

medieval thought has exerted a strong influence. This omission appears to have resulted from the editorial decision to spread discussion of issues in philosophy of religion over various chapters (analogous language in Ashworth, the existence of God in Menn, eternity and foreknowledge and necessity in Marenbon, creation in Sylla and Dobbs-Weinstein). This was not, in my opinion, a good idea. So important an intersection between medieval and contemporary thought as philosophy of religion deserved its own chapter, where the reader could readily find an account of medieval treatments not only of the topics just mentioned but also of the nature of faith, the divine attributes, the problem of evil, and so forth.

Neil Lewis

Georgetown University

Philosophical Review, Vol. 115, No. 1, 2006

DOI 10.1215/00318108-2005-005

Dieter Henrich, *Between Kant and Hegel: Lectures on German Idealism*, edited by David Pacini. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. liv + 341 pp.

Recent decades have seen a surge of interest in the development of German philosophy from Kant to Hegel. A remarkable share of responsibility for this rests with Dieter Henrich, whose influence stems from his unequaled historical learning and unfailing philosophical sophistication. In 1973, Henrich gave a course of lectures on German idealism at Harvard. David Pacini and others transcribed the lectures, Pacini edited the transcripts, and they have now been published as *Between Kant and Hegel*.

Those looking for a broad introduction to Henrich's approach will find one that is both sophisticated and a pleasure to read. Specialists and advanced students of German idealism will already be familiar with many of Henrich's insights published elsewhere. And they will be aware of many developments that have occurred since 1973, from Henrich's own later work to important alternative accounts of this material. But Henrich's broad account remains both lively and of great continuing importance. Readers of all backgrounds will probably agree on one main regret: the lectures get so involved in detailed coverage of Fichte's many revisions to his system that there is insufficient space left for the later idealists.

The narrative begins with a compelling account of the overall structure of Kant's philosophical system. Henrich stresses Kant's interest in two press-

ing and linked problems: justifying the new physical sciences and accounting for how metaphysics (though rational in origin) had become mired in unproductive conflicts. To this end, Kant ventured onto the new philosophical territory of his transcendental idealism and the transcendental unity of apperception. Kant thought that the best justification for these new ideas was that they enabled a unified solution to the most pressing theoretical problems of the day. Similarly, Kant would argue that the idea of our undetermined freedom fit perfectly as a “keystone” unifying this theoretical philosophy with his practical account of the moral law; this itself was the best rational justification for our belief in such freedom, even if we could not directly prove that we are free.



On Henrich’s account, Kant’s followers were naturally and understandably attracted to new questions and possibilities: Could Kant’s new ideas be more directly justified, ideally by a unified set of basic principles? Could more be done to ground Kant’s distinction between concept and intuition? To explain the nature of the apperceptive subject? To directly justify Kant’s concept of freedom, so as to better support the revolutionary impulses of the day? True, Kant himself warned—and not without reason—that these questions would lead back to the forms of metaphysics he had already criticized. But Kant’s followers did not simply miss his point. They rather perceived that this risk was accompanied by the real possibility of new and important philosophical insights. In this they perceived rightly, on Henrich’s view, even if the immediate effect of attention to the new questions was to bring out new difficulties. Probably the best-known example is Jacobi’s argument that Kant, on his own terms, was not at all entitled to employ the concept of the thing-in-itself. Though resistant to summary, Henrich’s masterful and concise account of Jacobi, Reinhold, Schulze, and the complex movements and trends among Kant’s early critics and followers is a real highlight of the book.

The narrative then proceeds to Fichte. On Henrich’s extremely influential account, Fichte followed Kant’s emphasis on self-consciousness in the transcendental deduction, looking for an explanation of self-consciousness itself. And he discovered surprising difficulties and paradoxes. For we would ordinarily want to appeal to what Henrich calls the “reflection theory”: there is self-consciousness insofar as a self can turn inward and attend to, or focus on, itself. But Fichte realized that any such account presupposes what it means to explain. First of all, I can only focus in on something of which I am already aware; so attending to myself in this way would require some prior form of self-awareness. Second, how could the self know that what it focuses on is really *itself*? Only with some prior knowledge of what it itself is.

