

A History of Philosophy

56 German Idealism

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We want to turn our attention now to German idealism and keep in mind the overall structure of modern thought that we've represented by these two intersecting lines. That is to say that we have a tradition of continental rationalism represented by Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, which, after Kant, leads into the German idealist tradition. And if you wonder what the point of connection is, it's on the emphasis on the self.

In the rationalists, it is of course the emphasis on a priori knowledge, that is to say, the inner intellectual resources of the self. The inner rationality of the self. And then the self gets even greater importance in the development of German idealism.

Of course, we have as well the British empiricist tradition represented by Locke, Burghley, and Hume, which leads into 19th-century positivism and empiricism that we'll meet in people like John Stuart Mill, and then in the 20th century with Bertrand Russell and logical positivism, and so on and so forth. From here on out, what we're doing is simply following these two trends. So we'll follow the European trend all the way up into the 20th century to Jean-Paul Sartre and beyond.

And then we'll back up and follow the empiricist trend from Bentham and Mill way up again into 1950 and since. So we'll structure it that way. Keep in mind as well the overall timeline of this other diagram, hopefully is familiar enough by now.

A plurality of worldviewish traditions developing through the course of history. Worldviewish traditions that you might label theism, naturalism, pantheism, or something of that sort. And each of them was profoundly influenced by, shaped by, the scientific models that have developed in the history of science.

The first, of course, representing Greek science, Pythagorean or Aristotelian, lays emphasis on the objective reality of form, fixity of species, and so forth, therefore a teleological worldview. The second is with mechanistic science losing the teleology, simply a fixed mechanical order of matter and cause-and-effect mechanisms. But then, as we mentioned last time around 1800 or a bit before, you begin to get the rise of historical science and biological science, both of which are concerned with the developmental process.

And so the third kind of scientific model that has come to characterize the 19th and most of the 20th century is of a more organic sort rather than mechanistic. Organic in the sense of the intertwined interrelationships. Everything is connected with everything else in some organic fashion.

And with the notion of historical process, the developmental process runs right through it. So we'll be talking about German idealism this week and next week a little bit. And then picking up with some other 19th-century developments, Feuerbach, a touch of Marx, that sort of thing.

But then, right after spring break, we'll be getting into process philosophy like Alfred North Whitehead. And I might mention now that we're done with outlining. But if you've done it in Kant, you've learned how to do it.

You've learned how to read philosophy. So, as we get to Whitehead and thereafter, we'll be reading paperback classics, selected paperback classics. And I'll be asking, and I'll give you more specifics later on, I'll be asking for book reviews rather than outlines.

So you'll get a chance to identify the thesis of the book. This week, you're working on a thesis statement for Hegel's Selections. We'll go after the thesis of the book and the steps by which the thesis is developed.

And an evaluation of how effective the development philosophically is. So we'll take the reading philosophy that much further for that remaining quad. But keep in mind this framework so that you can see that things are going to take a different shape.

Now, what we want to do, therefore, is to get some overall characterization first of all of German idealism. What is it about? And what this diagram indicates is that I'm just erasing that historical grid. What that indicates is that the German idealists are rejecting and reacting against the ultimacy of mechanistic science.

That is to say, they do not believe that the mechanistic science of the Newtonian tradition tells us the nature of reality. They will have a phenomenalist view as far as the mechanistic interpretation of nature is concerned. It's talking about appearances, not about reality.

The underlying reality is more of an organic than a mechanical sort. It's more of a developmental process than a static order. You'll see.

The static order that never changes. No, it's a developmental process in which there is change. So one thing you can keep in mind then is that 19th-century idealism is going to be a metaphysics of change.

A metaphysics of process. And it's the root out of which later there grows 20th-century process philosophy and process theology. Which some of you may be aware of.

So it's a reaction against mechanistic science. Now, there have been other reactions against mechanistic science that we've already taken in our stride. Three kinds of reaction, I think.

One that says that there must be exceptions to the mechanistic law. Descartes took that point of view. The mind is an exception to the causal mechanisms that rule everything else.

Because the mind has free will. Scottish realists take that point of view. John Locke seems to take that point of view.

