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*Johann Gottlieb Fichtes Wissenschaftslehre von 1812.
Vermächtnis und Herausforderung des transzendentalen
Idealismus* ed. by Thomas S. Hoffmann (review)

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violence and sacrifice at the foundation of all human communities in the same sense as Giraud—or Heidegger.

Harding acknowledges that Derrida does not use the term “sacrifice” in the same sense they do. He thinks that Derrida comes closer to them in his analysis of “the force of law.” Because no decision or law can be perfectly just, Derrida contends, all laws are imposed by force; their fundamental injustice can thus be shown by revealing their violent foundations and origins. However, because in his later works Derrida seems to look forward to an impossible to realize “democracy to come,” Harding suggests that Derrida is reintroducing the kind of “imaginary republic” Machiavelli objected to in his famous announcement of the way in which he differed from his predecessors in *The Prince*.

Machiavelli is a better philosopher than Heidegger, Harding concludes, because Machiavelli recognizes that the violence at the foundation of all human communities involves the murder of actual human beings. But he is inferior to Giraud, because he does not take account of the guilt or innocence of the victims. In the archaic communities Giraud describes, the people think that the scapegoat is guilty; the innocence of the sacrificial lamb is what distinguishes the Christian God’s sacrifice of his Son from all others. Because a majority of the inhabitants of the world do not believe in the Christian dispensation, Harding thinks, “not even a god can save us now.” In his famous statement Heidegger was not referring to a transcendent God. He was urging his readers to adopt an attitude of waiting for a new disclosure of Being. In the meantime, Harding suggests, we are doomed to see “princes” sacrifice innocent individuals and peoples in establishing and maintaining orders they want to impose.—Catherine Zuckert, *University of Notre Dame*

HOFFMANN, Thomas S., editor. *Johann Gottlieb Fichtes Wissenschaftslehre von 1812. Vermächtnis und Herausforderung des transzendentalen Idealismus*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2016. 184 pp. Cloth, €69,90—This new publication on Fichte is a collection of contributions that were originally presented at the 2012 Berlin conference celebrating the 200th anniversary of the *Doctrine of Science* or *Wissenschaftslehre* 1812 as well as the 250th anniversary of Fichte’s birth. The book contains ten articles that reflect the lively tone characteristic of conference presentations enriched with additional developments and references. As the editor’s preface emphasizes, all contributions were written in the spirit of Fichte’s transcendental approach and with the acknowledged desire to pass on to the readers the “flame of the *Wissenschaftslehre*.”

One of the most striking features of this collective work is the predominance of studies concerned with the concept of appearing (*Erscheinen*) and its reflective forms (*Sich-Erscheinen der Erscheinung*). They constitute central aspects of Fichte’s phenomenology

in 1812 as well as in its previous versions, notably after 1800. This also indicates that Fichte's position in 1812 is deepening the project of his *Doctrine of Science* rather than renewing it completely and radically.

T. S. Hoffmann's introductory contribution poses a decisive question—"Why Fichte?"—a question that the author answers through a general argument in favor of transcendental philosophy of which the 1812 *Wissenschaftslehre* is particularly emblematic. Fichte's approach not only allows a better understanding of Kant's oeuvre, but also enables us to expand the horizon of transcendental philosophy as such. What, then, are the main characteristics of Fichte's transcendental philosophy in 1812? First, it is the distinction between visibility and what is visible. This distinction is characteristic of the spirit of criticism as opposed to that of dogmatism, since for the latter the visible comprises, so to speak, in itself the conditions for its visibility. This first distinction implies a second one, which is even more fundamental, namely, that between image and being. Such is the originary transcendental disjunction stemming from the absolute, an absolute that is, however, not to be equated with the I, contrary to what a superficial interpretation based on Fichte's 1794 *Grundlage* would suggest. From the Fichtean standpoint in 1812, the I is "merely" the locus where visibility and seeing (*Sehen*) become themselves visible as self-appearing of appearing. In other words, it is the locus where light actualizes itself. Like its preceding versions, the 1812 *Wissenschaftslehre* remains nonetheless a philosophy of freedom: consciousness is capable of an act of freedom while elevating itself above its merely factual state (*faktisches Bewusstsein*).

Commenting on this reflective process, Honrath makes clear that the I surpasses its object character insofar as it brings to light the self-movement of life that animates it. But how can this life, which ultimately originates in God, be expressed? Such is the challenge faced by Fichte. As an image, however, the Kantian "I think" can be only the term of a process whose constitutive moments have to be discovered by the *Wissenschaftslehre*. For the human, that is, for finite consciousness understanding itself as a moment of this process, understanding amounts to freely acknowledging the absolute as something it fundamentally depends on. The vision of this dependence generates the self-limitation of the I, namely, what Fichte calls *Selbstvernichtung* (literally: self-annihilation), which is paradoxically the necessary condition to access one's individual vocation or *Bestimmung*.

The thesis affirming a "return to Kant" in Fichte's late transcendental phenomenology is, in turn, analyzed by Binkelmann. However, as the author highlights, it would be more than an oversimplification to reduce Fichte's middle period to a realist philosophy of life and being, while cataloguing his late period as a transcendental *Besinnung* inspired by Kant. One must acknowledge, on the contrary, that Fichte's philosophy has been, at least since the Jena period, in constant debate with that of Kant, while simultaneously trying to overcome the boundaries drawn by critical philosophy.