The core of Fichte’s continually developing attempts to articulate an alternative account was the famous claim that “the I *posits* itself.” This means, in Henrich’s view, that there can be no distinction between a prior self and a subsequent reflection; rather, “having the self *means* having it in such a way

that there is an awareness of itself”—an awareness that is *active* (242–43). Henrich argues that this idea finally gives Fichte some justification for the foundation of his project: his claim that the self is *absolute*. I think the crucial ideas here are these: No comprehensive philosophy can do without an account of our own mental life, including self-consciousness. But how can we account for self-consciousness in a way that promises to address the difficulties and paradoxes, yet without reducing self-consciousness to something else? Only, Fichte proposed, by starting with self-positing. He hoped to account in this way for the unity of all of mental life, including mental representation of outer objects as independent of the self. So Fichte tried to reconstruct in these terms Kant’s account of experience. And he further aimed to reconstruct both Kant’s theoretical and practical philosophy on the unified basis of the self-positing self, without appeal to any independent thing-in-itself.

Henrich sees Fichte’s criticism of the reflection theory, leading to his insight into the unity of mental life, as a breakthrough of importance comparable to Aristotle’s response to Plato’s ontology (245). But he sees a drawback in Fichte’s (continually frustrated) aim to build on this ground a “science” akin to “a deductive system” (30–31). And there is an obvious worry that Fichte’s attempt to deduce his way from the self-positing self to genuinely independent objects of experience could never “break the circle of the self’s being enclosed in itself” (223).

Such worries emerged early on and overshadowed Fichte’s later revisions to his system. Hölderlin’s response was to try to explain subject, object, and their relation all in terms of some higher unifying principle or ground—something akin to Spinoza’s substance. Later idealists would follow, trying to defend some of Kant’s insights by reconceiving fundamental substance as itself akin to a Kantian free will. Here I think Henrich runs out of time, in his final brief sections on Hölderlin and Hegel, leaving questions unanswered. Are there philosophical reasons for believing this form of monism might be true? Does it have philosophical advantages over a retreat to orthodox Kantianism? Or did monism just address a *hope* that the theoretical and practical problems of the day could be resolved in a single stroke? Or perhaps a more basic human aspiration, the “hope that all boundaries can be overcome” (86)? Finally, the mature Hegel often *criticized* the figures with which Henrich classifies him—those who advocated a “Spinozism of freedom” as a form of a “philosophy of immediacy”—suggesting that there are philosophically salient differences here that merit more consideration.

But it is by no means possible to do justice here to the many insights and nuances Henrich was able to fit into this single course of lectures. That this book necessarily ignores recent developments should not distract us from what is most important and compelling: the ambitious spirit with which Henrich defends the philosophical significance of the German idealists. He does so without trying to reinterpret them to suit the tastes of his audience—with-

out making concessions to then-dominant suspicions about “metaphysical phantasmagoria” (x), as Pacini puts it in the book’s foreword. On Henrich’s account, neither Kant nor the later idealists thought that we could become simply indifferent to the largest metaphysical questions of the most enduring human interest. In confronting these questions, Kant, Fichte, and Hegel each achieved important breakthroughs, opening new approaches and throwing new light on the underlying philosophical terrain. While each approach has its costs, Henrich argues that each has enduring philosophical benefits as well—and each remains open to us for further exploration. Future research should, on my view, strive to advance faithfully the ambitious spirit of Henrich’s account—even if this might sometimes end up leading beyond the letter of what Henrich himself had to say in 1973.

James Kreines
Yale University

Philosophical Review, Vol. 115, No. 1, 2006
DOI 10.1215/00318108-2005-006

Dieter Freundlieb, *Dieter Henrich and Contemporary Philosophy: The Return to Subjectivity*.
Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2003. ix + 195 pp.

Although Dieter Henrich is well known as one of the deans of Kant scholarship and a leading expert in German Idealism, his systematic philosophical work has not received much attention, at least not in the English-speaking world. This is the first book-length exposition and appraisal of Henrich’s systematic philosophy of subjectivity in the English language.

Chapter I situates Henrich’s work within the philosophical terrain. Freundlieb presents Henrich’s philosophy of subjectivity as steering between the Scylla of “analytic philosophy” and the Charybdis of “continental philosophy” by combining the best features of both while avoiding their pitfalls. The alleged problem of many strands of analytic philosophy is their commitment to naturalism and lack of existential, cultural, and political relevance. The major problem of continental philosophy (especially of the hermeneutic school and postmodernism), according to Freundlieb, is the excessive focus on language at the expense of nonlinguistic phenomena. Contrary to most analytic philosophers, Henrich argues that a thoroughgoing naturalism is impossible because subjectivity, properly understood, cannot be captured by a physicalist account of the world. And in opposition to the majority of continental philosophers,