Secondly, there's a complete rejection of mechanistic philosophy as not telling us the nature of reality. Leibniz is there. Leibniz is there.

His monadology is more of a teleological scheme. And in that sense, Leibniz is some sort of an anticipation of what's coming later in the 19th century. Because we get into this idealist movement a renewal of the teleological picture of nature and of history.

It is end-oriented, end-achieving. There is potency that is being actualized in the process. Then you get the phenomenalist reaction of people like Berkeley and Kant.

Saying that mechanistic science tells us about appearance but not about reality. So you get those three other kinds of reaction which we've already taken in our stride. Well, now comes the idealist.

And what it is doing, of course, is riding piggyback on the earlier phenomenalist view of science. And particularly on the influence of Kant. Particularly on the influence of Kant.

So keep that in mind, first of all, the reaction against mechanistic science. Second, it's also a reaction against the dogmatic rationalistic metaphysics of the 17th century. The kind of foundationalist approach that Descartes initiated with his first principles and thence deductive reasoning, all the way until you've got the whole system worked out.

Now that sort of process, that sort of methodology, may have been appropriate when you thought that this was a strictly mathematically ordered universe. A mathematical method fitting a mathematical universe. But if what you have is a developmental, organic kind of process, then you need a different kind of method.

And here we'll notice it is Kant's transcendental method that is the key. So we'll come back to that in just a moment. A transcendental method.

Third, these German idealists are continuing Kant's Copernican revolution. And that immediately rides on the notion of a transcendental method that focuses on the constructive contribution of the self. A Kant's Copernican revolution.

That is to say, the key to reality, the key to understanding reality, is the role of the self. The role of the subjective self, the human spirit. Now I said that Kant leads you into Romanticism.

Well, here it is. The role of the creative self. But this comes in different ways, and you might think of it as the viewer here, the observer, the thinker, whatever, looking through the lens of his or her own self-consciousness at the screen of reality as a whole.

So from this standpoint, you see things through what the self-consciousness of the human spirit provides. Put it another way, if we can, with the transcendental method, uncover beneath all of the particulars of human experience, the underlying essence of what self-consciousness is, of what the self is, then we can, in that light, see the reality, as it were, the reality of the whole projected on the screen. Have you played with making shadow images in the dark? Did you do that as a kid with a flashlight in your bed? Where would you shine a light on the ceiling and make some sort of crazy figure with your fingers, and you'd get a projected huge image there? Well, you can think what Hegel is doing is making those sorts of images.

Projecting an image of the self on the reality as a whole. If you like, creating the universe in the image of the self. Creating the whole of reality in one's own image.

The key to reality is one's own self-consciousness. Now, if that is the case, it's going to follow that the structures of human consciousness are also the structures of reality. Or to put it in Kantian language, the categories of understanding are the categories of reality.

Oh, you're breaking the phenomenal-nominal distinction. Right. You see? If there is indeed some sort of pre-formation whereby the forming of the self is in the image of reality, you see, then by understanding the structures of the self, we can understand the structures of reality.

And that's precisely what these people are trying to do. So the transcendental method is an attempt to provide a description of the process of self-understanding or self-consciousness. So that the development of the self-consciousness is a microcosm of the development of the consciousness of the absolute spirit, the all-inclusive ground of being.

And immediately I say that, you begin to see that this idealism is going to be a monistic idealism. There is one all-inclusive ground of being. Of which the self-consciousness is simply a microcosm.

Now, let me back up with one more statement there. This may help. Back up to this.

We've observed during the modern period, from Descartes on and culminating in Kant, the ongoing question about the nature of the self. What am I? Oh, a thinking thing. Well, Locke isn't so sure.

Hume finds only a bundle of perceptions with nothing to unify them. Kant finds that there is this synthetic unity of apperception, whereby there is some sort of unification of the field of consciousness. And the schematization of the understanding brings the unification of the whole of one's experience and thinking.

But you notice that that is not an underlying substantive entity that is the unified self. It is the structuring of consciousness that is the unifier. Right? It's the structuring of the consciousness that's the unifier.

