



The Heidelberg School: Continuation by Innovation

Gerhard Preyer

(Goethe University Frankfurt, Institute of Sociology)

Abstract: Dieter Henrich is one of the philosophers since the 1950s who conceived an independent philosophical approach. Applying the term “school” to the philosophers from Heidelberg is justified by the fact that several generations have been involved in the continuation of the group’s work since 1970. In the meantime, another generation has established itself, which calls itself the New Heidelbergs, whose members have been continuing and innovating what is called “Dieter Henrich’s original insight.” In this article, first, Henrich’s insight is characterized in a way which justifies the use of the term Heidelberg School. Second, a treatment of Henrich’s research programme at the beginning of the 1970s would be too one-sided. Third, it is argued that the epistemological interest in dealing with this school is not of a historical nature. Finally, an outlook on the progress of Henrich’s enduring insight is given. Without the “continuation by innovation” of the school and “Henrich’s original insight,” the research programme of the New Heidelbergs cannot be adequately grasped.

Key words: German philosophy, Heidelberg School, Dieter Henrich, Manfred Frank, self-consciousness, pre-reflective consciousness, *a priori* intersubjectivism

By “continental philosophy” I shall mean primarily phenomenology, which had its birthplace on “the continent” but now enjoys residence almost everywhere; but I shall also mean the “Heidelberg School,” i.e., Dieter Henrich and his students, primarily Manfred Frank. Through the work of these thinkers, along with phenomenology’s continued inquiry into self-consciousness, the self, first-person reference, and intersubjectivity, there have been convergences of philosophical interests on the side of analytic and continental philosophies.

James G. Hart, *Castañeda: A Continental Philosophical Guise*

1. Introduction

1.1. Contemporary Initial Situation

Dieter Henrich’s philosophical merit is reworking the problem of subjectivity in modern philosophy. His leitmotif is “By what is the subject intrinsically determined as a subject, and not extrinsically, for example, through socialization

or a particular neurophysiological structure?”¹ Tugendhat introduced the term Heidelberg School.² By this term he understood, beside Henrich as its founding figure, Konrad Cramer and Ulrich Pothast.³ Tugendhat argues that it was to their credit that they had thought modern philosophy of consciousness through to the end, since “all attempts to make the structure of self-consciousness intelligible have led into paradoxes.”⁴ However, he claims that the Heidelberg School did not solve this question.⁵ It is shown in the meantime that this is not the case.⁶ But it is also worth mentioning Manfred Frank from the perspective of the 1970s,⁷ since he proves in the analysis of Novalis’s concept of the pre-reflective self-feeling a turn to Henrich’s anonymous consciousness, and his re-systematization of Novalis’s concept of the absolute is a critique of Hegel’s philosophy.

The Heidelberg School has meanwhile been continued and re-systematized by Manfred Frank. In the meantime American colleagues have called Henrich’s

¹ The interpreters of Henrich agree in this characterization about it, e.g., G. Seel, *Fichte und Henrich nachdenken*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, p. 220. The history of Henrich’s work is now well researched. See M. Frank, *Ist Selbstbewusstsein ein “anonymes Feld” oder eine “wissende Selbstbeziehung”?* Dieter Henrichs zwei Theorien zur Verteidigung von Selbstbewusstsein, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 69–75; M. Frank, *In Defence of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness: The Heidelberg View*, “The Review of Philosophy and Psychology” 2022, Vol. 13, No. 2: *Self-Consciousness Explained*, pp. 277–293; and the contributions on the state of research, in M. Frank, J. Kuneš, eds., *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, op. cit.; M. Borner, M. Frank, K. Williford, eds., “ProtoSociology” 2019, Vol. 36: *Senses of Self: Approaches to Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness*; on further studies, see S. Lang, K. Viertbauer, eds., “The Review of Philosophy and Psychology” 2022, op. cit.

² E. Tugendhat, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbstbestimmung. Sprachanalytische Interpretationen*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin 1979.

³ K. Cramer, *Erlebnis Thesen zu Hegels Theorie des Selbstbewusstseins mit Rücksicht auf die Aporien eines Grundbegriffs nachhegelscher Philosophie*, in: *Stuttgarter Hegel-Tage 1970*, ed. H.-G. Gadamer, Bouvier, Bonn 1974, pp. 537–603; U. Pothast, *Über einige Fragen der Selbstbeziehung*, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1973.

⁴ E. Tugendhat, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbstbestimmung*, op. cit., pp. 10–11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶ M. Frank, *Ansichten der Subjektivität*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin 2012; M. Frank, *Prä-reflexives Selbstbewusstsein Vier Vorlesungen*, Reclam, Stuttgart 2015; D. Henrich, *Stationen einer Freundschaft*, “ProtoSociology” 2019, Vol. 36: *Senses of Self: Approaches to Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness*, pp. 535–521. On the philosophy of the mental/mind since the 1950s, see G. Preyer, *Cartesian Intuition: A Cleansed Cartesianism*, “Studia z Historii Filozofii” 2019, Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 77–109.

⁷ M. Frank, *Die Philosophie des sogenannten magischen Idealismus (1969)*, in: M. Frank, *Auswege aus dem Deutschen Idealismus*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin 2007, pp. 27–66.

original insight the “Heidelberg problem,” and many American, as well as Chinese, colleagues confront themselves with it.⁸ We should ask what entitles us to speak of a school in philosophy. We can justify it in this way: when several generations confront and work on a certain question reference. This can be claimed with regard to the Heidelbergers.

1.2. Sketch of a Guide to Henrich’s Work History

It is recommended as a first approach to the analysis of the history of the work of Henrich to provide a small guide. The present investigation confronts itself with “Dieter Henrich’s original insight” and its continuation by the innovation of Manfred Frank. On his shoulders stands the analysis of Henrich-1 and Henrich-2, that is, the two philosophies in Henrich’s work history.⁹ Henrich’s interpretation of Fichte is not treated in detail in this study. Henrich’s initial study is *Fichte’s Original Insight*,¹⁰ referring to Fichte’s *Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre* (1797).¹¹ The *cantus firmus* of Henrich-1 is the criticism

⁸ See also M. Borner, M. Frank, K. Williford, eds., “ProtoSociology” 2019, op. cit.

⁹ M. Frank, *Ist Selbstbewusstsein ein “anonymes Feld” oder eine “wissende Selbstbeziehung”?*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *In Defence of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*, op. cit.; G. Preyer, *Cartesian Intuition*, op. cit.

¹⁰ D. Henrich, *Fichtes ursprüngliche Einsicht*, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1967 [orig. in: *Subjektivität und Metaphysik. Festschrift für Wolfgang Cramer*, eds. D. Henrich, H. Wagner, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1966, pp. 188–233]; reprinted in D. Henrich, *Dies Ich, das viel besagt. Fichtes Einsicht nachdenken*, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 2019.

¹¹ J.G. Fichte, *Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre* (1797), in: *Fichtes Werke*, ed. I.H. Fichte, Vol. 1: *Zur theoretischen Philosophie I*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin 1971, pp. 519–534. Fichte claims to stop the regress and the circle of reflection philosophy by an action-theoretical egological approach. Fichte’s “magic formula” for this is “the I posits itself”; “as posited” is added by Fichte. However, this also remains circular and the recourse is not prevented, but the procedure is ended arbitrarily. It is recommended, in order not to get into not really decidable problems of interpretation in the matter of Fichte, to distinguish his “original insight” from his treatment of the question and the different versions of his *Wissenschaftslehre*. His “original insight” protects us from false theories, but his *Wissenschaftslehre* is to be classified as historical. The very big problem is the apophantic “as.” This prevents a non-objective conceptualization of mental states. This is emphasized in M. Frank, *Präreflexives Selbstbewusstsein Vier Vorlesungen*, op. cit., pp. 140–141. Henrich’s Fichte interpretation is now well studied; see, e.g., G. Seel, *Fichte und Henrich nachdenken*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 219–243; S. Lang, *Editorial: First Person and Non-Conceptual Consciousness*, “ProtoSociology” 2019, Vol. 36: *Senses of Self: Approaches to Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness*, pp. 464–465; J. Stolzenberg, *Subjektivität und Metaphysik. Dieter Henrich–Wolfgang Cramer–Fichte*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die*

of the modern philosophy of reflection and what conclusions are to be drawn from it. It should be mentioned that Wolfgang Cramer had already rejected the philosophy of reflection. A statement on Henrich, however, would be a bisection of his philosophical investigations if one did not also deal with his work history in excerpts (see section 2.1).

