

F. W. J. Schelling

Translated and with an Introduction and Notes by
Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt

Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom

PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS INTO
THE ESSENCE OF HUMAN FREEDOM

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Dennis J. Schmidt, editor

***PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS
INTO THE ESSENCE OF
HUMAN FREEDOM***

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Introduction

Schelling's Treatise on Freedom and the Possibility of Theodicy

Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and Matters Connected Therewith (1809) is now one of Schelling's more celebrated writings, having received a good deal of attention over the last half century, especially since Heidegger's lectures on the *Philosophical Investigations* were published in book form in the early seventies. Indeed, these lectures, along with notable reevaluations of Schelling's thought as a whole undertaken by such important figures as Walter Schulz, Manfred Frank, and Slavoj Žižek, have tended to give the *Philosophical Investigations* a special place and authority within Schelling's corpus.¹ Although there are many complex reasons for this, two warrant mention over the others: increasing recognition of Schelling's significance as a critic of German Idealism who anticipated many of the most important trends to emerge in its wake and his role as herald of a radical approach to the problem of freedom as one connected intimately with the freedom to do evil. In this latter respect, the *Philosophical Investigations* represents a feat of sustained and sinuous thought, a remarkable synthesis of Pascal's *esprit de géométrie* and *esprit de finesse*, that seeks to transform the Leibnizian notion of theodicy left in ruins by Kant's critical project. Since this specifically theodical perspective on Schelling's consideration of evil has received less intensive treatment in most of the important recent interpretations of the *Philosophical Investigations*—among which those of Heidegger and Žižek have acquired particular prominence—we should like to introduce our translation by providing a brief sketch of this very aspect of Schelling's treatise, one that we think is particularly fecund in and of itself, but that also casts light in interesting ways on the interpretations offered by Heidegger and Žižek.²

To this end, our introduction is divided into three principal sections. The first deals with the modern notion of theodicy and the philosophical response to it; in this latter regard, Kant's concept of radical evil seems to us of particular significance, and we accept Richard Bernstein's observation that Kant's concept of radical evil in fact spells doom for the theodical project as conceived by Leibniz.³ The second explores Schelling's fascinating attempt to recast the nature of theodicy in the treatise on freedom. The third provides a very brief survey of how this attempt has been received and why the theodical impulse in Schelling's treatise has been overlooked or dismissed.⁴

The second part contains the core of our arguments about the significance of Schelling's treatise, and it may be appropriate to give a brief summary of them here. We wish to advance in bare outline a somewhat provocative contention, that Schelling makes a very strong and radical attempt to revive theodicy overcoming the weaknesses inherent in the line of theodical thinking, running from Leibniz to Hegel, that led to the definitive rejection of theodicy. We argue that Schelling risks a theodicy that incorporates a much tougher and more perspicuous concept of evil. This profoundly dynamic theodicy eschews closure; God's creation unfolds in constant struggle, in an unrelenting, unstable tension between opposed ways of bringing a world into being that is the pure combat of becoming. Perhaps the most characteristic aspect of Schelling's thought is the conviction that God's creation is not justified by its unshakeable rationality, its preestablished harmony à la Leibniz, but by an irremediably unstable balance of forces, a core or "primordial" dissonance in Žižek's apt words.⁵ Schelling claims that theodicy cannot be purchased at the expense of life, that theodicy as conceived hitherto was nothing less than a tacit admission that life cannot be justified as it is. Schelling, to the contrary, takes on the great task (and risk) of justifying life by its dynamism alone, by the lure of discovery and the threat of death, which are the wellsprings both of desire and the creative overcoming of despair that is the most compelling justification of life—as Schelling writes in the *Philosophical Investigations*: "Where there is no struggle, there is no life." If this view of life as *polemos* evinces sharply contrasting connections with Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, the true kernel of Schelling's thought is an extraordinary originality that has perhaps not yet been given its due.⁶

The Theodical Project

Leibniz's beginning

Modern theodicy originates with Leibniz and the *Essays on Theodicy* (*Essais de théodicée sur la bonté de Dieu, la liberté de l'homme et l'origine du mal*) he published in 1710. One could not implausibly argue that Leibniz's treatise is a baroque encomium to the claim that *nihil est sine ratione*, "nothing is without a reason." Everything that is has a reason for being, a rationality (a preestablished harmony) lies submerged in all existence and explains or, at the very least, offers an explanation why things are rather than not—in other words, the fact of being as opposed to pure nothingness is rationally accessible; the whole is intelligible and, hence, it may be grasped by a human mind, which is not as radically different from the divine mind in a qualitative as in a quantitative sense.⁷ As Hans Blumenberg suggests, this unabashed triumph of rationality affirms in the strongest possible way that the world is caught in the webs of reason, that there is a perfect rational order binding together ostensibly chaotic dispersion into a world-system whose end is the expression of pure rationality itself: this is indeed the best of all possible worlds.⁸

If we read Leibniz's claim that "nothing is without a reason" from a different point of view, as Heidegger bids us to,⁹ we can come to grasp the notion of evil that Leibniz relies on in making his case for the overwhelming rationality of the world. "Nothing is without a reason"; nothing is that which has no reason to be, which cannot explain (and thereby legitimate) its own existence. For Leibniz evil is this nothing, this pure privation of being that cannot be thought other than as a wont of being, of that which is good simply because it *is*. Having no being of its own, evil is entirely parasitic and dependent on the beings to which it relates.

Leibniz equates lack of being with evil. This is the root concept of evil that Leibniz calls "metaphysical evil" in the *Essays on Theodicy* and, it also applies to the two other basic categories of his famous threefold distinction, moral and physical evil. With this conception of evil Leibniz is able to make the familiar defenses of God's goodness, omniscience and omnipotence. But, what is more, he is able to defend the indwelling rationality of creation as system by showing that evil cannot have any other function in the perfect order of the system than an ancillary one, the function of a servant. What emerges from

this way of thinking is a reinterpretation of evil that situates it usefully within the context of modern systematic thought; evil as negation becomes the loyal servant of system and, as such, evil works good. Having no existence of its own, evil can be nothing more than an expression of being's own limitation, the necessary condition for the articulation of the overall rationality of the system, the highest good of all.

If this connection of evil with the unfolding of system is distinctively new, the justification of evil as servant of a good that retreats from our limited vision the closer it comes to its own purity is as old as Christian apologetics.¹⁰

Hegel's Culmination

Hegel is the culminating point of this distinctive line of thought. He shows a substantial debt to Leibniz to the extent that his own pursuit of theodicy, while indelibly shaped by Hegel's own preoccupation with Kantian dualism, refines and complicates some crucial assumptions of Leibniz's thought. As Hegel wrote in his "Introduction" for the *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*:

The aim of human cognition is to understand that the intentions of eternal wisdom are accomplished not only in the natural world, but also in the realm of the [spirit] which is actively present in the world. From this point of view, our investigation can be seen as a theodicy, a justification of the ways of God (such as Leibniz attempted in his own metaphysical manner, but using categories which were as yet abstract and indeterminate). It should enable us to comprehend all the ills of the world, including the existence of evil, so that the thinking spirit may be reconciled with the negative aspects of existence; and it is in world history that we encounter the sum total of concrete evil.¹¹

Although it would be a mistake to efface the extremely important and obvious differences between Hegel and Leibniz, it is worth noting that, in both cases, evil as negation, as the paradoxical expression of negativity, "das nichtende Nicht," seems to play a crucial role in the successful self-definition of the system or, in Hegel's terms, in the dialectical self-realization of the absolute. Nonetheless, Hegel is hardly candid about the association of negation with evil—he is, to say the least, not as direct as Leibniz—and with good reason. For Hegel turns

the Leibnizian association of negation with evil and imperfection on its head in order to overcome this association and thereby rid his system of any traces of the difficulties immanent in the Leibnizian theodicy. Indeed, he gives negation a fundamentally positive dynamic role in the structure of his system, as the elusive and restless energy of thought itself, without, however, granting it any positive (i.e., finite) being of its own. This role is immediately complicated by its deeply ambiguous nature, a product of the profound conceptual transformation of which it is the beneficiary; in this respect, one has only to recall the remarkably polysemous description Hegel sets out in the “Preface” to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, where he refers to the negative as an “ungeheure Macht,” which is the “energy of thought, of the pure I.”¹² It is a “monstrous power” indeed that cannot be defined in any positive way other than by reference to what it brings about. But, to paraphrase Goethe’s Mephistopheles, this power is still one that works good; it brings about its own dissolution in the end, the accession to the absolute.¹³ The problematic ambiguity of negation is purely Hegelian; it reflects the difficult transition from finite to infinite, from negation as limitation to negation as helpmate of the whole—both views are possible, but one comes from the weakness of finite thought, while the other from the strength of infinite thought.¹⁴

Hegel directs the essential patterns of Leibniz’s thinking to very traditional ends in that he construes evil to be a moment in the realization of the absolute that can be seen entirely differently and more benevolently with the advent of infinite thought; in other words, if one could see from the point of view of God or the God-like philosopher, one would see that evil is productive, that it really is a necessary moment in the positive labor of the self-realization of the absolute. Here is the essentially reconciliatory position so characteristic of Hegel, one that manifests itself explicitly in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, where he equates evil with cognition, with the “cleavage” (*Entzweiung*) or contradiction, that is both a necessary aspect of cognition and one that is overcome in the dialectical *Aufhebung* through which a reconciliation of the contradiction is enacted.¹⁵

With this all too brief survey, we wish to make two central points about theodicy and the conception of evil developed to function within this theodicy.

First, it is evident that theodicy as conceived by the philosophers also presents a God suitable for the philosophers. While Leibniz tries

to avoid the “lifeless machine” of Spinoza, his God has many more affinities with Spinoza’s than one might think—the essence of God for Leibniz is very much pure rationality, God being nothing more than the fullest expression of systematic rationality, the *prima causa* and first origin of all that is. In Hegel, matters are none too straightforward, but God is still primarily a principle of systematic rationality, if in the Hegelian case, this rationality is dynamic and dialectical. Here it should come as no surprise that Hegel’s most far-reaching systematic work is the *Science of Logic*, which endeavors to outline the self-realization of the absolute as a logical process, that is, a process of thought, *logos* or *ratio*, coming to the fullest expression of its essential nature.

The upshot of this is that the philosophical attempt to demonstrate the rationality of the world is a bulwark support of modern science’s drive to impose human authority over nature. In this respect, one could argue that the God of the philosophers is merely the instrument of a revolutionary coup d’état by which human reason takes hold of nature, and, in doing so, is exoterically justified by the accessibility of nature to human reason—theodicy becomes the tool of purely human ambitions for hegemonic mastery over an only apparently hostile nature.¹⁶

Second, the notion of evil that accompanies this profound (and profoundly veiled) anthropocentric system-building *eros* is a curious one, which shows its origins in the Christian tradition while also taking on a new role as a solid systemic citizen, a deceptive “source” of differentiation and systemic definition that serves the rhetoric of modern revolutionary philosophy. Why deceptive? Here negativity is made to have a positive dynamic energy—negativity fuels difference and transition, and this positive function risks conferring on evil as the purely negative a shadowy, only virtual positivity that menaces systemic integrity.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that the notion of evil as negation, as an ever unreal force, leads to obvious questions about the adequacy of this theodical project to the realities of human experience. If one may accuse Voltaire’s *Candide* of being somewhat unfair to Leibniz, there should be little question that Voltaire’s attacks must be taken into account because they do point out the gap between philosophical imagination and unavoidable reality. In this regard, all one has to do is ask a question, the very question that

haunts Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*: What systemic good does a murder achieve? And who can think of this systemic good in an impartial way? Who among us can think with God? And what if this murder is itself systemic, a rude parody of the thesis that evil is a tool of the good, participating in a divine rationality that may be beyond us? Is this rationality not necessarily beyond us?¹⁷

The Kantian Intervention

These questions are not merely insistent, they are definitive, and in modern philosophy a different way of dealing with evil exists alongside the theodical project we have just described that attempts a more adequate response to them. Kant is the crucial figure here; his exploration of radical evil provides the basis for the alternative theodicy of Schelling and represents a momentous break in the tradition in modern German thought that runs from Leibniz to Hegel; indeed, Hegel's focus on reconciliation may be interpreted as a most powerful reaction to Kant's refusal of theodicy.

Kant's thought finds itself in a particular bind.¹⁸ He seeks to provide an adequate account of the nature of evil while not overturning the faith in science that theodicy has attempted to foster in the modern era. He partakes in the modern revolution while also attempting to deal with its "excesses of enthusiasm." Kant's attempt to justify faith in science is too complex and well-known to address here, suffice it to say that his daring project of delimiting the proper bounds of reason is guided by an apparently paradoxical intention: to defend and advance the authority of reason by having it engage in a critique of its proper realm of activity.¹⁹ But, in this respect, it is important to note at the outset that Kant decisively forgoes the route of theodicy as his famous brief essay, *On the Miscarriage of All Philosophical Attempts at Theodicy* (1791), attests. Instead, Kant develops his concept of evil within the context not of metaphysics but of morality.

This of course makes sense, since theodicy is a striving to explain the function of evil with relation to God. Whether that be the traditional God of the theologians or the God of the philosophers, the purpose of theodicy in either case is ostensibly directed toward the whole first and only latterly toward the role of human beings within it. Kant removes the focus of philosophical investigation away from God to human beings. Hence, evil for Kant is an essentially human problem to be dealt with in the sphere of morality. This is an exceedingly bold

move and one entirely consistent with Kant's project of autonomy while also showing in great clarity the difficult ambiguities that attend this project and have led to long and complex debates over Kant's position: whether he celebrates a notion of autonomy that essentially replaces God with human beings or whether he is engaged in renovating (and thereby restoring) the relation of God to human beings.²⁰ The key problem here, as Schelling understood so well, is one of freedom. For Kant, freedom is the highest goal of modern thought and must be presupposed if moral agency is to have any meaning for human beings.

Kant's thinking about radical evil introduces evil as a propensity (*Hang*) in human beings that is basic (i.e., radical, reaching to the root or *radix*) and ineradicable. In doing so, Kant seems to confer on evil a status that had hitherto been denied it, the status of positivity—no longer is evil simply that which is not. Now, indeed, evil can be a positive guide for action. But one has to be careful to set out the various elements of Kant's complex teaching in order to avoid substantial misunderstandings and thereby distort Schelling's own attitude toward Kant.

The most important aspect of Kant's conception of radical evil is to assert that evil can be a guide for action. But the exact nature of this guidance needs to be made clear. The traditional notion of evil as deficiency or a wont of perfection suggests too that evil can be a guide for action but only based on the deficiency or frailty of the actor or agent, and this deficiency was typically associated with matter and, thus, with our material selves and the host of inclinations or motivations connected with them. Evil as a guide for action in this sense meant nothing more than succumbing to such inclinations.

To read Kant in this way is problematic. Kant does not associate our physical inclinations and motivations with evil, and one of the primary reasons for this is that they are not in themselves subject to moral judgment until there is a notion of choice involved. Indeed, if there is no notion of choice involved, if someone acts wholly in accordance with physical inclination, it is very hard to discern any notion of agency at all (something that Sade was quick to notice and exploit).²¹ Agency can only be invoked if there is an underlying freedom that allows for choice, and it is one of the most powerful aspects of Kantian thought to insist that this freedom, precisely as freedom of the will, is the *sine qua non* of moral existence and that,

without such freedom, it is quite difficult to understand how moral action could be possible in any way.

Kant maintains that there is choice, and that this choice determines the moral nature of the actions. What kind of choice is this? Choice always implies criteria on which a choice can be made, and for Kant these criteria are weighed rationally. If the choice is one that pursues rational ends for the sake of those ends, it is rational and good. If, however, the choice is one that pursues ends, whether rational or not, for any other sake, then the action is evil. To explain this, it is necessary to investigate Kant's moral theory in somewhat greater detail.

A good choice is one that pursues rational ends; it is exercised for the sake of the moral law, for the sake of duty, and both duty and law are universal in so far as they are the products of reason in the form of a categorical imperative, an imperative that by its very nature must be universal. An evil choice is one that is exercised for the sake of inclination, that is, the inclination of a particular individual. And this inclination, as personal, subjective, and deeply contingent, is thereby turned into a maxim of action that subordinates to its particularity the universality contained in the moral law and duty attached to it. For Kant, radical evil is precisely this chosen subordination of that which is universal to that which is particular, of the inherent universality of reason to the inherent particularity of personal inclination. This reversal of the relation between universal and particular is the "perversion" at the heart of Kant's conception of radical evil, and it represents a very powerful innovation in the tradition, since it insists on the primacy of choice and the autonomy of the subject that can act positively in an evil manner.

In looking at evil as the pursuit of one's own inclinations over those of duty or the moral law, Kant comes rather close to his great predecessor and teacher, Rousseau. In condemning the subordination of the whole to the part, the will of the many to the will of one, Kant seems to follow what Rousseau says in Book IV of *Emile*:

. . . the good man orders himself in relation to the whole, and the wicked man orders the whole in relation to himself. The latter makes himself the center of all things, the former measures his radius and keeps to the circumference. Then he is ordered in relation to the common center, which is God, and in relation to all the concentric circles, which are the creatures.²²

The importance of Kant's concept of evil for our purposes is its expression of the power in human beings to do good or evil and the placement of that power in the will. Evil is no longer merely a lack, a parasitic negation, but a force that can threaten to subvert or pervert the claim to structure and coherence of the moral law that binds free individuals together; the basic character of evil, then, is that, in contravening the moral law, it seeks to become a law of its own.²³

Yet, there is an additional problem in Kant's account of radical evil that is not only quite relevant for Schelling but also for a better grasp of the basically divided nature of Kant's thought, a division which Hegel sought to solve in one way, and Schelling in another.²⁴

The freedom to choose to act according to maxims either in accordance with or contravention of the proper hierarchy of universal and particular, of the moral law and personal inclination, is a curious one. For how can there be a propensity for evil in a being that must in some sense always be completely free? Specifically, if human beings are free to act either for good or evil, how can they be said to have a propensity to act for the evil—does this propensity not restrict their freedom; indeed, does this propensity not suggest that they are not free at all?

Kant does try to address this issue by creating a notion of moral disposition (*Gesinnung*) that "inclines and does not necessitate," but ultimately the problem remains: How can one consider someone as good or evil, as having a propensity to either without undermining the notion of freedom or spontaneity essential to autonomy? In other words, how can one reconcile the kind of radical autonomy that is of the very essence of Kant's philosophical project with the notion of character, disposition, or any other limiting qualities? For some commentators this attempt to combine Aristotelian *hexis* with Kantian spontaneity is misguided and, by its very nature, destined to failure, for others, like Goethe, it indicates Kant's peculiar form of esotericism whereby he attempts to clothe his revolutionary pursuit of autonomy in the guise of a variant of traditional notions of original sin²⁵; for still others this awkward combination of innate quality with freedom points to the greatest incoherence of Kantian thought, the attempt to derive necessary rules from freedom, a problem that has been otherwise referred to as the "Kantian paradox" or which has been seen as the clearest indication that the Kantian project is inherently unstable, a tissue of ambiguities concealed by a conscious rhetoric of concealment.²⁶

All these cases turn on Kant's apparent intention to combine autonomy and spontaneity with some notion of inhibitive normativity, the inherently problematic creation of an identity that defines but not to such an extent that freedom is ever relinquished. Schelling works through this difficult combination of necessity and freedom with great daring and skill in his attempt to explain evil in the *Philosophical Investigations*, and his response is very much determined by the problem that Kant's own thinking isolates; for Schelling attempts to place normativity in the very essence of the whole, in God, while leaving to human beings the freedom to ignore or subvert that normativity. If radical evil in Kant places a certain kind of question mark behind his thinking about autonomy, suggesting a pessimism about human beings that courses through all of Kant's thought, Schelling, in striving to overcome that pessimism, takes it to a more dangerous brink, an "abyss of freedom," that Kant could not have countenanced.

Schelling's Response

To this point, we have outlined major conflicting tendencies regarding theodicy that Schelling tries to face squarely in his *Philosophical Investigations*. Let us bring the various strands of our discussion together now in order to give a brief account of the complex problem Schelling seeks to solve.

On the one hand, Schelling perceives with his customary acuity the utter inadequacy of conceptions of evil designed—or so it may seem—to serve the ends of theodicy, of a justification of the world as friendly to the modern pursuit of hegemony. On the other hand, Schelling also perceives the danger in Kant, that Kant's repudiation of theodicy, coupled with his development of a more far-reaching concept of evil, cannot help but put in question the place of human beings in the world, in turn opening the way for radical assertions of the world's ever frustrating inscrutability.

The great gamble of the *Philosophical Investigations*, its central striving, is to affirm both the project of theodicy and the more powerful concept of evil that Kant developed. What Schelling seems to have understood is that the unreality of the privation concept of evil is just as much an admission of the frailty of theodicy as the adoption of a more powerful concept of evil, one that does not serve any systemic

purpose, which cannot be contained but at any given time threatens to burst the bounds of system. And here is one of the central points of Schelling's approach, that evil introduces a necessary imbalance into the system of the world, that this imbalance is itself the origin and life of the system, the impulsion to the self-revelation of the absolute or God. Yet, evil is not on that account a good systemic citizen, it is essentially chaotic or anarchic and, as such, it always threatens to turn system to its own ends, to make system its servant; precisely this terrible tension is the essential medium of life, of the organic struggle of forces that constitutes the true basis of the whole. Vitality becomes the highest value, a vitality that exists only because of the ceaseless struggle of forces.

Schelling builds these points out of an unusual interpretation of the whole as resulting from the union of two different (and largely opposed) ways of being, ground and existence, an interpretation ostensibly derived from his explorations of nature.²⁷ It is important not to underestimate the innovative character of this distinction which Schelling's own explanatory apparatus, the association of ground and existence with darkness and light, tends to confuse by suggesting an affinity with traditional notions of chaos and order, nothingness and being, or infinite and finite. Since this distinction both depends on, and departs from, the expected usages of the metaphysical tradition, we need to look at it on its own merits, considering ground as a principle of inwardness or contraction and existence as a principle of expansion—ground tending to retreat into darkness, existence tending toward light as an essentially creative unfolding.²⁸

This conflict emerges mysteriously with the word, the utterance of the *logos* or *ratio*, which is the self-revelation of the pure light, the pure principle of form and intelligibility that is God. In this regard, what is so surprising and puzzling about Schelling's account of the emergence of the word is the apparent arbitrariness of it. While Schelling does claim that the word must reveal itself, he does not explain why it must reveal itself. Nor does he offer an account of why the word emerges in any specific beginning. In both cases, Schelling avoids explanations because they would limit God's freedom. But this limitation presents a striking problem.

Slavoj Žižek has rightly called attention to this problem,²⁹ that the point of beginning in Schelling has the character of the arbitrary, and this is a very important problem because Schelling quite strikingly

departs from the orthodox notion of divine necessity; namely, if God is as he must be, then he cannot not have been or been in a way other than he is. But Schelling tries to play a careful dual game here. He suggests, in line with the tradition, that God always is even when that “is” refers to a presumably “dormant” being within the ground. The emergence of God by means of the ground is not in fact the transition from nothingness to being (hence, the caution about conflating Schelling’s terms with traditional conceptual distinctions) but the point of revelation of a being that in some sense was always already there, even if “dormant”; here it is also important to stress that the ground only emerges with the revelation; it is in fact the latter’s very condition of possibility.

The fact is, however, that the point of God’s emergence does seem arbitrary and this arbitrariness points to a troubling concern, since the inchoate remainder in the ground persists as a threat to undermine the integrity of God’s existence, his logos-being or emergent rationality—it remains as a darkness from which God cannot seem fully to extricate himself, despite Schelling’s ambivalent and questionable protestations to the contrary (especially toward the end of the *Philosophical Investigations*). Simply put, Schelling’s attempt to reconcile God’s necessary nature with his freedom is beset with fundamental conflict and reveals one of the central ambiguities in Schelling’s thought: God seems to play a delicate balancing act in his own self-revelation, which both *may* (as conditioned by the ground) and *must not* (as somehow overcoming this condition) end in a disastrous contraction back into the ground.³⁰

This supposedly impossible possibility of disastrous contraction is of such importance because Schelling transposes the struggle in God, whose outcome, however unsure, *must* nonetheless “express” God’s triumph, to human beings as the highest form of creaturely being, as the ultimate reflection of God’s nature in the hierarchy of creation. This transposition is indeed the way of defining the dependent and independent aspects of human beings, dependent because human beings emerge from the ground in God, independent because the ostensibly necessary unity of ground and existence in God becomes their possible disunity in contingent human beings; for, if ground remains a condition in God, it need not do so in human beings. In other words, the ambiguity merely hinted at as an impossible or negative possibility in regard to God, becomes very explicitly possible in regard to

human beings whose contingency makes them the site of incessant conflict, nature's struggle with itself. If God is that in which existence triumphs over the ground, no matter how perplexing or unconvincing that triumph may be, in human beings this triumph is simply never secure at all, and those cases where human action is dominated by the contracting principle of ground are expressions of evil; evil being a perversion of the relation of ground to existence in which ground as the selfish (and self-conscious or "rational") will of the individual seeks to turn the whole to its own advantage, to make of the whole a pliant servant, to be no longer a condition of the revelation of the whole but that for which the whole is conditioned—in a word, it seeks to become absolute.

Žižek refers to this perversion of the relation of ground and existence as the creation of a *universal singularity* and goes on to say:

Man is the only creature which can elevate itself to this duality and sustain it: he is the highest paradox of *universal singularity*—the point of utmost contraction, the all-exclusive One of self-consciousness, and the embracing All—a singular being (the vanishing point of *cogito*) which is able to comprehend/mirror the entire universe . . . with the appearance of man, the two principles—Existence and its Ground—are posited in their distinction, they are not merely opposed to each other: *their unity also has to be posited*—that is to say, each of them is in the same breath posited as united with its opposite, as its opposite's inherent constituent. In other words, from the previous *indifference* of the two principles we pass to their *unity*—and it is here that we encounter freedom as freedom for Good and Evil, since this unity can take two forms, the form of the true or of the perverted unity . . .³¹

What Žižek calls a universal singularity can be vividly clarified by reference to Sade, whose work could act as paradigmatic of Schelling's bolder characterization of evil.

Simone de Beauvoir's famous essay "Must We Burn Sade?" (*Faut-il brûler Sade?*) makes precisely this point, that Sade's entire oeuvre is aimed at transforming his singular singularity, all the more shocking for its bizarre and brutal features, into a universality, claiming more or less distinctly and clearly that the "polymorphic" perversity his novels never tire of depicting in myriad profusion is actually an accurate portrayal of the true nature of human beings,

provided we are free and courageous enough to accept this nature.³² In Sade's world, the passions of the body rule with the active collaboration of the mind; the most brutal acts are "spiritualized"—"elegant" form being conferred on them—and they are the subject of careful, ostensibly "learned" disquisition, the true "torch of philosophy." Indeed, this "spirituality" first lends interest and piquancy to the passions, as if their products could be the subject of exquisitely precise mathematical deductions brought forth into the most monstrous sensual form. Nothing could be more exemplary of Schelling's expression of a kind of evil which is the product neither of a lack nor a deficiency, but rather of a positive, vital force, one in which all the powers that are typically associated with the good, such as rationality, rigor, and probity, come to serve the most brutal and selfish impulses, the ever varying whims of physical desire, of the most "earthly" appetites.

Here one glimpses the deeper movement of Schelling's thought along with its powerful affinity with Kant; for the subordination of reason to the advocacy of the body, its serving as an instrument for the complication and elaboration of the body's necessarily selfish pleasures, is the ultimate affront to reason as inherently universal, as authorizing a categorical imperative—once the body's dictates become categorical imperatives, nothing but the most extreme rejection of the universal as such, as something to which all could assent, is achieved. This brings us back to the Sadean revolutionary who deploys all the resources of reason in service of the most particular, evanescent and selfish interests and, what is more, clothes those selfish interests in the guise of universal principles, this being a part of the titillation his perversions provide—here is the will to power gone mad, the possibility of the universal as something that is inherently egalitarian fades away, and all that can remain is the imposition of the universal by force as a *proton pseudos*, the more or less arbitrary basis for the ascent of the particular to universal hegemony or, as Wirth says, for "the propensity of the creaturely, as the child of the super-creaturely, to shun the abyss of its origin and the abyss of its future and move towards itself and affirm the presence only of itself."³³

Now, one may interject that Schelling's thinking as described here really does not seem to differ all that significantly from the notion of radical evil Kant develops. Schopenhauer certainly saw it

this way and, in his typically vituperative manner, criticized Schelling for merely rehashing what Kant had already said more clearly and consequentially. But here Schopenhauer is surely wrong because he fails to acknowledge—or tacitly rejects—the way that Schelling returns evil to its status as a fundamental aspect of being and not only of one being. In other words, by transposing the divine structure onto human beings, Schelling immediately ties the whole to the part, whether in harmony or conflict and, in so doing, avoids the division of the concept of evil into metaphysical and moral spheres—here the moral is the metaphysical and vice versa. Schelling thereby returns the question of evil to its wider ontological context while incorporating the stronger concept of moral evil he found in Kant.³⁴ This combination lays the foundations for reviving the problem of theodicy by combining a palliative normativity that legitimates the whole with a force that threatens actively to undermine all normativity.

The End of Theodicy?

What concept of theodicy does this combination create? Commentators may be divided as to its exact nature, but almost all agree that Schelling is working within the traditional confines of theodicy. They note that the transposition of an apparently stable structure in God to human beings as an unstable structure absolves God of responsibility for evil and, thus, fulfills one of the primary conditions of theodicy.³⁵ But they also note that the transfer of the locus of evil to human beings as a positive concept still leaves the question open of why God should permit this evil in his creation, a sort of evil that, by its very nature, presents a challenge to God—as a positively negative concept, evil now seems to have a far greater power because it always threatens to undermine God. Evil is no longer an obedient servant but a surly and dangerous one who seeks to rid himself of his master.

The commentators' difficulty stems from nagging doubts about whether the attempt to combine traditional theodicy with a much more aggressive concept of evil, one that seems to make a mockery of theodicy, is in fact possible. From this standpoint, it seems that Schelling's daring combination of incompatibles in fact fails. Even

Heidegger, one of Schelling's most formidable (and, at least initially, sympathetic) readers, sees Schelling's failure precisely in his attempt to remain within the tradition of theodicy, and for Heidegger that means systematic thought, while asserting a much more generous account of freedom and the reality of evil that is inseparable from it:

That is the difficulty which emerges more and more clearly in Schelling's later efforts with the whole of philosophy, the difficulty which proves to be an *impasse* (*Scheitern*). And this *impasse* is evident since the factors of the jointure of Being, ground and existence and their unity not only become less and less compatible, but are even driven so far apart that Schelling falls back into the rigidified tradition of Western thought without creatively transforming it. But what makes this failure so significant is that Schelling thus only brings out difficulties which were already posited in the beginning of Western philosophy, and because of the direction which this beginning took were posited by it as insurmountable. For us this means that a second beginning becomes necessary through the first, but is possible only in the complete transformation of the first beginning, never by just letting it stand.³⁶

Heidegger suggests that the very dissonance Schelling discovers in the *Philosophical Investigations* simply cannot admit of reconciliation with the notion of system, that it leads to the final destruction of this notion since it shows with unparalleled acuity that which system must ignore or sacrifice in order to maintain its own legitimacy. This fundamental freedom, a freedom that cannot be possible other than as an affront to system, refuses to obey, for this refusal is its very essence, an essence that is expressed by the ground and the anarchic impulse it "contains"; hence, any system must also seem to be merely a fiction, a "ruling by fiat" whose authority can never be absolute, can never achieve the apparent calm of Leibnizian reason or Hegelian reconciliation.

Žižek comes to a view that is not that much different but strikes more directly at the key problem of contingency. As we noted before, the apparent contingency lingering in the emergence of the word must cast a long shadow on any attempt to assert even God's necessity; indeed, this is the most sensitive point of the entire analysis. How can God's emergence into existence be both necessary

and contingent: In other words, can a coherent concept of God successfully, that is, harmoniously, combine necessity and freedom? And if, indeed, God's emergence into existence is somehow necessary and free, does this necessity not in a very significant way undermine the homology between God and human beings that Schelling is otherwise careful to preserve? One might argue with some justice that this difference is so immense that it vitiates the entire comparison and points to what seems to be an indelicately forced aspect of Schelling's thought, a purely dogmatic and, as such, seemingly arbitrary desire to preserve the most important elements in the tradition of theodicy against an analysis of human being that cannot but destroy them.³⁷

From this point of view (and perhaps this point of view only) one is hard pressed to distinguish Žižek from Heidegger in regard to the essential thrust of argument, since both identify the basic frailty of Schelling's attempt at reconciliation in the problematic nature of his assertion of a homology between God and human beings that seems to admit of its own impossibility and, in doing so, tends to undermine the identity between God and human beings that must be the crucial foundation for any form of theodicy. If God is simply not like human beings, and the question of necessity and contingency raises the specter of this difference like none other, there may be no way to reconcile the two, and no way to explain how all the qualities that are intimately connected with God could in any way be connected with human beings other than as useful fictions or projections that are indistinguishable from fictions.

Coda

But a different view may be argued if one risks the conjecture that Schelling in effect redefines theodicy as a way of preserving it within the context of his much more adventurous concept of evil. To explore this conjecture, we have to look at the purpose of theodicy, the ends to which theodicy is put, once again.

We have already suggested that theodicy arises as the bulwark of the modern scientific revolution; its purpose is to make the broadest claims for the intelligibility and accessibility of the world to human rationality and, thus, to human domination. The dream of mastering

nature and thereby overcoming the meanness of our mortal estate is underwritten by theodicy—absolute knowledge is possible, the human mind can accede to complete understanding because thought and being are one. This is the boldest claim of theodicy, and it is also a very controversial claim about theodicy itself because it assumes that God becomes the tool of the philosophers, of an *eros* to dominate that has nothing of piety about it;³⁸ that the notion of mastering nature is merely a coded way of expressing the ascent of human beings from their mortal estate to that of a god.

Kant scuppers this exuberance, and it has been argued that Kant in fact sees nothing more pernicious than the elevation of human beings to the status of gods.³⁹ But this may not be a fair statement. It seems to us much better to claim that Kant is terribly ambiguous, that his thinking shows the greatest tension between the desire to elevate and to level human beings, as noted previously, the desire to save the true nature of enlightenment aggression by curbing its most dangerous excesses. In this Schelling is very much Kant's disciple and his philosophical journey reveals the intolerable nature of the tensions in Kant, their inherent instability.⁴⁰

In our opinion, the *Philosophical Investigations* is one of Schelling's most daring attempts to make sense of the tensions in Kant by reinterpreting their instability as the very essence of a theodicy of life, as the living surface of a whole justified by its vital dynamism. Here a central point for Schelling is precisely that a homology between God and man must not be possible; to the contrary, such a homology would be the highest expression of evil itself, a sort of cosmic suicide, because its achievement would mean not only the disappearance of God but that of man as well. What we suggest here, then, is that theodicy understood in the modern sense as ultimately demanding (and also despairing of) such a homology, whether openly or covertly, is indeed a most terrible form of evil, a leap into madness that seeks to close the universe at the cost of life itself; the search to become a god leaves human beings in the tatters of aging Oedipus, strangers to themselves and the world—this surely is the essence of evil as Schelling sees it. Hence, the corrosive irony is that the modern theodicy of life is indistinguishable from an evil condemnation of life (and, ultimately, of itself as an untenable and unfortunate fiction).

