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**Popper and Hayek: Who Influenced Whom?**

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**POPPER AND HAYEK:  
WHO INFLUENCED WHOM?**

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Almost twenty years ago I began doing research for a paper that would try to answer the question of who had the greater influence on the other, the polymath philosopher of science Karl Popper, or the polymath social theorist Friedrich A Hayek.

One can understand why a young academic might be tempted to attempt such a paper. Both of the protagonists were giants in their respective fields, and both had made contributions to the methodology of the social sciences, the area I was then studying. Most significantly, both of them to varying degrees had claimed that the other was an important figure in his own intellectual development. For example, Popper stated in a much-quoted letter to Hayek that “I think I have learnt more from you than from any other living thinker, except perhaps Alfred Tarski” (Popper to Hayek, 15 March 1944, quoted in Hacoheh 2000, 486). This is really quite a remarkable statement given the circles that Popper ran in and the people that he encountered. Popper also dedicated his most famous collection of papers, *Conjectures and Refutations* (Popper 1965), to Hayek. For his part, Hayek first cited Popper in a paper published in the 1930s, then began citing him repeatedly in the 1950s and 1960s, referring to one of his own papers as “little more than an elaboration of some of Popper’s ideas” (Hayek [1955] 1967, 4). Hayek dedicated his own 1967 collection, *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics* to Popper, mentioning him explicitly in the Preface. And in a 1982 retrospective, Hayek said of Popper’s thought, “...ever since his *Logik der Forschung* first came out in 1934, I have been a complete adherent to his general theory of methodology” (Hayek, in Weimer and Palermo 1982, 323). So it appeared that there was plenty of material with which to work.

Though I began the research I never did write the paper, mostly because it quickly became apparent that the relationship between their ideas was exceedingly complex. But now, with the opening of the archives of both men and the sterling research executed by scholars like Jeremy

Shearmur and Malachi Hacothen, the time seemed right to try again. When I was invited to give a paper at this conference, that is what I decided to do.

I have to confess, however, that I again rather quickly encountered a number of difficulties. There is first of all the general problem surrounding any investigation of “influence.” Though the question of “influence” is always a popular one, it is also probably one that responsible scholars should make it a point to resist trying to answer. One problem is that the whole notion of influence seems to get the concept of agency reversed, particularly if one is referring to the “influence” of earlier writers on later ones – for example, what kind of sense does it make to say that Menger set out to influence Hayek? Furthermore, when one thinks not just of all the earlier writers, but also of all the contemporary people that could have had an impact on a person’s thought, and also of the influence of the milieu in which the person worked, it does not take long before the mind boggles. There are good general reasons, then, to be very cautious when speaking in terms of “influence.”<sup>1</sup>

But there are specific reasons, too, why unraveling the question of influence is particularly difficult when it comes to Popper and Hayek. In order to make credible claims about influence, one must have a reasonably clear picture of both the content of each person’s thought and of its development through time. There are difficulties here for both of our protagonists. In the case of Popper, the convoluted publishing history surrounding his works, in which various pieces when published in book form (or, in the case of *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, when translated) contain additions, or the fact that his last major work, though circulating in galley proofs, remained unpublished for decades, makes it hard to know exactly what Popper thought when.

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<sup>1</sup> I thank Mary Morgan for pointing out to me the general problems that surround the question of “influence.” Her commonsense solution is to avoid the word altogether, and to speak instead of earlier writers as *resources* upon which the person in question might have drawn.

The problem is compounded if Malachi Hacoen is right that Popper, in crafting his autobiography as a series of problems and solutions, may have forgotten or neglected certain important episodes that did not fit neatly into his framework (Hacoen 2000, 18-21). (I hasten to add that Hacoen's biography does an extraordinary, if sometimes controversial, job, at straightening many of these matters out.) As for Hayek, I will simply mention Ludwig Lachmann's storied response to the question of "What did Hayek think about subject x?" Lachmann's wonderful riposte was, "Which Hayek?" – which was meant to indicate that one might get different answers to the question depending on which part of Hayek's *oeuvre* one consulted.

