

THE LIBERAL TEMPER IN CLASSICAL GERMAN PHILOSOPHY: FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION

Michael N. Forster

Consideration of the German philosophy and political history of the past century might well give the impression, and often does give foreign observers the impression, that liberalism, including in particular commitment to the ideal of free thought and expression, is only skin-deep in Germany. Were not Heidegger's disgust at *Gerede* (which of course *really* meant the free speech of the Weimar Republic) and Gadamer's defense of "prejudice" and "tradition" more reflective of the true instincts of German philosophy than, say, the Frankfurt School's heavily Anglophone-influenced championing of free thought and expression? Were not the Kaiser and Nazism more telling of Germany's real political nature than the liberalism of the Weimar Republic (a desperate, ephemeral experiment undertaken in reaction to Germany's disastrous defeat in World War I) or the liberalism of (West) Germany since 1945 (in effect forced on the country by the victorious Allies after World War II)?

It can therefore come as a surprise - and an extremely heartening one - to learn that liberalism, including the ideal of free thought and expression, has long, deep roots in German philosophy and political history. In particular, during the classical period of German philosophy Kant, Herder, G. Forster, Schiller, the young Fichte, the young F. Schlegel, Schleiermacher, W. von Humboldt, and even Hegel all championed versions of liberalism, including freedom of thought and expression.¹ Also (and connectedly),

¹ For an excellent account of liberalism in this period of German philosophy, see F.C. Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1992).

liberalism, including commitment to freedom of thought and expression, constituted a central strand in nineteenth-century German politics.²

That much is beyond serious dispute. But I would like in this article to argue for a more radical and controversial thesis (albeit in a tentative and sketchy way). A grudging Anglophone observer might concede what has just been said but reply along roughly the following lines: "To be sure, classical German philosophy embraced liberal political ideals. But it basically just took these over from the English and French Enlightenment. And (aside from some implausible and unhelpful metaphysical elaborations) it contributed little to their development. Where, for example, is the J.S. Mill of German philosophy?" What I want to suggest is that such a reply is in fact deeply mistaken. For one thing (and I merely mention this without elaborating on it), the Germans in question were by no means simply borrowing from the English and the French; they also had their own native tradition of liberalism going back at least as far as, and forcefully expressed in, the Reformation (in connection with freedom of thought and speech, Luther is the central figure). For another thing (and this is the point on which I want to elaborate here), these German thinkers contributed *greatly* to the development of the ideas in question. In particular, the very Anglophone philosopher mentioned in this grudging reply, J.S. Mill, turns out to owe most of his (justly) famous case for freedom, including freedom of thought and expression, to the German tradition. Indeed, important aspects of his case for freedom of thought and expression only become fully intelligible and plausible once its

² Some helpful literature on this subject: J. de Grandvilliers, *Essai sur le libéralisme allemand* (Paris: 1914); J.J. Sheehan, *German Liberalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: 1978); and R. Hinton Thomas, *Liberalism, Nationalism, and the German Intellectuals (1822-1847)* (Cambridge: 1951).

Points similar to the above apply to further enlightened political ideals as well, such as republicanism, democracy, and cosmopolitanism: A focus on German philosophy and political history in the twentieth century might well, and often does, give the impression that these too are only skin deep in Germany. But classical German philosophy, and to some extent also nineteenth-century politics (e.g. the Revolution of 1848), again suggest otherwise.

original German form is retrieved and used to supplement or correct what is in effect an incomplete or inferior reproduction of it by Mill. And moreover, there are important additional arguments for freedom of thought and expression which the German tradition either preserved or developed but which Mill omits, whereas there is little if anything of importance in Mill's case which was not already in the German tradition. In short, unbeknownst to most of us, a vital, if wobbly, cornerstone of Anglophone liberal theory rests on firmer and broader German foundations.³

In order to perceive this situation, however, it is essential to look at the *right part* of the classical German philosophical tradition. Initially, focus is likely to turn to the best known philosophers of the period: Kant, Fichte, and Hegel. All three did in one way or another support liberalism generally and freedom of thought and expression in particular. It is probably also true that the predominant philosophical influence on the liberalism in nineteenth-century German politics was theirs.⁴ However, it is doubtful that they achieved genuine theoretical advances in this area (deeply entangled as they indeed were

³ A similar point could probably be made in connection with Locke's liberalism, which likewise owes debts to Germany. For some helpful hints about this, see M. Cranston, "Liberalism," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. P. Edwards (New York and London: 1967), vol. 4, p. 459.

⁴ See de Grandvilliers, op. cit., pp. 143-4; G. de Ruggiero, *The History of European Liberalism* (London: 1927), pp. 23, 352-3.

in questionable metaphysics).⁵ And it is even more doubtful that the Anglophone liberal

⁵ There is no denying that Kant, Fichte, and Hegel - inspired by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution - all make *freedom* a strikingly central ideal in their philosophies, including their philosophies of politics, law, and society. But, rhetorical support aside, how much do they really accomplish for liberalism?

Kant's political philosophy bases legislation on a principle of reconciling individuals' freedoms with one another (Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. M. Gregor [Cambridge: 1996], pp. 30, 112). But Kant faces an embarrassing question here: On a Kantian view, all that legislation could possibly hope to affect or effect is some sort of *phenomenal* freedom. But what relevance does that have for the *noumenal* freedom which, on Kant's official theory, underpins morality and is what really matters? If, on the other hand, in order to avoid this problem, one detaches Kant's idea that the point of legislation is the reconciliation of individuals' freedoms from the official theory that causes the problem, is it any longer really a new idea?

Kant's main arguments for freedom of thought and expression specifically seem to be threefold: First, this is required for enlightenment, in the sense of thinking for oneself (Kant, *What is Enlightenment?* in *Kant: On History*, ed. L. W. Beck [Indianapolis: 1980], pp. 4-5). Second, it is required for self-government, since enlightenment is in its turn required in order to make people competent for self-government (*ibid.*, p. 10). Third, (in the meantime) freedom of expression is required in order to keep authoritarian but benevolent and open-minded rulers adequately informed (Kant, *On the Proverb: That May be True in Theory but Is of No Practical Use*, in *Immanuel Kant: Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, tr. T. Humphrey [Indianapolis: 1983], pp. 82-3). The first two of these arguments are sensible but unoriginal. The third is, in its assumption of monarchical benevolence and open-mindedness, and of the consequent efficacy of simply informing a monarch, merely a naive and obsequious variant of a much more plausible and important traditional argument to the effect that part of the value of freedom of thought and expression lies in the constraint which it imposes on arbitrary governmental power (a variant which Kant was evidently seduced into embracing by the limitation of his experience to the very atypical case of Frederick the Great, an unusually benevolent and open-minded monarch). On the other hand, Kant *cannot*, it seems, really claim credit for an important argument which has sometimes been credited to him (e.g. by B. Mitchell, *Law, Morality, and Religion in a Secular Society* [Oxford: 1978], p. 93; cf. J. Gray, *Mill on Liberty: A Defence* [London: 1996], p. 78), and which will be considered further below: that freedom of thought and expression is required for autonomy and hence for moral responsibility. Kant did probably influence the general idea here that moral responsibility requires self-given laws. But note that he also says that the absence of freedom of thought and expression is a "self-incurred tutelage," the result of "laziness and cowardice" (*What is Enlightenment?* p. 3), i.e. *already* an exercise of autonomy and hence morally blameworthy.

Fichte's *Foundations of Natural Right* of 1796-7 (ed. F. Neuhouser [Cambridge: 2000]) attempts to establish an elaborate system of liberal rights by showing them all to be

tradition ever found much to learn from them (healthily skeptical as it has always been of such metaphysics).

The German thinkers to whom one *should* look for important theoretical advances in this area which proved influential on the Anglophone tradition are instead, I suggest, a roughly contemporary group dominated by Herder - saliently including, besides Herder himself, W. von Humboldt, G. Forster, Schiller, Goethe, and Schleiermacher.⁶

I. Mill's *On Liberty* clearly owes a large debt to this group of thinkers for its general liberalism.⁷ Von Humboldt's *Ideas for an Attempt to Fix the Boundaries of the State's Operation* was written in 1792, but was only published in German in 1851 and in English translation in 1854. Mill began writing *On Liberty* in 1854, publishing it in 1859. Both in *On Liberty* itself and in his *Autobiography* (1873) he pays rich tribute to von Humboldt's work and to its influence on his own.

In *On Liberty* Mill in particular acknowledges a debt to von Humboldt's central principle of *individuality*.⁸ In his *Autobiography* he adds Goethe and "a whole school of

⁶ There are several further subject areas in and connected to philosophy concerning which a similar moral applies. For example, if one is interested in the birth of modern philosophy of language, interpretation theory ("hermeneutics"), translation theory, or anthropology, Kant, Fichte, and Hegel provide fairly slim pickings; but if one turns instead to Herder and his group one finds riches.

⁷ For some suggestive points about the essay's resemblances and debts to the ideas of this group, see F.M. Barnard, *Herder's Social and Political Thought* (Oxford: 1965), pp. 77-8, 167-8.

