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MICHAEL SAMAN

Constructions of Goethe versus Constructions of Kant in German Intellectual Culture, 1900–1925

Reconfiguring Goethe

IN THE EARLY DECADES of the twentieth century, Goethe scholarship found itself in a charged and complex state of affairs.¹ The defining philological undertaking of Wilhelm Scherer and his generation reached its culmination in 1919 with the completion of the monumental *Weimarer Ausgabe* of Goethe's works, yet for an emerging generation of critics, the driving conviction of Scherer's positivist school—namely that empirically founded philology would yield the most valid and authentic insights regarding Goethe and his work—had gradually lost much of its power to convince. “Eine Fülle von Tatsachen und Material ist aufgehäuft worden,” went one critic's response, “aber das Vermögen zur Synthese hat in keiner Weise damit Schritt halten können” (A wealth of facts and material has been amassed, but the capacity for synthesis has in no way been able to keep up).² As the ethos that had produced this philological landmark was declared inadequate, a vocal set of critics in Germany began instead to embrace the diametrically opposed, highly speculative and vitalistic sensibilities of *Neuromantik* (neo-Romanticism). Rather than an emphasis on text, one witnessed the emergence of a post-Nietzschean interest in mythical, heroic constructions of key symbolic historical personalities—one may think, for example, of the George Circle's lionizing of individuals such as Caesar, Frederick the Great, and, of course, Nietzsche himself.

Hand in hand with these changes in literary scholarship, the figure of Goethe underwent extraordinary transformations starting around 1900. Having become an irreplaceable symbolic pillar of the new German nation-state after 1871, Goethe was now energetically refashioned into an icon for an ever bolder yet deeply unstable Wilhelmine Germany. As literary criticism became less empirical, as philosophy (especially under the rubric of *Lebensphilosophie*) became more irrationalist, and as political sentiment gained ever greater influence over intellectual culture, Goethe, as a paragon of post-Enlightenment thinking, emerged as a model for the new postpositivist mind-sets. Literary critics became openly disdainful of thought that limited itself to what was *merely* documentable and invested themselves in what *could* or *should* be discerned in such foundational personalities; at the

same time, Goethe commentary began to be intellectualized in ways that decidedly overstepped the strictures of literary scholarship: “Die wissenschaftliche Beschäftigung mit Goethe,” writes Karl Robert Mandelkow, “war . . . aus dem Ghetto der Philologie entlassen und wurde zum Gegenstand aller Wissenschaftsdisziplinen” (Mandelkow 2:23; The scholarly treatment of Goethe was freed from the ghetto of philology and became subject matter for all scholarly disciplines).

To be sure, some updating may well have been due, for by the turn of the twentieth century, the figure of Goethe had come to look precisely the way the late nineteenth century had chosen to construe him: as an imposing figure from the *past*. In 1899, neo-Kantian philosopher Wilhelm Windelband articulated this sense vividly:

Wer aus den Thoren Roms hinauspilgert in die Campagna, den Bergen zu, der sieht alle die Mauern und Türme, die Kuppeln und Spitzen mehr und mehr verschwimmen und verschwinden: und schließlich, wenn die ewige Stadt nur noch wie eine einzige Masse daliegt, dann wölbt sich über ihr, allbeherrschend, die Eine gewaltige Kuppel von St. Peter. So geht es uns mit der zeitlichen Entfernung von Goethe. Je weiter wir von jener größten Zeit der deutschen Kulturgeschichte abkommen, in der um die Wende des vorigen und dieses Jahrhunderts unser Volk seine verlorene Nationalität sich geistig neu geschaffen hat, um so beherrschender erhebt sich daraus für unsern Rückblick in unvergleichlicher Mächtigkeit die Gestalt Goethes—eine Welt für sich, die alles umfaßt und alles überragt.³

[Whoever makes the pilgrimage from the gates of Rome out into the Campagna and toward the mountains sees all the walls and towers, the domes and steeples, blurring and disappearing more and more into the distance. And finally, when the Eternal City has become an indistinguishable mass, there looms imperiously over it the one mighty dome of St. Peter's. So it is for us with the temporal distance from Goethe. The further we move away from this greatest age of German cultural history, in which at the turn of the previous and this century our people created its lost nationhood anew in the realm of the intellect, the more imperiously the figure of Goethe rises up in incomparable might before our retrospective gaze—a world in itself, which encompasses and towers above all else.]

Goethe, who for much of the nineteenth century had still been within living memory, remained an imposing presence, yet was now slipping inexorably into historical distance. This transition provoked dramatic changes in the way he was represented. Rather than an untouchable and immutable classical figure, the need was felt for a more vitalistic icon whose spirit could still be felt here, now, in the present. During the ensuing years, therefore, Goethe would be remodeled, bit by bit, from the august, classical Olympian of the founding years of the *Reich* into the modern Germanic *Übermensch* of the 1910s through the 1940s.

This transition is evident in Richard Dehmel's 1908 “Der Olympier Goethe: Ein Protest.” Here, Dehmel reports a realization that had come to him upon rereading Goethe's poetic work: “Ich fand einen wesentlich anderen

Goethe," he writes, "als ich ihn in der Vorstellung trug, und als er wahrscheinlich vielen Deutschen von der Schulbank her vorschweben wird"⁴ (I found a fundamentally different Goethe from the one I carried in my memory, and from the one many Germans probably recall from their school days). The hitherto prevalent conception of Goethe, he argues, no longer seems an adequate or convincing way of capturing what had made Goethe great. Quite the contrary,

es heißt Goethe *verkleinern*, wenn man ihn als Olympier anspricht. Soweit er wirklich olympische Anlagen hatte, war er weder ein Zeus noch ein Apoll; dazu mangelte ihm vor allem andern die unerschütterliche Hartherzigkeit dieser antiken Ideale. Nicht einmal ein Dionysos war er in seinen unbekümmerten Stimmungsstunden, sondern höchstens ein Ganymed oder Hermes, ein Spender der Anmut und Lebensklugheit, und mehr im römischen als im griechischen Sinne, wie er selbst zu Herrn Eckermann sagte. (Dehmel 356, emphasis in the original)

[to address Goethe as an Olympian is to *miniaturize* him. Insofar as he indeed had Olympian aspects, he was neither a Zeus nor an Apollo—for this he lacked the unshakable hard-heartedness of these classical ideals. Not even a Dionysus during his more carefree moments, he was at most a Ganymede or Hermes, a bestower of grace and wisdom, and this more in the Roman than in the Greek sense, as he himself said to Eckermann.]

Goethe's genius, according to Dehmel, lay precisely in his ability to resist falling into any classical, idealized form. "Es ist sein höchster und reinster Ruhm," Dehmel writes,

daß er unablässig gegen diese Gefahr, die auch in seinem Charakter lauerte, seinen besten Kunstwillen aufgeboten hat, nicht wie ein ausgelerner Altmeister bloß, dem die mancherlei Spiegelfechtereien der poetischen Technik glatt von der Hand gehen, sondern als ein steter Lehrling des Lebens, in oft sehr verzweifelter, manchmal vergeblicher, immer aber "strebend bemühter" und eben dadurch "erlösender," für uns alle vorbildlicher Notwehr. (Dehmel 356–57)

[It is his highest and purest merit that he unrelentingly engaged his greatest artistic will against this danger—which also lurked in his own character—not merely as an old hand at his trade, for whom the shadowboxing of poetic technique proceeds effortlessly, but rather as a permanent apprentice of life, in a gesture of self-defense that is exemplary for all of us—an often quite desperate gesture, sometimes in vain, but always "striving" and, consequently, "redemptive."]

Nineteenth-century attempts to monumentalize Goethe into a classical figure appear, from the vantage point of the new century, as failures to understand that it was constant striving and continual metamorphosis that had truly defined him, and that any hypostatizations of his person and work would therefore necessarily fail. The intended scholarly rigor of institutionalized *Germanistik*, on this view, systematically missed the ineffable quality that had made Goethe's works into crucial objects of study in the first place.

A handbook of literary criticism such as Rudolf Lehmann's 1908 *Deutsche Poetik* captures the moment in which a methodological shift begins to follow upon this change in sensibility. To redress the "Einseitigkeit" (one-sidedness) he perceives in literary scholarship—the prevalence, namely, of the "genetische Untersuchung der Dichtungen" (historical-genealogical analysis of poetic works, i.e., philological methodology) over what he calls "künstlerische Erklärung" (artistic explication)—Lehmann calls for a renewed emphasis on speculative, subjective aesthetics.⁵ Rather than *analyzing* into constituent elements that which "der Künstler als eine Einheit gesehen und als eine Einheit geschaffen hat" (the artist envisioned as a unity and created as a unity), Lehmann believes that criticism must begin to operate *synthetically* if it is to capture, in its integrity, what the author conceived.

Die ästhetische Interpretation steht dafür unmittelbar im Dienste der Kunst und des künstlerischen Verständnisses, und unwürdig der Wissenschaft ist ein solcher Dienst gewiß nicht, am wenigsten einer Wissenschaft, die mit Recht den Anspruch darauf erhebt, Führerin und Lehrerin der Nation zum Verständnis und zur Würdigung ihrer großen Dichter zu sein. (Lehmann 52)

[Aesthetic interpretation, meanwhile, stands directly in service of art and of an artistic mode of understanding. And such a service is certainly not beneath the dignity of true scholarship—least of all of any scholarship that legitimately lays claim to be the guide and teacher of the nation in the understanding and appreciation of her great poets.]

The philological precision and factual objectivity that had characterized the Scherer school were now perceived as marks of intellectual frailty, of incapacity for philosophical speculation; subjectivity and *Weltanschauung*, rather, were key, and the ideal was to think one's way into the innermost psychology and worldview of individuals—such as Goethe—who were seen as definitively embodying German *Geist*.

Mandelkow speaks of an "Akzentverlagerung von der Germanistik auf die Philosophie" (Mandelkow 23; shift in emphasis from *Germanistik* to philosophy) during this time, and in the case of Goethe, the question of his relation to philosophy was "vorrangig auf das Verhältnis Goethes zu Kant eingeengt" (Mandelkow 28; constrained first and foremost to Goethe's relationship to Kant)—an artificially constrained frame of reference that gave the relationship between these two figures a dramatically inflated importance. In fact, it is largely by virtue of the "Antithese Goethe-Kant" (Goethe-Kant antithesis)⁶ that Goethe took on much of his newfound vitality. Thus, if we wish to bring forth his image in the early twentieth century in its sharpest contours, it proves necessary to direct our attention not only to the way Goethe was constructed in his own right but also to the way his perceived attributes were defined in explicit opposition to the equally iconic figure of Immanuel Kant.

Goethe versus Kant

Since Nietzsche's famous pronouncement in *Die Götzen-Dämmerung* (*The Twilight of the Idols*) that Goethe and Kant personified a paradigmatic and irreconcilable opposition within German intellectual culture,

any direct juxtaposition of these two figures had come to be construed as a zero-sum contest.⁷ Beginning in the 1890s and escalating through the years of the Weimar Republic, a remarkable discourse emerged around the question of “Goethe and Kant,” with partisans of both figures debating—in increasingly agitated tones, as the years progressed—which one better embodied the uniqueness and greatness of German *Geist*: the unreflected, sensual, and intuitive immediacy of Goethe or the systematic, abstract, and analytic philosophical rigor of Kant. According to Georg Simmel’s account of this polarity:

Goethe ist das größte historische Beispiel des Menschen, der nur von innen heraus, nach seinen eigenen Entwicklungsnotwendigkeiten lebt, von dort aus die Forderungen des Objekts erfüllt und zu einem reinen Bilde der Objekte gelangt. Kant umgekehrt steht von vornherein unter der Herrschaft objektiver Ideen, der Erkenntnis oder der Moral, die von sich aus sein subjektives Wesen zu ihnen adäquaten Formen und Inhalten gestalten.⁸

[Goethe is the greatest historical example of a man who lives only from the inside out and in accordance with the necessities of his own development, who from this standpoint fulfills the demands of the object and arrives at a pure image of objects. Kant, on the other hand, labors from the first instance under the domineering authority of objective ideas—cognitive or ethical ones—that, in and of themselves, shape his subjective essence into forms and contents that are adequate to them.]

Though a dichotomy between the two figures was already a commonplace, for thinkers of this period it became not only paradigmatic but programmatic.