A further layer of complications is added when one recognizes that though each man was fulsome in his praise of the other, each would also typically add qualifiers when it came to specific points, qualifiers that make attribution of influence extremely difficult. Thus Hayek in the sentence immediately preceding his acknowledgement that he had since 1934 been a complete adherent of Popper's methodology said that this was because Popper's formulation was "a statement of what I was feeling," implying that he had already had similar ideas, even if he had never articulated them (Hayek, in Weimer and Palermo 1982, 323). And Popper more than once made a point of emphasizing that he had had certain insights before he had read similar sounding ideas in Hayek (Shearmur 1996, 27; cf. also Popper 1957, 137-38). So it turns out that, despite their many statements of their debt to one another, in the specific case of Popper and Hayek the question of influence is as tricky as it can be more generally.

It is thus with considerable trepidation that I have decided nonetheless to forge ahead. I will state my conclusions in advance. My own reading of the evidence is that neither Popper nor Hayek had much of an influence on the other, at least if we restrict ourselves to speaking in terms of their ideas about how to do social science. The influence I see is mostly in terms of the

*language* in which each came to express his ideas, the way they came to put things. I will support this thesis by examining four episodes drawn from their long relationship. The first is their initial encounter in 1930s, one that led to Hayek's first citation of Popper's work. Next, I will look at the extent to which Hayek's writings influenced Popper's final draft of "The Poverty of Historicism" during the war years. Third, I will examine certain of Hayek's methodological writings from the 1950s and 1960s in which Popper is prominently cited. Finally, I will look at the interpretative puzzles surrounding Hayek's last book, *The Fatal Conceit*, which again contains certain new and apparently very Popperian themes.

In what follows I will concentrate on the influence that each man might have had on the others' writings about the methods of the social sciences. I will not deal with questions of influence on political outlook, and neither will I address Malachi Hacoheh's fascinating counterfactual that, had Popper not met Hayek, he might have gone on to contribute more in the area of political philosophy (Hacoheh 2000, 450). However, at the end of the paper I will speculate on why two such apparently different thinkers should be so taken with each other.

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The first episode has to do with Hayek's first citation of Popper, which occurred in a paper entitled "Economics and Knowledge" published in 1937. To understand its significance, I will briefly trace how they came to know each other. Though both were born in Vienna, Hayek being three years the elder, they never met there. It seems that their paths did cross, however. Both of them apparently witnessed the shootout in April 1919 between a communist-inspired crowd of workers and the police force, an incident that, according to Hacoheh, helped begin to wean Popper from his youthful commitment to communism (Hacoheh 2000, 80-83). Hayek was a student returning home from university and got caught in the crossfire, though obviously he escaped unharmed (Bartley 1989, 44). Anyway, Hayek spent the 1920s mostly in Vienna and



then, in a story that itself is not without interest, managed in the early 1930s to get appointed to the economics faculty of the LSE as holder of the Tooke Chair. Hayek heard about Popper's work when, soon after its publication, Gottfried Haberler put a copy of Popper's *Logik* into his hands. This ultimately led to an invitation by Hayek for Popper to present a paper in the Hayek-Robbins seminar in June 1936.

With that background, we can now turn to Hayek's paper, "Economics and Knowledge," which was apparently written in the late summer or early fall of 1936, that is, soon after Hayek had met Popper. Hayek stated in his paper that the "empirical element in economic theory" is that part which leads to conclusions that are capable, at least in principle, of verification – at which point he added a footnote, "Or rather falsification" and cited Popper's *Logik* (Hayek [1937] 1948, 33). This, then, is Hayek's first citation of Popper in print. The same paper also contained a criticism, though an extremely diffident one, of Mises' a priorism. (Mises believed that what he called "the axioms of the science of human action" were a priori true yet capable, via a "verbal chain of logic," of yielding apodictical claims about the world.) The combination led one observer, Terence Hutchison, to propose that "Economics and Knowledge" represented Hayek's turning away from Misesian a priorism and towards Popperian thought (Hutchison 1981, chapter 7). If one takes into account certain of Hayek's later remarks (for example, he once called the paper a turning point, after which he began to ask "all kinds of questions usually regarded as philosophical" (Hayek [1964a] 1967, 91-92); also recall his comment that he immediately accepted Popper's methodology after reading the *Logik*), one can see how Hutchison might reach such a conclusion.

