



PROJECT MUSE®

Solving the Regress Puzzle: J. F. Fries's Psychological
Reconstruction of Kant's Transcendental Methodology

Peter Sperber

Journal of the History of Philosophy, Volume 55, Number 4, October 2017,
pp. 675-691 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/hph.2017.0070>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/672439>

Solving the Regress Puzzle: J. F. Fries's Psychological Reconstruction of Kant's Transcendental Methodology

PETER SPERBER*

ABSTRACT Many commentators have noted that Kant's transcendental methodology seems to be in danger of infinite regress. This paper discusses an early and much-neglected attempt to resolve this Regress Puzzle. Jakob Friedrich Fries, one of the most prominent Kantians during the first decades of the nineteenth century, argued that in order to avoid the Regress Puzzle, Kant's transcendental methodology had to be reconstructed on empirical-psychological premises. As part of this argument, Fries developed a subtle and original account of the importance of psychology for pure philosophy, and of the proper relationship between the two disciplines, that remains of interest.

KEYWORDS Kant, Fries, psychology, transcendental arguments, methodology, epistemology

THE REGRESS PUZZLE

WHILE KANT'S TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY as expounded in the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Prolegomena* has been extraordinarily influential over the past two centuries, its transcendental methodology has continued to puzzle commentators. Recently, Colin Marshall, in an article entitled "Does Kant Demand Explanations for *All Synthetic A Priori Claims?*," has brought one of the central problems for any interpretation of Kant's methodology to the fore again.¹ In his paper, Marshall discusses what he calls "the Regress Puzzle":

Several commentators have noted that there is a puzzle about how the positive part of Kant's project could work. The puzzle, which I will call the "Regress Puzzle," arises

¹Marshall, "Does Kant Demand Explanations?"

* Peter Sperber recently completed his Ph.D. at the University of Utrecht.

when we ask: If Kant demands explanations for *all* synthetic a priori claims, then how does he think a successful explanation works?²

We can pose the problem underlying this puzzle in straightforward terms: Kant claims that mathematics and physics include a number of basic synthetic a priori claims that serve as premises or principles.³ He furthermore stresses that the possibility of such claims is highly mysterious, because it is unclear how we could acquire new non-analytic knowledge without the aid of perception.⁴ Transcendental philosophy is the discipline that intends to answer this question, and thereby to provide a justification for the synthetic a priori claims adopted in mathematics and physics.⁵ However, transcendental philosophy is itself supposedly a synthetic a priori discipline, and for this reason, it must presumably contain its own basic synthetic a priori claims. But if this is the case, it would seem that Kant, if his philosophy is not to be dogmatic, owes his readers a further (presumably meta-transcendental) justification as to how such synthetic a priori judgments in transcendental philosophy are possible. This line of reasoning would clearly end in infinite regress. Hence the Regress Puzzle.

This puzzle has recurred in various guises ever since the publication of Kant's first *Critique* in 1781. The treatment of this problem, however, has changed over time. In recent decades, on the one hand, Kant scholars have primarily treated the puzzle as a problem of interpretation. The aim has therefore been to develop an interpretation of Kant's methodology that shows how he manages to avoid this looming regress, and commentators have deployed various strategies to this end.⁶ In the first decades after the publication of the first *Critique*, on the other hand, philosophers did not see the Regress Puzzle as a problem of exegesis, but as a serious threat to Kant's transcendental philosophy. For Kantians around 1800, in other words, the pressing task was one of reconstruction, not of interpretation.

In this paper, I consider one such early attempt at reconstruction, made around 1800 by the important, but much-neglected, Kantian, Jakob Friedrich Fries (1773–

²Marshall, "Does Kant Demand Explanations?" 549.

³B 14–19; *Prolegomena*, 4:279. All references to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* are to the original page numbering of the 1781 (A) and 1787 (B) editions. References to Kant's *Prolegomena* are to the volume and page number of the *Akademie Ausgabe* (AA), *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, edited by *Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften* (29 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1900–). Translations are from the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*.

⁴*Prolegomena*, 4:276–78; B 19.

⁵B 73. Kant, of course, considers a similar justification for the synthetic a priori claims made in (traditional) metaphysics impossible.

⁶One can identify at least three broad strategies in the literature on transcendental argumentation. The first strategy, which is also the one employed by Marshall himself, is to argue that Kant believes that the basic synthetic a priori claims of transcendental arguments do not require further justification, either because they are self-justifying, or because they are directly grounded in a non-discursive source or insight (Marshall, "Does Kant Demand Explanations?"; and Jaakko Hintikka, "Transcendental Arguments"). A second strategy is to deny that the premises of Kant's transcendental arguments are themselves synthetic a priori, but instead (minimally) empirical (Patricia Kitcher, "Kant's Epistemology"; and Derk Pereboom, "Kant on Justification") or analytic (Jonathan Bennett, *Kant's Analytic*, 42). A third strategy is to deny that Kant's transcendental philosophy contains claims that are "basic" in the relevant sense. This strategy includes, amongst others, holistic (Dieter Henrich, "Kant's Notion of a Deduction," 40–41) and dialectic (Ralph C. S. Walker, "Induction and Transcendental Argument") interpretations.

1843).⁷ Fries, who served as professor of philosophy, as well as of mathematics and physics, in both Heidelberg and Jena during the first few decades of the nineteenth century, developed a highly novel, sophisticated, and unapologetically psychological attempt to resolve what he considered to be the inconsistencies in Kant's transcendental methodology that led to the infinite regress. I aim to show that scholars should pay more attention to this attempt for its historical importance, as well as for its intrinsic philosophical virtues.

In section 1, I begin by showing that Fries was indeed keenly aware of the Regress Puzzle, and I will discuss his diagnosis of the problems in Kant's methodology that give rise to this puzzle. The puzzle, Fries argues, only arises because Kant misunderstands the empirical-psychological nature of his own transcendental project. Having considered his critique of Kant in section 1, section 2 will examine Fries's positive reconstruction of Kant's transcendental methodology. More specifically, I shall explain how Fries thinks transcendental philosophy, reinterpreted as a system of empirical psychology, can contribute to answering the question regarding the possibility of synthetic a priori cognition. In this section, I will especially emphasize the ways in which Fries nevertheless remains close to Kant's original project. Having stressed these similarities with Kant, section 3 will consider three ways in which Fries's reconstruction is innovative. These innovations, I conclude, make Fries's transcendental philosophy a highly interesting topic for further research.

