be truly known in-and-of-itself. By contrast, Descartes doubted the very existence of everything in the external world. *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think therefore I am) was his conclusive way of knowing that he, himself existed purely because he experienced thinking.¹⁴ For Kant, thinking itself was not self-revelatory. There needed to be an object upon which to think and from which to differentiate oneself.

The published first *Critique* only brought questions and misunderstandings as exemplified by the Göttingen review and subsequent correspondence with the article’s original author. The review confused Kant’s transcendental idealism with Berkeley’s annihilated matter idealism. Garve, who wrote the original review before it was rewritten by his editor, also criticized Kant’s speculative philosophy around God and morals, and questioned how the real versus unreal might be distinguished.¹⁵ Such questions and criticisms only drove Kant to re-think the *Critique*, along with its inconsistencies and confusions. His reflections ultimately led him to write an additional five books and a second edition of the *Critique* itself in relatively short

¹³ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 50.

¹⁴ Tarek R. Dika, “Descartes ‘Method,’” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2024 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), forthcoming URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2024/entries/descartes-method/>>.

¹⁵ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 48, 51, 53.

order.¹⁶ In the end he created an opus of work including three *Critiques* that spanned theoretical reason, morals, and aesthetics — each of which was inextricably linked with and necessitated by the others.

After the second edition of the *Critique* was published in 1787, Kant was both heralded and criticized. The three *Critiques* evoked significant interest and provocative thought among philosophers in Germany and throughout Europe. In the words of Alfred North Whitehead, “...it is more important that a proposition be interesting than that it be true”¹⁷. Thus, whether Kant’s work proved right or wrong, it nonetheless lit a significant fire of interest and subsequent scholarship.

Jacobi: An Inadvertent Spark

Friedrich Henrich Jacobi (1743-1819) bears mention not because of his philosophical theories or ideations, but due to his extreme dislike of Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677). In a letter to Herrn Moses Mendelssohn, a good friend of the recently deceased Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (an avowed Spinozaist)¹⁸, he quotes extensively from Spinoza’s *Ethics* which in an unexpected turn resurrects Spinoza from the depths of the forgotten, unknown, and disliked. Jacobi finds Spinoza’s supposed pantheism and identification of God with nature as atheistic since his doctrine does not admit any kind of religion.¹⁹ Through Jacobi's critical correspondence with

¹⁶ These books included: *Prolegomena* (1783), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Moral* (1785), *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (1786), *Critique of Pure Reason (2nd Edition)* (1787), *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), and *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790).

¹⁷ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, ed. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), 259.

¹⁸ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 76. Note: Lessing writes to Jacobi that “There is no philosophy than the philosophy of Spinoza.”

¹⁹ Friedrich Henrich Jacobi, *Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel Allwill*, trans. George di Giovanni (Montreal & Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), 173-252, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 84, 86.

Mendelssohn, which Jacobi publishes, he inadvertently exposes a host of younger philosophers (e.g., Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Hölderlin) to Spinoza's work.²⁰

Further, through his friendship with Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) and the exclamatory nature of his own controversial beliefs, he sparks their interest in Spinoza as well, presumably much to his chagrin. Spinoza proves to be an eureka moment for Goethe who later writes to Jacobi, "I'm training myself with Spinoza. I read him again and again."²¹ As will later be discussed, Spinoza's work within the context and development of the German Idealism movement was pivotal.

Reinhold: The First Principle, Consciousness and Jena

Kant had never intended for his *Critique of Pure Reason* to establish a first or underlying principle of philosophy on which everything was founded. He had merely wanted to prove that metaphysics was a legitimate science by showing that humans had a priori representations of objects prior to experiencing them. He tacitly agreed that reason and understanding might spring from a common root yet did not overtly explore what that root might be.²² Yet as he stepped deeper into the waters of morals and aesthetics, he realized the need for a categorical imperative on which to hang the possibility of synthetic a priori truths overall. Such an imperative would be the glue binding everything together. He wrote:

Nothing can be more desirable to a philosopher than to be able to derive a priori from one principle the multiplicity of concepts or basic principles that previously had exhibited themselves to him piece-meal, in the use he had made of the *in concreto*, and in this way to be able to unite them in one cognition.²³

²⁰ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 77.

²¹ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 78.

²² Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 160.

²³ Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können*, ed. Rudolf Walter (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1989), 4:322, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 155 (footnote).

Karl Leonhard Reinhold (1757-1823), one of the first advocates of Kant's work, strongly agreed with Kant that philosophy (metaphysics) needed to be established as a legitimate science. He also felt the *Critique* established a proper middle ground between dogmatism and philosophical skepticism.²⁴ Reinhold, through the gaze of Kant's *Critique*, claimed that philosophy was not merely a science, but indeed "the first science"²⁵ since it now posited an epistemological system that determined how it is that we know what is real. At the same time, he also held that philosophy could not be viewed in this strict scientific sense unless all its elements and theorems be derived from a common principle, which would cement its systematic theoretical architecture. He felt that Kant had not delivered this.²⁶

Reinhold's attempt to rectify the situation unfolded through his *Elementarphilosophie* (*Philosophy of the Elements*) where he analyzed consciousness itself and from which he formulated philosophy's first principle as "the principle of consciousness":

In consciousness, the representation is distinguished from, and related to, the subject and object, by the subject.²⁷

His first principle was enthusiastically received by Fichte²⁸ but ultimately undermined by the anonymous criticism of Gottlob Ernst Schulze (1761-1833). Schulze skeptically demolished it by noting that it included various presuppositions that undermined its first principle nature (i.e., the law of non-contradictions), and that one could not know the cause of something through

²⁴ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 96.

²⁵ Karl Reinhold, *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 129-145, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 104.

²⁶ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 154-155.

²⁷ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 97.

