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German Idealism and the Development of Psychology in the Nineteenth Century

DAVID E. LEARY

THE BIRTH OF MODERN SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY is generally placed in Germany around 1850. This birth is credited by the standard historiography to the dual parentage of the empirical school of philosophy and the experimental study of sensory physiology. There is also a tradition of giving a nod toward Kant and Herbart as predecessors, for varying reasons, of the rise of scientific psychology.[1] Almost completely overlooked in the literature is the influence of post-Kantian German idealism upon the development of the concepts, subject matter, and methods of psychology. This is somewhat surprising since idealism was the dominant philosophical movement in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century. The purpose of this article will be to present a general survey of the relationship between German idealism and the development of psychology in the nineteenth century. The article will be divided into three sections: (1) the idealistic conception of the science of psychology; (2) a survey of idealistic psychology; and (3) the contributions of idealistic psychology.

The Idealistic Conception of the Science of Psychology To understand the idealistic conception of psychology as a science, it is necessary to review the philosophy of science proposed by the leading German idealists, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Wilhelm von Schelling, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. "Science" meant something quite different for them than it did for Kant in *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft* (Metaphysical foundations of natural science, 1786).[2] From this change in the definition of science there naturally followed a change in what it meant for psychology to be a science and a corresponding change in the attitude toward, and approach to, psychology.

One of the most crucial changes in the definition of science resulted from the idealists' abolition of things-in-themselves. Since they no longer considered natural objects as separate from, and prior to, the ego, the central Kantian distinction of a posteriori and a priori lost its significance for them. Knowledge, the idealists now maintained, does not result from the a posteriori experience of things-in-themselves; rather "things" are themselves manifestations of will (Fichte), imagination (Schelling), or reason (Hegel).

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[1] See my "Philosophical Development of the Conception of Psychology in Germany, 1780–1850," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 14 (1978):113–21, where I argue that Kant and Herbart, as well as Fries and Beneke, deserve more than just a nod

[2] *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, trans James Ellington (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970).

There are not two spheres of knowledge, the rational and empirical. Rather all knowledge or "science" (*Wissenschaft*) is one; all knowledge can be reached by the same method; all knowledge can form a system. In fact, since reality is ultimately unitary, according to the idealists, knowledge *must* form a system if it is to be complete and whole. Only then can "science" be said to be certain.

It is not by chance that two of the most common words in the titles of the works of the German idealists were *Wissenschaft* and *System*. These words, which became practially synonymous, represented the goal of the idealist philosophers. As Hegel wrote, voicing a conviction common to them all, "the truth is only realized in the form of system."[3] This system is the fullness of science. Obviously, there has been a change here in the meaning and significance of "science" and its relation to philosophy. With Kant, science—or as he defined it more narrowly, natural science—was an autonomous enterprise which philosophy must investigate in order to clarify the presuppositions that make it possible. Philosophy thus provides critical, second-order reflections upon the nature of science. To the idealists, philosophy itself is science, not simply a reflection upon science. It is not merely critical; it actually produces true knowledge. With this change a major intellectual revolution (in the etymological sense of "turn") has taken place. Once again philosophy has been made the ultimate "science," and natural science, which had been struggling for liberation from philosophy since at least the seventeenth century, is once more made subordinate to it.

However, the idealists did not wish to eliminate natural science altogether. They granted it a place within their systems. Even though they thought that natural scientists mistakenly "reified" the objects of their investigations (into things-in-themselves) and misunderstood the significance of natural science, nonetheless, as Hegel put it, the empiricism of natural science did have the positive advantage that it was based on "the great principle that whatever is true must be in the actual world and present to sensation."[4] This for the idealists, who believed in the identity of nature and spirit, was a true and proper starting point for philosophy; but it was only that, a starting point. The idealists rejected natural science, empiricism, and common sense insofar as these remained at the level of "mere" sensation. They rejected the static and partial view of reality that, as they maintained, was the only possible result of a purely sensationalist and objectivist (or "dogmatic") philosophy.

The crucial distinction upon which the German idealists based their critical analyses of natural science was the Kantian distinction between understanding (*Verstand*) and reason (*Vernunft*). According to the idealists, the problem with natural scientists and with Kant, whose philosophy was a defense of natural science, was that they based science upon the understanding rather than reason. In other words, the idealists criticized the reliance of natural scientists upon the categories of understanding and their corresponding rejection of dialectical reason. The categories (such as causality and substantiality), the idealists maintained, are static; or put another way, they are nonhistorical. They therefore cannot reveal the fullness of the "objects" they describe since that

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[3] G. W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. J. B. Baillie, 2nd ed. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1949), p. 85.

[4] Quoted in *Hegel: The Essential Writings*, ed. Frederick G Weiss (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 125.

completeness, the idealists insisted, is something which is not yet accomplished. Reality is a process which has not yet reached its teleological goal. That goal, and the true essence of reality, can be known only through a progressive logic, that is, through dialectical reason. Only by subjecting empirical data—and, according to Hegel, the categories themselves—to critical (and dialectical) analysis can we proceed beyond them to a higher stage at which both subject and object are more nearly one. In this manner alone can the philosopher transcend the limitations, contradictions, and one-sidedness of natural science and common sense and approach closer and closer to the absolute and unitary truth about reality.

In this process of developing "science" into a system which expresses the absolute essence of reality, the idealists maintained, neither mathematics nor experimentation offer much help. Mathematics, they said, like natural science in general, presents only fixed, "dead," and formal half-truths which are based upon the false assumption of equality. Stated differently, mathematics fails to go beyond the surface of "things" because it is concerned with quantitative "determinations" rather than with qualitative essences.[5] Experimentation, on the other hand, exemplifies another characteristic limitation of natural science in general. In itself, according to Schelling, it provides "nothing but a collection of facts, of reports on what has been observed, of what has happened under either natural or artificially-produced conditions."[6] Only if experimentation is supplemented and thus transformed by "scientific" reasoning can it lead to anything beyond a mere collection of data. Otherwise, it is, as Hegel wrote, "the mere semblance of [a demonstration]."[7]

Thus, in summary, just as the idealists felt that their work completed Kant's, so too did they feel that their philosophies completed natural science. It is not surprising that *Naturphilosophie* (philosophy of nature) became an important part of their work, especially Schelling's and Hegel's. The avowed task of this philosophy of nature was to discover among the facts reported by natural scientists the teleological pattern in nature.[8] The popularity of various systems of this *Naturphilosophie*, coupled with the extravagance of some of its propositions and its preeminence over natural science in most of the German universities, led to a great deal of ill feeling between German scientists and philosophers in the 1820s and 1830s. Indeed much of the residual modern antagonism between science and philosophy can be, and has been, traced to this period of time.[9] This does not mean, however, that the idealists totally rejected natural science in the same way that many natural scientists rejected philosophy. As has been shown, the idealists accepted natural science as a point of departure. In developing their philosophies of nature, both Schelling and Hegel demonstrated a surprising knowledge and acceptance of contemporary science.[10] Their major criticism was not that it was wrong

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[5] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, pp. 100–102.

