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Introduction

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*Henny Blomme, Laure Caben-Maurel, David W. Wood**

For Frederick C. Beiser

Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) is now regarded by many readers and scholars not simply as a poet, historian, or playwright, but as a genuine philosopher in his own right. With respect to the classification of his writings as philosophical, Frederick Beiser has justly remarked:

“In fact, measured in terms of sheer rigor, Schiller is not an especially problematic case at all. He is no less rigorous than Kant or Hume, whose place in the canon has never been subject to question. [...] One reason for reading Schiller’s texts is simply historical: they were profoundly influential, an inspiration for Romanticism and German Idealism.”¹

The following research articles in French and English are devoted to understanding the relationship between Schiller’s philosophy and German idealism, especially some of the chief figures associated with the inception and extended development of this movement: Kant, Reinhold, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Lotze.² In the last twenty years

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1 F.C. BEISER, *Schiller as Philosopher: A Re-Examination*, p. 9, 2.

2 On early and late German idealism, see F.C. BEISER’s two books: *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism, 1781-1801*, and *Late German Idealism: Trendelenburg and Lotze*.

in particular, ground-breaking edited collections have appeared on the content and legacy of Schiller's thought.³ The present volume of articles, however, is one of the first to attempt a broader investigation of Schiller's connection to German idealism, in which the contributions have above all been written by scholars of German idealism itself.

The aim of this volume is to furnish foundational material for better answering the question: To what extent should Friedrich Schiller be considered a German idealist? Naturally, the response to this question depends on one's conception of German idealism, a point discussed below. This introduction provides a brief overview of earlier scholarship on this topic and summarizes the findings of our contributors.



Despite the neglect in many quarters of his main philosophical texts, Schiller's work on aesthetics has always attracted a small but dedicated group of academic readers. This is especially the case among commentators on Kant and historians of classical German philosophy.⁴ Half a century after Schiller's death, the great German scholars Kuno

- 3 Important edited volumes of essays in the last two decades include: G. BOLLENBECK, L. EHRICH (eds.), *Friedrich Schiller: Der unterschätzte Theoretiker*; M.R. ACOSTA LÓPEZ (ed.), *Friedrich Schiller: estética y libertad*; J.L. HIGH, N. MARTIN, N. OELLERS (eds.), *Who is this Schiller Now? Essays on His Reception and Significance*, especially Part II: "Schiller, Aesthetics, and Philosophy," p. 99-202; C. BURTSCHER, M. HIEN (eds.), *Schiller im philosophischen Kontext*; O. AGARD, F. LARTILLOT (eds.), *L'éducation esthétique selon Schiller: entre anthropologie, politique et théorie du beau*; L.A. MACOR (ed.), "Reading Schiller: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Religion"; M.R. ACOSTA LÓPEZ, J.L. POWELL (eds.), *Aesthetic Reason and Imaginative Freedom: Friedrich Schiller and Philosophy*; G. STIENING (ed.), *Friedrich Schiller: Über die Ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefe*; A. FALDUTO (ed.), *Schiller's Challenge to Moral Philosophy/Schillers Herausforderung für die Moralphilosophie, Kant-Studien 111/2, 2020*; and M. LÖWE, G. STIENING (eds.), *Ästhetische Staaten: Ethik, Recht und Politik in Schillers Werk*. A number of recent monographs on Schiller's philosophy are listed further below in this introduction.
- 4 For a detailed overview of the scholarship, see L. SHARP, *Schiller's Aesthetic Essays: Two Centuries of Criticism*.

Fischer⁵ and Friedrich Ueberweg⁶ argued in 1858 and 1859 respectively for a holistic treatment that integrated the philosophical, historical, and poetic writings. Fischer underscored the pivotal position held by Schiller in the evolution of philosophy from Kant to the German Romantics:

“The history of philosophy will recognize that Schiller was the first thinker to further develop Kant’s discoveries in the field of aesthetics; and that without Schiller there would be a gap between the aesthetic concepts of the critical school and the romantic one in their well-grounded direction between Kant and Schelling.”⁷