⁸ Mill uses a passage from von Humboldt on this principle as his motto for *On Liberty*: "The grand, leading principle, towards which every argument unfolded in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity" (*The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* [henceforth: *Collected Works*], ed. J.M. Robson [Toronto and London: 1963-], vol. 18, p. 215). He also explicitly credits von Humboldt for this principle in the main body of the work, quoting further passages from von Humboldt on it (*ibid.*, pp. 261-2).

German authors" as further influences on *On Liberty*'s adoption of this principle of individuality.⁹

⁹ *Autobiography*, in *The Essential Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. M. Lerner (New York: 1965), p. 150.

Herder is the real father of this ideal of individuality.¹⁰ For, while all the members of the group listed above embraced it, they did so mainly as a result of Herder's leading influence. Herder had from an early period championed especially the individuality of *cultures* - for example, in his *This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* (1774). But he had also championed the individuality of *persons within a*

¹⁰ Since this paper will largely be devoted to tracing Mill's ideas concerning liberty back to Herder, it may be worth noting here at the outset that Mill's *general* philosophical profile strikingly reminds one of Herder's. In addition to the liberalism discussed in this paper, some further areas of striking agreement between Mill and Herder are: empiricism; recognition of thought's intimate dependence on and boundedness by language; sentimentalism in ethics; recognition of the importance of poetry for cultivating the moral sentiments; commitment to republicanism and democracy; feminism; cosmopolitanism; and the ideal of progressing "humanity." How much of this agreement is merely accidental, how much merely the result of shared influences, and how much the result of Herder's (indirect) influence on Mill? The answer is not entirely clear. However, my suspicion is that the role of (indirect) influence is significant. Mill's works contain a number of explicit references to Herder (see the index to *Collected Works*); there are also a fair number of (arguable) allusions to Herder, including for example the reference quoted above to "a whole school of German authors"; and by Mill's day Herder's influence on European thought had become so widespread that indirect influences are often likely even where Mill was not conscious of them. One example of a case in which a conscious influence can be identified with some confidence: Mill's late ideal of a "religion of humanity," in the sense of a conviction in and commitment to the progressive improvement of humanity over history (*Collected Works* 10:420 ff.). This ideal has usually been seen as an inheritance from Comte (see e.g. A. Ryan, *J.S. Mill* [London and Boston: 1974], ch. 8; G. Himmelfarb, *On Liberty and Liberalism* [San Francisco: 1990], pp. 88 ff.), and no doubt there is truth in this. But note that Mill was quite critical of Comte's relevant views, and observe that by contrast already in his essay *Coleridge* from 1840 he praised "that series of great writers and thinkers, from Herder to Michelet, by whom history, which was till then 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing,' has been made a science of causes and effects; who, by making the facts and events of the past have a meaning and an intelligible place in the gradual evolution of humanity ["Humanity" is a distinctive and central Herderian term, concept, and ideal.], have at once given history, even to the imagination, an interest like romance, and afforded the only means of predicting and guiding the future, by unfolding the agencies which have produced, and still maintain, the present" (*Mill's Essays on Literature and Society*, ed. J.B. Schneewind [New York and London: 1965], p. 316; Mill's approving remarks on Herder's philosophy of history continue over pp. 316-17). Indeed, Mill had already alluded approvingly to Herder and his school of historical writing in *The Spirit of the Age* from 1831 (see *ibid.*, p. 52; also, note that the very title of this essay is a Herderian coinage [*Zeitgeist*], and that the essay's relativistic defense of the Middle Ages and criticisms of hereditary monarchy are indebted to Herder's historical writings).

culture - for example, in his *On Thomas Abbt's Writings* (1768) and *On the Cognition and Sensation of the Human Soul* (1778).¹¹ The combined impact of these two Herderian positions was mainly responsible for the deep commitment to individuality found in this whole group of thinkers.

However, Mill's debt to these German thinkers in *On Liberty* clearly also extends well beyond this principle of individuality which he explicitly credits to them.¹² Two further examples, both, like the principle of individuality, fundamental to the work's general liberalism: First, Mill primarily applies this principle of individuality in order to justify maximal freedom of *action*.¹³ But in doing so he is again following von Humboldt. For in his work von Humboldt had written that "that on which the whole greatness of a human being in the end rests, for which the individual human being must strive eternally, and which he who wants to affect human beings may never lose sight of, is individuality [*Eigentümlichkeit*] of force and culture," and that "this individuality is effected through freedom of action."¹⁴ (Mill quotes from the former part of this passage, but obscures the latter part,¹⁵ and thereby the identity of von Humboldt's argument with his own.)

Second, Mill famously in *On Liberty* articulates what he goes as far as to call the "one very simple principle" which it is "the object of this essay . . . to assert," namely "that the

¹¹ For instance, in *On Thomas Abbt's Writings* Herder states that "a human soul is an individual in the realm of minds: it senses in accordance with an individual formation, and thinks in accordance with the strength of its mental organs . . . My long allegory has succeeded if it achieves the representation of the mind of a human being as an individual phenomenon, as a rarity which deserves to occupy our eyes" (*Herder: Philosophical Writings*, ed. M.N. Forster [Cambridge: 2002], p. 167).

¹² It was not for nothing that Mill suggested in letters to Gomperz and Ruge that the essay was needed less in German "than here" (*Collected Works* 14:539, 598).

¹³ *Collected Works* 18:260 ff.

¹⁴ *Wilhelm von Humboldt Werke* (henceforth: *Humboldt Werke*), ed. A. Leitzmann (Berlin: 1903), vol. 1, p. 107.

¹⁵ *Collected Works* 18:261. Mill does, however, note that for von Humboldt individuality has "two requisites, 'freedom and variety of situations.'"

sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant."¹⁶ Mill disallows treating mere annoyance to others (in contrast to harm) as a ground for interference: "There are many who consider as an injury to themselves any conduct which they have a distaste for, and resent it as an outrage to their feelings . . . But there is no parity between the feeling of a person for his own opinion, and the feeling of another who is offended at his holding it . . ."¹⁷ And he also includes consensual acts between more than one person in the protected sphere: this sphere is one "comprehending all that portion of a person's life and conduct which affects only himself, or if it also affects others, only with their free, voluntary, and undeceived consent and participation."¹⁸ Now this principle again comes from von Humboldt's work (with only slight modification).¹⁹ Thus von Humboldt writes that "every effort of the state is to be rejected to interfere in the private affairs of the citizens anywhere where they do not have immediate relation to the injury of the rights of the one person through the other,"²⁰ and

¹⁶ *Collected Works* 18:223. It is by no means clear that this really is the "one very simple principle" of the essay. For example, what about the recently mentioned ideal of individuality? (In his *Autobiography* Mill indicates that *that* is the "single truth" of which *On Liberty* is "a kind of philosophical textbook" [p. 149].) And what about knowledge of truth (as we will see shortly, another central concern of the essay's)? And what about (moral) autonomy (as we will see later, yet another concern of the essay's)? And what about the essay's officially overarching principle of utility? Still, the principle in question is at least *an* important principle of the essay's.

¹⁷ *Collected Works* 18:283.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

¹⁹ The main modification consists in the fact that whereas von Humboldt is exclusively concerned with the *state's* right to interfere, Mill is also concerned with the right of groups or individuals within a state to do so.

²⁰ *Humboldt Werke* 1:111; cf. 129, 134.

that "to punish actions which bear solely on the agent or happen with the consent of the person they affect is forbidden by just the same principles which do not even permit them to be limited; and therefore, not only may none of the so-called crimes of the flesh (except rape), whether they annoy or not, attempted suicide, etc. be punished, but even the murder of another person with his consent would have to remain unpunished were it not that in this last case the too easy possibility of a dangerous misuse made a punishing law necessary."²¹

In this case the ulterior debt via von Humboldt to Herder is weaker than in the case of individualism, but it is still significant. For, while one side of Herder is at odds with von Humboldt's position here, namely a side which, insofar as it endorses the state, conceives the state in more paternalistic terms, for example as having some of the functions of a modern welfare state, another side of Herder very much anticipates von Humboldt's position, and probably helped to inspire it, namely passages in which Herder looks forward to a sort of withering away of the state.²²

This situation surely suggests the possibility that *On Liberty* may owe even *further* debts to the German thinkers in question which Mill fails to acknowledge explicitly. In this essay I want to argue that that is indeed the case, particularly in connection with the work's arguments for *freedom of thought and expression*.

²¹ Ibid., p. 207; cf. pp. 182, 190.

²² See for instance the following censored and unpublished passage from the *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Humanity* (1784-91): "The people needs a lord as long as it has no reason of its own. The more it acquires this and knows how to govern itself, the more the government must soften or finally disappear. The noblest purpose of government is therefore that it become dispensable and that each person govern himself" (S13:456). (I cite Herder's works in German from two editions: *Johann Gottfried Herder Werke*, ed. U. Gaier et al. [Frankfurt am Main: 1985-] and *Johann Gottfried Herder Sämtliche Werke*, ed. B. Suphan et al. [Berlin: 1877-]. Citations take the form of the main editor's surname initial, followed by the volume number, then the page number, e.g. G1:231 or S15:562.)