Now, that's the point of departure for the German idealists. They're not looking for some mind substance, some soul substance in the Cartesian sense. They're not looking for immortal souls in the Platonic sense that have some eternal pre-existence and so on and so forth.

No. What they're doing is trying to understand the self as structured self-consciousness. You see? That's the notion of the self.

What is it that unifies all of the diversities of experience? What is the unifying action of the self? How are you going to characterize this self-consciousness? And as you see from what I've written on the board, if self-consciousness is the key to reality, and the question is, well, what is the essential, central, fundamental characteristic of self-consciousness, of which everything else is just a function or a by-product, then you get four different answers. In Fichte, moral consciousness takes off from the critique of practical reason. In Schelling, it's what Kant calls the teleological.

In the critique of judgment, the aesthetic consciousness. Schelling is the major philosopher of German Romanticism. For Schleiermacher, Friedrich Schleiermacher, it's the religious consciousness.

And Schleiermacher is the great 19th-century theologian, building his theology as a projection of religious experience. If you like, Romanticism in theology. He's a Romanticist theologian.

And what Hegel does is simply to say, no, it's this conceptual capacity that we have. The ongoing process of trying to grasp the concept of being itself. That's what marks the developing consciousness.

So in trying to grasp more and more fully the concept of my self, I'm grasping more and more fully the concept of being itself, the totality. So you have to distinguish between the finite self and the absolute self. Absolute in the sense of the one all-inclusive ground of being.

And this is where the phrase ground of being begins to pick up. You find it in Schleiermacher, Hegel, and so forth. Okay, now, let me pause there for a question, a comment.

Kristen? Oh, you answered my question as you were preparing. I figured I might, that's why I kept going. Is the hinge point to all these, or it seems to me that one of the hinge points of all these idealists is that there is some sort of unity within the self? Yeah, yeah.

Yeah, the emphasis here is on the unity of the self. And immediately, you've got a unified, all-inclusive, one absolute self. So what you get here is a monistic idealism, a monistic metaphysic, everything is ultimately one.

Built in this image. Right, the unity of the self. How is that different from? Why do you say monistic as opposed to pantheistic? Well, the term monism simply says reality is one all-inclusive being.

Pantheism is the religious shape that would take, identifying the one as God. Now, the term pantheism you'll find may be a little too heavy-handed for these guys. Particularly for Hegel, who isn't happy with pantheism.

But the term panentheism is perhaps more applicable. Now the difference is the little Greek preposition en, which means in. So rather than saying everything is God and God is everything, everything is in God.

But the totality of finite things does not exhaust the totality of God. There is room for more process. Pantheism in Spinoza has a static universe.

It has the mechanistic static order. This is a dynamic, open-ended teleological process. David? No, no, say that again.

I'm not quite sure I got the question. Yes, yes. When it comes to the German idealists, they're trying to understand the self as structured self-consciousness.

Yeah, in Kant, the unity of the self, which is this thing, okay. In Kant, the unity of the self is not found simply by listing forms and categories. But it's found in terms of what he calls that synthetic unity.

Notice the term synthetic unity of a perception. You'll see. And then the schematization of the twelve categories in relationship to the form of time.

Now, notice in both cases, both the synthetic unity and the schematization, this is a functional unity. The self is unified in action. Not in just being, but in thinking, in experiencing.

That's why I say self-consciousness. You'll see. And I think that's important to notice that it's a functional unity, we're functionally unified.

Because what is the unifying factor in the self-consciousness in these cases? Well, this is the functional unity. These are the functional units. You'll see.

It's those functions that unify. Respectively for a particular philosopher. Reflect back on John Locke and his discussion of personal identity.

You'll see. What is it that gives unity of the self through a period of time for Locke? And his answer is simply memory. That is to say, the past experiences that are associated with my present experience, my present memory of the past.

You'll see. So that too is sort of a functional unity. And it's a somewhat speculative thing that he, as to whether there is an underlying soul substance, he thinks so but can't prove it as clearly as Descartes thought he could.

You'll see. So this notion of functional unity, I think, is important. Okay, anything else there? Let me sum this up, then.

