

German Idealism: Chronology

1747

- Birth of Goethe.

1762

- Birth of Fichte.
- Rousseau publishes *Émile*.

1770

- Birth of Hegel in Stuttgart, into a Lutheran middle-class family.

1775

- Birth of Schelling.

1778

- Death of Rousseau.

1780

- Fichte enters Jena theological seminary.

1781

- Kant publishes *Critique of Pure Reason* (second edition, 1788).

1782

- Publication of the 'Feder-Garve' or 'Göttingen' review of *Critique of Pure Reason*, charging Kant with Berkeleyan idealism.

1784

- Kant publishes *An Answer to the Question, What is Enlightenment?*
- Feder, empiricist critic of Kant, publishes *Ueber Raum und Kausalität, zur Prüfung der Kantischen Philosophie*.
- Fichte breaks off theological studies without completing degree.

1786

- Jacobi publishes *Letters on Spinoza to Herrn Moses Mendelssohn*, initiating Pantheismusstreit.
- K. L. Reinhold publishes (1786-87) letters on Kant's philosophy in the *Teutsche Merkur* (republished 1790, with some modifications, as Part I of *Letters on Kantian Philosophy*).

Death of Friedrich II and Accession of Friedrich Wilhelm II.

1787

- Jacobi publishes *David Hume on Faith or Realism and Idealism*, to which is appended a short essay, 'On transcendental idealism', in which Jacobi argues that Kant's transcendental idealism is incoherent.

1788

- Kant publishes *Critique of Practical Reason*.
- Fichte accepts position as private tutor to a family in Zurich.
- Hegel enters theological seminary in Tübingen. Reads Rousseau, Lessing and Kant, but

is drawn above all to the ancient Greeks. Close friendship with the poet Hölderlin, whose Hellenism Hegel shares.

1789

- Criticism of Kant in Johann Friedrich Flatt's *Letters on the Moral Ground of Knowledge of Religion in General and in Particular in the Kantian Philosophy*.
- Attack on Kant by Johann August Eberhard in the four issues of *Philosophisches Magazin*, vol. 1.
- K. L. Reinhold publishes *Essay Towards a New Theory of the Human Faculty of Representation*.

Storming of the Bastille (July).

1790

- Kant publishes *Critique of Judgement*. Kant replies to Eberhard in *On a Discovery According to Which all New Critique of Reason Ought to be Rendered Redundant by an Older One*.
- Reinhold publishes *Letters on Kantian Philosophy*, vol. 1, and *Contributions to the Rectification of Misconceptions Hitherto Held by Philosophers*, vol. 1.
- Solomon Maimon publishes *Essay in Transcendental Philosophy*.
- Fichte leaves Zurich for Leipzig, where begins study of Kant.
- Schelling, aged 15, joins Hegel and Hölderlin at the Tübinger Stift; studies theology and attends lectures in addition on philosophy, history, and physics. Ferment caused by French Revolution of 1789, Hegel an enthusiastic supporter.

1791

- Fichte travels to Warsaw to seek employment, then to Königsberg to ask Kant for financial support, then to Gdansk where he works again as a private tutor.
- Schelling writes *Commentary on Timaeus* [1791/92?].
- Reinhold publishes *The Foundation of Philosophical Knowledge*.

1792

- Fichte's first publication, *Attempt at a Critique of all Revelation*, published with Kant's help.
- F. I. Niethammer, professor of theology and philosophy at Jena, publishes a defence of Fichte's *Critique* against attacks which had ensued when it was realised that Kant was not its author.
- Schelling completes his Magisterdissertation.
- Formation in the Tübinger seminary of a political club, with Schelling, Hölderlin and Hegel as members.
- Reinhold publishes *Letters on Kantian Philosophy*, vol. 2.
- Gottlob Ernst Schulze's (anonymously published) attack on critical philosophy, in the form of a dialogue between Hermas (a recent convert to Kant/Reinhold) and Aenesidemus (a skeptic), *Aenesidemus*.

France declares war on Austria (20 April).

1793

- Kant publishes *Religion Within the Bounds of Mere Reason*, and essay on theory and practice.
 - Schiller writes *Letters on Aesthetic Education* (published 1795), and publishes *On Grace and Dignity*.
 - Fichte begins work on his philosophical system. Publishes two popular political writings: *A Discourse on the Reclamation of the Freedom of Thought from the Princes of Europe, Who Have Hitherto Suppressed It* and *Contribution towards Correcting the Public's Judgement of the French Revolution*, and a second edition of *Attempt at a Critique of all Revelation*. Fichte offered Jena professorship, replacing Reinhold.
 - In May the Archduke visits the Tübinger Stift; revolutionary tendencies are investigated.
 - In June Fichte lectures at Tübingen.
 - Hegel's so-called 'Tübinger Fragments'. In the autumn Hegel leaves seminary and begins a series of posts as house-tutor. Over the next few years Hegel writes essays (not published) on theology, critical of institutional Christianity, and a fragment on 'Love'.
 - Hölderlin leaves the Stift in the autumn and takes up position as Hauslehrer.
 - Reinhold publishes reply to Schulze, 'Ueber den philosophischen Skepticismus'.
- Execution of Louis XVI (21 January).**
Terror begins (5 September).
Execution of Girondins (31 October).