II. As I read it, Mill's *On Liberty* gives four main arguments for freedom of thought and expression, which can be roughly summarized as follows: (1) The "one very simple principle" protects all thought, and thereby, due to an intimate connection between thought and expression, virtually all expression too. (2) Freedom of thought and expression is necessary in order to make possible progress in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error. (3) Freedom of thought and expression is necessary for individualism. (4) Freedom of thought and expression is necessary for autonomy and hence for (moral) excellence. (Officially, these arguments are all supposed to be subsumable under a higher utilitarian principle of maximizing happiness.)

It seems to me that all four of these arguments are indebted to the Herderian tradition, which moreover in certain respects develops them in ways that are superior to Mill's. In order to show this, let me consider each of them in turn.

Mill's first argument goes like this: He argues that, since thought is purely inner, his "one very simple principle" that only harm to others can justify limiting a person's freedom guarantees complete freedom of thought. He then adds that this entails that freedom of expression is guaranteed as well because freedom of expression is "practically inseparable" from freedom of thought.²³

We have already seen one important respect in which this argument is indebted to the Herderian tradition: namely, for the "one very simple principle," which Mill borrows from von Humboldt. But I would like now to focus on a further debt. What is the basis of Mill's claim that freedom of expression is "practically inseparable" from freedom of

²³ "[Liberty] comprises, first, the inward domain of consciousness; demanding liberty of conscience in the most comprehensive sense; liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects, practical or speculative, scientific, moral, or theological. The liberty of expressing and publishing opinions may seem to fall under a different principle, since it belongs to that part of the conduct of an individual which concerns other people; but, being almost of as much importance as the liberty of thought itself, and resting in great part on the same reasons, is practically inseparable from it . . . From [the Liberty of Thought] it is impossible to separate the cognate liberty of speaking and of writing" (*Collected Works* 18:225-7).

thought? That they *are* practically inseparable is by no means obvious. Locke, for example, had argued that, at least on certain matters, freedom of thought ought to be allowed but freedom of public expression not.²⁴

Part of Mill's implicit answer to this question seems to lie in a plausible thesis that agility in thought is causally dependent on practice in linguistic expression. In this spirit, he notes in his *Autobiography* that "among the ordinary English . . . the habit of not speaking to others, nor much even to themselves, about the things in which they do feel interest, causes . . . their intellectual faculties to remain undeveloped."²⁵

A further part of Mill's answer can be seen from his *System of Logic* (1843). On a standard Enlightenment model of the relation between thought and linguistic expression (assumed by Locke, for example), these had been conceived in sharply dualistic terms: thought was (at least in principle) capable of occurring in complete separation and autonomy from linguistic expression, and the latter was merely a contingent means for its communication, perhaps a radically inadequate one. On such a model, it would naturally seem that (at least in principle) thought might quite well go its own merry way whithersoever it liked without linguistic expression even needing to occur at all, let alone in similar ways. However, in his *System of Logic* Mill rejects that standard Enlightenment

²⁴ Locke, *An Essay on Toleration*, in Locke, *Political Essays*, ed. M. Goldie (Cambridge: 2000), pp. 141-2.

²⁵ *Autobiography*, p. 43. Similarly, in his *Grote's History of Greece [III]* (1853) Mill approvingly quotes Grote's opinion that the distinctive ancient Greek tradition of public speaking was an essential causal factor in the extraordinary development of ancient Greek thought (*Collected Works* 11:297-8).

view, committing himself instead to a contrary principle that thought is deeply dependent on and bounded by linguistic expression.²⁶

Now it seems to me that here again Mill's argument is deeply indebted to the Herderian tradition. Herder and his tradition had certainly already recognized the causal principle to which Mill appeals. For example, Herder's essay *On the Ability to Speak and to Hear* (1795) is full of this principle. But more strikingly, it was also Herder and his tradition who had introduced the revolutionary principle, sharply at odds with most of the Enlightenment, that thought is deeply dependent on and bounded by linguistic expression. To quote one of Herder's early statements on this subject, from his *Fragments on Recent German Literature* (1767-8): language is "the form of cognition, not merely in which but also in accordance with which thoughts take shape, where in all parts of literature thought sticks to expression, and forms itself in accordance with this . . . Language sets limits and contour for all human cognition."²⁷

Moreover, Herder had himself already pointed out precisely the sort of consequence of these two principles for freedom of expression to which Mill implicitly appeals, namely that facility in thought requires facility in linguistic expression, so that in order for the former to be really free the latter must be so as well. For example, in *On the Ability to*

²⁶ Thus Mill begins the book with a chapter significantly titled "Of the necessity of Commencing with an Analysis of Language" in which he argues that so commencing is necessary because (1) "reasoning, or inference . . . is an operation which usually takes place by means of words, and in complicated cases can take place in no other way," and especially (2) "a proposition . . . is formed by putting together two names . . . , is discourse, in which something is affirmed or denied of something" (*Collected Works* 7:19-21).

²⁷ G1:556-7. Several other thinkers in the Herderian tradition embraced versions of this principle as well, including von Humboldt and Schleiermacher. For a discussion of the history of this principle, see my essays "Herder's Philosophy of Language, Interpretation, and Translation: Three Fundamental Principles" (*The Review of Metaphysics*, no. 56, December 2002), "Gods, Animals, and Artists: Some Problem Cases in Herder's Philosophy of Language" (*Inquiry*, vol. 46:1, March 2003), and "Language" (forthcoming in *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. A. Wood [Cambridge: 2003]).

Speak and to Hear Herder writes in this vein: "Hagedorn says: whoever may think freely, thinks well. Ought one not to say with equal right: 'Whoever *can* and *may* speak correctly, purely, appropriately, forcefully, concisely, cannot but think well'? If the language of a human being, of a human society, is sluggish, hard, confused, forceless, indeterminate, uncultured, then certainly the mind of these human beings is so too, for of course they think only in and with language."²⁸

Nor did Herder and his tradition merely develop these considerations *first*; they also did so *more deeply* than Mill. Unlike Mill, Herder has sophisticated and compelling arguments for the principle of thought's deep dependence on and boundedness by language. In particular, he grounds it on an equally important and revolutionary further principle which he introduces, namely that concepts or meanings are to be identified - not, as many previous philosophers had believed, with such items, independent of language, as the referents involved, Platonic forms, or mental "ideas" - but with *usages of words* (a further principle for which he in turn develops several subtle and plausible arguments).²⁹

Besides thus providing deep arguments for this principle which are missing from Mill's case, Herder also supplies something else that is missing from Mill's case. Mill's insight into thought's dependence on and boundedness by language might reasonably still leave one asking the following question: Granted that linguistic expression is required for thought in this way, why could it not take the form of merely *private* linguistic expression? Why is it not compatible with refraining from expressing oneself to *other people*? Unlike Mill, Herder has an answer to this question. Already in his *Treatise on the Origin of Language* (1772) he argues plausibly that linguistic expression has a social

²⁸ S18:384-5. Cf. 386-7.

²⁹ For detailed discussion, see my "Herder's Philosophy of Language, Interpretation, and Translation: Three Fundamental Principles" and "Gods, Animals, and Artists: Some Problem Cases in Herder's Philosophy of Language."

telos. And in later works such as *On the Cognition and Sensation of the Human Soul* (1778) he plausibly adds that linguistic expression's very foundation is social as well.³⁰

One reason why this second debt in Mill's argument has deserved special emphasis is the following. As has sometimes been pointed out by critics,³¹ Mill's argument is problematic: If thought seems to be protected by the "one very simple principle" because it is purely inner, but then on closer scrutiny turns out to be inseparable from expression, which is not purely inner and so may well harm others, is not the proper conclusion to draw that freedom of thought is after all *not* protected by the principle *either* (rather than that, because it is, and because expression is inseparable from thought, freedom of expression is so as well)?³² This problem even threatens to undermine the "one very simple principle" itself, namely by throwing into doubt whether there are any significant general categories of activity which it would protect after all.³³ However, even if Mill's argument does succumb to this problem, and indeed even if this problem (or another one) does damn the "one very simple principle" itself, he has still made one very important and plausible point, namely that because thought and expression are "practically inseparable," the right to freedom of thought either stands or falls together with a right to

³⁰ Herder does not, indeed, advance this latter thesis in the very strong form which some subsequent thinkers have given it - e.g. Hegel, later Wittgenstein, Kripke, and Burge, all of whom have argued in one way or another that communal language-use is *essential* to linguistic meaning. Rather, he advances it as a simple claim of causal dependence. However, this may well put him on firmer philosophical ground than theirs. And even in this modest form, his thesis can serve to plug the gap in Mill's case mentioned above.

³¹ See e.g. J.W.N. Watkins, "John Stuart Mill and the Liberty of the Individual," in *Political Ideas*, ed. D. Thomson (Harmondsworth: 1975), pp. 159-60.

³² It is indeed tempting to accuse Mill of an outright inconsistency in the argument: in order to justify freedom of thought, he starts out assuming a conventional Enlightenment picture of thought as radically inner, but then, in order to extend his argument to justify freedom of expression as well, he assumes a quite contrary picture of thought as deeply dependent on outer expression.