²⁸ Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Gesamtausgabe der Bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaft*, III, 2:282, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 155. Note: "Like Kant, you have introduced something to humanity that will remain with it eternally. He taught us that the investigation must be conducted on the basis of a single principle. The truth you have spoken is eternal."

its effect. He was thus countering Reinhold's stand that "the concept of the faculty of representation [cause] may be inferred only from its effect [representations]"²⁹. In addition, Schultze found the principle only to be known empirically; thus, it was a posteriori, not a priori nor ontologically primary.³⁰ Reinhold himself ultimately abandoned his own philosophical first principle and turned instead to Fichte's consequent work.³¹

Reinhold, in addition to exciting this need for a philosophical first principle, also guided the formation of Jena as a philosophical think-tank community of networking and exchange. Reinhold's early published letters about Kant's work merited him a teaching position at the University of Jena. Under his care and tutelage, the university ultimately became the Kantian and philosophic center in Germany, if not across the entirety of Europe. Many gifted philosophers and scholars were part of its community, including Fichte, Goethe, Novalis, Hegel, Schelling, etc. All ended only after Napoleon's invasion in 1806 when many fled and the university closed.

Fichte: Deeper Dive into Human Subjectivism (Anthropocentrism) with an Oppositional Twist

Reinhold's *Philosophy of Elements* and its criticisms spurred Johann Gottlieb Fichte's (1762-1814) own judicious analysis which led to his development of *Wissenschaftslehre*. He found Reinhold's principle of consciousness not wrong, but just not the first principle:

The subject and object do indeed have to be thought of as preceding representation, but not in consciousness *qua* an empirical mental state, which is all that Reinhold is speaking of. The absolute subject, the I, is not given by empirical intuition; it is, instead, posited by intellectual intuition. And the absolute object, the non-I, is that

²⁹ George di Giovanni and H.S. Harris, eds., *Between Kant and Hegel: Texts in the Development of Post-Kantian Idealism*, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2000), 105-33, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 147.

³⁰ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 158.

³¹ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 95.

which is posited in opposition to the I. Neither of these occur in empirical consciousness except when a representation is related to them.³²

In Fichte's account the "I am" of the subject is only brought about by its own activity. It does not originate from something outside the self, or from some other person as its cause. As Förster explains, "In the cognition of all other things, I am receptive; in the case of the "I", I am productive, the creator of the I."³³ This has led many to view Fichte's philosophy as solipsistic in nature, yet the "I" here is not synonymous with the "ego." Nonetheless, it is an isolated "I" that comes out of its own creation and activity. As such, it is posited in its originary nature as separate and external to all that is not-I, which in the Fichtean sense does not include any elements of nature.

On judgment, Fichte's philosophy was a deepening of the anthropocentric turn. This was presumably not his intent (nor was its Kant's or Reinhold's), but arose out of the need to establish philosophy as a science (not something reliant on religious revelation) by identify its underlying first principle. Its anthropocentric focus was presumably not unexpected since it followed on Kant's first *Critique*. As already discussed, the *Critique* centered on the subjective view, was originated as scientism was steadily gaining ground, and fell into the social and intellectual milieu of the Cartesian subject-object divide that had already become embedded in the human psyche as part of its unnoticed background.

The *Tathandlung* (deed-action), first principle of Fichte's philosophy, wherein activity and that which is produced by the activity are one and the same, was breakthrough.³⁴ It was a much richer premise than Reinhold's "faculty of representations" or "consciousness." Fichte

³² Fichte, *Gesamtausgabe*, I, 2:48, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 162.

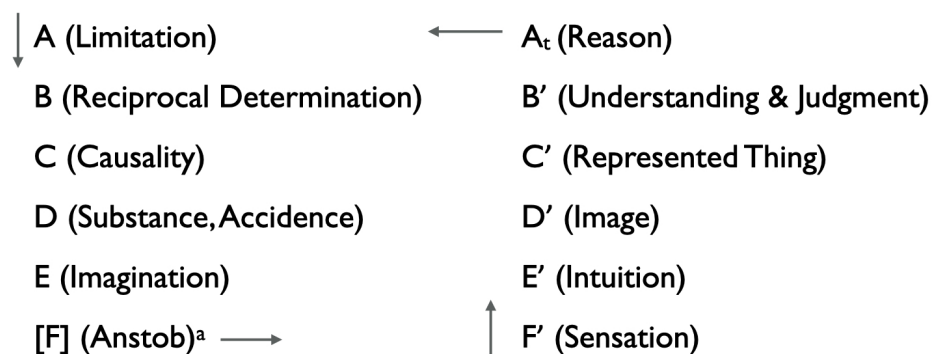
³³ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 162.

³⁴ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 183.

deftly stepped around the problem of the law of non-contraction through the distinction of the “I” versus “not-I” opposition falling out of the “I am/deed-action” first principle, instead of this opposition being deemed as its presupposition.³⁵

Another elegant, though complicated, facet of Fichte’s system is the way in which the practical and theoretical aspects of his epistemology are integrated. This was a significant milestone compared to Kant’s *Critique* which proposed, but did not necessarily conclusively resolve, the linkage between the theoretical (*Critique of Pure Reason*) and the practical (*Critique of Practical Reason*).

As detailed in Figure 4.³⁶, the theoretical syntheses (A-E) are given practical application in F’-B ’and come full circle back to the baseline theoretical principle of A_t. Theoretically, Fichte’s epistemology consists of the continuous identification of opposites which through synthesis are brought to unity through a higher ground of relation. And such a synthesis and unity must exist because if not, the apparent unity of human consciousness wouldn’t exist. And



^a I include the Anstob here as item [F] merely in order to provide a more useful overview; it should be noted, however, that it does not represent a proper synthesis.

Figure 4.

³⁵ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 197, Figure 8.1.