The evaluation of Schiller’s philosophy received a significant boost around 1900-1905 on account of the numerous publications commemorating the centenary of his passing. A special issue of the *Kant-Studien* appeared: *Schiller als Philosoph und seine Beziehungen zu Kant* (Schiller as Philosopher and his Relations to Kant).⁸ As the title suggests, the volume was focused on the Kantian background of Schiller’s thought. It included prominent commentators like Rudolf Eucken, Hans Vaihinger, and Wilhelm Windelband. In the introduction, Eucken likewise emphasized the aesthetic element of Schiller’s engagement with Kant’s moral philosophy and defended its continuing relevance.⁹ Windelband’s text—“Schillers transscendentaler Idealismus” (Schiller’s Transcendental Idealism)—concurred with Eucken, and closed with reflections that perceived a harmony in the philosophies of history of Kant and Schiller:

- 5 K. FISCHER, *Schiller als Philosoph: Vortrag gehalten in der Rose zu Jena, am 10. März 1858*. Thirty years later, Fischer recast and expanded this text into a two-volume study that also took into account Schiller’s early philosophical writings. See K. FISCHER, *Schiller als Philosoph*, 2 vols.
- 6 See F. UEBERWEG, *Schiller als Historiker und Philosoph*, edited by M. BRASCH, with a biographical sketch by F.A. LANGE. Ueberweg’s study was written in 1859 but published posthumously. It mostly concentrates on Schiller’s reception of the Kantian philosophy, and only briefly mentions his readings of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel (cf. p. 35, 157, 177, 239).
- 7 K. FISCHER, *Schiller als Philosoph: Vortrag*, p. vi. Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this introduction are our own.
- 8 *Kant-Studien* 10 (1905): *Schiller als Philosoph und seine Beziehungen zu Kant*, p. 253-414.
- 9 See R. EUCKEN, “Was können wir heute aus Schiller gewinnen? Einleitende Erwägungen”.

“Whereas the Königsberg philosopher sees the sense of history in the establishment of the best state constitution, the poet places aesthetic life at the centre of historical progress. [...] For both Schiller and Kant history is not a necessity of natural evolution: it is the work of the human race, its very act of freedom, its self-determination in the fulfilment of this task. This is the ultimate and supreme attitude that the two thinkers share in common in transcendental idealism.”¹⁰

Moreover, two shorter texts by Susanna Rubinstein¹¹ and Alexander Wernicke¹² were published for the centenary commemorations, both of which had Schiller and “*der deutsche Idealismus*” (German idealism) in their titles. In Rubinstein’s eyes, Schiller is a poet-philosopher, whose work attempted to expand Kant’s critical philosophy into the sphere of poetry. This endeavour is encapsulated in Schiller’s celebrated poem “Der Künstler” (The Artist), with its epistemological injunction: “you can only enter the kingdom of knowledge through the gate of beauty.”¹³ Consequently, the aim of Schiller’s magnum opus *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* is the cognitive overcoming of all opposites in order to generate a harmony between ourselves and the world:

“In this study of the aesthetically refined entry into nature, the antitheses of sensibility and reason, feeling and thinking, are overcome, and the equilibrium of forces is established. Schiller’s ideal concept of ‘totality’ becomes attained in this way. It signifies a complete immersion into harmony.”¹⁴

On the other side of the Rhine, Schiller’s philosophical thought became more academically known in France through the work of Victor Basch.¹⁵ Basch had written his *thèse complémentaire* on the definition of the categories of the naive and the sentimental in Schillerian poetics as

10 W. WINDELBAND, “Schillers transscendentaler Idealismus,” p. 411.

11 S. RUBINSTEIN, “Schiller und der deutsche Idealismus”. Rubinstein’s text is a review-essay of E. KÜHNEMANN’S book *Schillers philosophischen Schriften und Gedichte*.

12 A. WERNICKE, *Schiller und der deutsche Idealismus: zum 9. Mai 1905*.

13 S. RUBINSTEIN, “Schiller und der deutsche Idealismus,” p. 141.

14 *Idem*, p. 142.