In the first instance, this relation would seem to be essentially a matter of academic concern, yet the stakes would heighten abruptly and dramatically with the outbreak of World War I. Beginning around 1914, intellectual discussion divorced itself ever more forcefully from standards of objectivity and merged more and more explicitly with nationalist political discourses.⁹ In a trend that reached its peak around 1916–17, many critics felt they had license—indeed, perhaps even a certain imperative—to construct and reconstruct historical icons in accordance with the exigencies of the present. “Goethe” and “Kant” were now, in effect, no longer just historical figures but, rather, rival paradigms of exemplary Germanness between which the country would have to choose. The fact that, during their lifetimes, Goethe and Kant never communicated or interacted with one another in any direct way (“Kant hat nie von mir Notiz genommen,” Goethe tells Eckermann in a conversation on April 11, 1827 [Kant never took notice of me]) was the very circumstance that created vast space for invention when later German intellectuals undertook to construct them—posthumously and counterfactually—into bitter, implacable rivals.

“Das Problem ‘Kant und Goethe,’” Ernst Cassirer would observe in the 1920s, “gehört zu jenen Problemen der Geistesgeschichte, die schlecht-hin unerschöpflich scheinen. So häufig, so gründlich und eingehend es von Philosophen und Literaturhistorikern behandelt worden ist: es fordert immer wieder zur Betrachtung heraus und stellt immer neue Fragen”¹⁰ (The

problem “Kant and Goethe” counts among those problems of intellectual history that seem to be sheerly inexhaustible. However often and however thoroughly and extensively it has been treated by philosophers and literary historians, it always challenges us to consider it yet again and always poses new questions). The reason the topic is so contentious, Cassirer suggests, is because the juxtaposition of such symbolically overdetermined figures reaches back to something deeper, more primordial than what philological analysis could ever hope to capture. “Hier handelt es sich nicht mehr um einzelne, literarhistorisch-aufweisbaren ‘Einflüsse,’ sondern um Zusammenstöße, die in die letzten Tiefen zurückweisen, denen die deutsche Geistesgeschichte entstammt, und aus denen sie ihre Struktur und ihre Form enthält” (Cassirer 105; Here it is no longer a question of individual lines of “influence” that could be demonstrated by literary-historical scholarship but rather of collisions that point us into the farthest depths from which German intellectual history arises and from which it derives its structure and form). Indeed, the cultural symbolism of these purported *Zusammenstöße* (collisions) was high. As a “belated” European nation, Germany felt an urgent need to counterbalance its comparative lack of stable historical, territorial, institutional, and international political identity with its formidable body of very recent cultural accomplishment—and Goethe and Kant, as towering figures of that recent golden age, formed crucial parts of the intellectual bedrock that the nation saw itself as resting upon. Goethe and Kant were construed as standing in an ontologically necessary tension with one another, and any rethinking of the balance of power between them meant nothing less than tampering with the quasi-mythical foundations of a nation that took the question of its foundations very seriously. Any redrawing of the lines between them was not just a shift in facts on the surface of German intellectual culture but a symbolic shifting, as Josef Bleicher has written, of the “fundamental, almost tectonic, positions underlying the central intellectual, cultural, and political commitments” of the age.¹¹

Thus laden with cultural and ideological currents quite extraneous to serious scholarly deliberation, and unfettered, at the same time, by a new fashion for rather adventurous intellectualism, the tone of discussion escalated at times to almost implausible levels of fantasy and vitriol. Political, ideological, philosophical, and aesthetic transformations in Germany shaped the question of Goethe and Kant into a highly volatile intellectual epiphenomenon. In it, national political anxieties and cultural uncertainties manifested themselves in ways that were sometimes quite inspired, sometimes troubling, sometimes cartoonishly far-fetched—but, as we will see, almost never factually accurate.

Beweisbares versus Unbeweisbares

In neo-Kantian philosopher Jonas Cohn’s 1905 essay, “Das Kantische Element in Goethes Weltanschauung” (The Kantian Element in Goethe’s *Weltanschauung*), we find an early expression of the new speculative, synthetic mode of commentary applied to the question of Goethe and Kant. Cohn’s stated method in this essay places emphasis upon a certain

intellectual or spiritual added value that he believes cultural criticism must try to capture: beyond the simple and quantifiable “Eigenwert der Wissenschaft” (intrinsic scholarly value), he declares, one must aim to grasp a text’s deeper “Kulturbedeutung” (cultural meaning). This element, he suggests, lies primarily in the mode of subjective experience that a work models for the reader:

Was wir erleben, was von den möglichen Anschauungen in uns wirklich und wirksam wird, hängt überall von den Gesichtspunkten ab, unter denen unser Geist Erlebnisse und Dinge betrachtet. Dadurch wird uns der Sinn eines Wortes deutlich, das der Deutsche nicht ohne Ehrfurcht aussprechen sollte, des Wortes *Weltanschauung*.¹²

[What we experience, what becomes real and effective within us from among all possible perceptions, depends always on the perspectives from which our intellect observes experiences and things. In this way the meaning of a word becomes evident to us, a word that a German should never speak without reverence: the word *Weltanschauung*.]

Cohn’s undertaking is expressly ahistorical in nature: he does not aim first and foremost to interpret actual states of affairs from Goethe’s own time; rather, he frames his work as a contribution toward the construction of normative forms of thought and pathos for *contemporary* use. Above and beyond the intrinsic scholarly value of Goethe’s or Kant’s ideas lay the more visceral significance of their exemplary status for “us,” for “our” experience, for “our” perceptions. The crystallization of a personal *Weltanschauung*, Cohn asserts, is “das höchste persönliche Ziel jedes denkenden Menschen” (the highest personal aim of every thinking person). Thus rejecting disinterested scholarly inquiry, Cohn takes the view that a Goethe critic must aim, in effect, both to find Goethe in himself and to find himself in Goethe. Without this identification with the author, one’s work would be reduced to mere objectivity. “Wir verstehen dann auch,” he writes,

dass sich in der Weltanschauung wissenschaftliche und rein persönliche Elemente, Beweisbares und Unbeweisbares, Begriff und Gefühl unlösbar verbinden. Eine Weltanschauung in diesem Sinne, keine Philosophie in der strengen Bedeutung des Wortes hatte Goethe, ja man könnte meinen, dass das Wort Weltanschauung recht eigentlich auf ihn geprägt sei. (Cohn 345)

[We also understand, then, that in *Weltanschauung*, scholarly and purely personal elements, provable and unprovable things, concept and feeling, are inextricably connected. A *Weltanschauung* in this sense—not a philosophy in the strict sense of the word—is what Goethe had; indeed, one might even say that the word *Weltanschauung* really was coined just for him.]

To the extent, then, that Cohn sees Goethe as having exemplified this mixing of the subjective and the objective, he posits that the contemporary Goethean thinker must do the same. With this, Cohn more or less openly announces to the reader that not all of what he says will necessarily be borne out by proof or cogent argument. He presents this fact, however, not as a weakness in his work but as a strength—as an indication of his ability to think as Goethe did.

Cohn's essay centers on a fixed set of presumptions concerning Goethe's response to Kant. Undergirding his views is the notion of a fundamental oil-and-water incompatibility between the two thinkers. This notion does not emerge as a conclusion from his investigations; rather, it is posited from the start as the operative premise that anchors his argument. Cohn thus asserts not only that Kant's ethics was "fremd" (foreign) to Goethe, but that his epistemology was "direkt feindlich" (directly hostile; Cohn 305). What does this mean concretely? Did Kant's ideas actually intend to harm Goethe? Seeking to lend a deep, visceral resonance to the ostensible hostility between Goethe and Kant, Cohn employs a metaphor that had gained currency in recent years:

Während die Bereicherung seiner Erkenntnis, die Möglichkeit der Verständigung mit hochgeschätzten Zeitgenossen, die grössere Freiheit und Sicherheit seiner Anschauungen als ein Gewinn ihm vor Augen standen, fühlte [Goethe] doch, dass die strenge, trennende Art des Kantischen Denkens ein fremder Tropfen in seinem Blute war. (Cohn 290)

[While he strove for enrichment of his cognition, for the possibility of mutual understanding with highly regarded contemporaries, and for the greater freedom and surety of his perceptions, [Goethe] nevertheless felt that the strict, dividing manner of Kantian thought was a foreign drop in his blood.]

This gratuitous biological metaphor reads rather awkwardly for today's reader, but it seems to have become a commonplace in the literature of the time, recurring in the works of several critics. In his 1899 lecture, "Aus Goethes Philosophie" (From Goethe's Philosophy), Wilhelm Windelband writes:

Für [Schiller] war Kants Philosophie das Stahlbad, in das er aus verworrener Jugend niedertauchte, um sich in männlicher Klarheit daraus zu erheben. Vorher ein stürmisches Talent, ist er nachher der große Dichter. Für Goethe dagegen ist jene Reflexion ein fremder Tropfen in seinem Blute. (Windelband 91)

[For [Schiller], Kant's philosophy was the bracing mineral bath into which he dove out of a confused youth, to rise from it in masculine clarity. Previously a tempestuous talent, afterward he is the great poet. For Goethe, on the other hand, this reflection is a foreign drop in his blood.]

In Max Heynacher's 1905 book, *Goethes Philosophie aus seinen Werken* (Goethe's Philosophy from His Works), we read the following: "[Die Kantische Philosophie] war für Goethe nicht das Stahlbad, in das er wie Schiller aus verworrener Jugend niedertauchte, um sich in männlicher Klarheit daraus zu erheben. Nein, sie war ein fremder Tropfen in seinem Blute" ([Kantian philosophy] was not for Goethe the bracing mineral bath into which he, like Schiller, dove out of a confused youth, to rise from it in masculine clarity. No, it was a foreign drop in his blood).¹³ Karl Vorländer, in his 1907 collection, *Kant—Schiller—Goethe*, writes that "der Kritizismus [war] wirklich, wie man gesagt hat, ein fremder Tropfen in Goethes Blute" (the Critical Philosophy truly [was], as has been said, a foreign drop in Goethe's blood).¹⁴ Neither Windelband nor Heynacher nor Vorländer back up this rather implausible

choice of metaphor by reasoned explanation; rather, it gains force by sheer repetition from author to author. Its pseudobiological criterion found expression furthermore in the work of Houston Chamberlain, who judged that if Goethe had encountered Kant any earlier in his life, “die Keime einer so durchdringenden Analyse des Denkens—des reifen Werkes eines gleichsam reif geborenen Mannes—[hätten] Goethe’s unbefangene Anschauungskraft bedroht”¹⁵ (the germs of so penetrating an analysis of thought—the mature work of a man who was, so to speak, born mature—[would have] threatened Goethe’s unspoiled powers of perception).

Thus blurring the line between “Beweisbares” and “Unbeweisbares” (things that are provable and things that are unprovable), Cohn proposes not only that Goethe saw certain elements of Kant’s philosophy as incompatible with his own thinking (which is certainly true, and provable), but that Kant’s ideas were somehow directly destructive of Goethe’s thought, and that he had suffered from contact with them (which is absurd, and of course unprovable). One effect of so dramatically overstating the distance between Goethe and Kant is that it makes it all the more necessary to explain how, despite the purported hostility, the “scheinbar durch eine Welt getrennten Ideen Goethes und Kants” (Cohn 286; ideas of Goethe and Kant, which appear to be a world apart from one another) could possibly still have been mediated. Cohn offers two scenarios.

In one rendition of events—which approaches the truth but which is mentioned only in passing—Cohn states that Goethe had responded to Kantian philosophy by creatively reconfiguring its ideas: “Goethe hat die Einwirkung erlitten—aber eben doch nicht erlitten, sondern den fremden Stoff sich fruchtbar umgestaltet” (Cohn 290; Goethe suffered from the impact of it—but then again didn’t suffer from it but rather reconfigured the foreign material in a manner fruitful for himself). Indeed, during his lifetime, Goethe’s interlocutors had been struck by the marked idiosyncrasy of his interpretation of Kant: “es sei freilich ein Analogon Kantischer Vorstellungsart,” Goethe recalls being told, “aber ein seltsames” (it is, to be sure, an analogue of a Kantian mode of thought, but a peculiar one).¹⁶ That Goethe generated peculiar “analogues” of Kantian ideas for use in his own intellectual projects is a fact borne out by a solid body of evidence. That body of evidence was still in the process of being uncovered in Cohn’s time, though, and since the philosophical pursuit of *Weltanschauung* staunchly refused to be beholden to philological pedantry, such facts could be systematically ignored. Cohn turns his attention, instead, to a fiction that was more in keeping with the fusion of fact and speculation that characterized the *Geisteswissenschaften* of his time.

