Introduction

I.1 Protestantism and Modern Freedom

In 1835 the German Jewish exile Heinrich Heine wrote that "[t]he religion which we enjoy in Germany is Christianity. I will thus have to explain what Christianity is, how it became Roman Catholicism, how from that Protestantism emerged, and, from Protestantism, German philosophy."[1] A riposte to Germaine de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* – which had done a great deal to introduce German thought and literature to a French audience – Heine's *History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany* echoed Hegel in asserting a continuity between "the great religious revolution ... represented by Martin Luther" and Kantian philosophy, noting that this "philosophical revolution ... emerged from the religious one, and ... is nothing other than the logical conclusion of Protestantism."[2] Heine felt that de Staël had overemphasized German Romantic inwardness at the expense of the revolutionary implications of German philosophy, and while he loosely followed the structure of her famous work, he reversed the order by putting religion and philosophy before literature and art, stating that without understanding the former "the entirety of German thought will remain ... a barren mystery."[3] For Heine, the Germans were by nature pantheists. Christianity refined the pagan tribes, but the materialistic element of Roman Catholicism eventually generated too much strain until Martin Luther came along and restored a more spiritual

[1] Heinrich Heine, *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany and Other Writings*, ed. Terry Pinkard, trans. Howard Pollack-Milgate (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 10.

[2] Ibid., 42.

[3] Ibid., 9. On the complicated publication history of this book, see Jeffrey L. Sammons, *Heinrich Heine: A Modern Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 188–90. According to Sammons, *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland* and *Die romantische Schule* were conceived as parts of a single work, but they only ever appeared together in French: *De l'Allemagne*, Oeuvres de Henri Heine, vols. V–VI (Paris: E. Renduel, 1835).

religion. But that dispensation was not to last, and under the impetus of the philosophical revolution begun by Kant, Germans, according to Heine, returned to their original pantheism, this time with a Spinozistic turn. This rough outline mirrored Hegel's philosophy of history, which Heine know well from his Berlin days.[4] Focusing on "those philosophical questions which we deem to have social importance and for which philosophy competes with religion to find answers,"[5] Heine tightly linked German philosophy as "an important matter affecting the entire human race" to the Reformation, asserting that "a methodical people like us had to begin with the Reformation, could only on that basis occupy itself with philosophy, and solely after its completion be able to pass over to political revolution."[6]

By "German philosophy" Heine meant Kantianism and the German Idealism that developed from it. "Germany," as a coherent national unit or state in any conventional sense, did not exist until the late nineteenth century. Yet, as Terry Pinkard argues, after the publication of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1781:

> "German" philosophy came for a while to dominate European philosophy and to change the shape of how not only Europeans but practically the whole world conceived of itself, of nature, of religion, of human history, of the nature of knowledge, of politics, and of the structure of the human mind in general.

"If nothing else," he continues, "what counted as 'German' was itself up for grabs and was being developed and argued about by writers, politicians, publicists, and of course, philosophers, during this period."[7]

Not only was the definition of "German" up for grabs, but so too was the very definition of "Protestantism." This book will explore how two key cultural and intellectual achievements – the Reformation and "German"

[4] Sammons, *Heinrich Heine*, 76–81. Sammons notes that while Heine's specific reliance on Hegelian thought is a matter of dispute, he certainly belonged in a "general way to the Hegelian generation" (ibid., 80). Heine's seemingly prophetic pronouncement that "[a] play will be enacted in Germany which will make the French Revolution look like a harmless idyll" has often been portrayed as some dark foreboding of twentieth-century disasters, but Heine was concerned to show only the implications for a modern life in which German philosophy had supplanted the place of religion. Ibid., 190–93; Heine, *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany and Other Writings*, xxv, 116.

[5] Heine, *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany and Other Writings*, 42.

[6] Ibid., 115.

[7] Terry P. Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2.

philosophy (separated by more than two centuries) – became fused in public debate and discussion over the course of the eighteenth century. One need not accept Heine's specific formulation to recognize that the succession narrative from the Protestant Reformation to modern life and thought has a long and powerful genealogy. Indeed, it was so long a fixture of nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiography that it is easy to forget that the linkage itself had a history. Despite the multiple ways in which subsequent historical work has undermined the neat succession narrative from the Reformation to Idealist philosophy, it persists, leading one historian to label this "strange alloy of theological hostility [and] historical dogma" as "Hegel's ghost."[8] But while many early modern historians have long since dismissed the modernizing myths of the Reformation, little attention has been paid to the ways in which that story was formed and then solidified. This book aims to recover that history.

Scholars of the Reformation and those of nineteenth- and twentieth-century history are faced with a puzzle: How did we get from the religious core of the sixteenth-century Reformation to the view popularized by Hegel and Ranke? How, in other words, was it possible for Heine and those sharing similar views to closely link the Reformation to modern German philosophy specifically, and more broadly to a narrative of progress and freedom? This book attempts to answer that question by showing how the meaning of the Reformation was recast in the public sphere during the eighteenth century, first by a set of religious thinkers intent on revitalizing Christianity to meet the challenges of the day, and subsequently by a cohort of thinkers seeking to establish public support for their new philosophical project. The book argues first that a broad-based Protestant Enlightenment recast the meaning of Protestantism as part of a wide-ranging cultural apology aimed at the twin threats of unbelief and deism on the one hand and of Pietism and a nascent evangelical awakening on the other. It then shows how the new conceptualization and language of Protestantism forged by this apologetical and reforming impulse proved exceptionally fertile for the rise of a new philosophical and social worldview, which began its ascent in the 1780s and became part of mainstream German intellectual culture in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The new set of meanings ascribed to Protestantism, however, did not simply succeed the old. While it is common from a contemporary perspective to see religion and philosophy as two entirely separate discourses,

[8] Constantin Fasolt, "Hegel's Ghost: Europe, the Reformation, and the Middle Ages," *Viator* 39, no. 1 (2008): 350.

the boundary lines were not always so clearly drawn. The two may have become institutionally and conceptually separate in the nineteenth century, but as social phenomena – as something read and discussed by an expanded lay readership – they were joined and constituted part of a Protestant public sphere. In this sense, the varied claims on the Protestant legacy competed for social prominence. The result was a rich if unstable idea linking Protestantism and modern freedom that would dominate German intellectual culture until the First World War.

This German story has its twin in Herbert Butterfield's *Whig Interpretation of History*. In his famous account, Butterfield identified the tendency to cast the roots of liberal values and order as a triumphal narrative of Protestant liberation beginning in the Reformation.[9] By labeling it the "Whig" interpretation of history, Butterfield tied the progress narrative to a specific political outlook and party, though, upon closer examination, without the specificity such a label would seem to imply. As both a term and a party Whig and Whiggism underwent numerous transformations from their origins in the Exclusion Crisis under Charles II through the Glorious Revolution and the era of Whig dominance for much of the eighteenth century, such that the original political context for the ideology and the party it supported were increasingly separated from the worldview ascribed to their founders.[10] Though similar in many ways, the German form of this progress narrative has not been ascribed such a specific political or ideological origin story, which is what this book attempts to do.

Unlike designations that would tie one's church to the Augsburg Confession, to the tradition of Luther, or to the notion of a church "reformed according to God's word," "Protestantism" had a certain flexibility.[11] It commemorated an act of refusal and resistance as well as a rejection of Rome, but it was able to appeal to abstract notions of conscience and reason without the uncomfortable encumbrances of

[9] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1931).

[10] J. G. A. Pocock, "The Varieties of Whiggism from Exclusion to Reform: A History of Ideology and Discourse," in *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 215–310; Keith C. Sewell, "The 'Herbert Butterfield Problem' and Its Resolution," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64, no. 4 (2003): 599–618.

[11] It is disputed when the Latin phrase "*ecclesia reformata semper reformanda secundum verbum dei*" was accepted as a slogan for the Reformed Church. While the phrase had its roots in the sixteenth century, it was made more prominent in the work of seventeenth-century Dutch clergymen but owes its twentieth-century acceptance to Karl Barth. See Leo J. Koffeman, "'*Ecclesia Reformata Semper Reformanda*' Church Renewal from a Reformed Perspective," *Review of Ecumenical Studies Sibiu* 7, no. 1 (2015): 8–19.

Scriptural authority and traditional doctrine. Inevitably, the rise of the word "Protestantism" was accompanied by a contest over its definition. Because the term was not as concrete as those it was replacing, it had the capacity to absorb and contain conflicting meanings. The flexibility of that term lent it an essential dynamic, while the divergence of meanings encapsulates the many paths of modern Protestantism.

That the meaning of such a core term as "Protestant" was open for reappropriation over the course of the eighteenth century was recognized by contemporaries. Infused with the Enlightenment conviction that a purified language and vocabulary would lead to refined and improved thinking by his countrymen, the linguist and educational reformer Johann Heinrich Campe published in 1801 a dictionary aimed at "clarifying and Germanizing foreign words that have intruded into our language." Among his most lasting neologisms were the German words – still in use today – for "ground floor," "progresses," and "in fact."[12] For Campe, purging foreign expressions and replacing them with German ones were important for creating a practical and supple language. There were "nationalist" motivations as well, even if that term did not carry the same weight around 1800 that it would much later. But Campe was concerned with more than just foreign encroachments on the German language. He was keenly aware that historical usages carried weighty and sometimes outdated associations that obscured the actual meanings of words.