Marco Ivaldo's contribution moves toward a similar conclusion, as it stresses the genealogical character of Fichte's approach: far from being a mere description, it aims at seizing the genesis of appearing within the important context provided by the *Wahrheits- und Vernunftlehre* of the second 1804 *Wissenschaftslehre*.

As M. J. de Carvalho points out, the image is image of the absolute, that is, God's *Dasein*. Life is thus the activity that engenders the division proper to the manifold of images, which are, in turn, destined to be analyzed by the *Wissenschaftslehre*. As a result, the appearing as self-appearing, that is, the image of an image, is revealed not only as a process of division but also as the fundamental condition for appearing *tout court*.

The idea of the world as image is also the topic of J. R. de Rosales's study that comprises a particularly interesting discussion of Fichte's Spinoza reference in the 1812 *Wissenschaftslehre*. The famous "so Spinoza, so wir" means, indeed, that for Fichte being is absolute oneness. Not only is divine life impervious to change, it also has to be conceptualized as through itself, from itself, and in itself (*durch sich, von sich, an sich*). However, and here the difference with Spinoza is insurmountable, it is equally clear to him that we do not live *in* God but "through" God (*an Gott*), which means, *in fine*, that we are essentially in the mode of an image. This mode of being is necessarily one of knowing (*Wissen*).

The role of the *Wissenschaftslehre* as the reflection (enabled through reflexivity) on the self-appearing of appearing is confirmed by Kimura's article. The author takes into account Janke's important study of Fichte's phenomenology that concluded on the balance between phenomenology and ontology in Fichte: without being there can be no image (as *da-seiend*), and, without appearing, being could not be "there," that is, it would not manifest itself as *da-seiend*. Furthermore, Kimura accounts for the threefold schema of appearing in Fichte's 1812 *Wissenschaftslehre*. Schema I equates to the foundation of appearing as such (*Erscheinung erscheint*), schema II to factual knowing (*faktisches Wissen, Erscheinung erscheint sich*), and schema III to the *Wissenschaftslehre* itself as it reflects such factual self-appearing (*Erscheinung erscheint sich als erscheinend*).

The *Wissenschaftslehre* is, however, not limited to a theory of self-awareness, as Dieter Henrich's well-known thesis seems to imply. Richli highlights that the *Wissenschaftslehre*, in particular its 1812 version, in fact surpasses the concept of self-awareness in order to thematize appearing as the appearing of the absolute. For the late Fichte, therefore, there exists an immediate unity prior to self-awareness and that constitutes its transcendental condition.

The volume concludes with two comparative studies that go beyond the Fichte-Kant debate, thus enlarging the angle taken on the 1812 *Wissenschaftslehre*. The first, authored by Penolidis, engages in a comparison with Hegel's *Science of Logic*. As Penolidis points out, the *Science of Logic* shares a methodological concern with the

Wissenschaftslehre 1812: to investigate and posit being in its “purity” means to lose track of the living movement of appearing and its subject–object division. Thus, a tension arises between the immediacy proper to the unity of being, on the one hand, and the logical form implying mediation, on the other. It is this tension that both Hegel and Fichte try to resolve.

The second comparison, by Girndt, further enlarges the debate to Indian and Asian thought in general (Vedanta, Buddhism), as it reminds us of the requisite of universality inherent to the philosophical project. Girndt also highlights Plato’s influence on Fichte, while stressing the latter’s original conceptualization of freedom.—Frédéric Seyler, *De Paul University*

INGTHORSSON, R. D. *McTaggart’s Paradox*. New York: Routledge, 2016. xiii + 154 pp. Cloth, \$140.00—John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart’s infamous argument for the unreality of time (or McTaggart’s paradox) has left an enduring impression on the philosophy of time. Few contemporary philosophers agree with McTaggart’s conclusion that time is unreal, but the argument is discussed frequently, and the core debate in the philosophy of time, between so-called A theorists and B theorists, turns on insights and distinctions that originated with McTaggart. Ingthorsson’s valuable book is a focused study of the paradox, which offers an insight into McTaggart’s overall metaphysical system and discusses a range of responses to the paradox.

Ingthorsson begins by challenging the widely held assumption that “McTaggart’s argument for the unreality of time is a stand-alone argument that does not rely on any metaphysical assumptions.” For Ingthorsson, McTaggart’s paradox is not asserted as a discrete argument, to be understood and assessed in isolation; Ingthorsson asserts that the paradox must be understood alongside McTaggart’s methodological and ontological idealism, keeping in mind his views on, for example, “the general nature of the existent in Absolute Reality.” Thus, the task of chapter 2—before the argument is introduced and dissected in chapter 3—is to present some of the key points of McTaggart’s idealist metaphysics, the points that Ingthorsson takes to be crucial for a proper understanding and appreciation of the paradox. One illuminating aspect of chapter 2 is the statement of McTaggart’s metaphysical system in axiomatic form. That is: existence and reality coincide and do not permit degree; existence (reality) is constituted by substances, their qualities, and relations between them; a substance is something that bears qualities and stands in relations without being a quality or a relation; qualities and relations (characteristics) depend for their existence on the existence of substances; and, substances are individuated by their characteristics. From these axioms, Ingthorsson asserts that McTaggart derives three