1794

- Solomon Maimon publishes *Essay Towards a New Logic or Theory of Thought, Together with Letters of Philaletes to Aenesidemus*, his second major book (pursuing his criticism of Kant and responding to Reinhold).
 - Fichte publishes a review of *Aenesidemus*, replying to Schulze's criticisms of Kant/Reinhold, and hinting at a new philosophical method. Gives a course of private lectures on Critical philosophy.
 - Fichte takes up prestigious Jena professorship, replacing Karl L. Reinhold. Fichte publishes the first version of his *Wissenschaftslehre: Concerning the Concept of the Wissenschaftslehre or of So-Called Philosophy*, a prospectus or short programmatic statement to attract students at Jena to his lectures, and then the first installment, Parts I and II, of his *Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre* (September 1794).
 - Fichte lectures at Tübingen.
 - Fichte gives a public lecture series 'Morality for Scholars' during his first semester at Jena, five of which are published as *Some Lectures Concerning the Scholar's Vocation*.
 - Hölderlin writes *Fragment von Hyperion*.
 - Schelling publishes *On the Possibility of a Form of All Philosophy*.
- Fall of Robespierre (28-29 July).**

1795

- Kant publishes *On Perpetual Peace*.

- Schiller publishes *Letters on Aesthetic Education* and *Naive and Sentimental Poetry*.
- Fichte publishes *Outline of the Distinctive Character of the Wissenschaftslehre with respect to the Theoretical Faculty*; and the second installment, Part III and Preface, of the (now complete) *Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre*.
- Fichte publishes 'On stimulating and increasing the pure interest in truth' and 'Concerning the capacity for language and the origin of language'.
- Fichte has literary quarrel with Schiller, over the latter's refusal to publish in his new journal, *Die Horen*, the first three of Fichte's 'A series of letters concerning the spirit and the letter within philosophy', on art and the aesthetic drive.
- Schelling publishes *Of the I as the Principle of Philosophy, or On the Unconditional in Human Knowledge*, and *Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism*. Niethammer invites Schelling to cooperate on the *Philosophisches Journal*, but Schelling declines, instead going to Hamburg and becoming house tutor.
- Fichte lectures in Jena: heard by Hölderlin, Schelling, Hegel, Novalis, and Schlegel.
- J. S. Beck publishes critical review of Fichte's *On the Concept of the Wissenschaftslehre* and *Foundations*.
- Hölderlin writes 'Judgement and Being' (1794/95), and studies in Jena, where he hears Fichte. At the end of December, becomes house tutor in Frankfurt.
- Schelling and Hölderlin meet in Tübingen at the end of July, travels to Stuttgart in November, and again meets Hölderlin in the middle of December, in Nürtingen.
- Niethammer founds the philosophical journal, *Philosophisches Journal*, in which many of Fichte's essays would appear.

1796

- Schiller publishes *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*.
- Jakob Sigismund Beck publishes what is intended to be an anti-skeptical, defensive statement of Kant's position, *The Only Possible Standpoint from which the Critical Philosophy Must Be Judged*, setting forth Beck's *Standpunktslehre*, 'doctrine of the standpoint'.
- Fichte publishes a review of Kant's *Perpetual Peace* (January 1796), 'A comparison between Prof. Schmid's system and the WL' (Spring 1796), and *Foundations of Natural Right*, Part I (March 1796). Birth of Fichte's only child, I. H. Fichte, who later edited his father's works. Fichte becomes co-editor of Niethammer's *Philosophisches Journal*.
- Fichte gives in the winter of 1796/97 a course of lectures, 'Foundations of Transcendental Philosophy (*Wissenschaftslehre*) nova methodo', an attempt to correct misunderstandings of his philosophy (lectures repeated in the winter semesters of 1797/98 and 1798/99).
- Schelling publishes *Essays in Explanation of the Idealism of the Doctrine of Science* (1796-97) and *New Deduction of Natural Right*.
- *The Oldest System Programme in German Idealism* (June 1796?).
- Schelling meets Hölderlin in Frankfurt in April.