15 Basch is the acknowledged founder of “modern aesthetics as an academic discipline in France.” C. TRAUTMANN-WALLER, “Victor Basch: l’esthétique entre la France et l’Allemagne,” p. 77.

a supplement to his doctoral thesis on Kant's aesthetics. According to Basch, Schiller not only paved the way for the idealists Schelling and Hegel, but also for Schopenhauer and Friedrich Theodor Vischer, by adopting a metaphysical and normative approach to aesthetics and not simply a logical one as in Kant.¹⁶

The later twentieth century yielded a number of translations and studies on Schiller's significance in relation to the German idealists. In the United States, the translations of Schiller's philosophical essays by Walter Hinderer and Daniel O. Dahlstrom contributed to the interest in his thought.¹⁷ While in Germany, Manfred Frank's published cycle of lectures, *Einführung in die frühromantische Ästhetik* (1989)¹⁸, highlighted Schiller's originality in the context of the Kantian, idealist and romantic landscapes: "Schiller puts forward in *Grace and Dignity* the innovative thesis that *love* is the mediating *link* between the two sources of cognition; and that love is also able to span the gulf between the intellect and reason."¹⁹ However, Frank maintained that Schiller's thought ultimately could not escape the dualisms of Kant.²⁰ The issue of Schiller's success or failure to progress beyond Kant is a contentious flashpoint in Schiller research. For Peter Baumanns, it is a "dogma"²¹ to say that Schiller blurs the distinction between ethics and aesthetics and therefore failed to go beyond Kantianism. Nevertheless, this conclusion was also reached by a number of contributors to the volume edited by Olivier Agard and Françoise Lartillot, *L'éducation esthétique selon Schiller: entre anthropologie, politique et théorie du beau*.²² For instance, Gérard Raulet argued that Schiller returned to a pre-critical form of philosophy due to the fact that he could not rid himself of an empirical and anthropological perspective that was essentially foreign to the transcendental approach.

16 See V. BASCH, *De poesi ingenua ac, quae dicitur, sentimentali Schillerius quid senserit*, published in French under the title: *La poésie de Schiller*.

17 F. SCHILLER, *Essays*.

18 M. FRANK, *Einführung in die frühromantische Ästhetik*.

19 *Idem*, p. 114. For Frank, this mediating Schillerian link was also a factor in Hegel's early work on the dialectic. *Idem*, p. 116.

20 "Schiller remained Kantian." *Idem*, p. 117.

21 P. BAUMANNs, *Die Seele-Staat-Analogie im Blick auf Platon, Kant und Schiller*, p. 7.

22 O. AGARD, F. LARTILLOT (eds.), *L'éducation esthétique selon Schiller: entre anthropologie, politique et théorie du beau*.

Although Schiller claimed to give a transcendental foundation to the play drive, the author of *The Robbers* actually attaches beauty (theorised at the transcendental level by Kant in the third Critique) to the earlier physiological model found in the two medical treatises he had written in his youth.²³

On the other hand, Schiller became a fruitful reference point in Jacques Rancière's influential work on aesthetics. Since the publication of *Le Partage du sensible* (2000)²⁴, Schiller's letters *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* have supported the development of Rancière's theory on the regimes of the identification of art. In particular, they lend support to Rancière's definition of our contemporary regime as the 'aesthetic regime' of art, in contrast to the 'ethical regime' of the 'image', and the prescriptive regime of 'representation' in the system of fine arts. In the 'aesthetic regime' the specificity of the different arts is identified more with the sensible experience they engender than with their technique or mode of production. More with the "free appearance" as the actualized presence of the beauty of the art work and the "free play" they stimulate as a response in the spectator than with their specific manner of creating an object (*poiésis*). Thus, in Rancière's perspective, Schiller is an emblematic representative of "aesthetic German idealism."²⁵

Another crucial event in the recent reception of Schiller's philosophy was the bicentenary of his death in 2005. This resulted in numerous publications, including the above-mentioned text of Frederick Beiser: *Schiller as Philosopher*. Beiser's book led to a veritable sea change in the attitude to Schiller among historians of philosophy.²⁶ Other valuable monographs appearing in the wake of Beiser's book that tackled Schiller's relation to classical German philosophy include: Peter Baumanns, *Die Seele-Staat-Analogie im Blick auf Platon, Kant und Schiller* (2007);

23 G. RAULET, «Éducation esthétique ou anthropologie thérapeutique?», in particular p. 130.

24 J. RANCIÈRE, *Le Partage du sensible: esthétique et politique*. Translated into English: *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*.

25 M. JALBERT, «Perdre aussi nous appartient: entretien avec Jacques Rancière sur la politique contrariée de la littérature».