Henrich's renewal of the philosophy of consciousness put him in opposition to the turn from mentalism to the philosophy of language, which was also represented in German philosophy, and the move to a language-theoretical intersubjectivism (Tugendhat, Habermas). Henrich's critique of reflective philosophy was also agreed with by Chisholm, with whom he exchanged views (see section 2.2). It is advisable also to mention his resonance with his American colleagues, for example: Chisholm, Nozick, Quine, and Davidson. In his lectures and seminars he discussed the basic ideas of analytic philosophy and confronted Tugendhat's theory of language as a critique of a mentalistic epistemology.

The selected points of view of Henrich's history of works are not historical in the narrower sense, but are based on his central reference problem of his research since the beginning of the 1980s. It is that of placing the philosophy of self-consciousness in an existential relation to a metaphysical all-unity. Of interest are Henrich's turn to aesthetics, referring to Hölderlin as an example, his ethics of nuclear peace, and the introduction of a new research programme of reconstructing the cultural reproduction of social communication, that is, the constellation

Heidelberger Schule, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 285–310; M. Frank, *Präreflexives Selbstbewusstsein Vier Vorlesungen*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *In Defence of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*, op. cit.; J. Kardsek, "Vor Augen haben". *Überlegungen zu Henrichs Fichte- und Kant-Interpretation*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 267–284.

It should be mentioned that in the 1970s he pursued the philosophical research programme of reinterpreting Fichte's original insight from his interpretation of Hegel's "Wesenslogik." However, the programme was abandoned by him in the end. Since I am not a Hegelian, I do not want to comment further on this. However, it cannot be denied that his interpretation of Hegel's dialectic as a "dialectic of shifting meaning" can certainly be classified as innovative among Hegel admirers. On Hegel and Fichte as well as Henrich, see A. Kress, *Selbstbezügliche Negation als Selbstbewusstsein Versuch, zwei Grundgedanken Dieter Henrichs zu verstehen*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 339–363. It is worth mentioning, however, that in the first half of the 1970s Henrich oriented himself to two early studies of Schelling, *Über die Möglichkeit einer Form der Philosophie* (1794) and *Das Ich als Prinzip der Philosophie* (1795). They were of importance for him especially with regard to reasoning nihilism. Those who studied with Henrich in the first half of the 1970s will not deny this.

research (see sections 2.3–2.5). Henrich’s interpreters agree that his lines of flight begin a re-systematization of his early inquiry that increasingly distances him from his non-Kantian research programme of the early 1970s.

Henrich’s *original insight* deals with Henrich’s philosophical rediscovery of Fichte’s original insight. It establishes a new version of the concept of the subject (see section 3) Meanwhile, Henrich’s interpreters agree that in the history of his work there is a reshuffling. It concerns a Kantian turn from his “original insight.” Already in his *Fichte’s Original Insight* an egological systematization is laid out, to which he returns again and again in his work history.¹² The problem is that the subjectivity of the epistemic and practical subject is systematized as a “self-relationship” (*Selbstbeziehung*). In this way, however, he gives a very different answer to the question of “what intrinsically determines the subject as subject” (section 4).

But above all we have to address the issue of why the Heidelberg School has remained of philosophical interest. That we still speak of it at all is the merit of Manfred Frank. He has promoted the exchange with American colleagues and innovated the Henrich-1. In this respect we should speak of a “continuation through innovation.” In order to clarify this situation, it is advisable to identify the central question. This also addresses the reinterpretation of Castañeda, Chisholm and Sartre. However, a distorted view of Henrich’s philosophical investigations would be presented if one did not address the extension of his renewal of the philosophy of self-awareness and the modification of his approach from the early 1970s. In this regard, there are relevant investigations by Frank, Lang, and Preyer that should be followed up and processed. The study concludes with a brief outlook (sections 5 and 6).

2. Some Aspects of the History of Dieter Henrich’s Work

2.1. Wolfgang Cramer

It has already been mentioned that Wolfgang Cramer had a special place in German philosophy. This is due to the fact that he conceived an independent philosophical approach. This is not affected by the fact that he argued with traditional philosophical means and not with formal and formalized arguments. Henrich

¹² D. Henrich, *Fichtes ursprüngliche Einsicht*, op. cit.

usually referred to Cramer in his accounts of his intellectual biography. He wrote a review of Cramer's *Die Monade* and had philosophical exchanges with him in the second half of the 1950s.¹³

Cramer's philosophy is primarily an *a priori* ontology and also metaphysics. According to Cramer, consciousness presupposes a lived experience (*Erlebnis*) as origin. Lived experiences are the having of any content – for example, thinking, perceiving and feeling. For him experience is always a more or less differentiated subjective feeling (*Empfinden*). We recognize from this that thus his epistemological beginning is Cartesian-motivated, that is, "I experience something." "I," "self," and "consciousness" are synonymous expressions according to Cramer. The question is whether Cramer consistently conceptualizes experiences without a subject–object distinction. It is helpful for an interpretation of Cramer to discuss his determination of the mental "I-thought."¹⁴

The ego is not representational. It is a way of making the ego. One could also say that it is done without an agent. At this point we already encounter a basic problem as in Cramer.¹⁵ According to Cramer, a purely performative theory is inconceivable. The origin of experience is thus a "drawing out of oneself." In this respect, the beginning with experiencing has a fundamental reflexive constitution, which is not to be in a reflexive relation.¹⁶

Cramer introduces into the epistemology and ontology of the monad a non-conceptual, non-objective, performative experience that can be understood as a relation only if it is distinguished from the relative as original consciousness. The philosophical frame of reference is the philosophical deduction.¹⁷ The talk of a performative experience recedes in the course of the investigation. It is reinterpreted as a "category theory of subjectivity," respectively "an ontological constitution of subjectivity."¹⁸ It is instructive for our presentation of Henrich, since

¹³ W. Cramer, *Die Monade*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1954; D. Henrich, *Fichtes ursprüngliche Einsicht*, op. cit. On Cramer and Henrich, see J. Stolzenberg, *Subjektivität und Metaphysik*, op. cit.

¹⁴ E. Rogler, *Subjektivität and Transzendentalität*, in: *Rationale Metaphysik. Die Philosophie von Wolfgang Cramer*, Vol. 1, eds. H. Radermacher, P. Reisinger, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1987, p. 165.

¹⁵ W. Cramer, *Die Monade*, op. cit.

¹⁶ The concept of lived experiencing is replaced in Cramer's work history by the concept of soul.

¹⁷ On the critique of the concept of deduction in German Idealism, see G. Preyer, *Cartesian Intuition*, op. cit.

¹⁸ W. Cramer, *Die Monade*, op. cit., pp. 60, 88; W. Cramer, *Grundlagen einer Theorie des Geistes*, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1957 (2nd edition 1965), p. 25. For the principle construction problems of Cramer's ontology, see E. Rogler, *Subjektivität and Transzendentalität*, op. cit.

it concerns the problem of reflection and primordial consciousness (*Urbewusstsein*), to use an expression of Husserl.