1797

- Kant publishes *Metaphysics of Morals*.
- Fichte publishes 'Annals of philosophical tone', *Foundations of Natural Right*, Part II, and *An Attempt at a New Presentation of the Wissenschaftslehre* in installments, between February 1797 and March 1798.
- Schelling publishes 'Treatise Explicatory of the Idealism in the *Wissenschaftslehre*' and *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature*.
- Schelling meets Fichte, Novalis, A. W. Schlegel. Schiller and Niethammer organise his appointment at Jena.
- Hegel writes *Morality, Love, Religion* (1797/98).
- Reinhold writes letter to Fichte, 14 February, informing of his conversion to the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and publicly declares his allegiance to Fichte in the Preface to the new edition of his Prize Essay 'Progress in metaphysics'.
- Hölderlin begins to write *Hyperion*, and *Empedokles* fragments.

1798

- Kant publishes *The Conflict of the Faculties* and *Anthropology in a Practical Regard*.
- Fichte publishes *System of Ethical Theory According to the Principles of the Wissenschaftslehre*.
- Fichte publishes 'On the foundation of our belief in a divine government of the universe' in *Philosophisches Journal*, a response to an article by Forberg published in the same edition ('Development of the concept of religion'). Their articles elicited a tract 'A father's letter to his son, studying at the university, concerning the atheism of Fichte and Forberg', resulting in a declaration from the administrative council in Dresden in November 1798 that both essays were atheistic and the confiscation of all copies of the *Journal*.
- Schelling publishes *Von der Weltseele, einer Hypothese der höheren Physik/Of the Worldsoul, a Hypothesis of Higher Physics*.
- Schelling travels to Jena and meets Goethe, who articulates his reservations about Schiller. On the strength of Goethe's recommendation Schelling obtains a professorship at Jena. Schelling meets F., A W, and Caroline Schlegel in Dresden (18 Aug – 1 Oct). In Jena, contact with Fichte, Schiller, Goethe, Ritter, Schubert, Steffens.
- Hegel publishes *Vertrauliche Briefe über das Vormalige Verhältnis d. Waadtlandes (Pays de Vaud) zur Stadt Bern* and *Über die neuesten Verhältnisse Württembergs, besonders über die Verbrechung der Magistratverfassung*.
- A fuller public statement by Reinhold of his conversion to Fichte, in long review of Fichte's writings in the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (Jan).
- Publication of *Athenäum*, first issue in May, until 1800 (vols. I-III, 1798, 1800).
- Hölderlin goes to Homburg: *Homburger Fragmente*.

**Accession of Friedrich Wilhelm III as
King of Prussia.**

1799

- Atheism controversy: Fichte publishes, *J. G. Fichte's Appeal to the Public concerning the Charge of Making Atheistic Assertions* (January 1799), and *Juridical Defence of the Editor of the Philosophical Journal against the Charge of Atheism* (March 1799). Jacobi publishes 'Open letter to Fichte', a letter sent to Fichte in the spring of 1799 and later published in expanded form in September 1799. Fichte loses his position at Jena.
- Kant publishes 'Open letter on Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*', repudiating Fichte.
- Schelling publishes *First Plan of a System of the Philosophy of Nature, and Introduction to the Sketch of a System of Naturphilosophie or on the Concept of Speculative Physics*.
- Hegel publishes *The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate*.
- Reinhold's break with Fichte: due to Jacobi's criticisms, and to his infatuation with Bardili's 'logical realism'.
- Hölderlin publishes *Hyperion*, vol. 2.
- Meeting of Schelling, Schlegel brothers, Novalis and Tieck in Jena; Novalis reads manuscript of *Christendom or Europe*.

1800

- Fichte moves to Berlin. Fichte publishes 'From a private letter' and *The Vocation of Man*, both intended to supply a direct response to the charge of atheism and to Jacobi. Fichte publishes 'A series of letters concerning the spirit and the letter within philosophy', on art and the aesthetic drive.
- Fichte gives public announcement of a new presentation of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. Though Fichte later lectures on the *Wissenschaftslehre*, at Berlin, Erlangen and Königsberg, no published restatement of his science of knowledge ever appears.
- Hegel writes a long essay outlining a system of philosophy; two pages of the manuscript survive, showing traces of Hegel's later philosophy in nascent form.
- Schelling publishes *System of Transcendental Idealism* and *Allgemeine Deduktion der dynamischen Prozesses*.
- Death of Maimon.

Bonaparte overthrows Directory.