[6] Friedrich Wilhelm von Schelling, *Einleitung zu dem Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* (1799), in *Schellings Werke*, ed. Manfred Schroter, 13 vols. (Munich, 1929–59), 2:283.

[7] *Phenomenology*, p. 104

[8] In a similar way, Hegel used the contemporary "science" of history as the basis for the development of a philosophy of history which proposed the teleological pattern within human history.

[9] See Frederic Lilge, *The Abuse of Learning* (New York, 1948), chap. 3.

[10] See Schelling, *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* (1799), in *Schellings Werke*, 2:1–268; Hegel, *Die Naturphilosophie*, 3d ed. (1830), in Hegel's *Sammtliche Werke*, ed. Hermann Glockner, rev. 2d

but that it was insufficient. Natural science accepted "things" at their face value; it failed to utilize the critical capacities of reason to get beyond the obvious empirical level to more essential levels where individual "facts" achieve their true significance as integral parts of the entire system of reality.

One such individual "fact" or "thing" in the world is the individual finite ego that is the object of psychology. This too, the idealists insisted, is but a part of a larger whole, and it can be understood only when its place within the system of reality is determined. This conviction reflects the fact that German idealism was *not* a subjective idealism; it tended to subordinate the finite ego to a larger process of the Absolute Ego. This helps explain the dominant attitude of the idealists toward psychology: *being anti-individualistic, the idealists tended to be antipsychological.* Or perhaps better stated in terms of the prior discussion of the idealistic conception of natural science, the idealists viewed psychology as an intermediate and inadequate science of man. Just as the individual had to be transformed and completed by a process of immersion into the absolute totality of reality, so too did psychology, like physics, have to be transformed and completed by the workings of "scientific" reasoning. Psychology, which provides knowledge of the individual subjective mind, was considered only a step toward real knowledge of the realm beyond the individual in which subject and object become, and are known, as one.

Of the three major German idealist philosophers, Schelling maintained the closest ties to the individualism which had characterized the German humanism of the previous period. For instance, he devoted attention to personality and character.[11] However, even he spoke of the individual ego as a manifestation of the Absolute and insisted that "the complete system of science begins with the Absolute Ego."[12] With Fichte and Hegel the bias against individualistic psychologizing was even more pronounced. The ultimate end of Fichte's philosophy, for instance, was the socialization of the individual in a unified system. For all his discussion of freedom, he made it clear that he did not advocate individualistic freedom. As he wrote in his *Reden an die deutschen Nation* (Addresses to the German nation, 1808), individual self-seeking, which is "the root of all other corruption," must be countermanded by an education (indoctrination) that presents "a picture of the moral world-order so vivid that the pupil [will be] filled with passionate love and yearning for that order" and thus be "fashioned" in such a way that "he simply cannot will otherwise than you wish him to will."[13] This controlling vision behind Fichte's philosophy is loaded with social-psychological implications, but Fichte himself did not develop a system of social psychology. The point is simply that his approach to man was not individualistic. He was not concerned with the processes internal to a single individual except as these were a part of the greater whole of social reality. In fact, Fichte's discussion of the ego, often understood as referring to the individual ego,

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ed., 26 vols. (Stuttgart, 1936–54), vol. 9. It should be noted that Fichte was less interested in nature per se (except as non-ego) and more interested in human social reality.

[11] See Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände* (1809), in *Schellings Werke*, 4 223–308; and "Anthropologisches Schema" (*Nachlass*), in *Schellings Werke*, 5:333–40.

[12] Schelling, *Vom Ich als Prinzip der Philosophie* (1795), in *Schellings Werke*, 1:100.

[13] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, trans. R. F. Jones and G. H. Turnball, ed. George Armstrong Kelley (New York. Harper and Row, 1968), pp 7, 11, 18.

actually concerned the Absolute Ego, which in his system was the beginning and end of the historical process.[14] The dialectic of history proceeded from the Ego to the Non-Ego and then to the subsumption of Ego and Non-Ego into the unity of the Absolute Ego; it was not lived out, according to Fichte, in the lives of individual finite egos.

Neither Schelling nor Fichte addressed himself directly to the topic of psychology. Their attitudes toward psychology have to be culled from the general orientations of their philosophies. Hegel, however, discussed psychology at length, and it is in his work that the antipsychologistic bias of German idealism is most clearly expressed. As he wrote in describing his first major work, his philosophy was intended "to replace psychological explanations as well as more abstract discussions of the foundation of knowledge" by portraying "the various *forms of the spirit* as stations on the way on which it [spirit] becomes pure knowledge or absolute spirit."[15] The main point of Hegel's philosophy was to describe (and aid) the development of the spirit from its subjective to its objective and, finally, its absolute state. These three "forms of the spirit"—subjective, objective, and absolute— were the "stations" of the teleological development of reality. Specifically, the finite subjective ego of the first stage was subsumed at a higher level of development into a social consciousness that in turn would be lost in the realm of the absolute. In this architectonic system, with its tripartite division and sequence of subjective spirit–objective spirit–and–absolute spirit, psychology is a science of subjective spirit. As such, it provides only partial knowledge at a very rudimentary level of reality that must be "overcome" (*aufgehoben*) by the development of social consciousness. This development beyond psychology takes place, according to Hegel, when the "I," motivated by its own insufficiency, moves beyond itself in a dialectical fashion. "Self-consciousness," Hegel wrote, "attains its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness."[16] Together these two self-consciousnesses form a "we" that is the beginning of social consciousness. Only in the "we" can that "I" be comprehended, and even then only imperfectly since the "we" in turn must be "cancelled" (*aufgehoben*) someday in its immersion into the Absolute Spirit.

Thus, just as physics was considered inadequate because it accepts the objects it investigates as they seem rather than submitting them to a critical, dialectical analysis which would reveal that they were known only incompletely at first, so too psychology is considered inadequate because it investigates the "particular individual" only in "a concrete form." This individualistic approach can reveal only "the incomplete spirit." In order to know the spirit more completely—indeed, in order that the spirit *become* more complete—"the lower concrete form of existence [must be] sunk into an obscure moment; what was formerly an objective fact (*die Sache selbst*) [must be] now only a single trace; its definite shape [must be] veiled, and become simply a piece of shading."[17] As in physics, one must begin with the concrete, but this is only the starting point of the "science" of the spirit. Psychology provides knowledge of the spirit's tem-

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[14] Fichte has often been misinterpreted as assigning primary status to the individual ego, but he explicitly rejected this interpretation of his meaning in his winter lectures of 1810–11. See Fichte, *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. I. H. Fichte, 11 vols. (Berlin, 1834–46), 2:607.