26 Beiser's volume was followed in 2008 by a published volume of texts in an author meets critics session. Here Beiser replied to Anne Margaret Baxley, Douglas Moggach, Stephen Houlgate, and Violetta Waibel. See *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 51/1, 2008, p. 1-78.

María del Rosario Acosta Lopez, *La tragedia como conjuro: el problema de lo sublime en Friedrich Schiller* (2008); Laura Anna Macor, *Der morastige Zirkel der menschlichen Bestimmung: Friedrich Schillers Weg von der Aufklärung zu Kant* (2010); Emiliano Acosta, *Fichte versus Schiller: Schillers Begriff der Person in der Zeit und Fichtes Kategorie der Wechselbestimmung im Widerstreit* (2011); and Gaël Cloitre, *Schiller: esthétique et dualisme* (2012).

Starting at the turn of the millennium, Schiller began to feature more prominently in the Anglophone world in volumes and anthologies on the history of classical German philosophy, including: *The Emergence of German Idealism* (1999),²⁷ *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism* (2000),²⁸ *German Idealism: An Anthology and Guide* (2006)²⁹, *The Yearbook of German Idealism* (2006 & 2008), *German Idealism Reader: Ideas, Responses, and Legacy* (2020)³⁰, and *Kantian Legacies in German Idealism* (2021).³¹ Some of the reasons given for including Schiller in these books concern the Kantian strand of his rational and holistic society; and that he essentially adopts Fichte's principle of *Wechselwirkung* (reciprocal interaction).³² While his statement "World history is the court of world judgement" famously becomes for Hegel "the most profound thing anyone can say" about history.³³ Of course, this does not settle the question whether Schiller is a German idealist.

27 M. BAUER, D.O. DAHLSTROM (eds.), *The Emergence of German Idealism*. It contains a section entitled "The Aesthetic Turn: Essays on Schiller, Hölderlin, and the Romantics"; see especially the essay by John McCumber: "Schiller, Hegel, and the Aesthetics of German Idealism".

28 K. AMERIKS (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, includes three essays relating to Schiller, by Daniel O. Dalhstrom, Charles Larmore, and Dieter Sturma.

29 B. O'CONNOR, G. MOHR (eds.), *German Idealism: An Anthology and Guide*. Schiller is the only figure included apart from Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. Includes selections from *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, letters 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, 15.

30 M.F. BYKOVA (ed.), *German Idealism Reader: Ideas, Responses, and Legacy*. Includes selections from Schiller's *Kallias Letters*, and the letters *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*.

31 G. GENTRY (ed.), *Kantian Legacies in German Idealism*. See the essay by A. POLLOK, "Aesthetic Conditions of Freedom: Friedrich Schiller as a Complicated Kantian".

32 See, for instance, *German Idealism: An Anthology and Guide*, p. 230-231.

33 G.W.F. HEGEL, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, GW 14/1, p. 273.

Nevertheless, the inclusion in all these volumes is symptomatic of how more positively Schiller's philosophy is perceived in the 21st century.



Friedrich Schiller is generally classified by many commentators, especially in the field of German studies, as belonging to German *classicism*. It could therefore be controversial to situate, or even just to consider him, in the stream of German idealism. As a reply to this one could point to the fact that Kant is traditionally placed in three different currents: the German Enlightenment, the Critical philosophy or transcendental idealism, and at the genesis of German idealism alongside Reinhold and Fichte. It is problematic if the definition of German idealism is so narrow that a figure cannot simultaneously belong to another movement.³⁴ It is also problematic if Schiller is excluded in advance from German idealism without a proper examination of his philosophical writings.

In any event, it is important to realize the different nuances and fluctuating uses of 'German idealism' in the last century of scholarship. Fritz Mauthner had already highlighted this issue in 1910 in his entry on "Idealismus" in the *Wörterbuch der Philosophie*: "In its [transcendental] form 'idealism' is a relatively recent word; but it was used confusedly from the very beginning, and two people employing this word rarely understand idealism in the same way. Just as the concept of 'idea' glimmers colourfully [in the history of philosophy], so too its derivative 'idealism'."³⁵

In this regard, when Schiller's relation to 'German idealism' was discussed at the beginning of the twentieth century, the term 'German' frequently designated Schiller's role as a public intellectual or *educator of the German people*. Here Windelband, Vaihinger, and Eucken all considered Schiller to be the champion of the spirit of Kantian *criticism*, the thinker who did most to popularize the critical philosophy, even

34 In his study of different historians of philosophy, Matthias Neumann concludes that many historians place Schiller outside of German idealism due to their fixed definition of this movement. See the chapter "Friedrich Schiller – ein deutscher Idealist?" of his book: M. NEUMANN, *Der deutsche Idealismus im Spiegel seiner Historiker: Genese und Protagonisten*, p. 119-131.