I. CORRECTING THE TRANSCENDENTAL PREJUDICE

Fries, of course, did not discuss the Regress Puzzle under that name. Yet, his writings on transcendental methodology make it very clear that he was in fact aware of the problem that it poses, and that his reconstruction of this methodology was strongly motivated in part by his desire to resolve this puzzle.⁸ In the introduction to the *Neue Kritik der Vernunft*, Fries discusses the problem in terms of two "prejudices" philosophers are prone to fall victim to, and that, he claims, have harmed Kant's philosophy, and even more so the philosophies of his idealist successors. He calls these the "rationalist" and the "transcendental" (or "Kantian") prejudice.⁹

Fries characterizes the rationalist prejudice as the mistaken idea that proof (interpreted as a straightforward derivation¹⁰ of a proposition from certain

⁷This paper will focus exclusively on Fries's psychological reconstruction of Kant's transcendental methodology. For a more general account of Fries's life and philosophy, see Frederick C. Beiser, *Genesis*, 23–88.

⁸Fries wrote a number of texts dealing with philosophical methodology from 1798 until 1808. Among the most important of these are his magnum opus, the three-volume *Neue Kritik der Vernunft* of 1807 (republished in 1828–31 with a number of revisions as *Neue oder anthropologische Kritik der Vernunft*); his 1803 polemic *Reinhold, Fichte und Schelling*; and his first published article, 'Verhältnis der empirischen Psychologie zur Metaphysik' (1798). In order to avoid difficult questions about Fries's philosophical development over time, I will focus on the texts published in this decade, disregarding later publications.

⁹*Neue Kritik* 1:xxviii–xxxvii/SS 4:85–94. Citations to Fries's works are to the first editions of the cited works and to the corresponding passage in the *Sämtliche Schriften*. References to SS and to the *Neue Kritik* (both editions) are to the volume number, followed by the page number after the colon. All translations are my own.

¹⁰Here and elsewhere, I will use 'derivation' instead of the more common 'deduction' in order to avoid possible confusion. As will become clear below, Fries uses 'deduction' in a way that diverges from its modern usage, and that is in fact much closer to Kant's juridical use of the same term. Wherever I use 'deduction,' I intend it to be taken in the sense that Fries gave this term.

premises) is the highest form of justification, and that every scientific claim, including the claims of philosophy, should ideally be justified in this fashion. He argues that the root of this rationalist prejudice is twofold. One reason for its popularity is the one-sided focus on Euclidean geometry as an ideal model for all cognition.¹¹ The second reason Fries identifies is the tendency towards an overly strong interpretation of the (otherwise valid) principle of sufficient reason:

[The] logical principle of sufficient reason is after all usually expressed so generally, that it demands roughly that every cognition must have its sufficient ground. Now one adds: 'to prove' means 'to derive [*ableiten*] a cognition from its grounds'—as a result it must be possible to prove every cognition. In this syllogism, however, both premises are false, and with them the conclusion as well. (*Neue Kritik*, 1:23/SS 4:87–88)¹²

The first premise is false, according to Fries, because it overextends the scope of the principle. While it is true that every 'judgment' requires a justification, there are other types of cognition, most notably perception, that cannot be so justified. The second premise is false because giving a proof is not the only way to justify a cognition: Fries names "demonstration" (grounding a judgment in pure or sensible intuition) and "deduction" (to which I will come back in the next section) as alternatives. In fact, Fries continues, it is clear that the conclusion of the argument cannot be true, for if it were, it would lead directly to the infinite regress that we already encountered in the previous section. If every cognition is to be validated by means of a proof, then the premises of this proof must be similarly subjected to a proof etc. *ad infinitum*.

Despite these rather straightforward arguments against the rationalist prejudice, Fries believed that this prejudice was widespread in his own time. In fact, it is relatively easy to identify the two main targets of Fries's criticism: Fichte, his former teacher at the University of Jena, and Schelling, his life-long nemesis.¹³ Kant, of course, certainly does not accept this prejudice in its full scope. In fact, one fundamental doctrine of Kant's critical philosophy is that we cannot prove material knowledge (unlike formal knowledge) in this way. Fries both acknowledges and appreciates this, but he argues that Kant does not go far enough in his rejection of this prejudice: "Kant . . . presupposes like all the others that *what is asserted by pure reason* it must first have subjected to proof."¹⁴ In other words, Kant reduces, but does not avoid, the damage done by the rationalist prejudice when he limits its scope to the realm of pure philosophy. As evidence for this claim, Fries refers to a passage in the methodology section in which Kant discusses various rules for what he there consistently calls "transcendental proofs" (A 782–94/B 810–22).

Fries continues by arguing that this prejudice then translates itself into a second harmful prejudice that is peculiar to Kant's own philosophy, and that he therefore names the "Kantian" or "transcendental" prejudice:

¹¹*Neue Kritik*, 1:xxviii/SS 4:85.

¹²See also *Neue Kritik*, 1:281/SS 4:403.

¹³Fries uses very similar arguments in his main polemical work, his *Reinhold, Fichte und Schelling*, published in the same period. To what extent these criticisms of Fichte and Schelling are fair is a question that I will not attempt to address here.

¹⁴*Neue Kritik*, 1:xxvi–ii/SS 4:84, emphasis added.

Kant, however, made the great mistake that he considered transcendental cognition to be an *a priori* cognition of the philosophical kind, and that he misunderstood its empirical-psychological nature. This mistake is an unavoidable consequence of the other, which we have just mentioned, that he confuses the philosophical deduction with a kind of proof, which he called transcendental proof. (*Neue Kritik*, I:xxxvi/SS 4:93)

Kant's adherence to the rationalist prejudice forces him to make this further error, because otherwise he would be committed to proving *a priori* claims on the basis of empirical premises. Later in the passage just quoted, Fries happily admits that this would be a complete absurdity.¹⁵ However, once we come to reject the rationalist prejudice in its entirety and come to consider alternative methods of justifying *a priori* synthetic claims, we also open up the possibility for granting that empirical premises have a legitimate role to play in philosophy.

The only way to avoid the Regress Puzzle then, in Fries's view, is to reject these two assumptions: that one can only justify philosophical principles by proving them, and that empirical premises have no role to play in philosophy. The rejection of these assumptions creates the space for Fries's own envisioned psychological reconstruction of Kant's critical project: a transcendental philosophy built on the data of inner sense.

2. FRIES'S PSYCHOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF TRANSCENDENTAL METHODOLOGY

Having examined Fries's diagnosis of the Regress Puzzle, I now turn to his proposed resolution of this problem. Fries's reconstructed transcendental method proceeds in two stages, the first of which we might call the 'psychological stage proper.' His goal at this stage is the construction of a psychological theory of human cognition. The second stage forms the transition between empirical psychology and pure philosophy. Fries's notion of deduction signifies this transition. I will discuss these stages in turn below.