[15] Quoted from Hegel's 1807 advertisement (*Selbstanzeigen*) for *Phänomenologie des Geistes* as translated in *Hegel: Texts and Commentary*, trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p. 4.

[16] *Phenomenology*, p. 226.

[17] Ibid., p. 89.

porary abode in the concrete, individual "station," but this is a very inadequate knowledge of the true nature and significance of the mind. Even knowledge of the spirit in its "objective," social "station" is incomplete. Only in the region of the absolute—reflected in art, religion, and philosophy—can the spirit hope to be truly itself, free and complete. And that completeness has not yet been reached.

The point is this: psychological dynamics had best be "overcome" or "cancelled." In and of itself psychology cannot provide an adequate description of human reality. Again: the individual ego is but a manifestation or integral part of something much larger than itself. True comprehension, true systematic science, reveals psychology to be the study of the mere "chaff" or "husks" through which reality reveals itself.

Yet Hegel does have much to say about psychology, and the philosophies of both Schelling and Fichte are pregnant with implicit psychological doctrines. More significantly, the work of these three German idealist philosophers had a direct influence upon others—their disciples—who were more concerned than they with developing psychology according to the idealistic orientation.

A Survey of Idealistic Psychology There was no orthodox idealistic psychology. As we shall see in the following review, it would be more precise to speak of the idealistic psychologies of the early- and mid-nineteenth century. However, there was a basic unity among these psychologies—an overall unity in orientation, which we have just reviewed in the previous section, and a slightly more diversified unity of kinship. That is, all the idealistic psychologies were related to one or more of the three basic families of idealists—those descending from Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.

From a psychological viewpoint, Fichte bequeathed three important notions to his followers. The first notion, that of "consciousness," was taken by Fichte from Karl Leonhard Reinhold. In his attempt to correct and complete Kant's philosophy, Reinhold had argued that Kant's system failed to command assent because of its dualistic foundation upon the antitheses of phenomenal and noumenal realities as well as upon both theoretical and practical concerns. Only if a truly ultimate principle could be found, Reinhold maintained, could philosophy be firmly established on the bedrock of certainty. Reinhold argued further that he had discovered this fundamental principle that constitutes the basic and irreducible fact of all experience and knowledge. It was, he said, the principle of "representation" (*Vorstellung*) or "consciousness" (*Bewusstseyn*). For in consciousness both subject and object are contained, and without consciousness neither subject nor object is conceivable.[18] Fichte, leading the way for the later idealists, accepted "consciousness" as fundamental and accepted Reinhold's contention that the task of philosophy is to give a systematic description, or "phenomenology," of consciousness.

Fichte's systematic elaboration of the principle of consciousness led him to his idealistic view of consciousness as an ever active ego which produces the objects it "overcomes" both in theory (knowledge) and in practice (action) as it strives for further and further development. This emphasis upon the unceasing activity of the ego was Fichte's second important notion. From it came a third influential notion, the idea that

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[18] See Reinhold's *Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögens* (Jena, 1789) and *Ueber das Fundament des philosophischen Wissens* (Jena, 1791).

the ultimate manifestation of the ego's activity is the will. Thus his philosophy was voluntaristic and stressed that the truth about reality is best expressed in human choice and action.

Fichte's influence was very wide, extending to all the subsequent idealists regarding the central focus on consciousness. Since his themes were broad, the idealistic psychologists who took their lead from Fichte were not limited by any orthodox dogmas, and thus it is difficult to label many of them as "Fichtean" in any strict sense. However, a number of psychological thinkers were quite clearly indebted to Fichte. G. E. A. Mehmel, for instance, utilized Fichte's principle of psychic activity as the guiding concept in his *Versuch einer vollständigen analytischen Denklehre, als Vorphilosophie* (Essay on a complete analytic doctrine of thought as a propaedeutic to philosophy, 1803).[19] From this basic principle of activity, interpreted as impulsivity at the most elementary level, Mehmel developed psychological theories of the cognitive, emotive, and aesthetic processes. Both his reliance upon a fundamental principle and his choice of activity as that fundamental principle were typical of early nineteenth-century idealistic psychology. Both were part of Fichte's legacy.

More important than Mehmel and others, however, was Karl Fortlage, who wrote his works well after the period in which idealist philosophy had its greatest popularity. Perhaps this very fact reveals the fecundity of Fichte's ideas as well as, or better than, Fortlage's works themselves: forty years after Fichte's last works, and sixty years after his important early works, Fichte's ideas could still influence creative thought in the field of psychology. To his credit, Fortlage did not accept Fichte's ideas uncritically. Nor did he use a completely speculative method. Instead he attempted to combine empirical rigor with philosophical, and particularly Fichtean, speculation. In his two-volume *System der Psychologie* (System of psychology, 1855), for instance, he let the empirical facts regarding psychic activity occasion a speculative discussion of the self; and the empirical description of the functioning of the nervous system and musculature provided the "necessity," he felt, for a philosophical analysis of agency and will.[20] Fortlage believed that this two-sided method of observation and speculation served to enrich psychology by drawing the philosophical significance out of its empirical research and making it the basis for philosophical extrapolation. The chief purpose of using this method in his *System der Psychologie* was to give empirical substance to Fichte's speculative insight regarding the primacy of activity and the centrality of consciousness. Taking a genetic viewpoint, Fortlage traced the development of consciousness from the basic impulsivity of the human body to its fullness in conscious will. In this way he tied together all three of Fichte's basic notions in one systematic psychology and portrayed the will, as did Fichte, as the goal of psychological development.

Although he did not himself perform experiments, Fortlage appreciated the significance of experimental physiology and discussed his own conclusions within the context of current empirical findings. Thus, certain ideas of Fichte—particularly the emphasis upon consciousness, activity, and will—were updated and brought into the forefront of

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[19] Erlangen, 1803.

[20] Leipzig, 1855. Fortlage credited Herbart and Beneke for his adoption of empirical methodology (see ibid., 1:xvff.). This is a good example of the influence of nonidealistic empirical psychology upon second-generation idealistic psychologists.

psychological thought in the 1850s. And they were reemphasized in the following years when Fortlage published three volumes of psychological lectures and investigations.[21] It was around the same time that the earlier works of Arthur Schopenhauer were "rediscovered" and had a very great impact upon German thought. This served to reinforce the voluntarism, if not the stress upon consciousness, that can be traced to Fichte's thought.