³³ The principle may well prove problematic for other reasons too - for example, the notorious difficulty of defining its notion of "harm" satisfactorily.

freedom of expression, so that anything which really does establish the former thereby also establishes some version of the latter. For there may well be other considerations besides the "one very simple principle" which establish the right to freedom of thought, and whose extension in this manner to establish a right of freedom of expression does *not* like the attempt so to extend the "one very simple principle" prove self-defeating. Examples might be the arguments for freedom of thought from *individuality* and *autonomy* to be discussed below, or the simpler consideration (also discussed below) that freedom of thought is just *intrinsically valuable*.

Mill's second, and perhaps central, argument for freedom of thought and expression in *On Liberty* is a quite different one. Famously, it is that freedom of thought and expression are vital because they make possible *progress in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error*.

Mill assumes that human cognition is of its nature profoundly fallible. Given this assumption, he identifies several main ways in which freedom of thought and expression are vital for advancing knowledge of truth and avoidance of error: (1) Both the genesis and the communication of new truths require that inquirers be and feel free to think and express them. Thus Mill writes that "genius can only breathe freely in an *atmosphere* of freedom,"³⁴ and that denying people freedom is robbing mankind of the opportunity to exchange error for truth.³⁵ (2) Free criticism and controversy are required in order to expose and correct old errors.³⁶ (3) Free testing of the truth by criticisms and even errors is necessary for clear understanding, sureness, and vitality in people's grasp of it.³⁷

³⁴ *Collected Works* 18:267. Mill had already developed this point much more fully in *Grote's History of Greece [III]* (1853) (*Collected Works* 11:320-1).

³⁵ *Collected Works* 18:229.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 231-3.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 229, 243-52, 258.

Now it is striking that Herder had already argued for freedom of thought and expression in almost exactly the same terms. Thus, Mill's assumption of the deep fallibility of human cognition is also Herder's.³⁸ And like Mill, Herder on the basis of this assumption gives the above three arguments for the vital importance of freedom of thought and expression for advancing knowledge of truth and avoidance of error: (1) Like Mill, he stresses its importance for the genesis and communication of new truths.³⁹ (2) Like Mill, he stresses its importance for eliminating errors through criticism.⁴⁰ (3) Finally, like Mill, he stresses the importance of free testing of the truth through criticisms

³⁸ For example, in the *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Humanity* Herder argues that just as we only learn to walk by falling so we only progress toward the truth through error (G6:145).

³⁹ For example, in the *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity* (1793-7) Herder writes: "Should not . . . the voice of each citizen, even assuming that it appeared in print, be considered a freedom of the fatherland . . . ? . . . [Especially] valuable for the man of understanding are the hints and looks of those who see further. They inspire to activity when everyone is asleep; they sigh perhaps when everyone is dancing. But they do not only sigh; they show higher results in simpler equations by means of a certain art. Do you want to make them be silent because you calculate merely according to the common arithmetic? They go silent easily and continue to calculate; but the fatherland counted on these quiet calculators. A *single* step of progress that they successfully indicated is worth more than ten thousand ceremonies and eulogies" (*Herder: Philosophical Writings*, pp. 376-7).

⁴⁰ For example, in the *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity* Herder writes: "Free investigation of the truth from all sides is the sole antidote against delusion and error of whatever sort they may be . . . The river current of human cognition always purifies itself through oppositions, through strong contrasts. Here it breaks off, there it starts; and in the end a long- and much-purified delusion is regarded by human beings as truth" (*ibid.*, pp. 370-1). Cf. Herder's point there in support of "the communication of thoughts" that "the mistake gets discovered, the error gets corrected" (*ibid.*). Cf. also S18:385 and S24:92-3.

and errors for a clear understanding and sure grasp of it.⁴¹ A compressed form of this Herderian case for freedom of thought and expression can also be found in Forster and von Humboldt.⁴²

One cannot be certain of an influence here. It is possible that Mill simply came up with the same line of argument independently of Herder and his tradition. Also, there are earlier sources of such a line of argument which might have influenced Mill (and Herder

⁴¹ For example, in the *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity* Herder writes: "Let the deluded person defend his delusion, the person who thinks differently his thought; that is *their* business. Even if both of them fail to be corrected, for the unbiased person there certainly arises out of every criticized error a new reason, a new view of the truth" (*Herder: Philosophical Writings*, p. 370). Cf. *On the Ability to Speak and to Hear*, where he notes in support of freedom of expression: "we see everywhere that men in whom there was a great drive to become acquainted with the truth from *all* sides sought even on remote sides intercourse with people *who dared to speak freely*" (S18:386). Cf. also S24:92.

⁴² Thus Forster writes in his *Fragment of a Letter to a German Author on Schiller's "Gods of Greece"* (1789): "If there is a universal truth which is to be acknowledged by all then no other path leads to it but this: that each person says and defends what *seems* to him to be the truth. From the free expression of all diverse opinions, and their equally free testing, it is inevitable that in the end - to the extent that this limited, shortsighted species is capable of such a cognition at all - the pure truth will emerge as a result intelligible and welcome to each sense, filling each sense, will be *voluntarily* accepted by all, and will then govern us in peace alone" (G. Forster, *Werke in vier Bänden* [henceforth: Forster, *Werke*], ed. G. Steiner [Frankfurt: 1967], vol. 3, p. 33). Similarly, von Humboldt in the work already cited at least notes that part of the "harm of limiting freedom of thought" concerns "the results of inquiry," "incompleteness or incorrectness in our scientific cognition" (*Humboldt Werke* 1:160).

too). One is Milton's *Areopagitica* (1644).⁴³ Another is Helvétius.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, I suspect that Herder and his tradition *did* influence Mill here.⁴⁵

However, Herder's case is again not only prior but also arguably superior to Mill's in certain ways. Mill does not offer the above considerations in an a priori spirit. Rather, that freedom of thought and expression is important for advancing knowledge and avoiding error is for him basically an empirical claim made in the light of historical evidence, the above considerations constituting his explanation of why the empirically observable connection has obtained and can be expected to obtain in the future.⁴⁶ Accordingly, in *On Liberty* he adduces three historical examples of periods in which he alleges that freedom

⁴³ Milton's *Areopagitica* had already made the cause of knowing truth and avoiding error the core of its case for freedom of thought and expression, and had indeed already developed versions of points (1)-(3). See J. Milton, *Areopagitica*, in J. Milton, *Areopagitica and Of Education*, ed. K.M. Lea (Oxford: 1973), esp. pp. 5, 23, 32-3, 40 for (1); pp. 14, 35-6, 41 for (2); and pp. 29-30, 41 for (3).

⁴⁴ Helvétius had already argued for freedom of thought and discussion in terms of its necessity for discovery of the truth, and had (in still closer anticipation of Mill) added that discovery of the truth was important because it promoted human happiness. See K. Martin, *French Liberal Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston: 1929), pp. 184-5.

⁴⁵ The closest thing to direct evidence of this that I have found occurs in Mill's essay *Coleridge* (1840), where he explicitly discusses Herder and his tradition, and where he writes: "Among the truths long recognized by Continental philosophers, but which very few Englishmen have yet arrived at, one is, the importance, in the present imperfect state of mental and social science, of antagonistic modes of thought; which, it will one day be felt, are as necessary to one another in speculation, as mutually checking powers are in a political constitution. A clear insight, indeed, into this necessity, is the only rational or enduring basis of philosophical tolerance; the only condition under which liberality in matters of opinion can be anything better than a polite synonym for indifference between one opinion and another" (*Mill's Essays on Literature and Society*, p. 295).

⁴⁶ This is an example of the "inverse deductive method" which Mill advocates for the social sciences - that is, a method in which a law is first suggested by some factual evidence which it is adduced to explain but then verified by reference to higher-level law(s) (see Mill, *System of Logic*, in *Collected Works* 8:911 ff.). In the spirit of this method, Mill praises de Tocqueville for combining, on the one hand, a reliance on empirical evidence with, on the other hand, an "a priori" explanation of the phenomena thus empirically discovered (meaning by this, roughly, an explanation in terms of general psychological laws) (*Mill's Ethical Writings*, ed. J.B. Schneewind [New York and London: 1965], p. 108).

of thought and expression proved fecund for new ideas: the post-Reformation period, the second half of the eighteenth century on the Continent, and the Goethe-Fichte period in Germany.⁴⁷ (By contrast, he implies there that the ancient republics did not respect freedom generally, or the freedom of thought and expression in particular, that they instead required individuals to conform to their notion of social excellence.⁴⁸ And in this spirit he cites the case of Socrates, whose death sentence illustrates that "we do not now inflict so much evil on those who think differently from us, as it was formerly our custom to do."⁴⁹)

This part of Mill's case is problematic.⁵⁰ There are four main problems with it. The first two concern the modern periods mentioned by Mill, for it is by no means clear that these support his claim of a correlation between freedom of thought and expression, on the one hand, and advances in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error, on the other. First, concerning the post-Reformation period (and especially the scientific revolution), while there are some cases which favor Mill's claim, such as Boyle and Newton, what about such cases as Copernicus, Galileo, and Descartes, all of whom accomplished what they accomplished rather in the face of persecution for their thought and expression?