Religious terminology required especially careful consideration. Campe's entry on the term "Catholic," which he translates as "the universal believer [*der Allgemeingläubige*]," makes his commitment to Enlightenment liberalism especially clear. "The Catholic," he continues, "is a Christian, who holds his own church-belief for universally binding and feels justified in forcing everyone to recognize its binding nature, even through violence." Campe concludes the entry "Catholic" with a wish: "Hopefully the time will come – may God grant very soon! – when a fully mature human race will rise above this childish, unreasonable, and baneful religious artifice. Then humanity will not even need this term anymore."[13] Not surprisingly, the definition he offers for "Protestant" expresses a very

[12] Johann Heinrich Campe, *Wörterbuch zur Erklärung und Verdeutschung der unserer Sprache aufgedrungenen fremden Wörter* (2 parts, Braunschweig, 1801): "*Erdgeschoss*" (for "*parterre*") II:509, "*Fortschritte*" (for "*Progressen*") II:551, "*tatsächlich*" (for "*factisch*"), I:356. On Campe, see Jürgen Schiewe, *Sprachpurismus und Emanzipation: Joachim Heinrich Campes Verdeutschungsprogramm als Voraussetzung für Gesellschaftsveränderungen* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1988).

[13] Campe, *Wörterbuch*, I:216.

different sentiment. After first noting how the term originated at the Second Diet of Speyer in 1529, he observes that "in general, this word refers to a Christian who, as Kant says, defends himself against the claims (usurpations) of a fellow believer. One can also say: he defends himself against every obligation to believe something that is not based in his reason and the Bible." Indeed, Campe concludes, in the place of the word "Protestant," one could use the term "Free-Believer [*Freibgläubiger*]." He based his suggestion on a political analogy: Protestants, he states, "are with respect to ecclesiastical society what the free citizen is with respect to civil society."[14] His definitions of religious terms emphasize how historical usages need to be reconsidered and how the term "Protestant," with its roots in law and history, no longer fit the times or what he saw as the faith's essence. Unlike his more prosaic neologisms, Campe's suggestions for a new religious terminology did not find broad acceptance. Nevertheless, he drew attention to a profound shift in political and religious terminology that had taken place over the course of the eighteenth century.

Campe was not alone in his observation that the term "Protestant" and its cognates had undergone a remarkable transformation in recent decades. The Göttingen theologian Carl Friedrich Stäudlin noted in 1804 how the "spirit of investigation" that was first applied to Scripture "turned finally toward Protestantism itself" in the eighteenth century. After having been nourished and guided by Scripture for so long, human reason asserted its independence. "It wanted to become the last word in matters of religion, and thus Protestants transformed the very meaning of the word by which they identified themselves." "Protestantism," he continues, "no longer consisted in the principle that Holy Scripture was a divine authority, the source and norm of faith and life. Instead, the new principle of Protestantism was that in matters of religion, each must think freely for himself, and that human reason thereby would take on a divine image."[15] In an explicit attempt to tie new developments in philosophy to Germany's religious history, Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel wrote in 1802 that "[t]he great form of the world spirit that has come to cognizance of itself" in the philosophies of Kant and his Idealist successors, "is the principle of the North, and from the religious point of view, of Protestantism. This principle is subjectivity for which beauty and truth

[14] Ibid., 555–56.
[15] Stäudlin, *Kirchliche Geographie und Statistik*, 2 vols. (Tübingen: Cotta, 1804), II:321–22.

present themselves in feelings and persuasions, in love and intellect."[16] By the nineteenth century "Protestantism" had acquired a set of meanings that ranged from the embrace of the gospel and rejection of Rome to the conviction that Protestantism was responsible for material progress, advanced philosophy, and even modern freedom itself. "The designation 'Protestants' can be used in two senses," declared the *Allgemeine deutsche Real-Encyclopädie* in 1822. In the first sense, it can simply refer to those Imperial German estates and their subjects who have separated from Rome and "bound themselves through a common obligation to the Augsburg Confession." In the second sense, "Protestants" can refer to "those Christians" who "reject any human authority in matters of faith" and who submit only to Holy Scripture and those creeds that are in agreement with it.[17] "In the first sense," the entry continues, "this designation was linked to the legal conditions of the German Empire," and it was applicable neither to the Reformed in Germany – who did not adhere to the Augsburg Confession – and certainly not to "evangelicals" outside Germany. Moreover, with the disappearance of the Empire in 1806, these legal conditions no longer obtained, and the term, in this specific legal and historical sense, ceased to have any meaning. However, "in the second sense, the expression 'Protestant' belongs not only to the history of German law, but to world history. Because it designates a living, permanent, and always developing principle of religious thought, it also belongs to the present."[18] Beyond asserting Protestantism's world-historical importance, the second definition implied, but left unsaid, that the term "Protestant" had also expanded far beyond its original religious context.[19]

I.2 "Protestantism": A Concept and Its History in Early Modern Germany

These characterizations of Protestantism by educators, theologians, and philosophers around 1800 would have come as a great surprise to the

[16] G. F. W. Hegel, "Faith and Knowledge," in *Faith and Knowledge*, ed. and trans. W. Cerf and H. S. Harris (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977), 57.

[17] "Protestanten," in *Allgemeine deutsche Real-Encyclopädie für die gebildeten Stände (Conversations-Lexicon)*, ed. Friedrich Arnold Brockhaus, vol. 7, *O bis Q* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1822), 869–70.

[18] Ibid., 870.

[19] The best overviews, with further references, are offered by Johannes Wallman, "Protestantismus," in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4th ed., vol. 6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 1727–33; Hermann Fischer and Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, "Protestantismus," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (TRE), vol. 27 (1997), 542–80. See also Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, *Der Protestantismus. Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Munich: Beck, 2006).

evangelical theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for whom biblical authority, salvation, and human moral weakness remained fundamental concerns. The term "Protestant" first emerged as a political protest and was later adopted as an expression of derision by Catholic opponents. In 1526, an Imperial recess had delegated the enforcement of the Edict of Worms against Luther and the new faith to the estates. This effectively meant that the Reformation was in the hands of the evangelical princes and imperial cities that had chosen to "embrace the gospel." By 1529, however, the Emperor and his brother Ferdinand – his deputy in the Empire – were in a stronger position and revoked the 1526 recess. At the Second Diet of Speyer in 1529, a minority group of German princes and imperial cities issued a "*protestatio*" against this revocation. Evangelical unity would not last long, however. In the same year, Luther and Zwingli failed to come to an agreement over the meaning of the Eucharist at the Marburg Colloquy, setting into motion a long split among adherents of the new faith.[20] Eventually, Lutheran and Reformed theologians would come to dispute two other major points. The first had to do with the doctrine of predestination and the second with the union of divine and human nature in Christ's person.[21]

"Lutherans" would eventually identify themselves as adherents of the Augsburg Confession (1530), while heirs of Zwingli and Calvin adopted "Reformed" and its cognates. "Protestant," or "the Protesting ones" (*Protestierende*), was more often used in Germany as a term of abuse by Catholic opponents. The formation of confessional differences after the settlement of 1555 was almost as bitter between evangelicals as it was between "Protestants" and Catholics. After the Peace of Westphalia (1648), the two parties could come together as the "*corpus evangelicorum*" in Imperial Diets when religious matters were to be discussed. Although Catholics would refer to them as "Protestants," it was rarely used in a positive sense.

There were, of course, exceptions. A few theologians did use the term to refer to adherents of the Augsburg Confession. Under certain circumstances, even the Reformed could be understood in this usage. The term "Protestant" has been shown to have been employed in theological polemic in the late sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth

[20] Thomas Kaufmann, *Geschichte der Reformation in Deutschland*, revised and expanded edition (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016), 538–41.

[21] Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele, *Christoph Matthäus Pfaff und die Kirchenunionsbestrebungen des Corpus Evangelicorum* (Mainz: Phillip von Zabern, 1998), 16.

century, even if its use was not widespread.[22] An early outlier in a more inclusive usage was a book on "Protestant Doctrine" in 1662 by Gerhard Titius, a student of the irenic Helmstedt theologian George Calixt. Calixt had actively pursued unification with his Reformed brethren as well as with Catholics, an effort that earned him deep scorn from much of the Lutheran Orthodox establishment. Calixt's (and his successors' at Helmstedt) irenicism thus established an important intellectual background for Protestant unity but did not lead in any direct way to a unified church.

