

# German philosophy since 1945

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## I

If we enquire about the traces that the end of the Second World War left in the history of German philosophy, we may be disappointed: such traces can scarcely be found. In German history, of course, 1945 belongs with 1933, as former federal President von Weizsäcker again made clear in an important speech on 8 May 1985. Even if this is granted, however, the picture is scarcely altered: German philosophy seems to have been little influenced by political events. It had always been a philosophy of the universities. The great innovators of the nineteenth century—Schopenhauer, Feuerbach, Marx and Nietzsche—were not professors of philosophy and did not want to be. They were thus considered for a long time as outsiders; the mainstream of philosophical thinking proceeded entirely in academic channels. It was therefore not to be expected that the seizure of power by Hitler would alter philosophical activity, at least so long as his regime allowed the universities to go on working more or less undisturbed, which was the case until 'total war' was proclaimed in 1944. The expulsion of Jewish colleagues was for German university departments the most noticeable intrusion of the new state power. It seemed, however, to affect only individuals, and that on racial grounds independent of their intellectual or political position; academic structures were scarcely altered.

German academia, perennially loyal and somewhat conservative, accepted the measures for the most part as an 'act of God', and the fact that countless left-wing and left-liberal scholars had to join the exodus may even have been rather welcome to the majority of those who stayed behind. Of notable protests by German philosophers—e.g. against the Nazi purges—history tells us nothing. That German academia was so unpolitical can be explained by the fact that, in a country with strong authoritarian and weak democratic traditions, freedom of research and teaching was only to be gained at the price of abstinence from politics. Where academics did become

politically involved, this was as a rule not in a professional capacity. It is thus easy to understand why the few explicitly Nazi philosophers (Alfred Bäumler, Ernst Krieck, Alfred Rosenberg) were regarded in the 'trade' as outsiders and careerists and no longer taken seriously. Martin Heidegger's support for the new regime ended around 1934 and remained an isolated episode.

If other German philosophers became politically engaged in the Third Reich—and many did—it was not in their professorial capacity; academic activity was scarcely affected. It was not Hitler, the war or Auschwitz that affected the content of German philosophy after 1933, but rather the consequences of the emigration. This brought about the interruption of traditions which would then develop more strongly abroad; German philosophy thus became somewhat provincial. First Marxism disappeared from the scene, and with it everything which, however distantly, had any connection with Karl Marx or with socialism. The classification of psychoanalysis as 'typically Jewish' ensured a similar fate for the thought of Sigmund Freud. The ending of the



*'Today, students, I shall be lecturing about the categorical imperative of Immanuel Kant ...'*

'Vienna Circle' through the *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938 was also particularly momentous, since the tradition of logical empiricism could not then be carried forward in the German-speaking world; analytic philosophy and the philosophy of science became an Anglo-Saxon affair. Karl Jaspers and Edmund Husserl were forbidden to teach and to publish and went into 'inner emigration'; the philosophy of existence and the older phenomenology were thus sidelined to make room for what Heidegger was to put in their place. His *Being and Time* (1927) was presented as the inheritance not only of the philosophy of existence and of phenomenology, but of Western philosophy in general. Heidegger represented original German philosophizing, and his fascination grew in proportion as the important alternatives—Georg Lukacs, Ernst Bloch, Max Horkheimer, Ernst Cassirer, Paul Tillich, Karl Popper and Ludwig Wittgenstein—faded from view.

Heidegger's great opponent in the field of ontology was Nicolai Hartmann, who was very influential but could never establish a school. In the universities, the neo-Kantian tradition that had been dominant for many years was accused of 'formalism', and a philosophy of content was prescribed. When a history of philosophy written in 1943 characterizes Husserl's phenomenology of consciousness as 'Jewish introversion', it reflects the general mood. People didn't want to continue with the mere phenomenology of consciousness but with the phenomenology of reality; in this way Heidegger, Hartmann, Lipps and many others believed themselves to have gone beyond Husserl.

Mention must also be made here of the philosophical anthropology founded by Max Scheler and Helmuth Plessner, which found in Arnold Gehlen<sup>1</sup> its most important representative. It presented itself in sharp distinction to traditional philosophizing as a post-philosophical philosophy which integrated empirical sciences into itself. The academic scene was in any case dominated by a mass of more or less undisturbed historical and hermeneutic research, which is still the case today. How else does one qualify in philosophy save by the usual proofs of competence in the human sciences? To submit a doctoral thesis on Heidegger's *Being and Time* or Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* would still leave philosophy departments today at a loss.