What we're going to find, what we're going to find, is first a new scientific model, more organic and developmental. If you like evolutionary theory, because of course, evolutionary theory came in with the developmental biology. Developmental biology was both the micro and the macro level.

At the micro level, the beginnings of genetics, the macro level is evolutionary biology. But a new scientific model, developmental. A new philosophical method.

That begins with the transcendental method but comes to be referred to as a phenomenological method. Phenomenology, that's the method. What is the title of Hegel's major work? The Phenomenology of Mind.

The Phenomenology of Mind. And what is the dominant European philosophy in the 20th century? It is phenomenology, a methodological approach. It's the method underlying existentialism, underlying hermeneutical theory, and so forth.

Now watch this term phenomenology. It is not the same as phenomenalism. And a moment's reflection will help you see why some of you who have been using the terms interchangeably were not thinking.

There's a difference between an ism and a logy. An ism is a position, a theory. Phenomenalism is the view that all we know is appearances.

A logy is a study of, a science of, a methodological thing. Now phenomenology, then, is the study of the phenomena. It's not saying only phenomena can be known.

But it's saying that we start with a study of the phenomena. Get the difference? Yes, because if you're trying to get at the structure of the self, what is it that is the functional structuring that goes on in the development of consciousness and self-consciousness? Well, you have to describe the process, don't you? You have to describe the phenomena of developing consciousness. So the method is phenomenological.

Well, now in the 20th century, the term is fairly common. And even though you find some unphilosophical people using the term interchangeably with phenomenalism, the two are very, very different. You find its proper use in a phrase like phenomenology of religion.

Which is used in two senses. One is a phenomenology of religious experience, describing the phenomena of religious experience. Another is phenomenology of religion is describing beliefs and practices.

The phenomena at that social level, cult level. Phenomenology. It's a descriptive method.

It's not an attempt to prove something with demonstrative arguments. The old demonstrative arguments of the Descartes lock tradition, no, that's past. That was part of dogmatic metaphysics.

What you have is a descriptive method. And the conclusion to an effective description is not, therefore, such and such, QED. The conclusion to an effective description is, " Oh, I see, yeah, that's the way it is.

You see? Because what you're doing with your description is saying to somebody, hey come and look at this. See what I see. You see? And the validity of the description is underscored when you get that consensual social process.

You see? The interpersonal agreement about what indeed is properly being described. So it's a descriptive approach rather than a demonstrative approach. So when you read Hegel, don't say to yourself, well what has he proven? What's this piece about master and servant? Has he proven anything? He's not trying to prove anything.

He's just trying to describe the interpersonal dynamics by virtue of which the master becomes aware of himself as master. And the servant becomes aware of herself as a servant. You see? The developing self-awareness and self-consciousness are described.

But that is just a shadow image of the whole, or the whole is a shadow image of that. You see? Microcosm, macrocosm. Let me pause there with one other footnote that strikes me.

I hadn't thought of this particularly before. Last fall, when we got started with the pre-Socratics, I was trying to point out that from before the beginnings of philosophy, back in the Greek poets, Homer, Hesiod, so forth, there is an idea of ordered unity, such that the ordering of the moral life of an individual is a microcosm of the ordered justice of a city-state, which is a microcosm of the ordered unity of the cosmos. Remember? So that the self, morally ordered, a right, a just individual, is a microcosm of an ordered cosmos.

Now, notice how radical the change is at this juncture. In a way, it's coming back to that theme. You see? The ordered unity of the self is a microcosm of the ordered unity of reality as a whole.

You see? But for the Greek philosophers, it was developed in terms of the ordered unity of the physical universe. Oh! Now it's in terms of the ordered universe of the world of ideas, the world of culture, of art, of religion. But the idea of the self being a microcosm of the whole is still here.

So don't be surprised if, in Hegel, reading about Hegel, you run into the notion of the logos. You see? Because Hegel, in his religious writing, reintroduced the logos concept, which had been eclipsed during the mechanistic age, which had no teleology. Okay.

Okay. What did I say then? A new scientific model, a new philosophical method, phenomenological description. All right.