³⁶ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 203, Figure 8.2.

then in order “to determine itself” (i.e., reflect on itself), the “I” must become the object of its own reflection. Through this turn the theoretical aspects of the system are put into practice in the “sensible” world wherein the “I,” to know itself, must differentiate and distinguish itself from other (“not-I”).

Schelling: Taking a Stand for the Super-sensibility of Nature and Intuitive Intelligence

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775-1854), who received his doctorate at the incredibly young age of 20³⁷, enacted through his extensive work a significant turn in the overarching philosophical spiral of German Idealism. He was heavily influenced by Kant, Spinoza, and Fichte — all of whom had great impact on his philosophy. He was first and foremost a Spinozist and wrote in *From Presentation of My System of Philosophy*:

I have taken Spinoza as a model here, since I thought there was good reason to choose as a paradigm the philosopher whom I believed came nearest my system in terms of content or material and in form...³⁸

In addition, Kant’s early *Critiques* and significantly, the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* published in 1790, opened a doorway for major tenets of Schelling’s philosophy of nature. The first was the distinction that Kant made between understanding and reason whereby understanding is the conceptual limitation of reason’s excessiveness which has the potential to extend into the super-sensual:

³⁷ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 249.

³⁸ Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, “Presentation of My System of Philosophy (1801),” in *The Philosophical Rupture between Fichte and Schelling, Selected Texts and Correspondence* (1800-1802), trans., ed. and with an Introduction by Michael Vater and David Wood (Albany: State University of New York, 2012, 141-155, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 257.

“One soon learns that where the understanding cannot follow, reason becomes excessive, displaying itself in well-grounded ideas as regulative principles but not in objectively valid concepts...”³⁹

The second was his presentation of the possibility of mechanical (i.e., sensible world) and teleological (i.e., super-sensible world) principles in nature not being contradictory. Whereas consideration of them in the discursive mode of thought, where they could only be unresolved, found them to be antinomies.⁴⁰ Kant wrote:

But since it is still at least possible to consider the material world as a mere appearance, and to conceive of something as a thing in itself (which is an appearance) as substratum, and to correlate with this a correspondent intellectual intuition (even if it is not ours), there would then be a super-sensible real ground for nature, although it is unknowable to us, to which we ourselves belong, and in which that which is necessary in it as object of the senses can be considered in accordance with mechanical laws, while the agreement and unity of the particular laws and corresponding forms, which in regard to *the mechanical laws* we must judge as contingent, *can at the same time be considered* in it, as object of reason (indeed the whole nature as a system) *in accordance with teleological laws, and the material world would thus be judged in accordance with two kinds of principles, without the mechanical mode of expiation being excluded by the teleological mode, as if they contradicted each other.*⁴¹ (Italics added)

Thus, the specific nature and freedom dichotomy discussed in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, i.e., the relation between the thing-as-it-appears and the thing-in-itself, is presented in the third *Critique* as having the potentiality of resolution in the substratum of nature.⁴²

³⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 271-79, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 65.

⁴⁰ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 223.

⁴¹ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 70.

⁴² Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 80. Quote: “The understanding legislates a priori for nature, as object of the senses, for a theoretical cognition of it in a possible experience. Reason legislates a priori for freedom and its own causality, as the supersensible in the subject, for an unconditioned practical cognition. The domain of the concept of nature under the one legislation and that of the concept of freedom under the other are entirely barred from any mutual influence that they could have on each other by themselves (each in accordance with its fundamental laws) by the great chasm that separates the supersensible from the appearances” (5:195).

This possibility was revelatory for Schelling. The underlying root that he subsequently identified as the connecting ground of freedom and nature was what he termed the Absolute I.⁴³ He carefully chose this term, Absolute I, to align its Spinoza-based essence (i.e., one substance) with Kant's theoretical reason. The Absolute I, which he posited as being neither an individual nor conscious I, captured a purposive dynamicism in appearances since "the ultimate ground of appearances cannot be determinable as an unconditioned object. In its blind mechanism it must also be purposive, i.e., *rational*, and hence "I"-like in nature."⁴⁴

In *Naturphilosophie* (1797) which was published two years later, Schelling opens the preface by contextualizing his *Philosophy of Nature* vis a vis theoretical or transcendental philosophy as being in partnership with it, and in essence, completing it through application.⁴⁵ He closes the preface, however, with a statement that disavows the very indivisibility of the two, now discussed as Mind and Nature, which in turn brings Nature into the picture as the a priori ground — an inversion of Kant's subjectivism:

For what we want is not that Nature should coincide with the laws of our mind *by chance* (as if through some *third* intermediary), but that *she herself*, necessarily and originally, would not only *express*, but *even realize*, the laws of our mind, and that she is, and is called, Nature only in so far as she does so. Nature should be Mind made visible, Mind the invisible Nature. Here then, in the absolute identity of Mind *in us* and Nature *outside us*, the problem of the possibility of a Nature external to us must be resolved.⁴⁶

⁴³ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 227. Note: Presented in Schelling's 1795 work, *Of the I as Principle of Philosophy or on the Unconditional in Human Knowledge*.

⁴⁴ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 227.

⁴⁵ Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science (1797, Second Edition 1803)*, trans. Errol E. Harris and Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 168.

⁴⁶ Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy*, 209.