1801

- Fichte publishes 'A crystal-clear report to the general public concerning the actual essence of the newest philosophy: an attempt to force the reader to understand', and speaks of Schelling as his 'spiritual colleague'. Nevertheless, beginning of difficulties between Schelling and Fichte.
- Schelling publishes *Presentation of My Own System [Exposition of My System] of Philosophy*.
- Schelling, well established in Jena, arranges for Hegel to join him (January). Hegel's 'Jena period', which includes the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, begins. Hegel completes a Latin dissertation in order to qualify as a teacher at the university. Hegel's first publication, *On the Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy* ('Difference essay'), argues the superiority of Schelling's philosophy to Fichte's. Hegel is regarded as Schelling's disciple.

Hegel becomes co-editor with Schelling of the latter's *Critical Journal of Philosophy*. The journal is short-lived. Hegel writes most of it, including a book-length piece, *Faith and Knowledge*, in which he examines critically conceptions of religious belief in Kant, Fichte and Jacobi. When Schelling departs from Jena in 1803, Hegel begins to free himself of his influence.

- Schelling's lectures on philosophy of art (1800-01, 1802-3, 1804-5).

1802

- Schelling publishes *Bruno, or On the Divine and Natural Principle of Things* and *Further Presentation of my System of Philosophy*.

1803

- Schelling leaves Jena, disenchantedly, and goes to Bavaria (professorships at Würzburg, Erlangen, Munich).

1804

- Schelling publishes *Philosophy and Religion, System of Philosophy in General and of the Philosophy of Nature in Particular*, and *Propädeutik der Philosophie*.

1805

- Hegel gains associate professorship at Jena. Starts writing *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

1806

- Hegel completes *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as Napoleon achieves victory over Prussia at Jena.

1807

- Fichte appointed Professor in Königsberg but leaves (for Copenhagen) when French troops threaten to occupy East Prussia. Returns to Berlin after Peace of Tilsit. Delivers lectures 1807-8 that become *Addresses to the German Nation*.
- *Phenomenology of Spirit* published. Hegel forced by circumstance to leave Jena. Edits newspaper in Bavaria.

1808

- Hegel takes up position as headmaster at a Gymnasium in Nuremberg. Works on *Science of Logic*, the next part of the system which began with the *Phenomenology*.

1809

- Schelling publishes *Of the Nature of Human Freedom*.

1810

- Fichte appointed Professor and Dean of the Philosophical Faculty at new Humboldt University in Berlin.
- Schelling's Stuttgart Seminars.

1811

- Fichte named Rector of Humboldt University in Berlin.

1812

- Fichte dismissed as Rector of Humboldt University in Berlin and begins work on final version of the *Wissenschaftslehre*.

- First part of Hegel's *Science of Logic* (Doctrine of Being) published. Second part (Doctrine of Essence) follows in 1813, final part (Doctrine of the Concept) in 1816.
- Death of Reinhold.

1813

- Hegel publishes *Science of Logic*, second part (Doctrine of Essence).

War against Napoleon resumes.

1814

- Death of Fichte from fever.

1815

- Schelling publishes *Ages of the World*.

1816

- Hegel publishes *Science of Logic*, third and final part (Doctrine of the Concept). Hegel appointed to University of Heidelberg on the strength of the *Science of Logic*.

1817

- First edition of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*, in 3 volumes. Originally intended to accompany Hegel's lectures, and composed of numbered paragraphs with 'Zusätze' (additional remarks). Organised in three parts: (1) Logic (a briefer version of the earlier *Science of Logic*), (2) Philosophy of Nature, (3) Philosophy of Spirit. Second, expanded edition in 1827, third and final edition in 1830.

1818

- Hegel's appointment at University of Berlin. Hegel's Berlin period marked by fame and extensive lecturing. Reactionary political climate.
- Schopenhauer publishes *The World as Will and Representation* (second edition, 1844).

1821

- Hegel's last published book, *The Philosophy of Right*. A variety of essays appear in *Yearbooks for Scientific Criticism*, founded by Hegel.

1827

- Second edition of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*.
- Schelling publishes *On History of Modern Philosophy*.

1830

- Third and final edition of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*, in 3 volumes.

1831

- Hegel dies in cholera epidemic, having just begun to revise the *Phenomenology* for republication. Friends and relatives prepare Hegel's papers and lecture materials for publication.

1832

- A complete edition of Hegel's works appears in 21 volumes between 1832 and 1845.
- Schools of Hegelianism form – 'Left' and 'Right' Hegelians – on explicitly political bases.

- Death of Goethe.

1841

- Schelling is invited to Berlin to counter the influence of Left Hegelians.

1844

- Schopenhauer publishes second edition of *The World as Will and Representation*.

1840-50's

- Schelling's lectures on mythology and religion.

1854

- Death of Schelling.