A new logic. A new logic. Because what we have had is a logic of the syllogism.

Syllogistic logic. What we are going to get is a logic of process. And that logic of process is dialectic.

Syllogistic logic is a logic of unchanging universals. Why? Well, you know the basic rule of the simple categorical syllogism. All A is B. All B is C. Therefore, all A is C. You see, the basic rule of the syllogism is that there is a middle term.

And the middle term must be universally extended at least once. That is to say, B must be universal, all B, at least once, in order that B, this B, this particular B, can be part of this. Otherwise, there's no connection.

You've got to have a connective. The connective has to be about a universal. Now, of course, it can be about a universal class of people.

But it would have to be a class of people unchanging in a certain respect. In other words, you've got to have unchanging universals of some sort. At least, unchanging universal concepts.

So, this logic was devised, it was devised, it was organized, developed, by Aristotle with his emphasis, you see, on universals. Unchanging universal concepts. Classes, species.

Oh, but now, if we've got a developmental concept in science, and in history, you see, how are you going to think about what's going on in the developmental process? Obviously, that's going to raise the question, are there any universals? And Hegel is going to have to restructure the whole theory of universals. He doesn't ditch it, he restructures it. And he's pretty close to Aristotle.

But in restructuring it, he still has to work with a logic of process, rather than the logic of permanence. Think of the pre-Socratics. Where the antithesis between Heraclitus and Parmenides is the antithesis between universal change and universal permanence.

Well, now we're moving to the notion that change is more ultimate than permanence. Change is more ultimate than permanence. When we get to Hegel, I'll make some comments about his logic.

It's sometimes said that, by people who haven't read Hegel's logic, that he rejects the law of non-contradiction. He does not. Explicitly, he does not.

He simply regards it as trivial in a world of change. You never step into the same river twice, and so you have trouble with the law of non-contradiction at the same time and in the same respect. So, the logic of process, dialectic.

And dialectic, you remember, is the sort of thinking that says, yes, no, and then brings the two together in a synthesis. Thesis, antithesis, synthesis. Yes, no, well, here it is.

And the problem is to grasp this. The idea is that the process of thought, which is the starting point, the process of thought is like a mental meandering, finding your way through a whole maze of ideas. Not this, but this, that's a little bit further, but yeah, we need this and this.

A mental meandering that leads to a fuller and fuller understanding. The unfolding concept. And applied to history, that's the view, that history tends to have those swings of the pendulum.

We're now seeing the conservative reaction in the former Soviet Union, and then there will be a modification. So, a dialectical process. A new logic.

Therefore, also a new epistemology. A new epistemology. What we had back in the 17th century, 18th century, was a representational theory of knowledge.

Representational. Ideas that are subjective, that stand for, oh, but in these German idealists, ideas are no longer representations, static representations in the mind. Ideas arise in dynamic interaction with the world of which we're part, with the larger world.

And so, what you have is an epistemology that stresses direct awareness. Within which there is a gradual clarifying of ideas, a clarifying of concepts. Direct awareness, gradual clarification.

We'll see that more explicitly as we get to Hegel. And the new metaphysic, well, that's what we've been talking about. How are you going to describe the new metaphysic? It's idealism rather than materialism, rather than dualism.

It's idealism. Everything is of the nature of mind, spirit, and self. It is a developmental kind of monism, if you like.

You can call it an evolutionary idealism. Not all evolutionary thinking is naturalistic. These were evolutionary idealists.

Everything is moving towards the full actualization of that spiritual life and vitality which underlies everything else. It's latent. It's coming out.

Evolutionary idealism. It's sometimes spoken of as immanentistic. In that any divine being, absolute ground of being, is imminent in the entirety.

That has profound theological consequences. It means that there is no transcendent God who has to reveal himself to creatures who are external to himself. So there's no such thing as special revelation.

Because if the divine is imminent, then the divine self-consciousness wells up within your self-consciousness. So there is no such thing as special revelation, acts of revelation. There is no such thing as ex nihilo creation.

There is no such thing as a historic act of redemption. It's all process from within, imminent. There's no unique incarnation.