After receiving a professorship in 1798 at Jena under the auspices of Fichte who had replaced Reingold as the chair in critical philosophy, Schelling developed his “identity philosophy” which sought to explain the relationship between the self-conscious I and the objective world. Fichte had broken new ground with his *Wissenschaftslehre* because it consisted “precisely in the exploration of what for Kant was unexplorable, namely the common root linking the sensible and super sensible worlds, and in the real and comprehensible derivation of the two worlds from a single principle [i.e., the self-positing I - *Tathandlung*].”⁴⁷

Schelling sought to extend this idea or first principle into his philosophy of nature, and across both *Naturphilosophie* and transcendental idealism as well. He felt that Fichte’s self-conscious “I” was not the foundational starting point but the result of a larger unfolding. He detailed his thinking in *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* (1801). He began by stating that “the standpoint of philosophy is the standpoint of reason” and that reason should be held as Absolute Reason, indifferent to subject or object. He followed by finding the ultimate law for the being of reason to be the law of identity “which with respect to all being [universality] is expressed by $A=A$ ”. He used Fichte’s assertion ($A=A$) found in *Wissenschaftslehre* as proof (i.e., “the second part of the proposition follows of itself from the first and is contained within it”), and states that for Fichte, $A=A$ is purely an exemplar of a unique “being” being posited. In other words, he used the particular as proof for the universal.⁴⁸

From here Schelling arrived at the notion of absolute identity, which was not only one, but the multiplicity of things both material and immaterial.⁴⁹ Absolute identity was presented as the first principle across mind and nature:

⁴⁷ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 226.

⁴⁸ Schelling, “Presentation of My System,” 141-55, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 258-259.

⁴⁹ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 251.

This identity, however, is not produced, but original identity, and it is only produced [in the totality] because it is. Therefore it already is in everything that is. The power that bursts forth in the stuff of nature is the same in essence as that which displays itself in the world of mind, except that it has to contend there with a surplus of the real, here with one of the idea, but even this opposition, which is not an opposition in essence, but in mere potency, appears as opposition only to one who find himself outside indifference, who fails to view absolute identity itself as primary and original.⁵⁰

A year later Schelling continues with his reflections about natural philosophy in *Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy* (1802). It is here that he brings together two earlier ideas: “intellectual intuition” first mentioned in Kant’s third *Critique*, and an earlier expression of it, “pure intuition”⁵¹ found in his own preface to *Naturphilosophie*. He proposed that through pure intuition, nature and freedom [spirit] are indistinguishable, occur simultaneously, and are mutually reciprocated.⁵² However, he now takes a stronger stand and presents intellectual/pure intuition as the focal starting point of philosophy that should no longer tolerate equivocation or doubt.

For Schelling this intellectual intuition is a cognition that abolishes bifurcation of nature in all its forms...thought and being, subjective and objective, the ideal and the real, form and essence, *naturata* and *naturans*, the absolute itself and the knowledge of the absolute. He wrote:

The condition of the scientific spirit in general and in all the divisions of knowledge is not just a transitory intellectual intuition, but one that endures as the unchangeable organ of knowledge. For it is simply the capacity to see the universal in the particular, the infinite in the finite, the two united in a living unity... To see the plant in the plant, the organism in the organism, in a word to see the concept or indifference

⁵⁰ Schelling, “Presentation of My System,” 141-55, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 260.

⁵¹ Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy*, 202, quote “...whereas the pure intuition, or rather, the creative imagination, long since discovered the symbolic language, which one has only to construe in order to discover that Nature speaks to us the more intelligibly the less we think of her in a merely reflective way.”

⁵² Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy*, 203, quote “So here we are again, we meet that absolute unification of Nature and Freedom in one and the same being. The living organism is to be a product of *Nature*: but in this natural product an ordering and coordinating *mind* is to rule. These two principles shall in no way be separated in it, but most intimately united.”

within difference is possible only through intellectual intuition...any intuition in which the opposite of finite and infinite is not absolutely destroyed is not intellectual intuition.⁵³

Goethe: Exploring and Practicing Intuitive Understanding—The Third Kind of Knowledge

When many in the philosophical world were reacting and responding to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) was striving to experience and notice that which many chose to disregard: Spinoza's philosophy and doctrine. He embraced a particular facet of Spinoza's doctrine, that Jacobi had chosen to ignore, a third kind of knowledge, *scientia intuitiva* or "intuitive knowledge."

This third kind of knowledge was of a higher order than purely rational knowledge or reason, i.e., that of the dialectic, or of Kant's transcendental analytic.⁵⁴ It allowed for the presence of God (as super sensuous and not in a purely religious sense) through the seeing of the essence of things and their proximate cause, such as the vitality found in the growth and metamorphosis of plants. He wrote in "A Study Based on Spinoza":

The things we call the parts in every living being are so inseparable from the whole that they may be understood only in and with the whole.⁵⁵

Goethe also took on Spinoza's problem of subjectivism where human observers "...come increasingly to represent things exclusively in relation to themselves and to regard the things of nature as existing for their own benefit" and thus are unable to see the real nature of things.⁵⁶

⁵³ Schelling, "Presentation of My System," 206-12, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 261-262.

⁵⁴ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 92-93.

⁵⁵ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Scientific Studies* (1749-1832), ed. and trans. Douglas Miller (New York: Suhrkamp Publishers, 1988), 8.

⁵⁶ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 255.

In *The Experiment As Mediator Between Object and Subject*, Goethe warns how the botanist must “bracket” his own subjectivism in order to experience and see plants as they truly are:

Thus the true botanist must remain unmoved by beauty or utility in a plant; he must explore its formation, its relation to other plants.... he must find the measure for what he learns, the data for judgment, not in himself but in the sphere of what he observes.⁵⁷

Reading Kant’s third *Critique* after it was published in 1790, Goethe felt he had received support from the leading philosopher for the work he already had well underway. Kant’s *Critique* coincided with the publishing of his own pivotal work, *Essay on the Metamorphosis of Plants*. In §§77 of the *Critique*, Kant speaks of living beings with an inner purposiveness alone as the “key concept...from which one must not stray”⁵⁸ and introduces the idea of intuitive understanding⁵⁹ wherein the whole is present in the whole and not merely an amalgamation of its parts.

Goethe had already been exploring the idea of intuitive understanding in his work observing the metamorphosis of plants. In his effort to meld idea/concept with experience, he detailed two facets of observation — parts and transitions — to arrive at the intuitive understanding or essence of the whole. He expresses this in his observation of plants where he arrived at the idea of “leaf,” or of the archetypal plant, and the one single force which orchestrates its metamorphosis. He wrote:

⁵⁷ Goethe, *Scientific Studies*, 11.