In the alternative rendition of events—“the ‘condescending neo-Kantian’ narrative,” as Frederick Amrine has called it¹⁷—Goethe is presented as being incapable of processing Kant’s philosophy by himself and, therefore, as being in need of Schiller to aestheticize and soften it for him (Cohn 344): “[Schiller] gab Goethe in der für ihn einzig möglichen Form, was dem Dichter von Kant förderlich werden konnte,” goes Cohn’s telling of it (Cohn 286; [Schiller] gave Goethe, in the only form that was possible for him, those aspects of Kant that could be productive for the poet). It is by virtue of his philosophical

prodding of Goethe that Schiller, according to Cohn, takes on part of his greatness within German intellectual history. This understanding of events, which came to be widely accepted around this time, had the advantage of creating a usefully neat narrative: here, Goethe and Kant maintain their necessary distance, while Schiller—who, until being upstaged by Goethe in the late nineteenth century, had been popularly upheld as the greatest German author—could reclaim first-order importance by virtue of the mediating role he played. The only problem with this version of events, however, is that it simply is not true.

Goethe had first developed a serious interest in Kant's philosophy upon his return from Italy in 1788 and—as Schiller himself attests—was eager to talk about Kant above all else during the months following the publication of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (*Critique of the Power of Judgment*) in spring 1790.¹⁸ Schiller, meanwhile, had resisted his friend Körner's encouragement to read Kant during the 1780s—he “was slow to develop” an interest in Kant,¹⁹ writes Frederick Beiser—and only in 1791 did he, with strenuous self-discipline, undertake the studies that he then put aside just a few years later (see Beiser 37–41). This means that Goethe had begun to read Kant at least a year before Schiller did (“Goethe . . . in 1790 knew more about Kant than Schiller did,” affirms Nicholas Boyle²⁰) and had thus been familiar with Kantian ideas for roughly five years before his regular interaction with Schiller began in 1794.²¹ Moreover, Goethe's interest was primarily in the second part of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (the critique of teleological judgment and the principles of natural science), and he was dismissive of the portions on aesthetics. By contrast, Schiller's interest in Kant was based largely on the first part of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (the aesthetics), and he took little notice of the ideas on science contained in the second part. If Schiller had been Goethe's guide through Kantian thought, it would be necessary to explain how Schiller's Kant-derived ideas on aesthetic education could possibly have offered relevant tutelage for Goethe's Kant-inspired practice of natural science. But Goethe states unambiguously that this was not the case; on the contrary: “Schiller pflegte mir das Studium der Kantischen Philosophie zu widerraten. Er sagte gewöhnlich, Kant könne mir nichts geben” (Schiller tended to advise me against studying Kantian philosophy. He usually said that Kant could give me nothing).²² The fact that Goethe and Schiller both were engaged readers of Kant surely formed a crucial part of the intellectual bond between them; part of the fruitful difference between them lay in the fact that they were interested in distinctly different elements of that same philosophy. In short, they were equal interlocutors in philosophical matters—neither was the teacher of the other.

These facts can be clearly discerned and documented today, yet, due to the newness of the published primary documents at Cohn's time, and compounded by the particular brand of antiempirical intellectualism that refused to acknowledge new textual evidence even when it appeared, the myth of Schiller as go-between between Goethe and Kant became entrenched. If Goethe were acknowledged to have taken a serious interest in Kant, this would have spoiled the clean polar opposition that, as Cassirer suggests, lent structure and orientation to German intellectual culture. There was, in

a sense, an a priori necessity for any juxtaposition of Goethe and Kant to be constructed as a violent tectonic “Zusammenstoß” (collision) rather than as a fruitful intersection.

Either/Or

During World War I, an even more urgent need was felt to establish clear contours regarding this paradigmatic relationship. In a way that exemplifies the difficulties and absurdities inherent in this endeavor, Theobald Ziegler cantankerously attempted to restore order to things in his 1914 book *Goethes Welt- und Lebensanschauung* (Goethe's View of the World and of Life). The juxtapositions “Goethe und Spinoza” and “Goethe und die Natur,” Ziegler writes, constitute “Goethes großes Ja” (Goethe's great yes); the juxtaposition “Goethe und Kant,” on the other hand, constitutes “das Nein” (the no).²³ With a tone of impatience, Ziegler drives home the maxim “*Goethe und Kant gehören nicht zusammen*” (Ziegler 56, emphasis in the original; *Goethe and Kant do not belong together*). From this standpoint, Ziegler proceeds to dismiss the position put forth by Houston Chamberlain, who, in his 1905 book on Kant, had eagerly drawn attention to the “von fast allen Biographen Goethe's geflissentlich unbeachtet gelassenes Verhältnis” (Chamberlain 22–23; relationship, which has been deliberately left unnoticed by almost all biographers) between Goethe and Kant. Indeed, among the commentators of the day, Chamberlain was one of the few to exhibit genuine enthusiasm for the newfound connection between Goethe and Kant. Curiously, however, with regard to the well-established and seemingly uncontroversial fact of Goethe's interest in Spinoza, Chamberlain's tone was markedly different: “auf eine Polemik betreffs der üblichen Ausbeutung Goethe's zu Gunsten Spinoza's wollen wir keine Minute vergeuden” (Chamberlain 23; we do not wish to waste a single minute on a polemic with regard to the customary exploitation of Goethe for the benefit of Spinoza). This jarring reversal, whereby Goethe's Kantianism is affirmed and his Spinozism denied, was motivated, as Ziegler observes, simply “aus Antisemitismus” (out of anti-Semitism). For the quintessentially German Goethe to be intellectually beholden to the Jewish Spinoza was plainly problematic for a thinker of Chamberlain's ilk. The hypothesis of a philosophical affiliation with Kant—whose Germanic credentials were unquestioned—offered a way to rehabilitate Goethe from an incriminating connection to Jewish culture.

In addition to Chamberlain, Ziegler goes on to ridicule “eine[n] dieser Neukantianer Marburger Observanz, Ludwig Goldschmidt, [der] in der *Frankfurter Zeitung* vom 23. Oktober 1909 diejenigen fast gar körperlich bedroht und in Verruf erklärt, die es fürderhin noch wagen würden, Goethe einen Spinozisten zu nennen” (Ziegler 55; one of these disciples of Marburg neo-Kantianism, Ludwig Goldschmidt, who, in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of October 23, 1909, almost physically threatened and denounced those who henceforth would dare to call Goethe a Spinozist). Unlike in the case of Chamberlain, it is altogether unclear what warranted this attack. In the article cited, Goldschmidt argues that Goethe's early interest in Spinoza was only a youthful phase that he later put definitively behind himself and, moreover,

that it was specifically his engagement with Kant's philosophy that catalyzed this break:

Wo Goethes Spinozismus oder Pantheismus als Eideshelfer angerufen wird, geschieht dem *Philosophen* Goethe ebenso unrecht, wie etwa durch Hinweis auf frühere Schriften den Philosophen Hume und Kant, die sich beide von jugendlichen Auffassungen freigemacht haben. . . . Nach dem Studium Kants war ein Pantheismus des *Philosophen* Goethes [*sic*] nicht mehr möglich.²⁴

[When Goethe's Spinozism or pantheism is summoned as a witness, it is just as much of an injustice to the *philosopher* Goethe as when one refers to the early writings of Hume and Kant, both of whom emancipated themselves from the convictions of their youth. . . . After his study of Kant, any pantheism on the part of the *philosopher* Goethe was no longer possible.]

While there is clearly a point of substantive disagreement between Ziegler and Goldschmidt, neither the tone nor the content of Goldschmidt's article bears any correspondence to the way Ziegler characterizes it; the alleged threats of bodily harm appear simply to be products of Ziegler's own agitated state of mind.

Beyond Chamberlain and Goldschmidt, however, the true cause of Ziegler's indignation lay in the recent work of yet another neo-Kantian philosopher, Karl Vorländer, who, on the basis of hitherto-unpublished materials now available in the Weimarer Ausgabe, had begun in the late 1890s to publish a series of articles that shed new light on Goethe's relation to Kant and thereby had triggered the debates that Ziegler sought to counteract.²⁵ Whereas for much of the nineteenth century, the question of Goethe and Kant had not been strongly thematized, newly emerging evidence now clearly demonstrated the fact—largely forgotten since his lifetime—that Goethe had cultivated a keen interest in Kant from the late 1780s through the last years of his life. In light of the intellectual paradigm shifts discussed above, however, Vorländer was going against the current. Whereas his arguments are made on the strength of concrete and specific textual evidence, such reliance on evidence was now widely seen as being antithetical to the very spirit of Goethean genius; selective *disregard* for textual evidence functioned as proof that one's assertions regarding Goethe were authentic. Due to these attitudes, the reaction against Vorländer was virtually preprogrammed. "Goethe'sche Zitate aufsuchen und sie zusammenstellen kann jeder," we read in a hostile commentary by Rudolf Steiner; "sie im Sinne Goethe'scher Weltanschauung deuten, kann jedenfalls Herr Vorländer nicht"²⁶ (Anybody can seek out Goethean quotations and anthologize them; interpreting them in light of Goethean *Weltanschauung*, however, is something Mr. Vorländer, for one, cannot do). Rudolf Lehmann, who had been one of the advocates of the turn away from philological method, questioned the legitimacy of using any primary documents at all beyond Goethe's main literary works:

[G]esprächsweise Aeusserungen und Briefe, die von der Goethephilologie als die unmittelbaren Quellen angesehen und der Erklärung der Werke soweit wie möglich zu Grunde gelegt werden, . . . stellen nur das Wandelbare dar. Sie

sind von aussen hervorgerufen und zeigen uns, wie Goethe auf die Aussenwelt reagierte. Aber sie offenbaren nicht sein eigenes persönliches, geschweige denn sein künstlerisches Wesen. (Lehmann 344)

[Conversational remarks and letters, which are regarded by Goethe philology as direct sources and are used to the fullest extent possible as a foundation for the explanation of his works, . . . represent only that which is inconstant. They are elicited by outside events and show us how Goethe responded to the outside world. But they do not reveal his own most personal—let alone his artistic—essence.]

A serious historian of philosophy, Vorländer was on the whole a perceptive and sympathetic reader of Goethe. His research, while certainly not beyond criticism,²⁷ is by and large solid and impressively thorough:

So habe ich die Beziehungen Goethes zu Kant, wie sie sich historisch entwickelt haben, an der Hand der besten Quellen unparteiisch darzulegen versucht. Da ich keinerlei vorgefasstes Ziel im Auge hatte, kein anderes wenigstens als die objektive Wahrheit, so habe ich in erster Linie diese *Quellen* sprechen lassen. (Vorländer 131; emphasis in the original)²⁸

[Thus, I have attempted to document Goethe's relationship to Kant impartially, as it developed historically, using the best sources. Since I didn't have a preconceived goal in mind—at least none other than the objective truth—I have first and foremost let those *sources* speak for themselves.]

When Vorländer first began to publish his findings, therefore, he was confident that new and fruitful territory in Goethe scholarship was being opened up. "Hier betraten wir sozusagen Neuland," he would later recall proudly (Vorländer vii; Here we entered, so to speak, uncharted territory). The barrier between Goethe and Kant had at last been breached. Yet his affiliation with neo-Kantianism marked him, to partisans of Goethe, as an opponent, and his challenge to accepted views regarding Goethe and Kant was construed as an impertinent disruption of ideological order and clarity. Ziegler protested:

Da wurde das alles plötzlich auf den Kopf gestellt und uns gesagt, seit Beginn der neunziger Jahre sei Goethe unter den Einfluß Kants geraten, dadurch von Spinoza abgekommen und schließlich durch Schiller ganz für Kant gewonnen, geradezu zu einem Jünger Kants gemacht worden. (Ziegler 54–55)

[Then suddenly everything was turned on its head, and we were told that since the beginning of the 1790s, Goethe had come under Kant's influence, had thereby been led away from Spinoza, and finally been won over fully for Kant by Schiller—virtually made into Kant's apostle.]