Schelling's daring reformulation of theodicy reflects a unique oscillation between this madness and a sobriety of reconciliation,

between the desire to be a god and the desire to live as a human being, between the tragic and comic sides of human striving; Schelling's theodicy is one that sees struggle as the end of creation and the very wellspring of life. Imbalance and dissonance are of the essence and, without them, all turns into meaningless indifference, the *Ungrund*, a rejection of the constant interestedness that is life, its tirelessly changing fusion of contraction and expansion. As Schelling writes in the 1815 draft of the *Ages of the World*:

All life must pass through the fire of contradiction. Contradiction is the engine of life and its innermost essence. From this it follows that, as an old book says, all deeds under the sun are full of trouble and everything languishes in toil, yet does not become tired, and all forces incessantly struggle against each other. Were there only unity and everything were in peace, then, truly nothing would want to stir itself and everything would sink into listlessness.⁴¹

One might well accuse Schelling of being rather naive. But he is in fact showing a deeply Goethian respect for the integrity of struggle, for the recognition that evil emerges from the unquenchable desire to overcome the ambiguous terms of human life in a brutal pursuit of quietude, a quietude that can only be a form of self-destruction, whether it emerges in monastic self-immolation or in the more brutal pursuits of domination that haunt the history of the twentieth-century as well as our ceaseless striving for control over our bodies and the earth.

Hence, the reformulation of theodicy Schelling advances is one that respects the whole as a necessarily free and unstable interplay of essentially tragic and comic forms of striving; it is a dynamic structure which reflects Schelling's point that the absence of a complete homology between God and human being, expressed through the instability in the human synthesis of ground and existence, is the grave dissonance that works life, the evil that works good.

But Heidegger and Žižek cannot be so easily dismissed. For has Schelling merely renewed the traditional view of evil as servant of the good in a remarkably circuitous way, has he merely engaged in a complex subterfuge that has not managed to conceal itself all that well? One might respond in typically Schellingian fashion by suggesting that he both does and does not. While Schelling invokes this

traditional view, he also seems to undermine it by suggesting that evil is not a loyal systemic servant but rather one who always threatens to become master and may (and rather ambiguously must not) have the power to do so. For Schelling, fundamental instability is of the essence of theodicy; the ineradicable possibility of collapse creates the manifold tensions from which the whole emerges as a vibrant plenitude. Indeed, these manifold tensions—the tensions of restless life itself—must be present at every moment; since instability endows the moment with an alluring promise of being that is the foremost gift of theodicy, a theodicy always threatened and ever restored, at once ending and beginning anew.

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Translators' Note

The clumsiest literal translation is a thousand times more useful than the prettiest paraphrase.—Vladimir Nabokov

It has become customary to preface translations with a statement of impossibility, that the translation simply cannot capture the original, that translation is a traitor to the work translated (*traduttore traditore*) or that all translation is “merely” an interpretation tainted by limited knowledge, time, and so forth. All three statements, and the great number of variations on them that may be found in any sampling of contemporary translations, constitute a modern variant of humility *topos*; as such they allude to an act of veneration that inevitably corrupts to the extent the ever mysterious “grace,” by which the blessed tongue may speak the truth freely across the barriers of alien customs and grammar, falters or is unexpectedly withdrawn. While we have no wish to quarrel with these well-worn conventions of the translator’s art, we do wish to make a claim that heads in the opposite direction, that suggests the vitality of translation as a means of *discovering* a text, of bringing the original alive in a new and unaccustomed form; every worthy translation is in this sense a restoration of an original that may never have existed as such but appears refreshed and refurbished through the translator’s efforts if, indeed, they meet with success.

Now, Schelling’s celebrated essay on freedom is a notoriously difficult work, and we have tried to hold a fine line between not tainting or masking its difficulty and making it sufficiently accessible to an audience perhaps only slightly familiar with the conventions and habits of writing prevalent in German philosophical discourse at the beginning of the nineteenth century (and, even for those with more than passing familiarity, Schelling’s style can be quite opaque). But, as a practical matter, we have generally preferred to retain the genuine flavor of the original. In particular, we

have sought to preserve its syntactic structure and idiosyncrasy as generously as possible on all levels, from the simple phrase to the exceedingly complex agglomerations that emerge and transform themselves in the course of Schelling's argument. And this movement from the simple phrase to a broader series of echoes of that phrase, both in sound and syntax, is one of the more remarkable features of the treatise's linguistic texture; here we have a carefully wrought structure in which internal echoes and changes in tone play a significant role, one that is indeed extremely hard to capture effectively but that merits the attempt.

To that end, we have thus erred in many ways on the side of the ostensibly more literalist attitude to translation that marks the recent Cambridge edition of Kant's works as well as some of the more distinguished translations produced by those following what one might call the "Straussian" imperative to capture the strangeness of the original text and not to efface its linguistic peculiarity (or, for that matter, clumsiness) through palliative simplification or condescending colloquialism. In this respect, we have sought to avoid the undoubted excesses of hermeneutic approaches derived from Heidegger while not dismissing the virtue of enhancing strangeness through explanatory paraphrase; yet, we usually have thought it best to keep paraphrase of this nature to the notes or certain combinations (like, e.g., "beings in the world" for *Weltwesen*) that may in turn be considered deliberately provocative or overly Heideggerian or, indeed, "mock-Heideggerian." The upshot is that our translation tends in general toward a painstaking *mimēsis* of the German text that makes as many sacrifices to English as seemed necessary to avoid loss of the translation's greatest ally, a reasonably idiomatic English prose; in other words, our translation presents Schelling "warts and all" but in what we hope is a sufficiently English manner that the warts are not simply all or do not overwhelm the whole.

This approach has led us to several difficult translation choices that merit some discussion in advance, either because the words at issue are ones that have been traditional sources of perplexity to translators or because our way of using them departs from the previous reception of the text or indicates philosophical choices that must be made explicit.

Anarchy, Anarchical

We have used “anarchy” and “anarchical” to translate, respectively, *das Regellose* and *regellos*. This may prove to be a very controversial choice since James Gutmann’s rendering of these terms as “unruliness” or “unruly” has been widely accepted in discussions of the text.¹ Gutmann’s rendering has the virtue of translating the German into cognate English and thereby also preserving Schelling’s contrast between “rule” and “unruliness” where an equivalent contrast between “archē” and “anarchy” is not possible. Yet, the problem with “unruliness” is twofold. The word seems to us to sound increasingly archaic in modern American English and, where it does not, to have largely more benign associations than the German may be said to have since, for example, unruliness can refer to children (or, for that matter, mischievous spirits) and, then, in a gently ironic way, one suggesting perhaps some degree of bemused approval. We chose instead to emphasize what we consider the more striking ambivalence suggested by the word “anarchy,” its range of reference both to a terrifying and liberating absence of order. In our view, this ambivalence captures more powerfully the tension between ground and existence, between contraction and expansion, that is such a central aspect of Schelling’s thought in a way that “unruliness” or “unruly” cannot. Moreover, the broad application of the word “anarchy” to a number of contexts (political, historical, philosophical) enhanced its appeal for us, since it emphasizes the great sweep of Schelling’s treatise, that the latter is neither so hermetic nor so divorced from immediate reality that it must remain on dusty shelves as just another abandoned metaphysics or shipwreck of thought appropriate primarily for the historian of philosophy.

Essence, being, and Being

Jason Wirth has recently pointed out that Schelling’s use of the German *Wesen* is a great source of difficulty for the translator, and we could not agree with him more. *Wesen* in German philosophical writing has had strong associations with the Latin *essentia* and, as demonstrated by Bonitz’s celebrated translation of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, the Greek *ousia* as well. Both *essentia* and *ousia* may be (and have

been) translated into English as “essence,” as that “what-ness” of a thing that distinguishes it as the thing it is, as that definition which gives the thing the general identity it has. Hence, *Wesen* translated as “essence” refers to an abstract universal, something that describes things in time, where they are subject to the cycle of generation and decay, but which, as a condition of its being able to do so, must be freed from that cycle. Now, Wirth has suggested that to translate Schelling’s use of *Wesen* as “essence” is inevitably to distort because Schelling does not associate *Wesen* with an abstract universal; indeed, according to Wirth, *Wesen* for Schelling is fundamentally dynamic, naming “the tension between present being (existence) and the simultaneous intimation of that which is as no longer being (the past) and that which is as not yet being (the future).” Wirth’s solution to this problem—one he freely admits is problematic—is to avoid use of the word “essence” to translate *Wesen* in favor of “being” with the definite or indefinite article as required.²

While we appreciate the validity of the problem Wirth identifies and have followed him in practice to a significant degree, we have nonetheless chosen a somewhat different guiding principle in our translation; namely, we have translated *Wesen* either by “essence” or by “being” depending on the particular shade of meaning Schelling seems to emphasize in a given instance. We freely admit, however, that this shade of meaning has not at all been easy to isolate with assurance in many of these instances. For example, we have chosen to retain the conventional translation of the title of the essay as a treatise regarding the “essence of human freedom” rather than the “being of human freedom.” We have done so because it seems to us that in this instance Schelling is indeed seeking to express a sort of “abstract universal” to the extent the essay is intended to set out the what-ness of human freedom, a definition that is not subject to time but, indeed, in a sense determines what time is or may be. In other cases, where Schelling refers to what is quite evidently a form of being originating or existing within a narrative horizon, that is, within some interpretation of time, we have used the term “being.” In this latter respect, one of the most difficult decisions we made involves reference to the *Wesen* of the ground as a form of being. But we chose this usage precisely to avoid the assimilation of Schelling’s characterization of the relation between ground and existence to that between essence and existence, an assimilation inimical to the polysemy inherent in this

characterization which both suggests a similarity to the tradition (present here as a sort of conceptual “shadow”) and a departure from it, since God’s essence has traditionally been equivalent to his existence and not (in a carefully qualified manner) prior to it.

Finally, where Schelling uses the substantive *Sein*, we have translated it with the capitalized “Being” to avoid confusion between *Wesen* and *Sein*. In the case of the participial *Seiendes*, we have employed a circumlocution, “that which has being.” Regarding both these choices, we have followed Wirth’s practice in his translation of *The Ages of the World*.

Man, Mankind

Schelling very frequently uses the word *Mensch* to describe the whole species. We have translated this word throughout by “man” and its variants where necessary. Not only is this translation somewhat inaccurate—because *Mensch* does not refer to one of the sexes only, but, like the Greek *anthrōpos*, to the species without regard to the sexes—it also involves a degree of gender bias that is repugnant. And yet the demands of English have presented us with somewhat of a dilemma both grammatically and in regard to well-worn phrases like the relation of “man to God.” Moreover, the strongest alternative we considered, “human beings,” is in many cases both unusual and cumbersome. While these may seem like exculpatory reasons themselves, we also want to point out that, as Judith Norman mentions in her translation of *The Ages of the World*, *Mensch* in the German philosophical tradition was associated with a masculine subject, and this too seems to be present in the *Philosophical Investigations*.³

In closing, we note that our translation follows Thomas Buchheim’s excellent recent critical edition of the *Philosophical Investigations*, although we have not hesitated to check other editions where necessary.⁴ We should also like to express our appreciation to the previous translators of the *Philosophical Investigations*, from whose work we have learned a great deal, even if we have not infrequently made different choices, and, in this regard, we hope our choices prove worthy of their work.

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PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE
ESSENCE OF HUMAN FREEDOM AND
MATTERS CONNECTED THEREWITH

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling

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PREFACE

This collection will contain individual philosophical treatises by the author that have already been published in various places together with others, as yet unpublished.¹

Those already published in this volume are mostly idealist in content. The first, *Of the I as Principle of Philosophy or on the Unconditioned in Human Knowledge*, shows idealism in its most youthful guise and, perhaps, in a sense that it subsequently lost. At least the I is still taken everywhere as absolute or as identity of the subjective and objective and not as subjective.

The *Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism* (No. II), which appeared first in *Niethammer's* philosophical journal in 1796, contain a lively polemic against the then almost generally accepted and variously misused, so-called moral, proof of the existence of God from the point of view of the then no less generally prevailing opposition of subject and object.² For the author this polemic seems still to have its full force in regard to the way of thinking to which it refers. Not one of those who has remained at the same standpoint to this day has refuted it. However, the observations contained in the ninth letter at p. 178, *et passim*, concerning the disappearance of all oppositions of conflicting principles in the absolute, are the clear seeds of later and more positive views.

These show themselves in a more definite way in the *Treatises in Explanation of the Idealism of the Doctrine of Science* [*Wissenschaftslehre*] (No. III) which first appeared in the philosophical journal of *Fichte* and *Niethammer*, and which indisputably contribute much to the general understanding of this system, especially in the third treatise.

The following treatise, *On the Relation of the Fine Arts to Nature* (No. IV), is an academic speech of which only a small number of copies were made on the first occasion of its appearance, so that it likely first will come into the hands of most more distant readers through this second printing. Incidentally, some new comments have been added at the end of the treatise.³

The fifth treatise of this volume, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and Matters Connected Therewith*, is new and appears in print here for the first time.

| The author finds but little to remark about this same treatise.

Since reason, thinking and knowing are accounted to the essence of the spiritual [*geistig*] nature first of all, the opposition of nature and spirit was properly considered first from this perspective. This way of considering the matter is adequately justified by the firm belief in a purely human reason, the conviction that all thinking and knowing are completely subjective and that nature is utterly without reason and thought, as well as the mechanistic kind of representation [*Vorstellungsart*] prevalent everywhere in so far as even the dynamism that was revived by Kant changed again only into a higher mechanism and was in no way recognized in its identity with the spiritual.⁴ This root of opposition has now been torn out, and securing of a more correct view can be calmly given over to general advancement toward better knowledge.

It is time that the higher or, rather, the genuine opposition emerge, that of necessity and freedom, with which the innermost centerpoint of philosophy first comes into consideration.

Since the author has confined himself wholly to investigations in the philosophy of nature | after the first general presentation of his system (in the *Journal for Speculative Physics*), the continuation of which was unfortunately interrupted by external circumstances, and after the beginning made in the work, *Philosophy and Religion*—which, admittedly, remained unclear due to faulty presentation—the current treatise is the first in which the author puts forth his concept of the ideal part of philosophy with complete determinateness.⁵ Hence, if that first presentation should possess any importance, he must first place alongside it this treatise, which, according to the nature of its topic, must already contain deeper disclosures about the entire system than all more partial presentations.

Although up to now the author had nowhere expressed himself regarding the main points that come to be spoken of in this treatise, the freedom of the will, good and evil, personality, and so on (excepting the one work, *Philosophy and Religion*), this has not prevented the attribution to him of definite opinions regarding these matters by others as they saw fit, even when wholly inappropriate to the content of

that—as it seems utterly ignored—work. Unsolicited, so-called followers may have brought forth many distortions as well, as in other so also in these matters, apparently in accordance with the basic principles of the author.

Indeed, only a complete, finished system should have, so it seems, adherents in the genuine sense. Until now the author has never established anything of the like, but rather has shown only individual facets of such a system (and these often only in a particular, e.g., polemical, connection as well). Hence, he has declared his works fragments of a whole, to perceive the interconnection of which required a finer gift of observation among intrusive followers and a better will among opponents than is commonly found in either. The only scientific presentation of his system, since it was not completed, was in its genuine intent understood by no one or by very few. Immediately after the appearance of this fragment, there began slander and falsification on the one hand, and, on the other hand, clarification, adaptation and translation, of which that into a supposedly more brilliant language (since at the same time an entirely unrestrained poetic frenzy had taken hold of minds) was | the worst sort. Now it seems that a healthier time is again upon us. The unwavering, the diligent and the inner are again being sought. One is beginning in general to recognize for what it is the emptiness of those who have gamboled about with the phrases of the new philosophy like French stage heroes or who have gestured like tightrope walkers. At the same time, others have sung to death in all the market squares the new that has been seized upon, as if to the accompaniment of a barrel organ, and have finally aroused such a general disgust that they will soon find no audience remaining; especially if critics, who are, in passing, not ill-disposed, did not say that every unintelligible rhapsody in which some turns of phrase of a well-known writer have been brought together is composed in accordance with his fundamental principles. Let them rather treat each such writer as an original, which each fundamentally wishes to be, and which, in a certain sense, quite a few also are.

May this treatise thus serve to strike down, on the one hand, many prejudices and, on the other hand, much loose and shallow chatter.

Finally, we wish that those who have openly or furtively attacked the author from prejudice should now also present their points of view just as candidly as has happened here. If complete mastery of one's

topic makes possible its free and technically rich [*Kunstreich*] development, then the artificial tergiversations [*künstliche Schraubengänge*] of polemic indeed cannot be the form of philosophy. But we wish still more that the spirit of general endeavor secure itself ever more and that the sectarian spirit, which only too often prevails among Germans, not impede achievement of a knowledge and point of view whose development always seemed destined for Germans and that was perhaps never nearer to them than now.

Munich, March 31, 1809 |

F. W. J. Schelling

Philosophische Untersuchungen
über
das Wesen
der
menschlichen Freyheit
und die
damit zusammenhängenden
Gegenstände.

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Philosophical investigations into the essence of human freedom can in part address the correct concept of freedom in so far as the fact of freedom, no matter how immediately the feeling of which is imprinted in every individual, lies in no way so fully on the surface that, in order merely to express it in words, an uncommon clarity and depth of mind would not be required; in part, they can deal with the connection of this concept with the whole of a scientific worldview.⁶ Since no concept can be defined in isolation, however, and only proof of its connection with the whole also confers on it final scientific completeness, this must be preeminently the case with the concept of freedom, which, if it has reality at all, must not be simply a subordinate or subsidiary concept, but one of the system's ruling center-points: thus both these sides of the investigation coincide here, as everywhere. According to an old but in no way forgotten legend, the concept of freedom is in fact said to be completely incompatible with system, and every philosophy making claim to unity and wholeness should end up with the denial of freedom.⁷ It is not easy to dispute general assurances of this kind; for who knows which limiting notions have already been linked to the word system, so that the claim asserts something which is of course very true, but also very trivial. Or, if opinion is this, that the concept of system opposes the concept of freedom generally and in itself, then it is curious that, since individual freedom is surely connected in some way with the world as a whole (regardless of whether it be thought in a realist or idealist manner), some kind of system must be present, at least in the divine understanding, with which freedom coexists. To claim generally that this system can never be brought to clarity in human understanding is again to claim nothing, in so far as, according to how it is understood, the statement can be either true or false. It depends on determination of the principle by which man comes to have knowledge of

any kind; and what Sextus says in regard to Empedocles should be applied to this assumption: the learned and the ignorant can conceive of such an assumption as emerging from boastfulness and arrogance, qualities which must be foreign to anyone having even meager practice in philosophy; yet one who starts out from the theory of nature and knows that it is a very ancient doctrine that like is recognized by like (which supposedly comes from Pythagoras but is also encountered in Plato, and was declared by Empedocles a good deal earlier) will understand that the philosopher claims such a (divine) understanding because, holding his understanding clear and undimmed by malice, he alone grasps the god outside through the god in himself.*⁸ However, it is customary among those who are ill-disposed to science to understand thereby a kind of knowledge that is utterly abstract and inanimate like common geometry. It would be more succinct and decisive to deny system even in the will or understanding of the primal being [*Urwesen*], to say that there are only individual wills of which each determines its own center for itself and is, according to Fichte's expression, the absolute substance of each and every "I."⁹ Reason, which strives for unity, like feeling, which insists on freedom and personality, is, however, always dismissed only by a fiat [*Machtspruch*] that lasts for a while and finally comes to ruin. Thus Fichte's doctrine had to attest to its recognition of | unity, if only in the paltry form of a moral ordering of the world, in which it nonetheless immediately fell into contradictions and unacceptable propositions. Therefore it seems that no matter how much may be brought to support this claim from a merely historical standpoint, namely, from previous systems—(we have not found anywhere arguments [*Gründe*] that were drawn from the essence of reason and knowledge themselves)—connection of the concept of freedom with the whole of a worldview will likely always remain the object of a necessary task without whose resolution the concept of freedom would teeter while philosophy would be fully without value. For this great task alone is the unconscious and invisible driving force [*Triebfeder*] of all striving for knowledge, from the lowest to the highest; without the contradiction of necessity and freedom not only philosophy but each higher willing of the spirit would sink into the death that is proper to those sciences in which this contradiction has no

* Sext. Empir. *adv. Grammaticos* L. I, c. 13, p. 283, ed. Fabric.

application. To pull oneself out of the conflict by renouncing reason seems closer to flight than to victory. With the same justification, another could turn his back on freedom in order to throw himself into the arms of reason and necessity without there being cause for triumph on either the one or the other side.

The same opinion has been more decisively expressed in the phrase: the only possible system of reason is pantheism, but this is inevitably fatalism.* It is an undeniably excellent invention that with such labels entire viewpoints are described all at once. If one has found the right label for a system, the rest falls into place of itself, and one is spared the effort of examining what is characteristic about it more meticulously. As soon as such labels are given, with their help even one who is ignorant can pass judgment on the most thought-through matters. Nevertheless, with such an extraordinary claim, all depends on the closer determination of the concept. For thus it should likely not be denied that, if pantheism denotes nothing more than the doctrine of the immanence of things in God, every rational viewpoint in some sense must be drawn to this doctrine.¹⁰ But precisely the sense here makes the difference. That the fatalistic sense may be connected with pantheism is undeniable; but that this sense is not essentially connected with it is elucidated by the fact that so many are brought to this viewpoint through the most lively feeling of freedom. Most, if they were honest, would confess that, given how their ideas have been formed, individual freedom would seem to them to be inconsistent with almost all properties of a highest being, for example, with omnipotence. Through freedom a fundamentally unlimited power is asserted next to and outside of divine power, which is unthinkable according to these concepts. As the sun in the firmament extinguishes all the lights in the sky, even more so does infinite extinguish every finite power. Absolute causality in One Being leaves only unconditional passivity to all others. This entails the dependence of all beings in the world on God, and that even their continued existence is only an ever-renewed creation in which the finite being is produced not as an undefined generality but rather as this

* Earlier claims of this kind are well known. We leave open the question of whether Fr. Schlegel's statement in his work, *On the Language and Wisdom of the Indian People*, p. 141, "Pantheism is the system of pure reason," has perhaps another meaning.

definite, individual being with such and such thoughts, strivings, actions and no others. It explains nothing to say that God holds his omnipotence in reserve so that man can act or that he permits freedom: if God were to withhold his omnipotence for a moment, man would cease to be. Is there any other way out of this argument than to save personal freedom within the divine being itself, since it is unthinkable in opposition to omnipotence; to say that man is not outside of, but rather in, God and that his activity itself belongs to the life of God? It is exactly from this standpoint that mystics and religious natures of all times have attained to the belief in the unity of man with God, a belief that seems to accord with the deepest feeling as much as, | if not more than, with reason and speculation. Indeed, scripture itself finds exactly in the consciousness of freedom the seal and pledge of the belief that we are and live in God. Now, how can *the* doctrine necessarily be at odds with freedom, which so many have asserted in regard to man precisely in order to save freedom?¹¹

But another and, as commonly believed, more accurate explanation of pantheism is that it consists in a complete identification of God with things; a blending of creator and created being [*Geschöpf*]¹² from which yet another set of difficult and unbearable assertions is derived. However, a more total differentiation of things from God than that found in Spinoza, the presumed classic for this doctrine, is hardly conceivable. God is what is in itself and is understood only from itself; what is finite, however, is necessarily in another and can only be understood from this other. According to this differentiation, things are obviously not different from God simply in degree or through their limitedness, as it may appear, however, on a superficial consideration of the doctrine of modifications, but *toto genere*. Whatever for that matter their relation to God may be, they are absolutely separate from God due to the fact that they can only exist in and according to another (namely, to Him), that their concept is a derived one that would not be possible at all without the concept of God; since, to the contrary, the latter concept alone is what is independent and original, alone what affirms itself, that to which everything else can be related only as affirmed, only as consequence to ground. Other properties of things, for example, their eternity, are valid solely on this assumption. God is eternal according to his nature, things only with him and as a result of his existence, that is, only in a derivative way. Precisely because of this difference, all individual

things together cannot amount to God, as commonly maintained, in so far as no sort of combination can transform what is by nature derivative into what is by nature original, just as little as the individual points on a circumference | when taken together can amount to that circumference, since as a whole, and according to its concept, it must necessarily precede them. Still more fatuous is the conclusion that in Spinoza even the individual thing is equivalent to God. Then, if even the strong expression that every thing is a modified God is to be found in Spinoza, the elements of the concept are so contradictory that, once they are combined together, the concept falls apart again. A modified, that is, derivative, God is not God in the genuine and eminent sense; due to this one addition, things return to their place whereby they are forever divided from God. The reason [*Grund*] for such misinterpretations, which in large measure other systems have also experienced, lies in the general misunderstanding of the law of identity or the meaning of the copula in judgment. It can at once be made comprehensible to a child that in no possible proposition (which according to the assumed explanation states the identity of the subject with the predicate) is stated a sameness [*Einerleiheit*] or even only an unmediated connection of these two—in so far as, for example, the proposition, “This body is blue,” does not have the meaning that the body is, in and through that in and through which it is a body, also blue, but rather only the meaning that the same thing which is this body is also blue, although not in the same respect: and yet this assumption, which indicates complete ignorance regarding the nature [*Wesen*] of the copula, has constantly been made in relation to the higher application of the law of identity in our time. For example, if one puts forward the proposition: “The perfect is the imperfect,” the meaning is this: the imperfect is not due to that through which it is imperfect, but rather through the perfect that is in it; however, in our time it has this meaning: the perfect and the imperfect are the same [*einerlei*], all is the same [*gleich*] in itself, the worst and the best, foolishness and wisdom. Or: good is evil, which means to say roughly that evil does not have the power to exist through itself; that within evil which has being is (considered in and for itself) the good. This is interpreted in the following manner: the eternal difference between justice and injustice, virtue and vice is denied; both are logically the same. | Or, if in a different turn of phrase, necessary and free things are explained as One, the meaning of which is that the

same thing (in the final judgment) which is the essence of the moral world is also the essence of nature, then this is understood as follows: free things are nothing but forces of nature, coil springs [*Springfeder*], which, like any other, are subject to mechanism. The same thing occurs in the proposition that the soul is one with the body, which is interpreted as suggesting that the soul is material, air, ether, nerve fluid, and the like; for the reverse, that the body is the soul, or, in the preceding proposition, that the seemingly necessary is in itself free, though it is at once just as valid to infer from the proposition, is in a well-considered way set aside. Such misunderstandings, which, if they are not deliberate, presuppose a level of dialectical immaturity that Greek philosophy surpasses almost in its first steps, make recommending the thorough study of logic into a pressing duty. The ancients' profoundly meaningful [*tiefsinnig*] logic differentiated subject and predicate as what precedes and what follows (*antecedens et consequens*) and thereby expressed the real meaning of the law of identity.¹³ This relation persists even in tautological propositions, if they are not to be utterly without meaning. Whoever says, "The body is body," surely thinks something different with respect to the subject of the sentence than with respect to the predicate; with respect to the former namely, unity, with respect to the latter, the individual properties contained within the concept of body that relate to it as *antecedens* to *consequens*. Just this is the meaning of another ancient explanation according to which subject and predicate are set against each other as what is enfolded to what is unfolded (*implicitum et explicitum*).* |

* Mr. Reinhold, too, who wanted to re-create all of philosophy through logic, does not, however, seem to recognize what Leibniz, in whose footsteps he claims to walk, said about the meaning of the copula in regard to the objections of Wissowatius (Opp. T. I ed. Dutens, p. 11) and still toils away in this labyrinth, where he confuses identity with sameness. In a paper before us is the following passage from him: "According to the demands of Plato and Leibniz, the duty of philosophy consists in showing the subordination of the finite to the infinite, according to the demands of Xenophanes, Bruno, Spinoza, and Schelling, in showing the unconditional unity of both." To the extent that unity in the sense of opposition is obviously supposed to denote sameness here, I assure Mr. Reinhold that he is mistaken at least in regard to both of the last named. Where is there a more incisive expression for the subordination of the finite to | the infinite to be found than the one

However, defenders of the foregoing claim will now say that pantheism does not speak at all about the fact that God is everything (which is not easy to avoid according to the common notion of his properties), but rather about the fact that things are nothing, that this system abolishes all individuality. Yet it seems that this new determination contradicts the preceding one, for, if things are nothing, how is it possible to blend | God with them? Then there is nothing anywhere but pure unblemished divinity. Or, if there is nothing besides God (not simply *extra*, but rather also *praeter Deum*), how can he be all things, other than merely in words, so that the whole

by Spinoza referred to above? The living must take issue with calumnies against those who are no longer present—just as we expect that, in a similar case, those living after us will in regard to us. I speak only of Spinoza and ask what should one call this practice of asserting fecklessly what one finds good about systems without being thoroughly acquainted with them, as if it were a trifle to read into them this or that creation of one's fancy? In ordinary, moral society it would be called *unconscionable*. According to another passage in the same paper, the fundamental mistake of all more recent philosophy, just as of earlier philosophy, lies for Mr. R. in the non-differentiation (in confusing, mixing up) of unity (identity) and connection (nexus), as well as of variety (diversity) and difference. This is not the first example where Mr. R. finds in his opponents exactly those errors that he has brought to them. This seems to be the way that he takes the necessary *medicina mentis* for himself; just as one wants to have examples that people with excitable imaginations can be cured by means of remedies that they have had others take for them. For who makes the error of confusing what one calls unity—but which really is sameness—with connection in regard to earlier and more recent philosophy more decidedly than precisely Mr. R. himself who interprets the inclusion of things in God as Spinoza's assertion of their *alike ness* [*Gleichheit*] and who generally holds non-diversity (according to substance or essence) for non-difference (according to form or logical concept). If Spinoza is actually to be understood in this manner, as Mr. R. interprets him, then the well-known proposition, that the thing and the concept of the thing are one, would have to be understood as if, for example, one could defeat the enemy with the concept of an army rather than with the army, and so forth, consequences which the serious and thoughtful man certainly finds himself to be too good for.

concept seems therefore to dissolve and vanish into nothingness? In any event, the question arises as to whether much is gained by raising such labels from the dead that, though they may indeed be ones to hold in honor in the history of heresy, yet appear to be much too crude a way of handling products of the mind in which, as in the most delicate natural phenomena, fine [*leise*] determinations cause essential changes. It might still be open to doubt whether the last-noted determination should even be applicable to Spinoza. For, if besides (*praeter*) substance, he recognizes nothing but its mere affections, which he declares things to be, then this concept is admittedly a purely negative one that expresses nothing essential or positive. Initially, however, it serves merely to determine the relationship of things to God but not what they may be, considered for themselves. Yet, from the absence of this determination, it cannot be concluded that things contain nothing positive whatsoever (even if always in a derived manner). Spinoza's most astringent expression is likely this here: The individual being is substance itself considered as one of its modifications, that is, consequences.¹⁴ Let's posit now that infinite substance = A, and the same considered in one of its consequences = $\frac{1}{n}A$: thus the positive in $\frac{1}{n}A$ is still A; but on this basis it does not follow that $\frac{1}{n}A = A$, that is, that infinite substance considered in its consequences is the *same* [*einerlei*] as infinite substance considered as such; or, in other words, it does not follow that $\frac{1}{n}A$ is not a particular individual substance (even though a consequence of A). This is of course not set out in Spinoza; but here we are speaking first about pantheism in general; hence, the question is only whether the view presented is inconsistent with Spinozism itself. This will be asserted with difficulty, since it has been admitted that Leibniz's monads, which are entirely what $\frac{1}{n}A$ is in the preceding expression $\frac{1}{n}A$, are not a decisive aid against Spinozism. Many statements by Spinoza remain enigmatic without a supplement of this sort, for example, that the essence of the human soul is a living concept of God that is declared to be eternal (not transitory). Therefore, even if substance dwelt only momentarily in its other consequences $\frac{1}{m}A, \frac{1}{n}A, \dots$ it would surely dwell in that consequence, in the human soul = a, eternally and, therefore, $\frac{1}{n}A$ would be divided from itself as A in an eternal and irreversible manner.

If, proceeding further, one wished now to explain the genuine character of pantheism as the denial not of individuality but of freedom, then many systems otherwise essentially distinguished from

pantheism would be included in the concept of it. For, until the discovery of idealism, a genuine concept of freedom was lacking in all the more recent systems, in that of Leibniz as well as in that of Spinoza;¹⁵ and a freedom—as it has been thought by many among us who also pride ourselves on having the liveliest feeling of it according to which it consists precisely in the mere rule of the intelligent principle over sensuality and the desires—such a freedom might still be derived even from Spinoza, not in a forced way [*nicht zur Not*], but rather easily and even more decisively. Hence, it appears that the denial or assertion of freedom in general is based on something completely other than the assumption or non-assumption of pantheism (the immanence of things in God). For, if, admittedly, it seems at first glance as if freedom, which was unable to maintain itself in opposition to God, had perished in identity here, then one can say that this appearance is only the result of an imperfect and empty notion of the law of identity. This principle does not express a unity which, turning itself in the circle of seamless sameness [*Einerleiheit*], would not be progressive and, thus, insensate or lifeless. The unity of this law is an immediately creative one. In the relation of | subject and predicate we have already shown that of ground and consequence, and the law of the ground [*Gesetz des Grundes*] is for that reason just as original as the law of identity.¹⁶ Therefore, the eternal must also be a ground immediately and as it is in itself. That of which the eternal is a ground through its being is in this respect dependent and, from the point of view of immanence, also something contained within the eternal. But dependence does not abolish independence, it does not even abolish freedom. Dependence does not determine its being and says only that the dependent, whatever it also may be, can be a consequence only of that of which it is a dependent; dependence does not say what the dependent is or is not. Every organic individual exists, as something that has become, only through another, and in this respect is dependent according to its becoming but by no means according to its Being. It is not inconsistent, says Leibniz, that he who is God is at the same time begotten or vice versa; just as little is it a contradiction that he who is the son of a man is also himself a man. On the contrary, it would be far more contradictory, if the dependent or consequent were not independent. That would be a dependency without a dependent, a consequence without a consequent (*consequentia absque consequente*) and, thus, no real consequence, that is, the whole

concept would abolish itself. The same is valid for the containment [*Begriffensein*] of one thing within another. An individual body part, like the eye, is only possible within the whole of an organism; nonetheless, it has its own life for itself, indeed, its own kind of freedom, which it obviously proves through the disease of which it is capable. Were that which is contained in another not itself alive, then there would be containment without some thing being contained, that is, nothing would be contained.¹⁷ A much higher standpoint is granted by consideration of the divine being itself, the idea of which would be fully contradicted by a consequence which is not the begetting, that is, the positing of, something independent. God is not a god of the dead but of the living. It is not comprehensible how the most perfect being could find pleasure even in the most perfect machine possible. However one may conceive of the way in which beings proceed from God, the way can never be mechanical, not mere production or installation | whereby the product is nothing for itself; just as little can it be emanation where what flows out remains the same as that from which it flows, therefore nothing individual, nothing independent. The procession [*Folge*] of things from God is a self-revelation of God. But God can only reveal himself to himself in what is like him, in free beings acting on their own, for whose Being there is no ground other than God but who are as God is. He speaks, and they are there. Were all beings in the world but thoughts in the divine mind, they would have to be living already for that very reason. Thoughts are thus probably generated by the soul; but the thought generated is an independent power, continuing to act on its own, indeed, growing within the human soul in such a way that it restrains and subjugates its own mother.¹⁸ Yet, the divine imagination, which is the cause of differentiation [*Spezifikation*] of beings in the world, is not like its human counterpart in that the latter grants merely ideal reality to created beings [*Schöpfungen*]. The representations [*Repräsentationen*] of the divinity can be independent beings only; for what is the limiting element in our representations [*Vorstellungen*] other than exactly that we see what is not independent? God looks at the things in themselves.¹⁹ Only the eternal is in itself as based in itself, will, freedom. The concept of a derived absoluteness or divinity is so little contradictory that it is rather the central concept of philosophy as a whole. Such a divinity befits nature. So little does immanence in God contradict freedom that precisely only what is free is in God to the

extent it is free, and what is not free is necessarily outside of [*außer*] God to the extent that it is not free.