35 F. MAUTHNER, *Wörterbuch der Philosophie. Neue Beiträge zu einer Kritik der Sprache*, vol. 1, p. 526.

more than Reinhold, and to make it the unifying rallying cry of German education or *Bildung*. On the other hand, the label ‘idealism’ was often understood in the sense of an *idealistic disposition*, a thinker guided by lofty ideas and ideals. Hence, due to his unique placement between Kant and Fichte, it is easy to see how Schiller could be viewed as the original founder of German idealism in this sense. This meaning still exists today, and underpins the title of Rüdiger Safranski’s well-known book: *Schiller, oder die Erfindung des Deutschen Idealismus* (Schiller, or the Invention of German Idealism). For Safranski, Schiller too was an idealistic poet-philosopher, the aesthetic inspirer of an entire philosophical and cultural period extending to Beethoven’s *Ode to Joy*:

“Eventually, Schiller brought an entire epoch into elevated motion. This elevation and what became of it, especially in the field of philosophy, was later termed ‘German idealism’, and Beethoven set it to music: *Joy, beautiful spark of the Gods*.”³⁶

In much of contemporary academic research, however, ‘German idealism’ is primarily a *terminus technicus* for classifying that group of thinkers directly emerging from Kant’s transcendental idealism. But this gives rise to the questions: which published works and time period exactly does this movement encompass—seventy years from the first Critique of 1781 until Schelling late philosophy in the 1850s, or perhaps even later? And who is to be included in it—does Kant belong as well, and what about Schopenhauer?

Hans Jörg Sandkühler helpfully underlines the multifaceted meanings of ‘idealism’ just within the works of these philosophers. The sense might even change, depending on the area of inquiry, i.e. metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy or religion or history, and so on.³⁷ Frederick Beiser makes two major distinctions in this movement: between a ‘subjective’ or ‘formal’ idealism in Kant and Fichte, and an ‘objective’ or ‘absolute’ form of idealism in Hölderlin, Novalis, Friedrich Schlegel, Schelling, and the early Hegel.³⁸ Moreover, idealism should not be seen as a rejection of empiricism or as dismissive of realism. In this respect, Olivier Tinland

36 R. SAFRANSKI, *Schiller oder die Erfindung des deutschen Idealismus*, p. 13.

37 H.J. SANDKÜHLER, “Der Deutscher Idealismus – Zur Einführung”. Cf. “L’idéalisme allemand. Introduction,” in: J.-F. KERVÉGAN, H.J. SANDKÜHLER (eds.), *Manuel de l’idéalisme allemand*.

38 F.C. BEISER, *German Idealism*, p. 11-12.

has insisted that ‘absolute idealism’ for a thinker like Hegel (but also for Schelling) actually signifies that ‘ideality’ is immanent to reality. That is to say, this kind of idealism is the exact opposite of an anti-realism, since it aims at a “higher empiricism” capable of integrating all the richness of reality.³⁹ Bernard Bourgeois recalls that one of the most enduring problems for the protagonists of German idealism is the status of the subject and concomitant theories of self-consciousness.⁴⁰ Whereas for Gilles Marmasse and Alexander Schnell, the golden metaphysical thread running through this entire current is the search for a legitimate first foundational principle.⁴¹

This much is apparent: like the other collective labels German Enlightenment and German Romanticism, the definition of the term German idealism remains contested and subject to debate, and not just with respect to the case of Friedrich Schiller. These are just some of the issues to be investigated when deciding whether or not Schiller is a German idealist.