Vorländer, to be sure, asserted no such thing—yet almost immediately, the notion of a "Vorländerscher Mythos" (Vorländerian myth) began to take hold (Vorländer 262). Bringing attention to Vorländer's identity as "einer von den Marburger Neukantianern, die überhaupt alles Große und Bedeutsame in der Geistesgeschichte unseres deutschen Volkes und seiner jüngsten Vergangenheit auf Kant zurückführen und auf seinen Namen getauft wissen wollen" (Ziegler 55; one of the Marburg neo-Kantians, who in every

case want to see everything great and meaningful in the intellectual history of our German people, and its recent past, as being derived from Kant and baptized in his name), Ziegler makes his own allegiances unambiguous. Engaging in a starkly partisan struggle over claims to cultural property, Ziegler holds that meaning and greatness in German intellectual culture must be ascribed *either* to Goethe *or* to Kant, and any equivocation between these alternatives cannot be tolerated. “Man kann natürlich Kant *und* Goethe hochstellen und bewundern,” Ziegler declares, “wie Goethe selbst Kant für den größten Philosophen erklärt hat: aber Kantianer *und* Goetheaner zugleich kann man nicht sein, sondern immer nur eines von beiden. Darüber darf man sich nicht täuschen oder täuschen lassen” (Ziegler 69, emphases in the original; One can of course celebrate and admire Kant *and* Goethe, just as Goethe declared Kant to be the greatest philosopher. But one cannot be a Kantian *and* a Goethean at the same time, but always only one of the two. In this regard one must not deceive oneself nor let oneself be deceived). Thus, while acknowledging in passing that Goethe really did hold Kant in the highest regard, Ziegler quickly shifts attention away from this concession by insisting that, *for the contemporary reader*, an either/or decision nonetheless exists. Normative imperatives for the present supplant historical assertions about the past; at stake is what “we” can think or be—not what Goethe thought or was. Though Goethe himself had, from his return from Italy onward, tempered his early “genius” with ever more methodical reflection (significantly influenced by Kant, among others), for Ziegler, no such mixing of intuition and reason is permissible. Goethe and Kant—metonymically identified with intuition and reason—were to be kept separate.

Objectivity versus Truth

In the 1916 biography of Goethe by Friedrich Gundolf, we find, arguably, *the* classic of neo-Romantic Goethe reverence. As a necessary complement, though, to the determinedly tendentious idealization of Goethe presented in this work, there occurs also a pronounced deprecation of Kant. A protégé of Stefan George, Gundolf in many ways exemplifies the intellectual trends we have seen unfolding: attempting a holistic, ahistorical, supertemporal representation of Goethe’s existence as a quasi-organic intellectual and spiritual unity, Gundolf emphasizes the anti-Enlightenment aspects of Goethe’s thought and, writing in a speculative and highly aestheticized style, elegantly blurs the distinction between the critic and the artist. In light of the distinctive cast of Gundolf’s method, Ernst Osterkamp has characterized him as being a “Wissenschaftskünstler” (scholarly *artist*) rather than a “Wissenschaftler” (scholar).²⁹ Gundolf’s blurring of the line distinguishing the twentieth-century critic from the eighteenth-century author caused a sensation among Goethe critics: “Dass es geschrieben werden konnte, dass es in den Fachkreisen anerkannt wird,” wrote Lehmann, “ist ein Zeichen des erfreulichen Umschwungs, der sich in der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft seit einiger Zeit angebahnt hat und nunmehr entschieden hervortritt” (Lehmann 341; That it could be written, and that it receives recognition

among specialists, is a sign of a fortunate change of direction in German literary scholarship that has been developing for some time and is now coming decisively to the fore).

To the extent, though, that Gundolf's work represents the apogee of post-positivist Goetheanism, it also—inevitably?—falls into the fixed clichés of the Goethe-Kant opposition. Gundolf's celebration of Goethe is without limits:

Goethe war der einzige im höchsten Sinn schöpferische, sinnliche und der einzige im höchsten Sinn zugleich philosophische Geist der um 1790 wenigstens für seine Person über ein allgemeines Gültiges in der Dichtkunst ins klare gekommen und über bloßes empirisches Tappen hinaus gelangt war. . . . [E]r war der einzige der, selbst wenn er nur seiner Natur folgte, nicht in bloße Empirie verfiel, der einzige als Person schon gesetzliche deutsche Dichter, eine unerreichte Einheit von Individualität und Normalität, nicht nur eine große Persönlichkeit, sondern wie Nietzsche formuliert "eine Kultur," ein Niveau, ein Gesetz durch bloßes Dasein, kurz, ein *Vorbild*.³⁰

[Goethe was the only—in the highest sense—creative, sensual, and—in the highest sense—also philosophical intellect around 1790 who, at least as far as his own person was concerned, arrived at something universally valid in poetic art and managed to move beyond mere empirical groping about. . . . [H]e was the only one who, even when he was simply following his nature, never lapsed into mere empiricism; the only German poet who, as a person, took on the character of law; an unparalleled unity of individuality and normativity; not just a great personality but, as Nietzsche formulates it, "a culture," a level, a law by dint of sheer existence—in short, a *model*.]

The concomitant diminution of Kant, meanwhile, is telling. Gundolf asserts that Kant constituted "unter den großen Philosophen vielleicht am wenigsten eine *Gestalt*" (among all great philosophers, perhaps least of all a *personality*). Whereas philosophers from Plato to Spinoza had been strong enough figures to stand as "Sinnbilder ihrer Systeme, nicht nur Urheber, sondern Schöpfer und Träger ihrer Systeme" (symbols of their systems, not only the authors but also the creative and representative forces of their systems), Kant was dependent on Schiller to make his abstract ideas interesting to the genius of sensory thought, Goethe. Operating on the false presumption that Goethe had never independently read Kant, Gundolf depicts the situation as follows: "Das Reich Kants schickte Schillern gleichsam als Gesandten an Goethe—hier war Gestalt, Vertretung und lebendige Wirkung der Philosophie menschlich faßbar, und schon die bloße Erscheinung Schillers gab Goethe über Kantische Philosophie wenn nicht objektiv richtigeren, so doch persönlich fruchtbareren, das heißt ja für Goethe *wahreren* Aufschluß als etwa die Lektüre der drei Kritiken" (Gundolf 479–80, emphases in the original; The kingdom of Kant sent Schiller to Goethe as an ambassador, so to speak. Here, the form, the representation, and the vital effects of philosophy became fathomable in human terms, and already the mere appearance of Schiller gave Goethe insight into Kantian philosophy that was, if not objectively more correct, nonetheless personally more fruitful—which means for Goethe *truer*—than a reading of the three *Critiques*). It is, according to Gundolf, precisely

by purportedly *not* having read the *Critiques* that Goethe arrives at a truer Kantianism than he would have had if he actually *had* read them—the *prima facie* absurdity of this requires little comment. Yet the assertion is useful as an encapsulation of Gundolf's mode of thought: something that is objectively inaccurate can nonetheless be *truer* than objective facts; what we can *feel* may well be truer than what we can *prove*. "Ich will nicht der schöngeistigen Schwärmerei das Wort reden," Gundolf writes;

die Exaktheit und Reinlichkeit ist selbstverständliche Voraussetzung jeder wissenschaftlichen Beschäftigung mit dem Werk des Genius, sie vor allem ist das Siegel einer ernsten Hingabe an ihn: aber die Methode darf nie Selbstzweck werden, und philologische Kritik nie übergreifen von der Reinigung der Papiere und Drucke zum Gebild und Geist selbst. . . . Fragen wir uns von Zeit zu Zeit: *warum* erforschen wir des Dichters Werk, aus äußerem Zufall oder aus einem inneren Bedürfnis? so werden wir uns auch über die Grenzen unserer Mittel, d. h. über die richtige Methode klar. (Gundolf 7–8, emphasis in the original)

[I don't wish to plead the cause of effete and fanciful intellectualism; exactitude and pristineness are self-evident preconditions of any scholarly treatment of the work of a genius; it above all else is the insignia of a serious dedication to genius. But the method must never become an end in itself, and philological criticism must never be allowed to overstep its bounds, from the bringing of papers and writings into pristine form, to the artistic construct and the intellect itself. . . . If we ask ourselves from time to time, *Why* do we investigate the poet's work, because of some external contingency or because of an inner necessity?, then we also gain clarity regarding the limits of our means, that is to say, regarding the correct method.]

Having thus asserted the primacy of inner necessity over objectivity, of "Gebild und Geist" (artistic construct and intellect) over the written word, Gundolf is able with unwavering certainty to reaffirm the already-familiar principle: "[Goethe] ist nicht, wie neuerdings absurderweise behauptet worden ist, ein Schüler Kants, sondern der äußerste Gegensatz der in Deutschland gegen Kantische Denk- und Fühlweise überhaupt zu finden ist" (quoted in Vorländer 262–63; [Goethe] is not, as has recently and absurdly been asserted, a pupil of Kant's but rather the uttermost opposite of the Kantian way of thinking and feeling that can possibly be found in Germany). With this declaration, the position was indelibly canonized.

Vorländer would protest in a reply to Gundolf, "Wir Deutsche . . . sollten *beide* froh verehren, in dem tröstenden Bewußtsein, daß die Parole nicht zu heißen braucht: Kant *gegen* Goethe, oder Goethe *gegen* Kant, sondern daß sie lauten darf: Kant *und* Goethe" (Vorländer 272, emphases in the original; We Germans . . . should gladly honor *both*, taking solace in knowing that the slogan need not be "Kant *versus* Goethe" or "Goethe *versus* Kant," but that it may also be "Kant *and* Goethe").³¹ With his thinking going so clearly against the currents of the day, however, and with Gundolf's thinking so effectively articulating those currents, Vorländer's comparatively level-headed attempt at a conciliation of Goethe and Kant had little chance of gaining traction.

Either/Or versus Both/And

“Ein Buch wie das Gundolfsche ist man natürlich berechtigt als ganzes anzuerkennen oder abzulehnen, insoweit darüber nicht Gründe verstandesmäßiger Kritik, sondern die Richtung des geistigen Seins entscheidet,” writes Georg Simmel in his 1917 review of Gundolf’s *Goethe*. “Denn ein solches Werk ist doch nicht wie eine Rechnung, deren Gesamtergebnis negativ wird, wenn ein einzelnes Glied es ist; dies Gesamtergebnis überhaupt darf man wirklich nicht aus dem quantitativen Verhältnis zwischen dem Anerkannten und dem Widerlegten errechnen wollen” (One is, of course, entitled to acknowledge or to reject wholesale a book such as Gundolf’s, insofar as it is not the principles of rationalistic critique that serve as criteria but rather the orientation of intellectual being. For such a work is, of course, not like an arithmetic calculation, the end result of which is false if a single part of it is; in general, one must not wish to ascertain its end result out of the quantitative relation between what has been acknowledged and what has been refuted).³² As a corrective to fault-finding “intellectualism,” as he refers to positivist criticism, Simmel advocates a radically “affirmative” mode of thought that would instead prioritize “geistiges Sein” (intellectual being) over empirical fact. Goethe, Simmel believes, stands as “das erhabenste Beispiel der Positivität des Aufnehmens” (the most sublime example of positive reception).³³

In the years prior to the war, Germans had enjoyed the luxury of being selective: “In sozialer wie in religiöser, in künstlerischer wie in politischer, in persönlicher wie in wissenschaftlicher Hinsicht, haben wir unzählige Werte verneint, weil mit ihrem Positiven anderes verbunden war, das wir verwerfen mußten” (In social as well as religious, in artistic as well as political, in personal as well as scholarly matters, we have negated uncounted values because other things, which we had to discard, were connected with their positive aspects), Simmel writes in his Gundolf review. The time of peace, though, in which such carefree wastefulness could be afforded, was now over. After the outbreak of war, the urgency of the present and the uncertainty of the future called, according to Simmel, for precisely the brand of neo-Romantic Goetheanism presented by Gundolf. Therefore, Simmel dramatically interweaves elements of Goethe-cum-Gundolf aestheticism with the future prospects of the German nation itself.