However inadequate such a general deduction is in itself for one who sees deeper, it surely makes it sufficiently clear that the denial of formal freedom is not necessarily connected with pantheism. We do not expect that one will oppose Spinozism to us. No small daring belongs to the claim that system, as it is brought together in the head of any one individual, is the system of reason *kat' eksochēn*, the forever unchangeable. What, then, does one understand by Spinozism? Perhaps his entire doctrine as it is presented in the man's writings, therefore, for example, | in his mechanistic physics as well? Or, in accordance with which principle does one wish to distinguish and divide up things where everything is supposed to be full of extraordinary and singular consistency? It will always remain a striking phenomenon in the history of the development of the German spirit that at any time the claim could have been made: the system, which heaps God together with things, the created being together with the creator (as it was understood), and which subjugates all under a blind, thoughtless necessity, is the only one rationally possible—the only one to be developed from pure reason! To understand the claim one has to recall the prevailing spirit of an earlier era. Then the mechanistic way of thinking, which reached the summit of its infamy in French atheism, had captured almost all minds; in Germany as well one began to take this manner of seeing and explaining for the genuine and sole philosophy.²⁰ Since, however, the native German disposition [*Gemüt*] could never assimilate these consequences to itself, for that reason there first emerged the discord [*Zwiespalt*] of head and heart that was characteristic of more recent philosophical literature: one abhorred the consequences without freeing oneself from the basis [*Grund*] of this way of thinking or rising to a better one. One wanted to declare these consequences, and since the German mind could only take hold of the mechanistic philosophy from its (supposedly) highest expression, the terrible truth was declared in this way: all philosophy—absolutely all—that is purely rational is or becomes Spinozism! Everyone now was warned about the abyss; it was laid bare before all; the only remedy which still seemed possible was seized; that bold word only could bring on the crisis and frighten Germans away from the corrupting philosophy and lead them back to the heart, to inner feeling and belief.²¹ Nowadays, since this way of

thinking is long gone, and the higher light of idealism shines for us, the same claim would be neither comprehensible to an equal degree nor would it also promise the same consequences.* |

And here then, once and for all, our definite opinion about Spinozism! This system is not fatalism because it allows things to be contained in God; for, as we have shown, pantheism at least makes formal freedom not impossible. Spinoza therefore must be a fatalist for a completely different reason, one independent of pantheism. The error of his system lies by no means in his placing things *in God* but in the fact that they are *things*—in the abstract concept of beings in the world, indeed of infinite substance itself, which for him is exactly also a thing. Hence his arguments against freedom are entirely deterministic, in no way pantheistic. He treats the will also as a thing and then proves very naturally that it would have to be determined in all its activity through another thing that is in turn determined by another, and so on *ad infinitum*. Hence the lifelessness of his system, the sterility of its form, the poverty of concepts and expressions, the unrelenting severity of definitions that goes together excellently with the abstract means of presentation; hence his mechanistic view of nature follows quite naturally as well. Or does one doubt that the basic views of Spinozism must already be essentially changed by a dynamic notion of nature? If the doctrine that all things are contained in God is the ground of the whole system, then, at the very least, it must first be brought to life and torn from abstraction before it can become the principle of a system of reason. How general are the expressions that finite beings are modifications or consequences | of God; what a

* In a review of the recent writings by | Fichte in the *Heidelberg Annals of Literature* (vol. 1, No. 6, p. 139), the advice that Mr. Fr. Schlegel gives to the latter is to stick exclusively to Spinoza in his polemical efforts because in Spinoza alone the utterly complete system of pantheism in form and consequence is encountered—one which, according to the statement cited above, would be at the same time the system of pure reason. Incidentally, this advice may indeed offer certain advantages, yet it strikes one as strange that Mr. Fichte is without doubt of the opinion that Spinozism (as Spinozism) has already been refuted through the *Doctrine of Knowledge* [*Wissenschaftslehre*] in which he is entirely correct—or is idealism perhaps not the work of reason, and the supposedly sad honor of being a system of reason remains only for pantheism and Spinozism?

gulf there is to fill here, what questions there are to answer! One could look at the rigidity of Spinozism as at Pygmalion's statue that had to be made animate [*beseelt*] through the warm breath of love;²² but this comparison is incomplete since Spinozism is more like a work sketched out only in barest outline in which many still missing or unfinished features would first become noticeable if it were made animate. It would be preferable to compare Spinozism to the most ancient images of divinities which appeared that much more mysterious the less their features bespoke individuality and liveliness. In a word, it is a one-sidedly realist system, which expression indeed sounds less damning than pantheism, yet indicates what is characteristic of the system far more correctly and is also not employed here for the first time. It would be irksome to repeat the many explanations that have been made concerning this point in the author's early writings. A mutual saturation of realism and idealism in each other was the declared intent of his efforts. Spinoza's basic concept, when infused by spirit (and, in one essential point, changed) by the principle of idealism, received a living basis in the higher forms of investigation of nature and the recognized unity of the dynamic with the emotional and spiritual; out of this grew the philosophy of nature, which as pure physics was indeed able to stand for itself, yet at any time in regard to the whole of philosophy was only considered as a part, namely the real part that would be capable of rising up into the genuine system of reason only through completion by the ideal part in which freedom rules. It was claimed that in this rising up (of freedom) the final empowering [*potenzierende*] act was found through which all of nature transfigured itself in feeling, intelligence and, finally, in will.²³ In the final and highest judgment, there is no other Being than will. Will is primal Being [*Ursein*] to which alone all predicates of Being apply: groundlessness, eternity, independence from time, self-affirmation. All of philosophy strives only to find this highest expression.²⁴

In our times philosophy has been raised up to this point by idealism, and only at this point are we really able to begin the investigation of our topic in so far as it by no means could have been our intention to take into account all those difficulties that can be raised and were raised long ago against the concept of freedom from the one-sidedly realistic or dogmatic system. Still, idealism itself, no matter how high it has taken us in this respect, and as certain as it is that we have it to thank for the first complete concept of formal freedom,

is yet nothing less than a completed system for itself, and it leaves us no guidance in the doctrine of freedom as soon as we wish to enter into what is more exact and decisive. In the first connection we note that, for idealism which has been constructed into a system, it is by no means adequate to claim that “activity, life and freedom only are the truly real” with which even Fichte’s subjective idealism (which misunderstands itself) can coexist; rather, it is required that the reverse also be shown, that everything real (nature, the world of things) has activity, life and freedom as its ground or, in Fichte’s expression, that not only is I-hood all, but also the reverse, that all is I-hood.²⁵ The thought of making freedom the one and all of philosophy has set the human mind free in general, not merely with respect to itself, and brought about a more forceful change in all divisions of knowledge than any prior revolution. The idealist concept is the true consecration for the higher philosophy of our time and, especially, for its higher realism. Were those who would judge or appropriate this realism to ponder that freedom is its innermost presupposition, in what a totally different light would they consider and grasp it! Only one who has tasted freedom can feel the longing to make everything analogous to it, to spread it throughout the whole universe. One who does not come to philosophy by this path follows and merely imitates what others do without any feeling for why they do it. It will always remain odd, however, that Kant, after having first distinguished things-in-themselves from appearances | only negatively through their independence from time and later treating independence from time and freedom as correlate concepts in the metaphysical discussions of his *Critique of Practical Reason*, did not go further toward the thought of transferring this only possible positive concept of the in-itself also to things; thereby he would immediately have raised himself to a higher standpoint of reflection and above the negativity that is the character of his theoretical philosophy.²⁶ From another perspective, however, if freedom really is the positive concept of the in-itself, the investigation concerning human freedom is thrown back again into the general, in so far as the intelligible on which it was alone grounded is also the essence of things-in-themselves. Mere idealism does not reach far enough, therefore, in order to show the specific difference [*Differenz*], that is, precisely what is the distinctiveness, of human freedom. Likewise, it would be an error to think that pantheism has been abolished and destroyed by idealism, a view

that could only arise from the confusion of pantheism with one-sided realism. For it is entirely the same for pantheism as such whether individual things are in an absolute substance or just as many individual wills are included in a primal will [*Urville*]. In the first case, pantheism would be realist, in the other, idealist, but its grounding concept remains the same. Precisely here it is evident for the time being that the most profound difficulties inherent in the concept of freedom will be just as little resolvable through idealism, taken by itself, than through any other partial system. Idealism provides namely, on the one hand, only the most general concept of freedom and, on the other hand, a merely formal one. But the real and vital concept is that freedom is the capacity for good and evil.

This is the point of most profound difficulty in the entire doctrine of freedom, one which has been perceived in all times and which does not affect merely this or that system but, more or less, all.* | Yet, it affects most noticeably the concept of immanence; for either real evil is admitted and, hence, it is inevitable that evil be posited within infinite substance or the primal will itself, whereby the concept of a most perfect being is utterly destroyed, or the reality of evil must in some way be denied, whereby, however, at the same time the real concept of freedom vanishes.²⁷ The difficulty is no slighter though, if even the most distant connection between God and beings in the world is assumed; for even this connection is limited to a so-called mere *concursus* [coming-together, coincidence] or to that necessary participation [*Mitwirkung*] of God in his creatures' actions, which must be assumed due to the essential dependence of the latter on God, incidentally, even when freedom is asserted. Thus God appears undeniably to share responsibility for evil in so far as permitting an entirely dependent being to do evil is surely not much better than to cause it to do so. Or, likewise, the reality of evil must be denied in one way or another. The proposition that everything positive in creatures comes from God must also be asserted in this system. If it is now assumed that there is something positive in evil, then this positive comes also from God. Against this can be objected:

* Mr. Fr. Schlegel has the merit of asserting this difficulty especially against pantheism in his book on India and in several other places, | where it is only to be regretted that this astute scholar did not see fit to communicate his own point of view on the origin of evil and its relation to the good.

the positive element of evil is good in so far as it is positive. Evil does not thereby disappear, although it is also not explained. For, if what has *being* in evil is good, whence *that in which* this being is, the *basis* that actually constitutes evil? Completely distinct from this assertion (though frequently, even recently, confused with it) is the assertion that in evil there is nowhere anything positive or, differently expressed, that evil does not exist at all (not even with, or connected to, another positive) but rather that all actions are more or less positive, and the distinction among them is merely a plus or minus of completeness, whereby no opposition is established and, therefore, evil utterly disappears. This would be the second possible assumption in regard to the proposition that everything positive comes from God. Then the force that appears in evil, though it would indeed be comparatively less complete than that appearing in the good, yet considered in itself or aside from the comparison would surely be a complete whole itself which, thus, like any other, must be derived from God. What we call evil in this is only the lower degree of perfection, which appears merely for our comparison as a deficiency; in nature there is none. It is not to be denied that this is the true view of Spinoza. Someone could attempt to bypass this dilemma through the answer: the positive that comes from God is freedom that in itself is indifferent toward good and evil; yet, if he but thinks of this indifference not merely negatively yet rather as a vital, positive capacity for good and evil, it is not comprehensible how a capacity for evil can result from God who is regarded as pure goodness. It is evident from this, to note in passing, that, if freedom really is what it must be according to this concept (and it unmistakably is), the derivation of freedom from God attempted above is then likely also not correct; for, if freedom is a capacity for evil, then it must have a root independent of God. Driven by this argument, one can be tempted to throw oneself into the arms of dualism. This system, however, if it is really thought as the doctrine of two absolutely different and mutually independent principles, is only a system of the self-destruction and despair of reason. But if the fundamental being [*Grundwesen*] of evil is thought in some sense as dependent on that of the good, then the whole difficulty of the descent [*Abkunft*] of evil from good, though concentrated on One Being, is, however, thereby increased rather than diminished. Even if it is assumed that this second being was originally created good and

through its own fault fell away from the primal being, then the first capacity for an act striving against God always remains inexplicable in all the previous systems. Hence, even if one | wished at last to abolish not only the identity, but every connection of beings in the world with God and wished to regard their entire current existence and, thus, that of the world, as an estrangement [*Entfernung*] from God, the difficulty would be removed only one point further but it would not be abolished. For, in order to be able to flow out from God, they had to exist already in some manner, and, thus, the emanation doctrine would be the least able to be opposed to pantheism since it presupposes an original existence of things in God and obviously, therefore, pantheism. To clarify this estrangement, however, only the following could be assumed: it is either an involuntary estrangement on the part of things but not on the part of God in which case they are cast out by God into a condition of disaffection and malice, and, therefore, God is the originator of this condition. Or it is involuntary on both sides, having been caused, for instance, by an overflow [*Überfluß*] of being as some say, an utterly untenable idea. Or it is voluntary on the part of things, a tearing oneself away from God, therefore the consequence of a culpability from which ever deeper abasement [*Herabsinken*] results; this first culpability is, then, precisely already evil itself, and hence reason provides no explanation of its origin. Without this auxiliary thought, however, which, if it explains evil in the world, on the other hand entirely obliterates the good and introduces instead of pantheism a pandemonism, every genuine opposition of good and evil just vanishes in the system of emanation; what is first loses itself in infinitely many intermediary levels through a gradual weakening into that which no longer has any appearance of the good, roughly as Plotinus* subtly, but unsatisfactorily, describes the transition from the original good into matter and evil. Accordingly, through a constant subordination and estrangement, something final emerges beyond which nothing more can come into being, and precisely this (which is incapable of further production) is evil. Or: if there is something after what is first, then there must also be something final that has nothing more in itself from that which is first, and this is matter and the necessity of evil.²⁸ |

* *Ennead*. I, L. VIII, c. 8.

According to these reflections, it just does not seem appropriate to throw the entire burden of this difficulty only on a single system, especially since the supposedly higher one opposed to it affords so little satisfaction. The generalities of idealism also cannot be of help here. Nothing at all can be achieved with such abstract concepts of God as *actus purissimus* [purest actuality], the likes of which earlier philosophy put forward, or with such concepts as more recent philosophy has brought forth again and again out of a concern to remove God quite far indeed from all of nature. God is something more real than a merely moral world order and has entirely different and more vital motive forces in himself than the desolate subtlety of abstract idealists attributes to him. The abhorrence of everything real that finds the spiritual befouled through any contact with the latter must of course also blind one's eye to the origin of evil. Idealism, if it does not have as its basis a living realism, becomes just as empty and abstract a system as that of Leibniz, Spinoza, or any other dogmatist. The entire new European philosophy since its beginning (with Descartes) has the common defect that nature is not available for it and that it lacks a living ground. Spinoza's realism is thereby as abstract as the idealism of Leibniz. Idealism is the soul of philosophy; realism is the body; only both together can constitute a living whole.²⁹ The latter can never provide the principle but must be the ground and medium in which the former makes itself real and takes on flesh and blood. If a philosophy is lacking this living foundation, which is commonly a sign that the ideal principle was originally only weakly at work within it, then it loses itself in those systems whose abstract concepts of aseity, modifications, and so forth, stand in the sharpest contrast with the living force and richness of reality. Where, however, the ideal principle is actually active to a great degree but cannot find a reconciling and mediating basis, it generates a bleak and wild enthusiasm that breaks out into self-mutilation or, like the priests of the Phrygian goddess, | self-castration which is achieved in philosophy through the renunciation of reason and science.³⁰

It seemed necessary to begin this treatise with the correction of essential concepts that have always been confused, but especially in recent times. Hence, the preceding remarks are to be considered merely as an introduction to our genuine investigation. We have already explained: that point of view which is fully adequate to the task to be undertaken here can only be developed from the fundamental

principles of a true philosophy of nature. We do not deny for that reason that this correct point of view has not been present in isolated minds for a long time already. But it is also precisely these minds that sought the living ground of nature without fear of the ever trite words of slander against real philosophy, like materialism, pantheism, and so on, and who were natural philosophers (in both senses of the word) in contrast to the dogmatists and abstract idealists who dismissed them as mystics.³¹

The natural philosophy of our time has first advanced in science the distinction between being in so far as it exists and being in so far as it is merely the ground of existence.³² This distinction is as old as its first scientific presentation.* Notwithstanding that it is precisely this point at which natural philosophy most decisively turns away from Spinoza's path, in Germany it could indeed still be claimed up to this time that its metaphysical principles were the same as those of Spinoza; and, although it is precisely this distinction which at the same time brings about the most decisive differentiation of nature from God, this has not prevented accusation that it is a confusion of God and nature. Since this is the same distinction on which the present investigation is based, let the following remarks be made toward its explanation.

Since nothing is prior to, or outside of [*außer*], God, he must have the ground of his existence in himself. All philosophies say this; but they | speak of this ground as of a mere concept without making it into something real [*reell*] and actual [*wirklich*]. This ground of his existence, which God has in himself, is not God considered absolutely, that is, in so far as he exists; for it is only the ground of his existence. It [the ground³³] is *nature*—in God, a being indeed inseparable, yet still distinct, from him. This relation can be explained analogically through that of gravity and light in nature.³⁴ Gravity precedes light as its ever dark ground, which itself is not *actu* [actual], and flees into the night as the light (that which exists) dawns. Even light does not fully remove the seal under which gravity lies contained.† Precisely for this reason gravity is neither the pure essence nor the actual Being of absolute identity but rather follows

* See this in the *Journal for Speculative Physics*, vol. II, no. 2, comment to § 54, further comment to § 93 and the explanation on p. 114.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 60.

only from its own nature* or *is* absolute identity, namely considered as a particular potency. For, incidentally, that which relative to gravity appears as existing also belongs in itself to the ground, and, hence, nature in general is everything that lies beyond the absolute Being of absolute identity.† Incidentally, as far as this precedence is concerned, it is to be thought neither as precedence according to time nor as priority of being. In the circle out of which everything becomes, it is no contradiction that that through which the One is generated may itself be in turn begotten by it. Here there is no first and last because all things mutually presuppose each other, no thing is another thing and yet no thing is not without another thing.³⁵ God has in himself an inner ground of his existence that in this respect precedes him in existence; but, precisely in this way, God is again the *prius* [what is before] of the ground in so far as the ground, even as such, could not exist if God did not exist *actu*.

A reflection starting out from things leads to this same distinction. First, the concept of immanence is to be set aside completely in so far as thereby a dead containment of things in God is supposed to be expressed. We recognize rather that the concept of | becoming is the only one appropriate to the nature of things. But they cannot become in God, considered in an absolute manner, since they are different from him *toto genere* or infinitely, to speak more correctly. In order to be divided from God, they must become in a ground different from God.³⁶ Since, however, nothing indeed can be outside of God, this contradiction can only be resolved by things having their ground in that which in God himself is not *He Himself*,‡ that is, in that which is the ground of his existence. If we want to bring this way of being closer to us in human terms, we can say: it is the yearning the eternal One feels to give birth to itself.³⁷ The yearning is not the One itself but is after all co-eternal with it. The yearning wants to give birth to God, that is, unfathomable unity, but in this respect there is not yet unity in the yearning itself. Hence, it is, considered for itself, also will; but will in which there is no understanding and, for that reason, also not independent and complete will, since the understanding is really the will in will. Nevertheless it is a will³⁸ of the understanding, namely

* Ibid., p. 41.

† Ibid., p. 114.

‡ In the sense that one says: the logic of the enigma [*das Wort des Rätsels*].

yearning and desire for the latter; not a conscious but a divining will [*ahnender Wille*] whose divining is the understanding.³⁹ We are speaking of the essence of yearning, considered in and for itself, that likely must be brought into view, although it has long been repressed by the higher things that have arisen out of it, and although we cannot grasp it by the senses but rather only with the mind and [in] thought. After the eternal act of self-revelation, everything in the world is, as we see it now, rule, order and form; but anarchy still lies in the ground, as if it could break through once again, and nowhere does it appear as if order and form were what is original but rather as if initial anarchy had been brought to order.⁴⁰ This is the incomprehensible base of reality in | things, the indivisible remainder, that which with the greatest exertion cannot be resolved in understanding but rather remains eternally in the ground. The understanding is born in the genuine sense from that which is without understanding. Without this preceding darkness creatures have no reality; darkness is their necessary inheritance.⁴¹ God alone—as the one who exists—dwells in pure light since he alone is begotten from himself. The arrogance of man rises up [*sträubt sich*] against this origin from the ground and even seeks moral reasons against it. Nevertheless we would know of nothing that could drive man more to strive for the light with all of his strength than the consciousness of the deep night from which he has been lifted into existence. The effeminate lamentations that what is without understanding is thus made the root of understanding, the night into the beginning of light, indeed rest in part on a misunderstanding of the matter (since one does not grasp how, from this point of view, the conceptual priority of understanding and essence can nevertheless be maintained), yet do express the true system of today's philosophers who happily want to make *fumum ex fulgore* [smoke from lightning]⁴² for which, however, even the most violent Fichteian impetuosity is not sufficient.⁴³ All birth is birth from darkness into light; the seed kernel must be sunk into the earth and die in darkness so that the more beautiful shape of light may lift and unfold itself in the radiance of the sun.⁴⁴ Man is formed in the maternal body; and only from the obscurity of that which is without understanding (from feeling, yearning, the sovereign [*herrlich*] mother of knowledge) grow luminous thoughts. Thus we must imagine the original yearning as it directs itself to the understanding, though still not recognizing it, just as we in our yearning seek out

unknown and nameless good, and as it moves, divining itself, like a wave-wound, whirling sea, akin to Plato's matter, following dark, uncertain law, incapable of constructing for itself anything enduring.⁴⁵ But, corresponding to the yearning, which as the still dark ground is the first stirring of divine existence, an inner, reflexive representation is generated in God himself through which, since it can have no other object but God, God sees himself | in an exact image of himself. This representation is the first in which God, considered as absolute, is realized [*verwirklicht*], although only in himself; this representation is with God in the beginning and is the God who was begotten *in* God himself. This representation is at the same time the understanding—the *Word*—of this yearning* and the eternal spirit which, perceiving the word within itself and at the same time the infinite yearning, and impelled by the love that it itself is, proclaims the word so that the understanding and yearning together now become a freely creating and all-powerful will and build in the initial anarchy of nature as in its own element or instrument.⁴⁶ The first effect of the understanding in nature is the division of forces, since only thus can the understanding unfold the unity that is unconsciously but necessarily immanent in nature as in a seed, just as in man the light enters into the dark yearning to create something so that in the chaotic jumble of thoughts, all hanging together, but each hindering the other from emerging, thoughts divide themselves from each other, and now the unity hidden in the ground and containing all raises itself up; or as in the plant the dark bond of gravity dissolves only in relation to the unfolding and expansion of forces, and as the unity hidden in divided material is developed. Because, namely, this being (of primordial nature) is nothing else than the eternal ground for the existence of God, it must contain within itself, although locked up, the essence of God as a resplendent glimpse of life in the darkness of the depths.⁴⁷ However, yearning aroused by the understanding strives from now on to retain

* This is the only correct dualism, namely that which at the same time permits a unity. The above discussion concerned the modified dualism, whereby the evil principle is not coordinated with, but subordinated to, the good principle. It is hardly to be feared that someone will confuse the relationship put forward here with that dualism in which the subordinate is always an essentially evil principle and, precisely for that reason, in respect of its origin in God remains completely incomprehensible.

the glimpse of life seized within itself and to close itself up in itself so that a ground may always remain. Since, therefore, the understanding, or the light placed in primordial nature, arouses the yearning that is striving back into itself to divide the forces (for the surrender of darkness), while emphasizing precisely in this division the unity closed up within the divided elements—the hidden glimpse of light—something comprehensible and individuated first emerges in this manner and, indeed, not through external representation but rather through genuine impression [*Ein-Bildung*], since that which arises in nature is impressed [*hineingebildet*] into her or, still more correctly, through awakening, since the understanding brings to the fore the unity or idea hidden in the divided ground.⁴⁸ The forces split up (but not fully dispersed) in this division are the material from which the body is subsequently configured; the vital bond which arises in division—thus from the depths of the natural ground, as the center of forces—however, is the soul. Because the original understanding raises the soul up as something inner [*als Inneres*] out of a ground that is independent of it, the soul thereby remains independent of the original understanding as a particular and self-sufficient being.

It is easy to see that, in the resistance of the yearning that is necessary for any complete birth, the innermost bond of forces loosens itself only in a gradually occurring unfolding; and at each point of division of forces a new being emerges from nature whose soul must be that much more complete the more it contains divided what is not divided in other things.⁴⁹ To show how each succeeding process approaches closer to the essence of nature, until the innermost center appears in the highest division of forces, is the task of a comprehensive philosophy of nature. For the current purpose only the following is essential. Each being having emerged in nature according to the manner indicated has a dual principle in itself which, however, is basically but one and the same considered from both possible sides. The first principle is that through which things are separated from God or through which they exist in the mere ground; since, however, an original unity indeed occurs between what is in the ground and what is prefigured in the understanding, and the process of creation involves only an inner transmutation or transfiguration of the initial principle of darkness into the light (because the understanding or the light placed in nature genuinely seeks in the ground only the light that is related to it and turned inward), the—by its nature—dark principle

is exactly what is transfigured in the light, and both are, though only to a certain point, | one in each natural being. The principle, to the extent that it comes from the ground and is dark, is the self-will of creatures which, however, to the extent that it has not yet been raised to (does not grasp) complete unity with the light (as principle of understanding), is pure craving or desire, that is, blind will. The understanding as universal will stands against this self-will of creatures, using and subordinating the latter to itself as a mere instrument. But, if through advancing mutation and division of all forces, the deepest and most inner point of initial darkness in a being is finally transfigured wholly into the light, then the will of this same being is indeed, to the extent it is individual, also a truly particular will, yet, in itself or as the *centrum* of all other particular wills, one with the primal will or the understanding, so that now from both a single whole comes into being. This raising of the deepest *centrum* into light occurs in none of the creatures visible to us other than man. In man there is the whole power of the dark principle and at the same time the whole strength of the light. In him there is the deepest abyss and the loftiest sky or both *centra*. The human will is the seed—hidden in eternal yearning—of the God who is present still in the ground only; it is the divine panorama of life, locked up within the depths, which God beheld as he fashioned the will to nature. In him (in man) alone God loved the world, and precisely this likeness of God was possessed by yearning in the *centrum* as it came into opposition with the light. Because he emerges from the Ground (is creaturely), man has in relation to God a relatively independent principle in himself; but because precisely this principle—without it ceasing for that reason to be dark in accordance with its ground—is transfigured in light, there arises in him something higher, *spirit*. For the eternal spirit proclaims unity or the word into nature. The proclaimed (real) word, however, is only in the unity of light and darkness (vowel and consonant).⁵⁰ Now both principles are indeed in all things, yet they are without complete consonance [*Konsonanz*] due to the deficiency of that which has been raised out of the ground. Only in man, therefore, | is the word fully proclaimed which in all other things is held back and incomplete. But spirit, that is, *God* as existing *actu*, reveals itself in the proclaimed word. In so far as the soul is now the living identity of both principles, it is spirit; and spirit is in God. Were now the identity of both principles in the spirit of

man exactly as indissoluble as in God, then there would be no distinction, that is, God as spirit would not be revealed. The same unity that is inseverable in God must therefore be severable in man—and this is the possibility of good and evil.⁵¹

We say expressly: the possibility of evil. And we are seeking at the moment to make intelligible only the severability of the principles. The reality of evil is the object of a whole other investigation. The principle raised up from the ground of nature whereby man is separated from God is the selfhood in him which, however, through its unity with the ideal principle, becomes *spirit*. Selfhood *as* such is spirit; or man is spirit as a selfish [*selbstisch*], particular being (separated from God)—precisely this connection constitutes personality. Since selfhood is spirit, however, it is at the same time raised from the creaturely into what is above the creaturely; it is will that beholds itself in complete freedom, being no longer an instrument of the productive [*schaffenden*] universal will in nature, but rather above and outside of all nature. Spirit is above the light as in nature it raises itself above the unity of the light and the dark principle. Since it is spirit, selfhood is therefore free from both principles. Now selfhood or self-will is, however, only spirit and thus free or above nature by virtue of the fact that it is actually transformed in the primal will (the light) so that it (as self-will) indeed remains in the ground (because there must always be a ground)—just as in a transparent body the matter which has been raised to identity with the light does not for that reason cease being matter (the dark principle)—yet, it does so merely as a carrier and, as it were, receptacle of the higher principle of light. Since, however, selfhood has spirit (because this reigns over light and darkness)—if it is in fact not the spirit | of eternal love—selfhood can separate itself from the light; or self-will can strive to be as a particular will that which it only is through identity with the universal will; to be that which it only is, in so far as it remains in the *centrum* (just as the calm will in the quiet ground of nature is universal will precisely because it remains in the ground), also on the periphery; or as created being (for the will of creatures is admittedly outside of the ground, but it is then also mere particular will, not free but bound). For this reason there thus emerges in the will of man a separation of selfhood having become animated by spirit (since spirit is above the light) from the light, that is, a dissolution of the principles which are indissoluble in God. If, to the contrary, the self-will of man

remains as central will in the ground so that the divine relation of the principles persists (as, namely, the will in the *centrum* of nature never elevates itself over the light but remains under the latter as a base in the ground), and if, instead of the spirit of dissension that wants to separate the particular from the general principle, the spirit of love prevails in it, then the will is in divine form [*Art*] and order. But that precisely this elevation of self-will is evil is clarified by the following. The will that steps out from its being beyond nature [*das Übernatürliche*], in order as general will to make itself at once particular and creaturely, strives to reverse the relation of the principles, to elevate the ground over the cause, to use the spirit that it obtained only for the sake of the *centrum* outside the *centrum* and against creatures; from this results collapse [*Zerrüttung*] within the will itself and outside it. The human will is to be regarded as a bond of living forces; now, as long as it remains in unity with the universal will, these same forces exist in divine measure and balance. But no sooner than self-will itself moves from the *centrum* as its place, so does the bond of forces as well; in its stead rules a mere particular will that can no longer bring the forces to unity among themselves as the original will could and, thus, must strive to put together or form its own peculiar life from the forces that have moved apart from one another, an indignant host of desires and appetites (since each individual force is also a craving and appetite), this being possible in so far as the first bond of forces, the first ground of nature itself, persists even in evil. But since there can indeed be no true life like that which could exist only in the original relation, a life emerges which, though individual, is, however, false, a life of mendacity, a growth of restlessness and decay. The most fitting comparison here is offered by disease which, as the disorder having arisen in nature through the misuse of freedom, is the true counterpart of evil or sin. Universal disease never exists without the hidden forces of the ground having broken out [*sich auftun*]: it emerges when the irritable principle, which is supposed to rule as the innermost bond of forces in the quiet of the depths, activates [*aktuiert*] itself; or when aroused Archæus leaves his peaceful dwelling in the *centrum* and steps into his surroundings.⁵² Just as, by contrast, all original healing consists in the reconstruction of the relation of the periphery to the *centrum*, and the transition from disease to health can in fact only occur through its opposite, namely through restoration of the separate and individual life into the being's inner glimpse of light, from which

restoration division [*Krisis*] once again proceeds. Even particular disease emerges only because that which has its freedom or life only so that it may remain in the whole strives to be for itself. As disease is admittedly nothing having inherent being [*nichts Wesenhaftes*], really only an apparent picture of life and merely a meteoric appearance of it—an oscillation between Being and non-Being—yet announces itself nevertheless as something very real to feeling, so it is with evil.

In more recent times Franz Baader especially has emphasized this concept of evil, the only correct one, according to which evil resides in a positive perversion or reversal of the principles, and has explained this through profound analogies, in particular, that of disease.* | All other explanations of evil leave the understanding and moral consciousness equally unsatisfied. They all rest fundamentally on the annihilation of evil as a positive opposite and on the reduction

* In the treatise, “On the Assertion that There Can Be No Wicked Use of Reason,” in the *Morgenblatt*, 1807, No. 197, and in “On | Solids and Liquids,” in the *Annals of Medicine as Science*, vol. III, No. 2. Let the relevant comment at the end of this latter treatise, at p. 203, be set out here for comparison and further explanation: “Here common fire (as wild, consuming, painful heat) provides instructive clarification [*Aufschluß*] as opposed to the so-called organic, beneficial heat of life; since *in the latter* fire and water come together in a (growing) ground or conjunction while *in the former* they disperse in discord. Now, neither fire nor water existed as such, however, i.e. as separate spheres in the organic process, rather the former existed as *centrum (mysterium)*, the latter openly or as periphery in it, and precisely the unlocking, raising, igniting of the first together with the closing up of the second gave disease and death. Thus, in general, I-hood, individuality is now admittedly the basis, foundation or natural *centrum* of any creature’s life; but as soon as it ceases to be the serving *centrum* and enters as ruling into the periphery, it burns in I-hood as the selfish and egotistical rage (of enflamed I-hood) of Tantalus. From ☉ now comes ○—that is: in one single place of the planetary system this dark *centrum* of nature is closed up, latent, and for that very reason serves as a carrier of light for the entry of the higher system (illumination or revelation of the ideal). For that very reason this place is thus the open point (sun—heart—eye) in the system and, if the dark *centrum* of nature were also to raise or open itself there, then the light point would *eo ipso* close itself up, light would become darkness in the system or the sun would be extinguished!”

of evil to the so-called *malum metaphysicum* [metaphysical evil] or the negating concept of the imperfection of creatures. It was impossible, says Leibniz, that God conferred on man all perfections without making man himself into God. The same is valid for created beings in general; for that reason various degrees of perfection and all manner of limitation pertaining to them had to occur. If one asks from whence comes evil, the answer is: from the ideal nature of creatures to the extent that it depends on the eternal truths that are contained in the divine understanding, but not on the will of God. The region of the divine truths is the ideal cause of good and evil and must be posited in place of the | matter of the ancients.* Yet, there are, he says in another spot, two principles, both however in God; these are the understanding and will. The understanding yields the principle of evil, although it does not thereby become evil itself, for it represents natures as they are in accordance with the eternal truths: it contains in itself the ground that permits evil, but the will alone is directed toward the good.† God did not bring about this sole possibility since the understanding cannot be its own cause.‡⁵³ If this differentiation of the understanding and will as two principles in God, whereby the first possibility of evil is made independent of the divine will, accords with the richness of this man's way of thinking, and if even the idea of understanding (of divine wisdom) as something in which God is passive rather than active alludes to something more profound, evil nonetheless—as can be derived from any purely ideal ground—amounts once again to something merely passive, to limitation, lack, deprivation, concepts that are in complete conflict with the actual nature of evil. For the simple reflection that only man, the most complete of all visible creatures, is capable of evil, shows already that the ground of evil could not in any way lie in lack or deprivation. The devil, according to the Christian point of view, was not the most limited creature, but rather the least limited one.§⁵⁴ Imperfection in the general | metaphysical sense is not the common character of evil, since evil often shows itself united with an excellence of individual

* *Tentam. Theod.* Opp. T. I, p. 136.