It is a conclusion, though, with which I disagree. Though I agree with Hutchison that Hayek is critical of Mises' a priorism in the article, I disagree that he was ever an a priorist, and certainly never one of the type that Mises was. Furthermore, it was not until much later that

Popper's ideas seem to play an important role in Hayek's written work. I argued these points in an earlier sequence of papers (Caldwell 1988, 1992a, 1992b; cf. Hutchison's reply in his 1992), and will just summarize the main points here.

Concerning Hayek's commitment to a priorism: When Mises claimed that the fundamental postulates or axioms of the science of human action were a priori true, he was discussing what might be called today the assumptions of microeconomic theory. Hayek's early work in economics principally focused on monetary theory and the theory of the trade cycle, fields quite different from microeconomics, so the question of the a priori basis of microeconomic theory never came up. Furthermore, in those few places that Hayek used the terms "a priori" or "a priorism" in writings in the 1930s and 1940s, his use appears to be quite different from that of Mises. Finally, in a letter in which he offered a retrospective reflection on the question, Hayek flatly stated that he had never been an a priorist (Hayek to Hutchison, 26 November 1981, Box 26, Folder 8, Hayek Archives).

As for traces of Popper's ideas on Hayek's subsequent writings, there is little to be found in either of Hayek's next two major projects, the first being on the Abuse of Reason, one which ultimately would include both his essay on "Scientism and the Study of Society" and *The Road to Serfdom*, and the second being his book on psychology, *The Sensory Order*. Had Hayek begun becoming a Popperian in 1937 the philosopher's ideas would presumably have been discernable somewhere in these works. They are not, and indeed, Popper had reservations about at least parts of each project. I can finally add that in a letter to the author Hayek noted that his reference to falsification in "Economics and Knowledge" was added in the galley proofs, mostly in recognition of the fact that the term "verification" was, given recent developments in philosophy, "no longer adequate" (Hayek to Caldwell, 29 September 1984, Box 13, Folder 30, Hayek Archives).

Let us move next, then, to the 1940s, and Hayek's impact on Popper's thought during the period that the latter was working on "The Poverty of Historicism." In his autobiography Popper called the essay one of his "stodgiest pieces of writing" (Popper 1976, 114). I would prefer to call it "brilliant but disorganized." The book starts out very systematically. In the first two sections the anti-naturalistic and the pro-naturalistic doctrines of historicism are described. The only complaint that one might have about this section is that it is not always clear exactly which particular writers Popper had in mind when he wrote about each doctrine. On the other hand, he addresses this problem in the book's introduction by noting that he was trying to present historicism as a well-considered and complete doctrine, so that in some instances he was *constructing* arguments for the historicists rather than *describing* the ideas of concrete individuals (Popper 1957, 3).

In the third section, though, things begin to go awry. Though his table of contents promised that the third and fourth sections would contain Popper's critique of the anti-naturalist and pro-naturalist doctrines of historicism, this is not what he provides. A good part of the third section has nothing to do with the anti-naturalist doctrines, but instead is a defense of what Popper called piece-meal social engineering, something he contrasts with utopian social engineering. In addition, rather than criticize anti-naturalist doctrines as a whole, Popper's chief target seems to be Karl Mannheim and his *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*. (If I counted correctly, Mannheim is lacerated in no less than fourteen different footnotes.) Things get better for a while in section four, the first part of which is devoted to a discussion of the difference between laws and trends, which fits as a part of the critique of the pro-naturalist doctrines. But when Popper gets to his defense of the unity of scientific method in section 29, he switches from criticisms of the pro-naturalist doctrines to criticisms of certain anti-naturalist ones.