Before doing so, however, I need to address an urgent question. This question concerns the grounds on which I am entitled to call Fries's methodology 'transcendental' at all. First, readers may well be skeptical whether any kind of philosophy that starts from empirical premises could lay claim to this name. This skepticism is understandable: Kant certainly intended for transcendental philosophy to be an *a priori* investigation. Nevertheless, as Fries himself notes, this is not necessitated by Kant's official definitions of 'transcendental' or 'transcendental philosophy.'¹⁶ "Transcendental," according to Kant, is all our cognition "that is occupied not so much with objects but rather with our mode of cognition of objects insofar as this is to be possible *a priori*" (B 25). Transcendental cognition is thus meta-cognition about *a priori* cognition, but this definition does not determine

¹⁵Historically, critics often accused Fries of trying to give a psychological proof for *a priori* claims, which made him an easy target in the psychologism discussions around 1900. For this reason, it is worth emphasizing that Fries was very much aware of the illegitimacy of such strategies. His actual proposal, which we will survey below, is far more subtle and does not so easily fall victim to accusations of psychologism.

¹⁶"Verhältnis," 279–81/SS 2:184–86.

that this meta-cognition must itself be a priori. Transcendental philosophy is simply the system of such meta-cognitions. As we shall see below, Fries precisely intends for his *Neue Kritik der Vernunft* to provide such meta-cognition about a priori cognition. I consider this sufficient legitimation for considering Fries's reconstruction of Kant's methodology transcendental, and will now proceed to my discussion of the two stages of his methodology.

2.1. A Psychological Theory of Cognition

In order to understand the first, properly psychological,¹⁷ stage of Fries's transcendental methodology, it is important to take note of the rationale underlying this psychological project. Here, I should first remark that, despite Kant's own warnings against mixing transcendental philosophy and psychology (and despite the hesitance of modern commentators to read any psychology into Kant's critical philosophy), Fries's motivation for embarking on his psychological investigation is very much rooted in a central line of thought in Kant's first *Critique*. In his preface to the first edition of the *Critique*, Kant famously describes the state of metaphysics in his time as one of chaos and anarchy. The only solution to this dire state is, in his estimation, a critique of pure reason: "a critique of the faculties of reason in general, in respect of all the cognitions after which reason might strive *independently of all experience*" (A xii, translation modified). Such an investigation would decide "the possibility or impossibility of a metaphysics in general, and the determination of its sources, as well as its extent and boundaries" (A xii).

Despite the familiarity of these passages, commentators rarely take note of the underlying idea expressed here, one that Kant shares with Fries, that is, the emphasis on the psychological side of the a priori: cognition is a priori when it is the autonomous *product* of reason (understood in its broad sense, as the collection of our higher cognitive powers).¹⁸ In other words, if we are to have a priori cognition in this sense, our faculties of cognition must be capable of exhibiting spontaneous activity.¹⁹ Thus, Kant defines a priori cognitions as those that have their source "independent of all experience and even all impressions of the senses" (B 2), and

¹⁷There are some difficulties connected to the use of the term 'psychological' in this context, given that psychology had not been established as an autonomous scientific discipline when Fries was writing. Since there was no clear consensus at the time as to the form that such a future discipline should take, the use of the term 'psychological' varied from author to author. Furthermore, each of these uses also differs from our modern understanding of what is properly called 'psychological.' I avoid these difficulties by using a stipulative notion of 'psychological' that I take to be broad enough to incorporate both the modern and the various early nineteenth-century uses, yet substantive enough to still be of philosophical interest. As I use the term throughout the rest of this article, a claim (or idea, investigation, theory etc.) is psychological when it concerns the factual (and contingent) functioning of the (human) mind. As such, I believe it to be sufficiently distinguished from epistemological claims and claims in the philosophy of mind.

¹⁸Kitcher and Pereboom form exceptions. See Kitcher, *Kant's Transcendental Psychology*, 15–16; and Pereboom, "Kant on Justification," 26.

¹⁹Spontaneous here should not be taken to mean free or undetermined, but rather self-determined, or determined by its own nature instead of by an external source. See *Neue Kritik*, 1:47/SS 4:141–42: "The original spontaneous activity of the power of cognition is to be the source of truth within us, and it can therefore in no way depend on our will, but it must follow an unchanging, necessary inner law."

notes that “in *a priori* cognition nothing can be ascribed to the objects except what the thinking subject *takes out of itself*” (B xxiii, emphasis added).²⁰ It is also for this reason that Kant thinks Locke’s “physiology of the human understanding” fails (A ix); not, as is often thought, because it searches for the origins of *a priori* cognition *per se*, but rather because it does not allow for any of these sources to be non-empirical. The claim regarding reason’s spontaneous activity, however, is a strong psychological thesis that stands in conflict with radical empiricist views of the workings of the human mind. Fries also adopts this thesis when he writes: “philosophical [that is *a priori*]²¹ cognition must be that which pertains to reason by virtue of its pure spontaneity”²² and “philosophical cognition . . . must be the pure property of reason, must arise only out of itself, must only be dependent on its spontaneity.”²³ Although both Kant and Fries share this conception of the *a priori*, only the latter draws the conclusion explicitly:

If we could elevate ourselves . . . to a . . . theory of the inner life of our reason that would grant us a complete understanding of the subjective organization of our powers of cognitions, then [this theory would tell us] which philosophy the human mind possesses and can alone possess. (“Selbstrezenion,” 242–43/SS 4:7–8)

In other words, if we define *a priori* cognition as a product of the spontaneous activity of our cognitive powers, then a critique of pure reason should aim to discover whether, and, if so, to what extent, our cognitive powers do in fact act spontaneously. We should grant Fries that it is indeed difficult to see how this particular investigation could take any other form than that of a psychological theory of cognition. Furthermore, because such a theory would attempt to uncover the actual spontaneous activity of our cognitive powers, it would necessarily be an empirical theory. After all, as Kant himself stresses, “perception . . . is the sole characteristic of actuality” (A 225/B 273). Fries has this line of thought in mind when he emphasizes, in the passage cited in the previous section, that transcendental cognition must be empirical-psychological cognition.²⁴

Fries faces two questions. First, does reason, as a matter of fact, act spontaneously? And, second, should this be so, what spontaneous activity pertains to reason? In response to the first question, Fries in fact never seriously considers adopting the strict empiricist thesis that our faculties of cognition do not act spontaneously, but only respond passively to the stimulation of the (inner and outer) senses. His reason for presuming such spontaneous or original (*ursprünglich*) activity is again very reminiscent of Kant:

²⁰Many other illustrations of this point can be found in the text. Compare for example A 2, B 41, and B 241.

²¹That Fries uses “*a priori* cognition” and “philosophical cognition” interchangeably is clear from *Neue Kritik*, I:xlvi/SS 4:104.