However, we should not overestimate Cramer's influence on Henrich. If we ask ourselves what could motivate a connection of Cramer to Henrich from our present point of view, two points are worth mentioning in a free reinterpretation. It is the question of the I-thought, the access to I-myself, and the question of the I-thought as an intentional mental state as basics.

1. We can interpret the I-thought in such a way that it takes its epistemological starting point in an immediate and unquestionable self-experience. This would be a primordial realm. Rogler emphasizes that Cramer does not pursue this point of view.¹⁹
2. The other point of view is that only through the I-thought an access to myself as an individual or a single member of the human population is possible. According to Cramer, this ultimately also concerns the experience, which is only given through an I.
3. A commonality with Henrich is that he emphasizes that the philosophy of self-consciousness is one of the individual self-consciousness that makes sure of itself and its position in the world. But it can also be seen in the fact that Henrich returns to a Kantian-inspired egology in his history of works.

But we should ask ourselves: if anything, what could be the source of Henrich's inspiration? If we start from Fichte's original insight, this is Cramer's critique of the concept of reflection or of the constitution of the ego as intentional reflection. Consciousness is therefore not fundamentally to be characterized as intentionality.²⁰ According to Cramer, self-determined experience is not a reflection on oneself, but a "self-determination."²¹ Cramer recognizes from the following quote that he has an understanding of Fichte's original insight without expressly referring to it: "Self-consciousness, namely the creation of the thought 'I,' is not a reflection on oneself."²² Henrich certainly agrees with Cramer that the I-thought has a single I as its ontological bearer.

¹⁹ See E. Rogler, *Subjektivität and Transzendentalität*, op. cit., pp. 170–171, on this dimension and the dispatchment of pursuing this conceptualization.

²⁰ J. Stolzenberg, e.g., also pointed this out in *Subjektivität und Metaphysik*, op. cit., pp. 285–290, 291.

²¹ W. Cramer, *Grundlagen einer Theorie des Geistes*, op. cit., p. 39.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

Cramer goes as far as to say that without “given to the I” the given itself is destroyed. We can call this a “rationalist conception of self-consciousness.”²³ Cramer objects to the unknowability of the I-thought, that is, “the I-thought does not mean a representation, but this itself.” But this again leads to a regress, since preserving the ego thought again presupposes an ego thought.²⁴ It should be added to the problem of singularity that in the social evolution it has not gone unnoticed to any member of a social system that he is born and lives as a single person.

2.2. Chisholm, Tugendhat, Habermas

Henrich highlighted philosophical exchanges with Chisholm in the self-descriptions of his intellectual biography. In terms of the history of his work, this is not coincidental, since this exchange was particularly inspiring for both of them.

Chisholm accepts the argument of Anscombe, Castañeda, Henrich, and David Lewis that self-reference is done by a direct self-attribution as an unmediated one.²⁵ Therefore there are no first-person propositions. Chisholm’s self-correction in *First Person* is also motivated by the review of *Person and Object* by Henrich.²⁶ Henrich argues that an individual essence (haecceity), as property which refers to an entity using the first-person sentence, is still a property which could refer to another person as well. It is to conclude that it is not the content of self-reference which guarantees the Cartesian certainty. Chisholm has accepted Henrich’s critiques. Henrich emphasizes the problem of the two senses in which one might be an object of his awareness:

1. self-consciousness as self-attribution (self-presentation) – the “believing subject is the *primary object* of all beliefs,” and
2. a direct awareness of the subject; thereby, it has a certain property.

²³ E. Rogler, *Subjektivität and Transzendentalität*, op. cit., p. 171.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

²⁵ See R. Chisholm, *The First Person: An Essay on Reference and Intentionality*, The Harvester Press, Brighton 1981; D. Lewis, *Attitudes de dicto and de se*, in: D. Lewis, *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, Oxford University Press, New York–Oxford 1983 [1979], pp. 333–359; H.-N. Castañeda, *On the Phenomenology of the I*, in: H.-N. Castañeda, *The Phenomeno-Logic of the “I”: Essays on Self-Consciousness*, eds. J.G. Hart, T. Kapitan, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN–Indianapolis, IN, 1999, pp. 89–95.

²⁶ R. Chisholm, *Person and Object: A Metaphysical Study*, George Allen & Unwin, London 1977; D. Henrich, *Zwei Theorien zur Verteidigung von Selbstbewusstsein*, “Grazer Philosophische Studien” 1979, Vol. 5, pp. 77–99; R. Chisholm, *The First Person*, op. cit., pp. 45, 133.

Chisholm agrees with Henrich that the second sense is constitutive of conscious beings in general. But he gives the second sense an epistemic description:

One must also “know and believe that he himself is one to whom he attributes such properties,” he must recognize these attributes “as his own,” “an immediate apprehension of oneself.”²⁷

Chisholm claims to solve the problem of the two senses of self-consciousness by the distinction of direct and indirect attribution, and the concept that immediate acquaintance of the *content* of direct attribution is *subjectless* as an immediate apprehension of oneself standing in the tradition of the early Brentano’s, Husserl’s, and Sartre’s philosophy.

It should also be emphasized, however, that since the end of the 1970s there has been a recurrent debate in German sociology between Henrich on the one hand and Habermas and Tugendhat on the other. It is now well researched, and appropriate conclusions have already been drawn from it. It will not be discussed further in this text, since there is not enough space for it.²⁸ The interested reader can inform himself about it in the secondary literature, which is unfortunately only available in German. It should be mentioned, however, that we do not have to identify ourselves as spatio-temporal entities first in order to attribute mental states to ourselves. This is what Tugendhat tends to do. This is true even when he acknowledges an immediate knowledge of the asymmetry of the first-person setting. He also claims an epistemic symmetry of the first- and third-person setting, that is, the first-person speaker has to know himself as a space-temporal entity identifiable in the third person. Habermas’s increase of an *a priori* intersubjectivism in natural language deposes the philosophy of self-awareness and, like Hegel’s dialectic between master and servant, moves in circles.²⁹

²⁷ R. Chisholm, *The First Person*, op. cit., pp. 89–90.

²⁸ On Habermas and Tugendhat, see M. Frank, *Ansichten der Subjektivität*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *Prä-reflexives Selbstbewusstsein Vier Vorlesungen*, op. cit.; G. Preyer, *Kritik des apriorischen Intersubjektivismus. Dieter Henrich und Manfred Franks Einwände gegen den apriorischen Intersubjektivismus Hegels, Tugendhats, Habermas’ und Meads*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 367–392. In Henrich’s philosophical colloquium in the winter semester of 1976–1977, he treated Tugendhat’s *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die sprachanalytische Philosophie* (1976) and classified the book as one that belongs to the works of the century. This is worth mentioning despite all the far-reaching philosophical differences between the two authors.

²⁹ On the circle argument, see D. Henrich *Noch einmal in Zirkeln Eine Kritik an Ernst Tugendhat semantischer Erklärung von Selbstbewusstsein*, in: *Mensch und Moderne Beiträge zur philosophischen*

But it is also worth mentioning the philosophical exchange between Henrich and Nozick and Castañeda. Nozick elaborates Henrich's philosophy of self-consciousness,³⁰ and Castañeda devotes his last investigation, *I-Structures and the Reflexivity of Self-Consciousness*, to Henrich.³¹ In its coarse-grained individuation, the exchange between Henrich and Nozick is comparable to that with Chisholm. However, the philosophical exchange and Henrich's friendship with Davidson should also be mentioned. Davidson's article *The Irreducibility of the Concept of the Self* is motivated by Henrich.³² It was primarily through this philosophical exchange that Henrich established a contact with American philosophers that continues to the present.

2.3. Hölderlin

Henrich's turn to aesthetics is motivated by the insights of his research programme in the philosophy of self-consciousness. In it, he encounters the limitation and self-limitation of the subject's empowerment in such a way that its selfhood is not given by itself. This includes that every conscious life involves the thinking of a reason with its existence in a world over which the subject of cognition and action cannot totally dispose. The motives of Hölderlin's poetry from the *Hyperion* to the "late hymns" are thus addressed.