Born in the context of German Imperial politics, the term "Protestant" found more widespread acceptance in England as a term of identification. It was also deployed to emphasize the rejection of Catholicism and Catholic liturgical elements within the Church of England. As early as 1601, William Barlow (later Bishop of Rochester and Lincoln) published *A Defence of the Articles of the Protestants Religion* in response to a Catholic "libell."[23] The latter phrase reappeared in William Chillingworth's *The Religion of the Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation* in 1638, likewise a reply to Catholic polemic. William Laud's godson and member of the Great Tew Circle, Chillingworth had briefly converted to Roman Catholicism before returning to the Anglican fold. Latitudinarian in his theological tendencies, he saw in the doctrines of the Church of England nothing that would hinder salvation. "The Bible, the Bible only I say is the religion of Protestants," he declared.[24] Chillingworth's Protestantism was not doctrinally restrictive, but it was consciously opposed to Roman Catholic claims of infallibility. Later in the century, John Milton would also invoke "Protestantism" and "the Protestant religion" in *Eikonoklastes* (1649), his treatise justifying the execution of Charles I.[25] As a term of identification, "Protestantism" thus did not carry specific doctrinal connotation but, especially in the English political context, invoked a certain kind of

[22] See Christian Witt, "Protestantes – Protestierende – Protestanten. Zum Werden eines Integrationsbegriffs in der theologischen Literatur des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts," *Monatshefte für evangelische Kirchengeschichte des Rheinlands* 60 (2011): 221; and Christian Witt, *Protestanten: Das Werden eines Integrationsbegriffs in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011). In his detailed study, Witt argues that Reformed theologians used versions of "Protestant" as an integrative term. They emphasized a more inclusive version of the Augsburg Confession (the *Variata*) and thereby argued that the Reformed were covered under the umbrella of those who had originally protested at Speyer in 1529.

[23] William Barlow, *A Defence of the Articles of the Protestants Religion* (London, 1601).

[24] Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants. The Church in English Society 1559–1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), viii. On Chillingworth, see Warren Chernaik, "Chillingworth, William (1602–1644)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[25] Graff, "Protestantismus," TRE.

freedom and rejected Catholicism. Some scholars suggest that the English usage of "Protestantism" was imported slowly into Germany and pushed aside alternative uses, but there is little direct evidence for this. Alternatively, it has been shown that several German theologians did use the term in an "integrative" sense already by the end of the sixteenth century.[26] Such usage, in any case, was not widespread.

By 1700, with the religious and political chaos of mid-seventeenth-century Germany in the rearview mirror, the term continued to be shaped and transformed. The German territories of the Holy Roman Empire had recovered economically and demographically from the ravages of the Thirty Years War. Under the long reign of Leopold I, the Empire had achieved a certain level of political stability. Defeat at the Siege of Vienna (1693) meant the effective end of Ottoman expansion in the West, while the Peace of Rijswijk (1697) seemed to finally draw a limit to Louis XIV's ability to seize more territory from the Empire.[27] According to the Westphalian settlement, religious matters were handled at the Imperial Diet by separating into religious caucuses – the *Corpus catholicorum* and the *Corpus evangelicorum* – thus in principle removing religion as a possible spark for future civil war. This does not mean that religious uniformity reigned within these confessional groupings. Lutherans made up a decisive majority of Protestants in the Empire. Reformed territories were mainly smaller polities, except for the Palatinate.[28] Brandenburg was a significant exception in that the ruling Hohenzollern house was Reformed, despite its overwhelmingly Lutheran population.[29] In Brandenburg and elsewhere Reformed refugee communities also constituted a strong presence disproportionate to their low numbers. Well into the eighteenth century many

[26] The thesis of reimportation from England is offered by Wallmann, as well as by Martin Ohst, "Protestantismus," *Evangelisches Staatslexikon*, new edition, eds. Werner Heun et al. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006), col. 1865, and by Fischer and Graf. Christian Witt argues that there is no evidence for this, and that the term was already developed in German debates about the status of the Reformed. See Witt, *Protestanten*, 272.

[27] Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II: The Peace of Westphalia to the Dissolution of the Reich, 1648–1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 51–52.

[28] A Catholic branch of the Wittelsbach dynasty succeeded to the electoral dignity after 1685, but the Reformed minority was protected by the terms of the Peace of Westphalia. Christopher Ocker, "Calvin and Calvinism in Germany," in *The Oxford Handbook of Calvin and Calvinism*, eds. Bruce Gordon and Carl R. Trueman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 199–219.

[29] This became a key theme in the history of Brandenburg Prussia, and the Hohenzollerns continually sought to undermine the independent power of the Lutheran establishment, protected and sponsored the Pietists in Berlin and Halle, and welcomed French Huguenots. See Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II*, 307.

Lutherans considered Reformed theology to be as bad as Catholicism, a feeling that was no doubt mutual.

A common fear of a Catholic threat did serve somewhat to bind the parties together. Louis XIV's expulsion of Huguenots and his suppression of the Camisards were fresh in Protestants' minds when a new wave of Catholic aggressiveness erupted.[30] The conversion of some twenty princes between 1680 and 1720, most notably the Saxon Elector Frederick August I, raised the specter of Catholic domination. The revelation on the eve of the 1717 commemoration of the Reformation that the crown prince (the future Frederick August II) had already converted to Catholicism five years earlier was a hard blow given that Electoral Saxony chaired the *Corpus evangelicorum*, indicating that the Saxon dynasty's Catholicism was more than a formality in the interest of the Polish crown.[31] In addition, the Habsburg court had been actively pursuing dynastic Catholic politics within the Empire, encouraging princely conversions and rewarding smaller families with court positions and dignities in the Empire. In 1719, the Catholic Elector of the Palatinate, relying on a clause of the Treaty of Ryswick (1697), revoked the long-standing rights of the Reformed to worship in Heidelberg's Church of the Holy Spirit. The resulting controversy generated a flurry of political activity at the Diet and an equivalent response in the public sphere by outraged Protestants.[32] In one of the last acts of large-scale religious intolerance in the Empire, the

[30] John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture: Religious Intolerance and Arguments for Religious Toleration in Early Modern and "Early Enlightenment" Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 55–93.

[31] Wolfgang Flügel, *Konfession und Jubiläum: zur Institutionalisierung der lutherischen Gedenkkultur in Sachsen 1617–1830* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2005), 125. According to Flügel the Lutheran Church in Saxony still celebrated the anniversary but for political reasons did not engage in the kind of sharp anti-Catholic polemic characteristic of other celebrations.

[32] Karl Borgmann, *Der deutsche Religionsstreit der Jahre 1719/20* (Berlin: Verlag für Staatswissenschaften und Geschichte, 1937); Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II*, 150–56; Patrick Milton, "The Early Eighteenth-Century German Confessional Crisis: The Juridification of Religious Conflict in the Reconfessionalized Politics of the Holy Roman Empire," *Central European History* 49, no. 1 (2016): 39–68. For the international religious-political angle, see Alexander Schunka, *Ein neuer Blick nach Westen: deutsche Protestanten und Grossbritannien (1688–1740)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019), 298–317. As a consequence of this fear, several delegates at the permanent (*immerwährende*) Diet of Regensburg made proposals to forge a unified Protestant church. The Tübingen theologian Christoph Matthäus Pfaff took it upon himself to encourage these efforts at unification. Despite the seemingly unbridgeable differences between Lutherans and Reformed, he wrote in a brief treatise of 1720, "we live in such a time ... when all the sciences are enlightening themselves." Therefore, he continued, "the unification of the Protesting churches would seem to be reasonable, Christian, necessary, useful and possible." [Christoph Matthäus Pfaff], *Näherer Entwurff von der Vereinigung der Protestirenden Kirchen* (Regensburg, 1720), 6–7. See Schäufele, *Christoph Matthäus Pfaff*, 125–36.

Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg expelled about twenty thousand Protestants from his territories in 1731. Many of these eventually settled in Prussia, but some went as far as North America. Beyond the hardships those directly affected endured, the expulsion resulted in an enormous propaganda campaign.[33]

The Orthodox Lutheran ecclesiastical advisor Ernst Salomon Cyprian leaned into this general sense of Catholic threat in his massive volume commemorating the 1717 Reformation anniversary.[34] Cyprian's *Hilaria evangelica* gathered official documents, orations, descriptions of ceremonies, and an extensive reproduction of commemorative medals from over one hundred territories, aiming to provide a historical description of celebrations of the second anniversary of the Reformation across the German lands.[35] Accompanied by an extensive defense of the Reformation and an account of the origins of the papacy, the folio volume spanned over fifteen hundred pages.[36] As he wrote in a slightly earlier abbreviated version, the Church in Luther's time needed a thorough Reformation since it was corrupt in doctrine, liturgy, governance, and life.[37] In the 1719 volume, he attacked "natural religion" and atheism, as well as the papacy.