† *Ibid.*, p. 240.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 387.

§ In this connection it is remarkable that it was not first the scholastics but already several among the earlier fathers of the church, most notably, St.

forces, which far more rarely accompanies the good. The ground of evil must lie, therefore, not only in something generally positive but rather in that which is most positive in what nature contains, as is actually the case in our view, since it lies in the revealed *centrum* or primal will of the first ground. Leibniz tries in every way to make comprehensible how evil could arise from natural deficiency. The will, he says, strives for the good in general and must demand perfection whose highest measure is God; if the will remains entangled in sensual lust to the detriment of higher goods, precisely this deficiency of further striving is the privation in which evil consists. Otherwise, he thinks, evil requires a special principle as little as do cold or darkness. What is affirmative in evil comes to it only as accompaniment like force and causal efficacy come to cold: freezing water bursts the strongest containing vessel, and yet cold really consists in the reduction of movement.* Because, however, deprivation in itself is absolutely nothing and, in order to be noticeable, needs something positive in which it appears, the difficulty arises as to how to explain the positive that nevertheless must be assumed to exist in evil. Since Leibniz can derive the latter only from God, he sees himself compelled to make God the cause of the material aspect of sin and to ascribe only the formal aspect of sin to the original limitation of creatures. He seeks to explain this relation through the concept of the natural inertia of matter discovered by Kepler. He says that this is the complete picture of an original limitation in creatures (which precedes all action). If two different objects of unequal mass are set in motion at unequal speeds by the same impetus, the ground for slowness of movement in one lies not in the impetus but in the tendency to inertia innate to, and characteristic of, matter, that is, in the inner

Augustine, who posited evil as mere privation. Especially noteworthy is the passage in *contr. Jul.* L.I, C.III:

Quaerunt ex nobis, unde sit malum? Respondemus ex bono, sed non summo, ex bonis igitur orta sunt mala. Mala enim omnia participant ex bono, merum enim et ex omni parte tali dari repugnat.—Haud vero difficulter omnia expediet, qui conceptum mali semel recte formaverit, *eumque semper defectum aliquem involvere attenderit*, perfectionem autem omnimodum incommunicabiliter possidere Deum; neque magis possibile esse, creaturam illimitatam adeoque independentem creari, quam creari alium Deum.

* *Tentam. Theod.* P. 242.

limitation or imperfection of matter.*⁵⁵ But, in this regard, it is to be noted that inertia itself cannot be thought of as a mere deprivation, but actually as something positive, namely as expression of the internal selfhood of the body, the force whereby it seeks to assert its independence. We do not deny that metaphysical finitude can be made comprehensible in this way, but we deny that finitude for itself is evil.†

This manner of explanation arises generally from the lifeless concept of the positive according to which only privation can oppose it. But there is still an intermediate concept that forms a real opposition to it and stands far removed from the concept of the merely negated. This concept arises from the relation of the whole to the individual, from unity to multiplicity, or however one wants to express it. The positive is always the whole or unity; that which opposes unity is severing of the whole, disharmony, ataxia of forces. The same elements are in the severed whole that were in the cohesive whole; that which is material in both is the same (from this perspective, evil is not more limited or worse than the good), but the formal aspect of the two is totally different, though this formal aspect still comes precisely from the essence or the positive itself. Hence it is necessary that a kind of being be in evil as well as in good, but in the former as that which is opposed to the good, that which perverts the temperance contained in the good into distemperance.⁵⁶ To recognize this kind of being is impossible for dogmatic philosophy because it has no concept of personality, that is, of selfhood raised to spirit, but rather only the abstract concepts of finite and infinite. If, for that reason, someone wished to reply that, indeed, precisely disharmony is privation, namely a deprivation of unity, then the concept in itself would be nonetheless inadequate, even if the general concept of deprivation included that of abolishment or division of unity. For it is not the division of forces that is in itself disharmony, but rather their false unity that can be called a division only in relation to true unity. If unity is totally abolished, then conflict is abolished along with it. Disease is ended by death; and no single tone in itself amounts to disharmony.

* *Ibid.*, P. I. § 30.

† For the same reason, every other explanation of finitude, for example, from the concept of relations, must be inadequate for the explanation of evil. Evil does not come from finitude in itself but from finitude raised up to Being as a self.

But just to explain this false unity requires something positive that must thus necessarily be assumed in evil but will remain inexplicable as long as no root of freedom is recognized in the independent ground of nature.

As far as we can judge, it will be better to speak of the question concerning the reality of evil from the Platonic viewpoint. The notions of our era, which treats this point far more lightly and pushes its philanthropism [*Philanthropismus*] to the brink of denying evil, have not the most distant connection to such ideas. According to these notions, the sole ground of evil lies in sensuality or animality, or in the earthly principle, as they do not oppose heaven with hell, as is fitting, but with the earth. This notion is a natural consequence of the doctrine according to which freedom consists in the mere rule of the intelligent principle over sensual desires and tendencies, and the good comes from pure reason; accordingly, it is understandable that there is no freedom for evil (in so far as sensual tendencies predominate)—to speak more correctly, however, evil is completely abolished. For the weakness or ineffectualness of the principle of understanding can indeed be a ground for the lack of good and virtuous actions, yet it cannot be a ground of positively evil ones and those adverse to virtue. But, on the supposition that sensuality or a passive attitude to external impressions | may bring forth evil actions with a sort of necessity, then man himself would surely only be passive in these actions; that is, evil viewed in relation to his own actions, thus subjectively, would have no meaning; and since that which follows from a determination of nature also cannot be objectively evil, evil would have no meaning at all. That it is said, however, that the rational principle is inactive in evil, is in itself also no argument [*Grund*]. For why does the rational principle then not exercise its power? If it wants to be inactive, the ground of evil lies in this volition and not in sensuality. Or if it cannot overcome the resisting power of sensuality in any way, then here is merely weakness and inadequacy but nowhere evil. In accordance with this explanation, there is hence only one will (if it can otherwise be called that), not a dual will; and, in this respect, since the names of the Arians, among others, have fortunately been introduced into philosophical criticism, one could name the adherents of this view Monotheletes, using a name also taken from church history, although in another sense. As it is, however, in no way the intelligent or light principle in itself that is active in the good,

but rather this principle connected to selfhood, that is, having been raised to spirit, then, in the very same way, evil does not follow from the principle of finitude for itself but rather from the selfish or dark principle having been brought into intimacy with the *centrum*; and, just as there is an enthusiasm for the good, there is a spiritedness [*Begeisterung*] of evil.⁵⁷ Indeed, this dark principle is active in animals as well as in all other natural beings, yet it is still not born into the light in them as it is in man: it is not *spirit* and understanding but blind craving and desire; in short, no fall, no separation of principles is possible here where there is still no absolute or personal unity. The conscious and not conscious are unified in animal instinct only in a certain and determinate way which for that very reason is unalterable. For just on that account, because they are only relative expressions of unity, they are subject to it, and the force active in the ground retains the unity of principles befitting them always in the same proportion. Animals are never able to emerge | from unity, whereas man can voluntarily tear apart the eternal bond of forces. Hence, Fr. Baader is right to say it would be desirable that the corruption in man were only to go as far as his becoming animal [*Tierwerdung*]; unfortunately, however, man can stand only below or above animals.*

We have sought to derive the concept and possibility of evil from first principles and to discover the general foundation of this doctrine, which lies in the distinction between that which exists and that which is the ground for existence.† But the possibility does not yet include the reality, and this is in fact the main object in question. And, indeed, what needs to be explained is not, for instance, how evil becomes actual in individuals, but rather its universal activity [*Wirksamkeit*] or how it was able to break out of creation as an unmistakably general principle everywhere locked in struggle with the good.

* In the treatise cited above in the *Morgenblatt* 1807, p. 786.

† St. Augustine says against emanation: nothing other than God can come from God's substance; hence, creatures are created from nothingness, from whence comes their corruptibility and inadequacy (*de lib. Arb.* L. I, C. 2). This nothingness has been a crux for understanding for a long time now. A scriptural expression gives a hint: man is created *ek tōn mē ontōn*, from that which does not *exist*, just like the celebrated *mē on* of the ancients, which like the creation from nothingness, might receive for the first time a positive meaning through the above-noted distinction.

Since it is undeniably real, at least as general opposite, there can indeed be no doubt from the outset that it was necessary for the revelation of God; exactly this results from what has been previously said as well. For, if God as spirit is the inseverable unity of both principles, and this same unity is only real in the spirit of man, then, if the principles were just as indissoluble in him as in God, man would not be distinguishable from God at all; he would disappear in God, and there would be no revelation and motility of love. For every essence can only reveal itself in its opposite, love only in hate, unity in conflict. Were there no severing of principles, unity could not prove | its omnipotence; were there no discord, love could not become real [*wirklich*]. Man is placed on that summit where he has in himself the source of self-movement toward good or evil in equal portions: the bond of principles in him is not a necessary but rather a free one. Man stands on the threshold [*Scheidepunkt*]; whatever he chooses, it will be his act: but he cannot remain undecided because God must necessarily reveal himself and because nothing at all can remain ambiguous in creation. Nonetheless, it seems that he also may not be able to step out of his indecision exactly because this is what it is. That is why there must be a general ground of solicitation, of temptation to evil, even if it were only to make both principles come to life in man, that is, to make him aware of the principles. Now it appears that the solicitation to evil itself can only come from an evil fundamental being [*Grundwesen*], and the assumption that there is such a being seems nonetheless unavoidable; it also appears that that interpretation of Platonic matter is completely correct according to which matter is originally a kind of being that resists God and for that reason is an evil being in itself.⁵⁸ As long as this part of the Platonic teaching remains in darkness, as it has until now,* a definite judgment about this issue is, however, impossible. The preceding reflections clarify in which sense, nonetheless, one could say of the irrational principle that it resists the understanding or unity and order without supposing it to be an *evil* fundamental being on that account. In this way one is likely able to explain the Platonic phrase that evil comes *from*

* Would that this be elucidated by the incisive exegete of Plato or still sooner by the sturdy Böckh who has already given rise to the best hopes in this respect through his occasional comments on Platonic harmonics and through the announcement of his edition of the *Timaeus*.

ancient nature. For all evil strives back into chaos, that is, back into that state in which the initial *centrum* had not yet been subordinated to the light and is a welling up in the *centrum* of a yearning still without understanding. Yet we have proven once and for all that evil as such could only arise in creatures in so far as light and darkness or | both principles can be unified in a severable manner only in them. The initial fundamental being can never be evil in itself because there is no duality of principles in it. But we also cannot presuppose something like a created spirit which, having fallen itself, tempted man to fall, for the question here is exactly how evil first arose in creatures. Hence, we are given nothing else toward an explanation of evil aside from both principles in God. God as spirit (the eternal bond of both) is the purest love: there can never be a will to evil in love just as little as in the ideal principle. But God himself requires a ground so that he can exist; but only a ground that is not outside but inside him and has in itself a *nature* which, although belonging to him, is yet also different from him. The will of love and the will of the ground are two different wills, of which each exists for itself; but the will of love cannot withstand the will of the ground, nor abolish it because it would then have to oppose itself. For the ground must be active so that love may exist, and it must be active independently of love so that love may really exist. If love now wanted to break the will of the ground, it would be struggling against itself, would be at odds with itself and would no longer be love. This letting the ground be active is the only conceivable concept of permission that in the usual reference to man is completely unacceptable. Thus the will of the ground admittedly also cannot break love nor does it demand this, although it often seems to; for it must be particular and a will of its own, one turned away from love, so that love, when it nonetheless breaks through the will of the ground, as light through darkness, may now appear in its omnipotence. The ground is only a will to revelation, but precisely in order for the latter to exist, it must call forth particularity and opposition. The will of love and that of the ground become one, therefore, exactly because they are separate and each acts for itself from the beginning on. That is why the will of the ground already arouses the self-will of creatures in the first creation, so that when spirit now appears as the will of | love, the latter finds something resistant in which it can realize itself.

The sight of nature as a whole convinces us that this arousal has occurred by which means alone all life first reached the final degree

of distinctiveness and definiteness. The irrational and contingent, which show themselves to be bound to that which is necessary in the formation of beings, especially the organic ones, prove that it is not merely a geometric necessity that has been active here, but rather that freedom, spirit and self-will were also in play. Indeed, everywhere where there is appetite and desire, there is already in itself a sort of freedom; and no one will believe that desire, which determines the ground of every particular natural being, and the drive to preserve oneself not in general but in this defined existence, are added on to an already created being, but rather that they are themselves that which creates. The empirically discovered concept of the basis [*Basis*], which will assume a significant role for the entire science of nature, [if] acknowledged scientifically, also must lead to a concept of selfhood and I-hood.⁵⁹ But in nature there are contingent determinations only explicable in terms of an arousal of the irrational or dark principle in creatures—in terms of activated selfhood—having occurred already in the first creation. Whence unmistakable signs of evil in nature, alongside preformed moral relationships, if the power of evil was only aroused by man; whence appearances which, even without regard to their dangerousness for man, nonetheless arouse a general, natural abhorrence?* That all organic beings advance toward dissolution absolutely cannot appear to be an original necessity; the bond of forces that defines life could be just as indissoluble according to its nature, and if anything, a created being, which has restored what has become lacking in it through its own strength, appears destined to be a *perpetuum mobile*. Evil, in the meantime, announces itself in nature only through its effects; it can

* Thus the close connection that the imagination of all peoples, especially all fables and religions of the east, makes between the snake and evil is certainly not an idle one. The complete development of the auxiliary organs, which has reached its highest point in man, indeed already suggests the will's independence from desires or a relation of *centrum* and periphery that is really the only healthy one, since the former has stepped back into its freedom and sobriety, having removed itself from what is simply (peripheral or) instrumental. Where, to the contrary, the auxiliary organs are not developed or completely lacking, there the *centrum* has walked into the periphery; or it is the circle without a middle point in the comment to the above-mentioned citation from Fr. Baader.

itself break through only in its immediate appearance at the endpoint [*am Ziel*] of nature. For, as in the initial creation, which is nothing other than the birth of light, the dark principle had to be as ground so that the light could be raised out of it (as from mere potency to actuality),⁶⁰ so there must be another ground of the birth of spirit and, hence, a second principle of darkness that must be just as much higher than the first as spirit is higher than the light. This principle is the very spirit of evil that has been awoken in creation by arousal of the dark ground of nature, that is, the *turning against each other* [*Entzweiung*] of light and darkness, to which the spirit of love opposes now a higher ideal, just as the light had done previously in regard to the anarchic movement of initial nature. For, just as selfhood in evil had made the light or the word its own and for that reason appears precisely as a higher ground of darkness, so must the word spoken in the world in opposition to evil assume humanity or selfhood and become personal itself. This occurs alone through revelation, in the most definitive meaning of the word, which must have the same stages as the first manifestation in nature; namely so that here too the highest summit of revelation is man, but the archetypical [*urbildlich*] and divine man who was with God in the beginning and in whom all other things and man himself are created. The birth of spirit is the realm of history as the birth of light is the realm of nature. The same periods of creation | which are in the latter are also in the former; and one is the likeness and explanation of the other. The same principle, which was the ground in the first creation, only in a higher form, is here also the germ and seed from which a higher world is developed. For evil is surely nothing other than the primal ground [*Urgrund*] of existence to the extent this ground strives toward actuality in created beings and therefore is in fact only the higher potency of the ground active in nature. But, just as the latter is forever only ground, without being itself, precisely on this account evil can never become real and serves only as ground so that the good, developing out of the ground on its own strength, may be through its ground independent and separate from God who has and recognizes himself in this good which, as such (as independent), is in *him*. But, as the undivided power of the initial ground comes to be recognized only in man as the inner aspect (basis or *centrum*) of an individual, so in history as well evil at first remains latent in the ground, and an era of innocence

or unconsciousness about sin precedes the era of guilt and sin. In the same way, namely, as the initial ground of nature was active alone perhaps for a long time and attempted a creation for itself with the divine powers it contained, a creation which, however, again and again (because the bond of love was missing) sank back into chaos (perhaps indicated by the series of species that perished and did not return prior to the present creation), until the word of love issued forth [*erging*]⁶¹ and with it enduring creation made its beginning, likewise, the spirit of love also did not immediately reveal itself in history, but rather, because God perceived the will of the ground as the will for his revelation and, according to his providential vision, recognized that a ground independent from him (as spirit) would have to be the ground for his existence, he let the ground be active in its independence; or, expressed in another way, he set himself in motion only in accordance with his nature and not in accordance with his heart or with love. Because the ground now held the whole of the divine being in itself as well, only not as unity, only individual divine | beings could preside over this being-active-for-itself [*Für-sich-wirken*] of the ground. This primeval [*uralt*] time begins thus with the golden age of which only a frail memory in legend remains for modern mankind, a time of blessed indecision in which there was neither good nor evil; then there followed the time of the presiding gods and heroes or the omnipotence of nature in which the ground showed what for itself it had the capacity to do.⁶² At that time understanding and wisdom came to men only from the depths; the power of oracles flowing forth from the earth led and shaped their lives; all divine forces of the ground dominated the earth and sat as powerful princes on secure thrones. This appeared to be the time of the greatest exaltation of nature in the visible beauty of the gods and in all the brilliance of art and profound [*sinnreich*] science until the principle active in the ground finally emerged as a world-conquering principle to subordinate everything to itself and establish a stable and enduring world empire. Because, however, the being of the ground can never generate for itself true and complete unity, there comes the time when all this magnificence dissolves and, as if by a terrible sickness, the beautiful body of the previous world collapses and chaos finally emerges once again. Already prior to this, and before complete collapse has set in, the presiding powers in this whole assume the nature of evil spirits

just as the same forces, which in healthy times were beneficial guardians of life, become malignant and poisonous in nature as dissolution approaches; the belief in gods vanishes and a false magic, complete with incantations and theurgic formulas, strives to call the fleeing ones back and to mollify the evil spirits. The attractive force of the ground shows itself ever more determinately; anticipating [*vorempfindend*] the coming light, the ground in advance thrusts all forces out of indecision to meet the light in full conflict. As a thunderstorm is caused in a mediated way by the sun but immediately by an opposing force of the earth, so is the spirit of evil (whose meteoric nature we have already explained earlier) aroused by the approach of the good not through a sharing but rather by a spreading out of forces. Hence, only in connection with the decisive emergence of the good, does evil also emerge quite decisively and *as itself* [*als dieses*] (not as if it only first arose then, but rather because the opposition is now first given in which it alone can appear complete and as such), [just] as, in turn, the very moment when the earth becomes for the second time desolate and empty becomes the moment of birth for the higher light of the spirit that was in the world from the very beginning, but not comprehended by the darkness acting for itself, and in a yet closed and limited revelation; and, in order to counter personal and spiritual evil, the light of the spirit in fact appears likewise in the shape of a human person and as a mediator in order to reestablish the rapport between God and creation at the highest level. For only what is personal can heal what is personal, and God must become man so that man may return to God.⁶³ The possibility of being saved (of salvation) is restored only through the reestablished relation of the ground to God. Its beginning is a condition of clairvoyance which, through divine imposition, befalls individuals (as the organs chosen for this purpose), a time of signs and miracles in which divine forces counteract everywhere emergent demonic ones and mollifying unity counteracts the dispersion of forces. Finally a crisis ensues in the *turba gentium* [tumult of peoples] that overflows the foundations of the ancient world, just as once the waters of the beginning covered the creations of the primeval time [*Urzeit*] again in order to make a second creation possible—a new division of peoples and tongues, a new empire in which the living word enters as a stable and constant *centrum* in the struggle against chaos, and a conflict declared between

good and evil begins, continuing on to the end of the present time, in which God reveals himself as spirit, that is, as *actu* real.*

Hence, there is a *general* evil which, if not exactly of the beginning, is first awoken in the original revelation of God by the reaction | of the ground; a general evil which, though it never becomes real, yet continually strives toward that end. Only after coming to know general evil is it possible to grasp good and evil in man. If, namely, evil already has been aroused in the first creation, and through the ground's being-active-for-itself was developed finally into a general principle, then a natural propensity [*Hang*] of man to do evil seems to be explicable on that basis because the disorder of forces engaged by awakening of self-will in creatures already communicates itself to them at birth. Yet the ground continues to be incessantly active in individuals as well and arouses individuality [*Eigenart*] and the particular will precisely so that the will of love may appear in contrast. God's will is to universalize everything, to raise everything up toward unity with the light or keep it there; the will of the ground, however, is to particularize everything or to make it creaturely. The will wants difference [*Ungleichheit*] only so that identity [*Gleichheit*] can become perceptible to itself and to the will. For that reason the will reacts necessarily against freedom as that which is above the creaturely and awakes in freedom the appetite for what is creaturely just as he who is seized by dizziness on a high and steep summit seems to be beckoned to plunge downward by a hidden voice; or, according to the ancient legend, the irresistible song of the sirens reverberates from the depths in order to drag the passing sailor into the maelstrom. The connection of the general will with a particular will in man seems already in itself a contradiction, the unification of which is difficult if not impossible. The fear of life itself drives man out of the *centrum* into which he was created⁶⁴; for this *centrum*, as the purest essence of all willing, is for each particular will a consuming fire; in order to be able to live within it the man of all particularity must become extinct [*absterben*], which is why the attempt to step out of this center into the periphery is almost necessary in order to seek there some calm

* One should compare this whole section with the author's *Lectures on the Method of Academic Study*, VIII. "Lecture on the Historical Construction of Christianity."

for his selfhood. Hence, the general necessity of sin and death as the actual extinction of particularity through which all human will as a fire must cross in order to be purified.⁶⁵ Notwithstanding this general necessity, evil remains always an individual's own choice; the ground cannot make evil as such, and every creature falls due to its own guilt. But just how in each individual the decision for good or evil might now proceed—this is still shrouded in complete darkness and seems to demand a specific investigation.

We have generally focused up to this point less on the formal essence of freedom, although insight into it seems to be strapped with no less difficulty than explication of the real concept of freedom.

For the common concept of freedom, according to which freedom is posited as a wholly undetermined capacity to will one or the other of two contradictory opposites, without determining reasons but simply because it is willed, has in fact the original undecidedness of human being as idea in its favor; however, when applied to individual actions, it leads to the greatest inconsistencies. To be able to decide for A or –A without any compelling reasons would be, to tell the truth, only a prerogative to act entirely irrationally and would not distinguish man in exactly the best way from the well-known animal of Buridan which, in the opinion of the defenders of this concept of free will [*Willkür*], would have to starve if placed between two piles of hay of equal distance, size and composition (namely because it does not have this prerogative of free will).⁶⁶ The only proof for this concept consists in referring to the fact that, for example, anyone has the power now to draw back or extend his arm without further reason; for, if one says, he stretches his arm just in order to prove his free will, then he could say this just as well of when he draws it back; interest in proving the statement can only determine him to do one of the two; here the equilibrium [*Gleichgewicht*] is palpable, and so forth; this is a generally bad manner of proof since it deduces the non-existence of a determining reason from lack of knowledge about it; but this argument could be used in the completely opposite way here, for exactly where lack of knowledge enters, determination takes place all the more certainly. The main issue is that this concept introduces a complete contingency [*Zufälligkeit*] of individual actions and, in this respect, has been compared quite correctly with the contingent swerve of atoms that Epicurus conceived in physics with the same intention, namely, to evade fate.⁶⁷ But contingency is

impossible; it contests reason as well as the necessary unity of the whole; and, if freedom is to be saved by nothing other than the complete contingency of actions, then it is not to be saved at all. Determinism (or, according to Kant, predeterminism⁶⁸) counters this system of the equilibrium of free will and, indeed, with complete justification, since it claims the empirical necessity of all actions because each is determined by representations or other causes that lie in the past and that no longer remain within our power during the action itself. Both systems adhere to the same point of view; but if there were no higher one, then the latter would undeniably earn the advantage. For both, that higher necessity remains unknown which is equidistant from contingency and from compulsion or external determination, which is, rather, an inner necessity springing from the essence of the acting individual itself. All improvements, however, which one has sought to make to determinism, for example, the Leibnizian ones that motivating causes only incline but do not determine the will, are of no help at all in the main issue.⁶⁹

Idealism actually first raised the doctrine of freedom to that very region where it is alone comprehensible. According to idealism, the intelligible being of every thing and especially of man is outside all causal connectedness as it is outside or above all time.⁷⁰ Hence, it can never be determined by any sort of prior thing since, rather, it itself precedes all else that is or becomes within it, not so much temporally as conceptually, as an absolute unity that must always already exist fully and complete so that particular action or determination may be possible in it. We are expressing namely the Kantian concept not exactly in his very words, but indeed in the way, as we believe, that it would have to be expressed in order to be comprehensible. But if this concept is assumed, then the following appears also to be correctly deduced: free action follows immediately from the intelligible aspect of man. But it is necessarily a determined action, for example, to take what is nearest at hand, a good or an evil one. There is, however, no transition from the absolutely undetermined to the determined. That, for instance, the intelligible being should determine itself out of pure, utter indeterminacy without any reason leads back to the system of the equilibrium [*Gleichgültigkeit*] of free will discussed above.⁷¹ In order to be able to determine itself, it would already have to be determined in itself, admittedly not from outside, which contradicts its nature, also not from inside through some sort

of merely contingent or empirical necessity since all this (the psychological as well as the physical) is subordinate to it; but rather it would have to be its determination itself as its essence, that is, as its own nature. This is of course not an undetermined generality, but rather determines the intelligible being of this individual; the saying *determinatio est negatio* [determination is negation]⁷² holds in no way for such determinateness since the latter is itself one with the position and the concept of its being, therefore it really is the essence in its being. Hence, the intelligible being can, as certainly as it acts as such freely and absolutely, just as certainly act only in accordance with its own inner nature; or action can follow from within only in accordance with the law of identity and with absolute necessity which alone is also absolute freedom. For free is what acts only in accord with the laws of its own being and is determined by nothing else either in or outside itself.

At least one thing is achieved with this notion of the matter, that the inconsistency of the contingent is removed from individual action. This must be established, in every higher view as well: that individual action results from the inner necessity of a free being and, accordingly, from necessity itself, which must not be confused, as still happens, with empirical necessity based on compulsion (which is itself, I however, only disguised contingency). But what then is this inner necessity of the being itself? Here lies the point at which necessity and freedom must be unified if they are at all capable of unification. Were this being a dead sort of Being [*ein totes Sein*] and a merely given one with respect to man, then, because all action resulting from it could do so only with necessity, responsibility [*Zurechnungsfähigkeit*] and all freedom would be abolished. But precisely this inner necessity is itself freedom; the essence of man is fundamentally *his own act*; necessity and freedom are in one another as one being [*Ein Wesen*] that appears as one or the other only when considered from different sides, in itself freedom, formally necessity.⁷³ The I, says Fichte, is its own act; consciousness is self-positing—but the I is nothing different from this self-positing, rather it is precisely self-positing itself. This consciousness, however, to the extent it is thought merely as self-apprehension or cognition of the I, is not even primary and all along presupposes actual Being, as does all pure cognition. This Being, presumed to be prior to cognition, is, however, not Being, though it is likewise not cognition: it is real self-positing, it is a primal and fundamental

willing, which makes itself into something and is the ground of all ways of being [*Wesenheit*].⁷⁴

But, in their immediate relation to man, these truths are valid in a much more definite sense than in this general one. Man is in the initial creation, as shown, an undecided being—(which may be portrayed mythically as a condition of innocence that precedes this life and as an initial blessedness)—only man himself can decide. But this decision cannot occur within time; it occurs outside of all time and, hence, together with the first creation (though as a deed distinct from creation). Man, even if born in time, is indeed created into the beginning of the creation (the *centrum*).⁷⁵ The act, whereby his life is determined in time, does not itself belong to time but rather to eternity: it also does not temporally precede life but goes through time (unhampered | by it) as an act which is eternal by nature. Through this act the life of man reaches to the beginning of creation; hence, through it man is outside the created, being free and eternal beginning itself.⁷⁶ As incomprehensible as this idea may appear to conventional ways of thinking, there is indeed in each man a feeling in accord with it as if he had been what he is already from all eternity and had by no means become so first in time. Hence, notwithstanding the undeniable necessity of all actions and, although each individual, if he is aware of himself, must admit that he is by no means arbitrarily or by accident good or evil, an evil individual, for example, surely appears to himself not in the least compelled (because compulsion can be felt only in becoming and not in Being) but rather performs his actions in accordance with and not against his will. That Judas became a betrayer of Christ, neither he nor any other creature could change, and nevertheless he betrayed Christ not under compulsion but willingly and with complete freedom.* It is exactly the same with a good individual; namely he is not good arbitrarily or by accident and yet is so little compelled that, rather, no compulsion, not even the gates of hell themselves, would be capable of overpowering his basic disposition [*Gesinnung*]. This sort of free act, which becomes necessary, admittedly cannot appear in consciousness to the degree the latter is merely self-awareness and only ideal, since it precedes consciousness

* This is what Luther maintains, correctly, in his treatise *de servo arbitrio*, even though he did not grasp the unification of such unwavering necessity with freedom of action in the correct manner.

just as it precedes essence, indeed, first *produces* it; but, for that reason, this is no act of which no consciousness at all remains in man since anyone, for instance, who in order to excuse a wrong action, says “that’s just the way I am” is surely aware that he is like he is through his guilt, as much as he is right that it was impossible for him to act otherwise. How frequently does it occur that, from childhood on, from a time when, considered empirically, we can hardly attribute to him freedom and self-reflection, an individual shows a propensity [*Hang*] to evil from which it can be anticipated that he will bend neither to discipline nor to doctrine, and which consequently brings to ripeness the wicked fruit that we had foreseen in the earliest sprout [*Keim*]; and yet no one doubts his capacity to deliberate, and all are as convinced of this individual’s guilt as they could only ever be if each particular action had stood within his power. This general assessment of a propensity to evil as an act of freedom which, in accordance with its origin, is utterly unconscious and even irresistible points to an act and, thus, to a life before this life, except that it is not to be thought just as prior in time since that which is intelligible is altogether outside of time. Because there is the highest harmony in creation, and nothing is as discrete and consecutive as we must portray it to be, but rather in what is earlier that which comes later is also already active, and everything happens at once in one magic stroke, accordingly, man, who appears decided and determinate here, apprehends himself in a particular form in the first creation and is born as that which he had been from eternity since through this act even the type and constitution of his corporeal formation is determined. The assumed contingency of human actions in relation to the unity of the world as a whole already outlined in the divine understanding has been forever the greatest obstacle [*Anstoß*] in the doctrine about freedom.⁷⁷ Hence, then, the presumption of predestination, since neither the prescience of God nor genuine foresight can be relinquished. The authors of this presumption felt that human actions had to have been determined from eternity; but they sought this determination not in the eternal act contemporaneous with creation that institutes the being of man itself but rather in an absolute, that is, utterly groundless, decision of God whereby one would be predestined to damnation, the other to blessedness and, in so doing, they abolished the root of freedom. We too assert a predestination but in a completely different sense, namely in this: as man acts here

so has he acted from eternity and already in the beginning of creation. His action does not *become*, just as he | himself does not *become* as a moral being, but rather it is eternal by nature. Thus this oft-heard and tormenting question also falls by the wayside: Why is exactly this individual destined to act in an evil and base manner while, in contrast, another is destined to act piously and justly? For the question presupposes that man is not initially action and act and that he as a spiritual being has a Being which is prior to, and independent of, his will, which, as has been shown, is impossible.⁷⁸

Once evil had been generally aroused in creation by the reaction of the ground to revelation, man apprehended himself from eternity in his individuality and selfishness, and all who are born are born with the dark principle of evil within even if this evil is raised to self-consciousness only through the emergence [*Eintreten*] of its opposite. As man is now, the good as light can be developed only from the dark principle through a divine transformation [*Transmutation*]. This original evil in man, which can be denied only by one who has come to know man in and outside himself only superficially, although wholly independent of freedom in relation to contemporary empirical life, is still in its origin his own act and for that reason alone original sin; something that cannot be said about the admittedly equally undeniable disorder of forces that propagated itself like a contagion after the collapse had taken place. For the passions in themselves do not constitute evil, nor do we have to struggle just with flesh and blood but with an evil in and outside of us that is spirit. Only this evil, contracted through our own act but from birth, can on that account [*daher*] be called radical evil; and it is remarkable how Kant, who had not raised himself in theory to a transcendental act that determines all human Being, was led in his later investigations, merely by faithful observation of the phenomena of moral judgment, to the recognition of, as he expressed it, a subjective ground of human actions preceding every act apparent to the senses but that itself must be nonetheless an *actus* of freedom. Whereas Fichte, who had grasped speculatively the | concept of such an act, fell prey once again to the philanthropism [*Philanthropismus*] prevalent in his moral theory and wanted to find this evil that precedes all empirical action in the lethargy of human nature.⁷⁹

There seems to be only one argument [*Ein Grund*] to advance against this point of view: that it cuts out all turning of man from evil

toward good, and vice versa, at least for this life. But suppose now that human or divine assistance—(man always requires some assistance)—may destine an individual to convert to the good, then, that he grants the good spirit this influence and does not positively shut himself off from it, lies likewise already in the initial action whereby he is this individual and no other. That is why in the man in which this transformation has not taken place but in which the good principle is also not completely extinguished, the inner voice of his own better nature [*Wesen*], in terms of what he now is, never ceases to exhort him to such a transformation, just as he first finds peace within his own inner realm [*in seinem eignen Innern*] through a real and decisive turnaround and, as if only now the initial idea [*Idea*] had been satisfied, finds himself reconciled with his guardian spirit. It is true in the strictest understanding that, given how man is in fact created, it is not he himself but rather the good or evil spirit in him that acts; and, nonetheless, this does no harm to freedom. For precisely the allowing-to-act-within-himself [*das in-sich-handeln-Lassen*] of the good and evil principles is the result of an intelligible act whereby his being and life are determined.