⁵⁸ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Die Schriften zur Naturwissenschaft* (Leopoldina Edition), I, Section 6, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 167.

⁵⁹ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 253.

“In the progressive modification of the parts of the plant, one single force is at work which can only improperly be called expansion and contraction...The force contracts, expands, develops, transforms, connects separates...”⁶⁰.

Yet there are also environmental conditions which confront plants in nature. Thus, from his observations he derived the law of inner nature, by which plants are formed, and the law of external circumstances, by which they modify themselves in order to thrive.⁶¹

Goethe, in his continuing work with color, mediated between Spinoza and Kant. He did not dichotomize human vs. nature, subject vs. object, but rather felt into and found the wholeness inherent in polarities and the discovery of essence through the realization of this intuited third knowledge or intuitive understanding. His color theory and discovery of the law of complementary colors is a visible manifestation of how nature craves wholeness. He wrote that “A single colour excites the eye, by a specific sensation, to strive toward universality.”⁶² In other words, if the eye is only exposed to the color yellow for a period of time and then turns to look at a white surface, yellow’s complementary color, violet, is evoked, etc.

Goethe was not only scientist, writer, and artist but he was a major part and influencer of the philosophical milieu at Jena. He was a great admirer and supporter of both Schelling and Hegel. Goethe was even heralded as a father-figure by Hegel and may have played a similar role with some of the other young visionaries and scholars in Jena at the time. He made professional recommendations and even secured a stipend for Hegel when he was close to financial insolvency.⁶³ With August Batsch he established the Ducal Botanical Garden at Jena which he successfully pushed to become part of the university’s philosophy department. This move ensured

⁶⁰ Goethe, *Die Schriften*, 1, 10:58, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 273 F14.

⁶¹ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 274.

⁶² Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Theory of Colours*, trans. Charles Lock Eastlake, R.A., F. R.S. (London: John Murray, 1840), 805, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 267.

⁶³ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 358.

that his own method with plants became recognized as a scientific method.⁶⁴ The botanical garden and Goethe's work with plants would ultimately have a significant influence on Hegel's philosophical work, especially the later turn that *The Phenomenology of Spirit* was to take.

Hegel: The End to Find the Beginning

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) first met and became close friends with Schelling and Friedrich Hölderlin when all three were students and roommates at Tübinger Stift, a Protestant theological seminary.⁶⁵ Schelling was a fast rising star, and had secured a teaching position at Jena in 1798, while Hegel tutored the children of wealthy families. Nonetheless, Hegel soon joined Schelling at Jena when he was awarded an unpaid professorship in 1801.

Before arriving at Jena, Hegel was already positing thoughts about antimonies (i.e., “the original unity necessarily undergoes separation in order to emerge into appearance”), their unification (i.e., “even to be able to show that they are opposites, a unity is presupposed”), the nature of belief, (i.e., “Belief is the way in which what has been unified, thereby unifying an antimony, is present in our representation”), and the absolute (i.e., *infinite life*).⁶⁶

In 1801 when Hegel came to Jena, Schelling had already written *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* with its ideas about Absolute Identity and “intellectual intuition” in which there was unity of thought and being, subject and object. Prior to his arrival, Hegel had concluded that philosophy ended in religion since the “elevation of the finite to the infinite is ‘necessary’ for reflection ‘since the former is conditioned by the latter’”.⁶⁷ But with this new

⁶⁴ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 288.

⁶⁵ Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism*, 272.

⁶⁶ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 279-280.

⁶⁷ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, eds. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), 1:426, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 281.

idea of intellectual intuition where the observing subject was required to completely bracket out its own subjectivity and become nature itself⁶⁸, Hegel realized that philosophy did not end in religion. Rather, the shared identity of subject and object in intellectual intuition made this primary principle of philosophy accessible to cognition.⁶⁹

Nonetheless, he felt that Schelling's objective intellectual intuition and Fichte's subjective intellectual intuition (which had provided the proof for Schelling's proposition) both still contained vestiges of inherent subjectivism. Thus, Hegel felt that for both, there still needed to be higher abstraction from the subject. This led him to establish his notion of "transcendental intuition." He wrote:

To grasp transcendental intuition in its purity, one must also abstract from this subjective [element]; as the basis of philosophy, it is neither subjective nor objective, neither self-consciousness, opposed to matter, nor matter, opposed to self-consciousness, but absolute identity, neither subjective nor objective identity, pure transcendental intuition. ...The opposition belonging to speculative reflection is no longer that of object and subject, but a subjective transcendental intuition and an objective transcendental intuition, the former the I, the latter nature, both the highest manifestations of absolute, self-intuiting reason.⁷⁰

After Schelling left Jena in 1803, Hegel began to question Schelling's Identity Philosophy and wrote: "Thus the so-called construction of the idea from two opposed activities, one ideal and other real, as the unity of the two, has produced absolutely nothing but the boundary."⁷¹ As Figure 5-A. depicts, Hegel now felt that the real and ideal activities were

⁶⁸ In other words, such that I=nature and nature=I and the opposition between I and nature disappears.

⁶⁹ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 282.

⁷⁰ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1968), 4:77, and *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, eds. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), 2:115, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 283.

⁷¹ Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, 7:3, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 292.