Schelling's philosophy also inspired later psychological applications. Even Fortlage, Fichte's disciple, reflected one aspect of Schelling's influence in his emphasis upon the unconscious as a necessary antecedent and corollary of consciousness. This theme of the unconscious, however, and Schelling's discussions of personality, genius, and mythical consciousness were typically "romantic." They can be traced also to the works of Herder and Hamann, and even to the revival of interest in the German mystics. Perhaps more significant because more specifically Schellingian was the influence of the philosophy of identity upon the development of psychophysical investigations. According to Schelling's philosophy of identity, both subject and object—or mind and nature—are actually but two aspects of the same absolute reality. Thus, "inner" spirit and "external" nature are ultimately identical, even if empirical appearances seem to be to the contrary.[22] As applied in psychology, this postulate was translated into the proposition that the nature of mind is reflected in the structure of the brain and the type of personality is reflected in the structure of the body. This proposition became a major incentive for many investigators. Karl Friedrich Burdach, for example, was inspired by this Spinozistic view of body and mind as two aspects of a single unitary reality.[23] So also was Karl Gustav Carus.[24] But certainly the most significant influence of this doctrine was upon Gustav Theodor Fechner, who developed the formal science of "psychophysics" in the late 1850s in an attempt to prove the philosophy of identity.[25] Through the work of Fechner, which inspired Wilhelm Wundt and the first generation of experimental psychologists, this aspect of Schelling's philosophy influenced the course of modern psychology.

Fechner's rationale was quite simple, and he came to it, he said, by a sudden flash of insight. Convinced of the Schellingian doctrine that mind and body are essentially one, he wanted to prove this fact in a scientific manner so that he could persuade his colleagues, both scientific and philosophical alike, of the essential unity—and the fundamental spiritual nature—of all creation. What he needed to show was the irreducible relation between mind and body, and his insight was that there should be a demonstrable and lawful mathematical relationship between changes in the intensity of bodily stimulation and contemporaneous changes in the states of internal consciousness. He located

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[21] *Acht psychologische Vortrage* (Jena, 1869); *Vier psychologische Vorträge* (Jena, 1874), and *Beiträge zur Psychologie als Wissenschaft aus Speculation und Erfahrung* (Leipzig, 1875).

[22] Schelling first developed his philosophy of identity in *Vorlesungen uber die Methode des akademischen Studiums* (1803; 3d ed., 1830), in *Schellings Werke*, 3:229–374.

[23] Burdach, *Das Seelenleben* (Stuttgart, 1836).

[24] Carus wrote companion volumes entitled *Psyche: Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele* (Pforzheim, 1846) and *Physis: Zur Geschichte des leiblichen Lebens* (Stuttgart, 1851).

[25] Fechner denied any direct influence of Schelling's identity theory, but he acknowledged that Oken's *Naturphilosophie*, which was "rooted in Schelling's perspective," was the original inspiration for his work. See William R. Woodward, "Fechner's Panpsychism. A Scientific Solution to the Mind-Body Problem," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 8 (1972):367–86, esp. p. 385.

the key to this relationship in a finding he dubbed "Weber's Law," and he developed various techniques for confirming and extending its significance. Using both measured stimulus conditions and introspective reports of sensation, Fechner elaborated the new science which he formally presented in his *Elemente der Psychophysik* (Elements of psychophysics, 1860).[26] This landmark contribution is generally considered one of the important points of departure for modern experimental psychology.

Another proposition of Schelling's thought had a similar impact upon psychology. This was the tenet that it is necessary, in developing systematic science, to present knowledge historically—that is, in the history of its genesis—rather than as the static results of an investigation.[27] One cannot understand final conclusions, Schelling maintained, without understanding the context in which they were reached. Nor can one understand a given reality without comprehending how it came to be. This proposition encouraged a number of investigators to undertake a genetic approach to psychological analysis and to write books with titles like *Geschichte der Seele* (History of the soul). Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert's popular *Geschichte der Seele* (1830) was one of these;[28] Karl Gustav Carus's *Psyche: Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele* (Psyche: toward a developmental history of the soul, 1846) was another.

As a natural historian, Schubert found Schelling's historical approach very congenial. Having defined the soul as that which seeks for God, or fullness of being in the Absolute, he began his *Geschichte* with a discussion of "outer nature" and proceeded through the study of plants, animals, and the human body to an investigation of the human soul (*Seele*). Also in a genetic and progressive manner, Schubert considered the basic relationship between soul and body, sensation, the feelings, temperament, physical expressions of the soul, disturbances of the soul, self-consciousness, reason, and understanding. His treatise concluded with an investigation of the ways in which the individual soul reaches beyond itself by means of art, science, and the state until it enters the domain of the Spirit (*Geist*) in religious belief and self-abnegation. This "history" portrayed the psychic tendency of all nature toward the Absolute. Schubert believed, as did Schelling, that it was only within this pattern of historical development that the human mind could be understood.

Though the popularity of Schubert's book was confirmed by its later revised editions, and though the book provides a nice example of the "historical" approach to psychology, it was written very much in the old style of pure speculation. A much better example of Schelling's influence on subsequent psychology is provided by the work of Karl Gustav Carus, who approached his psychological work from the position of a comparative anatomist and physiologist rather than as a speculative natural historian. Thus, as is clearly seen in his early *Vorlesungen über Psychologie* (Lectures on psychology, 1831), Carus informed his genetic approach with a scientific knowledge of the physiological development of the nervous system, and his developmental "history of the soul" as presented in *Psyche* was interwoven with empirical threads.[29] What makes Carus an even better example of the influence of Schelling's philosophy, however, is

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[26] 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1860).

[27] This is a repeated theme in Schelling's *Vorlesungen über die Methode*

[28] 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1830)

[29] Leipzig, 1831.

the fact that Carus not only used the genetic method recommended by Schelling, he also took up Schelling's stress upon the role of the unconscious and the interrelationship of mind and body. The combination of all these tenets in Carus's work produced a foundation for comparative psychology, with which he was concerned long before he wrote *Vergleichende Psychologie oder Geschichte der Seele in der Reihenfolge der Thierwelt* (Comparative psychology or history of the soul in the sequential species of the animal world, 1866).[30] In this and other works, Carus traced the gradual development of consciousness in the animal world. Using myth, allegory, and analogy—the tools of Schellingian *Naturphilosophie*—as well as empirical evidence, Carus sought to determine the relationship between man and animals. Not surprisingly, animals were found to possess many "human" faculties while lacking others. They were found, that is, to be at a more rudimentary stage in the "history of the soul." Man, on the other hand, was found to express the fullness of natural capacity, and more. Man's ability to choose and to possess the thought of eternity, Carus said, gives notice of his capacity to transcend mere "nature." Although he concluded *Vergleichende Psychologie*, as well as *Psyche*, with this typical idealist theme, Carus's advocacy of, and contributions to, comparative psychology were important stimuli to later developments.