After we have thus outlined the beginning and emergence of evil up to its becoming real in the individual, there seems to be nothing left but to describe its appearance in man.

The general possibility of evil consists, as shown, in the fact that man, instead of making his selfhood into the basis, the instrument, can strive to elevate it into the ruling and total will and, conversely, to make the spiritual within himself into a means. If the dark principle of selfhood and self-will in man is thoroughly penetrated by the light and at one with it, then God, as eternal love or as really existing, is the bond of forces in him. But if the two principles are in discord, another spirit usurps the place where God should be, namely, the reversed god, the being aroused to actuality by God's revelation that can never wrest actuality from potency, that, though it never is, yet always wants to be and, hence, like the matter of the ancients, cannot be grasped actually (actualized) by the complete understanding but only through the false imagination (*logismōi nothōi**), which is sin

* The Platonic expression in the *Timaeus* p. 349, Vol. IX of the Zweibr. Ed.: earlier in *Tim. Locr. De an. Mundi*, *ibid.*, p. 5.

itself; for this reason, since, having no Being itself, it borrows the appearance of Being from true Being, as the serpent borrows colors from the light, it strives by means of mirrorlike images to bring man to the senselessness in which it alone can be understood and accepted by him.⁸⁰ That is why it is presented correctly not only as an enemy of all creatures (because they come to be only through the bond of love) and, above all, of man, but also as the seducer of man who entices him toward false pleasure [*falsche Lust*] and the acceptance of what does not have Being in his imagination; there it is supported by the tendency to evil proper to man, whose eyes, being incapable of beholding constantly the luster of the divine and the truth, always look away to what does not have Being [*das Nichtseiende*]. Thus is the beginning of sin, that man transgresses from authentic Being into non-Being, from truth into lies, from the light into darkness, in order to become a self-creating ground and, with the power of the *centrum* which he has within himself, to rule over all things. For the feeling still remains in the one having strayed [*gewichen*] from the *centrum* that he was all things, namely, in and with God; for that reason he strives once again to return there, but for himself, and not where he might be all things, namely, in God. From this arises the hunger of selfishness which, to the degree that it renounces the whole and unity, becomes ever more desolate, poorer, but precisely for that reason greedier, hungrier, and more venomous. In evil there is the self-consuming and always annihilating | contradiction that it strives to become creaturely just by annihilating the bond of creaturely existence and, out of overweening pride [*Übermut*] to be all things, falls into non-Being. Incidentally, obvious sin does not fill us with regret, as does mere weakness or incapacity, but with fear and horror, a feeling that is only explicable on the basis that sin strives to break the word, touch the ground of creation, and profane the mystery. But this should also be revealed, for only in the opposition of sin is revealed the most inner bond of the dependence of things and the being of God which is, as it were, *before* all existence (not yet mitigated by it) and, for that reason, terrifying. For God himself cloaks this principle in creatures and covers it with love in so far as he makes it into the ground and, so to speak, the carrier of beings. This principle becomes actual [*aktuell*] for and against anyone who now provokes it by misusing self-will raised to the level of selfhood. For, because God cannot be disturbed,

much less abolished, in his existence, so, according to the necessary correspondence that occurs between God and his basis [*Basis*], precisely that radiant glimpse of life in the depths of darkness in every individual flares up in the sinner into a consuming fire, just as in a living organism a particular joint or system, as soon as it has strayed from the whole, perceives the unity and cooperative effort itself to which it is opposed as fire (= fever) and ignites from an inner heat.

We have seen how, through false imagining and cognition that orients itself according to what does not have Being, the human spirit opens itself to the spirit of lies and falsehood and, fascinated by the latter, soon loses its initial freedom. It follows from this that, by contrast, the true good could be effected only through a divine magic, namely through the immediate presence of what has Being in consciousness and cognition. An arbitrary good is as impossible as an arbitrary evil. True freedom is in harmony with a holy necessity, the likes of which we perceive in essential cognition, when spirit and heart, bound only by their own law, freely affirm what is necessary. If evil exists in the discord of the two principles, then good can exist only in the complete accord of the two, and the bond that unifies both must be divine since they are one, not in a conditional, but in a complete and unconditional, manner. Hence, it is not possible to present the relation of both as an arbitrary morality or one originating in self-determination. The latter concept presupposed that the two principles were not in themselves one; but how are they supposed to become one if they are not one? Moreover, this concept leads back to the inconsistent system of equilibrium of free will. The relation of both principles is that of a ligature of the dark principle (selfhood) onto the light. It may be permitted to us to express this through religiosity according to the original meaning of the word. We do not understand by this meaning what a sickly era calls idle brooding, rapturous divination, or a willing-to-feel [*Fühlen-wollen*] of the divine.⁸¹ For God is the clear cognition in us or the spiritual light itself in which everything else first becomes clear—far be it that it should itself be unclear; and one who has this cognition is not permitted by it to be idle or to celebrate. This cognition is, where it really is, something much more substantial than our philosophers of feeling [*Empfindungsphilosophen*] think.⁸² We understand religiosity in the original, practical meaning of the word. It is conscientiousness

or that one act in accordance with what one knows and not contradict the light of cognition in one's conduct. An individual for whom this contradiction is impossible, not in a human, physical, or psychological, but rather in a divine way, is called religious, conscientious in the highest sense of the word. One is not conscientious who in a given instance must first hold the command of duty before himself in order to decide to do right out of respect for that command. Already, according to the meaning of the word, religiosity does not permit any choice between opposites, any *aequilibrium arbitrii* (the plague of all morality), but rather only the highest resoluteness in favor of what is right without any choice. Conscientiousness just does not necessarily and always appear as enthusiasm or as an extraordinary elevation over oneself which, | once the conceit of arbitrary morality has been struck down, another and much worse spirit of pride would happily have it become as well.⁸³ Conscientiousness can appear quite formal in the strict fulfillment of duty, where even the character of hardness and cruelty is added to it, as in the soul of M. Cato, to whom one ancient ascribed this inner and almost divine necessity of action by saying that Cato most resembled virtue because he never acted correctly in order to act in that way (out of respect for the command), but rather because he could not at all have acted otherwise.⁸⁴ This severity of disposition is, like the severity of life in nature, the seed from which true grace and divinity first come forth into bloom; but the ostensibly more noble morality that believes it is permitted to heap scorn on this seed is like a sterile blossom that produces no fruit.* The highest, just because it is the highest, is not always generally valid; and whoever has come to know the race of spiritual libertines, whom precisely the highest in science and sentiment must serve for the most outrageous improprieties of spirit and elevation [of self] above the so-called general sense of duty, will surely hesitate to declare it as such. It is already predictable that on the path where everyone wanted to be a beautiful soul rather than a rational one, to be called noble rather than just, that moral doctrine, too, will be lead back to the general concept of *taste* whereby vice would then still consist in

* The frequently cited review by Mr. Fr. Schlegel in the *Heidelb. Annuals*, p. 154 contains very just observations concerning this moral genius of the era.

bad or ruined taste only.* If the divine principle of this doctrine shows through as such in a serious disposition, virtue appears thus as enthusiasm; as heroism (in the struggle against evil), as the beautiful free courage of man to act as his God instructs him and not to fall away in action from what he has acknowledged in thought; as belief, not in the sense of a holding-to-be-true [*Fürwahrhalten*], which is seen as commendable or as leaving something out in regard to certainty—a meaning that has been foisted onto this word through usage for common things—but in its original meaning as trusting, having confidence, in the divine that excludes all choice. If finally a ray of divine love lowers itself into an unshakable seriousness of disposition, which, however, is always presupposed, then a supreme clarity of moral life arises in grace and divine beauty.

We have now investigated to the extent possible the genesis of the opposition of good and evil and how both act through each other in the creation. But the highest question of this investigation returns yet again. God has been considered thus far as a self-revealing being. But how, then, does he relate to this revelation as a moral being? Is revelation an action that ensues with blind and unconscious necessity or is it a free and conscious act? And if it is the latter, how does God as a moral being relate to evil, the possibility and actuality of which depend on the self-revelation? If he willed the latter, did he also will evil, and how is this willing to be reconciled with the holiness and highest perfection in God, or, as commonly expressed, how, given the fact of evil [*wegen des Bösen*], is God to be justified?

The preliminary question in fact seems to have been decided by the foregoing due to the freedom of God in the self-revelation. If God were for us a merely logical abstraction, then everything would have to proceed from him with logical necessity as well; he himself would be, as it were, only the highest law from which all things flow out, but without personhood [*Personalität*] and consciousness of personhood.

* A young man who, probably like many others now, is too arrogant to walk along the honest path of Kant and is yet incapable of lifting himself up to a level that is actually better, blathers about aesthetics [*ästhetisch irreredet*], has already announced such a grounding of morality through aesthetics. With such advances perhaps something serious too will come of the Kantian joke that Euclid should be considered a somewhat ponderous introduction to drawing.

But we have explained God as a living unity of forces; and if personality [*Persönlichkeit*] is founded, according to our previous explanation, on the connection between a self-determining [*selbständig*] being and a basis independent of him, then, similarly, because both of these completely | saturate the other and are but one being, God is the highest personality through the connection of the ideal principle in him with the (relative to it) independent ground, since basis and things existing in him necessarily unify themselves in one absolute existence; or also, if the living unity of both is spirit, then, as their absolute bond, God is spirit in the eminent and absolute understanding. It is so certain that the personality in him is grounded only through the bond of God with nature that, by contrast, the God of pure idealism, as well as the God of pure realism, is necessarily an impersonal being, of which the concepts of Spinoza and Fichte are the clearest proofs. But, because in God there is an independent ground of reality and, hence, two equally eternal beginnings of self-revelation, God also must be considered in regard to his freedom in relation to both. The first beginning for the creation is the yearning of the One to give birth to itself or the will of the ground. The second is the will of love, whereby the word is spoken out into nature and through which God first makes himself personal.⁸⁵ That is why the will of the ground cannot be free in the sense in which the will of love is. It is not a conscious will nor one connected with reflection, although it is also not a completely unconscious one that moves according to blind, mechanical necessity; but it is rather of intermediate nature, as desire or appetite, and is most readily comparable to the beautiful urge of a nature in becoming that strives to unfold itself and whose inner movements are involuntary (cannot be omitted), without there being a feeling of compulsion in them. Plainly free or conscious will is, however, the will of love, precisely because it is what it is: the revelation that results from it is action and act. The whole of nature tells us that it in no way exists by virtue of a merely geometrical necessity; in it there is not simply pure reason but personality and spirit (as we likely distinguish the rational author from one possessing wit); otherwise the geometrical understanding that has ruled for so long would have long ago had to penetrate into nature and prove its idol of general and eternal natural laws to a greater degree than has | occurred thus far, whereas it has had to recognize the irrational relation of nature to itself rather more every day. The creation is not an occurrence

but an act. There are no results from general laws; rather, God, that is, the person of God, is the general law, and everything that happens, happens by virtue of the personality of God, not according to some abstract necessity that *we* in acting would not tolerate, to say nothing of God. In the Leibnizian philosophy, which is ruled far too much by the spirit of abstraction, the recognition of laws of nature as morally, but not geometrically, necessary, and just as little arbitrary, is one of its most pleasing aspects. “I have found,” says Leibniz, “that the laws which are actually to be proved in nature are still not absolutely demonstrable, but this is also not necessary. Though they can be proved in various ways, yet something must always be presupposed which is not entirely geometrically necessary. Hence, these laws are the proof of a highest, intelligent, and free being against the system of absolute necessity. They are neither entirely necessary (in this abstract understanding), nor entirely arbitrary, but rather stand in the middle as laws that are derived from a perfect wisdom which is above all things.”* The highest striving of the dynamic mode of explanation is nothing else than this reduction of natural laws to mind, spirit and will.

In order to define the relation of God as a moral being to the world, general cognition of freedom in creation nevertheless does not reach far enough; moreover, the question still remains whether the act of self-revelation was free in the sense that all consequences of it were foreseen in God? But this too is necessarily to be affirmed; for the will to revelation would not itself be living if no other will turning back into the inner realm of being did not oppose it: but in this holding-in-itself [*An-sich-halten*] emerges a reflexive picture of all that is implicitly contained in the essence in which God ideally realizes himself or, what is the same thing, recognizes himself beforehand in his becoming real. Thus, since there is a tendency in God working against the will to revelation, love, and goodness or the *communicativum sui* [self-evidence] must predominate so that there may be revelation; and this, the decision, only really completes the concept of revelation as a conscious and morally free act.

Notwithstanding this concept, and, although the action of revelation in God is necessary only morally or in regard to goodness and love, the notion remains of God’s deliberating with himself or of a

* *Tentam. Theod. Opp.* T. I, pp. 365, 366.

choice among various possible worlds, a notion that is groundless and untenable. To the contrary, just as soon as the closer determination of a moral necessity is added, the proposition is utterly undeniable: that everything proceeds from the divine nature with absolute necessity, that everything which is possible by virtue of this nature must also be actual, and what is not actual also must be morally impossible. Spinozism is by no means in error because of the claim that there is such an unshakable necessity in God, but rather because it takes this necessity to be impersonal and inanimate. For, since this system grasps altogether only one side of the absolute—namely the real one or the extent to which God functions only in the ground—these propositions indeed lead to a blind necessity bereft of understanding [*verstandlos*]. But if God is essentially love and goodness, then what is morally necessary in him also follows with a truly metaphysical necessity. If choice in the truest understanding were required for complete freedom in God, then one would still have to go on further. For, there would only then have been perfect freedom of choice, if God also had been able to create a less complete world than was possible according to all conditions. Likewise, since nothing is so inconsistent that it also has not been put forth once, it has been claimed by some and in seriousness—not merely like the Castilian King Alphonso, whose well-known utterance concerned only the then dominant Ptolemaic system—that, if he wanted to, God could have created a better world than this one.⁸⁶ Thus the arguments [*Gründe*] against the unity of possibility and actuality | in God are derived as well from the wholly formal concept of possibility, that everything is possible which is not self-contradictory; for example, in the well-known objection that all coherently imagined novels must be actual occurrences. Even Spinoza did not have such a merely formal concept; all possibility is valid for him only in relation to divine perfection; and Leibniz accepts this concept obviously merely in order to stress a choice in God and thereby distance himself as far as possible from Spinoza. “God chooses,” he says, “among possibilities and for that reason chooses freely without necessitation: only then would there be no choice, no freedom, if only one thing were possible.” If nothing more is lacking for freedom than such an empty possibility, it can be admitted that formally, or without having regard to the divine way of being [*Wesenheit*], infinite things were and still are possible; but this entails wanting to claim divine freedom through a concept

that is in itself false and is possible merely in our understanding, not in God, in whom disregard for his essence or perfections can likely not be thought. With respect to the plurality of possible worlds, an anarchy in itself, as is, according to our explanation, the original movement of the ground, seems to offer an infinity of possibilities, like material that has not yet been formed but can receive all forms; and if, for instance, the possibility of several worlds should be based on this material, then it would only need to be remarked that surely no such possibility would follow in regard to God since the ground is not to be called God, and God according to his perfection can only will one thing. But by no means is this anarchy also to be thought as if there were no archetype [*Urtypus*] in the ground containing the only possible world according to God's essence, which in the actual creation is raised from potency into action [*zum Aktus*] only through division, regulation of forces and exclusion of the darkening or hindering anarchy. In the divine understanding itself, however, as in primeval [*uranfänglich*] wisdom in which God realizes himself ideally or as archetype [*urbildlich*], there is only one possible world as there is only one God. |

In the divine understanding there is a system; yet God himself is not a system, but rather a life; and the answer to the question as to [*wegen*] the possibility of evil in regard to God, for the sake of which the foregoing has been set out, also lies in this fact alone. All existence demands a condition so that it may become real, namely personal, existence. Even God's existence could not be personal without such a condition except that he has this condition *within* and not outside himself. He cannot abolish the condition because he would otherwise have to abolish himself; he can come to terms with the condition only through love and subordinate it to himself for his glorification. There would also be a ground of darkness in God, if he had not made the condition into *his own*, bound himself to it as one and for the sake of absolute personality. Man never gains control over the condition, although in evil he strives to do so; it is only lent to him, and is independent from him; hence, his personality and selfhood can never rise to full actuality [*zum Aktus*]. This is the sadness that clings to all finite life: and, even if there is in God at least a relatively independent condition, there is a source of sadness in him that can, however, never come into actuality, but rather serves only the eternal joy of overcoming. Hence, the veil of dejection that is spread

over all nature, the deep indestructible melancholy of all life. Joy must have suffering, suffering must be transfigured in joy. Hence, what comes from the mere condition or the ground, does not come from God, although it is necessary for his existence. But it cannot also be said that evil comes from the ground or that the will of the ground is the originator of evil. For evil can always only arise in the innermost will of our own heart and is never accomplished without our own act. The solicitation by the ground or the reaction against that which is beyond creaturely existence [*das Überkreatürliche*] awakens only the appetite for creaturely existence or the individual will; but this reaction awakens it only so that there may be an independent ground for the good and so that it may be overtaken and penetrated by the good. For aroused selfhood is not evil in itself but only to the extent that it has completely | torn itself away from its opposite, the light or the universal will. But exactly this renunciation of the good alone is sin. Activated selfhood is necessary for the rigor of life; without it there would be sheer death, a falling asleep of the good; for, where there is no struggle, there is no life. Therefore only the reviving of life is the will of the ground, not evil immediately and in itself. If the human will includes love in activated selfhood and subordinates itself to the light as the general will, then actual goodness first arises, having become perceptible through the rigor proper to the will. Therefore in the good the reaction of the ground is an acting in favor of the good, in evil it is an acting in favor of evil, as scripture says: In pious things you are pious, and in perverted ones you are perverse.⁸⁷ Good without active selfhood is itself inactive good. The same thing that becomes evil through the will of the creature (if it tears itself completely free in order to be for itself), is in itself good as long as it remains wrapped up in the good and in the ground. Only selfhood that has been overcome, thus brought back from activity to potentiality, is the good and, as having been overtaken by the good, it also remains in the good from then on according to its potency. Were there no root of cold in the body, warm could not be felt. To think an attracting and repelling force for itself is impossible, for against what should that which repels act if that which attracts provides no resistance, or against what should that which attracts act, if it does not have in itself at the same time something that repels? Hence it is entirely correct to say dialectically: good and evil are the same thing only seen from different sides, or evil is in itself, that is, considered in

the root of its identity, the good, just as the good, to the contrary, considered in its turning from itself [*Entzweiung*] or non-identity, is evil. For this reason the statement is also entirely correct that, whoever has neither the material nor the force in himself to do evil, is also not fit for good, of which we have seen plenty of examples in our own time. The passions against which our negative morality wages war are forces of which each has a common root with its | corresponding virtue. The soul of all hate is love, and in the most violent wrath only the stillness of the most inner *centrum*, attacked and excited, shows itself. In appropriate measure and organic equilibrium the passions are the strength of virtue itself and its immediate tools. “If the passions are the limbs of dishonor,” says the excellent J. G. Hamann, “do they—because of this—cease to be weapons of manhood? Do you understand the letter of reason more cleverly than the allegorizing chamberlain of the Alexandrian church understood that of scripture, who castrated himself for the sake of the kingdom of heaven? The prince of this era makes those who do themselves the greatest evil into his cherished ones. His court (the devil’s) jesters are the worst enemies of beautiful nature which, admittedly, has Corybants and Galli as priests of the belly, but strong spirits for its true admirers.”*.⁸⁸ Then may only those whose philosophy is made more for a gynaeceum than for the Academy or the Palaestra of the Lyceum not bring these dialectical propositions before the public who, misunderstanding the latter just as they themselves do, sees in them an abolition of all distinction of right from wrong, of good from evil, and before whom these propositions belong as little as, for instance, the propositions of the ancient dialecticians, of Zeno and the other Eleatic thinkers, belonged before the forum of shallow devotees of beauty [*Schöngeist*].⁸⁹

The arousal of self-will occurs only so that love in man may find a material or opposition in which it may realize itself. To the extent that selfhood is the principle of evil in its breaking away [*Lossagung*], the ground does indeed arouse the possible principle of evil, yet not evil itself and not for the sake of evil.⁹⁰ But even this arousal occurs not according to the free will of God, who does not move in the ground according to this will or his heart, but rather only according to his own properties.

* *Cloverleaf of Hellenistic Letters* II, p. 196.

Whoever might thus claim that God himself willed evil, would have to seek the basis for this claim in the act of self-revelation as creation, just as it has also often been thought that he | who willed the world must have willed evil as well. Solely because God brought order to the disorderly offspring of chaos and proclaimed [*ausgesprochen*] his eternal unity into nature, he opposed darkness and posited the word as a constant *centrum* and eternal beacon against the anarchical movement of the principle bereft of understanding. The will to creation was therefore immediately only a will to give birth to the light and the good along with it; but evil did not come into consideration in this will, neither as means nor even, as Leibniz says, as the *conditio sine qua non* of the greatest possible perfection of the world.^{*,91} It was neither the object of a divine decision nor, and much less so, of a permission. The question, however, of why God, since he necessarily foresaw that evil would follow at least as a companion from the self-revelation, did not prefer not to reveal himself at all, does not in fact deserve any reply. For this would be precisely as much as to say that, in order that there could be no opposition to love, there should be no love itself, that is, the absolutely positive should be sacrificed to what has existence only as an opposite, the eternal to the merely temporal. We have already explained that the self-revelation in God would have to be considered not as an unconditionally arbitrary, but rather as a morally necessary, act in which love and goodness overcome absolute inwardness. Thus if God had not revealed himself for the sake of evil, evil would have triumphed over the good and love. The Leibnizian concept of evil as *conditio sine qua non* can | only be applied to the ground so that the latter arouse the creaturely will (the possible principle of evil) as the condition under which alone the will to love could be realized. We have likewise already shown why God

* *Tentam. Theod.* P. 139: Ex his concludendum est, Deum *antecedenter* velle omne *bonum in se*, velle *consequenter optimum* tanquam *finem*; indifferens et malum physicum tanquam *medium*; sed velle tantum *permittere* malum morale, tanquam *conditionem*, *sine qua non* obtineretur optimum, ita nimirum, ut malum non nisi titulo necessitatis hypotheticae, id ipsum cum optimo connectentis, admittatur.—p. 292: Quod ad vitium attinet, superius ostensum est, illud non esse objectum decreti divini, *tanquam medium*, sed tanquam *conditionem sine qua non*— et ideo duntaxat *permitteri*. These two passages contain the core of the entire Leibnizian theodicy.

does not now resist the will of the ground or abolish it. This would be precisely as much as to say that God would abolish the condition of his existence, that is, his own personality. Thus, in order that there be no evil, there would have to be no God himself.

Another objection, which relates not merely to this view but rather to every metaphysics, is this: even if God did not want evil, he in fact continues to be active in the sinner and gives him the strength to accomplish evil. With appropriate qualification [*Unterscheidung*], this point is, then, entirely to be admitted. The primal ground of existence also continues to be active in evil as health continues to be active in disease, and even the most dissolute and false life still remains and moves within God to the extent that he is the ground of existence. But it [this life] perceives him as consuming fury [*Grimm*] and is posited by the attraction of the ground itself in an ever higher tension against unity until it arrives at self-destruction and final crisis.⁹²

After all this the question always remains: Will evil end and how? Does creation have a final purpose at all, and, if this is so, why is it not reached immediately, why does what is perfect not exist right from the beginning? There is no answer to these questions other than that which has already been given: because God is a life, not merely a Being. All life has a destiny, however, and is subject to suffering and becoming. God has thus freely subordinated himself to this as well, ever since he first separated the world of light from that of darkness in order to become personal. Being becomes aware of itself only in becoming. In Being there is admittedly no becoming; rather, in the latter, Being itself is again posited as eternity; but, in its realization by opposition, it is necessarily a becoming. Without the concept of a humanly suffering God, one which is common to all mysteries and spiritual religions of earliest time, all of history would be incomprehensible; scripture also distinguishes periods of revelation and posits as a distant future the time when God will be all in all things, that is, when he will be fully realized. The first period of creation is, as has been shown earlier, the birth of the light. The light or the ideal principle is, as the eternal opposite of the dark principle, the creating word which delivers [*erlöst*] the life hidden in the ground from non-Being and lifts it from potentiality [*Potenz*] into actuality [*zum Aktus*]. The spirit rises above the word, and spirit is the first being which unifies the world of darkness with that of the light and subordinates both principles to its realization and personality. Yet, the ground reacts

against this unity and asserts the initial duality, but only toward ever greater increase and toward the final separation of good from evil. The will of the ground must remain in its freedom until all this may be fulfilled and become actual. If the will of the ground were vanquished earlier, the good would remain hidden in it together with evil. But the good should be raised out of the darkness into actuality in order to live with God everlastingly, whereas evil should be separated from the good in order to be cast out eternally into non-Being. For this is the final purpose of creation that, whatever could not be for itself, should be for itself in so far as it is raised out of the darkness into existence as a ground that is independent of God. Hence the necessity of birth and death. God yields the ideas that were in him without independent life to selfhood and to what does not have Being so that, when called to life from the latter, they may be *in* him once again as independently existing [beings].*⁹³ In its freedom, the ground therefore effects separation and judgment [*krisis*] and, precisely in doing so, the complete actualization of God. For evil, when it is entirely separate from good, also no longer *exists* as evil. It could only have been active through the (misused) good that was in it without its being conscious of it. In life, it still savored the forces of external nature with which it attempted to create and still had an indirect participation in the goodness of God. But in dying it is separated from everything good and, indeed, it remains behind as desire, as an eternal hunger and thirst for actuality, yet it is unable to step out of potentiality. Its state is thus a state of non-Being, a state of constant consumption of activity or of that which strives to be active in it. For that reason it also does not require in any way a reconstitution of evil to goodness (of the return [*Wiederbringung*] of all things) for realization of the idea of a final, all-encompassing perfection; for evil is only evil to the extent that it exceeds potentiality, but, reduced to non-Being or the state of potency, it is what it always should be, basis, subordinate and, as such, no longer in contradiction with God's holiness or love. Hence, the end of revelation is casting out evil from the good, the explanation of evil as complete unreality. By contrast, the good, having risen out of the ground, is linked in eternal unity with the original good; those born out of darkness into the light join themselves to the ideal principle as limbs to a body in which the ideal principle is fully

* *Philosophy and Religion* (Tübingen, 1804), p. 73.

realized and now a wholly personal being. As long as the initial duality lasted, the creating word ruled in the ground, and this period of creation goes through all up to the end. But if the duality is destroyed through separation, the word, or the ideal principle, subordinates itself, and the real principle that has become one with it, communally to spirit, and the latter, as divine consciousness, lives in the same way in both principles; as the scripture says about Christ: He must rule until all his enemies lie under his feet.⁹⁴ The last enemy to be abolished is death (for death was only necessary for the separation, the good must die in order to separate itself from evil, and evil must do so in order to separate itself from good). But when everything will be subordinate to him, then the son will also subordinate himself just as quickly to him who has subordinated all to the son, so that God may be all in all. For even the spirit is not yet the highest thing; it is but spirit or the breath | of love. Yet love is the highest. It is what existed, then, before the ground and before that which exists (as separate) but not yet as *love*, rather—how should we describe it?

Here we finally reach the highest point of the entire investigation. For a long time already we have heard the question: What end should serve this primary distinction between being in so far as it is ground and in so far as it exists? For there is either no common point of contact for both, in which case we must declare ourselves in favor of absolute dualism, or there is such a point; thus, both coincide once again in the final analysis. We have, then, one being [*Ein Wesen*] for all oppositions, an absolute identity of light and darkness, good and evil, and for all the inconsistent results to which any rational system falls prey and which have long been manifest in this system too.

We have already explained what we assume in the first respect: there must be a being *before* all ground and before all that exists, thus generally before any duality—how can we call it anything other than the original ground or the *non-ground* [*Ungrund*]? Since it precedes all opposites, these cannot be distinguishable in it nor can they be present in any way. Therefore, it cannot be described as the identity of opposites; it can only be described as the absolute *indifference* [*Indifferenz*] of both.⁹⁵ Most people forget, when they come to that point of examination where they must recognize a disappearance of all opposites, that these have now really disappeared, and they once again predicate the opposites as such as arising from the indifference which had emerged precisely due to their total cessation. Indifference

is not a product of opposites, nor are they implicitly contained in it, but rather indifference is its own being separate from all opposition, a being against which all opposites ruin themselves, that is nothing else than their very not-Being [*Nichtsein*] and that, for this reason, also has no predicate, except as the very lacking of a predicate, without it being on that account a nothingness or non-thing. Therefore they either posit indifference actually in the non-ground that precedes any ground; thus they have | neither good nor evil—(for we are leaving aside for the moment the fact that raising the opposition between good and evil up to this standpoint is generally impermissible)—and also cannot predicate of it either the former or the latter or even both at the same time, or they posit good and evil and, thus, they also posit at once duality and therefore already no longer posit the non-ground or indifference. Let the following be said as a commentary to the latter point! Real and ideal, darkness and light, as we otherwise want to describe the two principles, can never be predicated of the non-ground *as opposites*. But nothing hinders that they be predicated of it as non-opposites, that is, in disjunction and each *for itself* whereby, however, precisely duality (the actual two-ness [*Zweiheit*] of principles) is posited. There is nothing in the non-ground itself by which this would be hindered. For, precisely because it relates to both as total indifference, it is neutral toward both. Were it the absolute identity of both, it could be both only *at the same time*, that is, both would have to be predicated of it *as opposites* and thereby would themselves be one again. Duality (which is something entirely different from opposition, even though we should have used both synonymously up to now since we had not yet reached this point in the investigation) breaks forth therefore immediately from the Neither-Nor, or indifference, and *without* indifference, that is, *without* a non-ground, there would be no two-ness of principles. Therefore, instead of abolishing this distinction once again, as was thought, the non-ground rather posits and confirms it. Far from the distinction between the ground and that which exists having been merely logical, or one called on as a heuristic aid and again found to be artificial in the end, it has shown itself rather as a very real distinction that from the highest standpoint was first correctly proved and fully grasped.

Following this dialectical discussion, we can explain ourselves therefore entirely concretely in the following manner. The being of the ground, as of that which exists, can only be | that which comes

before all ground, thus, the absolute considered merely in itself, the non-ground. But, as proved, it cannot be this in any other way than in so far as it divides into two equally eternal beginnings, not that it can be both *at once*, but that it is in each *in the same way*, thus in each the whole, or its own being. But the non-ground divides itself into the two exactly equal beginnings, only so that the two, which could not exist simultaneously or be one in it as the non-ground, become one through love, that is, it divides itself only so that there may be life and love and personal existence. For love is neither in indifference nor where opposites are linked which require linkage for [their] Being, but rather (to repeat a phrase which has already been said) this is the secret of love, that it links such things of which each could exist for itself, yet does not and cannot exist without the other.*⁹⁶ For this reason as duality comes to be in the non-ground, love comes to be as well, linking that which exists (that which is ideal) with the ground for existence. But the ground remains free and independent from the word until the final, total separation. Then it dissolves itself, as the initial yearning does in man when he crosses over to clarity and, as an enduring being, grounds himself, in that everything true and good in this yearning is raised into bright consciousness; but everything else, namely, the false and unclean, is locked away forever in the darkness as the eternally dark ground of selfhood, as *caput mortuum* [lit: "dead head"; lifeless source] of his life process and as potency left behind that can never emerge into actuality [*zum Aktus*]. Then everything is subordinate to spirit. In spirit that which exists is one with the ground for existence; in it both really are present at the same time, or it is the absolute identity of both. Above spirit, however, is the initial non-ground that is no longer indifference (neutrality) and yet not the identity of both principles, but rather a general unity that is the same for all and yet gripped by nothing that is free from all and yet a beneficence acting in all, in a word, love, which is all in all. |

Whoever thus would want to say (as before): there is in this system one principle for everything; it is one and the same being that rules in the dark ground of nature and in eternal clarity, one and the same that effects the hardness and discreteness of things and unity and gentleness, the very same that reigns with the will of love in the

* "Aphorisms on Natural Philosophy," in the *Annals of Medicine as Science*. Vol. I, No. I. Aphor. 162, 163.

good and the will of wrath in evil—although he says that all entirely correctly, he should not forget that the one being divides itself in two sorts of being in its two ways of acting, that it is in one *merely* ground for existence and in the other merely being (and, for that reason only ideal); and, further, that only God as spirit is the absolute identity of both principles, but only because and to the degree that both are *subordinated* to his personality.⁹⁷ But whoever were to find an absolute identity of good and evil in this final, highest point of view, would show his complete ignorance in so far as good and evil absolutely do not form an original opposition, but least of all a duality. Duality is where two beings actually stand opposed to each other. Evil is, however, not a being, but rather a non-being [*Unwesen*] that has reality only in opposition and not in itself. Precisely for that reason absolute identity is prior to evil as well, because the latter can appear only in opposition to it. Hence, evil also cannot be grasped through absolute identity but is eternally excluded and cast out from it.*

Whoever finally would want to name this system pantheism, because all oppositions disappear considered simply in relation to the absolute, may also be granted this indulgence.[†]⁹⁸ We are pleased | to

* From this it is clear how unusual it is to demand that the opposition of good and evil be explained right away from the first principles. Admittedly, anyone must talk in this way who takes good and evil for a real duality and dualism for the most perfect system.