This is probably the reason why Henrich keeps coming back to the study of Hölderlin again and again.³³ In doing so, he not only reassesses Hölderlin, but

Anthropologie und Gesellschaftskritik, eds. C. Bellut, U. Müller, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 1989, pp. 93–132.

³⁰ R. Nozick, *The Identity of the Self*, in: *Philosophical Explanations*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1981, pp. 27–114.

³¹ H.-N. Castañeda, *I-Structures and the Reflexivity of Self-Consciousness*, in: H.-N. Castañeda, *The Phenomeno-Logic of the "I": Essays on Self-Consciousness*, eds. J.G. Hart, T. Kapitan, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN–Indianapolis, IN, 1999, pp. 251–292.

³² D. Davidson, *The Irreducibility of the Concept of the Self* (1998), in: *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2004, pp. 85–91. On the friendship, see D. Henrich, *Stationen einer Freundschaft*, op. cit.

³³ On newer research, see F. Vollhardt, *Literarisch-philosophisches Kolloquium Dieter Henrich über die Dichtung Hölderlins*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 469–488; V.L. Waibel, *Selbstbewusstsein und Geist. Zu Dieter Henrich über Hegel und Hölderlin*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 311–337. On Hölderlin's "Urteil und Sein," see J. Stolzenberg, *But How Is Self-Consciousness Possible?*, "ProtoSociology" 2020, Vol. 37: *Globalization and Populism*, pp. 223–233.

also places him in an unexpected relationship to Beckett. This is also to be emphasized because Hölderlin experienced an unfortunate reception during the First and Second World Wars and was politically instrumentalized. This also applies to the Marxist tradition, for example, by Peter Weiss. Henrich places Hölderlin's work in the context of the representatives of German Idealism and their philosophy of self-consciousness. This is not refuted by the fact that Fichte, Schelling and Hegel worked on this philosophy in a completely different way.

Hölderlin's poetic philosophy of Greekism occupies a special position among the philosophers of German Idealism. From a subject-theoretical point of view, it turns against the philosophical system thought of as a representation of consciousness and the world. It is oriented to the fact that life as a whole has its ground in the "self-location" and "self-interpretation" of the subject. This cannot be done by any philosophical system. Poetic philosophy is thereby immunized against critical experiences of time. Exactly that is Hölderlin's Rousseauism.³⁴ Addressed here is the fundamental problem of a philosophy of self-consciousness, that the constitution of the subject emerges from its self-distance. Only with this a view on the world is opened to him. It pervades Hölderlin's entire oeuvre that the basic situations of life can be overarching as an unbreakable connection between "intimacy" and "distress of suffering" in retrospect of one's own life. This is fundamentally different from Hegel's "Reason in history."

What separates us from German Idealism is a changed society and experience of the world that is expanding rather than contracting. In epistemology, the orientation towards conscious life has been abandoned. But we have to ask ourselves whether Hölderlin's problem is to be renewed, that we do not consist of ourselves, but have to orient ourselves in a contingent world experience. This requires that philosophy detaches itself from "exaggerating claims to knowledge."

2.4. Ethics of Nuclear Peace

Henrich, in dealing with the problem of the ethics of the present age, confronts a problem that is obvious but rarely dealt with by practical philosophy, namely, the ethics of nuclear peace.³⁵ The ethics of this age concerns mainly two points:

³⁴ D. Henrich, *Die Philosophie im Prozess der Kultur*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 2006, especially pp. 136–248.

³⁵ D. Henrich, *Ethik des nuklearen Friedens*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin 1990.

1. Part of the new world situation is that the new weapons, which are translations of valid knowledge into means of destruction, can be proliferated and that technological progress has not led to any humanization of warfare.
2. However, this also means that in the assignment of moral justifications to the new situation also the consciousness of the illusion of an ethical life orientation with regard to important life questions belongs. This was noted under the keyword "nihilism," for example, by Heidegger.

From this follows the assessment of the situation of ethics that the conclusions of moral judgments have to reach and adequately grasp the given reality and thus to engage in understanding in and of situations of conflict. In this respect, there are no trivial solutions. The ethicist cannot operationalize his own approach. If he takes the role of a consultant, he has to orientate himself on the moral judgments of the members of social systems. His operationalizations have to proceed maieutically and not deductively or inductively. Henrich opposes nuclear pacifism (Tugendhat). This is justified by the fact that the non-revocability of the availability of nuclear weapons is already conditioned by the knowledge about thermonuclear processes. Thereby considerable limits are drawn to the disarmament. A world society without nuclear information and powers will be rather unlikely.

Henrich concludes that moral consciousness is only one point of light of ethical orientation. However, it may not inform about all important ethical orientations, through which an ethical orientation is built up. Ethical consciousness as an orientation for action can only become effective through respect for the reasons of others and a delimited personal identity. This is accompanied by the fact that the goal of being a person is bound to one's own decision-making ability. However, this constitution is only conceivable if the neutrality of judgment involves a distance between world-held and self-identification. This distance of judgment is to be resolved to the effect that other persons and situations of action are included in the judgment in the same way as *I myself am*.

Henrich draws from this inventory the conclusion that with the limitation of the selfless commitment of one's own fulfilment, the ethical conflict potentials will also increase. This is easily comprehensible due to the fact that all commitments also establish claims. Henrich identifies a very fundamental question that also affects our ethical self-understanding. Understanding in and of conflict situations is increasingly complicated by the fact that the nuclear threat and the

danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons mean that ethical conflict situations can no longer be described and assessed by consensus. With the ethics of nuclear peace and its sceptical results we should confront ourselves again and again.³⁶

At first glance, there is no obvious connection between the ethics of nuclear peace and Henrich's philosophy of self-consciousness. However, it can be established in such a way that the self-consciousness and the moral consciousness comes up against a limit of its constitution which it cannot exceed. This is the limit of the violent order of social systems, which can "barrack" violence, for example, in the modern state, but we are confronted with it again and again. In contrast, Kant's "eternal peace" is a naïveté of enlightenment philosophy. From our present point of view, in this respect Koselleck's *Critique and Crisis* should be recalled.³⁷

2.5. Constellation Research

The introduction of constellation research is another innovation.³⁸ It is an alternative to the archaeology of knowledge, discourse analysis and philosophical hermeneutics. Henrich exemplifies constellation research in the exchange of representatives of early Romanticism. This is what is addressed and what follows from the reinterpretation of the counter-constellation in the history of the works of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. A note on this.

The analysis of the relationship between the reflectivity or irreflectivity of the ego and the self-knowledge of facts or principles is one of the main subjects of the *Early Romanticism Constellation*, which is the initial problem situation of the different philosophies of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, and their development. But their philosophies obscured the primary question, and it has not taken effect in the following philosophical reflection. It was the particular merit of Henrich and his follower, Frank, to rediscover the primary question.³⁹ This refers to "Fichte's original insight" and the philosophy of self-consciousness.

³⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 364–366.

³⁷ R. Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1988 [1959].

³⁸ D. Henrich, *Grundlegung aus dem Ich. Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte des Idealismus Tübingen – Jena 1789–1795*, 2 vols., Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin 2004; M. Mulsow, M. Stamm, eds., *Konstellationsforschung*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin 2005.