Beyond comparative psychology, Carus also did much to establish what was later to be called physiological psychology. In doing so he tried to prove the relationship Schelling had postulated between mind and body. He did this not only in his studies as a well-known physiologist but also as an advocate of "cranioscopy," otherwise known as "phrenology." Through a series of works he documented what he felt to be clear evidence of the relationship between the organs of the brain and various psychological faculties.[31] In the process of discussing these faculties, Carus contributed to the change of perspective regarding psychologial faculties by explicating them as genetically related to one another in the life-histories of individuals. That is, in opposition to the old view of faculties as completely separate entities, Carus portrayed them as various interrelated functions which emerge at different stages in the history of the soul. It is easy to see here the beginnings of a developmental approach to psychological functions.

There were, of course, other psychologists influenced by Schelling. Johann Christian August Heinroth, for instance; and F. C. Th. Fischer and Heinrich Steffens.[32] But except for Heinroth's *Lehrbuch der Seelengesundheitskunde* (Textbook of the science of mental health, 1823–24), which is distinctive because of its application of "dialectic" to the consideration of mental health, the works of these individuals exemplify the same general tendencies we have seen in the works of Fechner, von Schubert, and Carus.

Hegel, as mentioned in the previous section, wrote more than Fichte and Schelling on specifically psychological topics. Most notably, he devoted the first sections of his *Philosophie des Geistes* (Philosophy of mind, 1830) to anthropology, phenomenology, and

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[30] Vienna, 1866. It should be noted that Karl Friedrich Burdach had previously written a *Comparative Psychologie*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1842).

[31] His most important work along these lines was *Grundzuge einer neuen und wissenschaftlichen begründeten Cranioscopie* (Schadellehre) (Stuttgart, 1841)

[32] Heinroth, *Lehrbuch der Seelengesundheitskunde*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1823–24) and *Die Psychologie als Selbsterkenntnisslehre* (Leipzig, 1828), Fischer, *Die Lehre von den Arten under der charakteristischen Natur der Vermogen und Einrichtungen unserer Seele* (Leipzig, 1830), and Steffens, "Ueber die wissenschaftliche Behandlung der Psychologie" (1845), published in his *Nachgelassene Schriften* (Berlin, 1846), pp. 187–214.

psychology. Under the title of anthropology Hegel included discussions of the most fundamental processes of human experience, namely, sensation and basic feeling. In his phenomenology of consciousness he discussed consciousness proper and self-consciousness, under which he included the phenomena of desire. And then in the section on psychology he discussed the psychological processes of both theoretical and practical mind and their unity in the "free mind" that is the transition from subjective to objective mind (or spirit). The theoretical processes for Hegel included intuition, memory, and thinking; the practical processes included practical feeling, or emotion, and will. The distinctive characteristic of Hegel's discussion of psychology is that it emphasized the interrelationship and optimal integration of mental processes. In opposition to former "common-sense" empirical psychology, of which he considered Aristotle's "still by far the most admirable," Hegel's psychology was not concerned with "the question whether mind or soul is simple or immaterial, whether it was substance." These questions reveal that "mind was still treated as a thing," according to the "inert, fixed" categories of the understanding (*Verstand*). Instead Hegel insisted that mind "is not an inert being, but on the contrary, absolutely restless being, pure activity."[33] And just as mind itself should not be considered a static thing susceptible to the categories of understanding, so too the mind should not be "converted into a mere aggregate of independent forces" or entities known as "faculties."[34] In the place of such "common-sense" notions about the mind, what was really needed, Hegel claimed, was a "speculative" treatment of the mind that would reveal its "living unity." The mind must be understood in its dynamic integration: only the ill mind could be conceived as fragmented and reified. Such was Hegel's psychological vision. Even though the actual working out of this vision in his *Philosophie des Geistes* is limited and uneven, it provided the basis for the subsequent development of "Hegelian psychology."[35]

Following Hegel, certain psychologists developed psychology as "the science of subjective spirit." In doing so, they defended themes I have earlier characterized as typical of Fichte and Schelling respectively, that is, the doctrine of the mind as activity and the doctrine that mind can be comprehended only in its "necessary development."[36] But the Hegelians were distinguishable from those psychologists who were inspired by Fichte and Schelling in at least two ways. First, they tended more than the others to perpetuate the subordination of psychology to a higher social perspective. This was particularly true, of course, of the so-called left-wing Hegelians. Carl Ludwig Michelet, for instance, in his *Anthropologie und Psychologie oder die Philosophie des subjectiven Geistes* (Anthropology and psychology or the philosophy of the subjective spirit, 1840), included a discussion of different racial and social types.[37] Later in time, Hegelian notions of the embodiment of "objective spirit" in social groups had an important influence upon the development of social psychology, especially as formulated in *Völkerpsycholo-*

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[33] *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. William Wallace, with *Zusätze* translated by A. V. Miller (Oxford Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 3.

[34] Ibid , p. 4.

[35] As early as 1841, Franz Exner pointed out that there was a distinctive type of psychology which could be called "Hegelian." See his *Die Psychologie der Hegelschen Schule*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1841–42), for a critical review.

[36] Hegel espoused these same themes in *Philosophy of Mind*, e g , p. 5

[37] Berlin, 1840.

gie (Folk psychology). The work of Moritz Lazarus and Hayim Steinthal, as well as the *Völkerpsychologie* of Wilhelm Wundt, owed much to the legacy of Hegelian thought, despite Wundt's denials and the fact that Lazarus and Steinthal were primarily Herbartians. From Hegel's time on, the way to study the "mind" of a people was to study its "objective" expression in art, religion, and philosophy, as well as in language, law, custom, and myth. And going beyond the stage of social consciousness, the individual mind was also commonly subordinated to the "absolute spirit," often conceived in the "mythological" form of the "personality of God." Another work of Michelet, *Vorlesungen über die Persönlichkeit Gottes und Unsterblichkeit der Seele, oder die ewige Persönlichkeit des Geistes* (Lectures on the personality of god and immortality of the soul, or the eternal personality of the spirit, 1841), is a good example of this approach.[38]

The second way in which Hegelian psychology tended to differ from other idealist-inspired psychology was in its continued dependence upon the dialectical, or rational, method and its resistance to empirical methods. Over time the psychologist-disciples of both Fichte and Schelling were influenced by contemporary developments in empirical psychology. They began, as we have seen, to include empirical approaches in their methodological repertoire. This was much less often the case with Hegelian psychologists, although there were some exceptions. Johann Georg Mussmann, for example, made a gesture toward empiricism in his *Lehrbuch der Seelenwissenschaft oder rationellen und empirischen Psychologie* (Textbook on the science of the soul or rational and empirical psychology, 1827).[39] Beginning with a conceptual definition of each psychological topic, such as feeling, sensation, dreaming, and knowing, Mussmann allowed observations insofar as they bore on, or fit within, the ideally prescribed area of discussion. From a positivistic perspective this was clearly a backward and very limited empiricism.