²²“Selbstrezenion,” 242/SS 4:7.

²³*Neue Kritik*, I:xlvi/SS 4:103.

²⁴In “Verhältnis,” Fries surmises that the reason why Kant never drew this conclusion was that he fell victim to a well-known ambiguity in the notion of a critique of pure reason (“Verhältnis,” 172/SS 2:276). This can mean either an investigation that has *a priori* cognition as its object, or an investigation that is itself conducted *a priori* and Kant clearly had both meanings in mind. However, as was already pointed out above, the fact that critique has *a priori* cognitions as its object does not yet entail that it must itself take the form of *a priori* cognition. As long as one clearly distinguishes the content of a cognition from that cognition as a mental act or state, there is no *prima facie* reason why empirical psychology could not study our *a priori* cognition.

Should there . . . be apodictic determinations in our cognitions, should there be a concept of necessity in our representations at all, then an original, persisting activity must pertain to reason in cognition. . . . Its immediate apodictic cognition must really consist in such original activities. (*Neue Kritik*, 2:34/SS 5:60)²⁵

If perception alone could never produce a concept that involves universality or necessity, the only options seem to be either to deny that we possess such concepts, or to allow for cognitive activity that is not reducible to perception. Since inner sense, on Fries's account, tells us that we do in fact possess such concepts, only the latter option remains.

Answering the second question, on the other hand, turns out to be a lot more difficult. The reason for this is that, despite rejecting strict empiricism, Fries does adopt what may well be called a *moderate* empiricism. What I mean by this is that Fries consistently denies the existence of innate ideas and intellectual intuition.²⁶ Because we are finite beings, all our experience is necessarily limited by sensible intuition. The conclusion that Fries draws from this is that the spontaneous activity of our cognitive faculties can only be something for us insofar as it aids in producing sensible experience by actively processing the material provided by our sensibility:

[W]e . . . maintain that bare reason gives only the form to the cognition that has been incited by the senses. There certainly are cognitions of bare reason within our cognition, namely the cognitions *a priori* . . . but these are for themselves always only *formal apperceptions* . . . which . . . never make up a whole of cognition. They only appear for themselves by means of abstraction, immediately, however, always as forms of a whole of cognition, the material of which is taken from the senses. (*Neue Kritik*, 2:65/SS 5:92)

In other words, the spontaneous activity of reason can never itself become a direct object of awareness. If all of our conscious experience is the product of an interaction of this spontaneous cognitive activity with sensible affection, this activity itself must necessarily be subconscious.²⁷ How, then, are we to uncover these *a priori* sources of cognition?

We can now see why Fries believes a psychological theory of reason to be of such crucial importance:²⁸ the goal of such a theory would be to provide an explanation of the genesis of our experience that disentangles those elements that can be reduced to sensibility from those that must be the result of spontaneous cognitive activity. The type of theory that results resembles what Patricia Kitcher, in her influential interpretation of Kant, has referred to as "task analysis."²⁹ The starting

²⁵See also *Neue Kritik*, 2:63/SS 5:90.

²⁶See for examples *Neue Kritik*, 2:35–36/SS 5:62 and *WGA* 24–25/SS 3:452–53.

²⁷This line of thought also clearly echoes certain themes in Kant, such as his claims regarding the "blindness" of the imagination's synthetic activity (A 78/B 134). Compare also the following passage from the first *Critique*: "Now what is especially remarkable is that even among our experiences cognitions are mixed in that must have their origin *a priori* and that perhaps serve only to establish connection among our representations of the senses" (A 2).

²⁸In sect. 3, I discuss one important respect in which this emphasis on a notion of theory interestingly distinguishes Fries's reconstruction of transcendental philosophy from Kant's own project.

²⁹Kitcher, *Kant's Transcendental Psychology*, 25. Cf. Beiser, *Genesis*, 77, who speaks of "functional explanation." In fact, Fries is a much more explicit representative of the type of transcendental psychology that Kitcher finds in Kant than Kant himself is, even though it should be admitted that Fries makes use of more substantial psychological background assumptions than Kitcher allows for. It is

point of Fries's investigations are general observations of inner sense regarding the different kinds of mental states that we find within ourselves. These mental states exhibit the performance of a number of complex cognitive tasks. Hence, in the first volume of the *Neue Kritik der Vernunft*, Fries discusses perception, memory, judgment, and reasoning. The role of psychology here, for Fries, is to explain how the human mind is capable of performing these cognitive tasks. Fries then proceeds by showing that we cannot in fact explain our performance of these various tasks (and the sub-tasks on which they depend) on strict empiricist premises, but that various a priori cognitive activities have to be posited to account for these tasks. Thus, to take but one example, in his discussion of sensibility, Fries notes our ability to recognize the same object by means of different senses and argues that we would not be able to do this if our cognitive faculties would not unite the affections of our various sense modalities in a single space that is common to all:

For our entire cognition of the external world, this or that way of being affected is always only that which occasions it [*das Veranlassende*]. We would, however, obtain in it neither unity nor coherence, but only confused individual images, if a single *uniting intuition, which is shared by all senses*, would not form the foundation for each. The table, the tree, or whichever individual object is for us a thing with a particular form in space. This representation is the one that unites, by means of which we cognize the one identical thing, no matter whether we intuit it through touch, hearing, sight or whichever other sense. (*Neue Kritik*, 1:66–67/SS 4:166–67)

Since the affections of the various senses are fundamentally heterogeneous, they cannot themselves provide any clue as to how this synthesis is to be performed. From this, Fries concludes that this single overarching representation of space cannot be the product of sensible affection, but has to be the product of the spontaneous activity of our cognitive faculties.

2.2. *Deduction*

We have now seen why Fries believes that an empirical-psychological theory of cognition is of such crucial importance for philosophy. However, even presuming that the development of such a theory is a feasible project and that it is possible to discover and map the spontaneous activity of the human cognitive faculties, Fries still has another question to answer. This question concerns the transition between this psychological theory and philosophy proper. How are we to get from the conclusions of the psychological investigation, which, despite being *about* the cognitive activity that is a priori in the sense outline above, are still very

therefore unfortunate that Kitcher, basing herself solely on secondary literature about Fries, rejects his philosophical project out of hand as a form of neo-Cartesian introspectionism that had already been adequately refuted by Kant (*Kant's Transcendental Psychology*, 6). This is hardly a fair assessment of the merits of Fries's philosophy. Fries is certainly an introspectionist in a weak sense: he believes that inner sense provides the empirical phenomena for which psychology must provide an explanation, much as outer sense does for the natural sciences. This position, however, was definitely not the target of Kant's arguments against Cartesianism, and it in fact remained popular for much of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, Fries rejects, as much as Kant, introspectionism in a strong sense. That is, Fries rejects the idea that we have a special, infallible access to the contents of our own mind (*Neue Kritik*, 1:92/SS 4:156), as well as the idea that we can simply observe the nature and workings of the human mind through inner sense (*Neue Kritik*, 1:248–49/SS 4:312–13).

much empirical in nature, to the a priori concepts and principles of theoretical philosophy themselves? As I already emphasized above, any attempt to prove such necessary and universal principles on the basis of an empirical, and therefore contingent, theory of human cognition is bound to fail miserably. For this reason, Fries introduces a different mode of justification, which he calls ‘deduction.’