But Cyprian's image of unity did not reflect the reality of German Protestantism circa 1717. Indeed, he recognized this less than fifteen years later in his *History of the Augsburg Confession*. During the 1617 anniversary, Cyprian writes, the church was threatened much more from the outside than it is now. However, compared to the present, "within the church

[33] Mack Walker, *The Salzburg Transaction: Expulsion and Redemption in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

[34] With the conversion of the Saxon Electors to Catholicism, Cyprian particularly saw the ruling house of Saxe-Gotha as a defender of Lutheranism. Through his many polemics Cyprian positioned himself as an ardent defender of Lutheran Orthodoxy, against what he perceived as multiple inner-Protestant threats such as Pietism and irenicism, as well as atheism and Catholicism. See Alexander Schunka, "Fighting or Fostering Plurality?: Ernst Salomon Cyprian as a Historian of Lutheranism in the Early Eighteenth Century," in *Archaeologies of Confession: Writing the German Reformation, 1517–2017*, eds. David Luebke et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 152–53.

[35] Also included were celebrations in Denmark, England, Sweden, and other Protestant lands. See Schunka, "Fighting or Fostering Plurality?"; Harm Cordes, *Hilaria evangelica academica : das Reformationsjubiläum von 1717 an den deutschen lutherischen Universitäten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006); Gustav Adolf Benrath, "Ernst Salomon Cyprian als Reformationshistoriker," in *Ernst Salomon Cyprian (1673–1745) : zwischen Orthodoxie, Pietismus und Frühaufklärung*, eds. Johannes Wallmann and Ernst Koch (Gotha: Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, 1996), 36–48.

[36] Ernst Salomon Cyprian, *Hilaria Evangelica, oder, Theologisch-historischer Bericht vom andern Evangelischen Jubel-Fest* (Gotha: Weidmann, 1719).

[37] Ernst Salomon Cyprian, *Hilaria Evangelica, Oder: Historische Beschreibung des Andern Evangel. Jubel-Festes.* (Leipzig: M.G. Weidmanns, 1718), n.p. [a2].

there were fewer evil examples, more unity in doctrine, less unbelief . . . less curiosity and more well-disposed Christians."[38] Those ignorant of history, as well as atheists, Cyprian continues, ignore or make light of the current jubilee because they have forgotten about crimes inflicted by the Roman yoke and the deep ignorance in which the nation was sunk.[39] Cyprian's concerns about disunity were by no means unfounded. As Alexander Schunka writes, this period was characterized by a "pool of religious options" that was felt by many contemporaries and was evident in often-shifting Protestant groupings and alliances.[40]

The biggest group in this pool were the Pietists. The term, originally pejorative, came from Philip Jakob Spener's *Pia desideria* (1675), which called for "God-pleasing" improvement in the evangelical Church.[41] While Pietism varied along confessional and regional lines, common features included an emphasis on practical piety, the formation of conventicles (small gatherings of believers), a stress on spiritual interiority, and a de-emphasis on doctrine in favor of spiritual reform. The movement quickly grew from its roots in Frankfurt and Leipzig. After August Hermann Francke established a Pietist orphanage in Halle (also home to a newly established university), the movement grew to encompass a far-reaching network of schools and missions. Because Pietism emphasized practical piety and inner conviction, it was easier to see a common "Protestantism" beneath the surface disagreements over doctrine.[42] Closely related to Pietism, yet reaching far beyond it, was the global evangelical awakening, whose roots can be traced to a confluence of political and religious pressures – especially those in Habsburg central Europe – and the inflexibility of the orthodox Protestant establishment

[38] Ernst Salomon Cyprian, *Historia der Augspurgischen confession* (Gotha: Johann Andreas Reyher, 1730), 10.

[39] Ibid., 11.

[40] Alexander Schunka, "Deutsche Protestantismen um 1700," in *Reformation und katholische Reform zwischen Kontinuität und Innovation*, eds. Frank Kleinehagenbrock et al. (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2019), 506.

[41] Definitions vary from expansive uses that see Pietism as part of a much larger movement that would include English Puritanism and the Dutch *nadere Reformatie* to more narrow ones that focus specifically on the ways in which theological polemic and mutual antagonism created "Pietism" and "Orthodoxy." Scholars also vary in their emphasis of how much weight to ascribe to social history versus theology. The standard overview is Martin Brecht et al., *Geschichte des Pietismus*, 4 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993–2004). For a brief overview of the various scholarly definitions, see Douglas H. Shantz, *An Introduction to German Pietism: Protestant Renewal at the Dawn of Modern Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 1–11; Jonathan Strom, "Problems and Promises of Pietism Research," *Church History* 71, no. 3 (2002): 536–54.

[42] Wallman, "Protestantismus."

in dealing with the new swelling of religious enthusiasm.[43] Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf, educated in Pietest Halle, allowed persecuted Moravian refugees to settle on his Saxon estates and establish the Moravian Church in Herrnhut, which eventually because the center for a global revival.

Like "Pietism," there is no satisfactory single definition for its antipode, the Orthodox Lutheran establishment, to which qualifiers such as "rigid," "cold," or "lifeless" have typically been attached. The reality was more complex. In fact, the category of "Lutheran Orthodoxy" has been contested for quite some time by historians of early modern Protestantism who long ago rejected the caricature of a spiritually dead ecclesiastical establishment. Indeed, this image of rigidity was one constructed by its Pietist opponents, just as the Orthodox created their own negative counterimage of Pietists as separatist enthusiasts or heretics.[44] It makes more sense to speak of Lutheran *establishments*, in that each territorial church operated independently from the others, with governance and culture varying according to the ruling prince or his consistory. Nonetheless, characteristic features included a commitment to the doctrinal statements of the Formula of Concord, an emphasis on academic theology (supported by Aristotelian scholastic philosophy) against more popular or nonscholarly versions, and a commitment to the doctrine of verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture.[45]

The closer one looks, in other words, the less neat appear the traditional groupings and oppositions among German Protestants in the early eighteenth century. Nonetheless, as Alexander Schunka writes, for all their

[43] W. R. Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); W. R. Ward, "Power and Piety: The Origins of Religious Revival in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 63, no. 1 (1980): 231–51.

[44] Christian Volkmar Witt, "Protestantische Kirchengeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit ohne 'Orthodoxie'?: Kategoriale Beobachtungen zur Erkundung eines Forschungsproblems," *Kerygma und Dogma* 65, no. 1 (2019): 47–67. For a fuller treatment of the concept as a historiographical problem, see Christian Volkmar Witt, *Lutherische "Orthodoxie" als historisches Problem: Leitidee, Konstruktion und Gegenbegriff von Gottfried Arnold bis Ernst Troeltsch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021).

[45] Thomas Kaufmann suggests using the term "Orthodoxy" not as an "epochal" concept but instead as a "directional" one. This latter use would emphasize tendencies within the process of differentiation in the formation of confessional cultures. In that sense, "Pietists" and "Orthodox" constituted one another both in their respective self-positioning as in their construction of historical memory. Thomas Kaufmann, *Dreissigjähriger Krieg und Westfälischer Friede : kirchengeschichtliche Studien zur lutherischen Konfessionskultur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 149f. note 375. Cited in Witt, "Protestantische Kirchengeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit ohne 'Orthodoxie'?" 55. For an overview, see Johannes Wallmann, "Orthodoxie," in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4th ed., vol. 6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 696–702.

disparate views and mutual antagonism, Protestants of all stripes looked back in one way or another to the Reformation as a core feature of their identity.[46] And in none of these invocations of the Protestant past would one find the assertion that the Reformation had created and would support modern freedom and philosophical exploration as formulated in the pronouncements of Campe, Stäudlin, or Heine. To understand how it was possible to write this after 1800 when it was not in 1700 is the task of this book.

I.3 Intellectual Contexts and Conflicts

In arguing that a series of assertions in public debate transformed the meanings of Protestantism and the Reformation this book is indebted to the contextualist intellectual history that is commonly referred to as the "Cambridge School" of intellectual history and political thought. Accordingly, the book throughout seeks to demonstrate how theological, philosophical, and historical assertions were made by interested parties and why it is important to recover the assumptions and positions of their interlocutors, real or imagined. It also investigates the conditions that gave rise to these new articulations, all the while recognizing that even supposedly new developments, such as the rise of public debates and discussion in the public sphere, grew from earlier vernacular controversies and religious debate, such as those among and between Pietist and Orthodox theologians.[47]

To clarify the terms and method that this book will follow, a few preliminary definitions are in order. The terms "public sphere" and "Protestant public," as I use them in this book, denote the emergence of a print vernacular culture in Germany that comprised, so to speak, a transformation in both supply and demand: an accelerating increase in printed journals and books as well as what some historians refer to as a "reading revolution" by the end of the eighteenth century. This "revolution" denotes both an explosion of interest in topics from literature and religion to natural science and public affairs, as well as a transition from "intensive" (few books read repeatedly) to "extensive" (multiple

[46] Schunka, "Deutsche Protestantismen um 1700," 523.