Instead of starting from a prior definition of German idealism found in the secondary literature, and seeing if Schiller fits that definition, we believe it to be more judicious and methodological to first return to the original works of these philosophers to see what they themselves have to say about each other. In this regard, the contributors to this volume were essentially motivated by two interrelated thoughts: Which methods and concepts does Schiller accept or reject from this movement? And were the main philosophers of German idealism influenced in turn by any of Schiller’s philosophical ideas and writings? Hence, the nine contributors to this volume tackled the nature of Schiller’s own philosophical system and/or his specific relation to one or more of the chief German idealists. Beginning with a more accurate determination of the mutual interactions between Schiller and the individual philosophers of this movement provides a more solid basis for answering the question about Schiller’s connection to German idealism.

39 O. TINLAND, *L'idéalisme hégélien*, p. 229.

40 B. BOURGEOIS, *L'idéalisme allemand: alternatives et progrès*, p. 7-9.

41 G. MARMASSE, A. SCHNELL (eds.), *Comment fonder la philosophie? L'idéalisme allemand et la question du principe premier*.

The first two articles by Frederick C. Beiser and María del Rosario Acosta López are new interpretations of Schiller's own philosophical position. In "Schiller's Humanism," Beiser places Schiller in the tradition of the philosophical anthropology of the *Karlschule*. Reading Schiller's Kantianism in the light of categories like "religious humanism," "autonomy," "providence," "immanence" and "transcendence," reveals that Schiller was among the first humanists in the German tradition to go beyond the religious dimension of ethics. He should therefore be considered the father of later radicals such as David Friedrich Strauss, Ludwig Feuerbach, and Friedrich Nietzsche. Acosta López's "Une dimension esthétique de la critique: la temporalité du beau dans les lettres de Schiller *Sur l'éducation esthétique*," highlights the relationship between aesthetic theory and political and historical resistance with the help of the concept of 'lingering'. Kant makes discreet use of this notion in the third *Critique*, but it plays a more decisive role in Schiller's letters *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*. Linked to beauty's ultimate resistance to conceptualization, lingering opens up a critical dimension to Schiller's aesthetics. Acosta López defends a conflict between two temporalities in his work. The temporality of the beautiful as 'free play' and lingering (i.e. in the 'presence' of the beautiful) does not belong to the causal order of events. It confronts the 'present' time understood as the arrow tip of the continuum of history. This results in the emergence of a time outside time which resists the violence that characterizes modernity, while providing an aesthetic dimension to critique.

The next two articles are devoted to Schiller, Kant and Reinhold on the central questions of *Bildung* and the play-drive. Cody Staton's "In Search of Play: Schiller's Drive Theory as a Turn Away from Kant" analyzes Schiller's account of the play-drive (*Spieltrieb*), locating its origins in part back to ideas in the writings of Kant and Reinhold. For Staton, Schiller's theory is highly innovative, since it transforms our impulses for physical satisfaction into an enjoyment of form. It goes beyond Kant by creating a love for beauty and the sublime, and signals moral progress in society. Staton converges with Acosta López when stating that Schiller views human freedom as an aesthetic experience in which the element of play allows the individual to overcome the oppressive forces of society. Jeremy D. Hovda's article "Bildung between Kant and Schiller" investigates the different theories of *Bildung* in Kant and Schiller and how they philosophically interact with one

another. It puts forward a mediating approach that does not start from the overly conflictual alternative between morals and aesthetics that is often found in the research. In contrast, it maintains that Schiller's central achievement lies in the domain of moralization, in which Schiller's theory responds to fundamental questions left open by Kant's conception of *Bildung*.

These papers are followed by two on Schiller's fraught relationship with J.G. Fichte. Laure Cahen-Maurel presents a new interpretation of the so-called *Horen* dispute. Her article "Fichte avec Schiller: la querelle des *Heures* à la lumière de *Grâce et Dignité*" argues for a re-examination of a number of overlooked textual influences in this dispute. It demonstrates that Fichte's principal text on aesthetics, *On Spirit and Letter in Philosophy* (1795-1800), created a covert dialogue with Schiller's 1793 essay *On Grace and Dignity*.—A dialogue that even Schiller himself did not notice. Consequently, the conflict between Schiller and Fichte is more based on a theoretical misunderstanding than any sort of irreconcilable opposition. Despite *personal* differences, this relationship should be ultimately viewed as one of *philosophical* harmony. For it is precisely Schiller's idea of grace as beauty in movement that provides the idealism and aesthetics of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* with a powerful conceptual tool lacking in Kant's critical philosophy. This concept of grace as beauty in movement is specific to the human spirit in its reciprocal relationship with dignity as testifying to our superiority over nature. It enables Fichte to transcendently conceive the force of the productive imagination in us as a process or dynamic bridging of the unfathomable abyss that separates sensibility and morality. In this regard, one of this article's most crucial findings is that Fichte and Schiller share in common the same "complete" anthropological perspective. In "La *Bildung* chez Schiller et Fichte, entre esthétique et politique," Quentin Landenne traces the parameters of the *Horen* dispute into the sphere of politics. He uncovers the connection between aesthetics and politics in the idea of self-cultivation (*Bildung*). Landenne too finds a positive yet critical reception of Schiller's philosophy of *Bildung* (in the letters *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*) in the Jena writings of J.G. Fichte. Here it can be said that the aesthetisation of the political and politisation of aesthetics is diametrically opposed to one another in these two philosophers.