What, then, is deduction? And how is deducing a claim different from proving it? It is important for Fries to provide a convincing answer to this last question given his critique of Kant’s dependence on proof as a mode of justification. Fries gives his most explicit characterization of deduction in the following passage from the *Neue Kritik*:

[A deduction] ought to show [*aufweisen*] the law within our immediate cognition, which lies at the basis of a principle [*Grundsatz*], and which is expressed by [that principle]. Because we only become conscious of this law by means of the principle, the deduction can only consist therein that we *derive from a theory of reason* what original cognition we must necessarily have, and what kind of principles must necessarily come forth from it within our [faculty of] reason. (*Neue Kritik*, 1:284/SS 4:406)

Admittedly, this passage is rather dense, but I believe that we can nevertheless understand what Fries is after by relying on the foregoing discussion of the role and nature of a psychological theory of cognition. The “immediate cognition” (*unmittelbare Erkenntnis*) of which Fries speaks in this quotation is a central concept in his philosophy, which has nevertheless been frequently misunderstood. Readers have often interpreted this notion as a commitment to a Jacobian-inspired doctrine of immediate rational (or even mystical) knowledge of a priori truths, and have subsequently criticized Fries for simply and dogmatically asserting the truth of all the synthetic a priori claims that Kant had tried to justify.³⁰ While Fries’s formulations on this point are sometimes misleading, this interpretation is nevertheless implausible given his consistent denial that we have any sort of immediate non-sensible knowledge.³¹ The confusion is caused by the fact that the German *Erkenntnis*, much like the English ‘cognition,’ can be used not only to describe the products of cognitive activity, but also to describe this cognitive activity itself. Fries uses the term in both senses, but when he speaks of immediate cognition he means this in the latter, performative sense.³² ‘Immediate cognition,’ for him, therefore does not refer to direct knowledge, but rather to cognitive activity that is not mediated by perception; it is the spontaneous activity of our cognitive faculties that determines how the empirical information that comes in through perception is processed. I have also mentioned that spontaneous does not mean free; our cognitive activity is certainly rule-bound, it just so happens to be the case that at least a number of these rules are not empirical but determined by the nature of our cognitive system. It is these rules, then, that are the “laws within our immediate cognition.” The last part of the passage repeats the doctrine, which I have already discussed above, that we cannot become directly conscious

³⁰For example, Klaus Sachs-Hombach, “Ist Fries’ Erkenntnistheorie psychologischer?” 134–35; and Walter Mechler, *Die Erkenntnistheorie bei Fries*, 22–27, 87.

³¹See n. 26.

³²See, for example, *Neue Kritik*, 2:34/SS 5:60 (quoted above), where Fries characterizes “immediate cognition” in terms of “original activity.”

of these laws, but can only discover them by means of developing an adequate psychological theory of cognition.

What, then, does it mean for “a law within immediate cognition” to “lie at the basis” of a philosophical principle, or, in other words, for a philosophical principle to express this cognitive law? Fries is not as clear on this point as one might like, but I think that it is easier to understand if we first focus on the deduction of concepts, rather than principles. Even though Fries only speaks of principles in the passage that I quoted, the second volume of the *Neue Kritik* does include a deduction of Kant’s categories of the understanding.³³ The fundamental idea here is that these categories are engendered by the subconscious spontaneous activities of the understanding and mirror them at the conscious level. Thus, for example, when our cognitive system synthesizes various impressions from our different sense-modalities to provide us with a spatiotemporal unity in experience, our concepts of substance and property mirror this cognitive activity on the conscious level. Similarly, our notion of causality mirrors the synthesis of different sensible impressions in accordance with a determined temporal schema. This, then, is the sense in which these concepts express reason’s spontaneous activity. Conversely, this activity lies at the basis of these concepts in the sense that this is where they find their origins: were our cognitive faculties differently constituted, we would not have the categories that we do in fact possess, according to Fries. Together these two claims enable Fries to defend two central Kantian doctrines: (1) that the categories are a priori concepts, and (2) that they only find their legitimate application within the realm of experience.

Fries then deduces the principles of philosophy in much the same way.³⁴ The single difference is that, instead of dealing with individual instances of spontaneous cognitive activity, Fries here considers, as I already indicated above, the rules that regulate the occurrence of these activities. What underlies a principle such as the principle of causality (that every event has a cause), for Fries, is the particular psychological law that regulates reason’s spontaneous synthetic activity in such a way that it makes possible our experience of time as a single unified whole:

If one inquires, for example, concerning the law of causality: every change is an effect, I do not compare both concepts [change and effect] but the theory already shows me by and large in which relation pure determinations of time and categories stand in our reason. (*Neue Kritik*, 2:62–63/SS 5:89)

In other words, according to Fries, a deduction of a metaphysical principle (*Grundsatz*) provides a link between two very different types of laws. The psychological laws that regulate our cognitive activity and that form the underlying subjective ground for our metaphysical principles, on the one hand, and the metaphysical laws (such as the law of causality) postulated by these principles, on the other.³⁵

³³This deduction starts at *Neue Kritik*, 2:89/SS 5:118.

³⁴In addition to his deduction of the categories and principles, Fries also attempts a deduction of Kant’s Ideas. This is an interesting discussion in its own right, which must, however, be left for another occasion.

³⁵I wish to thank an anonymous reviewer of this journal for pointing out the necessity of making the distinction between these two types of law more explicit than I did in an earlier version of this paper.