Second, the Goethe-Fichte period in Germany is a strangely equivocal case for Mill to appeal to. For, on the one hand, it is not clear that major advances in knowledge of truth

⁴⁷ *Collected Works* 18:243.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 241. Cf. p. 235.

⁵⁰ Its weakness was already perceived by one of his earliest critics, James Stephen, who in his *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* (reprint Indianapolis: 1993) argued that commitment to, and success in, discovering truth have been at least as common in societies which have lacked freedom of thought and expression as in ones which have enjoyed it.

were achieved then.⁵¹ And on the other hand, this was anyway by no means a period of unbridled freedom of thought and expression.⁵²

Third, *On Liberty*'s assessment of the ancient republics seems both factually false and a huge missed opportunity for its empirical case: Athens in its heyday was in fact strongly and self-consciously committed to the ideal of individual freedom, including freedom of thought and expression (as can be seen from Pericles' Funeral Speech, for example). Nor does Socrates' trial constitute convincing evidence of the contrary: Socrates was a principled enemy of democracy,⁵³ and of freedom, including freedom of expression.⁵⁴ Also, he had mentored two of the leaders of the recent anti-democratic, anti-liberal putsch by the Thirty Tyrants (Critias and Charmides). And it seems pretty clear that his trial was basically punishment for these political positions and activities (conducted under the cover of specious charges trumped up due to an amnesty which prevented prosecution for aiding the Thirty Tyrants).⁵⁵ Moreover, the fact that classical Athens was normally a committed champion of freedom of thought and expression opens up a vital opportunity for someone like Mill who is seeking an empirical correlation between freedom of

⁵¹ No doubt Goethe can wave his human intermaxillary bone in feeble triumph, and Fichte rant with wild implausibility about the self's constitution of everything, but really . . .

⁵² Think, for example, of Fichte's *Atheismusstreit*, Herder's struggles with the censors when writing his *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Humanity* and *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity*, and Kant's problems with censorship in connection with his *Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone*.

⁵³ For example, in Plato's *Apology* and *Crito* Socrates argues that in matters of virtue it is the advice of the one or few experts, not that of the many, which should be followed; and in the latter work he holds up Sparta and Crete as his models of good government.

⁵⁴ For example, in Plato's *Apology* he champions a principle of obedience to betters; Xenophon reports on his special liking for the Thersites episode in the *Iliad*; and Plato's *Republic* depicts him discussing freedom, including freedom of speech, in the most disparaging terms (557b-c).

⁵⁵ For a plausible argument along these general lines, see I.F. Stone, *The Trial of Socrates* (Boston and Toronto: 1988).

thought and expression, on the one hand, and advances in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error, on the other. For what richer source of such advances (in science, philosophy, history, politics, art, etc.) could one think of than Athens in the classical period?⁵⁶

Fourth, in order to make a convincing empirical case, Mill would have had to show, not only that freedom of thought and expression was historically correlated with advances in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error, but also that its *absence* was historically correlated with the *absence* of such advances. But he fails to do this.

Now Herder's position in this area had been significantly different from, and much more plausible than, Mill's. In his *Dissertation on the Reciprocal Influence of Government and the Sciences* (1788) Herder too had sought to develop an empirical case for a connection between freedom (of thought and expression) and advances in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error. But his case has marked advantages over

⁵⁶ It is one of the mysteries about *On Liberty* that just a few years earlier, in the review essay *Grote's History of Greece [III]* (1853), Mill had followed Grote in taking an almost diametrically opposite position on classical Athens - agreeing with Grote, on the basis of such evidence as Pericles' Funeral Speech, that classical Athens had been emphatically committed to freedom, including freedom of thought and expression, and that it had therefore richly illustrated the value of such freedom for progress in knowledge (*Collected Works* 11:318-21, 324-5). Why did Mill abandon this early, correct position for his incorrect one in *On Liberty*? A factor to consider is an intervening misinterpretation of the historical Socrates and his trial. Mill seems to have come, on the basis of evidence in such dialogues as the *Phaedo*, to a picture of Socrates as a champion of free thought and expression (see e.g. *Grote's Plato* [1866], in *Collected Works* 11:424-5). Such a picture is a mistake. The problem with it is roughly that there is a big leap from championing one's own brand of free inquiry and discussion with one's associates to a general commitment to freedom of thought and expression, and all the evidence suggests that this is a leap which Socrates felt no temptation to take. However, given that Mill came to see Socrates in such a light, he would then have been tempted to see the Athenians' trial of Socrates as an attempt to suppress freedom of thought and speech (as he does in *On Liberty*), rather than as the (perhaps misguided) attempt to defend such freedom which it really was. And he would then, by a further (shaky) step of inference, have been tempted to see the trial (so interpreted) as reflecting a more general anti-liberal streak in Athenian democracy (as he again does in *On Liberty*).

Mill's: First, Herder is well aware of the sort of prima facie counterevidence from the post-Reformation period that was recently mentioned as posing a problem for Mill.⁵⁷

Second, nor is Herder tempted to misrepresent the Goethe-Fichte period as evidence for the connection. For one thing, he has a much humbler assessment of the advances in knowledge achieved in this period than Mill.⁵⁸ For another, he is innocent of Mill's illusion that this is a period of great freedom of thought and expression.⁵⁹

Third (and most importantly), Herder recognizes that classical Athens was committed to freedom, including freedom of thought and expression, and he uses the correlation between this freedom and the great Athenian advances in knowledge as his central empirical evidence. For example, he writes in his essay: "It is evident that the specifically Greek sciences and arts, unsurpassed by those of any other age or peoples after more than two thousand years, have been daughters of Greek legislation, Greek political institutions, and especially of Greek freedom."⁶⁰

Fourth (and connectedly), Herder complements his more plausible case for a correlation between freedom of thought and expression and advances in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error with a plausible case for a correlation between its *absence*

⁵⁷ For example, Herder writes in his essay: "The first inventions and experiments were the undertakings of private persons, for genius is fated to make its own way . . . Descartes was banished from his fatherland; Copernicus revealed his system of the heavens only on the day of his death, and Galileo had to bear chains because of his discoveries in the heavens" (S9:351).

⁵⁸ For example, Herder is critical of Goethe's ethical views, has no sympathy with Fichte's theories, and is highly skeptical of Kant's critical philosophy.

⁵⁹ Herder was himself a victim of censorship, and was acutely aware of its burdens on his fellow Germans. If he was not entirely gloomy about it, this was because he believed that the political fragmentation of Germany made it relatively ineffective except in a local way (see S24:108).

⁶⁰ *J.G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, ed. F.M. Barnard (Cambridge: 1969), p. 239. Cf. S9:330. Von Humboldt too interprets the historical nature of ancient Athens correctly: the ancients enjoyed "unlimited freedom of thought, boundless tolerance" (*On Religion* [1789], in *Humboldt Werke* 1:51).

and the *absence* of such advances. For in his essay, he argues plausibly that with the curtailing of such freedom in Athens toward the end of the fourth century, the sciences (and arts) lost their vitality, and that this sorry combination continued in the Roman period.⁶¹

The jury should perhaps still be out on the question of a significant empirical correlation between freedom of thought and expression, on the one hand, and advances in knowledge of truth and avoidance of error, on the other. But Herder at least arguably provides a much more compelling case for such a correlation than Mill does.

A further arguable superiority of Herder's case over Mill's can be seen from the Herderian passages just cited as well: Unlike Mill, Herder embeds his argument for the importance of freedom of thought and expression for advancing knowledge of truth and avoidance of error within a broader argument for its importance for mental progress more generally ("*sciences and arts*"). Progress in the arts is not (primarily) a matter of progress in knowing truths and avoiding errors, but is it not (virtually) as valuable, and is it not just as dependent on freedom of thought and expression (as the case of classical Athens again illustrates)?

A third argument for freedom of thought and expression which Mill gives draws on the principle of *individuality* discussed earlier. Mill primarily bases his case for freedom of thought and expression on the different arguments considered above, and then invokes the ideal of individuality as a reason for protecting freedom of *action* as well. However, it is probable that he here means freedom of "action" in a broad sense which *includes* freedom of thought and expression, so that he is (among other things) implying a self-standing argument for freedom of thought and expression based on the ideal of

⁶¹ *J.G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, pp. 239-40. Herder also argues (perhaps more questionably) that in the modern period lands in which the Inquisition has been active have seen less scientific advances than lands in which it has not (S9:358).

individuality. (Thus it is in this context that he writes that "genius can only breathe freely in an *atmosphere* of freedom."⁶²) And it is at least clear that this *should* be his position.⁶³

Now not only had von Humboldt, inspired by Herder, already developed the ideal of individuality to which Mill is appealing here, and Mill's primary application of it to argue for freedom of action (as we have seen), but he had also already developed this Millian application of it to argue for freedom of thought and expression. Thus he argues in his essay that free inquiry is vital for producing "self-activity," "autonomy" in thought and action,⁶⁴ and that individualities require a free reciprocal self-revelation and influencing to and by one another for their development.⁶⁵ Such an argument can already be found in Herder as well. For example, he writes in *On the Ability to Speak and to Hear* that people who are not permitted to speak and hear about subjects inevitably have souls which remain "unpolished and clumsy in these areas," whereas by contrast "every lover of the *individuality* [*Eigentümlichkeit*] of human thoughts proceeded on this path; indeed every human being who wants to become truly and many-sidedly cultured [*gebildet*] knows no other."⁶⁶

⁶² *Collected Works* 18:229.