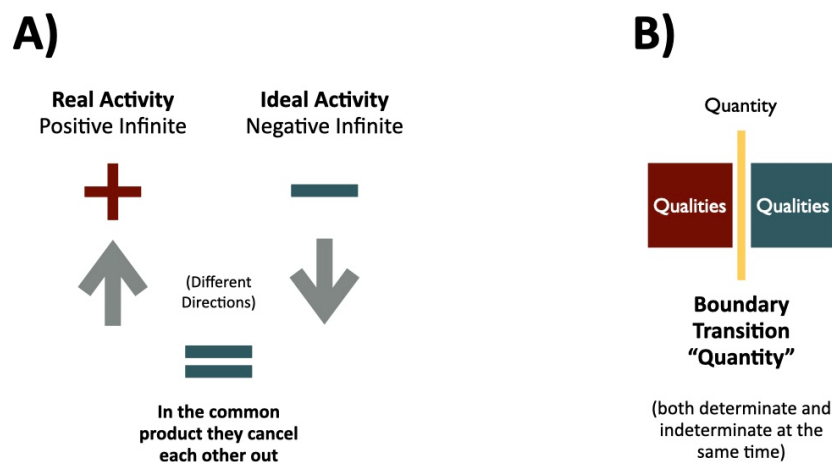


Figure 5.

oppositional in direction. He found this to be a key differentiator since one was deemed positive and the other negative. Thus, as a common product they would obliterate each another. In addition, one would not be able to return to a new starting point because nothing would exist.⁷² As a solution, in which Hegel no longer mentions intellectual intuition nor his own transcendental intuition, he focused instead on the boundary between the two “qualities” which he posits as the essence of a quantity (a something) that is both determinate and indeterminate at the same time (Figure 5-B.). Förster notes that this is an example, in the Hegelian sense, of something (a quality) passing over into its opposite:

Quality, as the simple unity of being and determinateness, passes over into the concept of quantity as a being in which the determinateness is not one with being, but instead is posited as external and indifferent to it.⁷³

⁷² Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 293-294.

⁷³ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 295 fn39.

As Hegel's work continued, he informed Goethe in the summer of 1804 as he prepared for fall lectures, that he was developing "a pure scientific treatment of philosophy"⁷⁴ which he hoped would meet Goethe's scientific criteria. Subsequently that winter he began lecturing about a central premise—the "single concept 'development'." Borrowing from Goethe's metamorphosis of plants, he singled out how spirit, i.e., consciousness itself, unlike the development of plants, is not repetitious in nature, but evolves and develops over time. He applied this idea in three ways: 1) that philosophies, when historically viewed, are seen to be developmental in nature — all part of a dynamic evolving process; 2) that philosophy itself is a dialectic process, such that unfolding opposites yield something new and evolutionary in nature; and 3) that therefore, it is not possible to begin with the absolute as the underlying principle, but rather philosophy itself must reveal the absolute at its end.⁷⁵ As he later wrote, "the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the onset of dusk."⁷⁶

With the metamorphosis of plants, Goethe was not specific about the consciousness of the observer in observing the development of plants, except that the observer's intuition and thought must be joined. Hegel's project, by contrast, was complicated since it was the consciousness of the philosopher that would provide the developmental data. Ironically, Fichte whom Hegel had criticized in the past, provided him with direction. In the *Foundation of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre*, Fichte recognized that the philosopher is he, himself both observer and subject of observation, which is an inherent part of the experimental process. Further, he

⁷⁴ Karl Hegel, ed., *Briefe von und an Hegel* (Leipzig: Dunier & Humblot, 1887), 1:85, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 291.

⁷⁵ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 298-300.

⁷⁶ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of the Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. Hugh Barr Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 9-59, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 291.

pointed out how the process elicits cognitions out of itself and by itself. He wrote that the *Wissenschaftslehre* is based...

not on an inert concept that is merely passively related to its investigation and has to wait for thought to make something out of it; rather, it is something living and active that produces cognitions out of itself and by itself, so that the philosopher merely watches it.⁷⁷

It is from this point that Hegel realized that his “scientific treatment of philosophy” would need to provide an introduction to logic itself through the evolution of consciousness. In this experiment, consciousness over its course will “reach a point at which **it casts of the** appearance of being caught up in something alien to it that exists only for it and as something other, a point where appearance and essence coincide...and finally, when it grasps this its own essence, it will denote the nature of absolute knowledge itself.”⁷⁸

As depicted by Figure 6-A., the dialectic process is one wherein the knowing of any object consists of an automatic putative knowledge of it compared with the object in-itself. If the two representations are not equal, then a new revised knowledge arises.⁷⁹ This is Hegel’s dialectic process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

⁷⁷ Fichte, *Gesamtausgabe*, I, 4:209-10, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 303.

⁷⁸ Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, #89, 9:62, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 307.

⁷⁹ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 306-307.