† No one can agree more than the author with the wish which Mr. Fr. Schlegel expresses in the *Heidelberg Annuals*, vol. 2, p. 242, that the unmanly pantheist fraud in Germany might cease, especially since Mr. S. also adds to it aesthetic delusion and conceit, and to the extent that | we may at the same time include in this swindle opinion as to the exclusively rational character of Spinozism. It is in fact very easy to arouse false opinion, even a fraud, in Germany where a philosophical system becomes the object of a literary industry, and so many, to whom nature has not granted understanding even for everyday things, believe themselves called to join in the philosophical endeavor [*mitphilosophieren*]. One can at least take comfort in the awareness of never having personally favored the fraud or encouraged it with helpful support, but rather of being able to say with Erasmus (as little else as one may have in common with him): *semper solus esse volui, nihilque pejus odi quam juratos et factiosos* [I always wanted to be alone, and nothing more did I hate than conspirators and factionists]. The author

allow to everyone their way of making the age and what it holds coherent. The name does not do it; it depends on the matter. The vanity of a polemic based on philosophical systems grasped in a general way against a specific one that can of course have numerous points in common with them and, hence, has been confused with all of them, but that has its own proper definitions in each particular point—we have already touched on the vanity of such a polemic in the introduction to this treatise. Thus it can be said succinctly that a system teaches the immanence of things in God; and yet, for example, nothing would be said thereby in regard to us even though it could not exactly be called untrue. For we have sufficiently shown that all natural beings have mere Being in the ground or in the initial yearning that has not yet achieved unity with the understanding, that they are therefore merely peripheral beings in relation to God. Only man is in God and capable of freedom exactly through this Being-in-God [*in-Gott-Sein*]. He alone is a being of the *centrum* [*ein Centralwesen*] and, for that reason, he should also remain in the *centrum*. All things are created in it just as God only accepts nature and ties it to himself through man. Nature is the first or old Testament, since things are still outside of the *centrum* and, hence, subject to the law. Man is the beginning of the new covenant through which as mediator, since he is himself tied to God, God (after the last division) also accepts nature and makes it into *himself*. Man is hence the redeemer of nature toward

has never wished through the founding of a sect to take away from others and, least of all, from himself the freedom of investigation in which he has declared himself still engaged and probably will always declare himself engaged. In the future, he will also maintain the course that he has taken in the present treatise where, even if the external form of a dialogue is lacking, everything arises as a sort of dialogue. Many things here could have been more sharply defined and treated less casually, many protected more explicitly from misinterpretation. The author has refrained from doing so partially on purpose. Whoever will and cannot accept it from him thus, should accept nothing from him at all and seek other sources. But perhaps unsolicited successors and opponents will grant this treatise the respect they showed the earlier, related text, *Philosophy and Religion*, through their total ignoring of it, to which the former were persuaded certainly less by the threatening words of the preface or the manner of presentation than by the content itself.

which all typology [*Vorbilder*] in nature aims. The word that is fulfilled in human beings is in nature as a dark, prophetic (not yet fully pronounced) word. Hence, the portents [*Vorbedeutungen*] that contain in themselves no interpretation and are explained only by man. Hence, the general finality⁹⁹ of causes that, likewise, becomes understandable only from this point of view. Whoever now overlooks or ignores all these intermediary definitions has no difficulty with refutation. Merely historical critique is in fact a comfortable matter. In the course of this, one need expend nothing of oneself, one's own capital, and can observe fittingly the *Caute, per Deos! incede, latet ignis sub cinere doloso* [Proceed with caution, by the gods!—fire hides under the treacherous ash].¹⁰⁰ But, in the course of this, arbitrary and untried presuppositions are unavoidable. Thus, in order to prove that there are only two manners of explaining evil—the dualistic, according to which there is assumed an evil fundamental being [*Grundwesen*], no matter with which modifications, under or next to the good one, and the Kabbalistic, according to which evil is explained through emanation and distancing—and that every other system therefore must abolish the distinction between good and evil; in order to prove this, nothing less would be required than the full power of a deeply thought-out and thoroughly developed philosophy. In a system, every concept has its definite place where it is alone valid and which also determines its meaning as well as its limitation. Whoever now does not examine the inner core [*das Innere*], but lifts only the most general concepts out of their context—how may he judge the whole correctly? Thus we have shown | the particular point of the system where the concept of indifference is indeed the only possible concept of the absolute. If it is now taken generally, the whole is distorted, and it also follows then that this system abolishes the personality of the highest being. We have been hitherto silent about this frequently heard accusation as about many others, but believe that we have established the first clear concept of personality in this treatise. In the non-ground or indifference there is admittedly no personality. But is the beginning point really the whole? Now we challenge those who have made such an accusation with ease to present us in contrast, according to their views, with even the most exiguous understanding [*das geringste Verständliche*] about this concept. Overall we find rather that they claim the personality of God is incomprehensible and in no way to be made understandable, and they are also entirely

right to do so in so far as they hold precisely those abstract systems in which all personality is utterly impossible for the only rationally consistent ones, which is also presumably the reason they attribute the like to anyone who does not condemn science and reason. By contrast, we are of the opinion that a clear, rational view must be possible precisely from the highest concepts in so far as only in this way can they really be our own, accepted in ourselves and eternally grounded. Indeed, we go even further and hold, with Lessing himself, that the development of revealed truths into truths of reason is simply necessary, if the human race is to be helped thereby.*,¹⁰¹ We are likewise convinced that reason is fully adequate to expose every possible error (in genuinely spiritual matters) and that the inquisitorial demeanor in the judgment of philosophical systems is entirely superfluous.† To transfer an absolute dualism of good and evil to history whereby either the one or the other principle prevails in all manifestations and works of the human spirit, whereby there are only two systems | and two religions, one absolutely good and another simply evil; further, the opinion that everything began in purity and simplicity and all subsequent developments (that were of course necessary in order to reveal the particular aspects contained in the first unity and thereby to reveal the unity fully itself) were only decay and falsification—while this whole view serves critique as a powerful sword of Alexander with which to chop the Gordian knot in two effortlessly everywhere, it introduces into history, however, a thoroughly illiberal and highly reductive point of view. There was a time that preceded this separation; and one worldview and religion which, although opposed to the absolute one, sprang forth from its own ground and not from a falsification of the first one.¹⁰² Paganism is, taken historically, as original as Christianity and, although only a ground and basis of something higher, it is not derived from anything else.

These reflections lead back to our point of beginning. A system that contradicts the most holy feelings, character and moral consciousness, can never be called, at least in this respect, a system of reason, but rather only one of non-reason [*Unvernunft*]. To the

* *Education of the Human Race*, Para. 76.

† Especially when on the other hand one wants to speak only of *viewpoints* [*Ansichten*], where one should be speaking of truths that alone tend toward salvation.

contrary, a system in which reason really recognized itself, would have to unify all demands of the spirit as well as those of the heart and those of the moral feeling as well as those of the most rigorous understanding. The polemic against reason and science does in fact allow for a certain elevated generality which dispenses with exact concepts so that we can guess more easily its intentions than its definite meaning. However, we fear that even if we did fathom its definite meaning, we would not come upon anything extraordinary. For, no matter how high we place reason, we do not believe, for example, that anyone may be virtuous or a hero or generally a great human being on the basis of pure reason, indeed, not even, according to the familiar phrase, that the human race can be propagated by it.¹⁰³ Only in personality is there life, and all personality rests on a dark ground that indeed must therefore be the ground of cognition as well. But it is only the understanding that develops what is hidden and contained in this ground | merely *potentialiter* [potentially] and raises it to actuality [*zum Aktus*]. This can only occur through division, thus through science and dialectic, of which we are convinced that they alone will hold fixed and bring permanently to cognition the system which has been there more often than we think but has always again slipped away, hovering before us and not yet fully grasped by anyone. As in life we actually have faith only in powerful understanding and most frequently miss all tender feeling in those who always show off their feelings, so selfhood, having reduced things merely to feeling, also cannot win in us any trust where one is dealing with truth and cognition. Feeling is glorious if it remains in the ground, but it is not so when it steps into daylight, wanting to make itself into a being and to rule. If, according to Franz Baader's striking views, the drive to know is most analogous with the reproductive drive,^{*,104} then there is something in cognition analogous to discipline and shame and, conversely, also a lack of discipline and shamelessness, a kind of faun-like appetite that samples everything without the seriousness and without the love to build or shape something. The bond of our personality is spirit, and if only the active linking of both principles can become creative and productive [*erzeugend*], then inspiration in the genuine sense is the active principle of every productive [*erzeugenden*] and

* One should see the treatise on this matter in the *Annals for Medicine*, Vol. III, No. 1, p. 113.

formative art or science. Every inspiration expresses itself in a definite way; and thus there is also one that expresses itself through a dialectical artistic drive, a genuinely scientific inspiration. For that reason there is also a dialectical philosophy that, defined as science, is distinctly separate, for example, from poetry and religion, and something that stands entirely for itself but is not identical with everything possible in turn, one after another, as those claim who presently labor to blend everything with everything else in so many writings. It is said that reflection is hostile to the idea [*Idee*]; but it is exactly the highest triumph of truth that it may emerge victorious from the most extreme division | and separation. Reason is in man that which, according to the mystics, the *primum passivum* [first passivity] or initial wisdom is in God in which all things are together and yet distinct, identical and yet free each in its own way.¹⁰⁵ Reason is not activity, like spirit, nor is it the absolute identity of both principles of cognition, but rather indifference; the measure and, so to speak, the general place of truth, the peaceful site in which primordial wisdom is received, in accordance with which, as if looking away toward the archetype [*Urbild*], understanding should develop. On the one hand, philosophy receives its name from love, as the general inspiring principle, on the other hand, from this original wisdom which is her genuine goal.

If the dialectical principle, that is, the understanding which is differentiating but thereby organically ordering and shaping things in conjunction with the archetype by which it steers itself, is withdrawn from philosophy so that it no longer has in itself either measure or rule, then nothing else is left to philosophy but to orient itself historically and to take the *tradition* as its source and plumb line to which it had recourse earlier with a similar result. Then it is time, as one intended to ground our poetry through acquaintance with the literature [*Dichtungen*] of all nations, to seek for philosophy a historical norm and basis as well. We harbor the greatest respect for the profound significance of historical research and believe we have shown that the *almost* general opinion that man only gradually raised himself up from the dullness of animal instinct to reason is not our own.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless we believe that the truth may lie closer and that we should seek solutions for the problems that trouble our time first in ourselves and on our own territory before we turn to such distant sources. The time of purely historical belief is past, if the possibility

of immediate cognition is granted [*gegeben*]. We have an older revelation than any written one—nature. The latter contains a typology [*Vorbilder*] that no man has yet interpreted, whereas the written one received its fulfillment and interpretation long ago. If the understanding of this unwritten revelation were made manifest, the only true system of religion and science would appear not in the poorly assembled state of a few philosophical and critical concepts, but rather at once in the full brilliance of truth and nature. It is not the time to rouse old oppositions once again, but rather to seek that which lies outside of, and beyond, all opposition.

The present treatise will be followed by a series of others in which the entirety of the ideal part of philosophy will gradually be presented.

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SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The purpose of the following supplementary texts is to provide a selection of important texts that we think offer a useful background to the *Philosophical Investigations* but are not readily available in English translation; indeed, we believe that the text from Baader is made available in English here for the first time. We have organized these texts around two broad conceptual streams that have a major impact on both the conceptual and rhetorical structure of the *Philosophical Investigations*. The first of these may be referred to as the “theosophical” stream while the second deals with the tension between reason and revelation that emerged with greatest clarity in the so-called *Pantheismusstreit* of the 1780s but which was preceded and prefigured by Lessing’s earlier polemic with Goeze of which Lessing’s enigmatic text, “A Parable,” is but one notable product. While the texts are merely a selection—others could have been chosen to fulfill the same purpose—we believe that they are well-suited for this purpose both due to their brevity and considerable concentration of thought.

Theosophical Texts

Under this grouping we include two texts, one by Jacob Boehme, the other by Franz Xaver von Baader.

Jacob Boehme (1575–1624) is one of the most important figures in the German tradition of speculative mysticism, and he had a tremendous influence not only on Schelling but on a veritable pantheon of German thinkers from Leibniz to Hegel. The text we include here in its entirety, the *Mysterium Pansophicum* (1620), gives a compressed overview of Boehme’s erotically charged mystical thought while presenting in its own highly specific context a concept that has major importance for the *Philosophical Investigations*, the “non-ground.”¹

Franz Xaver von Baader (1765–1841) was a contemporary of Schelling and one of the latter’s closer associates after his relocation to Munich in 1806. There seems to have been a rather intense intellectual collaboration between the two, of which the text included here, “On the Assertion that There Can Be No Wicked Use of Reason” (1807), would seem to provide ample evidence. This text affirms one of the crucial aspects of the *Philosophical Investigations*, its emphasis on evil not as a deficiency or surrender to sensuality, to the “animal” in man, but rather as very much a positive force, one that expresses a perverse “humanization” of ostensibly animal ends through the supposed perfections of man, foremost among which is the “heavenly light” of reason.

Pantheism Texts

Under this grouping we include four texts, one each by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and Johann Gottfried Herder and two by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi.

These texts all center around an issue of great complexity and amplitude in late eighteenth-century German thought, the authority of reason and, more generally, the authority of reason in relation to faith, the notorious contest between Athens and Jerusalem, revived by the propagation of Enlightenment ideals among German thinkers in the latter half of the eighteenth century. This contest plays an extremely important role in Schelling’s philosophical thought and in the *Philosophical Investigations* since, despite all misleading appearances, Schelling never sought to abandon the authority of reason for revelation and, in this respect, became one of Jacobi’s most ferocious critics. Rather, when Schelling seeks to defend system, as he does in the *Philosophical Investigations*, he is seeking to defend reason against its enemies and, of course, against its most formidable enemy, evil, which could be said to draw more to revelation and disgust with reason than any other fact of human life—this is the sense in which Schelling’s defense of reason is also very much a theodicy of reason.

We have included a remarkable text by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781) called “The Parable” (1778). As noted previously, this text forms part of a larger polemic with the orthodox Lutheran pastor

Johann Melchior Goeze, the senior representative of the Hamburg clergy, over the authority of the Bible. In essence, the argument turned on the fundamental question of whether the Bible reveals truths that are unassailable by reason because they are revealed or not. Lessing took the side of reason, suggesting that the Bible could be criticized on a rational basis without necessarily undermining faith, that objections against the Bible were not in themselves objections against faith but that some standard (namely, a rational one) of critique was necessary—here Lessing’s choice was for rational, natural theology and not revelation, for a way of reading the Bible more closely (if covertly) linked to Spinoza’s *Theological-Political Treatise*. Among other things, “The Parable” reflects this critique and the dangers of revelation whose tyrannical inconstancy may entail very dangerous consequences for the “quite exceptional architecture” of the whole.

In this sense, “The Parable” represents the kernel of a rationalist critique of the emphasis on revelation, the “leap of faith” or *salto mortale* that marks the contribution to German thought of Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743–1819). The two texts we include here, excerpts from Jacobi’s famous book, *On the Doctrine of Spinoza in Letters to Mr. Moses Mendelssohn* (1785), and from additions made to the second edition of the same book, which appeared in 1789, give a reasonably clear indication of Jacobi’s position and suggest his importance for Schelling as an opponent to be overcome.

Jacobi’s book relates several conversations with Lessing, whom Jacobi had met in 1780, and, in doing so, it intentionally suggests that Lessing was a Spinozist. This suggestion was shocking and disorienting for Jacobi’s contemporaries; it launched one of the great intellectual tumults of the late eighteenth century, the so-called *Pantheismstreit* or the “pantheism debate,” which engaged all the foremost minds of that extraordinarily fecund period including Goethe, Kant, Hamann, and Herder.² This revelation had such force because in the peculiar milieu of late eighteenth-century German intellectual life, “Spinozism” meant “Pantheism,” which in turn meant a rationalist atheism. The debate over Lessing’s adherence to Spinozism or pantheism became a debate over the authority of reason and, ultimately, a debate over the value of Enlightenment that in various mutations and different terms has continued practically unabated down to the present day. One of Schelling’s more remarkable exhibitions of intellectual virtuosity are his opening comments in the *Philosophical*

Investigations on the concept of pantheism where he develops—in avowed opposition to Spinoza—a concept of rationality that has much to do with his philosophy of nature; this concept emphasizes dynamic tension and interplay, the constant activity of opposed forces, a dialectic rather than axiomatic model of rationality.

In this respect, we thought it appropriate to provide a brief excerpt from Johann Gottfried Herder’s *God. Some Conversations* (1787) as the final one in this group. Herder (1744–1803) wrote this text as his rather late entry into the pantheism debate. This excerpt exemplifies Herder’s organic and dynamic sense of the structure of the whole, a way of characterizing the whole that is everywhere evident in Schelling; it also provides an important backdrop to the fundamental relation between ground and existence which is so central to the *Philosophical Investigations* and which Schelling claims to have derived from the natural philosophy of his day, that is, from his own earlier work in that area. Moreover, we chose an excerpt from Herder because his considerable influence on Schelling has been relatively undervalued.³

JACOB BOEHME

Mysterium Pansophicum
Or Thorough Report on the Earthly
*and Heavenly Mysterium*¹

The First Text

Summaries

The eternal ground of magia forms in itself since there is nothing, para.

The non-ground is an eternal nothing but forms an eternal beginning as a craving [*Sucht*]. For the nothing is a craving for something. And since there is also nothing that may give something, the craving is itself the giving of that which is indeed also a nothing as merely a desiring [*begehrende*] craving. And that is the eternal primal state of *magia* which forms in itself since there is nothing. It forms something from nothing, and that just in itself and, since indeed the same craving is also a nothing as only a mere will, the will has nothing and is also nothing that may give itself something; and it has also no place where it could find or rest itself.

The Second Text

Summaries

The nothing is a craving, that forms in itself the will to something, para.

- 1. The will, however, is a spirit and a magus and is caused by the craving,*
- 2. whence nature and the spirit of nature is to be conceived [*ersinnen*],*
- 3.*

Whereas a craving thus exists now in nothing, it makes the will into something for itself. And the same will is a spirit as a thought that

sets forth from craving and is the craving's seeker, for the will finds its mother as the craving. Now, the same will is a *magus* in its mother, since it found something in the nothing as its mother. And because it found its mother, it now has a dwelling place.

2. And understand herein how the will is a spirit and different from desiring craving. For the will is an insentient and unknowing life, but the craving is found by the will and is a being [*Wesen*] in the will. Now it is recognized that the craving is a *magia* and the will is a *magus*, and that the will is larger than its mother who gives it. For the will is the master in the mother, and the mother is recognized as silent and the will as a life without origin; and because indeed the craving is a cause of the will but without cognition and understanding, and the will is the craving's understanding.

3. Thus we briefly present nature and the spirit of nature—what has been eternally without primal state—for you to consider and find thus that the will as the spirit has no place for its rest; but the craving is its own place and the will is bound to it and yet is also not held fast [*ergriffen*].

The Third Text

Summaries

The will is the eternal omnipotence and rules over the craving and governs the life of craving, paras. 1, 2. The eternal will-spirit is God, 3, 4.

Whereas the eternal will is thus free from the craving, and the craving is, however, not free from the will, for the will rules over the craving; thus we recognize the will as the eternal omnipotence. For it has no equal; and though the craving is in fact an arousal of attraction or desire, it is, however, without understanding, and it has a life but without intelligence.

2. Now the will governs the life of craving and acts on the life as it sees fit. And if the will does something it is yet not recognized until the same being reveals itself with the will, that it becomes a being in the will's life; thus is recognized what the will has formed.

3. And we thus recognize the eternal will-spirit as God and the stirring life of the craving as nature. For there is nothing prior, and both

are without beginning; and each is the cause for the other and an eternal bond.

4. And thus is the spirit of the will an eternal knowledge of the non-ground, and the life of the craving an eternal being of the will.

The Fourth Text

Summaries

The craving is a desiring, para. 1. and desiring is an attracting, 2. The will takes, since nothing is, and becomes pregnant, 3. and gives birth in itself, 4. namely, a word or echo, 5. and inaugurates the intelligible life of magia, 6. The threefold spirit is its master: the word its residence, 7, 8. and stands in the middle as a heart, ibid. Thus is God and nature from eternity, 9.

Whereas the craving is thus desire and the same desire is a life, then the same desiring life goes forward within the craving, and is always pregnant with the craving.

2. And desire is an austere attraction and yet has nothing but itself as the eternity without ground; now it conceives magically as its own desire toward substance.

3. For the will takes now, since nothing is; it is master and possessor, it is itself not a being [*Wesen*] and yet rules in the being. And the being makes the will desirous [*begehrend*], namely of the being. And thus the will then becomes desirous in itself, it is thus magical and impregnates itself as with spirit without being, for it is in the primal state only spirit. Thus it makes in its *imagination* only spirit and becomes pregnant with spirit as the eternal knowing [*Wissenheit*] of the non-ground, in omnipotence of the life without being.

4. And thus the will is then pregnant, the act of giving birth happens in itself and lives in itself. For the life-essence of the other cannot take hold of this impregnation and cannot be its holder. Therefore, the impregnation must happen in itself and be its own holder as a son in eternal spirit.

5. And because this impregnation has no being, so it is a voice or an echo as a word of spirit, and it remains in the primal state of spirit, for it otherwise has no residence other than in the primal state of spirit.

6. And a will is still in this word, a will that wants to go out into a being, and the same will is the original will's life, which goes out from the giving birth as from the mouth of will into the life of *magia* as into nature. And the will inaugurates the unintelligible life of *magia*—that it is a *mysterium*—because an understanding lies essentially within and receives therefore an essential spirit, since every essence is an *arcanum* or a *mysterium* of a whole being. And therefore the will exists in the concept as an unfathomable miracle of eternity, since many lives are born without number; and yet everything together is just one being [*Ein Wesen*].

7. And the threefold spirit without being is its master and possessor, and since it does not possess the nature-being it thus lives in itself.

8. The word is its *centrum* or residence and stands in the middle as a heart. And the spirit of the word—which originally came into being in the first will—inaugurates [*eröffnet*] the miracles of the essential life, that there are thus two *mysteria*: one in the spirit-life and one in the essential life. And the spirit-life is recognized as God and also rightly so called; and the essential life is recognized as nature-life, which would have no understanding if the spirit or the spirit-life were not desiring, in which desiring the divine being as the eternal word and heart of God is always and eternally born, and from which the desiring will goes out eternally as its spirit into the nature-life and in all of this inaugurates the *mysterium* from the essences [*Essentien*] and in the essences, so that there are thus two lives and also two beings from and in one united, eternal, and unfathomable original condition.

9. And thus we recognize what God and nature is, how both exist from eternity without united ground and beginning, for it is always an eternally lasting beginning. It begins always and from eternity in eternity, since there is no number, for it is the non-ground.

The Fifth Text

Summaries

The spirit-life stands within and the nature-life without, para. 1. and is compared to a round sphere, 2. that, accordingly, two principia are in one eternal primal state, 3. and the eternal essence contains it, 4. Good and evil originate from the imagination into the great mysterium, 5. as is to be seen in the creatures of this world, 6. From the mirror arises the op-

position, 7. which makes creatures creaturely, 8. With creation is fury [Grimm] brought into motion, 9. that the eternal nature wants to abandon, 10.

Whereas two beings have thus been from eternity, we cannot say that one stands next to the other and takes hold of itself, that one seizes the other, and we also cannot say that one stands outside of the other and that there is by no means a parting. But rather we thus recognize that the spirit-life stands turned inward into itself and the nature-life stands turned outward from and before itself.

2. Thus we compare it to a round sphere-wheel that moves on all sides as the wheel in Ezekiel indicates.

3. And the spirit-life is a complete fullness of the nature-life and it is yet not seized by the nature-life, and these are two *principia* in one united primal state since each has its *mysterium* and its effect. For the nature-life works toward the fire, and the spirit-life toward the light of *gloria* and magnificence. Since we then understand in the fire the fury of the consumption of nature's essence, and in the light the birth of the water that takes away the force from the fire as it is set out earlier in the *Forty Questions on the Souls*.

4. And thus is recognizable to us an eternal essence of nature, similar to water and fire that are thus equally mixed with each other, since it gives a light blue color similar to the flash of fire. Since it then has a shape as a ruby mixed with crystals in one being; or as yellow, white, red, blue mixed in dark water, since it is as blue in green, since each has therefore in fact its gloss and shines. And the water thus repels only their fire so that there is nowhere consumption but rather an eternal being in two mysteries within each other and still the difference of two principles as two different lives.

5. And thus we understand in this the being of all beings, and subsequently that it is a magical being since it can create a will in the essential life for itself, and it thus can enter into a birth and revive a source in the great *mysterium*, especially in the original condition of fire that was not revealed before but rather was hidden in the *mysterium* as a gleam [*Glast*] in the plenitude of colors; we have from this a mirror of the devils and of malice and, thus, we also recognize whence all things, evil and good, originate, namely from the *imagination* into the great *mysterium*, since a miraculous essentialistic [*essentialistisch*] life gives birth to itself.

6. As we have from this a sufficient knowledge about the creatures of this world, that the divine life once aroused and revived the nature-life, how it gave birth to such miraculous creatures from the essentialistic *mysterium*, thus one understands, then, how every *essentia* has turned into a *mysterium* as into a life, and [one] also (understands further) how in the great *mysterium* there is thus a magical craving so that the craving of every essence makes a mirror in order to spot and recognize itself in the mirror.

7. And since the craving thereupon seizes it (understand here the mirror) and guides it into its *imagination*, and finds that it is not part of its life, thus arise repulsiveness and revulsion so that the craving wants to throw away the mirror but is also not able to do so. Thus the craving now seeks the purpose of the beginning and goes out from the mirror, thus the mirror is broken and the breaking is a *turba* [disruption/discordance] as a dying of the seized life.

8. And it is known well to us how the *imagination* of the eternal nature has thus the *turba* in the craving, in the *mysterium*, but how it is impossible to wake it up unless the creature as the mirror of eternity should wake it up itself as the fury that lies hidden in eternity in the *mysterium*.

9. And we see here, as the eternal nature moved and aroused itself with the creation of the world, that the fury was aroused with it and revealed itself also in creatures, as one then finds many evil animals, also herbs and trees as well as worms, toads, snakes, and the like. Since eternal nature carries a revulsion for this, malice and poison are nurtured in the fury's essence alone.

10. And eternal nature seeks therefore also the purpose of malice and wants to leave it, since eternal nature falls then into *turba* as into dying, yet this is not a dying but rather a spewing out into the *mysterium*, since malice with its life should reside separately as in a darkness. For nature abandons and overshadows it so that it therefore resides in itself as an evil, poisonous, and furious *mysterium*, and itself is its own *magia* as a craving of the poisonous fear [*Angst*].

The Sixth Text

Summaries

The repulsiveness is in the creature, para. 1, 2. Whence arises all violence in this world, 3. The multiplicity seeks oneness, 4. For one Lord

should govern the whole world, 5. then the driver will be sought out, 6. in the 6,000th year, 7. in the day of the accomplished creation, 8. namely, at noon on the sixth day, 9.

Whereas we recollect and come to know ourselves, we now find the repulsiveness of all beings since each one is the loathing of the other and hostile to the other.

2. For each will desires a purity in the other being without *turba*, but itself possesses the *turba* in itself and is also the loathing of the other. Now, the power of the larger being overcomes that of the smaller and constrains it, unless the latter then flees from the former; the strong otherwise rules over the weak, thus the weak runs and seeks the purpose of the driver and wants to be free from the constraint. And thus the purpose that stays hidden in the *mysterium* is sought by all creatures.

3. And all violence of the world originates due to and from this so that each one rules over the other; and violence was not called for or ordered by the highest good but rather grew from the *turba*, since it afterward recognized nature as its being that was born from nature and enacted the law to give birth to itself further within the established regime. Since, then, this giving birth thus ascended to royal status and thus sought further the abyss as oneness, until it became *monarchia* as empire. And thus it is still ascending and wants to be oneness and not multiple, and even if it is in [the] multiple the first growth—from which everything is born—it wants to rule everything and wants to be a lord over all regimes.

4. And while the same craving was one regime in the beginning but over time divided itself according to the essences into the multiple. Thus the multiplicity seeks again the ONE [*das EINE*] and is born for sure in the sixth number of crowns as in the 6,000th year of the figure. Not at the end but rather at that hour of the day when the creation of miracles was completed.

5. That is: since the miracles of the *turba* remain at the end, a lord is born who governs the whole world but with many functions.

6. And the self-grown authority and the driver will be sought everywhere. For the smaller, which was inferior, reached the purpose with it. Now, each one divides itself; for it has reached its purpose and there is no staying or repealing.

7. Thus the *turba* as the fury of all creatures is also sought, for it also reached the purpose of the creatures together with the loathing,

and the *turba* is now revealed in the role of the purpose amid the crown-number, in the 6,000th year, a little over but not under.

8. On that day and hour when the creation was accomplished in the *mysterium*, and was posited into the *mysterium* (as a mirror of eternity) and into the miracles.

9. This happens on the sixth day at noon, there the *mysterium* with the miracles stands revealed and is seen and known [*erkannt*]. Then the purity will drive out the *turba* for a time until the beginning enters into the end, thereupon the *mysterium* is a miracle in figures.

The Seventh Text

Summaries

A magic awoke the other through lust, para. 1. where evil is revealed at the same time, 2. Everything grew without deliberation, the colors as well, 3. as blue, red, green, yellow; white belongs to God, 4, 5. Herein we find the tree of tongues with four alphabets, there lies the nature-language, 6. as the first alphabet and the root in all languages; ibid. thereafter the Hebrew, 7. the Greek, 8. and the Latin, 9. In all alphabets God's spirit is revealed, 10. They originate from the colors of the great mysterium and divide themselves in seventy-seven languages, 11. as [it] is known from the tower of Babel, 12. where every language entered into itself within its own reason, 13. from this the turba has grown, 14, 15.

Whereas such an *arcanum* is laid within the *mysterium* of the eternal nature from which all creatures are born and created good and evil. Thus we recognize it as a magical being since each *magia* awoke the other through lust and brought it into being, as then everything raised itself and guided itself into the highest power. For the spirit of God is not a creator in nature but rather one who reveals and seeks the good.

2. Thus evil as by magical craving has always sought and found itself in the *mysterium*, and it is revealed at the same time without God's intention. For the fury is a severity and reigns over foolishness.

3. Thus everything grew from its own tree without deliberation. For the first revealer, as God, did not command malice into the regime, but rather reason and intelligence, which were supposed to reveal the

miracles and become a guide for life. And everywhere we encounter the great secret, as it has been laid in the *mysterium* for eternity, as the *mysterium* with its colors, which are four. And the fifth color is not property of the *mysterium* of nature but rather of the *mysterium* of the deity, which color shines in the *mysterium* of nature as a living light.

4. And these are the colors, since everything lies within: as (1) blue, (2) red, (3) green, and (4) yellow, and the fifth as white belongs to God, but also has its gleam in nature. But the latter is the fifth *essentia*, a pure immaculate child as it is devised in gold and silver, as well as in a white, bright crystal-stone that persists even in fire.

5. For the fire is the test [*proba*] of all colors in which none persists except for the white color because it is a gleam of God's majesty. (The black color does not belong to the *mysterium* but it is rather the cover as the darkness, since all lies within.)

6. Also, we find herein the tree of tongues as that of languages, with four alphabets, as one described with the characters of the *mysterium* in which lies the nature-language that is the root in all languages. And, in the spawn of multiplicity (or of the many languages), it is yet not recognized except by its own children to whom the *mysterium* itself gives understanding because it is a miracle of God. (This alphabet of the nature-language lies in the black color hidden under all others, for the black color does not belong to the number of colors, it is *mysterium* and not understood, except by him who possesses the nature-language, to whom it is revealed by the spirit of God.)

7. And the other alphabet is the Hebrew, which reveals the *mysterium* and names the tree with the branches and twigs.

8. The third is the Greek, which names the tree with the fruit and all ornament, which first rightly proclaims intelligence [*Witze*].

9. The fourth is the Latin, which benefits many peoples and tongues and proclaims the tree with its strength and virtue.

10. And the fifth is God's spirit, which is the revealer of all alphabets. And no man may learn this same alphabet, [until] it reveal itself in the human-spirit.

11. Thus these alphabets originate from the colors of the great *mysterium* and divide themselves further into seventy-seven languages in all, since we only recognize five as the main languages and seventy-two for the miracles in which Babel is understood, as a mouth of a confounded being. Hence rationality abandoned its guide and wanted to go alone and ascend to the *mysterium*.

12. Such is recognized through the children of Nimrod in the tower of Babel, since they fell from God's obedience into their own reason. Thus they lost their guide and confounded reason so that they did not grasp their own language.

13. Thus many languages grew as seventy-two from the confounded Babel, and each entered into itself and sought intelligence: each into its own reason and malice. For they left God and became pagans; and God allowed them to go in their miracles, for they did not want to follow Him, but rather wanted to be their own growth, and their own reason (which was yet mixed with all colors) was supposed to govern them.

14. Now the *turba* was born so that they were not of one mind. For each wanted to live from his color but these were not the right main colors, but rather their evil, self-hatched children who hatched themselves in reason. And they wandered without the true guide who created everything in one tongue and did not reveal more than one; one tree with the branches and strength together with the fruit.

15. Then the four alphabets lie in one tree and proceed the one from the other, but the multitude of languages must use their characters as occupants, but also want to be their own and all sprout against the tree.

The Eighth Text

Summaries

Thus there are two different religions, para. 1. and Babel is in both, 2. They mouth hypocritical flattery of God, 3. the magus is plenitude, a devourer, 4. and does not stand in the free will of God; 5. it is an idol and gives birth to falsity, 6. from which a parting from God, 7, 8. Thus were two different kinds of pagans: (1) that remained in their magia, 9. and (2) that lived in the flesh and sought war, 10, 11. The Jews were also the same, 12. and precisely thus is the antichrist's birth, since two empires dwell in one people at the same time that do not allow themselves to mix with each other in the inner spirit, 13. The antichrist is in all houses; the worst is, however, the crowned whore and her baptismal fathers, 14. The other part of God's free will are the righteous children of God, 15. and they are free from Babel and antichrist, 16.

Thus we now see the origin of two different religions from which Babel was born an idol, and that in the pagans and Jews.

2. For Babel is in both, and they are two races in one. One that proceeds by reason (as from the nature-life and spirit) and strives to raise itself. This makes for it a path in its being, for its will emanates from its own craving and seeks its *magia* as a large number for its regime, a multiplicity, and it proceeds simply from itself. Its will remains in its multiplicity and is its multiplicity's god and guide.

3. And if the free will of God confronts and punishes it, the idol only mouths hypocritical flattery of the free will as the spirit of God, and honors its own will in the number of multiplicity. For the same will is born from its treasure as from its *magia*. It does not gasp the free will of God and for that reason it is born from flesh and blood, from its own nature, and is a child of this world, and takes its treasure for its love. Thus it is now a hypocrite and a confounded Babel. For the numbers of the multiplicity as its own *magia* confound it so that it proceeds from one number into many. Now this multiplicity is a confounded Babel and its mouth hypocritical so that it offers good words to the spirit of unity and praises often, but is an antichrist and a liar. For it speaks differently and acts differently, its heart is a craving and its heart's spirit has turned into the craving.

4. Thus the *magus* of the multiplicity is a proud, malignant, covetous, malicious devourer and a spirit from the desiring multiplicity, and is a false idol. It does not follow the free will of nature—the one who controls the power of the miracles—and has no understanding in the divine *mysterium*. For it does not follow the same spirit with its will: thus, its will would otherwise be turned into freedom, God's spirit would reveal its magical *mysterium* and its miracles and works would stand with its will in God.