⁶³ There is a link between this argument for freedom of thought and expression and the preceding one (knowledge of truth and avoidance of error). For Mill, individuality is in some sense intrinsically valuable, and its intrinsic value warrants the freedom of (action and) thought/expression that is required for its realization. But it is also valuable as a means serving the discovery of truth (and better ways of living), so that this instrumental value warrants the freedom of (action and) thought/expression that is required for its realization as well. Thus Mill writes that one reason why "individuality is a valuable element in human affairs" is because "there is always need of persons . . . to discover new truths, and point out when what were once truths are true no longer" (*Collected Works* 18:267).

⁶⁴ *Humboldt Werke* 1:160.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-3, 128. An argument of this sort is also central to an essay of Schleiermacher's from 1799, *Toward a Theory of Sociable Conduct*.

⁶⁶ S18:386-7.

Finally, Mill in *On Liberty* has a fourth argument for freedom of thought and expression, closely connected with, but distinguishable from, his argument from individuality: such freedom is required for *autonomy*,⁶⁷ which is in turn required for (moral) excellence. Mill articulates this argument in the course of paying tribute to von Humboldt.⁶⁸

Mill is here once again drawing on an argument from the Herderian tradition, namely an argument that freedom of thought (and expression) is a precondition of the sort of autonomy in decision-making that is required for genuine moral virtue (or vice); so that, since genuine moral virtue is of immense positive value, freedom of thought (and expression) is so as well. This argument is salient in Forster and von Humboldt. For example, Forster writes in support of freedom of thought and expression that "*self-determination*, or in other words moral freedom, is the sole possible source of human virtue, and all the functions of the laws . . . must limit themselves exclusively to its protection."⁶⁹ Similarly, as we saw, von Humboldt argues in his work that free inquiry is

⁶⁷ Concerning Mill's commitment to an ideal of autonomy, cf. Gray, op. cit., pp. 55, 74 ff. In order to see that the two ideals of individuality and autonomy are distinct, note that the latter could in principle be achieved even if everyone in fact thought and acted in the same way, whereas the former, individuality, could not.

⁶⁸ "The human faculties . . . , and . . . moral preference, are exercised only in making a choice. He who does anything because it is the custom, makes no choice. He gains no practice either in discerning or in desiring what is best. The mental and moral, like the muscular powers, are improved only by being used. The faculties are called into no exercise by doing a thing merely because others do it, no more than by believing a thing only because others believe it . . . It really is of importance, not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it. Among the works of man, which human life is rightly employed in perfecting and beautifying, the first in importance surely is man himself. Supposing it were possible to get houses built, corn grown, battles fought, causes tried, and even churches erected and prayers said, by machinery - by automatons in human form - it would be a considerable loss to exchange for these automatons even the men and women who at present inhabit the more civilized parts of the world, and who assuredly are but starved specimens of what nature can and will produce" (*Collected Works* 18:262-3).

⁶⁹ *Fragment of a Letter to a German Author on Schiller's "Gods of Greece,"* in Forster, *Werke* 3:34.

essential for producing "self-activity" and "autonomy" in thought and action, and in an essay *On Religion* (1789) he argues more elaborately that freedom of thought (and expression) is vital for generating reflection, self-consistency, and deep grounding in the principles which guide our actions, and for self-activity as opposed to reliance on foreign authority, that in these ways it is essential for moral character,⁷⁰ and that, since man's very *raison d'être* lies in his development of moral character, freedom of thought (and expression) is therefore of vital importance as well.⁷¹ Here again, though, it is arguably Herder who is the ultimate source of the argument. For already in his *Letters concerning the Study of Theology* from 1780-1 Herder had written in support of freedom of thought and expression: "Freedom is the foundation stone . . . of all voluntary virtue in the human heart . . . 'But surely a freedom with laws?' Certainly with laws, but ones which the sound understanding recognizes as such, which freedom *elects* for itself."⁷²

III. Having seen the great extent to which Mill's arguments for freedom of thought and expression resemble and derive from the Herderian tradition's, note also that there are further compelling arguments for freedom of thought and expression which play no significant role in Mill's work but which the Herderian tradition had rightly stressed.

A first such argument is the extremely simple, but extremely important, one that freedom of thought and expression should be protected because they are *intrinsically* valuable. I suspect that if one had asked the average ancient Athenian why he valued freedom in general, or freedom of thought and expression in particular, he would have given an answer of just this sort: they are valuable in themselves.⁷³ Philosophers often

⁷⁰ *Humboldt Werke* 1:73-4.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁷² S11:202.

⁷³ Cf. R. Rhees, who writes (somewhat overstating the point): "For the man devoted to liberty, there is nothing which *makes* liberty important. And he has no reasons for his devotion" (R. Rhees, *Without Answers* [London: 1969], p. 84).

tend to overlook such simple but vitally important possibilities. In *On Liberty*, Mill disregards it in an extreme way, arguing in effect that respect for freedom of thought and expression is required in order to abide by the "one very simple principle," advance knowledge of truth and avoidance of error, promote individuality, establish the autonomy required for (moral) excellence, and via these things maximize human happiness, but *not* that it is valuable in its own right.⁷⁴

By contrast, Herder and his tradition show much more sensitivity to this simple but important argument. For example, in this vein, Herder writes: "Should not . . . precisely in the spirit of the ancients, the voice of each citizen, even assuming that it appeared in print, be considered a freedom of the fatherland, a holy court of ostracism? The poor man was perhaps able to do nothing else than write . . . - do you want to rob the sighing man of his breath that goes forth into desolate emptiness?"⁷⁵

A further argument neglected by Mill in *On Liberty* but properly emphasized by the Herderian tradition is that freedom of thought and expression is valuable because it helps to curb tyranny. Predecessors such as Hume had long given this argument.⁷⁶ Mill in *On Liberty* accepts it *in a way*, but claims that it has become less relevant due to the securely

⁷⁴ In *The Subjection of Women* Mill comes *closer* to giving an argument of this sort, pointing out that freedom (of thought and expression) is a basic human want and a part of happiness: "After the primary necessities of food and raiment, freedom is the first and strongest want of human nature . . . He who would rightly appreciate the worth of personal independence as an element of happiness, should consider the value he himself puts upon it as an ingredient of his own" (J.S. Mill, *The Subjection of Women* [Indianapolis: 1988], pp. 103-4; cf. *On Liberty*, in *Collected Works* 18:270). However, as is inevitable given his official utilitarianism, this is still not quite a claim of its intrinsic value, but rather of its value as a means to happiness (albeit a constitutive rather than merely a causal means).

⁷⁵ Herder: *Philosophical Writings*, p. 376.

⁷⁶ Hume, *Of the Liberty of the Press*, in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. E.E. Miller (Indianapolis: 1985), p. 12. As Himmelfarb notes, Bentham, James Mill, and even the young J.S. Mill himself had all used this argument too (Himmelfarb, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-4).

democratic environment of his own day.⁷⁷ However, this claim is surely dubious even by his own lights, given his recognition of the importance of *sustaining* democracy, and also his deep concern about democracy's *own* tyrannical potentials.

Herder, by contrast, keeps faith with this important traditional argument. In this connection his *Dissertation on the Reciprocal Influence of Government and the Sciences* is especially significant, for (as the "Reciprocal" hints) he argues there, not only that liberal republicanism benefits freedom of thought and expression and hence the sciences and arts, whereas despotism undermines them, but also that freedom of thought and expression and the consequent health of the sciences and arts benefit liberal republicanism, whereas their absence facilitates despotism: "Free states owe themselves to enlightenment, to science."⁷⁸

A final important line of argument which Mill lacks but which is rightly stressed by the Herderian tradition concerns, not so much the principle of respecting freedom of thought and expression per se, but rather its extension on an international plane.