## II

It has often been regretted, in hindsight, that the Germans made so little use of the opportunities for a new beginning in 1945. They are a people who, after national catastrophes, take care to reflect more strongly on their cultural identity, and for philosophy this means an emphasis on continuity. Martin Heidegger was banned from teaching by the French occupying authorities from 1945 until 1951, then returned to the university [Freiburg] for a year before becoming *emeritus* professor. There are few other spectacular cases of denazification, if we make an exception of cases in the Soviet occupation zone and the subsequent DDR. There, the expulsion of all members of the Nazi party from official positions followed promptly from the establishment of Marxism as the official philosophy, with a monopoly in all universities. In the rest of Germany matters continued as before, although the international isolation began slowly to give way. Here the return of the emigrants played an important role.

The reception of French existentialism had already begun in 1946. Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus were the most widely-read philosophical authors in Germany as well as in France. Karl Jaspers, who had moved to Basel in 1948, again made his presence felt and achieved a very wide influence, especially by his statements on the political questions of the day such as German re-armament or the atom bomb. In 1947 Heidegger published his letter 'On Humanism', in which he indirectly took issue with Sartre's 'Existentialism and Humanism' (1946), which itself can be traced back, via Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, to the French reception of *Being and Time*. The philosophical world remarked with astonishment on the transformation that Heidegger's thought had in the meantime received, from an existential or fundamental ontology to a meditation on Being itself. Heidegger's late philosophy was, for the moment, the direction of thought that determined all discussion, and its influence was only strengthened by existentialism. Who could precisely distinguish Heidegger, Jaspers, and Sartre from one another? In addition, more and more university chairs became occupied by Heidegger's disciples.

The gradual return of the emigrants was only slowly able to alter this scene. They had

never constituted a united group. That all the Jews were on the political left had been asserted by Nazi propaganda, but was no more true than that all left-wingers were Jews. Not all the emigrants, moreover, returned. Edmund Husserl had died in isolation in Freiburg in 1938. His unpublished works were dramatically brought to Louvain in Belgium, where Father Van Breda took on their assessment, and a number of Austrian emigrants who could read Husserl's shorthand occupied themselves with the transcription of the works and thus ensured their physical survival. After 1945, Husserl's late work had to be learned from scratch. Paul Tillich, Rudolf Carnap, Herbert Marcuse, Hannah Arendt, Erich Fromm, Hans Jonas and many others remained in the USA; Karl Popper went to England; Georg Lukacs remained in his homeland of Hungary. If these philosophers had immediately returned to Germany to champion their ideas, post-war German philosophy would have taken a different course; as it was, they only achieved notice by roundabout routes and after long delays. Even so, many of the returners only found a hesitant response. Helmuth Plessner took up a chair in Sociology at Göttingen in 1951, but it was 1959 before he allowed a new edition of his book, *The Be-lated Nation*. It had been written in exile in Groningen, Holland, in 1933–34, and delivered as a series of public lectures, entitled *The Fate of the German Mind at the end of its Bourgeois Period*, in Zürich in 1935. The book contains one of the most brilliant and painstaking analyses of the cultural and intellectual pre-history of the events of 1933. Plessner remained, like many of the other returners, an isolated figure in the academic world. Ernst Bloch left his American exile in 1948 and went to Leipzig where, until 1956, he was the most important philosopher in the young DDR. In 1957 he was compelled, on account of the alleged political machinations of his students, to accept *emeritus* status, and emigrated once again. This time he went to Tübingen, where he achieved, from 1961 until his death in 1977, a second and essentially more lasting influence on the German-speaking world. What made the reception of Bloch, and also of the works of Lukacs, more difficult in the 1950s was the Cold War and the pronounced anti-communism among the West German population. A new philosophical appropriation of Marx, no longer hampered by

hostile imagery, only began in the Federal Republic in 1960; by this time, Ernst Bloch was already in Tübingen.