³⁹ M. Frank, *Die Philosophie des sogenannten magischen Idealismus (1969)*, *op. cit.*; M. Frank, *Varieties of Subjectivity*, in: *Consciousness and Subjectivity*, eds. S. Miguens, G. Preyer, De Gruyter,

The background question of Early Idealism was Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi's concept of the "trans-reflectivity of being,"⁴⁰ and the critique of Reinhold's "Elementary Philosophy" (*Elementarphilosophie*) by his followers, for instance, Carl Christian Erhard Schmid, Johann Benjamin Erhard, and Friedrich Carl Forberg. But it is also worth mentioning the two meanings of being (*Sein*) of Early Idealism: 1. as existence (reality) (Kant, Crusius, Jacobi), and 2. as absolute within thinking (*cogito*) and being (*sum*) fall together (the tradition of Spinoza and Leibniz) which are not often carefully distinguished.⁴¹

Jacobi recognized complete dualism between the immediate certainty of being and the endless relativity of rational reasoning (nihilism of reasoning). Jacobi claims to have found a solution to the question by reference to higher cognitive faculty which he calls "feeling" (*Gefühl*). This is the *cantus firmus* for Early Idealism: the "absolute" (*Unbedingte*) is not to be reached by a chain of "conditions." The Early Romanticism view is that the "self-being" (*Selbstsein*) of the subject is not found by it-self and is not grounded by the internal subject point of view.⁴² Self-consciousness is grounded in a jointless (non-reflective) identity, which was called *Seyn* by Jacobi. This was the conclusion of the Early Romanticism from Novalis, and Hölderlin. In this respect, a connection to Henrich's philosophy of self-consciousness and his metaphysics can also be made to Early Romanticism.

We can sharpen this with Novalis's modern version of the concept of existence (ex-istence).⁴³ It says that we do not exist out of ourselves. This is an anticipation of Heidegger's concept of being, but without a rejection of Cartesianism.

Berlin 2013, pp. 171–187; M. Frank, *Why Should We Think that Self-Consciousness Is Non-Reflective?*, in: *Pre-Reflective Consciousness: Sartre and Contemporary Philosophy of Mind*, eds. S. Miguens, G. Preyer, C. Bravo Morando, Routledge, Abingdon 2016, pp. 29–48.

⁴⁰ F.H. Jacobi, *David Hume über den Glauben oder Idealismus und Realismus. Ein Gespräch*, in: F.H. Jacobi, *Werke*, eds. F. Roth, F. Köppen, Gerhard Fleischer d. Jung, Leipzig 1815, reprint: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 1968 [1787]; F.H. Jacobi, *Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an Herrn Moses Mendelsohn*, in: F.H. Jacobi, *Werke*, Vols. 1.1–1.2: *Schriften zum Spinozastreit*, eds. K. Hammacher, I.-M. Piske, Meiner, Frommann-Holzberg, Hamburg–Stuttgart, Bad Cannstadt 1969 [1789].

⁴¹ On this issue, see M. Frank, *Die Philosophie des sogenannten magischen Idealismus (1969)*, op. cit., pp. 12–14.

⁴² It is worth mentioning that the "riddle" of this relationship has motivated in the Early German Idealism the turn to the philosophy of art as a perfection of philosophy.

⁴³ This is highlighted by Frank.

3. Dieter Henrich's *Original Insight*

It is not too much to say if we call this “Henrich’s original insight.” The phrase is modelled on Henrich’s *Fichte’s Original Insight (Fichtes ursprüngliche Einsicht)*.⁴⁴ It should be emphasized that *Fichte’s insight had no history of impact in the philosophy handed down since German Idealism*. It was to be rediscovered by Henrich. We can conclude from the “insight” as *magna carta* that reflection is not the foundation of self-consciousness as a self-registration of mental states. This is the wellspring of error in modern epistemology, as found in its empiricist and rationalist versions. It is surprising that no philosopher has yet addressed Fichte’s insight. This is probably explained by the philosophical situation after the dissolution of Hegel’s philosophy and the naturalistic and materialistic attitude of many theorists of the 19th century, which put a veil over Fichte’s philosophy. He was considered a philosophically confused philosopher of German Idealism and Hegel’s philosophy also covered his philosophy.

Let us ask about the methodological-logical initial situation which triggers the critique of modern philosophy of reflection. It is what Henrich calls Fichte’s “original insight.” It is the *regress* and *circular* argument of modern mentalism.⁴⁵ In this respect, however, the early Sartre is already to be mentioned, who stopped

⁴⁴ D. Henrich, *Fichtes ursprüngliche Einsicht*, op. cit.

⁴⁵ We distinguish (1) extensive, and (2) intensive (regress). The extensive regress state means that:
1. every conscious state is an object of another conscious state (higher-order reflection) and
2. there is no circularity in a conscious state – *a* is an object of another conscious state *b*.
3. Conclusion: there are infinitely many conscious states.

The intensive regress state means that:

1. conscious states represent themselves,
2. if a conscious state represents something, then it represents itself as that object, and
3. conscious representations of something cannot be identical to their representations of their representations of those objects. Therefore, these representations have infinite objects.

A circle is, e.g., that a father takes his son to the doctor because he can no longer hear anything. He asks the doctor “Why doesn’t my son hear anything anymore?” The doctor answers, “He has lost his hearing.” The father then asks him, “Why has he lost his hearing?” The doctor answers, “Because he can’t hear anymore.” On the critique of K. Williford, *Zahavi versus Brentano: A Rejoinder*, “Psyche” 2006, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 1–8, and U. Kriegel, see M. Frank, *Präreflexives Selbstbewusstsein*, op. cit., pp. 138–172; S. Lang, *Phänomenales Bewusstsein und Selbstbewusstsein. Idealistische und selbstrepräsentationalistische Interpretationen*, Felix Meiner, Hamburg 2020, pp. 22–47; A. Pacholik, G. Preyer, *Shaping Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*, “Journal of Artificial Intelligence and Consciousness” 2022, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 1–22.

the regress in one step. It is somewhat surprising that Sartre's argument was taken into account.

Either we stop at any one term of the series – the known, the knower known, the knower known by the knower etc. In this case the totality of the phenomenon falls into the unknown; that is, we always bump up against a non-conscious reflection and a final term. Or else we affirm the necessity of an infinite regress (idea ideae-ideae, etc.), which is absurd [...] Are we obliged after all to introduce the law of this [knower–known] dyad into consciousness? Consciousness of self is not dual. If we wish to avoid an infinite regress, there must be an immediate, non-cognitive relation of the self to itself.⁴⁶

But a substantial problem of the modern reflection philosophy is centrally concerned with the suppression of regress and circularity. It is the conceptualization of self-consciousness and the structure of consciousness in general.

The circle is that a self-identical *I* requires a complete knowledge for its self-reflection or an infinite regress of reflexive *I*-consciousness (-knowledge) occurs because every conscious state is conscious only through another conscious state. Each conscious state is an object of another conscious state. The circle has happened in the *I*-reflection of modern philosophy, that is, an *I*-subject recognizes it-self thereby it has a relationship to it-self, because if it is as subject (an *I* really) then this *I* grabs itself by saying to itself “*I*.” The subject of reflection fulfils *I*=*I*, but the claim is that it is a result of reflection.⁴⁷

In our approach, however, we have to pay attention to the fact that when we speak of “self-consciousness,” which the word suggests, it is precisely not a subject–object relation that is addressed. It is recommended to focus on the problem of Fichte's original insight. As already mentioned it can be understood well without an interpretation of his different *Wissenschaftslehren*. His insight is that any consciousness of a mental state is to be determined as an immediate consciousness, which is not propositional. Assuming this, we can adequately capture Henrich's turn. Two Henrich quotations and one Novalis quotation can shed light on this. Call that “Dieter Henrich's insight” which is worth preserving.

⁴⁶ J.-P. Sartre, *L'être et le néant. Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*, Gallimard, Paris 1943, p. 12.

⁴⁷ This is emphasized by D. Henrich, *Dies Ich, das viel besagt*, op. cit., p. 10.