Katia Hay's contribution, "On the Tragic-Sublime and Tragic Freedom: Thinking with Schiller and Schelling," concerns the reciprocal relationship between Schiller and F.W.J. von Schelling with regard to their reception of the Kantian sublime and their analyses of the tragic and the tragic hero in particular. According to Hay, although Schiller and Schelling similarly see the tragic hero as an incarnation of the sublime realization of human freedom, there remain important differences between them. An analysis of both their concepts of human freedom illustrates how Schelling in fact reinterpreted and reappropriated some of Schiller's philosophical thoughts on the sublime.

The volume is completed by two studies on Schiller and Hegel and the Hegelian tradition. Louis Carré's "Vicissitudes de l'État organique. Kant, Hegel, Schiller" first recalls the opposition between a mechanical and an organicist account of the state in German thought after the French Revolution. Although the conception of a polarity between a mechanical and an organicist state can be found throughout German idealism, it is not uniformly the case. Carré's article follows the vicissitudes of the political organicism in Kant, Hegel, and Schiller, positing that Schiller should be recognized as the original mediating link between Kantian criticism and Hegelian idealism. Lastly, Charlotte Morel's "Conjoindre idéalisme et réalisme après Hegel: les lectures de Schiller par Lotze et Lange" offers a fresh reading of two philosophers and their changing philosophical perception of Schiller: Rudolf Hermann Lotze and Friedrich Albert Lange. Morel maintains that Lotze's many references to Schiller shed light on the status of the conceptual pair: "idealism" and "realism". This not only yields insights into the relationship between nature and the ideal, but also between the fields of science and poetry. Lange is an atypical Kantian and differs from Lotze by attempting to implement a form of idealism that obviates a metaphysical dimension. As such, Lange could be said to be the only true Schillerian in the history of philosophy.



These articles in *Les Cahiers philosophiques de Strasbourg* 52 were initially presented at the international bilingual conference: "Friedrich Schiller and German Idealism / Friedrich Schiller et l'idéalisme allemand," which took place 9-10 May 2019 at the Institute of Philosophy,

University of Leuven, Belgium. They have been revised and peer-reviewed for this issue.

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Finally, the editors and contributors would like to dedicate this volume to Frederick C. Beiser. In the last hundred years, he has done more than anyone else to rehabilitate Friedrich Schiller as a serious philosophical thinker. It is no exaggeration to say that Beiser’s 2005 book, *Schiller as Philosopher: A Re-Examination*, internationally rejuvenated interest in Schiller’s theoretical writings. In fact, the present collection of articles on Schiller’s position within the broader landscape of German idealism is difficult to imagine without the impact of Beiser’s landmark studies on the history of philosophy. These include not only his book on Schiller, but other monographs such as: *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (1987); *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism, 1781-1801* (2002); *Diotima’s Children: German Aesthetic Rationalism from Leibniz to Lessing* (2009); *Late German Idealism: Trendelenburg and Lotze* (2013); *Weltschmerz: Pessimism in German Philosophy, 1860-1900* (2016); and most recently, *Johann Friedrich Herbart: Grandfather of Analytic Philosophy* (2022).

Our hope is that these research articles in *Les Cahiers philosophiques de Strasbourg* will also contribute to a better comprehension of Schiller’s philosophy. It is clearer than ever: to more fully grasp the stakes and tensions among the German idealists, it is imperative to take into account the philosophical writings and thought of Friedrich Schiller.

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