In short, the structure of the essay breaks down in sections three and four. The first two very orderly and systematic sections seem to have little relationship to the last two.

Now that the archives have been opened, various scholars have been able to document just what was going on. It turns out that Popper worked on the “Poverty” during three different periods. He first conceived of the project in 1936 or so, then worked on it again between 1938 and 1940. He then set it aside to work on *The Open Society*. The first two parts were published with minor changes in *Economica* in 1944, but then Popper extensively revised the last two parts before sending them in for publication. And it is here that Hayek comes unmistakably into the picture (Hacohen 2000, 354).

Popper had by this time read Hayek’s 1935 edited collection, *Collectivist Economic Planning*, as well as a number of his articles. The most important of the latter was Hayek’s long piece, published in parts in *Economica* in 1942-44, “Scientism and the Study of Society.” Hayek criticized both historicism and the engineering mentality in the article. In a series of letters in late 1943 and early 1944 Popper repeatedly responded to ideas that Hayek had expressed in his writings, and this is what caused Popper to revise his essay. So, what do these letters tell us about Hayek’s influence?

The answer is – it depends on how you read them. Though it is clear that Popper is responding to Hayek, it is less clear just what his response *is*. His responses seem to fall into three general categories. One is praise for Hayek’s erudition, usually coupled with the remark that he, Popper, is learning a lot from him. Secondly, Popper marvels at the similarity of their positions on various issues. Finally, Popper points out areas where they differ. It is not atypical to find all three sorts of statements in a single letter. Depending on which part of a letter one chooses to emphasize, one can come away with very different answers to the question of the extent of Hayek’s influence.

And indeed, different scholars have given different answers. My own view comes closest to that of Jeremy Shearmur, who tends to minimize the effect of Hayek's influence. Shearmur points out that Popper had every reason to be grateful to Hayek personally, because he was helping him get a publisher for *The Open Society* and, as editor of *Economica*, was also responsible for the "Poverty" being published. As such, he may have added citations to Hayek's work more out of gratitude than anything else. This is reason enough, says Shearmur, for one to "be careful of reading too much into Popper's discussion of Hayek" in the "Poverty" (Shearmur 1996, 29).

The actual content of the "Poverty" provides further support for Shearmur's thesis. Though there are sixteen references to Hayek listed in the index, if one separates out the passing *references* from the more substantive *discussions*, arguably there are only two of the latter. One of these comes in the third section of the "Poverty," where Popper appears to be trying to convince Hayek that piece-meal social engineering (which Popper endorses) is different from the "engineering mentality" that Hayek had criticized in "Scientism." For Popper, piece-meal social engineering is simply the application of the scientific method, conceived by Popper as a non-dogmatic method of trial and error, to the realm of social policy. The method is non-dogmatic in that it does not rule out a priori any sort of social arrangement, but also in that it requires decision-makers to always be ready to learn from experience and to be prepared to adapt their reforms in the face of contrary evidence.

The second major reference comes in the fourth section of the "Poverty," where Popper states that the "Scientism" essay could be used to defend the unity of the methods of science thesis that Popper endorsed. This was much more of a stretch, because for Hayek "Scientism" meant the application of the methods of the natural sciences in areas where they did not belong. Popper's argument is that the methods Hayek criticized were not the real methods of the natural

sciences, but the illegitimate fabrications of natural scientists that social theorists in their efforts to be “scientific” mistakenly accepted.

Whatever we think of these arguments, it is pretty clear that Popper’s main point in both of his extended citations of Hayek is to argue that, *appearances notwithstanding*, their views are very similar. He nowhere suggests that Hayek caused him to change his mind. What shines through is not any particular thesis of *Hayek’s*, but Popper’s own original thesis, that the method of trial and error is applicable to the social sciences. Hayek did not so much cause Popper to change his mind as to change his *manner of presentation* so as to show that their apparent differences were in fact not so great. Because he ended up spending so much time responding to Hayek, my conclusion is that Hayek’s major impact on the “Poverty” was to cause Popper in rewriting them to destroy the orderliness of his last two sections!

