

Colloquium

The Unknown Influencer: Henrik Steffens (1773-1845) – a European Philosopher and Political Man in Times of Transition

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Abstract

The Danish-Norwegian-Prussian scholar Henrik Steffens was a central figure in European cultural and intellectual history, in an epoch designated by Reinhart Koselleck as “Sattelzeit”. He is, no doubt, inseparable from the history of (romantic) natural philosophy, not only because of his friendship with Schelling – he even left marks on literature, politics and university history. He was a political actor and a political professor in the best sense. Steffens had dealings with all the political, cultural and scientific greats of his time; he took part in the debates of his time, in Jena, Halle, Breslau, Berlin; he was widely known in Scandinavia and even in Paris. Today he is almost forgotten; still his views on climate, environment and nature based on his conviction of “organism-thinking” are of relevance even in our times.

Literature

On identity – No Identity. An Essay on the Constructions, Possibilities, and Necessities for Understanding a European Macro-Region. The Baltic Sea. (2011- [link](#))

Brief Bio

Bernd Henningsen, born 1945 in Flensburg, Northern Germany; studied political science, Nordic philology, philosophy, and psychology at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich; PhD in 1974; visiting professor/lecturer in Minneapolis/Minnesota, Zurich, Hamburg, Trier, Erlangen-Nürnberg, Aarhus, Odense and the Free University of Berlin; since 1992 professor of Scandinavian studies and (founding) director of the Department of Northern European Studies at Humboldt university, Berlin; 2002-03 founding director of the Alfried-Krupp-Wissenschaftskolleg, Greifswald; retired since 2010, honorary professor at the Department for Northern European Studies.

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FIT, Georges-Köhler-Allee 105, 79110 Freiburg

Seminar room, ground level