How can there be if there isn't a transcendent God to incarnate himself? The incarnation is simply a symbol for talking of the imminence of the divine in everything. So watch for this when we get to Hegel's philosophy of religion. Imminentism.

The metaphysic is sometimes described as gradualism. That is to say, everything in existence is to some degree mind, spirit, consciousness. The old notion of degrees of being all up the hierarchy, you see, is now translated into a developmental process.

The process of evolution is the development of greater degrees in a graduated process. Greater degrees of mind, spirit. This is part of the evolutionary optimism.

And for Hegel, the fullest manifestation of spirit comes out in German culture. Where else would you expect? Yeah, this was the age of nationalism. Why? Because what is nationalism? It's the embodiment, the full self-discovery, self-realization of the identity of the spirit of a people.

Nationalism is a product of Romanticism. A product of this German idealism. And then I was going to say it's Romanticism.

Well, I think you already see that. When Wordsworth's ode to daffodils, and your heart dances with the daffodils, that's not just a metaphor, you see. The daffodil's dance is a free, creative manifestation of a certain degree of creative spirit at work there that is at work more fully in your heart.

And so your heart, responding to the stimulus, joins in one great chorus of dance. Romanticism. Well, this is where we're going with German idealism.

Now, what I'd like to do is to make a comment or two about these other figures. Questions? Do you get the picture that I've been trying to paint? I think if you can grasp this and the other illustrations that I'm going to use, you'll find that reading the bits and pieces of Hegel that we have makes sense. But read Stumpf first.

He'll give you more of an over-picture, though what he does is to give you an almost dead over-picture, as if it's a logical system rather than a developmental process. The thing that does it best, I think, in a brief compass this, though I'm indebted as well to a book on Hegel by a graduate of ours, Meryl Westfall, W-E-S-T-P-H-A-L, who teaches at Fordham University in the Bronx. And is a first-rate Hegel scholar.

He's been president of the Hegel Society of America. But his book is very, very helpful in catching this. Okay.

As I was saying, the conception of what unifies the self, what is the function that is the dominant unifying function, the all-absorbing function of the self? Fichte, who died in 1814, and incidentally was enamoured with the figure of Napoleon, the figure on the white horse, marching through Europe. This is the romanticist figure embodying so much. Fichte raises the question of what the ground is that underlies all our experience. What is it that is the precondition, to use the Kantian term, the precondition that makes human-type experience possible, that makes our consciousness the way it is? Now that's the good Kantian question.

He rejects dogmatic metaphysics, as did Kant. He opts for a transcendental method, as did Kant. And the thing that he finds, as he describes the experience of the self, is that the nature of the self comes through prominently as that of a moral being, where the will is the dominant and most revealing faculty.

Now, interestingly, his phenomenological description that leads to that is more of a description of the epistemological side. He poses, for instance, the old question from Descartes: how do I know that material bodies exist? It's an old one. Berkeley would have been happy for that.

How do you know that material bodies exist? And his initial response, of course, is a description of the scepticism that results from people like Berkeley and Hugh. I don't know that physical bodies exist. But in my moral struggle, my inner moral struggle between duty and desire, between acting out of duty and just following my inclinations in the world around me, I find that my moral life postulates, there's that term again, we had it in Kant, it posits the existence of a non-self that is opposed to the moral life of the self.

So that it's in the moral life where we find the opposite of the moral will. The opposite of the moral will is that which is posited, you see, posited by the will, as it were. There is no proof that a physical non-self world exists.

But whatever it is in that non-self, it stands in a sort of dialectical opposition to the self. As we know it in the moral life, don't we? So then, if we're going to talk about the nature of reality, what is it going to be? That is to say, if the self-consciousness is the key to reality, and this lens allows me to project a picture of reality on the overall

screen, what am I going to say about the nature of reality? Well, obviously, in reality as a whole, there is no antithesis to the self. You can't have this as both a and non-a.

And what is projected is that it comes out as ego. Absolute ego, absolute will. That is to say, reality as a whole has what we would call the conative characteristics.

Yes, in varying degrees. In humans, there is conscious will, moral will. In animal life, instinctual drive.