Let us now move to the next period, the 1950s and 1960s. If one were going to make a case for Popper’s influence on Hayek, it is in two papers that Hayek reprinted in his 1967 collection that one should look. These are “Degrees of Explanation,” first published in 1955, and “The Theory of Complex Phenomenon,” first published in 1964 as Hayek’s contribution to *The Critical Approach to Science and Philosophy: Essays in Honor of K.R. Popper*. It was in the former that Hayek stated that “In many respects what follows is little more than an elaboration of some of Popper’s ideas” (Hayek [1955] 1967, 4). In the paper Hayek accepts Popper’s dictum that to be scientific a theory must be falsifiable, meaning that it must forbid certain outcomes so that, if they occur, the theory stands as falsified (Hayek [1955] 1967, 4; [1964b] 1967, 29). He cites Popper again in claiming that “prediction and explanation are merely two aspects of the same process” (Hayek [1955] 1967, 9). Another key Popperian idea is that science follows the hypothetical deductive model, not induction; a related one is that science does not start with pure

observation but with a problem that shapes our interests in data of a certain kind (ibid., 4; [1964b] 1967, 23). Finally, in the preface Hayek notes yet another place where Popper helped him:

Readers of some of my earlier writings may notice a slight change in the tone of my discussion of the attitude which I then called ‘scientism.’ The reason for this is that Sir Karl Popper has taught me that natural scientists did not really do what most of them not only told us that they did but also urged the representatives of other disciplines to imitate (Hayek 1967, viii).

Given all of this, it will be doubtless be surprising that even here I do not see that much influence. More precisely, I will argue rather that Popper was only one of many influences on Hayek at this time. My alternative story, a fuller version of which I detail elsewhere (Caldwell forthcoming), goes something like this.

We must first go back to the “Scientism” essay, an essay that Hayek had written without any discernable influence from Popper. In that essay, Hayek criticized the collectivism, objectivism, and historicism of the scientific approach. He also presented a positive account of what he called, after Menger, the compositive method, something that he thought was appropriate in the social sciences. That approach implied strict limits on prediction: when dealing with the subject matter studied by the social sciences, often pattern prediction is the best one can do, or an explanation of the principle by which complex social structures form. Finally, throughout the essay Hayek always distinguished the sciences according to the natural science – social science dichotomy. It was a crucial distinction for him because, recall, Hayek defined “scientism” as the illegitimate attempt to apply the putative methods of the natural sciences in areas they did not belong.

After the war Hayek began working on a book on theoretical psychology, *The Sensory Order*. Initially I think his major goal in the book was to provide a scientific critique of behaviorism. But in the course of his investigations he began to see the mind as another example of a spontaneously forming order, analogous to the social orders that formed as the result of the unintended consequences of human action.

In the 1950s Hayek moved to the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. He ran a seminar there in the early 1950s in which *The Sensory Order* and the “Scientism” essay were the major readings. Hayek would later call the seminar “one of the greatest experiences of my life” (Hayek 1983, 134), and he seemed particularly pleased that it attracted natural scientists from around the university. A handout from the seminar indicates that he was beginning to pay more careful attention to evolutionary theory. This is significant because in “Degrees of Explanation” we see evolutionary theory turning up as yet another an example of a science in which only pattern predictions are possible. During this period Hayek also began exploring other fields, among them cybernetics, made popular by Norbert Wiener; the systems theory of Ludwig von Bertalanffy (Bertalanffy had offered Hayek comments on *The Sensory Order* when it was still in manuscript form); communication theory; and John von Neumann’s theory of automata. Finally, he read Warren Weaver, whose distinction between sciences that study simple versus complex phenomena he ultimately adopted. This distinction would replace the natural science – social science dichotomy that he had used in the “Scientism” essay.