Mill's case for respecting freedom, including freedom of thought and expression, does extend beyond national boundaries, but only to a severely limited extent. According to *On Liberty* and *A Few Words on Non-Intervention* (both 1859), a nation must respect the freedom (of thought and expression) of other "civilized" nations, but, in sharp contrast, this does not hold for "barbarians," who should instead be treated with benevolent despotism, or even benevolent aggression. Thus in *On Liberty* Mill writes that his "one very simple principle" "is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children . . . For the same reason, we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage . . . Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually

⁷⁷ *Collected Works* 18:228

⁷⁸ S9:383.

effecting that end. Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one."⁷⁹

One problem with this position lies in its naive faith in the noble motives and the beneficial effects of (a significant number of) colonialists and imperialists. (*A Few Words on Non-Intervention* is a paean to the motives and effects of British colonialism and the East India Company, of which Mill was a high-ranking official.⁸⁰) We are unlikely to find this faith plausible today.⁸¹ The main problem with Mill's position, though, lies in its insidious conflation of a laudable principle of intervention with a highly questionable one, turning on a conflation of importantly different senses of the "civilized" / "barbarous" distinction. To the extent that Mill conceives this distinction as something like a distinction between, on the one hand, nations in which people's basic freedoms are protected or at least not habitually and severely violated, and on the other hand, nations in which they *are* habitually and severely violated, his principle concerning intervention seems defensible, and indeed important. After all, *shouldn't* we have intervened coercively in Rwanda? The problem is that he runs together with such a conception of the

⁷⁹ *Collected Works* 18:224. Cf. *A Few Words on Non-Intervention*: "To go to war for an idea, if the war is aggressive, not defensive, is as criminal as to go to war for territory or revenue; for it is as little justifiable to force our ideas on other people, as to compel them to submit to our will in any other respect. But there assuredly are cases in which it is allowable to go to war, without having been ourselves attacked, or threatened with attack . . . There is a great difference (for example) between the case in which the nations concerned are of the same, or something like the same, degree of civilization, and that in which one of the parties to the situation is of a high, and the other of a very low, grade of social improvement" (*Collected Works* 21:118).

⁸⁰ In a similar spirit, Mill in *Grote's History of Greece [II]* gives a strikingly approving assessment of the motives and effects of ancient Athenian imperialism (*Collected Works* 11:321 ff.).

⁸¹ Concerning effects, one only has to think of the partitioning of India or the present-day misery of black Africa, for example.

distinction something much more like a distinction between nations which share our European culture and nations which do not, and in consequence turns his principle of intervention into one which would warrant our riding roughshod, not only over the freedom (of thought and expression) enjoyed by Rwanda's murderous thugs, but equally over that enjoyed by, say, the Amazonian shaman and his tribe as they rather harmlessly go about their own quirky business and beliefs.⁸²

Herder's position is strikingly different and much more attractive. He is quite properly deeply cynical about both the underlying motives and the effects of European colonialism (especially British colonialism, including that of the East India Company).⁸³ Moreover, he has a much more compelling position on the question of intervention than Mill. On the one hand, he preserves, but also arguably improves on, the good side of Mill's position, in his *Adrastea* (1801-4) in principle approving of intervention in foreign nations in order to stop native oppression there, but also entering the strong caveat that such intervention usually in practice substitutes even *worse* oppression and so proves unjustified.⁸⁴ On the other hand, he entirely avoids the pernicious side of Mill's principle of intervention (its sanctioning of intervention in non-oppressive but culturally "backward" nations). For, as was mentioned earlier, he is at least as concerned to protect *cultural* individualism as the individualism of persons within a culture, and accordingly, he extends his defense of freedom of thought and expression to intercultural cases, arguing quite as strongly against the coercive interference by one culture in another's thought and expression as he does against a single state's or culture's interference in that of its own members. For example,

⁸² In this connection, observe how Mill writes about such peoples in his late essays on religion: he refers to "Patagonians, or Esquimaux, or something nearly as brutal," to "a Bosjesman or an Andaman islander, or something still lower," and opines that "savages are always liars" (*Collected Works* 10:390, 459, 395).

⁸³ See for example *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity*, 10th Collection (in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*); S23:496-505.

⁸⁴ S23:502-3.

he writes in the *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity*: "What, generally, is a foisted, foreign culture, a formation that does not develop out of [a people's] own dispositions and needs? It oppresses and deforms, or else it plunges straight into the abyss. You poor sacrificial victims who were brought from the south sea islands to England in order to receive culture - you are symbols of the good that Europeans communicate to other peoples generally!"⁸⁵ This, then, is a further respect in which the Herderian tradition's case for freedom of thought and expression is fuller and deeper than Mill's.

IV. Someone might still want to argue that, granting all that has been said so far, there remain important and valuable features of Mill's case for freedom of thought and expression which are absent from the Herderian tradition's. I am skeptical, however, and would like now to conclude by briefly discussing some of the potential candidates.

One obvious candidate is the fact that Mill ultimately means to subsume the sorts of considerations which have been discussed under a utilitarian umbrella. Thus after giving his "one very simple principle," he goes on to note: "It is proper to state that I forgo any advantage which could be derived to my argument from the idea of abstract right, as a thing independent of utility. I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being."⁸⁶ One may infer that he officially takes the same view of the other considerations to which his arguments for freedom of thought and expression appeal as

⁸⁵ *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, p. 382. Herder is against interference in other cultures not only by means of brute coercion, but also by means of such subtler instruments as addictions and luxuries. For example, in *This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* he writes: "Whither do European colonies not reach, and whither will they not reach! Everywhere the savages, the more they become fond of our brandy and luxury, become ripe for our conversion too! Everywhere approach, especially through brandy and luxury, our culture. Will soon, God help us!, all be human beings like us!" (ibid., p. 325).

⁸⁶ *Collected Works* 18:224.

well: knowledge of truth and avoidance of error, individualism, and autonomy.

Ultimately, all of these receive their authority from the higher court of utility.⁸⁷

This certainly constitutes a *difference* between Mill and the Herderian tradition. But it seems highly doubtful that it constitutes a *superiority* on Mill's side, rather than an *inferiority*. One obvious reason for doubting this is the extreme dubiousness of utilitarianism itself (much too large a topic to go into here).

Another reason is the tenuousness of Mill's assumption that the several factors to which he appeals directly - the "one very simple principle," knowledge of truth and avoidance of error, individualism, and autonomy - can all ultimately be justified in utilitarian terms, that is, as requirements for maximizing happiness. Prima facie at least, that seems unlikely. Thus, as C.L. Ten argues, the idea that utility can justify (unrestricted) commitment to the "one very simple principle" seems implausible.⁸⁸ As Nietzsche memorably pointed out, the assumption that knowledge of truth and avoidance of error serve utility seems dubious as well.⁸⁹ And similar points apply to individualism and autonomy.⁹⁰

Mill's standard strategy in this connection is twofold: first (assuming an intuitive sense of "happiness") argue that the factor in question is justified by its serving happiness

⁸⁷ *On Liberty* makes this position fairly clear in connection with individualism and autonomy. Concerning knowledge of truth, note that Mill writes elsewhere: "If religion, or any particular form of it, is true, its usefulness follows without other proof," "The knowledge of every positive truth is a useful acquisition" (*Collected Works* 10:403-5).

⁸⁸ C.L. Ten, "Mill's Defence of Liberty," in *J.S. Mill: On Liberty in Focus*, ed. J. Gray and G.W. Smith (London: 1991), esp. p. 213.

⁸⁹ For example, were not the gentle, anthropomorphizing falsehoods of Greek mythology or Christianity's consoling myths of an afterlife more promotive of happiness than the hard, "disenchanted" truths of modern science?

⁹⁰ This fact that *On Liberty* appeals to a wide variety of considerations which are not at all obviously or easily squared with Mill's official utilitarianism finds a large part of its explanation in the fundamental thesis of this article that the work is heavily indebted to multiple arguments drawn from the Herderian tradition.

instrumentally, but then (in case that seems doubtful) shift to a thesis that the factor in question is instead or also an essential *constituent* of happiness (conceived now in a less intuitive sense). For example, in this spirit he both argues that individuality is required for "experiments in living" which make possible the maximization of happiness in the long run, and that it is an essential constituent of genuine happiness ("one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress").⁹¹ There need be no inconsistency in such a combination of positions; they could be married. The real problem with it is rather that the former (instrumental) arguments turn out to look very dubious, while the latter (constitutive) claims turn utilitarianism into little more than a misleading reformulation of a traditional pluralism about values.⁹²

The fact that Mill commits himself to an ulterior utilitarian framework in his arguments whereas the Herderian tradition does not but rests content with a frank commitment to a plurality of values and with framing its arguments in terms of these therefore in the end

⁹¹ *On Liberty*, in *Collected Works* 18:261.

⁹² Concerning the latter problem, cf. Berlin's plausible case that Mill's utilitarianism unwittingly collapses into a form of value-pluralism ("John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life," in Berlin, *Liberty*, pp. 225 ff.).

constitutes, not a point of superiority in Mill's case, but rather yet another point of inferiority.⁹³

Another area where someone might suspect an important difference between Mill's position and the Herderian tradition's which tells in Mill's favor is the following. Famously, Mill is not only or even primarily concerned with restrictions on freedom of thought and expression (or on freedom generally) by *authoritarian* governments, but also and especially by *democracies*: the sort of "tyranny of the majority" of which de Tocqueville had written in his *Democracy in America*. Does *this* not distinguish Mill sharply from the Herderian tradition to his advantage?