Despite Mussmann's tentative example, however, the Hegelians as a group resisted the natural tendency of "second-generation" thinkers to become eclectic and accommodate their methods and doctrines to current trends. The reasons for this are quite complex and can be indicated here only schematically. Undoubtedly the fact that Hegel rose to his highest peak of popularity in the 1820s, after the fame of both Fichte and Schelling had been eclipsed, was partially responsible for the longer-lasting cohesiveness and faithfulness of his school. This cohesiveness was such that it transcended the "schisms" which rent Hegel's disciples along ideological lines. Both "left" and "right" Hegelians clung to the supremacy of the dialectical method. Also influential was the definition, which Hegelian psychologists continued to follow, of psychology as the study of mental processes qua mental—that is, excluding, on the one hand, purely physiological sensation, and on the other, the specific contents of consciousness. Sensation was to be dealt with in "anthropology"; the contents of consciousness, in the sciences of "objective spirit." Thus, psychology was understood as the dialectical study of the dialectical processes of the mind. In other words, as normally conceived, psychology was the systematic, or "speculative," reflection of mind upon itself. This definition excluded an empirical approach, and it may well be that the polemical atmosphere of the 1830s and 1840s reinforced this narrow view of psychology. Against the radical materi-

[38] Berlin, 1841.
[39] Berlin, 1827.

alism which, developing partly from radical Hegelianism, denied the very existence of mind (*Geist*), Hegelian psychologists continued to assert the existence and comprehensibility of the human spirit.

At any rate, whatever the reason, Hegelian psychologists did not develop, as did Burdach and Carus, a psychology that was physiological or comparative. In this sense their psychology was the most narrowly "philosophical" and "mentalistic" of the idealist psychologies. Excluding physiology from its domain, it was out of tune with the developments of the day. Pushing dialectical analysis to its extreme and beyond, it often lost contact with the empirical object of its study. For instance, a typical strategy of Hegelians was to consider feelings, not as the results of physiological ennervations, but as dialectical moments in the evolution of consciousness. As if this exclusion of physiology did not limit the purview of psychology sufficiently, Hegelian psychologists also excluded consideration of the unconscious. They dealt only with the operations of the conscious mind without seeking correlations with physical or nonconscious states. As late as 1882, in the sixth edition of his *Psychologische Briefe* (Psychological letters), Johann Eduard Erdmann continued to pursue this disembodied view of the subjective spirit. Psychology, he said again, does not concern what the spirit is, but how it functions at the subjective level.[40] This is the same theme he expressed forty-two years earlier in his *Grundriss der Psychologie* (Outline of psychology, 1840), and the same orientation can be found in Karl Friedrich Rosenkranz's *Psychologie, oder Wissenschaft vom subjectiven Geist* (Psychology, or science of the subjective spirit, 1837), another popular Hegelian text.[41]

As a result of this orientation, Hegelian psychologists presented phenomenological and speculative accounts of the mental processes that often amounted to little more than psychological commentaries on Hegel's philosophy of mind. In this regard, both Erdmann and Rosenkranz were typical. Erdmann's *Grundriss der Psychologie*, for instance, consisted of sections on "anthropology" (mind as individual), "phenomenology of consciousness" (mind as ego), and "pneumatology" (the mind as mind itself). Under the first heading came reflections upon sensations, physical feelings, and bodily habits; under the second, perception, consciousness, self-consciousness, social behavior, and social consciousness; and under the third, intelligence and will, with intellective will being the endpoint of the development of subjective spirit. Despite some slight changes in the content and order of presentation, this was an essentially orthodox rendition of Hegelian thought. What was novel in Erdmann's work, and in that of the other Hegelian psychologists, was the amount of elaboration and importance given to this psychological thought.

Of course, less orthodox works were also produced by the Hegelian school. Among these were Leopold George's *Lehrbuch der Psychologie* (Textbook of psychology, 1854) and Franz Vorländer's *Grundlinien einer organischen Wissenschaft der menschlichen Seele* (Foundations of an organic science of the human soul, 1841).[42] But however unorthodox, these works were still easily distinguished as Hegelian. For although

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[40] Erdmann, *Psychologische Briefe*, 6th ed. (Leipzig, 1882). A seventh edition of this book appeared posthumously in 1896.

[41] Erdmann (Leipzig, 1840); Rosenkranz (Konigsberg, 1837)

[42] George (Berlin, 1854); Vorlander (Berlin, 1841)

George's book was based on an earlier work that utilized the empirical findings of recent physiological research,[43] and though Vorländer expressed his "organic psychology" in his own terms, they both covered the traditional Hegelian topics and concluded with the typical discussion of the eternal sustenance of individual personalities in God.

The Contributions of Idealistic Psychology With these brief reviews of German idealism and its psychological perspective, we are now prepared to make a number of conclusions about post-Kantian idealistic psychology and its influence upon the development of the concepts, subject matter, and methods of psychology. To give shape to this discussion, I will make six major points, followed by a brief summation.

1. *There was indeed such a thing as idealistic psychology in Germany in the first half, and even the second half, of the nineteenth century.* This fact is often overlooked, largely because of the antipsychologistic bias reflected in the basic orientation of idealistic philosophy. But not only was there an idealistic psychology, there were also different varieties of idealistic psychology and a good number of texts representing each variety. We have surveyed only the most important ones above. It is important to note that these texts continued to appear, and continued to be popular, well into the 1870s.

2. *This idealistic psychology was developed by the disciples of the major idealists.* Consequently, the contributions of idealism to psychology did not always come directly from the three major idealists themselves. Rather, such influence as they had was often mediated and amplified through the psychological works of their disciples. This is important to note, first of all, because few of these noteworthy disciples are ever mentioned in treatises on the history of psychology; and second of all, because many of the more influential of these disciples—such as Fortlage, von Schubert, Burdach, and Carus—were not as pristinely idealistic as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Instead they freely admitted being influenced by the works of anti-idealists, such as Jakob Friedrich Fries, Johann Friedrich Herbart, and Friedrich Eduard Beneke.[44] This is significant because it is probably the case that this contact with empiricism accounts for some of the positive influence of the idealistic school of philosophy. Not only did it check the speculative tendency in idealistic psychology, it also made idealistic psychology more palatable to the taste of more natural scientifically oriented readers.

