

Paul Franks

*From Quine to Hegel: Naturalism, Anti-Realism and Maimon's Question Quid Facti*

Department of Philosophy

Yale University

U.S.A.

e-mail: paul.franks@yale.edu

Maimon understood the power of Hume's methodological naturalism better than Kant himself. Accordingly, he saw that Kant had not, as he thought, defeated Hume by showing that Hume could not do what Kant could do with his non-naturalistic method: namely, vindicate natural science and its transcendental conditions. For Maimon saw, not only that a consistent naturalist would reject Kant's method, but also that Kant's putatively necessary conditions of possibility could themselves be naturalised by means of a Humean psychological explanation. Much of post-Kantian idealism may be seen as motivated by the need to respond, not to Kant's conception of the naturalistic threat, but to Maimon's. Two centuries later, a similar dialectic played itself out in analytic philosophy, when Carnap's vestigially transcendental account of the possibility, not of synthetic *a priori*, but of analytic propositions was naturalised by Quine. The development of neo-Fichtean, neo-Schellingian and neo-Hegelian responses to Quine in contemporary analytic philosophy is thus illuminated by the comparison of Quine and Maimon.