In vegetative life, the constant thrust of things to grow, to grow, to survive. The resistance that even inanimate things offer to extraneous forces. In all of these cases, what you see is manifestations of will, or pre-developments of will, in opposition to that which is other than itself.

The rock that resists disintegration. The plant that thrusts itself up through the soil. The animal has its instinctual drive and fight to survive.

And the human, willing to act out of duty rather than just giving in to inclination. So, his conception comes out that way. And the way in which he pictures it then is in this sort of manner.

What you have, the ultimate reality, is the absolute ego manifested in the finite ego and the finite non-ego. Now, what we observe in the phenomenal realm is that antithesis. Ego versus non-ego.

So the phenomenological description describes this. We know the reality of the striving of will. We don't know the reality of physical non-ego.

Let's just posit it. And so projecting this on the screen, absolute ego is the nature of reality. Well, try it with Schelling.

Try it with Schelling. As I said, his point of departure is more the critique of judgment than the critique of practical reason. The focus is on the feeling one has of oneness with nature.

The feeling of the ongoing teleology of which our aesthetic experience is a part. So forth. Alright, so Schelling writes about the philosophy of nature in terms of an evolutionary idealism.

The physical world is at an early stage in its gradual evolution of a living conscious spirit. And nature is a living force. Impulsive.

Creative. Bursting out with novelty. And when he turns to philosophy of mind, he sees the same sort of thing in human culture.

There is a low level of creativity and an emerging drive for novelty in theoretical thought. Sense perception. Theoretical knowledge.

There is more of this creative drive going on in the practical realm. The moral and the political, as Fichte has said. But its fullest manifestation is in the aesthetic realm.

Where the contemplative of the first level, perception, is combined with the active dimension of the second, the moral level. Action and contemplation combine in creative art. Creative vitality.

Imaginative. Creating new worlds of experience. And so he traces this kind of thing phenomenologically and concludes that reality itself is overall vast, creative, not creative will, creative drive.

Emphasis on feeling and the unfolding of the absolute in the course of history. So you get those two following the same kind of methodological process very much. Very much the same.

Schleiermacher? Well, Schelling, by the way, was a member of the romanticist circle first at Jena, J-E-N-A in Germany, then at Berlin. In Berlin, he was joined by Schleiermacher, who was a pastor from a pietist background, a hospital chaplain, and so forth. And he finds religious consciousness the key.

He objects to Kant's reducing religion to little more than ethics. Because religious experience, as any pastor knows, is far, far more than simply ethical willing. The moral will.

Religious experience is of absolute dependence on the divine. And that's his definition of the very essence of Christian piety. It's a sense of absolute dependence on the divine.

Came from a Pietist background. But for that to be the case, absolute dependence, God is not another individual being along with us beings. God is not transcendent.

God is being itself. The ground of all being. But he doesn't want that to imply Spinoza's pantheism.

Spinoza, like the 18th century, had an atomistic view of individuals as discrete, isolated from each other. Insulated. Schleiermacher goes for a more relational view.

I'm not externally related to other things, with just a channel of continuity going through me. There's rather an organic relationship. The self is then defined, what I

am, what is being unified in this religious experience, is that whole network of relationships.

Here am I with relationships of a genetic sort to parents. Relationships of a social sort to friends, associates, environment. Relationships of an emotional sort to everything imaginable, you see.

And the unifying core of this is a sense of absolute dependence. Wherever these vectors go, they express dependence on. Dependence of one sort or another.

Bringing them all together in the unified core is an absolute dependence on being itself. And these finite dependencies are just finite aspects of the whole. So God is the all-embracing ground of being.

And what he tried to do, of course, was to articulate a theology to define Christian theological concepts in these terms. And the language of theology, therefore, becomes symbolic rather than being taken in some literal sense. Well, do you see what's going on? Phenomenological description of the functional unity of self-consciousness.

With the conclusion that what we discover in the self is simply a microcosm of the whole, which is then projected as the nature of reality. Okay. We'll pick it up there and rerun a little bit of this next time as we break into Hegel himself.