However, it is important to understand what Fries believes the status of these deductions to be, and how he thinks the deduction of a claim differs from its proof. After all, if he cannot make plausible that deduction is in fact interestingly distinct from proof, we are right back at the Regress Puzzle. Furthermore, he would invite a host of other problems, such as how we could ever come to know general metaphysical laws on the basis of an investigation of the mind; an investigation that must presumably itself presuppose these general laws. Not only infinite regress, but also the threat of vicious circularity would loom large.³⁶

Fries resolves this problem by stressing that proofs and deductions have very different purposes: whereas a proof is intended to establish the *truth* of a certain claim, deductions, as he understands them, merely establish that the *use* of a certain concept or principle is justified. As he writes in the preface to the second edition of the *Neue Kritik*, “Kant named the justification of the use of the categories *deduction*. I have maintained this name because my justification has the same purpose.”³⁷ However, Kant, at least on Fries’s reading, is far from consistent in trying to achieve this purpose, as is evidenced by his usage of terms such as ‘transcendental proofs.’ In fact, according to Fries, Kant is constantly tempted to try to show that the principles of pure philosophy are true after all, but in doing so misinterprets what his own arguments really achieve:

Indeed, Kant’s transcendental proofs do not prove that in nature every substance persists, that every change has a cause, and that all that exists at the same time stands in interaction, but they only show that human reason has the need to presuppose these laws as truths, when it wants to judge the appearances as being connected in a single united experience [*einem Erfahrungsganzen*]. (*Neue Kritik*, II 1:xvii/SS 4:45)

Fries’s reconstructed transcendental philosophy cannot tell us whether these principles are true, for an understanding of human cognition, no matter how complete, would never be able to settle this question.³⁸ It will, however, be able to

³⁶Karl Popper, in his *Grundprobleme*, 113, in fact employed this critique of vicious circularity against Fries. For a discussion of this criticism in the context of the well-known Münchhausen-Trilemma, see Sachs-Hombach, “Ist Fries’ Erkenntnistheorie psychologistisch?” 125–27. Fries himself discusses this threat of circularity at *Neue Kritik*, I: xxxiii–iv/SS 4:90: “Should these [metaphysical] principles [*Grundsätze*] be proven in some way by our method, this method would be wholly inconsistent, because we show on the basis of a theory of cognition, why they [these principles] must appear in our reason, and this theory of cognition is only one individual part of the doctrine of inner nature, whereas these principles are in part the first laws of all nature in general. Their truth is therefore already presupposed amongst the grounds of their deduction.”

³⁷*Neue Kritik*, II 1:xxi/SS 4:49. Henrich’s influential paper “Kant’s Notion of a Deduction” showed convincingly that Kant adopts this use of the term deduction from the juridical practices of his time. Cf. also Jay F. Rosenberg, “Transcendental Arguments Revisited,” 612: “What Kant explicitly intends is that the conclusion of a transcendental deduction state, not a matter of fact, but a matter of right. It is, in other words, to say that something may be done. It articulates a principle of permission.”

³⁸Sometimes one finds it hard to escape the impression that history repeats itself, for one finds clear echoes of Fries’s argument in Barry Stroud’s criticism of Strawson’s Kantianism: “Both [Kant and Strawson] appear to assume that skepticism will be disarmed by argument alone only if it can be refuted, and the propositions which it would challenge are positively proved by transcendental means” (“Kantian Argument,” 240). “What calls into question the validity of the last step of would-be transcendental arguments from the way we think to the way things are is the apparently simple logical observation that something’s being so does not follow from its being thought or believed to be so. Something’s being so does not follow from everyone in the world’s believing it to be so, from everyone’s fully reasonably believing it, even from every reasonable person’s being completely unable to avoid believing it” (241).

tell us that, given how human cognition works, we will not be able to come to any systematic knowledge of the world of experience without implicitly presupposing the categories to be valid and the philosophical principles to be true.³⁹ In Frederick Beiser's words, "A deduction [provides] a *subjective* justification for these principles, because it shows how they are part of our basic mental economy, our fundamental ways of perceiving and conceiving the world, without which we would understand nothing at all."⁴⁰ As such, these concepts and principles are the very conditions of experience.

3. THREE FRIESIAN INNOVATIONS

In my discussion of Fries's transcendental methodology in the previous section, I have paid special attention to those respects in which his reconstruction of this methodology remains indebted to Kant's philosophy. My main reason for doing this was to counteract a possible skepticism on the part of the reader concerning whether any philosopher who thinks philosophy has to start with empirical psychology can really be considered an heir to Kant's transcendental philosophy. By this point, I believe I have sufficiently rebutted this skepticism and shown that Fries develops a line of thought that is in fact importantly present in Kant's work. However, by emphasizing the similarities between Kant and Fries, I have exposed myself to another risk. If so much of what he does is already present in Kant's own philosophy, the reader may well ask, what is there of original value in Fries's reconstruction of transcendental method? In other words, one might ask why we should read Fries at all. In order to answer these questions, this section will briefly consider three ways in which Fries's treatment of transcendental methodology is innovative and worth considering in its own right. First, I explain Fries's resolution of the many ambiguities in the popular understanding of the nature of a transcendental argument. Second, I consider Fries's transcendental holism. Third, I explore Fries's introduction of the idea that the *a priori* can be relative to the empirical.

3.1. *Transcendental Arguments*

Let me begin with the first point, the common understanding of the nature of a transcendental argument. To my knowledge, Kant in fact never makes use of this term, but the popular understanding of the term owes much to a well-known passage in the doctrine of method, in which he characterizes what he calls a "transcendental proof:"

It is impossible for me to go beyond the concept of an object *a priori* without a special clue which is to be found outside of this concept. . . . In transcendental cognition, as long as it has to do merely with concepts of the understanding, this guideline is possible experience. The proof does not show, that is, that the given concept . . . leads

³⁹This move also enables Fries to avoid pure philosophy being swallowed up by empirical psychology altogether. Psychology may be a necessary prolegomenon to any metaphysics, but as soon as we start with *a priori* principles that are put forward as true, we have left the realm of psychology and have entered the realm of metaphysics. Some of Fries's Kantian contemporaries were less careful in this regard. See for example Friedrich Eduard Beneke's *Philosophische Aufgabe*, 89–91.

⁴⁰Beiser, *Genesis*, 75.

directly to another concept . . . for such a transition would be a leap for which nothing could be held responsible; rather it shows that experience itself, hence the object of experience, would be impossible without such a connection. (A 782–83/B 811–12)

This oft-quoted passage is doubtlessly the source for the popular slogan that transcendental arguments work by establishing the conditions for the possibility of experience. It is not difficult to see, however, that both this slogan and the actual passage from the *Critique* are highly ambiguous. What, for instance, does Kant mean by ‘experience’ in this passage? Any particular experience? The totality of experience? Human experience? Or perhaps even the/our concept of experience?⁴¹ The fact that Kant apparently uses ‘experience’ and ‘object of experience’ equivocally in this passage certainly does not help matters. Secondly, what kind of possibility is at stake when Kant speaks about the possibility of (the object of) experience? Are we talking of physical (psychological), metaphysical, logical, or perhaps conceptual possibility? And, third, what type of conditions are the conditions of experience of which Kant speaks? Are they internal conditions, that is, constitutive parts of (our concept of) experience? Or are they external conditions, which make possible our experience but do not themselves belong to it? The answers to these questions differ greatly depending on which of the many interpretations of Kant’s transcendental method one favors.