5. But now they proceed from themselves in this manner, the beginning seeks the end, and the midpoint is the *turba*. For it does not stand in the free will of God, but rather it grows from itself and raises itself as a proud tree.

6. And thus God is then only united in the will and is united in the eternal desire as in the eternal *magia*, so that the craving of the eternal *magia* thus surrenders itself then into the eternal will and draws its life from it. Thus the will (which originates from birth as one who is a rebel) is a perjured whore. For then it is a bearer of the falsehood and does not follow the free will.

7. And we understand in all of this a parting from God, since Lucifer—who made the *magia* of nature false-craving—is a cause of all of this. And thus in this, two eternal lives will be born, one in God’s will and the other in the will of the devil and fury. And that is Babel with the antichrist on earth.

8. Everything proceeding from God’s will into its own will belongs to Babel, you see that in the Jews and pagans, as well as in all peoples.

9. The pagans remained in their own *magia*. But those that went out from the craving for decay into the light of nature, because they did not know God and lived in purity, those were the children of free will, and the spirit of freedom revealed in them great miracles in their *mysterium* as is to be seen from the wisdom they left behind.

10. The others, however, as they lived only in their own magical will, lived from their own flesh and blood, their will drowned in the *turba*; and the *turba* poured forth in its will and provided them a spirit according to the essences of covetousness and furiousness. They only sought the number of multiplicity as lordly fiefdoms and kingdoms.

11. And when the *turba* could not advance further because of force, it thus became furious and started strife and war, and from this originates war as from the arrogance and covetousness of the multiplicity. And it belongs with its number to the *mysterium* of fury.

12. The Jews were the same. God revealed himself to them but they also followed two wills: one part followed the commandment to be judged with their will in God’s will and as the patriarchs and all the hopefully devout [*Hoffer*] of Israel, the others did [*thäten*] with their hands the works of the law and followed with their wills their poisoned *magia* as their covetousness and they sought only their number in multiplicity. Their mouth was a Jew and the heart a whore of Babel, a hypocrite and antichrist with good words and a false, covetous heart.

13. And thus the whore of Babel resides in Christianity and in all peoples with the antichrist, since two empires exist at the same time in one people. And both do not allow themselves to be mixed in the inner spirit so that they would become one, like clay and iron do not mix. They mix surely in the body but their spirits are two races as the prophet Daniel said in 2:43.

14. For that reason, he who wants to know the antichrist should indeed seek him: he will find the antichrist in all houses. But the worst is the crowned whore; and her baptismal fathers, who lifted her from

the baptism in prostitution (so that they might also live in the number of the multiplicity), are the barkers [*Schreyer*] who bring about many wills from the united will of God so that only they may inherit the number of the multiplicity and fatten their earthly bellies.

15. And the other part of God's free will proceeds with its magical will from itself into freedom as into the united ungraspable will of God—they stand turned backward in the magical figure. Their life seeks bread and goes forward, and their will is not in bread, but rather proceeds from itself, from the craving, into God. And they live with the will in God, in one number; they are the children of the eternal, true *magia*. For God's spirit lives in their will and reveals the eternal miracles of God and their life-spirit reveals the miracles of this world.

16. And they are free from Babel and antichrist, even if they were to fall into his lap. For the true image of God remains in the will-spirit that is born from the soul-spirit.

The Ninth Test

Summaries

How there are two magiae: thus there are also two spirits that lead them, para. 1. It must be in earnest to tame the astral-spirit, for it is not an easy thing to become a child of God, 2. that is what antichrist presents himself falsely as being, 3. Therefore the world may see itself in these writings, 4, 5. For Babel already burns and its empire goes toward its end, hallelujah! 6.

Whereas two *magiae* exist in one another thus there are also two *magi* that guide them as two spirits. One is God's spirit and the other is the reason-spirit in which the devil exerts himself, and in God's spirit the love of unity exerts itself. And man cannot test himself better than when he notices earnestly where his desire and lust drive him. Man has this earnestness as his guide, and he is also its child. Thus he has nevertheless the power to break and change the same will, because he is magical and has the power to do so.

2. But this must be in earnest, for man must tame the astral-spirit that rules in him. To this belongs a soberly calm life with constant reimmersion [*Einwerfung*] into God's will. For neither wisdom nor art is able

to restrain the astral-source, but rather the moderation of life with constant withdrawal from influence. The *elementa* always thrust the astral-craving into will for them. Thus it is not an easy thing to become a child of God. It takes great labor with much effort and suffering.

3. And still the antichrist is allowed to call himself God's child. But Christ says: Not everyone will enter into the kingdom of heaven who says to me, Lord, Lord, have we not through your name cast out demons, and through your name done many deeds? But He says to them: Go away from me, you stinking goats, I do not know you, Matt. 7:22. You did it from the false *magia* and were never recognized in my spirit and will. You are goats, tyrants, misers, courtiers, and voluptuaries in your spiritual figure; you called out my name but sacrificed your heart to voluptuousness and to the flesh, and you were born in the *turba*. You must be proven by fire; thus in every empire, its fruit comes home.

4. Therefore, you beautiful world, observe yourself in these writings that have provided the eternal ground for you, and thus consider the ground deeper and further; or you will be caught in your *turba*. Hence, you should walk with your being through God's fire and everything that is a work outside of God's will should remain in the fire.

5. However, what is born in God's will should honor God and stand for his miraculous deed and for the human-image as eternal joy.

6. Now mind what you do! Because Babel is already in flames and catching fire; there is no putting out the fire [*kein Löschen*] anymore and also no medicine. She has been recognized as evil and her empire is going toward its end. Hallelujah!

END

FRANZ XAVER VON BAADER

“ON THE ASSERTION THAT THERE CAN BE NO WICKED USE OF REASON”¹

*Le mal n'est pas une histoire, c'est une puissance.*²

Every drive already possesses its own wisdom, its own understanding or, as the ancients said, its wit (every craving has its own cunning) and is therefore an artistic drive. This applies in fact just as well to the drive of animals as to the drive of man as a living creature superior to animals. Now, if one wished to designate the understanding of animals as understanding purely in terms of their self-understanding in regard to their animal-purpose [*Thierzweck*] and wished to designate reason as the understanding of animals or their self-understanding toward their higher purpose, then this might pass muster only insofar as, on the one hand, one did not have the use of language against oneself—which however certainly seems to be the case here where, for example, “a reasoning Christian in conflict with an unreasoning devil” would be expressions that (language use) would in no way sanction—and insofar as, on the other hand, one reminded oneself that the genuine and original (autonomous) driving and leading force of animals does not reside in but rather within, that is, above, them. This is not the case for man of whom one says just because of this—namely because the understanding resides in him—that only he, and not the animal, has understanding. Now, if one wished further, and through applying the preceding limitation of both words’ meaning (understanding and reason), to describe by them the essence or non-essence of human corruptness at its root, so that one might say: man in giving up reason would become merely the understanding animal and come *en niveau* with the latter, whereas reason is something incorruptible in him, and

of reason itself there can be no wicked use,* then, through these assertions, one would not merely have language use but also the matter's nature itself against oneself. Admittedly, it would be desirable that the corruptness in man would only go so far, namely to pure—guilt-free—becoming-animal. But this is not the case. Man can unfortunately only stand above or under animals and, even after having fallen below animals, he strives nonetheless to rule them from bottom up according to his disposition and for his purpose—as he actually should rule them from top down—and to misuse them.† Also, the animal in or about

* See “On Learned Societies, their Character and Purpose. Read During the Ceremonial Renewal of the Royal Academy of the Sciences at Munich in 1807,” p. 51 of Jacobi's *Works* VI, 59. The author expressed himself differently on this subject in his earlier writings, asserting that reason was absolutely not light but rather no more than the eye. As a matter of fact, one could speak in such a way of the health in man that would never become sick in him and would therefore be incorruptible.

† Exactly here lies the source of the very old misunderstanding. Namely, that according to which one noticed that the spirit that turned evil comes to stand under the animal and loses its freedom with respect to the animal. Therefore, one immediately drew the conclusion that this service to the animal itself was evil. Now, shackles and prisons do not turn the criminal into one and are only consequences and witnesses of his wrongdoing. All the beautiful and edifying admonitions and sermons of most of the older and newer moral philosophers to man, “that he, in view of his dignity, should never serve the animal” and so on, seem to me for that reason often no different than as if I were to hear the wrongdoers that are imprisoned under lock and key shouting to each other that they should not like to serve their prison guards so slavishly, and so forth. The same is true of the declamations on bourgeois slavery, because this outward slavery presupposes that inward, earlier, slavery already and by rights accompanies it. The freedom howl of every outrage is also for that reason nothing other than the call of fools who got loose [*losgewordenen*] in a madhouse, or of animals that got free [*losgekommenen*] in a menagerie that one should, after all, confine them better. Like those, however, who were entrusted with the power of the keys, abase [*materialisiren*] themselves so much that they—no longer believing in their own power (*potestas* or authority)—mistake mere force (*vis*) for that power, they must naturally, as being incapable of excitement and enthusiasm for right and virtue, surrender to excitement for wrongdoing.

man is indeed indifferent toward good and evil, as it is ignorant toward the former and toward the latter, and it likely hinders malice just as often from its own eruption as one says that it would be a hindrance to good. Evil men would announce themselves without doubt as more evil, they would announce themselves as devils if that which is animalistic were still to give them a kind of (heteronomic) goodness that one surely can no longer call *bonhomie*, but that is often considered as such and as a “good heart” in common and in noble life, and that really is the only goodness one can still count on with some certainty in relation to these possessed animals. Thus, there is nonetheless evil—an evil spirit—in man, the recognition of which is independent of all theories and histories: How did this evil spirit come into man or arise in him? And this evil spirit is independent of all direction as to how to expel it again from him, and so forth; but also to the same degree [it] is independent of all theories and systems of those philosophers who would like to deny this evil just because they are not able to explain it. Whereas this evil is by no means neither so dumb nor of so bad [and] common ancestry as they would like to make us believe; and they may only do this to conceal the gap in their system. It is admittedly certain and undeniable that with the divine drive—inasmuch as man silences it in himself little by little—also the divine art (the talent for art) disappears, and that man becomes more unskilled, more inept, also more incomprehensible, more unreasonable or less insightful in respect to the good to the same extent that he becomes tired with it. But then, on the one hand, the insight into that which leads to good still remains with man and that which leads away from it (to evil), and the misuse of this insight to advance good, which falls together with the use of the same insight to advance evil, is exactly this misuse of this insight and of reason; and, on the other hand, however, we observe how reason in such a man admittedly turns into unreason [*zu einer Unvernunft*] but only in that positive sense of a perversity and corruption in which one says that that which is human turns into that which is inhuman [*zum Unmenschlichen*], nature turns into unnature [*zur Unnatur*], form and shape turns into that which is unshaped [*zur Ungestalt*]. Indeed! Man cannot even devote and surrender himself to the animal, cannot turn himself into a beast without first denying something positive—that which is truly human—in himself. But this denial—this “hindrance of truth by means of injustice and lie”—is not, for instance, a merely passive ignoring but rather a positive, dynamic, and (as the *rake of vice*

sometimes proves) violent act of the mind, by which the no less positive solicitation of that which is human toward revelation is for itself repelled and struck down. And exactly in this considered suicide of the more noble life and [in] the base selfhood's own wanting-to-raise itself to its place and site (of the divinization of the latter) consist the sin that has by no means a simple distraction or absence of reason as its source and yields to no simple, rational discourse.*

* One recalls here that *bon mot* by Goethe who, when the question was asked, how would the line of Adam have continued if he had not fallen, answered this would then have happened without doubt by means of a rational discourse.

EPHRAIM GOTTHOLD LESSING

“The Parable”¹

A wise and energetic king of a great, great empire had a palace in his capital of quite vast circumference and of quite exceptional architecture.

The circumference was vast because he had gathered around himself within it all whom he needed as aides or instruments [*Werkzeuge*] of his government.

The architecture was unusual because it was at odds with virtually all accepted rules; yet it was pleasing, and yet it was fitting.

The architecture was pleasing primarily because of the admiration that simplicity and greatness arouse when they seem to disdain richness and decoration more than to manage without them.

The architecture was fitting because of permanence and comfort. The entire palace stood after many, many years still in the same cleanness and completeness with which the builders had added the finishing touches; from the outside a bit incomprehensible; from the inside light and coherence everywhere.

Those who claimed to be knowledgeable in architecture were particularly offended by its exterior, which was disrupted with few windows, scattered to and fro, large and small, round and square; instead, however, it had all the more doors and gates of various shapes and sizes.

One did not grasp how enough light could come into so many rooms through so few windows. For it occurred to the fewest that the most elegant rooms received their light from above.

One did not grasp for what reason so many and varied kinds of entrances would be necessary since a great portal on each side would be likely more becoming and would provide exactly this service. For it occurred to the fewest that anyone who may be called into the palace should arrive precisely where one needed him in the shortest and most fail-safe way.

And thus among the allegedly knowledgeable arose much controversy that was normally promoted most heatedly by those who had had the least chance to see much of the inside.

Also, there was something of which, at first sight, one would have believed that it necessarily would have to make the controversy very effortless and short, which, nevertheless, precisely most complicated the controversy, which provided precisely the richest nourishment for the most stubborn continuation of it. Namely, one was thought to have various old plans which were supposed to be descended [*herschreiben*] from the initial builders of the palace; and these plans were found to be annotated with words and characters whose language and characteristics were as good as lost.

Thus everyone explained these words and characters to themselves as they saw fit. Everyone thus composed from these plans an arbitrary new one; by which new one someone or other not infrequently let himself become so intoxicated that he not only himself swore by it but also had others swear by it, now by persuasion, now by force.

Only a few said, "What do your plans have to do with me?" This and that one said, "They are all the same to us. It is enough that we hear every moment that the most beneficial wisdom fills the whole palace and that from it nothing but beauty and order and prosperity are spreading themselves over the whole country."

They were often poorly received, these few! For, sometimes, when they paid a bit closer attention to one of the specific plans in a humorous spirit, they themselves were denounced as murderous incendiaries of the palace by those who had sworn by this plan.

But they did not care much about this, and they became, exactly because of this, most capable of associating with those who worked within the palace and had neither the time nor the desire to get involved in controversies that were not controversies for them.

Once—when the controversy about the plans was not so much settled as in a quiescent phase—once at midnight the guards' voice suddenly echoed: Fire! Fire in the palace!

And what happened? Then, everyone got up from his bed; and everyone, as if the fire were not in the palace but in his own house, dashed toward the most valuable thing that he believed he had: toward his plan. "Let us only save it!" thought everyone, "The palace cannot be more truly burning up there than it is standing here!"

And thus everyone ran with his plan into the street where, instead of hurrying to protect the palace, each wanted to show the other where the palace presumably was on fire. "Look, neighbor! It's burning here! Here is the best place to cope with the fire." "Or rather here, neighbor; here!" "What are you both thinking? The palace is burning here!" "What kind of an emergency would it be if it were on fire there? But it is certainly burning here!" "Put it out here whoever wants to. I will not put it out here." "And I will not put it out here!" "And I will not put it out here!"

Because of these busy disputants, it could actually have burned down, the palace, if it had been on fire. But the horrified guards had taken the northern lights for the blaze of a fire.

FRIEDRICH HEINRICH JACOBI

**From *On the Doctrine
of Spinoza in Letters To
Mr. Moses Mendelssohn*¹**

[...]

The following morning, when I returned to my room after breakfast to get dressed, Lessing followed me after a while. I was sitting having my hair done, and meanwhile Lessing settled himself quietly at a table at the end of the room. As soon as we were alone, and I sat down at the other side of the table on which Lessing had his arms propped, he began: I came to talk to you about my *hen kai pan* [one and all]. You were distressed yesterday.

I. You surprised me, and I may indeed have blushed and turned pale, for I felt my bewilderment. It was not distress. Of course, nothing had I assumed less than to find a Spinozist or a pantheist in you. And you told me that so bluntly. I had come mainly to get help from you against Spinoza.

Lessing. Then you do in fact know him?

I. I believe I do as well as very few have known him.

Lessing. Then you are not to be helped. You should rather become entirely his friend. There is no other philosophy than the philosophy of Spinoza.

I. This might be true. For the determinist, if he wants to cut to the heart of the matter [bündig sein], has to become a fatalist. From this the rest follows by itself.

Lessing. I see we understand each other. I am all the more eager to hear from you what you consider the spirit of Spinozism to be; I mean the one that had made its way into Spinoza himself.

I. This is likely no other than the very ancient [*uralt*] *a nihilo nihil fit* [nothing comes from nothing] that Spinoza took into consideration

according to more abstract concepts than the philosophizing Kabbalists and others before him. In accord with these more abstract concepts, he found that, through each single coming into being in the infinite, and through each single change in the infinite, **something is posited from nothing**, regardless of the kind of images with which one also disguises it. He rejected thus every **transition** of the infinite to the finite; generally all *causae transitoriae, secundariae, or remotae*, and he posited, instead of the emanating, an **immanent** En-Sof²; an in-dwelling, **in itself** eternally unchanging, cause for the world that, taken together with all its consequences, would be one and the same . . . *

This indwelling infinite cause has, as such, *explicite*, neither understanding nor will, because it cannot have an object of thinking and willing, according to its transcendental **unity** and thoroughly [*durchgängig*] absolute infinity; and a capacity to generate a concept **before the concept** or a concept that would precede its object and be the **complete cause of itself**, just like the will that would act on the willing and **fully** determine itself, are nothing but inconsistencies. . .

. . . The objection, that an infinite series of effects is impossible (they are not **mere** effects because the immanent cause exists always and everywhere), refutes itself, because every series that should not arise from **nothing** must simply be infinite. And from this it follows once more, since every individual concept must arise from another individual concept and must relate **immediately to an actually present object**, that neither individual thoughts nor individual determinations of the will can be found in the first cause, whose nature is infinite, but rather only their inner, first general primal matter [*Urstoff*]. . . The first cause is exactly no more likely to be able to act on intentions or final causes as it exists because of a certain intention or final cause; a **beginning-ground** or **final end** are exactly no more likely to achieve something as **beginning** or **end** exist

* I am continuing with this presentation and summarize what I can without writing down the conversations that took place in between, because I would then have to digress too much. What immediately follows here came about because Lessing mentioned as the darkest in Spinoza what Leibniz also found to be so and had not understood completely (*Theod.* § 173).

I provide this reminder here once and for all and will not repeat it in the following when I take similar liberties.

in the first cause itself . . . Fundamentally, what we call consequence or duration is, however, pure delusion, because, since the **real effect** is coextensive with its **complete real** cause and only different from it with respect to [its] representation, then consequence or duration must be, **in truth**, only a certain way to intuit the manifold in the infinite.

Lessing. . . . We will not turn against each other on account of our *credo*.

I. We definitely do not want that. But my *credo* is not written in Spinoza.

Lessing. I am hoping it is not written in **any** book.

I. Not only that. I believe in an intelligible, personal cause of the world.

Lessing. Oh, so much the better! In that case, I shall have something utterly new to hear.

I. Don't expect too much. I extricate myself from the matter with a *salto mortale*,³ and you usually don't exactly take particular pleasure in leaping with your **head down**.

Lessing. Don't say that; as long as I don't have to imitate it. And you will surely come to stand on your feet again. Thus—if it is not a secret—I want to ask for it.

I. You can pick it up from me. The entire matter consists in the fact that from fatalism I conclude immediately against fatalism, and against everything that is connected with it. If there are only efficient and no final causes, then the capacity to think in the whole of nature merely acts as an observer; its only business is to accompany the mechanism of the efficient forces. The conversation that we are presently having with each other is only a concern of our bodies, and the entire content of this conversation is resolved in their elements: extension, movement, degrees of velocity, along with their concepts, and the concepts of these concepts. The inventor of the clock did not actually invent it; he only observed its emergence from forces that were blindly developing themselves. So too Raphael, when he drew the school of Athens; and Lessing, when he wrote his *Nathan*. The same is valid of all philosophies, arts, forms of government, naval and ground warfare, in short, of all that is possible. For the affects and passions also have no effect in so far as they are sensations and thoughts; or, more correctly, in so far as the affects and passions **carry** sensations and thoughts **with themselves**. We only **believe** that we acted

out of rage, love, generosity, or out of rational decision. Pure delusion! In all these cases, that which actually moves us is **something** that does **not know** anything about all of this, and that, **to this extent**, is utterly denuded of sensations and thoughts. These sensations and thoughts, however, are only concepts of extension, movement, degrees of velocity, and so on. Whoever can now accept this, his opinion I do not know how to refute. But whoever cannot accept this must become the antipode to Spinoza.

Lessing. I notice you would like your will to be free. I desire no free will. I am not in the least distressed about what you just said. It belongs to human prejudice that we view thought as the very first and the most distinguished, and that we want to deduce everything from it, since everything—including ideas—depends on higher principles. Extension, movement, thought are obviously grounded in a higher force [*Kraft*], which is still far from being exhausted with them. It must be infinitely more excellent than this or that effect; and thus for the force there can exist also a kind of enjoyment that not only surpasses all concepts but rather lies wholly **outside** of the concept. That we cannot conceive of it does not abolish the possibility.

I. You go further than Spinoza. For him **insight** counted above all.

Lessing. For **man!** But he was far from holding out as the highest method our miserable way of acting according to purposes and from placing thought above.

I. For Spinoza insight is the best part in **all finite** natures, because it is that part by which each finite nature reaches beyond its finitude. To a certain extent one could say: he too attributed two souls to each and every being: one that relates only to the present, individual thing and another that relates to the whole.* He also grants immortality to this second soul. But as far as the infinite single substance in Spinoza is concerned, it has no determinate or complete existence for itself alone and outside of individual things. If it had for its unity (to express

* Although only by means of this body, which cannot be an absolute individual (since an absolute individual is just as impossible as an individual absolute. *Determinatio est negatio, Op. Post.*, p. 558), but rather must contain general unchangeable properties and qualities, the nature and the concept of the infinite. With this distinction, one has one of the main keys to Spinoza's system without which one finds in it confusions and contradictions everywhere.

myself this way) a proper, particular, individual reality; if it had personality and life, then insight would be the best part in it too.

Lessing. Good. But then according to which ideas do you assume your personal extramundane deity? Perhaps according to the ideas of Leibniz? I am afraid, he was himself a Spinozist at heart.

I. Are you serious?

Lessing. Do you seriously doubt that? Leibniz's concepts of truth were obtained in such a way that he could not brook too narrow limits being imposed on truth. Many of his claims flowed from this way of thinking, and it is often very difficult—even with the greatest acumen—to discover his actual opinion. This is exactly why I hold him in such esteem, I mean, because of the greatness in his way of thinking and not because of this or that opinion that he only seemed to have or then really did have.

I. Quite right. Leibniz liked “to start a fire from every flint.” But you said about a certain point of view [*Meinung*], Spinozism, that Leibniz was at **heart fond of it**.

Lessing. Do you remember a passage in Leibniz's writings where it is said about God that, should he reside in a state of perpetual expansion and contraction, this would be the creation and the persistence of the world?

I. I know of his fulgurations,⁴ but this passage is unknown to me.

Lessing. I will look for it, and you ought to tell me then what a man like Leibniz could or **must** have been thinking by that.

I. Show me the passage. But I have to tell you in advance that, in the recollection of so many other passages of this very Leibniz, so many of his letters, treatises, his *Theodicée* and *Nouveaux essais*, his philosophical career overall, I reel at the hypothesis that this man should have believed not in a supramundane but rather in an intramundane cause of the world.

Lessing. From this perspective, I have to concede to you. This perspective will retain the upper hand, and I admit that I said a bit too much. Nonetheless, the passage that I am thinking of—and still a good many other things—always remains odd. But not to forget! Now, according to what ideas do you believe the opposite of Spinozism? Do you find that the *Principia* by Leibniz⁵ put an end to it?

I. How could I in view of the firm conviction that the incisive determinist does not differ from the fatalist? . . . The monads together with their *vincula* [bonds] leave extension and thinking, **reality** in general,

as incomprehensible to me as before, and there I know neither right nor left. It seems to me as if, ultimately, a confidence trick were being played on me . . . For that matter, I don't know of any doctrinal edifice that would agree as much with Spinozism as that of Leibniz; and it would be difficult to say which one of these authors fooled us and himself the most; with all due respect! . . . Mendelssohn proved publicly that the *harmonia præstabilita* is in Spinoza. From this alone, it already follows that Spinoza must contain much more of Leibniz's basic doctrines, or else Leibniz and Spinoza (on the basis of whose doctrine Wolff's lessons would hardly have flourished) would not have been the striking minds [*Köpfe*] that they indisputably were. I dare to explain on the basis of Spinoza Leibniz's complete doctrine concerning the soul . . . Both have fundamentally the same doctrine of freedom as well, and only an illusion [*Blendwerk*] distinguishes their theories. While Spinoza (*Ep. LXII, Op. Post.*, p. 584) explains our feeling of freedom through the example of a stone which would think and know that it strives as much it can to continue its movement, Leibniz explains the same (*Theod.* § 50) through the example of a magnetic needle that would like to move toward North and would be of the opinion it may turn itself independently from another cause since it would not be aware of the imperceptible movement of the magnetic matter.* . . . Leibniz explains the final causes through an *appetitus*, a *conatum immanentem (conscientia sui præditum)* [a striving, an indwelling impetus (endowed with self-consciousness)]. This is just like

* *Atque hæc humana illa libertas est, quam omnes habere jactant, & quæ in hoc solo consistit, quod homines sui appetitus sunt conscii, & causarum, à quibus determinatur, ignari* [And this is that human freedom, which all claim to have, and which consists solely in the *fact that men are conscious of their own desire but ignore the causes by which they are determined*—says Spinoza in the same 63rd letter.

Spinoza by no means lacks the concept of the expression with which the determinists presume they evade the fatalists. But it seemed to him of such bad philosophical character that he preferred the *arbitrium indifferentiæ* [indifferent power/will] or the *voluntas æquilibrii* [will of equilibrium] even more. Among other passages, one should refer to the end of the 2nd Schol. of the 33rd Prop. in the 1st part of the *Ethics*. Further, to the Schol. of the 9th Prop. in the 3rd part and, especially, to the preface to the 4th part.

Spinoza, who, in this sense, was able to let them be completely valid, and for whom, as for Leibniz, **representing the external and desire are the essence of the soul**. In short, if one gets down to the heart of the matter, it turns out that, for Leibniz as for Spinoza, each and every final cause presupposes an efficient cause . . . Thinking is not the source of substance, but rather substance is the source of thinking. Thus something not-thinking must be assumed before thinking as that which is first; something that must be thought as the foremost, if absolutely not in reality, then according to representation, essence and inner nature. Leibniz was therefore honest enough to call souls *des automates spirituels* [spiritual automatons].* But how (I am speaking here according to Leibniz's deepest and most complete meaning, to the extent I understand it) can the *principium* of all souls **exist** for itself anywhere and **be an efficient cause**. . . , how can spirit [exist] before matter, and thought before object? This great knot that he would actually have had to untie to help us out of difficulty, he left just as entangled as it was. . .

Lessing. . . I will not allow you any rest, you must bring this parallelism into the open . . . people do indeed speak of Spinoza always as of a dead dog . . .

I. They will continue to speak of him in this way. Understanding Spinoza takes too long and stubborn an effort of the mind [*des*

* The same term is also to be found in Spinoza, though not in his *Ethics* but rather in the fragment *de intellectus emendatione*. The passage is worth quoting here. *At ideam veram simplicem esse ostendimus, aut ex simplicibus compositam, & quae ostendit, quomodo, & cur aliquid sit, aut factum sit, & quòd ipsius effectus objectivi in anima procedunt ad rationem formalitatis ipsius objecti; id, quod idem est, quod veteres dixerunt, nempe veram scientiam procedere a causa ad effectus; nisi quod nunquam, quod sciam, conceperunt, uti nos hic, animam secundum certas leges agentem, & quasi aliquod automa spirituale*. [As regards a true idea, we have shown that it is simple or composed of simple ideas; and what it shows, how and why something is or has been made; and that the effects of the object in the soul proceed according to the formal structure (*ratio*) of the same object; this conclusion is identical with what the ancients said, that true science proceeds from cause to effect; though the ancients, so far as I know, never conceived the soul (as we do here) as acting in accordance with fixed laws and almost as some kind of spiritual automaton.] (*Op. Post.*, p. 384). The derivation of the word *automaton* and what Bilfinger mentions at that point, is not unknown to me.

Geistes]. And no one has understood him for whom one single line in the *Ethics* remains obscure or who does not grasp how this great man was able to have the firm inner conviction about his philosophy, which he exhibits so often and so emphatically. Even at the end of his days, he still wrote: . . . non præsumo, me optimam invenisse philosophiam; *sed veram me intelligere scio* [I do not claim to have discovered the best philosophy, but I know how to recognize the true one].* Only a few may have tasted of such a peace of the spirit, of such a heaven in the understanding as this bright and pure mind wrought for itself.

Lessing. And you are not a Spinozist, Jacobi!

I. No, in all honesty!

Lessing. In all honesty! Thus you must, by your philosophy, turn your back on all philosophy.

I. Why turn my back on all philosophy?

Lessing. Well, then you are a complete skeptic.

I. On the contrary, I turn away from a philosophy that makes complete skepticism necessary.

Lessing. And then turn—where to?

I. To the light, of which Spinoza says that it illuminates itself and the darkness—I love Spinoza, because he, more than any other philosopher, led me to the complete conviction that certain things cannot be explained, that because of this one need not close one's eyes to them, but rather take them as one finds them. I have no concept that would be more innate than that of the final causes and no more lively conviction than **that I do what I think** instead of **that I only should think what I do**. Sure enough, I have to assume a source of thinking and acting that remains utterly inexplicable to me. But if I

* In his letter to Albert Burgh. He adds to this: "*Quomodo autem id sciam, si roges, respondebo, eodem modo, ac tu scis tres angulos Trianguli æquales esse duobus rectis, & hoc sufficere negabit nemo, cui sanum est cerebrum, nec spiritus immundos somniat, qui nobis ideas falsas inspirant veris similes: est enim verum index sui & falsi.*" ["And if you ask me, however, in what way I know it, I will reply: in the same way as you know that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles; that this is sufficient no one will deny whose brain is sound, and who does not go dreaming of unclean spirits inspiring us with false ideas resembling truth. For the truth is an index of itself and of what is false."] Spinoza distinguishes greatly between "to be sure" and "not to doubt."

want to explain [it] fully, then I must fall back onto the second proposition, whose application to individual cases, and considered in its full extent, almost no human understanding can bear.

Lessing. You express yourself almost as bravely as the resolution of the Augsburg *Reichstag*.⁶ But I remain an honest Lutheran and keep “the more bestial than humane misapprehension and blasphemy that there is no free will” in which even the **bright pure** mind of your Spinoza also knew how to find itself.

I. Spinoza also had to twist himself to no small degree to hide his fatalism when applied to human conduct, especially, in his fourth and fifth part [of the *Ethics*—our note] where I would like to say that he every now and then degrades himself to a sophist. And this was what I was claiming: that even the greatest mind must arrive at inconsistencies, if he wants to explain all things absolutely, to make them consistent with each other according to distinct concepts, and does not want to accept anything else.

Lessing. And he who does not want to explain?

I. He who does not want to explain what is incomprehensible but rather wants to know only the border where it begins and to recognize that it exists, of him I believe that he reclaims the most space within himself for genuine human truth.

Lessing. Words, my dear Jacobi, words! The border that you want to establish cannot be determined. And you provide, on the other hand, a free open field for fantasy, nonsense, blindness.

I. I believe that this could be determined. I do not want to **establish** one but rather find the one already established and leave it. And as far as nonsense, musing, and blindness are concerned. . .

Lessing. They are at home everywhere disordered concepts rule.

I. Still more, where corrupt concepts rule. Even the blindest, most nonsensical, if not already the stupidest, belief also has its high throne there. For he who once fell in love with certain explanations adopts blindly every consequence that, according to a conclusion he cannot refute, is drawn from them and as if it were the case that he were walking on his head.

. . . According to my judgment, the greatest merit of the scientist [*Forscher*] is to unveil and reveal **existence** . . . Explanation is a means to him, a path to the end, a proximate, never final, purpose. His final purpose is what cannot be explained: the unresolvable, the immediate, the simple.

. . . Unrestrained craving for explanation makes us seek what is uniform so intensely that we pay no attention to what is different; we always want only to join together while we would split apart often to our much greater advantage . . . As we only **compose** and **associate** that which is explainable in things, a certain appearance emerges in the soul that blinds the soul more than it illuminates it. We then sacrifice that which Spinoza calls—profoundly and exaltedly—cognition of the supreme genus to cognition of the lower genera. We shut the eye of the soul with which it sees God and itself in order to look in a more undistracted manner with the eyes of the body only . . .

Lessing. Good, very good! I can use all of this, too, but I cannot do the same with it. In general your *salto mortale* pleases me not a little, and I understand how a man of intellect can put his head down in this way in order to move on from the spot. Take me with you if possible.

I. If you only will step onto the elastic spot that swings me farther, then it works as if of itself.

Lessing. This too would require a leap that I do not dare to expect of my old legs and my heavy head.⁷

FRIEDRICH HEINRICH JACOBI

“On Human Freedom” (1789)⁸

On Human Freedom

First Part

Man Has No Freedom

I. The possibility of the existence of all things known to us is based on and related to the coexistence of other single things, and we are not in the position to form an idea of a finite being that exists for itself alone.

II. The results of the manifold relations of existence to coexistence express themselves in living natural things [*lebendige Naturen*] through sensations.

III. We call *desire* and *repulsion* the inner mechanical behavior of a living natural thing according to its sensations; or the sensed relationship of the inner conditions of existence and persistence of a living natural thing to the external conditions of this very existence—or also only the sensed relationship of the inner conditions among themselves—is connected mechanically with a motion that we name desire or repulsion.

IV. That which forms the basis for all the different desires of a living natural thing we name its original natural drive [*Trieb*], and it constitutes the very being of this thing. Its business is to preserve and to extend the capacity-to-exist [*das Vermögen da zu sein*] of the particular natural thing whose drive it is.

V. One could name this original natural drive desire *a priori*. The multitude of individual desires are only so many occasional applications and modifications of this unchangeable general desire.

VI. One could name a desire utterly *a priori* that would be ascribed to every individual being without difference in genus, species, and gender to the extent that all strive in the same way generally to preserve their existence [*sich überhaupt im Dasein zu erhalten*].

VII. A capacity that would be absolutely undetermined is a nothing. But every determination presupposes something that is already determined and the consequence and fulfillment of a law. Desire *a priori* of both the first and second kind thus also presupposes laws *a priori*.

VIII. The original drive of the rational being consists, like the drive of each and every other being, in the incessant striving to preserve and to extend the *capacity-to-exist* of the particular natural thing of which it is the drive.