What I am suggesting is that Hayek was drawing on many different resources in the 1950s. To be sure, Popper was one of them. But it was Hayek’s own research, in the first instance, and in particular, his effort to provide a framework for the idea that in economics only “explanations of the principle” and “pattern prediction” are possible – that was the driving force behind any changes he underwent. The twin notions of pattern prediction and explanations of the



principle were his core ideas, ones that predated his change from the natural science – social science distinction to the simple phenomena – complex phenomena one and that remained after the switch. With the new terminology, a terminology that derives most directly from Warren Weaver, Hayek could present his original ideas in a way that was more consistent with the most up-to-date philosophy of the time, including not just Popper's, but also that of Ernest Nagel, whom he also cites ([1964b] 1967, 25; 28; 36). He could argue that economics was one of *many sciences* that study complex phenomena. Both the “many” and the “sciences” are important; economics was fully scientific, but that did not imply that it should follow the methods of physics and other “simple” sciences, as his positivist foes had for so long insisted. Economics was a science, but it was one among the sciences that studied complex phenomena. That is why we can do no better than to make pattern predictions. And *that* implies limits on what social planners and other constructivist rationalists could accomplish.

I will finally add that though Hayek clearly accepted Popper's key idea that a theory must be falsifiable to be scientific, he also always emphasized that theories that deal with complex phenomena are necessarily less falsifiable. He put it this way:

The advance of science will thus have to proceed in two different directions: while it is certainly desirable to make our theories as falsifiable as possible, we must also push forward into fields where, as we advance, the degree of falsifiability necessarily decreases. This is the price we have to pay for an advance into the field of complex phenomena (Hayek [1964b] 1967, 29).

So Hayek supported the notion of falsifiability, but at the same time he claimed that in sciences that study complex phenomena, progress is linked to a decrease in falsifiability. I suspect that the

two different emphases account for the different readings that Professor Hutchison and I have offered of these papers.

There is a final episode that deserves at least a brief mention. In his last book, *The Fatal Conceit*, Hayek occasionally sounds Popperian themes. He describes the book in the introduction as “an evolutionary account of moral traditions,” one meant to complement Popper’s evolutionary epistemology (Hayek 1988, 10). Another prominent bow to Popper comes in his section on morals in Chapter 5, where he argues that morals are not justifiable (ibid., 67-69). To my knowledge, this is the first time that either of these ideas appears in Hayek’s work. Did he, late in life, come to accept evolutionary epistemology and the notion that neither knowledge nor our moral code is justifiable?

Once again, it is hard to say. Hayek began work on what would become *The Fatal Conceit* in the late 1970s, and by the early 1980s envisioned a book of 21 chapters, the first four of which were written. Some of the remaining chapters were also in various stages of completion. Work stopped in 1985, when Hayek’s health deteriorated significantly. The book probably would not have been finished had the philosopher Bill Bartley, who was by then both the general editor of *The Collected Works of F.A. Hayek* and Hayek’s officially designated biographer, not stepped in to assist Hayek in putting together the final manuscript.

Bartley is no stranger to this audience, of course. His considerable efforts on Hayek’s behalf raise the question, though, of how much of *The Fatal Conceit* should be attributed to Bartley and how much to Hayek. Neither of the themes just identified appeared in the early drafts of *The Fatal Conceit*. Indeed, most of the planned sections that had to do with economics, even those that Hayek had already written up, did not make it into the final edition. Both the addition of new material and the cutting out of material already written suggest that Bartley’s role as editor was not a passive one.

There are other bits of evidence that make me leery of putting too much emphasis on Hayek's apparent new enthusiasm for Popperian themes in *The Fatal Conceit*. When I first read the book, I was struck by how frequently Hayek used italics in it. Though he occasionally used italics for emphasis, in previous writings Hayek typically only used them when he was introducing a new term. Anyone who has read Bartley, on the other hand, knows that he was far more promiscuous in his use of italics. This made me think that the book was more a product of his pen than Hayek's.

