

FICHTE'S *FOUNDATIONS OF*  
*NATURAL RIGHT*

Fichte's *Foundations of Natural Right* (1796/197) was one of the most influential books in nineteenth-century philosophy. It was read carefully by Schelling, Hegel, and Marx, and initiated a tradition in German philosophy that considers human subjectivity to be relational and intersubjective, thus requiring relations of recognition between subjects. The essays in this volume highlight this little understood book's most important ideas and innovations. They offer discussions of Fichte's conception of freedom, self-consciousness, coercion, the summons, the body, and human rights, together with new analyses of his deduction of right, his views on the social contract, and his arguments for the separation of right from morality. The essays expand and deepen ongoing debates in the scholarship and chart new avenues of thought about Fichte's most enduring work of political philosophy. They will be essential reading for students and scholars of German Idealism, nineteenth-century philosophy, and the history of political thought.

GABRIEL GOTTLIEB is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Xavier University. He has published numerous articles on Fichte and the philosophy of action.

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*OF NATURAL RIGHT*  
*A Critical Guide*

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## *Acknowledgments*

The idea of organizing a volume on Fichte's philosophy began brewing in my mind while I was writing my dissertation. Like many other burgeoning Fichte scholars, I felt acutely the lacuna of high-quality scholarship on Fichte, especially when compared to the likes of Kant and Hegel. It took some time to find the right idea for the makings of an edited volume, and I finally hit upon the idea of a *Critical Guide* on the *Foundations of Natural Right* at the 2013 Pacific APA in San Francisco, where a conversation with Lara Denis about her work on the *Critical Guide* to Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals* prompted me to reach out to Cambridge and Hilary Gaskin. Much thanks to Lara for her initial advice. Many thanks are due to Hilary Gaskin for guiding me through the process of putting together the proposal and the book. Thanks also to her team at Cambridge and in particular Emma Collison and Christofere Fila.

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## Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout the volume. The *Foundations of Natural Right* is referred to either by its entire title or by the shortened title *Natural Right* in the body of the essays. In the case of citations, it is referred to as *FNR*. Citations to Fichte's work cite first an English translation, when available, and then his *Sämmtliche Werke*. In the instances when Fichte's German text is not published in the *Sämmtliche Werke*, another German edition is cited.

### Fichte

- ACR* Fichte, *Attempt at a Critique of All Revelation*. A. W. Wood (Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- CC* Fichte, "Crystal Clear Report to the General Public Concerning the Actual Essence of the Newest Philosophy: An Attempt to Force the Reader to Understand," trans. John Botterman and William Rasch, in *Philosophy of German Idealism*, Ernst Behler. New York: Continuum, 1987.
- EPW* Fichte, *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings*, trans. Daniel Breazeale. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- FNR* Fichte, *Foundations of Natural Right*, trans. Michael Baur and ed. Frederick Neuhouser. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- GA* *J. G. Fichte: Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, ed. E. Fuchs, R. Lauth, H. Jacobs, H. Gliwitsky, et. al. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1964–2012.
- IW* Fichte, *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre*, ed. D. Breazeale. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994.
- K* Fichte, *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo: Kollegnachschrift K. Chr. Fr. Krause 1798/99*, ed. Erich Fuchs. Hamburg: Meiner, 1994.

- R* Fichte, “Reclamation of the Freedom of Thought from the Princes of Europe, who have Oppressed it Until Now” in J. Schmidt (ed.) *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996: pp. 119–43.
- RPP* Fichte, “Review of Immanuel Kant, Perpetual Peace,” trans. Daniel Breazeale, *The Philosophical Forum* 32: 311–22.
- SE* Fichte, *System of Ethics*, trans. and ed. Daniel Breazeale and Günter Zöller. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- SK* Fichte, *Science of Knowledge (Wissenschaftslehre)*, trans. and ed. Peter Heath and John Lachs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. [Contains the “First and Second Introductions” and *Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre*.]
- SW* *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. I. H. Fichte. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1965.
- VM* Fichte, *The Vocation of Man*, trans. Peter Preuss. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987.
- WLnM* Fichte, *Foundations of Transcendental Philosophy: Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo (1796/1799)*, trans. D. Breazeale. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992.

**Kant**

- C* Kant, *Correspondence*, trans. Arnulf Zweig. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- CF* *Conflict of the Faculties*, in A. Wood and G. diGiovanni (eds.) *Kant: Writings on Religion and Rational Theology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- CJ* Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- CPR* Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. P. Guyer and A. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- CPrR* Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- GW* Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, trans. Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- MM* Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

*Abbreviations*

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- OT* Kant, *What Does it Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking?* in A. Wood and G. diGiovanni (eds.) *Kant: Writings on Religion and Rational Theology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- P* Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, in H. Allison (ed.), *Theoretical Philosophy after 1781*. New York: Cambridge, 2002.
- TPP* Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace*, in M. Gregor (ed.) *Kant: Practical Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge, 1996.
- WE* Kant, *An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?*, in M. Gregor (ed.) *Kant: Practical Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge, 1996.