

of his task. But he also very soon became convinced that the Kantian scheme would require considerable modification in order to meet what he considered to be the demands of the age. What attracted Fichte most in Kant's philosophy was that Kant assigned to the practical reason or the moral principle in human nature the supremacy over the purely intellectual side. In this moral region were not only to be found the answers to the great fundamental questions, which the purely logical analysis was unable to give, but it also appeared that the "categorical imperative" or moral law was the greater, the only, reality with which man was able to confront the otherwise overwhelming and crushing reality of the external world. What in Kant's philosophy came at the end of a long and wearisome logical and dialectical process seemed to Fichte to be worthy of being elevated to the position of the initial and dominating principle of all speculation. This was the fact that the human mind was primarily not reflective and passive, but active and assertive. Action, self-assertion, comes before reflection; a primary synthesis precedes the subsequent reflective analysis. The many opposites and dualities which played such an important part in the 'Critique of Pure Reason,' such as sense and intellect, understanding and reason, form and content, cause and effect, appearance and reality, the phenomenon and the noumenon (or the thing in itself), freedom and necessity,—all these appeared to Fichte to be mere abstractions which were made out of the original unity by the activity of the intellect or pure reason, apart from which they could not be understood. This unity itself