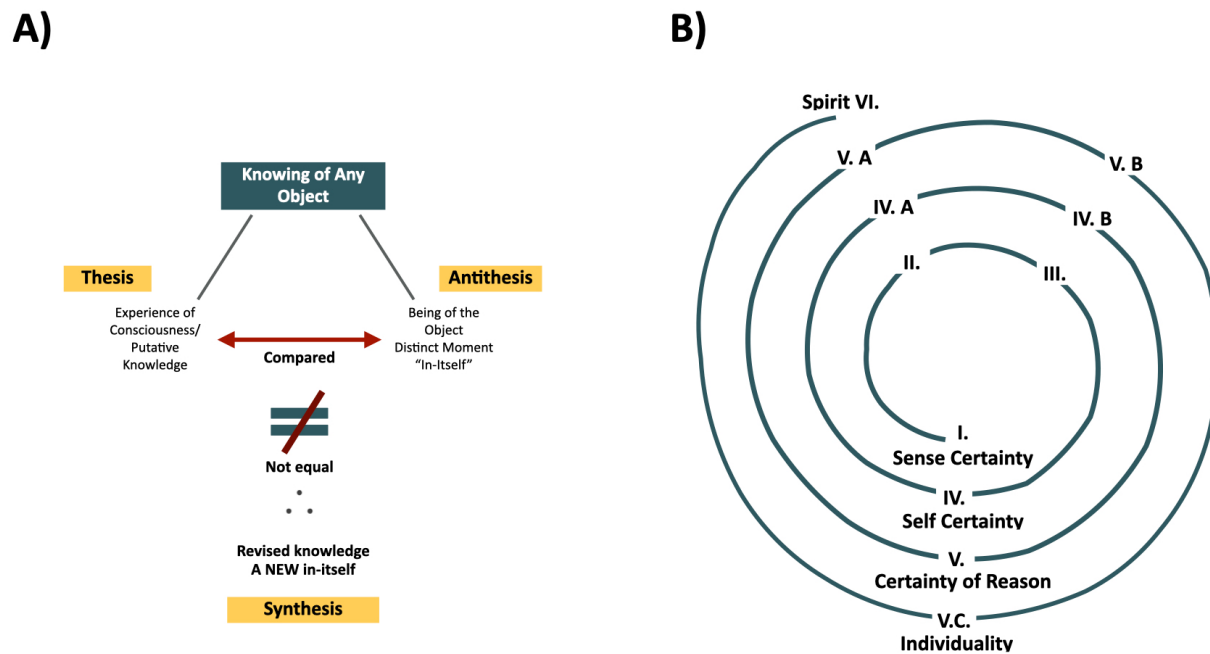


Figure 6.

Thus, in a *Science of the Experience of Consciousness*, Hegel begins with the simplest form of consciousness, which is Sense Certainty, and then proceeds to reveal each dialectic unfolding (Figure 6-B.). Upon reaching V.C. Individuality (or initial version C. Science), Hegel reached absolute knowledge, or the self-consciousness of the spirit. Everything had come full circle. However, he realized his project was incomplete. He had arrived at the beginning of logic and self-consciousness of spirit, and at the end of philosophy; yet he had not explicated cognition of the actual knowledge. Thus, in a final turn he changed direction and renamed the book, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. He added a preface to make clear his intention of providing an entire system: “A second volume will contain the system of logic as speculative philosophy as well as the two remaining branches of philosophy, the science of nature and of spirit.”⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, 9:477, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 367.

Through *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel had demonstrated the actuality of the absolute idea. Further, with absolute knowledge and the absolute idea, he had found first principle and superseded the subject-object divide. He had taken speculative philosophy to its apex, and subsequently concluded "...this history of philosophy comes to an end"⁸¹.

But is the end the end? Does philosophy truly come "too late" to the possibility "of issuing instructions on how the world ought to be."⁸² Based on this journey of subjectivism, there do seem to be openings, especially if one is not seeking a definite end or conclusive answer, but rather ideas about process, and ways of approaching life and the world. It is often the journey and not the destination wherein insight resides. The state of the world right now needs ideas, needs metaphysics, needs philosophy...not as hindsight critique, but as a deepening of understanding, and irradiation of imagination and creativity, grounded in the sagacity of its own past.

Förster identified two processes that fall out of Hegel's philosophy of absolute idealism: 1) Hegel's top-down path from the absolute idea to the system of actuality; and 2) the bottom-up path, the path from concrete phenomena to the ideas that correspond to them, i.e., *scientia intuitiva*.⁸³ This latter path, first discussed by Spinoza (e.g., "intuitive knowledge")⁸⁴ and explored by Goethe (e.g., *Essay on the Metamorphosis of Plants*), Coleridge (e.g., *Biographia Literaria*, "secondary imagination"), and Schelling (e.g., *naturata naturans*, "intuitive understanding" and Positive philosophy) continues to feel quite alive. In each instance, however, philosophy is no longer an end in and of itself as a closed circle of discursive thought. Rather, it

⁸¹ Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, 20: 461, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 367.

⁸² Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of the Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. Hugh Barr Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 9-59, quoted in Bykova, ed., *The German Idealism Reader*, 291.

⁸³ Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 369.

⁸⁴ Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics, Demonstrated in Geometric Order* 2, 40s2, quoted in Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years*, 92.

becomes a way of being—a process—whereby discursive thought is no longer dominant, and other types of practices and processes are entertained to participate with the actual world and the wisdom of super sensuous sources. It is the simultaneous holding of logic and intuition, imagining of subject in object and object in subject, and di-polar nature of God in the Whiteheadian sense that both inspires highest potential while limiting a chaotic infinitude of possibility. Thus, philosophy seems not at an end, but at the threshold of a new beginning.