And no one will say that he tried to come to consciousness in the way in which he can make an effort of introspection, reflection and observation.⁴⁸

Any relation of the ego back to itself presupposes a familiarity with it, which, moreover, must be of the kind that it can relate it to itself.⁴⁹

What reflection finds, appears to have already been there before.⁵⁰

The initial study of the Heidelberg School is Henrich's *Fichte's Original Insight*.⁵¹

But let's ask again: "What is Henrich's insight?" Let us express it in this way: *mental states are determined as mental states by their SELF-CONSTITUTION, that is, by themselves*. This is the claim which stops the *circle* and the *regress* in the philosophy of the consciousness. Both occur when we assume that a conscious mental state is "conscious" only by virtue of some other conscious mental state. The question is the epistemological problem of self-registration and of a *non-objectual consciousness*.⁵² In his early writings, Henrich goes along with Gurwitsch's anonymous field of consciousness and his assumption that non-egological mental states are not conceptual.⁵³ No *I* is its inhabitant. According to Gurwitsch, the unity of the field of consciousness is not the result of a previous activity or setting.⁵⁴ In this sense it is also placed in Searle's philosophy of the mental.⁵⁵ But Henrich also assumes that no mirror image can inform us that this image is ourselves. We already intend to be familiar with ourselves.

Let's make sure we understand it again.

⁴⁸ D. Henrich, *Selbstbewußtsein. Kritische Einleitung in eine Theorie*, in: *Hermeneutik und Dialektik*, Vol. 1, eds. R. Bubner, K. Cramer, R. Wiehl, Mohr, Tübingen 1970, p. 271, par. 1; cf. p. 276, par. 2.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

⁵⁰ Novalis [Friedrich von Hardenberg], *Schriften*, Vols. 2–3: *Das philosophische Werk*, ed. R. Samuel with H.-J. Mähl, G. Schulz, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1965, p. 112, no. 114.

⁵¹ D. Henrich, *Fichte's Original Insight*, op. cit.

⁵² The non-representational consciousness is also emphasized by von F. Kutschera, *Ungegenständliches Erkennen*, Mentis, Paderborn 2012. Frank has often mentioned that we also find the concept with Schelling and Schleiermacher.

⁵³ A. Gurwitsch, *The Field of Consciousness*, Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh, PA, 1978 [1964]. According to Gurwitsch, the field of consciousness is ordered by "subject," "background" and "border" through a "passive synthesis" (Husserl) as an interpretation.

⁵⁴ However, Gurwitsch's approach does not easily agree with Henrich's factor theory.

⁵⁵ J. Searle, *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1983; J. Searle, *Mind, Language and Society: Philosophy in the Real World*, Basic Books, New York 1998, chap. 3.

Argument

Self-consciousness is not to be explained as reflection in the sense of a return of a mental state (*reditus in se ipsum*) to itself, that is, *what reflection finds, must already have been there before*.⁵⁶

Conclusion

Self-consciousness cannot be an objectual consciousness as a subject–object relation, like that of the perceptual consciousness of objects; and self-consciousness is not regarded as a highest principle of transcendental philosophy as an original synthesis of the transcendental apperception (Kant, Fichte). The *what* of the self-consciousness is a non-conceptual consciousness and *how* we are familiar with it immediately. There is not any subject–object distinction in the pre-reflective consciousness as an immediate consciousness of mental states. The New Heidebergs agree with this problem.

From the Henrich-1 point of view, consciousness is not performative. It is not a Fichteian deed. It is not a knowing self-relation, it is not self-knowledge. Consciousness is an anonymous field of experience. A knowing self-relation, in contrast, consists in a special functional and organizational unit of the field of consciousness. The Henrich-1 approach is a “polyfactorial” theory of consciousness. He introduces a concept of self in *Selbstsein und Bewusstsein*.⁵⁷ But it does not contribute anything to the givenness of the objects. Henrich distinguishes an anonymous, non-conceptual consciousness as a consciousness of itself, for example, waking, dreaming, falling asleep and feeling pain from an ego as the active instance of organizing consciousness. The self-conscious I is based on an anonymous self-consciousness (field consciousness).⁵⁸ However, it is necessary to

⁵⁶ Novalis, *Schriften*, op. cit., p. 112, no. 114. The problem is not solved in the phenomenology of Husserl and his successors. In phenomenology, pre-reflexive consciousness is a borderline concept. In Husserl the problem of consciousness shimmers through again and again. But by giving priority to the analysis of intentionality he cannot solve it. Since from this point of view every cognition is to be objectified.

⁵⁷ D. Henrich, *Selbstsein und Bewusstsein* (1971), “Philosophie der Psychologie” 2007, Vol. 8, pp. 1–19.

⁵⁸ On a systematization of Henrich-1, see M. Frank, *Ist Selbstbewusstsein ein “anonymes Feld” oder eine “wissende Selbstbeziehung”?*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *In Defence of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*, op. cit.; H. Gutschmidt, *Die frühe Selbstbewusstseinstheorie Dieter Henrichs. Mit einem Ausblick auf die weitere Entwicklung*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 21–42. On a critique on a disjunctive account, see S. Lang, *Performatives Selbstbewusstsein*, Mentis, Paderborn 2020, pp. 249–259.

address the problem at this point that it is not only about the pre-reflexive state of mental states, but also the analysis of the self-differentiation of mental states. This is the link to the re-interpretation of the early Sartre and the *de se* constraint.⁵⁹

4. Henrich's Extensions and Modification

Henrich takes a reorientation of his critique of the philosophy of reflection in the investigations in *Fluchtlinien*.⁶⁰ This initiates a correction of his 1970s approach. He extends the analysis of the relation of self-consciousness to practical philosophy in the sense of conscious life, but also to metaphysics. Henrich's argument turns away from the basic theory of the field of consciousness, since he assumes that it is "unified," but not "uniform." Self-consciousness, in his view, has to be understood from a uniform ground. Henrich, however, takes a sceptical stance, since the structure of self-consciousness cannot ultimately be elucidated. In this respect, this reason and the relation of self-consciousness cannot be determined either. At the same time, self-consciousness also faces the world with its body. Henrich calls this relation "basic relation" (*Grundverhältnis*). The turn to metaphysics consists in the inclusion of a Platonic all-unity (*All-Einheit*) as an existential positioning of subjectivity that is not grounded in itself.⁶¹

Along with Henrich's turning away from his approach in the 1970s comes his assumption that all self-consciousness is relational and there is a priority of the I-consciousness.⁶² According to Henrich, the self-relation includes "a knowl-

⁵⁹ D. Lewis, *Attitudes de dicto and de se*, op. cit.; R. Chisholm, *The First Person*, op. cit.; H.-N. Castañeda, "He": *A Study in the Logic of Self-Consciousness* (1966), in: H.-N. Castañeda, *The Phenomeno-Logic of the "I": Essays on Self-Consciousness*, eds. J.G. Hart, T. Kapitan, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN–Indianapolis, IN, 1999, pp. 35–60.

⁶⁰ D. Henrich, *Fluchtlinien. Philosophische Essays*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1982.

⁶¹ E.g., D. Henrich, *Denken und Selbstsein. Vorlesungen über Subjektivität*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 2007. On Henrich's turn, see D. Henrich, *Fluchtlinien*, op. cit.; D. Henrich, *Die Philosophie im Prozess der Kultur*, op. cit.; H. Grundschildt, *Die frühe Selbstbewusstseinstheorie Dieter Henrichs. Mit einem Ausblick auf die weitere Entwicklung*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 21–42; M. Frank, *Ist Selbstbewusstsein ein "anonymes Feld" oder eine "wissende Selbstbeziehung"?*, op. cit.