Die Hoffnung auf ein in sich harmonischeres, gefestigt bleibendes Deutschland ruht auf einer ganz geänderten Einstellung, darauf, daß deren bestimmender Ton auf das Positive rückt, das der eine vom anderen nehmen, an ihm anerkennen kann, daß Personen und Parteien sich in wachsendem Maß an dasjenige an Personen und Parteien halten, wozu sie Ja sagen können und, unter Vorbehalt der unvermeidlichen Lebensbasierung auf Ja und Nein, sich öfter und öfter der Nietzscheschen Tafel erinnern: “Wo man nicht lieben kann, soll man vorübergehen.” Es scheint mir nicht unverhältnismäßig, dieses Allgemeinsten in der Zeit zu gedenken, wo an dem größten Heros deutscher Kultur—der zugleich ihr größter Ja-Sager war—dieses Buch [Gundolf’s *Goethe*] erwachsen ist. Vieles daran mag der eine, vieles der andere verneinen; aber zu irgendwelchem Wesentlichen darin wird auch der prinzipiell anders Gerichtete

Ja sagen müssen. Und ob das geistige Deutschland dieses und nicht jenes in den Punkt des schärfsten Sehens rückt, wird ein Symbol dafür sein können, ob jene Umstellung des deutschen Geistes auf das Positive—deren Gegenteil wir uns nun nicht mehr gestatten können—sich zu vollziehen beginnt; und wird damit den tiefen Zusammenhang offenbaren, in dem diese zukunftsverbürgende Umstellung und die Rechtsbegrenzung des Intellektualismus unserer Vergangenheit sich gegenseitig bedingen. (Simmel, "Goethebuch," 243)

[The hope for an internally harmonious Germany that will retain its fortitude rests upon a complete transformation of attitude; it rests upon the determining tone of this attitude shifting toward that which is positive, which one person may take from the other, acknowledge in the other; it rests upon persons and parties increasingly holding to that in persons and parties to which they can say yes; and—under the condition of life's inevitable foundation upon yes and no—upon their recollection of the Nietzschean inscription "Where one cannot love, one should pass by." It seems to me not inappropriate to recall this most universal principle at a time when around the greatest hero of German culture—who was at the same time its greatest affirmer—this book [Gundolf's *Goethe*] has grown. There is much in it that one person might negate, and much that another person might negate, but to some essential element within it, even he who has a fundamentally different orientation will have to say yes. And whether intellectual Germany moves the latter [the essential aspects of the book] and not the former [those aspects that can be negated] into the focal point of its sharpest gaze can stand as a symbol of whether this reorientation of the German intellect toward the affirmative is beginning to be accomplished—the opposite of which we indeed can ill afford. And this will reveal the deep connection by which this reorientation, which vouchsafes our future, and the delimitation of the intellectualism of our past are mutual necessities.]

In the 1916 revision of his book *Goethe und Kant*, Simmel sketches the major contours of the preceding century of German thought using Goethe and Kant as the two poles between which it moved. Reaction against speculative idealism, he writes, had led to the rise of materialist philosophy in the 1850s and 1860s, after which the need for a synthesis of idealism and materialism had led, in the 1870s, to the call "Zurück zu Kant!" (Back to Kant!). Yet this return to Kant was a strictly "*wissenschaftliche Lösung*" (*scholarly solution*), he continues, the rigorous scientificity of which "forderte einen Ausgleich" (demanded a counterbalance). The neo-Romantic aestheticism that had emerged since the turn of the century represented this necessary counterweight and announced itself with the call "Zurück zu Goethe!"³⁴

Did it follow, then, that the near future would bring a renewed return to Kant? Far from endorsing a continuation of this simple back-and-forth, Simmel makes a much bolder prediction: "Für die Weltanschauung der jetzt wohl abgeschlossenen Geistesperiode bleibt der Besitz, den wir an den Parteien haben, an die Formel gebunden: Kant *oder* Goethe! Die kommende Epoche aber wird vielleicht im Zeichen von Kant *und* Goethe stehen, jede flauere Vermittlung zwischen ihnen ablehnend, ihre begrifflichen Gegensätze nicht 'versöhnend,' aber sie durch die Tatsache ihres Erlebtwerdens verneinend" (Simmel, *Kant und Goethe* 116–17, emphases in the original; For

the *Weltanschauung* of the intellectual epoch that has now evidently come to a close, the stake we have in the parties remains bound to the formula Kant or Goethe! The coming epoch, however, will perhaps stand under the auspices of Kant *and* Goethe, rejecting every feeble mediation between them; not “reconciling” their conceptual oppositions, yet negating them through the fact of living them). Simmel is not interested in reconciling Goethe and Kant but in fact wishes to accentuate the polarity between them—only then to posit that a future Germany will be able to embody *both* antithetical models simultaneously. Such transcendence of oppositions becomes a central figure in Simmel’s expressly Goethe-inspired mode of thinking.³⁵ In the 1915 essay “Einheit und Zwiespalt: Zeitgemäßes in Goethes Weltanschauung” (Unity and Discord: Timely Elements in Goethe’s *Weltanschauung*), he develops this line of thought further:

Wir alle sind überzeugt, daß Wahnsinn und Verbrechen diesen Krieg entzündet haben; und wenn uns nun die Aufgabe zufällt, diesen Widersinn zum Sinn zu gestalten, ein erneuertes, reineres, verinnerlichtes Deutschland, ja vielleicht Europa aus ihm heraus zu gewinnen—was anderes ist es, als eine Verwirklichung jener Goetheschen Weltformel: daß die Zerrissenheit, der Gegenwert, der leidvoll sinnlose Widerspruch, daß alle Gegensätze zu Harmonie und Einheit doch ein geheimnisvolles Zusammen mit eben diesen Werten bilden? Daß, wo immer das Leben Wirklichkeit und Wert auseinanderführt, ein letzter mächtigster Sinn seiner auch diesen Gegensatz zu seinen unmittelbaren Erwünschtheiten umgreift, daß schließlich in Zerstören *und* Erhalten, im Leben *und* im Tode der Individuen, ja in Sinn *und* Widersinn die große Einheit des Weltlebens flutet? (Simmel, “Einheit und Zwiespalt,” 172–73, emphases in the original)

[We are all convinced that madness and criminality ignited this war. And if the task now falls to us of forming this nonsense into sense, and gaining from it a renewed, purer, more inward Germany—indeed, perhaps even Europe—then what else is this than the realization of that Goethean world formula: that the bitter strife, the countervalue, the miserably senseless contradiction, that all the opposites of harmony and unity do after all form a mysterious conjunction with these very values? That wherever life rends asunder reality and value, its final, most powerful meaning encompasses even this opposition to its immediate desirabilities; that ultimately the great unity of worldly life flows in destroying *and* in sustaining, in the life *and* in the death of individuals, in meaning *and* in meaninglessness?]

Just as he had rejected any “flaue Vermittlung” (feeble mediation) between Goethe and Kant, Simmel stresses that he does not seek a “versöhnlicher Schluß” (conciliatory conclusion) to the violent tensions of the day, but rather a robust sharpening of their harshest contrasts. For Simmel, to be able existentially to unify even these extremes is what constitutes a genuinely “Goethean” mode of being. “Diese Einheit ist auch nichts Friedliches, Ideales, Wundenheilendes,” he writes, “denn sie steht auch über diesem Pol des Gegensatzes. Sie ist das göttliche Leben des Weltganzen, das wir, mit Goethes Worten zu reden, nur ‘schweigend verehren’ können” (Simmel, “Einheit und Zwiespalt,” 173; This unity is also nothing peaceful, ideal, and healing, for it

too stands above this pole of the opposition. It is the divine life of the whole of the world, which we—to phrase it in Goethe's words—can only “silently honor”). Apparently seeking to transcend the law of noncontradiction with this remarkable simultaneity of opposites, Simmel envisions an intellectual and spiritual future that logic can only fail to capture. The hubristic notion of embodying *both* Goethe *and* Kant becomes emblematic of the proposed ethos. Like Werther declaring to Wilhelm his determination “zwischen dem *Entweder-Oder* durchzustehlen” (to steal through between the *either-or*), Simmel, too, places felt necessity above rational possibility.³⁶

Neither/Nor

“Die Frucht des Unsinns ist reif,” judged Ludwig Goldschmidt in 1920, surveying the state of German thought at the war's end. “Unwahrhaftigkeit in Rede und Schrift kannte in diesem Maße die Vergangenheit in Deutschland nicht” (The fruit of nonsense is ripe. . . In the past, Germany knew no disingenuousness of this dimension in the spoken and written word).³⁷ With bitterness and disappointment, Goldschmidt concludes that the nation was, at this juncture, simply no longer in a position to engage with its greatest minds from the past; “unsere Zeit,” he writes, “[ist] jener klassischen Literaturperiode nicht gewachsen” (our time does not measure up to that classical era of literature). Whereas for some two decades now, intellectuals had sought to experience Goethe as if he were living and breathing in the present, Goldschmidt declares any intellectual continuity with Goethe's age to have collapsed: “Zwischen unserer Zeit und dem 18. Jahrhundert klafft eine Lücke, die Schriftsteller des 18. Jahrhunderts sind uns in philosophischen Fragen nicht verständlich, das Verständnis würde dieselbe Vernunftkultur voraussetzen, die damals herrschend war” (Goldschmidt 6; Between our time and the eighteenth century lies a yawning gap. The writers of the eighteenth century are not intelligible to us today concerning philosophical questions; an understanding of them would require the same culture of reason that was dominant at that time). Rejecting, therefore, any polemics over the merits of “Kant *und* Goethe” versus “Kant *oder* Goethe,” Goldschmidt pointedly gives his book the title *Weder Kant noch Goethe* (Neither Kant nor Goethe).

“‘Weder Kant noch Goethe’ war der Gedanke,” Goldschmidt explains, “der sich beim Lesen der Simmelschen Alternative ‘Kant oder Goethe,’ ‘Kant und Goethe’ aufdrängte” (Goldschmidt 35; “Neither Kant nor Goethe” was the thought that presented itself to me when I read Simmel's alternatives, “Kant or Goethe” and “Kant and Goethe”). Yet the formulation should not be construed, he stresses, as proposing “eine[-] Philosophie des ‘Wedernoch’” (a “neither-nor” philosophy) or as rejecting or critiquing Goethe or Kant themselves. On the contrary, “Verfasser verehrt beide Männer,” he writes;

er hofft auch in ihrem Sinne zu schreiben. Was aber soll ständige Wiederholung ihrer Namen? Mag sie rühmen und preisen, wer sie verstanden hat, als Aushängeschilder und Folie für eigene Weisheit stehen sie zu hoch. Ihr Erbe, ja auch nur ihre Person zu würdigen, setzt wie die Würdigung ihrer Zeit vielerlei voraus, was heute im allgemeinen Bewußtsein fehlt. Peinvoll, wenn beide

vorgeführt werden und gar als Programme für philosophische Meinungen, wofür sie selbst sich bedanken würden. (Goldschmidt 3-4)

[The author [Goldschmidt himself] honors both men, and he also hopes to be writing in their spirit. But what good is constant repetition of their names? Whoever has understood them may laud and praise them, but they are too exalted to be placards or templates for one's own wisdom. To honor their legacy, or even just their person, requires—just as honoring their epoch does—much that is missing from general consciousness today. It is an utter embarrassment when both are paraded about, even used as programs for philosophical opinions that they themselves would have wanted nothing to do with.]

Whereas so many commentators of Goldschmidt's time—Simmel being his key target—displayed what he calls “die heutige merkwürdige Überlegenheit” (the peculiar superiority characteristic of our day) vis-à-vis the past, Goldschmidt himself sees the reverse as being the case: the early twentieth century had fallen hopelessly below the standards of the German tradition. “Wie war es möglich,” he asks, “daß im deutschen Lande, dessen Gelehrte sich Jahrhunderte hindurch vor allen anderen durch Gründlichkeit auszeichneten, sich Erscheinungen an die Oberfläche drängen, die jedes Verständnis, jede Bemühung um den behandelten Gegenstand vermissen lassen, ja, was noch schlimmer ist, Worte und Sätze enthalten, denen der Urheber keinen Sinn, kein Beispiel zur Seite stellen könnte?” (Goldschmidt 6-7; How is it possible that in the German lands, whose scholars for centuries distinguished themselves above all others by their thoroughness, phenomena force their way to the surface that are devoid of any understanding of, or attention to, the object in question—indeed, what is even worse, contain words and phrases that the author can substantiate with no reason, no example?). The quixotic aim to find Goethean genius in ourselves had led to a solipsistic absorption in contemporary concerns that ultimately, paradoxically, excluded Goethe himself from the picture. Scholarship such as Simmel's, observes Goldschmidt, was marked by the “heute unumgängliche ‘persönliche Note’” (the “personal note” that is obligatory today)—the emphasis, that is, on the way “we” experience Goethe's thought rather than on Goethe's thought in its own right. “Wer die ‘wir’ sind,” however, “. . . erfahren wir nicht” (Goldschmidt 5; who the “we” is . . . we do not find out). Ziegler's sharp *either/or* and Simmel's visionary *both/and* thus yield after the war's end to the bitter resignation of a *neither/nor*. The underlying question, meanwhile, of who exactly “we” are remains very much uncertain.