In German philosophy after 1945, the only 'school' established by the returners was the critical theory of the so-called 'Frankfurt School'. The reason for this is that it returned, after a fashion, as an institution: in the form of the Institute for Social Research. This institute had been founded in 1923 on the basis of a private endowment and contractually linked to the University of Frankfurt; Max Horkheimer had taken over the directorship and the associated chair in social philosophy in 1930. In 1933 the institute had been promptly seized and confiscated by the Nazis, but Horkheimer had succeeded in saving the endowment funds and re-establishing the institute in the USA. The *Journal for Social Research* could thus continue to appear, abroad, until 1941. In 1950 the Institute for Social Research was re-established in Frankfurt, but its character had changed during the intervening years. The older critical theory had been an interdisciplinary programme, involving fruitful interrelations between an unorthodox Marxism in social theory, dialectical philosophy and the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud. Now, at the latest after 1947, when Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno jointly published the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, philosophy and sociology began increasingly to go their separate ways in the practical work of the Institute, with philosophy continually gaining greater importance. Adorno's influence on the young Federal Republic was thus, above all, through his works in philosophy and the theory of art. Critical theory only made a truly broad impact in the 1960s, when it provided the theoretical basis of the student protest movement. This influence was strengthened by the wide audience that Ernst Bloch and Herbert Marcuse found in those years. The sudden death of Adorno in 1969 marked a sharp break. The collapse of the student movement, the ensuing dogmatic hardening of Marxist positions, and the wave of terrorism of the 1970s—blamed by many on critical theory—drove its influence into the background for some years. Only recently has intensive involvement with critical theory been renewed.

The last links to be restored in Germany were those with the Vienna Circle and thus with the tradition of analytic philosophy. An

important reason for this is the fact that the German-speaking representatives of this school of thought who had emigrated returned to Germany—with few exceptions—only through their writings. The works of Rudolf Carnap, Otto Neurath, Alfred Tarski, C.G. Hempel, Karl R. Popper and many others only became known after 1960, first merely through reports, followed later by new editions of old texts and by translations. (Moritz Schlick, the founder of the Vienna Circle, had been murdered in 1936. Of the remaining members of the circle only Bela Juhos and Viktor Kraft remained in Vienna; as early as 1950, Kraft published an account of the Vienna Circle, but it attracted little attention.) The re-appropriation of this tradition and the involvement of Germans in international discussion in this area is thanks above all to Wolfgang Stegmüller, whose pupils worked in this type of philosophy of science in a number of universities.

In 1960 there appeared the first German edition of the writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein, containing the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, the *Philosophical Investigations* and the *Notebooks*. The subsequent influence of Wittgenstein in German philosophy can scarcely be exaggerated. It set in motion the reception of analytic philosophy—in both its ideal language and its ordinary language versions—which followed in all philosophical movements and schools, as the Proceedings of the German Congress of Philosophy held in Heidelberg in 1965 impressively verify. It is not that no opposition was raised against Wittgenstein and against the 'linguistic turn' which he had brought to philosophy; but one had to have read him and reacted to him. 'Analytic philosophy' and 'philosophy of science' were the magical words of the early 1970s; they were considered the symbols of the philosophical 'moderns', and emblazoned everywhere on advertisements for university chairs. When the German sociologists held their conference in Tübingen in 1961, Theodor Adorno and Karl Popper were invited as leading speakers. Popper gave a paper on the logic of the social sciences to which Adorno replied. This was Popper's first public appearance in Germany after the war; this event, and the ensuing controversy about positivism fought out in print between Hans Albert and Jürgen Habermas, gave Popper's critical rationalism a considerable hearing in Germany. It was generally understood as the



Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951), whose Austrian intellectual roots figure prominently in the recent biography by Ray Monk.

great alternative to the critical theory of the Frankfurt School; and it seemed to regard itself as such. What made it attractive to many was the fact that it was not traditional or conservative, but also not Marxist; its profile was—as Popper's social philosophy shows—liberal, albeit with gradually strengthening conservative features. It is therefore not surprising that first the Liberal Democrats [FDP], then the Social Democrats [SPD], and most recently the Christian Democrats [CDU] have discovered Popper to be 'their' philosopher.

### III

So things remained in Germany until the 1960s, until the consequences of the emigration and the international isolation after 1933 had been overcome and philosophy within Germany once again reflected the international spectrum of philosophical approaches. If we set aside the mass of purely historical and hermeneutic research, which went on everywhere just as before, only a few philosophical movements set the debate: they were characterized, or characterized themselves, as 'schools'. The school of Heidegger developed the reflections on Being of their master's later writings into a hermeneutic philosophy, with the problem of understanding (*Verstehen*) at its heart. Hans-Georg Gadamer developed, in his *Truth and Method* (1960) the fundamental thoughts of *Being and Time* in the direction sketched by Heidegger himself. 'Understanding of Being is itself a determination of Being of *Dasein*. The ontic distinction of *Dasein* lies in the fact that it is