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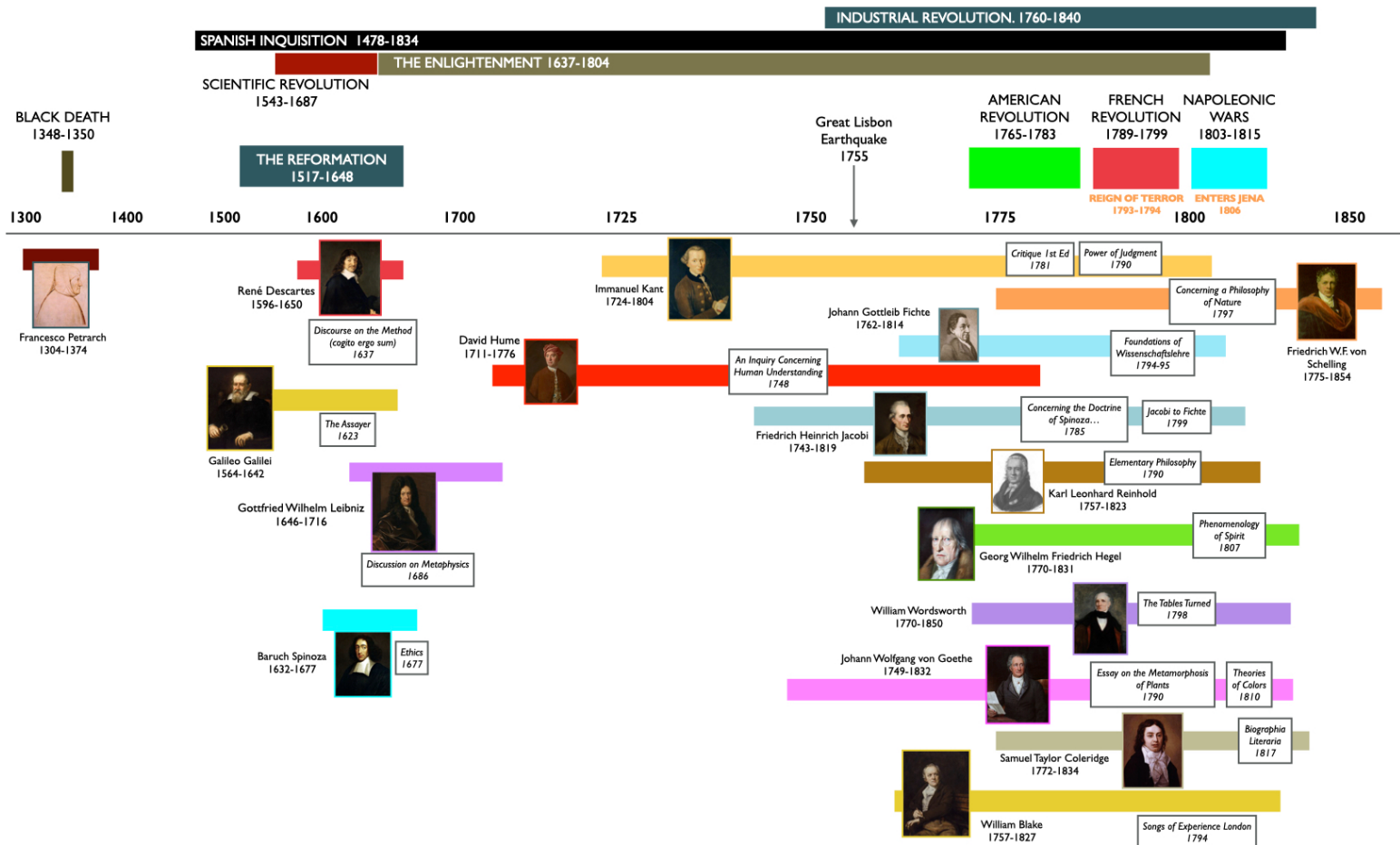
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Appendix - Figure 1.



Appendix - Figure 2.

Kant's Transcendental/Critical Philosophy (Critique of Pure Speculative Reason)

Problems of Metaphysics:

#1

Completion Proof

Proof that the a priori representations are complete

#2

Metaphysical Deduction

What are the a priori representations? (synthetic a priori truths)

#3

Transcendental Deduction

How do the representations refer to objects?
What is their legitimate use?

Source: Förster, 6-7; 17-22

Purpose:

- To save metaphysics as a *bona-fide* science
- To limit the unfounded super sensible speculations of the Dogmatists (Wolff, Baumgarten)
- To overcome the undermining of the Empiricists (including the Sceptics) of the validity of Metaphysics itself since they held there was no a priori knowledge (Locke, Hume)
- To counter pure Rationalists (Leibniz) who held that objects act upon the mind from an out there kind of heavenly place

Sources: Förster, 21-26, German Reader, 32.

*Only for humans

Transcendental Aesthetic**Sensibility (Space & time)*

Receptive | Affections

Metaphysical Deduction

- Space needed to distinguish anything from myself (intuitions)
- If outside myself must be spatial
- Space has space in it
- Infinite - has no limit
- Same for time (basically)

2 Pure (a priori) Representations

Space (external) and time (internal)

Transcendental Deduction

- The relation to objects doesn't really apply
- (Nothing can appear to us that is not in space & time)

Source: Förster, 17-22

Transcendental Analytic**Understanding (12 Categories)*

Active | Discursive

Metaphysical Deduction

Criteria:

- Pure not empirical
- Belong to thought & understanding & NOT sensibility & intuition
- Fundamental
- Complete

12 Judgments = 12 Pure Concepts/Categories

Concepts of objects *in general* (a priori condition of empiricism)
Quantity (universal, particular, singular); Quality (affirmative, negative, infinite); Relation (categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive); Modality (problematic, assertor, apodictic)

Transcendental Deduction

- Subjective deduction = manifestation of subject "I" as the unity of thought
- Objective deduction = categories distinct from the "I" but apply to all subjects... thus, universals & objective reality
- Objective & subjective deduction are sides of same coin (*the identity of self-consciousness of which we have a priori knowledge, would be wholly impossible without consciousness of objects* - Förster, p31)

Source: Förster, 22-31

Transcendental Dialectic*Reason (3 Ideas)***Metaphysical Deduction**

- Reason is faculty of drawing inferences: 1) major premise 2) minor premise 3) conclusion
- Groups understanding givens into larger wholes, i.e., assumes nature is unified
- Thus, 3 a priori concepts/ideas, i.e., 3 categories of unification

3 Pure (a priori) Ideas

- 1) Absolute unity of thinking subject | rational psychology | soul
- 2) Absolute unity of series of conditions of appearance | rational cosmology | world
- 3) Absolute unity of conditions of thought in general | rational theology | God

Transcendental Deduction

- No objective deduction per se (ideas not related to objects), only subjective
- Kant concludes there HAS to be transcendental deduction (homogeneity, variety, affinity) — regulative not constitutive (prepare the field for understanding)
- Reason ascends to higher levels of universality that is also highest form of regulative role... *foci imaginarii* (outside bounds of normal experience) — the soul, the world, God
- (**Error**) when appearance (conditioned, phenomena) is confused with thing-in-itself (unconditioned, noumena) — crucial antinomy (Förster, p38)

Source: Förster, 31-40

Appendix - Figure 3.