Classicism versus Bolshevism

Goldschmidt's humility, of course, was not the response of all German intellectuals to the situation. In the *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (Observations of an Unpolitical Man), Thomas Mann expresses undeterred belief in the “sendungsvolle Eigenart und Majestät deutschen Geistes” (unique and majestic mission of the German intellect) and states that the war was not only “ein Krieg um Macht und Geschäft” (a war over power and commerce) but also “ein Krieg zwischen Ideen” (a war between ideas).³⁸

Goethe and Kant, configured within this view of things, take on explicit political functions. “Wir haben von Kant . . . den sozialen Befehl” (From Kant we have . . . The social command), he writes. “[Das] kriegerisch-kategorische Einschreiten Kants gegen die völlige Liberalisierung der Welt” (Mann 305; [the] warrior-like categorical intervention of Kant against the complete liberalization of the world) serves, according to Mann, to halt the advance of decadent Western nihilism. (Unsurprisingly, in light of these comments, Mann concedes that he has never read Kant “gelehrterweise” [Mann 191; in a scholarly fashion].) Goethe, meanwhile, is cast as the guarantor of the intrinsically antiliberal fabric of German political culture: “Eine Nation erlebt nicht einen Geist, wie diesen, sie bringt ihn gar nicht hervor,” he asserts, “ohne sich zur Politik, zu ‘modernen Ideen,’ zu den generösen Zauber- und Schwindelworten Menschheit, Freiheit, Gleichheit, Revolution, Fortschritt von je und auf immer anders zu verhalten, als die anderen” (Mann 305; A nation does not experience an intellect such as this one, and does not bring it into being, without forever onward comporting itself differently from the others toward politics, toward “modern ideas,” toward the magnanimous magical smoke-and-mirrors words “humanity,” “freedom,” “equality,” “revolution,” and “progress”).

When Oswald Spengler was able—“trotz des Elends und Ekels dieser Jahre” (despite the misery and disgust of these years)—to recover what he considered to be a form of authentically “German” philosophy, it was formulated expressly in the name of Goethe.³⁹ The war, he wrote in 1917, had proved necessary in order for his philosophical worldview to take shape; he hoped that *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (*The Decline of the West*) would be able to claim its place proudly alongside Germany’s military accomplishments (Spengler x–xi). For Spengler’s ambitious synthesis of world history, Goethean morphology provided the model; twentieth-century paradigms could only fall short of what this project demanded.

Ich frage mich, wenn ich das Buch eines modernen Denkers zur Hand nehme, was er vom Tatsächlichen der Weltpolitik, von den großen Problemen der Weltstädte, des Kapitalismus, der Zukunft des Staates, des Verhältnisses der Technik zum Ausgang der Zivilisation, des Russentums, der Wissenschaft überhaupt ahnt. Goethe hätte das alles verstanden und geliebt. Von lebenden Philosophen übersieht es nicht einer. (Spengler 60)

[I wonder, whenever I pick up a book by a modern thinker, whether he even has an inkling regarding the reality of world politics, the great problems of the world metropolises, capitalism, the future of the state, the relationship between technology and the end of civilization, Russian character, or science. Goethe would have understood and loved all of it. Among living philosophers, not a single one can get the big picture.]

Spengler is furthermore staunchly dismissive of any attempt to find truth through philosophical systems in the manner of Kant: “ein Ethiker vom Schlage Kants ist niemals Menschenkenner” (Spengler 720; an ethicist in the manner of Kant can never really understand humankind). He holds up Goethe, by contrast, as a model of how to grasp truth synthetically rather than

analytically: “die Ehrfurcht vor dem Geheimnis—die Ehrfurcht Goethes—[hindert uns], begriffliche Zergliederungen für Tiefblicke zu halten” (reverence for mystery—Goethe’s reverence—[prevents us] from regarding conceptual dissections as profound insights). As opposed to academic philosophy, which, on Spengler’s view, merely generates ever more “Fachliteratur” (specialized academic literature), Goethean thinking is presented as a vital source of cultural and historical orientation. (Spengler viii)

A few years later, philosopher and later Nazi ideologue Alfred Baeumler conceived his two-volume study of the *Kritik der Urteilkraft* in light of the “neuen Gesichtspunkten” (new perspectives) with which he had returned from the battlefields of World War I; accordingly, he presents his philosophical motivations explicitly in terms of national cultural politics.⁴⁰ The essential continuity and integrity of German *Geistesleben* (intellectual life), he believes, must be reaffirmed: “Das Problem Kant und Goethe ist nur ein konzentrierter Auszug dieses umfassenderen Problems unserer historischen Erkenntnis. Eine klare Vorstellung von der Entwicklung des Fühlens und Denkens der Zeit, die etwa von 1670 bis 1830 reicht, ist nicht nur eine aus dem heutigen Stande der geisteswissenschaftlichen Forschung hervorgehende Forderung, sondern auch ein im Leben des Einzelnen lebendig empfundenes Bedürfnis” (Baeumler vii; The problem of Kant and Goethe is only one concentrated element extracted from this more comprehensive problem of our historical understanding. A clear conception of the development of feeling and thinking during the time that spans from approximately 1670 to 1830 is not only a demand that arises from the state of humanistic research in our day but also a vitally felt necessity in the life of the individual). A central aim in revisiting Kant is thus to reclaim for the present “ein[en] Lebensstil, ein[en] Charakter” (a mode of life, a character) that Baeumler terms “classical” (Baeumler v–vi)—ways of “feeling and thinking” exemplified by figures such as Bach and Beethoven, Leibniz and Kant, Lessing and Goethe. “Der geistige Komplex, den die Namen dieser Männer bezeichnen,” writes Baeumler,

ist heute in Gefahr. Die Jugend wendet sich von ihm als Ganzem ab. Sie sucht ihre Führer lieber in Rußland als in Königsberg und Weimar; der kostbare Besitz des deutschen Idealismus droht zu einem mehr oder weniger pietätvoll betrachteten Inventarstück einer abgelaufenen (“bürgerlichen”) Epoche zu werden. Bei dieser Sachlage bleibt uns nur die Wahl, den Gehalt an Menschlichkeit, der in jenem Vermächtnis der deutschen Bildung beschlossen liegt, neu zu *erwerben* oder ihn vielleicht für immer zu verlieren. (Baeumler vii–viii, emphasis in the original)

[The intellectual complex that the names of these men signify is in danger today. Young people turn away from it wholesale. They would rather seek their leaders in Russia than in Königsberg and Weimar. The precious property of German Idealism risks becoming a more or less piously regarded piece of inventory from an expired (“bourgeois”) epoch. In this state of affairs, the only choice that remains for us is to *claim possession* once again of the humane substance that is enclosed within that legacy of German *Bildung*, or else perhaps lose it forever.]

The new cultural foil evoked here had already been named by Spengler: “Russentum” (Russianness). What threat, though, did Moscow really pose to Königsberg and Weimar?

In a 1921 essay entitled “Goethe und Russland” (Goethe and Russia), the Königsberg-born music critic Eugen Zabel had reassured readers of the *Jahrbuch der deutschen Goethe-Gesellschaft* “daß der Geist Goethes immer weiter nach dem Osten flutet, durch die blauen russischen Grenzgendarme nicht aufzuhalten sei und sich auch über die unendliche slawische Ebene auszubreiten beginne” (that the spirit of Goethe is flowing ever farther toward the East; it cannot be stopped by the blue-uniformed Russian border police and is beginning to spread across the unending Slavic plain). Even on the part of the Russians, Zabel went on, a recognition existed that Goethe represented “das beste Gegengift” to “das extreme Slawophilentum, das die ganze europäische Zivilisation zum Teufel jagen möchte” (the best antidote [to] the extreme Slavophilia that wishes to send all of European civilization straight to hell).⁴¹ Such wishful assurances would not hold, however, and once faced with an emergent Soviet Union militantly hostile to the very kind of German nation that he believed in, a figure such as Baeumler would feel an imperative to reclaim the classical intellectual culture that constituted Germany’s own distinctive strength. To reach back into the depths of Germany’s intellectual arsenal necessarily meant, as we have seen, to return to the problem of Goethe and Kant—and indeed, Baeumler does this with brio. Exhuming and reanimating both icons with the urgency of one who believes the survival of his culture to be at stake, Baeumler is moved to produce one of the more striking iterations of this opposition that can be found. “Wir sind gewohnt,” he begins,

die Gebiete Kants und Goethes als antipodisch gelagerte Erdteile unseres intellektuellen Globus hinzunehmen. Zwischen der Moral Kants und der Moral Goethes gibt es in der Tat keine Vermittlung; die Kritik der praktischen Vernunft ist (unter anderem) die gewaltigste Invektive, die jemals gegen Goethesche Gesinnung geschrieben wurde. Dem Dichter des Wilhelm Meister lag nichts ferner als das Pathos der Freiheit, das Kant mit kritischer Entsagung in die Begriffe der Autonomie und der Pflicht gepreßt hat.

[We are accustomed to accepting Kant and Goethe as antipodally positioned continents of our intellectual globe. There is indeed no mediating between the morality of Kant and the morality of Goethe. The *Critique of Practical Reason* is (among other things) the mightiest invective that has ever been written against Goethean disposition. Nothing could be more foreign to the author of *Wilhelm Meister* than the pathos of freedom that Kant pressed—with critical self-negation—into the concepts of autonomy and duty.]

Not content, however, merely to reiterate an already-ingrained pattern of thought, Baeumler revives and amplifies a classic neo-Kantian trope that ratchets the stakes even higher. In his 1880 *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie* (History of Modern Philosophy), Wilhelm Windelband had similarly exaggerated Kant’s distance from contemporary German literary culture in order, on this basis, to make an even greater claim for his genius: allegedly cut off

from the arts altogether in the isolation of Königsberg, “entwirft dieser Mann in seiner Einsamkeit aus der philosophischen Überlegung heraus eine Lehre vom Ursprung der ästhetischen Auffassung und von der Produktionsweise des künstlerischen Genies” (this man conceives—in solitude and out of philosophical reflection—a theory of the origin of the aesthetic frame of mind and of the mode of production of the artistic genius). Such was the force of Kant’s philosophical mind, argues Windelband, that he was able to articulate and codify the very essence of Goethe’s creative process—even though he ostensibly knew nothing of Goethe. Windelband proclaims this virtually telepathic feat to be not only “die bewunderungswürdigste” (the most awe-inspiring) of Kant’s philosophical accomplishments but indeed “de[r] grösste[-] und einflussreichste[-] Moment unserer Kulturgeschichte: der grosse Philosoph denkt den grossen Künstler—Kant konstruiert den Begriff der Goethe’schen Dichtung” (the greatest and most influential moment of our intellectual history: the great philosopher thinks the great artist; Kant constructs the concept of Goethean poetry). Contrary to Windelband’s assumptions, however, Kant was indeed informed regarding contemporary literature, and Goethe, in fact, was rather unimpressed with Kant’s philosophical treatment of the arts; this nebulous “greatest moment” in German intellectual history is little more than a wildly implausible fabrication. Yet Windelband was an influential authority among philosophers, and he asserted his arguments with conviction: “so ist es,” he gruffly proclaimed, “und nicht anders” (this is the way it is, and not any other way).⁴² His views thus took root, and almost half a century later—and in stunning form—Baeumler incorporates Windelband’s precarious construction of events into his own Kant book.

Von Goethe her ist Kant niemals zu verstehen. Wohl aber ist von Kant aus Goethe zu verstehen. Kant hat persönlich und existentiell von Goethe nichts gewußt, aber er hat ihn *gedacht*. Dieses Gedachtwerden Goethes durch Kant ist vielleicht das größte und bedeutsamste Ereignis der deutschen Geistesgeschichte. . . . Der alte Kant, gerade der, dessen ergreifend strenges Antlitz uns vor Augen steht, wenn wir seinen Namen aussprechen, hat das gedacht, was wir historisch nicht anders als “Goethe” ausdrücken können: die zweckmäßig, d. h., in der Weise des Organismus auf sich beruhende, in eigenem Schicksal sich vollendende Einheit der Individualität. Die Kritik der Urteilskraft und Goethe—das ist der Gedanke und sein existentieller Ausdruck. In ihrer Trennung wie in ihrer Vereinigung gleich bedeutsam treten uns Kant und Goethe als Symbole unseres geschichtlichen Daseins entgegen. (Baeumler vi–vii, emphasis in the original)

[It will never be possible, coming from Goethe, to understand Kant. But it is certainly possible, coming from Kant, to understand Goethe. Kant knew nothing, personally and existentially, of Goethe, but he *thought* him. Goethe’s being thought by Kant is perhaps the greatest and most significant event of German intellectual history. . . . Old Kant, the very man whose grippingly severe visage stands before our eyes when we speak his name, conceived that which we cannot express historically any other way than “Goethe”: the unity of individuality that rests teleologically—that is to say, in the manner of the organism—in itself, and that completes itself in its own fate. The *Critique of the Power*

of *Judgment* and Goethe—that is the thought and its existential expression. Equally laden with significance in their separation and in their unity, Kant and Goethe stand before us as symbols of our historic existence.]