ontological'.<sup>2</sup> *Dasein*, for Heidegger, is what traditional philosophy had called the ego or consciousness. Its being is to be so determined that the understanding (*Verstehen*) of its being belongs to this very determination; the thesis is to be understood as asserting that ontological being is the ontic mark of *Dasein*. This primitive understanding of the sense of being is, according to Heidegger and Gadamer, originally a linguistic understanding, for language is—as Heidegger put it later—the 'home of Being'. The understanding of Being mediated by language is at the same time universal, because whatever concerns *Dasein* can only appear within the horizon of a determinate prior comprehension of Being. Hermeneutic philosophy thus necessarily raises a universal claim for what it regards as the fundamental structure of the limits of the human world in general. In Gadamer's philosophy, Being itself takes a back seat behind the notion of sense (*Sinn*), i.e. behind the respective historically unfolding contexts of meaning which are presupposed by all philosophizing and thus cannot be required to be produced by it. According to Gadamer himself, philosophizing is entering into a history of the effects of texts. It is obvious that this would be regarded by many as a philosophical justification of the historical-hermeneutic practice of academic philosophy. Philosophers had often asked themselves how their activities as historians of philosophy or interpreters of texts were to be distinguished from other human sciences like history or philology; Gadamer seemed now to have justified even this as philosophical, indeed as philosophy in its broadest sense.

When Jürgen Habermas, in a volume dedicated to Gadamer, combatted the universal claims of hermeneutics with arguments drawn from the critique of ideology, he drew on arguments of critical theory which he himself had developed by taking up the point of view of hermeneutic philosophy. In his famous Frankfurt inaugural lecture, 'Knowledge and Human Interests' (1965), he contrasted a 'technical' interest in knowledge with a 'practical' interest, only to subordinate both to an 'emancipatory' interest. In this way critical theory was radically altered—which many orthodox members of the Frankfurt School still lament as a 'betrayal'. The 'dialectic of enlightenment' had explained the Western process of enlightenment and its dialectic exclusively in

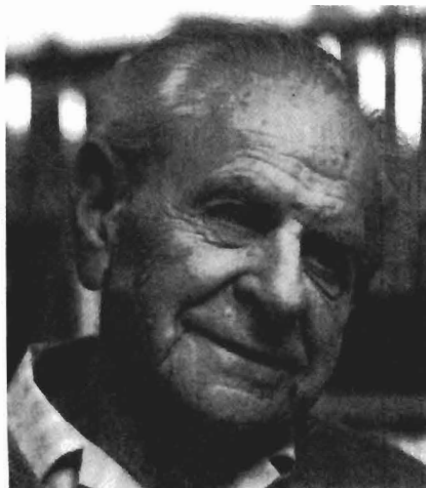
terms of our interest in the technical mastery of nature, and had conjured up by way of antidote the emancipatory force of philosophical reflection. In Habermas, this interest in technical control was now contrasted with a practical interest, an interest in the meaning-giving and meaning-preserving communication of traditions, without which both meaningful action in the world and social interaction are impossible. Habermas thus denies—as his controversial interpretations of Marx show—that the conditions and forms of human action and interaction can be explained in terms of the conditions and forms of the technical mastery of nature alone, i.e. in terms of the mere conditions of production. Influenced by his analysis of the systems theory of Niklas Luhmann (1971), Habermas completed what is best described as the 'communication-theoretic turn' of critical theory. Through the reception of analytic philosophy of language, speech act theory, and many of the results of linguistics, developmental psychology and social psychology, Jürgen Habermas has since developed the programme of the old critical theory into a 'theory of communicative action'.<sup>3</sup> In it the foundation of a general critical theory of society is to be laid down; it is, in a certain sense, the philosophical part of such a theory.

There is a close association between the programme of Jürgen Habermas and that of Karl-Otto Apel; the two authors have worked closely together for years, albeit with different goals in view. It was not the reconstruction of critical theory but the transformation of transcendental philosophy to meet the conditions of the present day that provided the focus of the philosophical work of Karl-Otto Apel and his disciples.<sup>4</sup> These conditions are to be defined firstly through the 'linguistic turn' (Wittgenstein), and secondly through the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Peirce, whose writings Apel has introduced into German philosophical discussion. In opposition to Kant, Apel claims that the conditions of the possibility of communication are the fundamental conditions of the possibility of thought, action and knowledge in general, so that the Kantian critique of knowledge must be completed by a pragmatic critique of linguistic meaning, without which knowledge would not even be possible. Even the fundamental ground of ethical norms is tackled in this context, in which the basic thought is the

reflection that in human communication certain timeless ethical norms come into play. Karl Otto Apel's programme of a transcendental-pragmatic philosophy takes up, like Habermas' philosophy, the essential points of view of the hermeneutic tradition, so that here too there is no simple opposition to Heidegger and Gadamer.