[47] Martin Gierl argues that the Enlightenment public sphere in Germany did not replace some completely different communication structure; it built off, even if it changed, a structure already there, which had emerged from Pietism. Martin Gierl, *Pietismus und Aufklärung: theologische Polemik und die Kommunikationsreform der Wissenschaft am Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 12.

and wide-ranging works, read with less intensity) reading. Included in this reading revolution was a change in social manifestations of reading, from collective and aloud to private and silent. These changes generated a share of anxieties by moralists concerned with the social dangers of uncontrolled access to reading material of all sorts.[48] These shifts in reading desires and practices map onto changes in the printing industry itself. Reinhard Wittmann notes how, after mid-century, printers transitioned from a system of exchange and barter to one that regarded books as pure commodities, resulting in shifts in marketing and sales strategies. Evidence from the Leipzig bookfair catalog confirms the explosion in titles (many of them novels).[49]

Admittedly, theology and "religious" material comprised a smaller proportion of this print production, but it contributed to this increasing market for reading and indeed competed for much of the same readership. Print culture, in other words, was the principal medium in which "the Enlightenment" as a process of debate and discussion unfolded. It was also confessionally inflected. While anyone who could read and access these works (censorship notwithstanding) constituted the public, the unspoken audience of much of this writing was the literate Protestant middle class as well as those nobles who largely adopted bourgeois culture and practices. The rise of this public was enabled by the general improvement in German economic and social conditions. Devastated by the Thirty Years War, the German population, for example, had finally begun to rebound to its prewar levels by the 1740s, with a sustained growth in population commencing after mid-century.[50] The Protestant public overlapped with other "publics." In much of German historiography, however, it has been taken to be the normative one. Later in the eighteenth century, some Catholics expressly invoked a lag in literary and cultural output as measured against their Protestant compatriots.[51] The key point is that the existence and growth of this print public sphere was the field upon which new meanings

[48] For an overview, see James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 81–122; Reinhard Wittmann, "Was There a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?" in *A History of Reading in the West*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo, Roger Chartier, and Lydia G. Cochrane (Oxford: Polity Press, 1999), 284–312; Reinhard Wittmann, *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels: ein Überblick* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1991), 171–99.

[49] Wittmann, "Was There a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?" 301–02.

[50] James J. Sheehan, *German History, 1770–1866* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 75.

[51] Jeffrey T. Zalar, *Reading and Rebellion in Catholic Germany, 1770–1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 18–29.

of Protestantism were negotiated.[52] The title of this book refers to that very process: "Enlightenment's Reformation" is the idea – or, better, a set of ideas – of the Reformation as created by public discussion and debate that had some coherence but also carried multiple valences. Importantly, whatever material and demographic basis it had in books and flesh-and-blood readers, it was most powerful as an imagined public to which writers appealed for legitimation and authority.[53]

The dyad of religion and theology, while obviously overlapping, likewise needs explanation. "Theology" is the easier of the two.[54] As commonly used today in relation to Christianity, "theology" designates the academic or formalized study of the nature and doctrines of belief or the institutional or authoritative promulgation of such teachings. The same definition was more or less current in the eighteenth century. "In the narrowest sense," Johann Christoph Adelung wrote in his dictionary in 1780, theology "refers to the revealed theology that contains the doctrine of God, his essence, person and works, as distinguished from anthropology, which is the doctrine of the relationship of humans to God."[55] But as Adelung, Zedler, and other lexicographers noted, that definition was rarely kept within strict boundaries, given that in its broadest sense and according to its Greek origins "theology" simply referred to "the doctrine of God and divine matters."[56] However, most uses of theology emphasized the intellectual nature of the enterprise, and in the minds of most eighteenth-century Germans the term "*Theologie*" (occasionally "*Gottesgelahrtheit*") was grounded in ecclesiastical or academic institutions.

Religion was another matter. In contemporary scholarly fields such as anthropology, sociology, or religious studies, there is no agreed-upon

[52] Wittmann, *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels*. On the role of public debate and controversy, see Ursula Goldenbaum, *Appell an das Publikum: die öffentliche Debatte in der deutschen Aufklärung 1687–1796*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004). Goledenbaum argues that the early Enlightenment debates – starting with the controversy over the Wertheimer Bible – set out the contours for public argumentation over the respective roles of reason and faith (and the limits of philosophy) through the advent of German Idealism. Ibid., 1:79.

[53] Ursula Goldenbaum, leaning on Ernst Manheim, refers to this as the "transcendental public." Ibid., 1:186–89. On the intersection of socioeconomic change and the emergence of the public sphere as a "powerful ideological construct," see Anthony J. La Vopa, "Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe," *The Journal of Modern History* 64, no. 1 (1992): 79–116.

[54] For the effort to regularize what constituted a proper course of study in theology in the context of the eighteenth-century university reforms, see Zachary Purvis, *Theology and the University in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 38–64.

[55] Johann Christoph Adelung, *Versuch eines vollständigen grammatisch-kritischen Wörterbuches der Hochdeutschen Mundart*, vol. 4 (Leipzig, 1780), col. 956–57.

[56] Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universal Lexicon Aller Wissenschafften und Künste* (Halle and Leipzig: Zedler, 1732–54), vol. 43, Sp. 857 [1745].

definition.[57] Eighteenth-century usage was almost as broad.[58] Zedler's *Lexikon* notes that the term derives from the Latin "*religare* because so to speak, it binds people with God."[59] Adelung writes that, in a narrower sense, religion denotes "that which binds people among themselves and also at the same time to God." This can be further understood objectively as "the manner of worship itself, which is based on specific truths." That is to say, Christianity, Judaism, or Islam each is a "religion," understood as an objective body of doctrines and practices. Further, the "specific branches of these main religions are also granted the name 'religion,' such as Catholic, Lutheran or Reformed." The term is thus used to indicate adherence to or fall from a specific religion or to characterize the religion of others. Subjectively, Adelung continues, religion is used in the singular to refer to a person's or group's attitude, intensity (or lack thereof), or engagement or withdrawal from the religion that one professes or to which one may supposedly belong.[60] In the 1770s, Johann Salomo Semler would make his famous distinction between theology and religion by noting that the former was the purview of academic theologians and served as the basis for the public and authorized instruction in Christianity. The latter, in which he pled for freedom of conscience in private exercise, referred to the individual's appropriation and incorporation of that faith.[61] While the definitions of religion and theology overlapped, it is important to be attuned to the different meanings each carried in the eighteenth century. The Protestant Enlighteners' goal was to reform religion as understood in the broader sense, and they did this both within formalized disciplines such as theology but also by appealing to more amorphous notions of "religion." Heine alluded to this multivalence when he expressed his aim to

[57] Arthur L. Greil, "Defining Religion," in *The World's Religions: Continuities and Transformations*, eds. Peter B. Clarke and Peter Beyer (London: Routledge, 2009).

[58] For a comprehensive overview of the uses of the term, see Ernst Feil, *Religio, Volume 4: Die Geschichte eines neuzeitlichen Grundbegriffs im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007). In this volume Feil contends that the meaning of the term was relatively stable from antiquity to 1700, arguing that it began its modern transformation in the middle of the eighteenth century. Ibid., 14–16, 879–83. For a summary in English (from the original German RGG), see Ernst Feil et al., "Religion," in *Religion Past and Present* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/religion-past-and-present/religion.

[59] Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universal Lexicon Aller Wissenschafften und Künste*, vol. 31, Sp. 443 (1742).

[60] Adelung, *Versuch eines vollständigen grammatisch-kritischen Wörterbuches der Hochdeutschen Mundart*, Bd. 3, Sp. 1082.

[61] See also Chapter 3 for a fuller discussion. Johann Salomo Semler, *Institutio ad doctrinam Christianam liberaliter discendam, auditorum usui destinata* (Halle, 1774); and Johann Salomo Semler, *Versuch einer freiern theologischen Lehrart, zur Bestätigung und Erläuterung seines lateinisches Buchs* (Halle, 1777).

discuss "those philosophical questions which we deem to have social importance and for which philosophy competes with religion to find answers."[62] "[R]eligion," Hegel would say in his Berlin lectures in the 1820s, "is for everyone. It is not philosophy, which is not for everyone."[63] The overlap (and, indeed, competition) between philosophical and religious approaches to questions of self, society, the Church, and the state – not to mention the relation of all of these to Christian traditions – constitutes the dynamism of the Enlightenment's redefinition of Protestantism.

The final term that merits definition is "philosophy," which had its own evolution in this period. As Terry Pinkard writes, Kant and his followers believed that they had revolutionized the nature of philosophy.[64] Indeed, in Eckhart Förster's pithy phrase, the period between Kant's first critique (1781) and a lecture by Hegel in 1806 constituted "the Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy."[65] The germ of that idea was planted by Kant himself, who insisted in the preface to the first section of the *Metaphysics of Morals* that, "although it may seem an arrogant claim ... before the rise of critical philosophy there had been no philosophy at all."[66] While Kant qualified this statement by situating it in a discussion of whether it was possible for there to be many philosophies or only one, it was clear where he (and his successors) stood on the matter. Hegel saw himself as completing this process, declaring at the end of his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* that with his appearance on the scene in 1806 "[h]erewith, this history of philosophy comes to an end." From another perspective, of course, that contention is absurd, given a documented history of philosophy spanning more than two and a half millennia.[67]

[62] Heine, *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany and Other Writings*, 42.