⁶² D. Henrich, *Denken und Selbstsein*, op. cit.; D. Henrich, *Dies Ich, das viel besagt*, op. cit.; D. Henrich, *Die rätselvolle Selbstbeziehung. Bilanz klassischer Theorien der Subjektivität*, in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 491–524.

edge of itself.” Thus it includes “a further self-relation in itself.” But it is not supposed to be in a kind of self-relation. A self-relationship is thus asserted that has no relation to itself, which makes self-consciousness into a self-consciousness.⁶³ Henrich-2 resorts to the thought “I think” (Kant) in the analysis of the “knowing self-relation.” Thus, the basic theory of the analysis of self-consciousness is an egological approach. Henrich includes the concept of knowledge in this, because “Self-consciousness is not knowledge of oneself in an anonymous process. It must originally take place as knowledge of me.”⁶⁴ But he does not provide an analysis of knowledge. Henrich only concedes that in the case of animal consciousness alone there is no subject–object distinction that belongs to its consciousness. However, this conceptualization has nothing to do with the placement of the field of consciousness in Henrich-1.

The question is that we have to conceptualize the identity lived experience of subjects. This means the field of consciousness with its non-difference between lived experience and what is lived experienced, for example, pain consciousness and pain itself. But also the *de se* constraint as the relation of the speaker (thinker, agent) to himself.

Our approach to the Heidelberg School is that there is now “continuity through innovation.” The innovation has been made by Frank in his philosophical investigations.⁶⁵ What does this innovation mean? It says that it is not advisable to follow Henrich-2, but to connect to Henrich-1. The innovation consists above all in freeing the philosophy of self-consciousness from “the fetter of self-relation.”⁶⁶ We can also express this as being familiar with experiences in a non-confrontational way. This may not be an entirely new insight, but the notion of “self-relation” is not compatible with it. The innovation includes a reinterpretation of Sartre’s early philosophy under the heading of “Sartre’s enduring insight” and the *de se* constraint as well. It should be noted that the conceptualization of the mental as intentionality, representation, internal perception/awareness, subject and object is very widespread among philosophers and they insist on it as if

⁶³ Henrich-2 is studied in detail in M. Frank, *Ist Selbstbewusstsein ein “anonymes Feld” oder eine “wissende Selbstbeziehung”?*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *In Defence of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*, op. cit.

⁶⁴ D. Henrich, *Das Ich, das viel besagt*, op. cit., p. 205. Henrich includes the concept of knowledge in this.

⁶⁵ E.g., M. Frank, *Ist Selbstbewusstsein ein “anonymes Feld” oder eine “wissende Selbstbeziehung”?*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *In Defence of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*, op. cit.

⁶⁶ M. Frank, *In Defence of Pre-Reflective Self-Consciousness*, op. cit., p. 85.

they were committing suicide, so to speak, in abandoning this concept. This is true of the brightest minds, such as David Lewis, Lycan, and Searle.

Let's go back to Henrich's metaphysics of the Platonic all-unity and the notion that human existence is not completely transparent to itself. Both have definitely a closeness to Jasper's "border situation" (*Grenzsituation*) and its "existential illumination" and "deciphering" (*Existenzerhellung, Deciffrierung*). The philosophical confrontation with the basic mystery of human existence might also be the reason for Henrich's positive reception of Schleiermacher, that with the philosophy of self-consciousness the question of its "whence" inevitably imposes itself.⁶⁷ The drama of this problem is that the primary self-consciousness has precisely no certainty about answering this question.⁶⁸

5. New Heidelbergs: Continuation by Innovation

Frank has dealt with the analytical theory of consciousness in his colloquia since 1986, reinterpreted the early philosophy of consciousness of Sartre, and has initiated a new and ongoing exchange with American philosophers.⁶⁹ It is fruitful to continue Frank's basic work on the analytical philosophy of consciousness and the early Sartre, which leads us into new directions in the philosophy of the mental, particularly regarding the non-objective understanding of self-consciousness which is not dealt with in the tradition of the egology of modern philosophy. Frank has also initiated further research on the subject in an exchange with the self-representationalists.⁷⁰ Looking back, this was a fruitful turn rethinking some

⁶⁷ Frank also draws attention to this.

⁶⁸ D. Henrich, *Die Philosophie im Prozess der Kultur*, op. cit., p. 175.

⁶⁹ M. Frank, *Ansichten der Subjektivität*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *Präreflexives Selbstbewusstsein*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *Ist Selbstbewusstsein ein "anonymes Feld" oder eine "wissende Selbstbeziehung"?*, op. cit. On Sartre, see G. Seel, *Sartres Dialektik. Zur Methode und Begründung seiner Philosophie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Subjekt-, Zeit- und Werttheorie*, Bouvier Herbert Grundmann, Bonn 1971; G. Seel, *Pre-Reflectivity and Reflective Time-Consciousness: The Shortcomings of Sartre and Husserl and a Possible Way Out*, in: *Pre-Reflective Consciousness: Sartre and Contemporary Philosophy of Mind*, eds. S. Miguens, G. Preyer, C. Bravo Morando, Routledge, Abingdon 2016, pp. 120–139.

⁷⁰ E.g., U. Kriegel, *The Same-Order Monitoring Theory of Consciousness*, in: *Self-Representational Approaches to Consciousness*, eds. U. Kriegel, K. Williford, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2006, pp. 143–170; U. Kriegel, *Subjective Consciousness: A Self-Representational Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2009; K. Williford, *The Self-Representational Structure of Consciousness*, in: *Self-Representational Approaches to Consciousness*, eds. U. Kriegel, K. Williford, MIT Press,

basic problems in philosophy of the mental and cognitive sciences in the ongoing research about taking into account the question of “self-consciousness” (anonymous/pre-reflective consciousness).

Frank innovates the Heidelberg School by re-systematizing it. This continuation does not interpret itself as a work interpretation of the philosophical writings of Henrich.⁷¹ This is to be emphasized, since in Henrich’s work history there is no unified position with regard to the philosophy of consciousness. This is a question of Henrich philology, which need not trouble us further. Let us focus on this approach so that it is clear enough before us.

The re-systematization concerns Sartre’s enduring insight.⁷² We can state as *magna carta*:

Il y a un *cogito* préreflexif qui est la condition du *cogito* cartésien.⁷³

Therefore Sartre argues: *All positional consciousness presupposes a non-positional consciousness.*

Cambridge, MA, 2006, pp. 111–142; K. Williford, *Zahavi versus Brentano*, op. cit.; T. Horgan, J. Tienson, *The Intentionality of Phenomenology and the Phenomenology of Intentionality*, in: *Philosophy of Mind*, ed. D. Calmers, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002, pp. 520–531. On the Heidelberg School, see D. Zahavi, *The Heidelberg School and the Limits of Reflection* (2007), in: *Selbstbewusstsein. Dieter Henrich und die Heidelberger Schule*, eds. M. Frank, J. Kuneš, Springer/Metzler, Heidelberg 2022, pp. 111–131; J.G. Hart, *From Metafact to Metaphysics in “the Heidelberg School”*, “ProtoSociology” 2019, Vol. 36: *Senses of Self: Approaches to Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness*, pp. 79–100; H. Gutschmidt, *Die frühe Selbstbewusstseinstheorie Dieter Henrichs*, op. cit. On exchanges between American and European philosophers, see M.C. Amoretti, G. Preyer, eds., *Triangulation from an Epistemological Point of View*, Ontos Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2011; S. Miguens, G. Preyer, eds., *Consciousness and Subjectivity*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2013; S. Miguens, G. Preyer, C. Bravo Morando, *Introduction: Back to Pre-Reflectivity*, in: *Pre-Reflective Consciousness: Sartre and Contemporary Philosophy of Mind*, eds. S. Miguens, G. Preyer, C. Bravo Morando, Routledge, Abingdon 2016, pp. 1–26. It should be noted, however, that Horgan and Williford distanced themselves from self-representationalism.