We have already mentioned that Hans Albert represented the party of critical rationalism in the 'positivism controversy'; since then he has expounded this position in countless publications<sup>5</sup> and extended it especially to social philosophy and the social sciences. His preference for vigorous controversies—e.g. with Karl-Otto Apel or with the Protestant theologian Gerhard Ebeling—has given critical rationalism a higher profile in Germany. In the face of the developments of this philosophy by Toulmin, Feyerabend and others, he has always defended the position of Popperian orthodoxy. We have also referred already to the works of Wolfgang Stegmüller. In his monumental work, *Probleme und Resultate der Wissenschafts theorie und Analytischen Philosophie [Problems and Results of the Philosophy of Science and Analytic Philosophy]*,<sup>6</sup> he has combined in synoptic form everything that has been discussed in this field in the last few decades. Although Stegmüller takes sides on many points, and proposes arguments which take the debate further, the strength of his work lies above all in its systematization. Stegmüller's influence as a teacher makes it quite permissible to speak of a 'Munich School' of analytic philosophy of science, although this expression is not widely used.

The third of the really influential movements in German philosophy of science is associated with the name of Paul Lorenzen. In the controversy over the foundations of mathematics, Lorenzen had joined the party of the intuitionists, and had submitted an operational foundation for logic and mathematics,<sup>7</sup> in which the methodological foundation for the reconstruction no longer depends on the fundamental intuition of counting but on mere operations with signs. Lorenzen thus took up a position sharply opposed to the old logicism of Russell and to the formalism of Hilbert, as well as to the views of his Munich colleague Stegmüller. Lorenzen went on to develop this approach further into a constructivist philosophy, seeking to carry through



Another of the eminent émigrés, Sir Karl Popper (1902–1994).

into ethics and the philosophy of science methods already practised in logic and mathematics.<sup>8</sup> The constructivist grounding of concepts always takes its point of departure from simple linguistic activities, in order to arrive by methodical steps at what, according to other epistemological or ethical traditions, seem to be mere matters of arbitrary decision or definition. The programme of the so-called 'Erlangen School' also contains the idea of a proto-physics, i.e. a constructivist grounding of the natural sciences. It was only to be expected that the theories of the Erlangen School were very critically received both by critical rationalists and by analytic philosophers of science of the Munich School; the ensuing public controversies between these schools were correspondingly lively.

#### IV

In the last decade, contemporary German philosophy has formed new groupings, no longer based on schools and movements but on problems and problem-areas. Philosophical activity is above all organized into longer-term working programmes, carried on jointly by participants from diverse backgrounds. The old controversies between the schools are beginning to seem dated, perhaps because they were eclipsed for a while by political struggles. The terrorism of the 1970s also had an extreme polarizing effect on philosophers, since it was not only politicians who believed

that its roots were to be found in left-wing political theories. The early 1970s also brought the *Tendenzwende*, i.e. the general turning back towards conservatism after the collapse of the protest movements and after the world economic crisis had ended the euphoria of reform associated with the social-liberal coalition in Bonn. Since that time one can speak of neo-conservatism in philosophical journalism as well. (An important document of the resistance against this trend is provided by the notes edited by Jürgen Habermas on the 'Intellectual Situation of the Time'.<sup>9</sup>) In the meantime, feelings have again calmed down somewhat, as the climate of debate at philosophy conferences shows; co-operative work on professional questions of shared interest seems to have been going on in all areas, even across academic and political party lines. We will conclude with outline sketches of some of these programmes of co-operative work.