One great advantage of Fries’s clear decisions with respect to his own reworking of Kant’s transcendental methodology is that, unlike Kant, he gives a straightforward answer to the questions posed above. As we have seen, transcendental arguments, for Fries, justify the use of synthetic a priori claims by way of establishing that actual human experience, which for him means the totality of representations of which we are aware through inner sense, would not be possible without the spontaneous activities of our cognitive faculties. These activities therefore serve as the external, psychological preconditions of human experience. A Friesian interpretation of the slogan that transcendental arguments work by establishing the conditions of the possibility of experience is thus a consistently psychological one. While such an interpretation may not appeal to all readers equally, it at least goes a long way towards demystifying the nature of the transcendental method.

3.2. Fries’s Holism

The second important innovation of Fries’s reinterpretation of Kant’s transcendental methodology is the introduction of a type of holism into this method. This holism is a consequence of the role that the theory of human cognition plays in Fries’s methodology. In most modern-day discussions, the term ‘transcendental argument’ applies to fairly straightforward linear arguments, starting from a phenomenon x and proceeding, by means of a limited number of argumentative steps, to the conclusion that a certain y is a condition of x being possible. Scholars therefore often take Kant’s Refutation of Idealism as the classical model for transcendental

⁴¹Scholars have often commented on the ambiguities in Kant’s use of the term ‘experience.’ In fact, as Lewis White Beck noted, Kant already uses the word equivocally in the very first sentences of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (“Sage of Königsberg,” 40–41). See also Hannah Ginsborg, “Kant and the Problem of Experience”; Henry Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Deduction*, 234–35; and Norman Kemp Smith, *Commentary*, 52.

argumentation in these discussions.⁴² However, this argument would serve badly as a paradigm case for Fries's interpretation of transcendental methodology. For Fries, as we have seen, the deduction of a synthetic a priori claim is always mediated by a theory of human cognition. But to Fries a theory is not merely a collection of isolated theoretical claims: in order to prevent ad hoc hypothesizing, a theory must be a unified whole.⁴³ Importantly, this means that every individual deduction of a philosophical concept or principle also stands or falls with this theory as a whole. That this is true for Fries is also clear from the very structure of the *Neue Kritik*, which only introduces the first deductions of concepts and principles after the entire theory of cognition has been presented.⁴⁴ Transcendental arguments in Fries's philosophy are therefore bound to look very different indeed from Kant's refutation of idealism and the arguments in modern philosophy that it has inspired.

3.3. *The Relativity of the a Priori*

The third innovative aspect of Fries's reconstruction of transcendental methodology, which I will refer to as the empirical relativity of the a priori, is perhaps the most important. This would certainly have been a very strange notion to Kant, as it is, I suspect, to many modern readers. The a priori, after all, is supposed to be the necessary and unchanging nature of reality, whereas the empirical is contingent per definition. For this reason, Kant could still be fairly optimistic that philosophy would be able to determine for all time the full extent of our a priori knowledge. Fries's reconstruction of transcendental philosophy leaves no room for such optimism. His theory of cognition is, after all, not only unapologetically psychological, it is also explicitly empirical. As we have seen, this is not to say that he intends to eradicate the difference between the empirical and the psychological: a priori cognition is as necessary and unchanging for Fries as it is for Kant. The important difference is that, for Fries, what a priori concepts and principles we are entitled to are relative to empirical facts about human cognition. An empirical theory, however, is always in principle vulnerable to being refuted, or to being replaced by a better theory, and an empirical theory of human cognition is no different in this regard.⁴⁵ This means that, on Fries's account, the philosopher's work, too, is never done, and that we must always be prepared and willing to revise our philosophical system on the basis of the latest empirical advances.⁴⁶

⁴²See, for example, Robert Stern, *Transcendental Arguments and Scepticism*, 12; Stroud, "Transcendental Arguments," 242; and James Skidmore, "Skepticism about Practical Reason," n. 1. The "Refutation" has also been contested as a good model for transcendental argumentation, for example in Hintikka, "Transcendental Arguments," 276.

⁴³See Fries's extensive discussion of the notion of a theory: *Neue Kritik*, 1:296–309/SS 4:419–35. Helmut Pulte's "Expanding Universe of Science," 106–8 contains helpful discussions on the same topic, as well as on Fries's account of theory formation.

⁴⁴The presentation of the theory of cognition takes up all of vol. 1, and proceeds well into vol. 2. The actual deductions start from §103 onwards.

⁴⁵Indeed, in the case of cognitive psychology this is no mere possibility. It is fair to say that the particular eighteenth-century type of associationist psychology that still forms the background to Fries's own thinking about the human mind has long since come to be seen as simplistic and outdated.

⁴⁶For a discussion of this point in the context of Fries's philosophy of nature, see Helmut Pulte, "Historiographische Überlegungen," 72. This article also contains a good broader discussion of Fries's view on the relationship between philosophy and the empirical sciences.

Whether one sees this as a weakness or strength of Fries's reconstructed transcendental methodology depends in large part on one's philosophical inclinations. The historical importance of this last point is in any case not to be underestimated. What Fries's philosophy represented at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a Kantian philosophy diametrically opposed to the Kantianism of the German Idealists. It was a Kantianism that did not presume a role of legislator of the empirical sciences, but that favored a relation of constant interaction between philosophy and these disciplines. It was therefore also a Kantianism that worked wholeheartedly to counteract the radical split that was starting to appear between philosophy and the empirical sciences during Fries's own lifetime. For this reason, studying Fries will not only help us to better understand transcendental methodology and the Regress Puzzle, it will help us to develop a much broader and more complete account of the role of Kantianism in the decades after the publication of Kant's critical works. This broader understanding of Kantianism was still widely present during the entire nineteenth century,⁴⁷ but it has since been lost to us. Now may be a good time to recover it.⁴⁸