⁷¹ On the Frank–Kapitan–Lang debate, see M. Borner, M. Frank, K. Williford, eds., “ProtoSociology” 2019, op. cit. For Kapitan’s critique on the Heidelberg view, see T. Kapitan, *Egological Ubiquity: Response to Stefan Lang*, “ProtoSociology” 2019, Vol. 36: *Senses of Self: Approaches to Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness*, pp. 516–531; T. Kapitan, *The Ubiquity of Self-Awareness*, “ProtoSociology” 2019, Vol. 36: *Senses of Self: Approaches to Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness*, pp. 466–490.

⁷² This insight states that all mental states are pre-reflective/immediately conscious. On Sartre and contemporary philosophy, see: *Pre-Reflective Consciousness: Sartre and Contemporary Philosophy of Mind*, eds. S. Miguens, G. Preyer, C. Bravo Morando, op. cit.

⁷³ J.-P. Sartre, *L’être et le néant*, op. cit., p. 19.

This is the *cantus firmus* of the New Heidelbergs and beyond. The re-systematization goes along with the following issues:

1. A re-interpretation of Sartre's pre-reflective consciousness and the *reflet-reflétant* (*jeux de réflexion reflétant*) and of the *reflet-reflétant* as moderate self-representationalism (mental content as "reflex").⁷⁴ Referring to this conceptualization is Frank's critique of Kriegel, Williford, and Burge's content preservation as well as a mediation of internalism and externalism in the philosophy of the mental.⁷⁵ Sartre's early philosophy requires reinterpretation in order to be compatible with the contemporary philosophy of the mental.⁷⁶ The pre-reflective approach also gives a response to the problem of "content preservation."⁷⁷
2. From the critiques on higher-order thought account and the self-representationalists,⁷⁸ it is concluded that consciousness is not a mental *relational property* we ascribe from higher-order level making mental states conscious.⁷⁹ This is also a critique of the *inner sense* model in the philosophy of the mental and epistemology as well. But it does not say that there are no relational mental states, for example, propositional attitudes, but that we are immediately familiar with our mental states. This is also true of relational mental states.
3. Recalling the analytical theory of self-consciousness (Castañeda, Chisholm, David Lewis), because the *de se* constraint and *quasi-indication* (he/she himself locution) are an elementary condition of the ascription of mental state, that is, in the case of self-ascription "In an episode of self-

⁷⁴ Meanwhile there is a new discussion about the concept of pre-reflectivity, especially among American philosophers, e.g., S. Lang, K. Viertbauer, eds., "The Review of Philosophy and Psychology" 2022, op. cit.

⁷⁵ M. Frank, *Präreflexives Selbstbewusstsein*, op. cit.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ On a critique of M. Tye, *Representationalism and the Transparency of Experience*, "Nous" 2002, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 137–151; and T. Burge, *Reason and the First Person*, in: *Knowing Our Own Minds*, eds. C. Wright, B.C. Smith, C. Macdonald, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1998, pp. 243–270, see M. Frank, *Präreflexives Selbstbewusstsein*, op. cit.

⁷⁸ E.g., D.M. Rosenthal, *Consciousness and Mind*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005; R. Genaro, *The "Of" of Intentionality and the "Of" of Acquaintance*, in: *Pre-Reflective Consciousness: Sartre and Contemporary Philosophy of Mind*, eds. S. Miguens, G. Preyer, C. Bravo Morando, Routledge, Abingdon 2016, pp. 317–341.

⁷⁹ On the critique of Kriegel and Williford and of higher-order thought accounts, see n. 45.

consciousness ONE refers to (thinks of) ONEself as *oneSELF*⁸⁰ and by quasi-indications to another person. Therefore it is valid: “The uniqueness and privacy of I-reference is established by the fact that nobody can refer to another person in the first-person way.”⁸¹ To this it must be added that the private ego consciousness is also directly (pre-reflective) conscious.

4. The essential is: *de re* “There is an x such that x is identical with the tallest man and x is believed by x to be wise” doesn’t imply *de se* “The tallest man believes that he himself is wise.”⁸² This is the constraint of the strong first-person authority. The quasi-indication⁸³ is a re-systematization of the third-person attitude and ascription of mental states to others. It should be noted that first-person authority has been conceptualized differently. We have to distinguish different versions of it, for example, in the frame of reference of Davidson’s unified theory of thought, meaning, action and evaluation. Davidson’s version debunks first-person authority. Castañeda’s account is to be distinguished from this. But his account also required a re-interpretation.

A new evaluation of the analysis of the consciousness of time (Brentano, Husserl, Sartre, Seel, Frank) and its inclusion in the analysis of the structure of the mental. It is advisable to first distinguish the analysis of time consciousness from the physical concepts of time. The point is that the consciousness of time is not to be conceptualized (only) as time flow, but the distinction of earlier–later cognitive abilities.

5. A link to sociology, but also to practical philosophy, is the critique of *a priori* intersubjectivism.⁸⁴ Thus the research programme of a new monadology is established. However, it is to introduce a different concept of the monad than in Leibniz and Cramer. We are monads with window seats, but we cannot extend our awareness into the environment. This leads, for example, to a reinterpretation of basic sociological concepts. But also the practical philosophy took off from there to redefine their subject reference. This could imply a departure from moral philosophy, for example, from

⁸⁰ H.-N. Castañeda, *I-Structures and the Reflexivity of Self-Consciousness*, op. cit., p. 264.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² R. Chisholm, *The First Person*, op. cit., pp. 18–19.

⁸³ H.-N. Castañeda, “He”: *A Study in the Logic of Self-Consciousness*, op. cit.

⁸⁴ M. Frank, *Ansichten der Subjektivität*, op. cit.; M. Frank, *Präreflexives Selbstbewusstsein*, op. cit. On Henrich’s philosophy of sociality, see D. Henrich, *Bewusstes Leben*, Reclam, Stuttgart 1999.

Kant's model and is a rejection of the whole Hegel–Marx tradition in sociology.

The new research programme of the Heidelbergers is *the analysis of non-representational consciousness as a basic theory of the analysis of consciousness and "self-registration."*

6. Outlook

In the current state of philosophical research there are already conclusive results and we do not need to start from scratch. It is central that we start from an elaborated apperception of the problem. What is the outlook from the point of view of innovation at the Heidelberg School? Epistemologically, the philosophy of the mental should approach an analysis of the internal framework of the mental, to investigate the self-registration of the mental.

What is the outlook from the point of view of innovation of the Heidelberg School? It concerns the insight that the thinker/speaker/agent cannot take an outer-worldly point of view to his conscious mental states.⁸⁵ They are pre-reflective and unmediated conscious states. The pre-reflective consciousness cannot take a detached attitude to itself like to propositional attitudes and experiences.

The continuation of the research programme could be that in the *internal frame of reference of the subject's point of view* the following guiding distinctions are to be worked on:

- the pre-reflective and the phenomenal consciousness, on the *one* hand, and
- the self-knowledge, intentionality, and consciousness of time on the *other* hand.

The distinction is necessary because self-knowledge and intentional states are not accounted for merely by the primary unreflective level. This level is accepted from different philosophers, for example, Castañeda referring to Fichte and Sartre. But even if we assume it, the I-consciousness is also directly conscious. This is almost an analytical truth. What this means is what an analysis of consciousness has to investigate. *The consequential problem is the ontology of a non-objective consciousness.* Some philosophers claim to systematize the problem of the pre-reflectivity model, theoretically. This is the wrong approach. What we have to ask

⁸⁵ On the subject's point of view, see K. Farkas, *The Subject's Point of View*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2008.

ourselves about is logical (scientific-theoretical). An answer not to be belated is that we classify it as a logically primitive concept. This is the update of the New Heidebergs. Further research and systematization are desirable.⁸⁶

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⁸⁶ The content of this article was presented at the conference *Philosophical Schools after 1950*, University of Warsaw, Faculty of Philosophy, 9–10 May 2022.

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