3. *Idealistic psychology influenced the development of various concepts and related subject matters (such as consciousness, ego, personality, imagination, and will) that became a prominent part of later psychology.* This point has not been given sufficient attention in the literature. Idealism contributed many of the central concepts and concerns of late-nineteenth-century psychology, including the most central one, consciousness. This must be understood if the importance of idealism is to be acknowledged. As Helmut E. Adler has written in a related context,

> Sensory phenomena had been studied by physiologists and physicists, but that alone would not have led to an independent science. One does not classify E. H. Weber, Helmholtz, Mach, or

[43] George, *Die funf Sinne* (Berlin, 1846)

[44] Regarding Fries, Herbart, and Beneke, see my "Philosophical Development"

Aubert primarily among psychologists, even though they made highly significant contributions to psychology. The essential idea that the mind—consciousness—could be measured, was missing.[45]

Adler wrote this as a preface to a discussion of the contribution of Gustav Theodor Fechner; but without denying Fechner's contribution regarding the necessity of measurement we can go four steps further back regarding the origins of his desire to study mind or consciousness. Fechner got his inspiration from the *Naturphilosophie* of Oken, who in turn got his inspiration from Schelling, who in turn based his work on that of Fichte, who based his work on Reinhold's fundamental principle of "consciousness." The entire nineteenth-century tradition of "phenomenology," or the systematic study of consciousness, is part and parcel of the post-Kantian idealist tradition. Fechner's contribution, as pointed out earlier, was to apply Schelling's principle of identity to the study of consciousness; the result was psychophysics. Later Wilhelm Wundt further developed experimental, or "physiological," psychology and defined its subject matter as "the manifold of consciousness."[46] The empirical and experimental restrictions he placed upon the study of consciousness came from a natural scientific tradition quite distinct from idealistic philosophy, but the object of study was clearly taken from the idealist tradition.[47] In this way both Fechner and Wundt—the two "founders of modern psychology"—were part of a much larger intellectual tradition in mid- and late-nineteenth-century Germany, the tradition of *Idealrealismus* which attempted to combine idealism and realism, utilizing the essential insights of both while avoiding the exclusive dogmatism of either. It should be noted that this "mediated way" was itself an application of the dialectical principle inherent in much idealistic thought. It should also be noted that we could similarly trace the concepts of ego, personality, imagination, and will, as well as the concepts of the unconscious, psychic activity, and self-actualization, to either idealistic origins or idealistic influences. For now, however, it is possible to state only programmatically that German idealism influenced the development of these various concepts and subject matters of psychology.

4. *Idealistic psychology influenced the development of voluntarism and a social-psychological perspective, both of which came to typify late-nineteenth-century theories about the higher cognitive processes.* These points were mentioned above in the review of idealistic psychology. It was principally Fichte who, in stressing practical reason (or will) over theoretical reason, influenced the shift away from Leibnizian intellectualist psychology toward the voluntarism of the later part of the century. Of the major "new psychologists" Wundt was as vociferous as any in claiming that his psychology was voluntaristic. While there is more than one step from Fichte's idea of voluntarism to Wundt's, there is a historical connection mediated through a host of mid-century psychologists, philosophers, and physiologists—including Wundt's mentor, Helmholtz[48]—

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[45] "The Vicissitudes of Fechnerian Psychophysics in America," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 291 (1977):22

[46] *Principles of Physiological Psychology*, vol 1, trans from 5th German ed (1902) by Edward Bradford Titchener (New York: Macmillan, 1910), p. 11

[47] For discussions of Wundt's work which are sensitive to the influence of the idealist tradition, see Arthur L. Blumenthal's "A Reappraisal of Wilhelm Wundt," *American Psychologist* 30 (1975):1081–86; and his "Wilhelm Wundt and Early American Psychology: A Clash of Two Cultures," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 291 (1977):13–20.

[48] Regarding the influence of Fichte on Helmholtz, see R Steven Turner, "Hermann von Helmholtz and the Empiricist Vision," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 13 (1977):48–58

who followed Fichte in refusing to accept the traditional intellectualist analysis of the mind. Among the philosophers who had some impact upon late-nineteenth-century German psychology, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche should also be mentioned as conduits of this new voluntarism.

As far as the social-psychological perspective is concerned, idealism gave a philosophical justification for (and incentive towards) this orientation by stressing the ultimate unity of finite egos within a larger social and/or absolute ego. Indeed this is the "antipsychologistic" thesis of idealism—that the individual mind is not an autonomous entity which can be analyzed in and of itself. Particularly Fichte, Hegel, and Hegel's disciples spread this social-psychological doctrine. Their influence blended with that of others—Herder, Hamann, and Herbart, for instance—to bring about the development of "folk psychology" and all its related disciplines, such as psycholinguistics, mythology, cultural anthropology, forensic psychology, and sociology. This "folk psychology" was recognized by Wundt as the only valid means of studying the higher mental processes. Only within a social context, he said, could the truly human, symbolic aspects of experience be understood.[49] Again, an originally idealistic thesis had been endorsed by one of the principal systematizers of modern psychology.

5. *Idealistic psychology encouraged a genetic approach as well as psychophysical and comparative studies by its adherence to dialectical procedures and the philosophy of identity.* The idealists' stress upon the "history of consciousness" and the dynamic and teleological aspects of consciousness, mind, or spirit influenced the development of a genetic approach to psychology that was a definite forerunner of later "racial" and developmental psychology. This emphasis upon the historical, or genetic, method of analysis was related to the idealists' opposition to static dichotomies and to the bifurcation of reality. It should be noted here that their opposition to the division of the mind into various "faculties" was a major factor in the development of a more unitive, dynamic, and functional view of mental processes. Largely because of the idealists, faculty psychology was replaced in the nineteenth century by a more "organic" psychology in which one process was considered to flow directly, or dialectically, into another. Sensing, understanding, and reasoning, for example, were represented as progressive stages in the realization of consciousness, not distinctly separate processes. Since the time of the idealists, faculty psychology has never again been an accepted psychological approach. Furthermore, the idealistic conception of the systematic unity and interrelation of all the sciences, psychology included, encouraged—indeed, made necessary—the broadening of perspectives and the tentative beginnings of interdisciplinary work, for example, between physiology and psychology. Such interdisciplinary work was further encouraged, as we have seen, by Schelling's doctrine of identity, which proclaimed that Nature is "visible spirit" and spirit is "invisible Nature."[50] According to Schelling's doctrine, one could study spirit (e.g., as manifested in the mind) by means of the investigation of nature (e.g., as manifested in the body); and vice versa. As noted above, this doctrine was a central influence upon Fechner's development of psychophysics. And combined with the genetic principle it contributed to the origins of nineteenth-century

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[49] *Elements of Folk Psychology* (1912), trans. Edward Leroy Schaub (New York: Macmillan, 1916), pp. 2–10.

[50] Schelling, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur als Einleitung in das Studium dieser Wissenschaft*, 2d ed (1803), in *Schellings Werke*, 1:706.

comparative psychology. Regarding this latter point the discussion of the work of Carus in the previous section is most pertinent.

6. *German idealism, despite its many contributions to specific aspects of psychology, did not influence the theoretical development of the concept of psychology in general. In fact, it opposed the development of psychology into an experimental and mathematical science.* This is an important qualification of the positive influences we have discussed up to this point. It also helps explain why the contributions of German idealism to modern psychology have been overlooked.[51] As we have seen, idealistic psychology tended strongly to be nonmathematical, nonexperimental, and metaempirical;[52] it rejected any simply natural scientific approach to psychology as inadequate and trivial. Thus it acted as a counter-developmental force in this regard.