One of the most comprehensive projects of post-war German philosophy is the new edition of the *Wörterbuch der Philosophischen Begriffe Historischen Wörterbuch der Philosophie* [*Dictionary of Philosophical Concepts*] by Rudolf Eisler,<sup>10</sup> begun by Joachim Ritter. While the old dictionary of Eisler had only listed references for the fundamental concepts of philosophy in historical order, and provided brief introductory notes, the new undertaking, under the title *Historical Dictionary of Philosophy*,<sup>11</sup> pursues the goal of the history of concepts in the strict sense. The changes and developments in the meanings of concepts are described against the background of the historical changes and developments in theory, which demands a great deal more expenditure of research effort than Eisler's project. (This is shown by the fact that the latest volume to appear—No. 8, 1992—only goes as far as the letter 'S'). The history of concepts is not merely a matter for historians and archivists; it is itself a philosophical programme, as the current editors of Ritter's dictionary understand. The reconstruction of the pre-history of our own world of philosophical concepts should help not only with the hermeneutic appropriation of classical texts but should also throw philosophical light on the present. *Historisches Lexicon der Politisch-Socialen Sprache in Deutschland*. A parallel undertaking is the great dictionary, [*Fundamental Concepts of History. A Histori-*

*cal Lexicon of Political and Social Language in Germany*<sup>12</sup>]. The history of concepts seems today generally to have taken the place of classical historical and hermeneutic research.

Just as Ritter's dictionary brings together philosophers from all camps, so another programme which oversteps school boundaries—the 'rehabilitation of practical philosophy'<sup>13</sup>—brings diverse positions and convictions into dialogue. *Praxis* seemed to have become the domain of the social sciences: neither the hermeneutic nor the Marxist, and certainly not the analytic tradition, had the capacity to provide a satisfactory basis for moral philosophy. As the volumes edited by Manfred Riedel show, philosophers of all persuasions have begun the attempt to fill this void, to put new life back into practical philosophy in its classical sense—i.e. as a branch of philosophy comprehending more than just normative ethics. The results are easy to see: one can really speak in Germany of a new flowering of practical philosophy, to which all the schools have contributed. German philosophers have as a whole become more 'practical', that is, more concerned with practical and political applications; a number of them enter publicly into the discussion of topical issues and exert no small influence. In this context we should mention the radio course on 'Practical Philosophy/Ethics'<sup>14</sup> conducted by Karl-Otto Apel and Dietrich Bohler, which several radio stations have broadcast. Here too authors from the most diverse backgrounds have worked together, and the wide response to their undertaking shows impressively how great the public need is for fundamental orientation in ethics and politics.

Another characteristic of the German philosophy of recent years has been its increasing engagement in interdisciplinary projects. Here we must remember the intensive discussions between historians, social scientists and philosophers on the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study of history.<sup>15</sup> These received a widespread response, and countless parallel publications show that it was obviously a matter of overcoming a fundamental crisis, in which traditional historical thinking had been overthrown by the change in historical research from the study of political events to social and structural history. Hans Lenk has edited a representative selection of the German and the international debates about the theory of action in four

volumes under the title *Handlungstheorien—interdisziplinär* [*Theories of Action: An Interdisciplinary Approach*];<sup>16</sup> these debates strongly occupied German philosophy in the late 1970s. They concerned not only the foundations of practical philosophy but also of the social sciences as sciences of human action—a concept that is at present placed in question both by structuralism and by systems theory (e.g. the works of Niklas Luhmann). Anglo-Saxon analytical philosophy of action has also made important contributions here. Here too we must mention the work of the group which publishes its results, in numerous volumes, under the title 'Poetics and Hermeneutics', and which is thus bringing about a true Renaissance in aesthetics and the theory of art. Other centres of interdisciplinary effort have been provided by philosophers of language and linguists with their discussions, especially of linguistic pragmatics and their relation to structural syntactic-semantic analyses on the one hand, and to the philosophy of the 'linguistic turn' on the other. German philosophers have also been intensively involved in the controversies over the relation between philosophy of science and history of science aroused by Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend. More recently established are groups working on the philosophy of religion and on biomedical ethics.

There are also simple institutional reasons why the German philosophy of the last few years has become organized into problem-oriented projects. Since the resources available to universities for research have been continually cut since 1974 by government economic measures, only the German Society for Research and the great private foundations (the V.W. Foundation, the Thyssen Foundation, etc.) remain as supporters of research in the human sciences, and these institutions prefer to support problem-oriented projects. This external pressure towards co-operation has been good for the traditionally quarrelsome society of German philosophers; it has become a truly productive force. To the extent that academic philosophy has turned to such problems, public interest in it has grown. This is shown not least by the steadily increasing numbers of students who want to read philosophy, even without any prospect of a job. Similar trends can be noticed in the schools and in adult education; after the reform of the grammar schools in 1970 philosophy was offered in

upper schools in most *Länder*, which previously had been the exception in Germany and not the rule. This lively philosophical interest, which does not straightforwardly coincide with interest in philosophy as it is academically established, is a challenge which German philosophers have yet to overcome.

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