This intuition was supported by Sudha Shenoy, who in an e-mail reported to me that a colleague of hers, John Burrows, had undertaken a preliminary computer textual analysis of the book, comparing selected chapters with bits of the book that Hayek had written before *The Fatal Conceit, Law, Legislation and Liberty*. Shenoy told me, "The results showed a definite divergence – i.e., some other hand definitely played a clear part in the published text of FC. Specifically, on early 'crude' tests, the text of FC clearly separated itself from the texts of LLL" (e-mail, Shenoy to Caldwell, 6 September 1999).<sup>2</sup>

Of course, the fact that Bartley may have written the book does not rule out the possibility that Hayek signed off on all the new materials in it. But again, he would have been in ill health when he made those decisions, and also very much in Bartley's debt for having carried out what all admit was a huge editorial task. It certainly is not inconceivable that *acquiescence* rather than *endorsement* might best describe Hayek's attitude towards the new additions to his original manuscript.

To sum up: I have argued that statements to the contrary made by each man notwithstanding, a plausible case can be made that neither Popper nor Hayek had a real influence

on the other's writings. I have offered arguments for my interpretation, though I also freely admit that the evidence at hand is capable of supporting alternative interpretations. If my interpretation is to be at all convincing, I must also address the question of why each man was apparently so taken with the other. What explains their mutual attraction? If I can explain this, it may help to explain why each was so eager to praise the other in ways that could lead outside observers to assume that one or the other of them was an influence.

I think that in the first instance each was fascinated by the fact that someone else, someone coming from a very different disciplinary background, had come up with an argument that complemented his own. I recently reread the opening chapters of *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* and tried to imagine Hayek's reaction to it when he first read them in 1935 or so. Hayek would have immediately been taken in by those chapters. He was, after all, part of the Austrian tradition in economics, a tradition that had fought in the *Methodenstreit* against the German historical school economists at least some of whom had argued that the careful collection of facts would someday, by means of induction, lead to the creation of a theory. Hayek had just published his inaugural lecture, "The Trend of Economic Thinking," and in it he had argued that many of the bad ideas about economics then current in British society found their origins in the writings of the German historical school (Hayek [1933] 1991). Those first few chapters would resonate with Hayek because he would read them as a modern scientific philosopher's rebuttal to views that the Austrian economists had so long been opposed. It is in this respect that Hayek is exactly right to say that when he first read Popper he immediately accepted his views, but that also what Popper had put into words was something that Hayek had long felt. For his part, Popper had developed a critique of historicism before he had studied the social science literature,

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<sup>2</sup> At the session, however, Jeremy Shearmur commented that Hayek frequently asked others to check his writings over before publication and to make suggestions for grammatical or stylistic changes. If this was indeed his standard

so he too must have been amazed to find that another scholar in a very different field should come up with arguments so similar to his. Both of them were impressed with each other because both of them saw in the other's work further support for his own arguments. Hayek gave Popper access to the past, to a set of methodological debates within the history of social science, knowledge of which could buttress his case. And Popper gave Hayek access to arguments from within contemporary philosophy of science to buttress his claim that economics was fully a science, but because it studies complex phenomena, one that could not follow the supposed methods of physics.

There was perhaps another dimension to their mutual attraction. As many writers have shown, for most of their lives Popper and Hayek were pretty far apart as far as politics is concerned. But they also had some things in common. One was a classical liberal in a world in which few existed, the other, if we accept Hacoheh's characterization, was an outsider in both the Jewish and the German-speaking communities and a socialist, but a disgruntled socialist. Both were secular, and both were cosmopolitan in outlook, at times idealistically so, particularly given the times in which they lived. Their views made them outsiders in Vienna, and then they became outsiders of a different sort again when they lived in English-speaking countries that were at war with the country of their birth. And though each held to certain bedrock views tenaciously, both were committed to the ideal of the importance of rational discussion and debate. All of this, I submit, helps to explain their mutual attraction.

I conclude, then, that the Popper – Hayek relationship was not one of influence, but one of mutual respect and admiration, a careful and proper relationship, but a close one. Mine, though, is just one of many possible conjectures, so I will now stop to hear some of yours.

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practice, it would undermine any attempts to do computer analyses of his texts.

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