To understand the full extent and effect of this opposition we must recall that between 1800 and 1840 idealism was the dominant philosophical approach in Germany. Throughout this period, especially after 1810, idealists had not only intellectual influence but also institutional positions and power. This institutional power lasted into the 1850s, even after the decline of their intellectual influence; and many important idealists, when their intellectual arguments did not convert their opponents, used their power to suppress the spread of empiricism and the development of a more natural scientific approach to the mind. It is impossible to judge how much more quickly empiricism would have spread, or how differently the history of nineteenth-century German thought would read today, if real academic freedom had existed in the German universities in the first half of the nineteenth century. For instance, all three of the most important German empirical psychologists in the first half of the nineteenth century—Fries, Herbart, and Beneke—were opposed and censured by the idealistic establishment at crucial points in their careers.[53] Both Fries and Herbart were in line for, and deserved, the chair of philosophy at Berlin. Had Fries received the chair, Hegel would not have! Had Herbart, he would have succeeded Fries (or Hegel). Perhaps the most succinct example of the power of the idealists was Beneke's suspension from the University of Berlin, apparently at Hegel's request, because his philosophical and psychological teachings were considered so *ganz unphilosophisch*—so unphilosophical, that is, so unidealistic. The use of such institutional power, as well as the influence of idealistic intellectual systems, clearly retarded the development of psychology towards the empirical, mathematical, and experimental science espoused by Fries, Herbart, Beneke, and

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[51] Several reasons seem to coalesce to account for the blindness of historians of psychology to the influence of German idealism: (1) German idealism opposed the emergence of the natural scientific approach to psychology; (2) German idealism was in some essential ways antipsychological; and (3) the association of modern scientific psychology with dogmatic positivism had led to the naive belief that modern psychology is somehow autononous—historically and presently—from all philosophical influences, especially that of metaphysical idealism. Since history is often written to validate a particular contemporary point of view, it is not surprising that the idealists have not received their due recognition in the histories of psychology. However, a more just account should prevail.

[52] Essentially the idealist psychologists returned to the premises of rational psychology, which Kant had discredited in his *Metaphysische Anfangsgrunde der Naturwissenschaft*. Even though certain idealist psychologists tried to supplement the rational approach with empirical observation, it was still true that they generally saw psychology as one branch of the total philosophical system of "science" rather than as an independent empirical or natural science.

[53] See my doctoral dissertation, "The Reconstruction of Psychology in Germany, 1780–1850" (University of Chicago, 1977), chaps. 4, 5, and 6.

others. To what extent the idealist opposition also helped shape the limits of the emerging "new psychology" by provoking various positivist reactions is a topic worthy of future reseach.

Thus the picture that emerges from these six points is two-sided. Although the three major idealists did not espouse the development of psychology except as an intermediate and incomplete stage in the construction of science, they nevertheless—often through their disciples—had a tangible influence upon the history of psychological thought. Their positive influence was upon what we can call the "microconceptualization" of psychology. That is, they contributed the microconcepts that focused the attention of psychologists upon certain relevant subject matters—such as consciousness. They also contributed concepts—such as identity, history, and activity—that inspired new approaches to the "manifold of consciousness" and to the study of personality.[54] However, as regards the "macroconceptualization" of psychology—that is, as regards the conceptualization of the general nature and methods of psychology—German idealism was counterrevolutionary, even repressive. It opposed the development of mathematical experimental psychology as well as the institutional advancement of those who supported the natural scientific approach to psychology. (To be fair in our appraisal, we should note that the idealists of the last century were no more protective of their point of view than are many natural scientific psychologists in our century. Many of the same techniques—intellectual argument, ridicule, and institutional power—are used today to censure those with opposing perspectives and approaches.)

Nonetheless it should be clear that the idealists left their mark upon the psychology that developed beyond their own version of mental science. As is always the case, the so-called losing side in the drama of history had more influence than is immediately apparent. On the one hand, German idealism contributed much to the development of the conception of the subject matter of experimental psychology (especially consciousness and psychophysical relations); on the other hand, it also contributed to the general orientation of folk psychology (especially the genetic and social perspectives). And it can be assumed that it had other influences this general survey has not even mentioned.

All these historical influences ought to be recognized. I hope that this article will be a first step towards this deserved recognition. By presenting a general survey of the relationship between German idealism and the development of psychology, I have attempted only to open up a new area of investigation. Much research remains to be done. But if the conclusions of this paper are at all accurate, further research along these lines will greatly expand our understanding of the evolution—and thus the conceptual foundations—of modern psychology.[55] Such enhanced understanding could be of some practi-

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[54] In this regard, the direct and indirect influence of idealism upon Freud in particular, and "depth psychology" in general, has yet to be fully explored. It would be truly remarkable if the concepts of ego, id, and superego, as well as the historical approach and the doctrine of psychophysical parallelism, all of which are essential ingredients of depth psychology, do not owe some sort of debt to the personalism, voluntarism, social-psychological perspective, geneticism, and identicalism of idealist philosophy. The debt of more recent personalist philosophies, including their derivative humanistic psychologies, to idealist and neoidealist conceptions of self-actualization is equally apparent.

[55] One conclusion that can be drawn from this study regarding the evolution of psychology in particular, and by extension science as a whole, is that scientific advancement is often preconditioned by philosophical ideas rather than the accumulation of empirical facts This conclusion, it is worth noting, is corroborated by an insight of the archpositivist Ernst Mach, who insisted (rather incongruously, yet, I believe, correctly) that

cal importance in an age in which there is much confusion about just what psychology is, what it should study, and how it should do so. Indeed the recent revival of neoidealistic psychology, whether in the guise of humanistic psychology, dialectical psychology, or self-psychology, invites a reexamination of the conceptual structure of modern psychology. Historical and conceptual analysis cannot in and of itself answer the ultimately crucial question of what psychologists should do in the present. But it can at least provide psychologists with a fuller understanding of the historically rooted, and often unconsciously held, assumptions which underlie their scientific work. Whether or not they wish consciously to accept these traditional assumptions, which at times are at odds with one another, or whether they wish to accept new or more consistent guidelines for their work, is their decision. The historical muse will speak her mind at a later time.

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great scientific investigations, such as those of James Prescott Joule, could be "carried out only by a man who is inspired by a great and philosophically most profound view of the world" (*Die Prinzipien der Wärmlehre* [Leipzig, 1896], p 240). Similarly, as we have seen, many of the historically fundamental investigations of modern psychology were carried out under the inspiration of philosophical, and often idealistic, concerns. If we are less aware of—or even reject—these concerns today, we nonetheless continue to develop the traditions that were inspired—and are still conceptually supported—by them.