[63] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion: The Lectures of 1827*, ed. Peter C. Hodgson, trans. R. F. Brown, Peter C. Hodgson, and J. M. Stewart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 106.

[64] Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860*, 2.

[65] Eckart Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy: A Systematic Reconstruction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[66] Immanuel Kant, Preface to first part of the *Metaphysik der Sitten* (Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Rechtslehre), AA IV: 206. For the reference: Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy*, ix (translation modified).

[67] Ibid., ix. Förster quotes Hegel from *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* 20:461 (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, eds. Eva Moldenhauer, Karl Markus Michel, and Helmut Reinicke, 20 vols., Theorie-Werkausgabe (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1969). Hegel ends his history of philosophy with himself; that is, the *Phenomenology*. The lectures were delivered multiple times over his career, starting in Jena in 1805–06 but also in his Heidelberg period, and then finally several times in Berlin up until his death in 1831. They were published posthumously based on his own fragments and notes as well as student notes in 1833–36. See

More importantly, as Ian Hunter has argued, the Kantian triumphal narrative was itself part of an intellectual civil war between two rival versions of enlightenment. The first, a jurisprudential or civil enlightenment, originating in the writings of Pufendorf and Thomasius, stressed the separation of moral theology and metaphysics from the state, seeking a wholly secular basis for civil power in order to "desacralize" the confessional state and ensure that the religious civil wars of the seventeenth century did not return. The other enlightenment centers on Wolff's refinement of Leibniz's thought, based in a "universal anthropology of rational being." The post-Kantian version of philosophical history casts both Thomasius and Wolff as philosophically deficient. Thomasius' voluntarism, on the one hand, lacks moral grounding and leads to mere political utilitarianism. Wolff's rationalism, on the other, has no basis in empirical experience. Kant is then said to have overcome these deficiencies and merged them into the "correct" philosophical basis for the Enlightenment. But this interpretation, in Hunter's words, "uproots the rival intellectual cultures from their ascetic and institutional conditions, turning them into mere actors in the theatre of Kantian dialectics."[68] Hegel continues this line of thought, historicizing the development of consciousness with his dialectical method. Hunter's insight into these rival enlightenments reveals the way in which the triumph of one strain of intellectual culture should be seen as the product of a set of assertions and arguments articulated in the public sphere in which one version of the story wins out over others. This book shows how a Reformation progress narrative was mobilized in the service of this assertion.

For much of the period, philosophy was considered one of the lower or preparatory disciplines, alongside the other fields in the "philosophical" faculty, which also comprised history, rhetoric, the natural sciences, and other foundational disciplines at most universities.[69] The discipline of philosophy was not well compensated, and many professors sought to move to the higher faculties of law, theology, or medicine. Authors of

Frederick Beiser, "Introduction to the Bison Book Edition," in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, ed. Frederick Beiser, trans. E. S. Haldane, vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), xxxi–xxxiv.

[68] Ian Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments: Civil and Metaphysical Philosophy in Early Modern Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 271.

[69] It is also important, as Ian Hunter and others caution, not to project the post-Kantian version of the philosopher back onto early modern Europe. See Ian Hunter, "The History of Philosophy and the Persona of the Philosopher," *Modern Intellectual History* 4, no. 3 (2007): 571–600; Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter, *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe: The Nature of a Contested Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

lexica agreed on the Greek roots of the term as the "love of wisdom," while Adelung pointed out that the term *Weltweisheit* – "worldly wisdom" as opposed to *Gottesgelerhtheit*, "divine learning" or theology – was in common use but could be imprecise. A basic dispute over the boundaries and ambition of philosophy animated much of the debate in the eighteenth century. The most expansive definition of the discipline could be found in the system of Christian Wolff, who built upon the thought of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. In the so-called German Logic of 1713, Wolff simply declared that "Philosophy is a science of all possible things, and how and why they are possible," further asserting, according to his "geometric method," that by "science" he meant the "capability of understanding" to provide irrefutable reasons linked in a chain of reasoning. By possible "I mean everything which can exist, whether it really is or not."[70] Wolff built his philosophy from there, reaching into every aspect of the human and the natural worlds based on the principles of sufficient reason and preestablished harmony. The latter concept would lead to conflict with Pietists at the University of Halle, resulting in Wolff's expulsion from Prussia in 1723, although he would triumphantly return in 1740.[71] Johann Georg Walch, who played a minor role in the opposition to Wolff, encouraged instead philosophical modesty. In his *Philosophical Lexicon* and the textbook he published to accompany it in 1726–27, he insisted that philosophy had to maintain differing levels of certainty according to the topic, that philosophers should know the limits of reason according to the subject at hand, and that one should adopt an "eclectic" approach rather than a "sectarian" one that tried to bring all philosophy under one system.[72]

[70] Christian Wolff, *Vernünfftige Gedancken von den Kräfften des menschlichen Verstandes & ihrem richtigen Gebrauche in Erkäntnis der Wahrheit*, in Christian Wolff, *Gesammelte Werke*, eds. J. Ecole et al., ser. 1., vol 1. Preface, § 1 (Hildesheim: Olms, 1965), 115.

[71] For more on Wolff and the Pietists, see Chapter 2. See also Albrecht Beutel, "Causa Wolffiana. Die Vertreibung Christian Wolffs aus Preußen 1723 als Kulminationspunkt der theologisch-politischen Konflikts zwischen Halleschem Pietismus und Aufklärungsphilosophie," in *Reflektierte Religion : Beiträge zur Geschichte des Protestantismus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 125–69; Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, 265–73; Carl Hinrichs, *Preußentum und Pietismus: der Pietismus in Brandenburg-Preußen als religiös-soziale Reformbewegung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 388–441; Simon Grote, "Wolffianism and Pietism in Eighteenth-Century German Philosophy," *Intellectual History Review* 33:4 (2023): 673–70.

[72] Johann Georg Walch, *Philosophisches Lexicon* (Leipzig: Gleditsch, 1726), col. 1988; Horst Dreitzel, "Zur Entwicklung und Eigenart der 'eklektischen Philosophie,'" *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 18, no. 3 (1991): 281–343. See also Johann Georg Walch, *Einleitung in die Philosophie, worinnen alle Theile derselbigen nach ihrem richtigen Zusammenhang erkläret und der Ursprung nebst dem Fortgang einer ieden Disciplin zugleich erzehlet worden, Sonderlich zum Gebrauch des Philosophischen Lexici* (Leipzig: Gleditsch, 1727), 22–32.

While the eclectic tradition still had its strongholds, by the middle of the century Wolffian thought nonetheless came to dominate German intellectual culture, and, as the story goes, it was only once Kant awoke from his "dogmatic slumbers" – that is to say, from Wolffian metaphysics – that the project of critical philosophy began. A more self-restrained philosophical tradition stemmed from the work of Christian Thomasius and, before him, Pufendorf. Famous for offering the first university lectures in German, Thomasius was also the most distinguished advocate for an eclectic philosophy. Though that tradition had many branches stretching into antiquity, the key matter of dispute in the eighteenth century had to do with its stance against the absolute claims of rationalism and insistence on the autonomy of the disciplines. The assertion of differing levels of certainty for specific spheres of knowledge constituted a key aspect of eclecticism.[73] Eclecticism was eventually overwhelmed by Wolffian philosophy, though it did persist in the "popular philosophy" of the mainstream German Enlightenment, which in the work of such thinkers as Georg Forster and Georg Christoph Lichtenberg avoided grand systems in favor of the practical natural and moral sciences.[74]

I offer this telescoped and schematic outline of German philosophy only to indicate that there was no settled definition of philosophy, even if there were some clearly agreed-upon concerns considered pertinent to the discipline. But it is key to acknowledge that the struggle over the boundaries, scope, and competence of philosophy took place not only within the ranks of philosophy proper but also between those claiming to speak for religion and those claiming to speak for philosophy. For this book, this dispute between the faculties matters because it reveals why in the 1780s the new breed of philosophers – beset by a set of intellectual and moral challenges – needed to appeal to the legacy of the Reformation to stake their claims on the big questions of social importance. The eclipse of popular philosophy and Wolffianism alike was the achievement of Kant and German Idealism, which, in opposition to the modest philosophical claims of eclecticism, asserted philosophy's power to interpret the word and infuse it with

[73] Dreitzel, "Zur Entwicklung und Eigenart der 'eklektischen Philosophie,'" 294, 314. Dreitzel's long article provides a comprehensive overview.

[74] John Zammito characterizes three phases of popular philosophy ("philosophy for the world") as: (1) Thomasian pragmatic eclecticism, (2) high Enlightenment opposition to Wolff under the influence of French and British thought from about 1750 to 1780; and (3) "Guerilla resistance" to the new "school philosophy" represented by critical philosophy and Idealism. See John Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 8–11.

meaning. And it was in that latter, more grandiose claim that "German philosophy" and the claims of religion butted heads.