The patent absurdity—and indeed unintended comedy—of this representation are only heightened by the fact that Baumlér really is entirely earnest about it. The perceived conceptual clarity of the classical past is once again called to the service of an uncertain and unstable present; the question of Goethe and Kant, once more, is not “merely” a scholarly one but a visceral, existential one in which *Dasein* itself hangs in the balance.

Reason versus Bombast

During the early 1920s, literary scholarship was regrouping and seeking to regain its orientation after the trauma and turbulence of the preceding decade. In 1921, following a “Kriegspause” (war recess) in its publication, the methodologically conservative journal *Euphorion* published a supplement dedicated to the reappraisal of Gundolf’s *Goethe*. Scholars now had “genügend Distanz” (sufficient distance) to be able to coolly assess Gundolf’s work, and a consensus had now formed, asserted editor August Sauer, that rejected the neo-Romantic approach. “Geläutert und gefestigt, weiteren Blickes und tieferen Sinnes können wir uns wieder in stiller Emsigkeit der historisch gerichteten Erforschung unserer älteren Literatur zuwenden, zu der dieses Buch in schroffsten Gegensatz getreten war”⁴³ (Cleansed and fortified, with a farther-reaching gaze and a deeper sensibility, we may again turn, in calm diligence, to the historically oriented investigation of our older literature, against which this book placed itself in the starkest contrast). *Euphorion* having been founded in allegiance with Scherer’s school of philology, this statement constitutes, in effect, a rather unimaginative call for a return to the literary criticism of the late nineteenth century. Between this sort of intellectual timidity, at one extreme, and tendentious flights of fancy, at the other, a reasoned middle ground remained to be negotiated.

In the methodological opening statements of Walter Benjamin’s *Wahlverwandtschaften* (*Elective Affinities*) essay of 1924/25, we find one example of a response to the oscillations and disputes that had marked literary criticism since the turn of the century. Addressing the tension between the philologists and the *Geisteswissenschaftler*, Benjamin opens by asserting that the current trend in literary scholarship places emphasis “mehr auf Rechnung eines philologischen als eines kritischen Interesses” (more on the account of a philological interest than a critical one). The basic dichotomies by which Benjamin organizes his argument are familiar: “Kommentar” (commentary), on the one hand, is a matter of philological concern seeking to establish the concrete “Sachgehalt” (substantive content) of a text; “Kritik” (critique), on the other hand, is a matter of conceptual concern, seeking to establish the text’s “Wahrheitsgehalt” (truth content). Benjamin stresses the importance of the philologist’s contribution, comparing him to a paleographer who makes an old parchment legible for modern scholars—for only once the correct data are in place, he emphasizes, can “critical” interpretation begin.⁴⁴ At the

same time, Benjamin stresses the vital role of criticism: while the “commentator” may be likened to a chemist who analyzes the wood and ash that a fire leaves behind, the “critic” is like an alchemist whose interest is in the flame itself—namely, the truth value that inheres in a work (Benjamin 64). Benjamin does not categorically prioritize one mode of scholarship over the other; rather, he asserts that the essential work of a scholar consists in determining how the empirical and the ideal elements of a text interact. It is a “Grundgesetz des Schrifttums” (fundamental law of the written word), he argues, that the more significant a work is, the more intimately and subtly its “Wahrheitsgehalt” and “Sachgehalt” are conjoined (Benjamin 63). Philosophy and philology, on this view, are not fundamentally at odds after all.

Benjamin speaks, then, of art and philosophy as “siblings”: while it would be false to construe them as identical with one another, it would be equally false to deny an unmistakable relationship between them. The task of determining this relationship, Benjamin suggests, is part of the work of interpretation. “Man setze,” he writes,

daß man einen Menschen kennen lerne, der schön und anziehend ist, aber verschlossen, weil er ein Geheimnis mit sich trägt. Es wäre verwerflich, in ihn dringen zu wollen. Wohl aber ist es erlaubt zu forschen, ob er Geschwister habe und ob deren Wesen vielleicht das Rätselhafte des Fremden in etwas erkläre. Ganz so forscht die Kritik nach Geschwistern des Kunstwerks. Und alle echten Werke haben ihre Geschwister im Bereiche der Philosophie.

[Imagine that one made the acquaintance of a person who is beautiful and appealing but closed off, because he carries a secret within him. It would be ignoble to wish to pry it out of him. It is, however, permissible to inquire as to whether he has siblings, and whether their essence may perhaps in some respect explain the mysterious aspect of this stranger. Quite in this manner, criticism seeks out the siblings of the work of art. And all true works have their siblings in the realm of philosophy.]

To construe a literary work as standing in sheer antagonism or indifference toward philosophy, or else as being somehow subordinated to it, is to forgo an opportunity for deeper understanding—between the extremes of identity and opposition lies a more subtle and complex relation. “Nicht mit der Philosophie selbst konkurriert das Kunstwerk,” writes Benjamin, “es tritt lediglich zu ihr ins genaueste Verhältnis durch seine Verwandtschaft mit dem Ideal des Problems” (Benjamin 108; The work of art does not compete with philosophy itself; it simply places itself into a most precise relationship to it through its relation to the ideal of the problem). While the work of a given philosopher may not directly or explicitly address the substantive content of a literary work, it may well, at a deeper level, demonstrate a kinship with regard to fundamental ideas or problems to which both respond. In the age of Goethe—an age distinguished by an “Armseligkeit ihrer Sachgehalte” (poverty of substantive content), Benjamin states—it is in terms of problems in their *ideal* forms that works must be situated. “In diesem bestimmenden Zuge der deutschen—wenn nicht der gesamteuropäischen—Aufklärung darf eine unerläßliche Vorbedingung des Kantischen Lebenswerks *einerseits*,

des Goetheschen Schaffens *andererseits* erblickt werden,” writes Benjamin. “Denn genau um die Zeit, da Kants Werk vollendet und die Wegekarte durch den kahlen Wald des Wirklichen entworfen war, begann das Goethesche Suchen nach den Samen ewigen Wachstums” (Benjamin 64, emphasis added; In this determining trait of the German—if not the Europe-wide—Enlightenment, one crucial prerequisite can be perceived for Kant’s life’s work, *on the one hand*, and for Goethe’s creative work, *on the other hand*. For precisely around the time that Kant’s work was completed, and the trail map through the barren forest of reality had been outlined, Goethe’s search for the seeds of eternal growth began).

Kant on the one hand, Goethe on the other: here we find the two figures presented not in zero-sum competition with one another but rather as dovetailing in a certain sense—the one picking up where the other leaves off, yet still clearly differentiated from each other. By giving each of the two figures their respective space, and acknowledging their difference without fashioning them into mortal enemies, Benjamin situates himself among the less vocal group of scholars who managed to avoid the factual confusions and ideological atavisms that had distorted discussion of Goethe and Kant in the preceding decades.

Touching on the “Auseinandersetzung” (negotiation of oppositions) between Goethe and Kant a few years later in his 1928 encyclopedia article on Goethe, Benjamin appears again to be by and large unencumbered by the exaggerations of previous scholars: he does not perceive it as a contradiction if Goethe remained “beziehungslos” (without connection) to the first two *Critiques*, while expressing “höchste Bewunderung” (highest admiration) for the third. With regard to the critique of teleological judgment, Benjamin writes unambiguously: “darin sind Kant und Goethe sich einig” (in this, Kant and Goethe are agreed). Rather than sensing a tension between Goethe’s interests in Spinoza and in Kant, moreover, he suggests that Goethe’s early interest in the former had only facilitated his later interest in the latter.⁴⁵ In these judgments, Benjamin is largely on the mark. From this sober and informed vantage point, the positions of earlier scholars begin to look rather shaky indeed—hence Benjamin’s assault on the foremost perpetrator of neo-Romantic error, Gundolf.

Gundolf’s Goethe book, which actively takes up “[d]as gedankenloseste Dogma des Goethekults” (Benjamin 96; the most mindless dogma of the Goethe cult), had been able to generate its mythologized image of Goethe only by adopting what Benjamin calls a “vernichtende[-] Indifferenz gegen die Wahrheit” (Benjamin 98; annihilating indifference toward the truth). In a memorable phrase, Benjamin states that in Gundolf’s writing, the reader’s *Verstand* (reason) finds itself, as it were, “in einem Urwald, wo sich die Worte als plappernde Affen von Bombast zu Bombast schwingen, um nur den Grund nicht berühren zu müssen, der es verrät, daß sie nicht stehn können” (Benjamin 99; in a jungle, in which the words swing like babbling monkeys from bombast to bombast in order not to have to touch the ground, which would betray that they cannot stand). Benjamin thus appeals to the sound reason of the reader, who might shake off the effect of Gundolf’s powerful style and see the hyperbole and tendentiousness of the book.

“Damit muß der letzte Glaube an die Überlegenheit dieses Werkes über die Goetheliteratur der ältern Schule schwinden, als deren rechtmäßigen und größeren Nachfolger die eingeschüchterte Philologie nicht allein um des eigenen schlechten Gewissens sondern auch um der Unmöglichkeit willen, an ihren Stammbegriffen es zu messen, es gelten ließ” (Benjamin 100; With this, the last remaining belief in the superiority of this book over the older school of Goethe literature must disappear—as whose legitimate and greater successor it was allowed, by intimidated philologists, to be seen, not only due to their own bad conscience but also due to the impossibility of measuring it with their own conventional concepts). While still championing the cause of finding philosophical “Wahrheitsgehalt” in literature, Benjamin does not countenance the conceptual overreach of commentators such as Gundolf—whose judgments Benjamin believes, in any case, to have been neither true nor philosophical.

A monograph on Goethe that Benjamin began planning in the 1930s never came to be written, however, so it remains a matter of speculation where his contribution to the methodology of Goethe scholarship might have led.⁴⁶ We have only adumbrations such as those above to work with, and his very brief and understated comments on the matter of “Goethe and Kant” passed by largely unnoticed; Benjamin did not succeed in putting any dent at all in this entrenched antithesis. By the 1930s, the voices of clearer heads such as Vorländer and Benjamin became scarce, and by the 1940s, the tone was set very much by politically reactionary patterns of thought. As indelible ideological overtones overwhelmed the actual textual and conceptual substance of the matter, the topic of Goethe’s stance toward Kant became largely untouchable in post-1945 German literary scholarship. As a consequence, investigation on this topic in the second half of the twentieth century was undertaken disproportionately by scholars from outside Germany or by scholars from Germany who worked in the English-speaking world. Much of this research has, moreover, been conducted under the aegis of the disciplines of intellectual history, philosophy, or history of science; comparatively rarely, though, within the terrain of *Germanistik* proper. A certain resistance to juxtaposing Goethe and Kant in any direct fashion seems to some extent to remain in place today, even if only out of force of habit.

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NOTES

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1. On the development of Goethe philology and of methodology in *Germanistik* in general from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, see Hans-Martin Kruckis, “Goethe-Philologie als Paradigma neuphilologischer Wissenschaft im

19. Jahrhundert,” in *Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Germanistik im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Jürgen Föhrmann and Wilhelm Voßkamp (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994) 451–93; Ulrich Wyss, “Abgrenzungen: Die Germanistik um 1900 und die Tradition des Faches,” in *Konkurrenten in der Fakultät: Kultur, Wissen und Universität um 1900*, ed. Christoph König and Eberhard Lämmert (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1999) 61–77; Georg Bollenbeck, “Goethe als kulturkritische Projektion bei Chamberlain, Simmel und Gundolf,” in *Goethe in Gesellschaft: Zur Geschichte einer literarischen Vereinigung vom Kaiserreich bis zum geteilten Deutschland*, ed. Jochen Golz and Justus Ulbricht (Cologne: Böhlau, 2005) 13–32; Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Goethe in Deutschland: Rezeptionsgeschichte eines Klassikers*, vol. 1 (Munich: Beck, 1980) esp. 267ff., and vol. 2 (Munich: Beck, 1989) esp. 22ff., further references appear in the text as Mandelkow and page number; and Pier Carlo Bontempelli, *Knowledge, Power, and Discipline: German Studies and National Identity* (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2004) esp. 69ff.