The answer is No. Herder is certainly as strongly in favor of republicanism and democracy over other forms of government as Mill is. But he is also like Mill acutely aware of their own potentials for tyranny. For example, in the *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Humanity* he says that it was understandable that, having tried out all sorts of other constitutions, people in more modern times returned to hereditary rulers, "for the tyranny of the aristocrats is a hard tyranny and *the commanding people is a true*

⁹³ Two further remarks loosely connected with the above: (1) Berlin tends to interpret Mill as a pluralist and an open-ended historicist about values, and to see his case for freedom of thought and expression as resting on these positions, and properly so (Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" and "John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life," in *Liberty*). However, if there is a good philosophical case of this sort to be made, it is much less likely to be found in Mill - who is officially neither a pluralist nor an open-ended historicist about values - than in Herder - who is officially both. (2) Gray has argued that Mill's case for freedom (of thought and expression) founders on the indefensibility of an underlying assumption which he makes of universalism, or precisely *lack* of historicism, in values (Gray, *op. cit.*, "Postscript"). In ascribing such an assumption to Mill, Gray interprets him more accurately than Berlin, and Gray's rejection of universalism is also highly plausible. However, Herder's construction of a strikingly similar case for freedom (of thought and expression) but on a historicist foundation suggests that there may be no deep incompatibility between these two things (that a Millian could recast his case in historicist terms, much as Herder had already done).

Leviathan,"⁹⁴ and that "the word despotism . . . does not only apply to monarchy but occurs in all misused, ill-administered governments."⁹⁵

Another famous and striking feature of Mill's position is that he by no means sees the threat to freedom of thought and expression (or to freedom generally) as coming only from *government* but is equally concerned about a threat to it posed by *society*. Is *this* not a point of difference and superiority in comparison with the Herderian tradition?

The answer is again No. For Herder's position is in fact similar, and indeed in certain ways deeper. Herder too is concerned about a societal threat. For example, in *On the Ability to Speak and to Hear* he discusses differences between "regions [of Germany] where people spoke better because one was allowed to speak, because people knew how to hear without anger" and "others over which a fearful distrust, a deaf-and-dumb confinement of thoughts, spread its dark wings, and a word-shy, timid, so to speak stammering manner of thought held sway," and similarly between Germany's social classes.⁹⁶

Moreover, Herder identifies some important and interesting types of societal threat that Mill overlooks. In particular, he argues that social conventions governing language itself in certain cases constitute an unacceptable constraint on expression and hence thought. He focuses on three sorts of cases: A first is simply that of excessively rigid linguistic conventions.⁹⁷ A second is that of extraneous languages being accorded privileges over a native language, as he (correctly) believed occurred with Latin and French in relation to German in the Germany of his day.⁹⁸ A third is that of extraneous languages excessively

⁹⁴ S13:386 (emphasis added).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 454.

⁹⁶ S18:387.

⁹⁷ For example, in the essay just mentioned he is concerned about "people who may not communicate with each other, on whom language itself imposes a constraint, a ceremonial" (*ibid.*, pp. 387-8).

⁹⁸ This was a lifelong concern of Herder's.

influencing a native language itself, as he (plausibly) believed also occurred with Latin and French in relation to German in his day.⁹⁹

Clearly, there has to be *some* level of conformity to (shared) linguistic rules in order for there to be a (shared) language at all, and no doubt an even higher level can be justified in functional terms. However, this does not invalidate Herder's concern, which applies to levels of regulation exceeding that minimum. Why does he find such excess regulation objectionable? One reason, which applies even to the first type of case, is that it inhibits intellectual innovation, including conceptual innovation.¹⁰⁰ Another reason is that (like other constraints on freedom of thought and expression) it is often intertwined with, and supportive of, broader exercises of coercive power. This is a major source of his concern

⁹⁹ The following passage from the *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity* combines concerns about all three sorts of cases: the Greeks, Romans, and French, Herder says, had glorious, independent languages, "And the language of the Germans, which our ancestors called a language of tribal stem, pith, and heroes, should pull the victory car of others like a conquered prisoner, and in the process still give itself airs in its clumsy empire- and court-style? Throw it away, this oppressive finery, you matron squeezed in contrary to your will, and be what you can be and formerly were: a language of reason, of force and truth" (*Herder: Philosophical Writings*, p. 387). Cf. S24:376 ff.

¹⁰⁰ On Herder's (arguably correct) philosophy of language, introducing new concepts consists in introducing new usages of words. But if the latter is prohibited or strongly discouraged, people will tend not to do it.

about the second and third types of case,¹⁰¹ in particular about the undue privileges of Latin and French in Germany and their undue influence on German.¹⁰²

A final feature of Mill's position to which someone might point as a differentia and virtue over the Herderian tradition's is Mill's radicalism in his provision for freedom of thought and expression: He protects all thought and most expression as well. By contrast, Herder is more cautious. For example, in his *Dissertation on the Reciprocal Influence of Government and the Sciences* he argues that governments may and should impose certain limits on freedom of thought and expression for the greater good.¹⁰³ Does this not constitute a difference between Mill and Herder which speaks in Mill's favor?¹⁰⁴

There *is* a difference here. But it is less sharp than it may seem, and does not tell clearly in Mill's favor. First, Herder is normally quite as strident as Mill in his defense of

¹⁰¹ Herder remarks at one point - with special reference to Greek, Latin, Arabic, Spanish, and French - that a refined, influential language gives a nation "a secret domination" (S16:604).

¹⁰² See the quotations in the last three footnotes. Some relevant facts to note in this connection: (1) Latin's source in Germany's Roman conquerors, its longstanding association with an oppressive Catholic Church, and its use in the universities, which held a dominating monopoly over much of Germany's intellectual life; (2) French's association with France's cultural domination of Germany in the eighteenth century, and with the despotic court of Frederick the Great.

A close modern counterpart to Herder's concern here would be the concern that many people in the non-Anglophone world have today about the undue privileges enjoyed by (American) English in their countries and its undue influence on their native languages, interconnected as these things are with the oppressive or intrusive influence of American military bases, economic power, fast-food chains, movies, and so on.

¹⁰³ See e.g. S9:358-9, 400-1. In one uncharacteristically illiberal passage in the *Adrastea* Herder even implies that immoral plays and anti-Christian expression should be banned (S24:174-6).

¹⁰⁴ Beiser suggests so at *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism*, pp. 210, 400.

free thought and expression.¹⁰⁵ Second, Herder's considered view seems to be, like Mill's, that thought should be entirely unrestricted.¹⁰⁶ Third, even Mill imposes some restrictions on expression - for example, disallowing the slandering of a tradesman before an unruly mob gathered outside his house.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, any reasonable position must do so. Fourth, the difference between Mill and Herder therefore only concerns *exactly how much* limitation there should be on *expression*. Fifth, Herder's considered position on this question includes a principle that at least all plain, sincere expressions of (putative) truths should be protected.¹⁰⁸ Mill would agree with that. Sixth, the disagreement between them therefore reduces still further to exactly how much limitation there should be on expressions *of other sorts*. Seventh, their main disagreement concerns Mill's tendency to outlaw only expressions likely to cause immediate, readily identifiable harm (as in the tradesman case), whereas Herder would also outlaw some which promote immorality and irreligion.¹⁰⁹ But is this clearly a virtue on Mill's side? Arguably not. For one thing, Mill

¹⁰⁵ For example, the essay just mentioned also includes statements like the following: "In the realm of truth, in the realm of thoughts and minds, no earthly power can or should decide; the government cannot, let alone its cowed censor" (S9:358). Cf. Herder's statement in the *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity* that "one may . . . rob the public of no opinions, not even the craziest ones, in that the state, when they seem false or dangerous to *it*, may rather occasion their public refutation, so that darkness may be conquered by light for the world's advantage" (provided only that an author insults no one and gives his own name) (*Herder: Philosophical Writings*, p. 373).

¹⁰⁶ Thus in the late *Adrastea* Herder writes that "persecution for *thoughts*, whatever subject these may concern, is not the spirit of Christianity" (S24:92), and although he imposes some restrictions on expression, he in the process leaves the thoughts untouched (S24:176: "let him [i.e. the offender] satisfy himself in his chaotic darkness - in quiet"). (This marks a revision in standpoint since the *Dissertation on the Reciprocal Influence of Government and the Sciences*. Contrast there e.g. S9:358.)

¹⁰⁷ *Collected Works* 18:260.

¹⁰⁸ See for example S9:358, 360-1, 401. Note that in his *Adrastea* Herder, a devout Christian, makes a forceful case for according freedom of thought and expression to "freethinkers," including outright atheists (S24:91 ff.). (S24:175-6 seems anomalous.)

¹⁰⁹ See S9:400-1; S24:174-6.

is himself torn about the matter - for example, he seems inclined to ban procuring.¹¹⁰ For another thing, it is hardly clear that there should *not* be a ban on certain forms of expression promoting immorality (even if we may not agree with all of Herder's candidates).

V. In sum, many central aspects of Mill's justly celebrated case in *On Liberty* for freedom of thought and expression were originally developed by Herder and his tradition, and in certain respects in a superior form; in addition, there are further important and valuable arguments preserved or developed by Herder and his tradition which Mill neglects or rejects; and moreover, there is little if anything of importance and value in Mill's case which had *not* already been articulated by Herder and his tradition.

Reflecting back on the points made at the start of this essay about the uneasy relation of recent German philosophy and political history to liberalism, and suspicions concerning this among Anglophone observers, let me conclude with the following thoughts: Would it not be healthy for German culture and politics if this authentic German contribution to liberalism were better known in Germany? And would it not be healthy for relations between Germany and the Anglophone world if it were better known in the latter too?

¹¹⁰ *Collected Works* 18:296-7.