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS

- Allison, Henry E. *Kant's Transcendental Deduction: An Analytical-Historical Commentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. [*Kant's Transcendental Deduction*]
- Beck, Lewis White. "Did the Sage of Königsberg Have No Dreams?" In *Essays on Kant and Hume*, edited by Lewis White Beck, 38–60. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978. ["Sage of Königsberg"]
- Beiser, Frederick C. *The Genesis of Neo-Kantianism: 1796–1880*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. [*Genesis*]
- Beneke, Friedrich Eduard. *Kant und die philosophische Aufgabe unserer Zeit: Eine Jubeldenschrift auf die Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler, 1832. [*Philosophische Aufgabe*]
- Bennett, Jonathan. *Kant's Analytic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966.
- Fischer, Kuno. *Die beiden kantischen Schulen in Jena: Rede zum Antritt des Prorektorats, den 1. Februar 1862*. Stuttgart: Cotta'scher Verlag, 1862. [*Kantischen Schulen*]
- Fries, Jakob Friedrich. *Neue Kritik der Vernunft*. 3 vols. Heidelberg: Mohr und Zimmer, 1807. [*Neue Kritik*]
- . *Neue oder anthropologische Kritik der Vernunft*. 3 vols. Heidelberg: Christian Friedrich Winter, 1828. [*Neue Kritik II*]
- . *Reinhold, Fichte und Schelling*. Leipzig: August Lebrecht Reinicke, 1803.
- . *Sämtliche Schriften*. Edited by Gert König and Lutz Geldsetzer. Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1967. [SS]
- . "Selbstrezension der Neuen Kritik der Vernunft." *Heidelbergische Jahrbücher der Literatur* 1 (1808): 241–55. ["Selbstrezension"]
- . "Ueber das Verhältnis der empirischen Psychologie zur Metaphysik." *Psychologisches Magazin* 3 (1798): 156–202. ["Verhältnis"]
- . *Wissen, Glaube und Ahndung*. Jena: J. C. G. Göpferdt, 1805. [WGA]

⁴⁷Kuno Fischer, *Kantischen Schulen*; Otto Liebmann, *Kant und die Epigonen*; and Wilhelm Windelband, *Geschichte*. See Lutz Geldsetzer, "Fries' Stellung" for a more extensive account of Fries's role in the histories of philosophy of the nineteenth century.

⁴⁸I presented earlier versions of this paper at conferences in Utrecht, Keele, and Amsterdam, and during a research stay at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. I am grateful for the many helpful comments and questions that I have received on these occasions. I also wish to thank Thomas Sturm, Patricia Kitcher, and my colleagues Paul Ziche, Dirk van Miert, Timmy de Goeij, and Tom Giesbers for their willingness to discuss this article extensively with me in person. Their comments have been invaluable. This paper has been written in the context of the research project "Thinking Classified: Structuring the world of ideas around 1800," which is funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

- Geldsetzer, Lutz. "Jakob Friedrich Fries' Stellung in der Philosophiegeschichte." In Herrmann and Hogrebe, *Jakob Friedrich Fries*, 13–56. ["Fries' Stellung"]
- Ginsborg, Hannah. "Kant and the Problem of Experience." *Philosophical Topics* 34 (2006): 59–106.
- Henrich, Dieter. "Kant's Notion of a Deduction and the Methodological Background of the First Critique." In *Kant's Transcendental Deductions*, edited by Eckart Förster, 29–46. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989. ["Kant's Notion of a Deduction"]
- Herrmann, Kay, and Wolfram Hogrebe, eds. *Jakob Friedrich Fries: Philosoph, Naturwissenschaftler und Mathematiker*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999. [*Jakob Friedrich Fries*]
- Hintikka, Jaakko. "Transcendental Arguments: Genuine and Spurious." *Noûs* 6 (1972): 274–81. ["Transcendental Arguments"]
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Edited and translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. [A/B]
- . *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*. 29 vols. Edited by the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1900–. [AA]
- . *Prolegomena to any future metaphysics that will be able to come forward as science*. Edited and translated by Gary Hatfield. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. [*Prolegomena*]
- Kemp Smith, Norman. *A Commentary to Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason"*. London: Macmillan, 1918. [*Commentary*]
- Kitcher, Patricia. *Kant's Transcendental Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- . "Revisiting Kant's Epistemology: Skepticism, Apriority, and Psychologism." *Noûs* 29 (1995): 285–315. ["Revisiting Kant's Epistemology"]
- Liebmann, Otto. *Kant und die Epigonen: Eine kritische Abhandlung*. Stuttgart: Schober, 1865. [*Kant und die Epigonen*]
- Marshall, Colin. "Does Kant Demand Explanations for All Synthetic A Priori Claims?" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52 (2014): 549–76. ["Does Kant Demand Explanations"]
- Mechler, Walter. *Die Erkenntnislehre bei Fries: aus ihren Grundbegriffen dargestellt und kritisch erörtert*. Berlin: Reuther and Reichard, 1911. [*Die Erkenntnislehre bei Fries*]
- Pereboom, Derk. "Kant on Justification in Transcendental Philosophy." *Synthese* 85 (1990): 25–54. ["Kant on Justification"]
- Popper, Karl R. *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Erkenntnistheorie*. Zweite, verbesserte Auflage. Tübingen: Mohr, 1994. [*Grundprobleme*]
- Pulte, Helmut. "Kant, Fries, and the Expanding Universe of Science." In *The Kantian-Legacy in Nineteenth-Century Science*, edited by Michael Friedman and Alfred Nordmann, 101–22. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006. ["Expanding Universe of Science"]
- . "... sondern Empirismus und Speculation sich verbinden sollen': Historiographische Überlegungen zur bisherigen Rezeption des wissenschaftstheoretischen und naturphilosophischen Werkes von J. F. Fries und einige Gründe für dessen Neubewertung." In Herrmann and Hogrebe, *Jakob Friedrich Fries*, 57–94. ["Historiographische Überlegungen"]
- Rosenberg, Jay F. "Transcendental Arguments Revisited." *Journal of Philosophy* 72 (1975): 611–24.
- Sachs-Hombach, Klaus. "Ist Fries' Erkenntnistheorie psychologistisch?" In Herrmann and Hogrebe, *Jakob Friedrich Fries*, 119–39.
- Skidmore, James. "Skepticism about Practical Reason: Transcendental Arguments and Their Limits." *Philosophical Studies* 109 (2002): 121–41. ["Skepticism about Practical Reason"]
- Stern, Robert. *Transcendental Arguments and Scepticism: Answering the Question of Justification*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000. [*Transcendental Arguments and Scepticism*]
- Stroud, Barry. "Kantian Argument, Conceptual Capacities, and Invulnerability." In *Kant and Contemporary Epistemology*, edited by Paolo Parrini, 231–51. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994. ["Kantian Argument"]
- . "Transcendental Arguments." *Journal of Philosophy* 65 (1968): 241–56.
- Walker, Ralph C. S. "Induction and Transcendental Argument." In *Transcendental Arguments: Problems and Prospects*, edited by Robert Stern, 13–30. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Windelband, Wilhelm. *Die Geschichte der neueren Philosophie in ihrem Zusammenhange mit der allgemeinen Cultur und den Besonderen Wissenschaften: Zweiter Band. Von Kant bis Hegel und Herbart*. Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1880. [*Geschichte*]