I.4 Scholarly Contexts: Nature and Structure of This Book

The present study resides at the intersection of three realms of scholarship that only occasionally interact: the philosophical history of post-Kantian German Idealism, early modern history (including church history), and the history of the Enlightenment. Philosophers, of course, have wrestled at length with the emergence of Idealism and post-Kantian philosophy, but few take seriously the claims made by thinkers such as Reinhold, Fichte, or Hegel that their philosophy continued the Reformation or was some new form of Protestantism. While questions of religion, infinity, and the social context of thought are often at the center of philosophers' analyses, the specific historical claims made by their subjects are left aside as irrelevant. For example, while the philosophy of religion or general claims about religion may be at the center of many works on the period, how they got tied to *contemporaneous debates* over the meaning of the Reformation is not pursued. More importantly, philosophers are often more concerned in uncovering compelling or instructive arguments than the context or reasons for their original articulation.[75] This book will draw selectively from this philosophical scholarship but will have little new to add about the internal development and core philosophical questions of post-Kantian German Idealism, except in showing how this philosophy was popularized and why its proponents seized on the new language of Protestantism.[76]

The second realm of scholarship with which this study intersects is the history of religion and theology, church history, and early modern history of the Reformation era. Much of our view of Enlightenment theology has been shaped by influential accounts from Weimar and Nazi Germany by two theologians of very different allegiances. Karl Aner's classic monograph *Die Theologie der Lessingzeit* (1929) emerged from the liberal Protestant circle of Martin Rade, Adolf Harnack, and Ernst Troeltsch. Having turned toward pacifism in the closing years of the First World War and alarmed at the rise of "mysticism, irrationalism, Kierkegaard-fever, Luther

[75] George di Giovanni, *Freedom and Religion in Kant and His Immediate Successors: The Vocation of Humankind, 1774–1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).

[76] For the continued relevance of German Idealism to modern theology, see Gary J. Dorrien, *Kantian Reason and Hegelian Spirit: The Idealistic Logic of Modern Theology* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

Renaissance" and other "disparate currents," Aner encouraged a return to the rational theology of the Enlightenment theologians ("*neologs*"), who forged a careful balance between reason and revelation and laid the foundations for Wilhelmine liberal Protestantism.[77] To the other extreme, but no less influential, was Emanuel Hirsch's *History of Modern Protestant Theology*, which he composed between 1941 and 1946.[78] Hirsch's long-standing conservative nationalism was only sharpened and radicalized by the Weimar revolution, and he subsequently became one of the most important theologians associated with the German Christians. He served as dean of the Göttingen theological faculty from 1933 to 1939, and, following the death of his son on the eastern front in 1941, he turned to writing his magisterial account of Protestant thought since the Peace of Westphalia.[79] One could hardly imagine an outlook more dissimilar to Aner's and his fellow liberals than that of Hirsch, whose full embrace of the Nazi movement and the German Christians (*Deutsche Christen*) is well-known.[80] But they both saw in the Enlightenment the key turning point in the continued relevance of Christianity to the modern world.[81] Hirsch emphasized German Protestantism's adaptive capabilities, and he saw the crisis of the 1930s and 1940s as a chance to make up for the deficit in Germany's place in the world since the seventeenth century. For Hirsch, the Enlightenment is the key turning point because it represents the full engagement with the "modern" problems of the secular state and natural

[77] Aner, *Theologie*, 364–65. For a biographical summary, see Mathias Wolfes' excellent entry on Aner in the *Biographisches-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, vol. XVIII (2001), col. 70–87. I am indebted to Wolfes' article not only for the biographical information but also for his insightful comments about Aner's career and its political and intellectual context.

[78] Emanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie : im Zusammenhang mit den allgemeinen Bewegungen des europäischen Denkens*, 5 vols. (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1949–54). For a modern edition, see Emanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie : im Zusammenhang mit den allgemeinen Bewegungen des europäischen Denkens*, ed. Albrecht Beutel, 5 vols., Emanuel Hirsch Gesammelte Werke 5–9 (Waltrop: H. Spenner, 2000).

[79] The book is dedicated to the memory of his fallen son. On his role as dean, see Robert P. Ericksen, *Theologians under Hitler: Gerhard Kittel, Paul Althaus, and Emanuel Hirsch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 166–77.

[80] John Stroup, "Political Theology and Secularization Theory in Germany, 1918–1939: Emanuel Hirsch as a Phenomenon of His Time," *The Harvard Theological Review* 80, no. 3 (1987): 321–68; Ericksen, *Theologians under Hitler*); Klaus Scholder, *The Churches and the Third Reich* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988); John S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches, 1933–45* (New York: Basic Books, 1968).

[81] The willing embrace of National Socialism by many Protestant associations and churches – not to mention theological efforts to "cleanse" Christianity of its Jewish roots – is an enormous topic, which I will not attempt to outline here. See Doris L. Bergen, *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

law as well as the new scientific worldview.[82] In Hirsch, the Protestant Enlightenment found its most unlikely defender. To this day scholars of the period cannot do without his *History of Modern Protestant Theology*, even as they tread carefully around its *völkisch* provenance, while in Aner, they are able to cite a seemingly sober, neutral, and clear-eyed account of the main currents of the Protestant Enlightenment. But both shared, in a strange way, a progress narrative, with its distinctive mix of theology, philosophy, and history that originated in the Protestant Enlightenment.

Research on this period has been granted new life in the work of Albrecht Beutel and his students. His compact *Kirchengeschichte im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (2006) is the standard reference work on a topic that last received comprehensive attention – in terms not only of studies such as Aner's but also reprints of sources – before the Second World War.[83] Beutel takes up a tradition that had been pursued by liberal Protestants associated with Martin Rade and the newspaper *Die Christliche Welt*, the essential starting point of which was the Troeltschian observation that the "modern" period of Protestant Church history begins not so much with the Reformation as with the period of the Enlightenment. "The decisive period of upheaval and transition in piety, church, and theology first comes into view in the eighteenth century," Beutel writes. It is then that the "old Protestant forms of thinking and living were transformed into new conformations" capable of surviving and even thriving in an age of "modernity, plurality and subjectively grounded theories."[84] Beutel and his collaborators have also undertaken a critical

[82] "The fate of Christianity in the west," Hirsh asserts, "requires that Protestants do not shy from the task of grappling with the transformation crisis [*Umformungskrise*]" posed by the modern world. "... Will Christianity be able to adapt to new problems and times and break out of its traditional forms and strictures? Because of their long engagement with these fundamental philosophical and spiritual issues, the fate of Christianity in the West," Hirsch writes, depends on "the German people." Emanuel Hirsch, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Gesammelte Werke 19 (Waltrop: Spenner, 2004 [1939]), 152–53. On Hirsch, see Jochen Hose, *Die "Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie" in der Sicht Emanuel Hirschs* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999).

[83] The first volume in the *Studien zur Geschichte des neueren Protestantismus. Quellenhefte* was Horst Stephan's edition of Spalding's *Bestimmung des Menschen*. Johann Joachim Spalding, *Spaldings Bestimmung des Menschen (1748) und Wert der Andacht (1755)*, ed. Horst Stephan (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1908).

[84] Albrecht Beutel, *Kirchengeschichte im Zeitalter der Aufklärung: ein Kompendium* (Stuttgart: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 8. The book first appeared in 2006 as part of a larger series of Church history handbooks edited by Kurt Dietrich Schmidt and Bernd Moeller. The distinction between "old Protestant" culture dominated by an "ecclesiastical civilization" and the "new Protestant" culture in which actual freedom of conscience and religious plurality reigned was made by Ernst Troeltsch in his *Protestantisches Christentum und Kirche in der Neuzeit*, a work that set the agenda for every major account of eighteenth-century Protestant church history since. In a break with an older tradition of Protestant historiography, Troeltsch shifted the epochal

edition of Johann Joachim Spalding's works and are producing a hybrid print–online library of German Enlightenment theology.[85] In his recent monograph on Spalding, Beutel overcomes the tendency in the earlier literature to celebrate progress by noting that "there never was a monolithic singularity" of Christian thought, and particularly not in the eighteenth century. He urges scholars to reflect on the "multiplicity of synchronic forms" in which religion adapted to the modern world instead of seeing one set of concepts or thinkers schematically replaced by the next. "Even multifaceted Enlightenment theology" – a term Beutel uses interchangeably with *Neologie* – "did not command the field without competition." Thus Pietists, Wolffians, and rationalists occupied the same intellectual and temporal space with each other as well as with traditional biblical Lutherans, not to mention radical splinter groups and other outsiders.[86] This latter comment about the plurality of religious streams and the competition for loyalty points to a fruitful approach that examines the nature of this competition; this is the reason why this book will be organized around the discursive redefinition of Protestantism as part of a public process and not with a definitive listing of core ideas and properties.