2. Rudolf Lehmann, “Neue Wege der Goethe-Wissenschaft,” *Kant-Studien* 22 (1918): 341–48; here 341.

3. Wilhelm Windelband, “Aus Goethes Philosophie,” in *Straßburger Goethevorträge: Zum Besten des für Straßburg geplanten Denkmals des jungen Goethe* (Strasbourg: Karl J. Trüber, 1899) 87–114; here 89–90. Further references appear in the text as Windelband and page number.

4. Richard Dehmel, “Der Olympier Goethe: Ein Protest,” in *Goethe im Urteil seiner Kritiker: Dokumente zur Wirkungsgeschichte Goethes in Deutschland*, ed. Karl Robert Mandelkow (Munich: Beck, 1979) 354–57; here 355. Further references appear in the text as Dehmel and page number.

5. Rudolf Lehmann, *Deutsche Poetik* (Munich: Beck, 1908) 50. Further references appear in the text as Lehmann and page number.

6. Karl Robert Mandelkow, “Das Goethebild Georg Simmels,” in *Von der Natur zur Kunst und zurück: Neue Beiträge zur Goethe-Forschung*, ed. Moritz Baßler et al. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1997) 219–33; here 220.

7. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Götzen-Dämmerung*, in *Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 6, ed. Giorgio Collini and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1967) 151.

8. Georg Simmel, “Fragmente eines Goethe-Buches: Aus dem Kapitel über Goethe und Kant,” in *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen, 1909–1918*, vol. 1 (*Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 12), ed. Rüdiger Kramme (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2001) 9–21; here 9.

9. For a helpful discussion of philosophical culture in Germany in the early twentieth century, and of neo-Kantianism in particular, see Peter E. Gordon, *Continental Divide: Heidegger, Cassirer, Davos* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2010) 43ff.

10. Ernst Cassirer, “Kant und Goethe,” in *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, ed. Rainer Bast (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1991) 101–5; here 101. Further references appear in the text as Cassirer and page number.

11. Josef Bleicher, “From Kant to Goethe: Georg Simmel on the Way to *Leben*,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 24.6 (2007): 139–58; here 141.

12. Jonas Cohn, “Das Kantische Element in Goethes Weltanschauung: Schillers philosophischer Einfluss auf Goethe,” *Kant-Studien* 10 (1905): 286–345; here 345 (emphasis in the original). Further references appear in the text as Cohn and page number.

13. Max Heynacher, *Goethes Philosophie aus seinen Werken: Ein Buch für jeden gebildeten Deutschen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Dürr’schen Buchhandlung, 1905) 45.

14. Karl Vorländer, *Kant—Schiller—Goethe* (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1923) 258.

15. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Immanuel Kant: Die Persönlichkeit als Einführung in das Werk* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1905) 21. Further references appear in the text as Chamberlain and page number.

16. "Einwirkung der neuern Philosophie," WA 2.11:53.

17. Frederick Amrine, "Goethean Intuitions," *Goethe Yearbook* 18 (2011): 35–50; here 35.

18. See the exchange of letters between Körner and Schiller regarding Goethe's visits to both around October 1790. Körner writes to Schiller: "Goethe ist acht Tage hier gewesen, und ich habe viel mit ihm gelebt; es gelang mir, ihm bald näher zu kommen, und er war mittheilender, als ich erwartet hatte. Wo wir die meisten Berührungspunkte fanden, wirst Du schwerlich errathen. Wo sonst, als im Kant! In der Kritik der teleologischen Urtheilskraft hat er Nahrung für seine Philosophie gefunden" (WA 5.10:20–21; Goethe was here for eight days, and I experienced a lot with him; I succeeded in getting closer to him, and he was more communicative than I had expected. You will scarcely guess where we found the most common ground. Where else but in Kant! In the critique of teleological judgment he has found nourishment for his philosophy). Schiller replies to Körner several weeks later: "Mir erging es mit ihm wie Dir. Er war gestern bei uns, und das Gespräch kam bald auf Kant. Interessant ist's, wie er alles in seine eigene Art und Manier kleidet und überraschend zurückgiebt, was er las, aber ich möchte doch nicht gern über Dinge, die mich sehr nahe interessiren, mit ihm streiten" (WA 5.10:21–22; It went the same way for me as it did for you. He visited us yesterday, and the conversation soon came to Kant. It's interesting how he clothes things that he has read in his own style and gives them back in surprising ways, but I wouldn't want to dispute with him over things that I have a particularly close interest in).

19. Frederick Beiser, *Schiller as Philosopher: A Re-examination* (New York: Oxford UP, 2008) 38. Further references appear in the text as Beiser and page number.

20. Nicholas Boyle, *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*, vol. 2, *Revolution and Renunciation (1790–1803)* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 2000) 255.

21. Cassirer made this observation as early as 1916: "Goethe hat, lange vor seiner Verbindung mit Schiller, die Beziehung zur Kantischen Lehre selbständig gesucht und für sich festgestellt" (Long before his friendship with Schiller, Goethe autonomously sought and established a connection to Kant's theory). In a 1944 lecture at the Yale University German department, he reiterates the untenability of the traditional view of Schiller as mediator: "die Zeugnisse erlauben das nicht" (the evidence does not permit this). "Goethe und Kant: German Department 25.I.[19]44," in *Kleinere Schriften zu Goethe und zur Geistesgeschichte*, ed. Barbara Naumann (Hamburg: Meiner, 2006) 81–103; here 83. See Reinhold Schmücker, ed., *Freiheit und Form: Studien zur deutschen Geistesgeschichte* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2001) 179.

22. See conversation with Eckermann, April 11, 1827.

23. Theobald Ziegler, *Goethes Welt- und Lebensanschauung* (Berlin: Georg Keimer, 1914) 54. Further references appear in the text as Ziegler and page number.

24. Ludwig Goldschmidt, "War Goethe Spinozist?," *Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt* 54, no. 294 (October 23, 1909): 1–2; here 2 (emphases in the original).

25. See Karl Vorländer, "Goethes Verhältnis zu Kant in seiner historischen Entwicklung," parts 1–3, *Kant-Studien* 1 (1897): 60–99 and 315–51, and *Kant-Studien* 2 (1898): 161–211; Karl Vorländer, "Goethe und Kant," *Goethe-Jahrbuch* 19 (1898): 167–85; Karl Vorländer, "Neue Zeugnisse, Goethes Verhältnis zu Kant betreffend," *Kant-Studien* 3 (1899): 311–19. Vorländer's main writings on Goethe and Kant are collected in the anthology *Kant—Schiller—Goethe*.

26. Quoted in Karl Vorländer, "Kant, Schiller, Goethe: Eine Apologie von Karl Vorländer in Solingen," *Kant-Studien* 3 (1899): 130–41; here 137. Further references appear in the text as Vorländer and page number.

27. Vorländer indulges, for example, in the tendentious exaggeration that since Goethe was not, strictly speaking, a philosopher, he must have been incapable of understanding philosophy. This preconception leads him not only to adopt the "foreign blood" trope but also to endorse the Schiller-as-mediator narrative.

28. Vorländer's contemporaries appear indeed to have been virtually unanimous in their praise of his rigor. Ewald Boucke writes: "Durch die Arbeiten Vorländers sind wir in den Stand gesetzt, die Beschäftigung Goethes mit den Werken Kants aufs genaueste zu verfolgen" (Ewald Boucke, *Goethes Weltanschauung auf historischer Grundlage: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der dynamischen Denkrichtung und Gegensatzlehre* [Stuttgart: Frommann, 1907] 219; Through Vorländer's work, we are put in the position to trace Goethe's engagement with Kant's works in the greatest detail). Houston Chamberlain praises the "ausserordentlich fleissige, archivarisch genaue Zusammenstellung" (Chamberlain 23n1; extraordinarily thorough and precise archival compilation) that Vorländer prepared. Ziegler echoes this: "[Die Textstellen] gesammelt und 'archivarisch genau' zusammengestellt zu haben, ist das unbestreitbare Verdienst Vorländers" (Ziegler 56; It is Vorländer's incontestable merit to have collected [the textual material] and compiled it in a "precise archival" manner).

29. Ernst Osterkamp, "Friedrich Gundolf zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft: Zur Problematik eines Germanisten aus dem George-Kreis," in *Literaturgeschichte und Geistesgeschichte, 1910–1925*, ed. Christoph König and Eberhard Lämmert (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1993) 177–98; here 178 (emphasis added).

30. Friedrich Gundolf, *Goethe*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1917) 465 (emphasis in the original). Further references appear in the text as Gundolf and page number.

31. The phrase "Kant *gegen* Goethe" contains no italics in Vorländer's text, but since this appears most likely to be a typesetting error in the original publication, I have added italics here.

32. Georg Simmel, "Das Goethebuch," in *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen, 1909–1918*, vol. 2 (*Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 13), ed. Klaus Latzel (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000) 231–43; here 242. Further references appear as Simmel, "Goethebuch" and page number.

33. Georg Simmel, "Einheit und Zwiespalt: Zeitgemäßes in Goethes Weltanschauung," in *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen, 1909–1918*, vol. 2 (*Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 13), ed. Klaus Latzel (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000) 165–73; here 172.

34. Georg Simmel, *Kant und Goethe: Zur Geschichte der modernen Weltanschauung* (Leipzig: Kurt Wolff, 1916) 22 (emphasis in the original).

35. See Paola Giacomoni, *Classicità e frammento: Georg Simmel goethiano* (Naples: Guida Editori, 1995).

36. See letter from August 8, in *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (WA 1.19:61; emphasis in the original).

37. Ludwig Goldschmidt, *Weder Kant noch Goethe: Zur Selbstbesinnung* (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1920) 1. Further references appear in the text as Goldschmidt and page number.

38. Thomas Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 2009) 192, 191. Further references appear in the text as Mann and page number.

39. Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006) ix. Further refer-

ences appear in the text as Spengler and page number. "Die Philosophie dieses Buches verdanke ich der Philosophie Goethes, der heute noch so gut wie unbekannten, und erst in viel geringerem Grade der Philosophie Nietzsches. Die Stellung Goethes in der westeuropäischen Metaphysik ist noch gar nicht verstanden worden. Man nennt ihn nicht einmal, wenn von Philosophie die Rede ist. Unglücklicherweise hat er seine Lehre nicht in einem starren System niedergelegt; deshalb übersehen ihn die Systematiker. Aber er ist Philosoph. Er nimmt Kant gegenüber dieselbe Stelle wie Plato gegenüber Aristoteles, und es ist ebenfalls eine mißliche Sache, Plato in ein System bringen zu wollen. Plato und Goethe repräsentieren die Philosophie des Werdens, Aristoteles und Kant die des Gewordenen. Hier steht Intuition gegen Analyse" (Spengler 68; This book's philosophy is indebted to Goethe's philosophy, which is still virtually unknown today, and to Nietzsche's philosophy, but only to a much lesser degree. Goethe's place in Western European metaphysics has not yet been understood. One does not even mention him when one speaks of philosophy. Unfortunately, he never placed his theory within a rigid system; therefore, the systematic philosophers overlook him. But he is a philosopher. In relation to Kant, he takes the same position that Plato does in relation to Aristotle, and it would likewise be misguided to try to bring Plato into a system. Plato and Goethe represent the philosophy of becoming, Aristotle and Kant the philosophy of that which already is. Intuition stands here in opposition to analysis).

40. Alfred Baeumler, *Kants Kritik der Urteilskraft: Ihre Geschichte und Systematik* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1923) v. Further references appear in the text as Baeumler and page number.

41. Eugen Zabel, "Goethe und Russland," *Jahrbuch der deutschen Goethe-Gesellschaft* 8 (1921): 27–48; here 27 and 48.

42. Wilhelm Windelband, *Die Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, vol. 2, *Die Blütezeit der deutschen Philosophie* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1880) 170–71.

43. August Sauer, "Vorbemerkung," *Euphorion: Zeitschrift für Literaturgeschichte*, supplementary vol. 14 ("Gundolf-Heft") (1921): iii–iv; here iii and iv.

44. Walter Benjamin, "Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften," in *Illuminationen* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1977) 63–135; here 63. Further references appear in the text as Benjamin and page number.

45. Walter Benjamin, "Goethe," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, no. 2, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhauser (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1977) 705–39; here 721.

46. See Burkhardt Lindner, ed., *Benjamin-Handbuch: Leben, Werk, Wirkung* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2006) 480–81.