Of lesser direct bearing, but still informing the argument of this book, is the last generation of early modern and Reformation scholarship. These fields have long since abandoned the progress narrative of the Reformation, not to mention the various nationalistic interpretations of the Reformation in general and Luther in particular. While the fields of Reformation studies and Enlightenment studies do interact, it is more frequently than not at shouting distance. As Fasolt indicates, early modern specialists may demonstrate puzzlement or embarrassment at the earlier triumphalist associations, and most express their astonishment at the continued disjunction between scholarly knowledge and popular perception of the Reformation and its consequences. The darker strains evident in the Hirschian view – notwithstanding legitimate concerns, such as about

boundary forward, from the sixteenth century to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Luther, in other words, did not represent the essential break from medieval Christian civilization, a point he also made in his article "Aufklärung," in *Realencyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1897), 225–41. The work appeared in multiple forms from 1906 to 1922: Ernst Troeltsch, *Protestantisches Christentum und Kirche in der Neuzeit: (1906/1909/1922)*, eds. Volker Drehsen, Christian Albrecht, and Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, Ernst Troeltsch Kritische Gesamtausgabe 7 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004).

[85] Johann Joachim Spalding, *Kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Albrecht Beutel (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001) [13 vols., 2001–13]; The Bibliothek der Neologie is described here: https://bdn-edition.de/.

[86] Albrecht Beutel, *Johann Joachim Spalding: Meistertheologe im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 16.

Luther and the Jews – are not ignored but met head on. But for early modernists and Reformation scholars in particular the Enlightenment is somebody else's problem.[87]

The third and final scholarly field in which this study participates is that pertaining to the Enlightenment. So much has been written about religion and Enlightenment that it seems there is little more to add to the historiographical debate on the topic.[88] Nonetheless, it helps to situate this book on the German Protestant Enlightenment within the larger trends of Enlightenment studies in general over the last few decades. One major strain has been to emphasize a plurality of Enlightenments and to focus on national or regional contexts. This approach has resulted in discrete studies dedicated to specific contexts, local concerns, and reform movements, with a concentration on practices, communication strategies, and notions of "politeness." J. G. A. Pocock's work offers the best example of studies in this realm, starting with his seminal article on "clergy and commerce" and crowned by his volumes on Edward Gibbon.[89] However, there has also been a revived insistence by some on a unitary view of a transnational Enlightenment, foremost among them Jonathan Israel, with his emphasis on Spinozism and radical materialism.[90] It should be clear where my argument falls in these debates: It builds on work by Jonathan Sheehan and David Sorkin. The former's *Enlightenment Bible* showed how scholarly practices transformed the bible into a cultural artifact for modern times, whereas Sorkin's *Religious Enlightenment* demonstrates the breadth and vitality of religious life and thought in the

[87] Or, formulated differently, the scholarly debates (at least in Anglophone scholarship) about the nature and form of the Enlightenment have almost no resonance in Reformation studies. This is not to say that there exist no more disputes about the meaning of the Reformation, as controversies around the 500th anniversary in Germany make clear. See, for example, Volker Leppin, "Reformation zwischen Mittelalter und Moderne : protestantische Rekonstruktionen," in *Reformation und katholische Reform zwischen Kontinuität und Innovation*, eds. Frank Kleinehagenbrock et al. (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2019), 527–48.

[88] For full discussions, see the following review essays: Jonathan Sheehan, "Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 4 (2003): 1061–80; Simon Grote, "Review Essay: Religion and Enlightenment," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 75, no. 1 (2014): 137–60.

[89] J. G. A. Pocock, "Clergy and Commerce: The Conservative Enlightenement in England," in *L'Età dei Lumi: Studi Storici sul Settecento Europeo in onore di Franco Venturi*, ed. R. Ajello (Naples: Jovene, 1985), 23–68; J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, 6 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999–2015). A related approach is Ian's Hunter's case for "rival" civil and metaphysical Enlightenments in Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*.

[90] Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

eighteenth century while revealing the parallels between the Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant Enlightenments up to the French Revolution.[91]

The embrace of the "plural" understanding of the Enlightenment does not deny some of the fundamental conclusions of other scholars, notably Israel's typology of radical, moderate (or mainstream), and conservative Enlightenments, but it does raise the question of priorities and succession. One may contend, as Margaret Jacob does in her recent book, that the "secular Enlightenment" was enormously powerful and influential, even while acknowledging that it coexisted alongside other varieties.[92] As a way of sidestepping while not quite neutralizing the issues surrounding Enlightenment scholarship, I would like to emphasize two points. The first is that the Enlightenment was a historical phenomenon with a beginning and an end, wherever one might set the specific markers. It is thus important, as Vincenzo Ferrone has written, not to confuse philosophical definitions of Enlightenment – themselves part of a debate stretching from Kant to Adorno – with the "historians' Enlightenment," which emphasizes the emerging role of intellectuals and the public sphere in a specific chronological slice of European history.[93] The second point is that by focusing on the transformation of the twin concepts of Protestantism and the Reformation we can be attuned to the concurrent and overlapping strains of religious and secular thought and move beyond old secularization narratives that present the Enlightenment as part of an inevitable decline of religion.

The central argument of the book is that the narrative of Protestant progress was an assertion formed in a specific set of shifting historical contexts. From the liberal theologians seeking to thread a narrow path between atheism and enthusiasm in the middle part of the eighteenth century to the critical philosophers' efforts to harness the legacy of Protestantism in order to establish the social legitimacy of their philosophical project in the latter part of the century, Protestantism was deployed in creative new ways that shaped its legacy. The current book's two parts overlap, temporally and conceptually, with slightly different methods and structure. Part I, "Recasting German Protestantism, 1750–1790," provides an account of the Protestant Enlightenment as part of a wide-ranging

[91] Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[92] Margaret C. Jacob, *The Secular Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 5.

[93] Vincenzo Ferrone, *The Enlightenment: History of an Idea*, trans. Elisabetta Tarantino (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 77.

cultural apology for Christianity against the background of a fragmenting Protestant culture. The Orthodox Lutheran establishments still controlled many of the institutional levers of the Church, but the deeply religious criticisms of Pietists and a rising tide of skeptical, deist, and atheistic assaults undermined its intellectual and moral foundations. Chapter 1 explores Spalding's immensely popular *Bestimmung des Menschen* (eleven editions appeared between 1748 and 1804), its reverberations throughout the German Enlightenment, and the ways it touched both philosophy and religion. Chapter 2 looks at two so-called transitional theologians who straddled the worlds of orthodox belief and learning and forward-looking scholarship and literary engagement. Deeply engaged in the controversies over Pietism, heterodoxy, Church history, and philosophy, Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1693–1755) and Johann Georg Walch (1693–1775) pointed the way to a new view of the Reformation, even if the results of their interventions went much farther then they intended. Chapter 3 shows how Enlightenment theology moved beyond its academic and ecclesiastical context to become part of a larger campaign for reform. Advocates of a new system of educating and training clergymen turned to the public sphere and cast their project as a continuation of the Reformation. Intended as a rhetorical strategy to solidify support among a Protestant public that was open to a less stringent and dogmatic Christianity than that of Lutheran Orthodoxy or Pietism, Enlightenment theologians paved the way for a fruitful reinterpretation of the Protestant past.

Part II, "Revolutions of the Spirit, 1780–1830," is more exploratory in form, showing how the languages and concepts forged in Germany's Protestant Enlightenment proved fertile for Germany's cultural revolution in the 1780s and 1790s and how these languages persisted into the 1830s. Drawing its title from Karl Leonhard Reinhold's defense of Kant in 1786, it traces the ways in which the new meanings of Protestantism were woven into "German" philosophy and its exportation as a body of thought to France and subsequently the English-speaking world, finally showing how, after the fall of Napoleon and the reconstitution of Germany, it was reflected in public commemorations and celebrations of Reformation. Because that ground is studded with so many major thinkers and movements, from Lessing and Herder to Schlegel, Hegel, and Schleiermacher – each with extensive scholarship – the chapters in this part will not proceed at the same level of detail as those in the first part. Also, since the individual figures who take up the lion's share of the section (Reinhold, Hegel, Fichte, Schleiermacher, and Hegel) are so much better known, the

chapters will mainly look at their work through the lens of the recasting of Protestantism. Chapter 4 will take the philosopher Karl Leonhard Reinhold as a starting point to look at the ways in which critical philosophers sought to cast Kantianism as the heir to Protestantism. In his highly influential *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy*, Reinhold argues that the "first" Reformation of the sixteenth century was only a "preparation" for the current attempts to purify morality through philosophy. Chapter 5 looks at the impact of the French Revolution on this German discussion of the meaning of Protestantism, as well as at the internationalization of its themes through Charles Villers' *Essay on the Spirit and Influence of Luther's Reformation* (1804). Chapter 6 then looks at the rivalry between religion and philosophy in German culture after 1800, starting with the Reformation anniversary of 1817 and concluding with Schleiermacher's and Hegel's competing tercentennial celebrations of the Augsburg Confession in 1830. An Epilogue traces four areas of public discourse and scholarship in which the new meanings of Protestantism and the Reformation reverberated into the early twentieth century: history, religion, philosophy, and culture.