IX. The *existence* of rational natural beings is called a *personal existence* in opposition to all other natural beings. This consists in the consciousness of its identity that the particular being has and is the consequence of a higher degree of consciousness in general.

X. The natural drive of the rational natural being, or rational desire, aims thus necessarily at increasing the degree of personhood [*Personalität*], that is, of living existence itself.

XI. We call rational desire in general, *or the drive of the rational being* as such, the will.

XII. The existence of each finite being is a successive existence; its personhood is based on recollection and reflection, its limited but clear cognition on concepts, consequently, on abstraction and verbal, written or other signs.

XIII. The law of the will is to act according to concepts of agreement and coherence, that is *according to basic principles* [*Grundsätzen*]. The will is the faculty [*Vermögen*] of practical *principles* [*Prinzipien*].

XIV. Whenever the rational being does not act in accordance with its basic principles it does not act according to its will, not according to a *rational* but rather to an *irrational desire*.

XV. The identity of the *rational existence* is disrupted by the satisfaction of each and every irrational desire; consequently the personhood, which alone is grounded in the rational existence, is injured and, therefore, the quantity of the living existence is diminished by the same amount.

XVI. That degree of the living existence that brings forth the person is only one manner of the living existence in general, and not a personal particular existence or being. Thus, the person does not only impute those actions to himself that happen according to basic principles but also those that are the effects of irrational desires and blind inclinations.

XVII. If man, blindfolded by an irrational desire, violates his basic principles, then he tends to say afterward, when he senses the bad consequences of his action: *It serves me right*. Since he is aware of the identity of his being he must regard himself as the originator of the awkward state in which he is situated and experience the most humiliating discord within himself.

XVIII. The entire system of practical reason grounds itself on this experience, *to the extent it is constructed on only one basic drive*.

XIX. If man had only one desire he would have no concept of right and wrong at all. But he has many desires that he cannot all satisfy to the same degree, but rather the possibility of satisfaction of one desire abolishes the possibility of satisfaction of the others in a thousand cases. Since all of these different desires are only modifications of one single primary desire, the latter provides the principle according to which the different desires can be weighed against each other and through which the proportion becomes determinable according to which the desire could be satisfied, without the person falling into contradiction and antagonism with himself.

XX. Such an inner right develops imperfectly in every man in a mechanical manner due to the identity of his consciousness. The external right that men freely agree on and adopt voluntarily when they join a civil union, is always only the reproduction of the inner right that arose among the single members. I refer to the history of all peoples of which we have somewhat detailed information.

XXI. The greater perfection, which the inner right achieves according to circumstances, follows only as a continuation and development of the very mechanism which brought about the lesser perfection. All basic principles are based on desire and experience and presuppose, to the extent they are in fact observed, an activity already determined from somewhere else; they can never be the beginning or the *first* cause of an action. The capability and readiness to develop or practically accept effective basic principles is the same as the capacity to receive ideas, as the capacity to turn these representations into concepts, as the vivacity and energy of thought, and as the degree of rational existence.

XXII. The principle (or the *a priori*) of the basic principles is the original desire of the rational being in general to preserve its own particular existence, that is, *to preserve **its person** and to subdue that which wants to injure its identity*.

XXIII. From precisely this drive flows a natural love and commitment to justice for others. The rational being cannot differentiate itself as rational being (in abstraction) from another rational being. *I* and *man* are one, *he* and *man* are one; *thus he and I are one*. The love of the *person* thus restricts the love of the *individuum*, and it requires the individual not hold itself in reverence. But so that the latter would not extend in theory to the possible elimination of the individual and a mere **nothing** would be left in the person, more exact determinations—which were suggested in the foregoing, and further discussion of which does not belong to our purpose here—are necessary. It is enough for us to have come in this way to the clear realization, how these moral laws, which could be called *apodictic* laws of practical reason, come about, and that we are now able to decide that the simple basic drive that is connected to reason shows pure mechanism and no freedom, although an appearance of freedom is achieved by the often antipodal interests of *individuum* and *person*, and by the alternating fortune of a sovereignty to which the *person connected with clear consciousness* alone has a claim.

Second Part

Man Has Freedom

XXIV. It is undeniable that the existence of all finite things is based on coexistence [*Mitdasein*] and that we are not able to form an idea of a being that exists utterly for itself. But it is just as undeniable that we are even less able to form an idea of an utterly dependent being. Such a being would have to be entirely passive, and yet *could* not be passive, because what is not already something cannot merely be *determined* to be something; for that which has no attributes none can be generated in it through relations, indeed not even a relation in regard to it is possible.

XXV. If now a completely mediated existence or being is not thinkable, but rather is a non-thing, then a merely mediated—that is, an entirely mechanical—**ACTION** must likewise be a non-thing. Consequently, mechanism in itself is only something contingent, and a **PURE self-activity** must necessarily form the basis for mechanism everywhere.

XXVI. In so far as we recognize that every finite thing in its existence, consequently also in its activity [*Tun*] and passivity [*Leiden*], is necessarily based on, and relates to, other finite things, we recognize at the same time the subordination of all and every individual

being to mechanistic laws. For, to the extent their Being [*Sein*] and effectiveness is *mediated*, to that extent it must be based entirely on laws of mechanics.

XXVII. The cognition of that which the existence of things *mediates* is called a *distinct cognition* and that which does not allow mediation cannot be cognized distinctly by us.

XXVIII. Absolute self-activity permits no mediation, and it is impossible that we somehow cognize its inner realm distinctly.

XXIX. The *possibility* of absolute self-activity thus cannot be cognized, but surely its *actuality*, which presents itself immediately in consciousness and proves itself through the act, can be cognized.

XXX. Self-activity is called freedom, to the extent that it can set itself against and prevail over the mechanism which accounts for the sensory [*sinnlich*] existence of every individual being.

XXXI. Among living beings we know only man to be endowed with that degree of consciousness of his self-activity, which carries within itself the calling and impetus toward free acts.

XXXII. Freedom thus exists not in an inconsistent capacity to decide without grounds, just as little as it does in the choice of what is better among what is useful or *the choice of rational desire*. For such a choice, even if it happens according to the most abstract concepts, still occurs only mechanically; but rather this freedom exists, according to its essence, *in the independence of the WILL from DESIRE*.

XXXIII. Will is pure self-activity, raised to the degree of consciousness that we call reason.

XXXIV. The independence and inner omnipotence of the will, or the possible rule of the intellectual being over the sensible being, is admitted *de facto* by all men.

XXXV. From the wise men of antiquity, mainly from the Stoics, it is known that they allowed no comparison between things of *desire* and things of *HONOR*. The objects of desire, they said, could be compared among each other according to the sensation of that which is pleasant and the concepts of that which is beneficial, and one desire could be sacrificed for the other. The *principle* of desire, however, lies outside of all relation with the *principle of honor*, which has only one object: the perfection of human nature *in itself*, *self-activity*, *freedom*. Thus, all wrongdoings were alike for them, and it was always only the question from which of the two *incommensurable* principles—that could not possibly come to a *real* collision with each other—the

action had occurred. They wanted quite rightly to have one called a free man who lived only the life of his soul, determined himself according to the laws of his own nature, therefore obeyed *only himself* and always acted *on his own*. They saw in contrast utter slaves in those who, determined by the things of desire, lived by following the laws of those things and subjugated themselves to them so that they might be continuously changed and put into action by them in a manner in accord with their desires.

XXXVI. In as much as our enlightened age now may be above the *effusions* [*Schwärmereien*] or the *mysticism* of an Epictetus and Antoninus, we have not yet advanced in *distinctness* and *thoroughness* so that we would be unbound from all feeling of honor. But as long as a spark of this feeling still lives in man, there is in him an irrefutable testimonial of freedom and an invincible belief in the inner omnipotence of the will. He can deny this belief with his lips, but it remains in the conscience and sometimes erupts suddenly as in the poet's *Mahomet*⁹ where Mohammed, turned inward and stricken, utters the terrible words:

Il est donc des remords!
[Alas, there is remorse!]

XXXVII. Yet, this belief cannot be denied entirely, even with the lips. For who wants to be known as one who at any time could not resist all temptations to a shameful action; who, then, needs to deliberate here, to take advantages and disadvantages into consideration, *to think about degree and greatness?* And, in the same way, we also make judgments in regard to other men. If we see someone preferring what is pleasant over what is useful, choosing perverse means for his ends, contradicting himself in his wishes and strivings, then we find only that he acts irrationally, foolishly. If he is careless in the fulfillment of his duties, even staining himself with vice, if he is unjust and carries out acts of violence, then we can hate, loathe him. But we cannot yet entirely disdain him. If he denies, however, in some sort of decisive manner the feeling of honor, if he shows that he cannot carry *inner* disgrace or cannot *feel* self-contempt, then we disdain him without mercy, he is excrement under our feet.

XXXVIII. Whence these unconditional judgments? Whence such immoderate [*ungemessen*] presumptions and demands that are not

even restricted merely to actions but rather lay claim to feeling and demand its existence apodictically?

XXXIX. Should the right to these presumptions and demands be based in all likelihood on a formula, for instance, on the insight into the correct connections, on the certain truth of the results of the following propositions: if A equals B and C is like A then B is like C? *Spinoza* demonstrated in this way that man, to the extent he is a rational being, would rather sacrifice his life, even if he does not believe in the immortality of the soul, than save himself from death through a lie.* And *Spinoza* is right *in abstracto*. It is just as impossible that men of *pure reason* lie or deceive as that the three angles in a triangle do not equal two right ones. But will a being actually endowed with reason really allow itself to be driven into a corner in such a way by the *abstracto of its reason*, to be so entirely captured by a thing of thought through a play on words? Never! If there is *reliance* in honor, and man can *keep his word*, then another spirit than the spirit of mere syllogism must reside in him.†

XL. I consider this other spirit to be the breath [*Odem*] of God in the work of clay [*in dem Gebilde von Erde*].

XLI. This spirit proves its existence first in the understanding which, without it, would truly be that miraculous mechanism that would not only make the guidance of a seeing person by a blind one possible, but rather would also prove the necessity of such an arrangement through conclusions of reason. Who constrains the syllogism here in so far as it sets out its premises? *Only* this spirit, through its presence in acts of freedom and in an ineradicable consciousness.‡

XLII. As this consciousness is the conviction itself: intelligence is for itself alone effective; it is the highest, indeed the sole force truly known to us. Thus it also directly teaches the belief in one *primary supreme* intelligence and in an intelligent originator and lawgiver for nature, in *one God WHO IS ONE SPIRIT*.

XLIII. But this belief receives its full force and becomes *religion* only when the capacity of pure love develops in the heart of man.

* *Eth.*, P. IV, Prop. LXXII.

† The reason of man, separated from man himself and from any drive, is only a thing of thought that neither can act [*agieren*] nor react, neither think nor be practically active [*handeln*]. Cf. p. 423 of this text.

‡ Cf. S. 28 and 29 of this text [see XXXIV–XXXIX above—our note].

XLIV. *Pure love?* Does such a love exist? How does it prove itself, and where does one find its object?

XLV. If I answer that the principle of love is the same principle of whose existence as the principle of honor we have already assured ourselves, then one will believe oneself to have an even greater right to be insistent in regard to the object that I am supposed to present.

XLVI. Thus I answer: the object of pure love is that which a *Socrates* had in mind. It is the *Theion* [divine] in man, and the reverence for what is divine forms the basis of all virtue, all sense of honor.

XLVII. I can *construct* neither this drive nor its object. In order to be able to, I would have to know how substances are created and how a necessary being is possible. But the following will perhaps explain my conviction about its existence a little further.

XLVIII. If the universe is not a god but rather a *creation*; if it is the effect of a free intelligence, then the original direction of each being must be [the] expression of a divine will. This expression in created beings is their original law in which the force to fulfill it [*Kraft es zu erfüllen*] must necessarily be given as well. This principle, which is *the condition of the existence of the being itself*, its *original drive*, its *OWN WILL*, cannot be compared with the laws of nature, which are only *results of relations* and are in fact based on *mediation*. But now every individual being belongs to nature. It is thus subject to the laws of nature and has a *double direction*.

XLIX. The direction toward the finite is the sensory [*sinnlich*] drive or the principle of desire, and the direction toward the eternal is the intellectual drive, the principle of pure love.

L. Were one to take me to task about this double direction itself, and ask about the possibility of such a relation and of the theory of its establishment, then I would rightly dismiss such a question, because it deals with the possibility and theory of creation, having as object conditions of the unconditional. It is enough if the existence of this double direction and its relation are proved through the act and recognized by reason. As all men ascribe freedom to themselves *and set THEIR HONOR alone in the possession of freedom*, they all ascribe to themselves a capacity for pure love and a feeling of the *overwhelming energy* of this love on which the possibility of freedom is based. All want to be lovers of virtue itself, not of the advantages connected with it; all want to know about a *beauty* which is not merely pleasing, about a *joy that is not mere excitation*.

LI. We name actions that actually follow from this capacity *divine actions*, and their source, the dispositions themselves, divine dispositions. They are also accompanied by a joy which cannot be compared with any other joy; *it is the joy that God himself has in his existence*.

LII. Joy is every enjoyment of existence, just as everything that challenges existence brings about pain and sadness. Its source is the source of life and all activity. But if its affect relates only to a transitory existence, then it is itself transitory: *the soul of the animal*. If its object is that which is permanent and eternal, then it is the force of the deity itself and its reward [*Beute*] immortality.

JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER

God.

Some Conversations

Excerpt from the Fifth Conversation: "Principle of persistency through separation of that which is opposed, through poles"¹

Theophron. [. . .] Thus, to begin with: *Every being is what it is* and neither has a concept of nothingness nor a yearning for it. All perfection in one thing is its *reality* [*Wirklichkeit*]; the feeling of this reality is the indwelling reward of its existence, its inner joy. In the so-called moral world that is also a natural world, Spinoza sought to ascribe all passions and strivings of man to this inner love toward existence and toward persistency in existence [*zur Beharrung*]; in the physical world, many, somewhat unworthy, names have been bestowed on the appearances that resulted from this law of nature. Now it is called the force of inertia, because every thing remains what it is and does not change without cause: now it is called, although from a different point of view, the force of gravity [*Kraft der Schwere*], according to which every thing has its center of gravity [*Schwerpunkt*] on which it rests. Inertia and gravity, just as their opposite, motion, are only appearances since space and body themselves are only appearances; that which is true, that which is of essence in them is persistency, [a] continuation of existence which can and may not be interrupted. Even its shape [*Gestalt*] shows that every thing strives only toward a state of persistency, and you, dear Theano, as a painter of nature, will be able to explain much for yourself from the form [*Form*] of things if you pay heed to it. We want to take the easiest example from the system of things that can tie the most sprightly mobility with the greatest homogeneity and, therefore, at the same time choose a shape for themselves. We name these *fluid things*. Now then, Philolaus, all fluid things

whose parts act homogeneously toward each other without obstruction, what kind of shape do they take?

Philolaus. The shape of a drop.

Theophron. And why the shape of a drop? Should we assume, for instance, a drop-forming *principium* in nature that arbitrarily loves this shape?

Philolaus. By no means! The drop is a sphere; and within a sphere, all parts come homogeneously about at one midpoint in harmony and order. The sphere rests on itself: its gravity is in the middle, its shape is therefore the most beautiful state of persistency of homogeneous beings that assemble around this midpoint and, with equal forces, lend the [proper] counterweight to each other. In accordance with necessary laws of harmony and order, a world will emerge in the drop.

Theophron. Consequently, dear Philolaus, you obtain in the law according to which the drop takes shape, at the same time, the rule according to which our earth, the sun, and all heavenly systems are formed. For our earth also emerged once from fluid status and gathered itself together in the drop. Thus the sun and this entire system in which the sun rules by gravitational force is a larger drop. Everything descends in radii and is being upheld in orbit by other forces; thus the orbit of all planets must approach more or less a circle. The sun in its system forms with millions of other suns in turn a circle or an ellipse, since they move around a common middle or focal point, as the Milky Way proves, and as those systems of suns, [and] the nebular stars show. Altogether they are bright drops from the deity's sea that, by means of indwelling eternal laws of harmony and order, sought and found their *state of persistency* in their shape and in their course of movement [*Lauf*]. They were able to find their state of persistency in no other way than in the shape of a sphere and in a circular course, the product of opposite forces, and not through arbitrariness but rather through inner principles of homogeneously acting forces in fluidity, in the sphere-shape, in the elliptic movement of a circle. The small tear, Theano, that every morning you find in the calyx of a rose, shows the principle according to which earth, suns, and all solar, indeed, all world systems, were formed. For, if we allow ourselves the enormous flight of fancy of thinking the entire universe, then no giant emerges but rather a sphere that rests on itself.

Theano. I thank you, Theophron, for this vast viewpoint concerning such a simple law of nature that exists in itself; but do come back to our earth or at least back to our solar system: since I do not like to fly so high. You spoke of a second law of nature according to which *everything that is similar unites and everything that is opposed separates*; don't you want to provide examples for this?

Theophron. I shall remain with my liquid drop. Surely, Theano, you are acquainted, with the stone of hate and love in the world of nature?

Theano. You mean the magnet?

Theophron. That very thing, and though its theory lies very much in obscurity, our experiences with it are that much more clear. So you know its two poles and their friendly or hostile activity?

Theano. I know of them and also know that a point of the greatest love and a point of complete indifference exists in its axis.

Theophron. Therefore, you know all that I need for my example. Consider the magnet as a round drop in which the magnetic force has distributed itself so homogeneously and regularly that its opposite ends comprise north pole and south pole. You are aware that one cannot come into being without the other.

Theano. I know this and that, if one alters one of them, one alters both.

Theophron. You therefore have in the magnet the most beautiful illustration of what hate and love in creation may be, and I am sure that one will discover the same thing in several and, possibly, in all fluids.

Philolaus. And this same thing is?

Theophron. That where a system of homogeneous forces achieves an axis the forces arrange themselves around this axis and around its middle point, in a manner such that every homogeneous thing flows to the homogeneous pole and organizes itself, in accordance with geometric laws, from this pole through all degrees of increase to the culmination and then through the point of indifference to the opposite pole. Every sphere would in this manner become the arrangement of two hemispheres with opposite forces, just as every ellipse with its two focal points; and the laws of this construction would lie—according to fixed rules—in the active forces of the system that consequently forms itself. As much as in a sphere there cannot be a north pole without a south pole, in a system of forces that forms itself in a regular manner there cannot be a shape in which to the same degree

[*eben sowohl*] that which is friendly would separate itself from that which is hostile. Consequently, it would form a whole exactly by means of the counterweight that both lend to each other according to decreasing and increasing degrees of connection. There probably could not be a system of electric forces in the world if it were not for two types of electricity opposing each other that one had actually discovered through experience. It is the same also with warmth and coldness as it is the same with probably every system of forces that can obtain unity only through multiplicity and coherence through that which is opposed to it. The remarkable teaching about nature, which is still so young, will eventually go a long way in these matters, so that it will at last dispel every blind arbitrariness from the world, according to which everything would fall apart and all laws of nature would come to an end. For you must concede, my friends, if the magnet, electric force, light, warmth and coldness, attraction, gravity, and so on, act arbitrarily, then the triangle is no triangle, and compasses are no compasses; then we might declare all observations of physics and mathematics as nonsense and wait for arbitrary revelation. But if it is certain that we have discovered accurate mathematical laws of nature for so many forces, who wants to set the boundary for us where these laws are no longer to be found, but rather where God's blind will begins? In creation, everything is connection, everything is order; therefore, if *one law of nature* occurs *somewhere*, then laws of nature must preside *everywhere*, or creation collapses like chaos.

Theano. You depart however, my friend, from the law of hate and love where according to your system one cannot be without the other.

Theophron. Because everything in the world exists that can, then also that which is opposed must exist, and a law of the highest wisdom must form a system everywhere precisely from this opposition [*aus diesem Entgegengesetzten*], from the north and south pole. In every circle of nature is the table of the thirty two currents of air, in every ray of sunshine is the full spectrum of colors, and it depends only on which current now and then flows, which color appears here and there. As soon as something solid emerges from a fluid, everything crystallizes and forms itself according to inner laws that lie in this system of active forces. All things gravitate toward, or repel, or remain indifferent against, one other, and the axis of these active forces passes continuously [*zusammenhängend*] through all gradations.

Chemists arrange nothing but weddings and separations, nature does this in a much richer and more profound manner. All things seek and find themselves that love each other, and the teaching about nature itself could not help but assume the concept of an *elective-attraction* [*Wahl-Anziehung*] for the naming of its bodies. What is opposite departs the one from the other and comes together only through the point of indifference. Often, the forces vary rapidly; whole systems behave differently as do the system's single forces among each other: hate can become love, love can become hate, and everything because of one and the same reason, namely, because every system *seeks persistency in itself and arranges its forces accordingly*. You see how cautious one thus has to be with respect to those analogies of external occurrences in so far as one is not immediately justified, for example, to perceive magnetism and electricity as one, because one discovers in both some similar laws. The systems of forces can be very different from each other and still behave in accordance with all the same laws, since in nature, everything ultimately has to be connected, and there can only be one main law according to which even the most different forces arrange themselves.

Theano. Your principle of persistency, of hate and love comes—as it seems to me—very close to this main law: since it appears everywhere, regardless of all the countless differences and opposed appearances in nature. For a few moments I would like to be a higher spirit in order to observe this great workshop in its inner workings [*in ihrem Innern*].

Theophron. Do not wish for this, *Theano*. The spectator from outside is better off, perhaps, at least more comfortable than the observer from inside who, however, also could never gain a synoptic view [*übersehen*] of the whole. The spectator in front of the stage stands more comfortably than he who eavesdrops behind the scenes. The exploration of the truth has greater appeal; possessing it perhaps makes [one] sated and dull. To investigate nature, to have a first premonition of her high laws, then to comment, to verify, to assure oneself about these laws, to find them now confirmed a thousand times and newly applied; to perceive finally the same wisest rule, the same holy necessity everywhere, to fall in love, to educate oneself, precisely this accounts for what a man's life is worth. For, dear *Theano*, are we only spectators, are we not actors ourselves, participants in nature and her emulators? Is it not true that hate and love

rules in the empire of men? And are not both equally necessary for the formation of the whole? He who cannot hate cannot love; he just has to learn to hate properly and to love properly. There is a point of indifference among men; but this is, thank God, within the entire magnetic axis only one point.

[...]

Notes

Introduction

1. Martin Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens: University of Ohio Press, 1985). See Walter Schulz, *Die Vollendung des deutschen Idealismus in der Spätphilosophie Schellings* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1975); Manfred Frank, *Der unendliche Mangel an Sein* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1992); Slavoj Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder: An Essay on Schelling and Related Matters* (London: Verso, 1996). We should note that, of these authors, only Heidegger and Žižek focus on the *Philosophical Investigations*, while Frank makes no attempt to hide his distaste.
2. This is not to say, however, that the *Philosophical Investigations* has not received attention as an attempt at theodicy: see, for example, Friedrich Hermanni, *Die letzte Entlastung: Vollendung und Scheitern des abendländischen Theodizeeprojekts in Schellings Philosophie* (Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 1994).
3. Richard Bernstein, *Radical Evil: A Philosophical Investigation* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2002), 3–4. But see Odo Marquard, “Unburdenings: Theodicy Motives in Modern Philosophy,” in *In Defense of the Accidental*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (New York: Oxford UP, 1991), 8–28. For another opposing view, see Joseph Laurence’s excellent essay, “Schelling’s Metaphysics of Evil,” in *The New Schelling*, ed. Judith Norman and Alistair Welchman (London: Continuum, 2004), 167–189.
4. Heidegger’s influence here, as elsewhere, is probably determinative, since he did not take the theodical aspect of the *Philosophical Investigations* seriously, considering it the “package in which ‘the problem of evil’ is passed around” and that it would be better to refer to the *Philosophical Investigations* as an attempt at “systemadicy” [*Systemadicee*] (Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise*, 15).
5. Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder*, 42.
6. But this may be a less justifiable statement now given the steep increase in interest in Schelling exhibited by a series of new translations and essay collections including *The New Schelling* and *Schelling Now*. See *The New Schelling* above as well as *Schelling Now: Contemporary Readings*, ed. Jason M. Wirth (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2005). Also see the recent collection of essays in German devoted to Schelling’s remarkable and influential concept of personality: *Alle Persönlichkeit ruht auf einem dunkeln Grunde: Schellings Philosophie der*

Persönlichkeit, eds. Thomas Buchheim and Friedrich Hermanni (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004).

7. Leibniz writes:

Mathematics or the art of measuring can elucidate such things very nicely, for everything in nature is, as it were, set out in number, measure and weight or force. If, for example, one sphere meets another sphere in free space and if one knows their sizes and their paths and directions before collision, one can then foretell and calculate how they will rebound and what course they will take after the impact. Such splendid laws also apply, no matter how many spheres are taken or whether objects are taken other than spheres. From this one sees then that everything proceeds mathematically—that is, infallibly—in the whole wide world, so that if someone could have sufficient insight into the inner parts of things, and in addition had remembrance and intelligence enough to consider all the circumstances and to take them into account, he would be a prophet and would see the future in the present as in a mirror.

This is quoted in Ernst Cassirer’s book *Determinism and Indeterminism in Modern Physics*. Cassirer comments that the “same infallibility that discloses itself in mathematical thought and inference must obtain in nature, for if nature did not possess this infallibility it would be inaccessible to mathematical thought. In this mode of argument there is expressed the characteristic subjective fervor that inspired the first founders and champions of classical rationalism.” It is worthwhile to add that the essence of the modern striving to mathematize nature is an overcoming of the reticence of Greek and Christian culture in regard to the possibility of obtaining true knowledge, the prerogative of the gods or God. See, E. Cassirer, *Determinism and Indeterminism in Modern Physics: Historical and Systematic Studies of the Problem of Causality* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1956), 11–12. See also Martin Heidegger, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, trans. Michael Heim (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984), 37–50, 57–69.

8. Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983), 55–56.
9. Martin Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1991), 3–9.
10. Hermanni argues persuasively for the distinctive innovation of Leibniz’s approach in regard to the traditional privation theory of evil. See Friedrich Hermanni, “Die Positivität des Malum: Die Privationstheorie und ihre Kritik in der neuzeitlichen Philosophie,” in *Die Wirklichkeit des Bösen*, ed. Peter Koslowski and Friedrich Hermanni (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1998), 49–55.
11. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975), 42–43. See, in this connection, Marquard, “Unburdenings,” 14–17 and Wilhelm G. Jacobs,

- “Die Theodizeeproblematik in der Sicht Schellings,” in *Studia Leibnitiana*, Supp 26, 1986, 217.
12. G. W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977), 19.
 13. Here is a close connection between Hegel and Goethe, one that helps to explain the effusive letter that is the centerpiece of Karl Löwith’s account of their relationship in his *From Nietzsche to Hegel*. See Karl Löwith, *From Nietzsche to Hegel: The Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought*, trans. David E. Green (New York: Columbia UP, 1964), 3–6.
 14. See Bernstein, *Radical Evil*, 46. Also see William Desmond, “Dialectic and Evil,” in *Beyond Hegel and Dialectic: Speculation, Cult and Comedy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 189–250.
 15. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion: Volume III, The Consummate Religion*, trans. R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson, and J. M. Stewart, with the assistance of H. S. Harris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 301. The key passage on p. 301 reads:

Being evil is located in the act of cognition, in consciousness. And certainly, as we already said earlier, being evil resides in cognitive knowledge; cognition is the source of evil. For cognition or consciousness means in general a judging or dividing, a self-distinguishing within oneself. Animals have no consciousness, they are unable to make distinctions within themselves, they have no free being-for-self in the face of objectivity generally. The cleavage, however, is what is evil; it is the contradiction. It contains the two sides: good and evil. Only in this cleavage is evil contained and hence it is itself evil. Therefore it is entirely correct to say that good and evil are first to be found in consciousness.
 16. This seems to be one of the strands in the critique of Enlightenment that stems from Horkheimer and Adorno. See Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2002).
 17. The paradigmatic modern example of this kind of questioning starts and ends with Auschwitz, which seems to mock any notion of theodicy in the traditional sense or even in the peculiar Nietzschean sense of the eternal return.
 18. See Susan Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002), 62. Also see Bernstein, *Radical Evil*, 11–45 and, for a more wide-ranging discussion, Gordon E. Michalson, Jr., *Fallen Freedom: Kant on Radical Evil and Moral Regeneration* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990).
 19. See Robert Pippin, *Modernism as a Philosophical Problem*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 45.
 20. See Michalson, *Fallen Freedom*, 107–124.
 21. See, for example, the opening paragraphs of *The Misfortunes of Virtue*, an early (and much tamer) draft of *Justine*. D. A. F. de Sade, *The Misfortunes of Virtue*, trans. David Coward (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992), 1–2.

22. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 292.
23. See Laurence, “Schelling’s Metaphysics of Evil,” 171.
24. This is a crucial aspect of Miklos Vetö’s provocative (and monumental) study of German Idealism. See Miklos Vetö, *De Kant à Schelling: Les deux voies de l’Idéalisme allemand*, 2 vols. (Grenoble: Editions Jérôme Millon, 1978).
25. Michalson, *Fallen Freedom*, 17.
26. Concerning the notion of the “Kantian paradox,” see Robert Pippin, “Hegel’s Practical Philosophy: The Realization of Freedom,” in *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 192 and Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 59–60; for the more radical position regarding Kantian rhetoric, see Stanley Rosen, *Hermeneutics as Politics* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987), 3–18.
27. Schelling addresses this issue in the “Preface” to the *Philosophical Investigations*, where he refers to an important work which, unfortunately, has not been translated, the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* (1801). For further background, see F. W. J. Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature*, trans. Errol E. Harris and Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), especially Schelling’s introduction at pp. 9–55, and F. W. J. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, trans. Keith R. Peterson (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).
28. Regarding the meaning of ground, see Jason M. Wirth, *The Conspiracy of Life: Meditations on Schelling and His Time* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 165–168.
29. Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder*, 39, 45.
30. Is this merely a curious transfer of the “Kantian paradox” to God? It would seem so, especially if any homology is to be maintained between God and man—a homology that would in fact seem necessary for there to be any relation between them (otherwise one returns to the problem of the relation between finite and infinite).
31. Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder*, 64.
32. Simone de Beauvoir, “Must We Burn Sade?,” in D. A. F. de Sade, *The 120 Days of Sodom and Other Writings*, trans. Austryn Wainhouse and Richard Seaver (New York: Grove Press, 1966), 3–64.
33. Wirth, *The Conspiracy of Life*, 170.
34. See Laurence, “Schellings Metaphysics of Evil,” 171–172.
35. See Hermann’s elegant characterization of Schelling’s theodicy as a two-stage process. Hermann, *Die Entlastung*, 15–26. Also see Christoph Schulte, *Radikal böse: Die Karriere des Bösen von Kant bis Nietzsche* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1991), 236–241.
36. Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise*, 161.
37. See Hermann, *Die Entlastung*, 19–23, 73–113.
38. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Marion Faber (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998), 8–9 (section 1, aphorism 6).

39. See Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought*, 62.
40. It is important to keep in mind that Schelling is hardly an irrationalist. Despite all his changes, his Protean philosophical personality, he never abandoned his essential adherence to understanding the nature of rationality. See Dale E. Snow, *Schelling and the End of Idealism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).
41. F. W. J. Schelling, *The Ages of the World*, trans. Jason Wirth (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 90.

Translators' Note

1. See F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophical Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom*, trans. James Gutmann (La Salle: Open Court, 1936), 34. See also Priscilla Hayden-Roy's more recent (1987) translation in which she uses the terms "ruleless" and "something ruleless" to translate, respectively, "regellos" and "das Regellose." F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and Related Matters*, trans. Priscilla Hayden-Roy (New York: Continuum, 1987), 238.
2. See "Translator's Introduction," in Schelling, *The Ages of the World*, xxxi–xxxii.
3. See F. W. J. Schelling, *The Abyss of Freedom/Ages of the World*, trans. Judith Norman (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), 112.
4. F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände*, ed. Thomas Buchheim (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1997). We have followed Buchheim's practice of giving the pagination of the German original both in the first edition, designated as "OA," and in the *Collected Works* compiled by Schelling's son and designated here as "SW." See F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände in Philosophische Schriften* (Philipp Krüll: Landshut, 1809), 397–511 and in *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. K. F. A. Schelling vol. VII (J. G. Cotta: Stuttgart, 1856–1861), 336–416.

We have also used Buchheim's very useful divisional headings for our notes to the *Philosophical Investigations*. But, since these headings are not in Schelling's original text, we have avoided inserting them into the main body of our translation.

Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and Matters Connected Therewith

Preface to the First Edition

1. The *Philosophical Investigations* first appeared in 1809 in volume 1 of what was to be a collected edition of Schelling's writings published by Philipp Krüll in Landshut. No further volumes were in fact published. Indeed, Schelling published only one other substantial work in his lifetime, a

polemic against Jacobi called, *F. W. J. Schelling's Memorial to Mr. Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi's Writing on the Divine Things etc. and to the Accusation Made against Him Therein Regarding an Intentionally Deceiving and Lying Atheism* (*F. W. J. Schellings Denkmal der Schrift von den göttlichen Dingen usw. des Herrn Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi und der ihm in derselben gemachten Beschuldigung eines absichtlich täuschenden, Lüge redenden Atheismus*), which appeared in 1812.

The other writings collected in the volume represent a selection from the very beginning of Schelling's philosophical activity, *Of the I as Principle of Philosophy or on the Unconditioned in Human Knowledge* (1795)—Schelling's second major work, which he published at the age of twenty—*Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism* (1795), *The Treatises in Explanation of the Doctrine of Science* (1796–1797), along with a later work, his speech, *On the Relation of the Fine Arts to Nature* (1807). The ten-year lacuna (from 1797 to 1807) represented here is remarkable and poses a question that Schelling himself answers somewhat cryptically in the “Preface.” This cryptic answer emerges by inference from Schelling's claim that the *Philosophical Investigations* is the first treatise “in which the author puts forth his concept of the ideal part of philosophy with complete determinateness.” The inference is that the other works included in the volume show different stages of the development of Schelling's concept of the ideal part of philosophy and, therefore, offer an interpretative path into the heart of the *Philosophical Investigations*. This inference seems to be more persuasive when one takes into account Schelling's focus on the philosophy of nature between 1797 and 1800 and that he seems to regard two other important treatises, the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* (1801) and *Philosophy and Religion* (1804), as more or less unsuccessful precursors to the *Philosophical Investigations*.

This self-interpretation may seem somewhat disingenuous to those who emphasize “Protean” discontinuity in Schelling's work rather than its continuity (see Xaver Tilliette, *Schelling: une philosophie en devenir*, vol. 1 [Paris: J. Vrin, 1970], 12–13). For many among the former, the *Philosophical Investigations* is more representative of a rupture in Schelling's thought that lays the foundation for the investigations of the late philosophy. According to a typical periodization of Schelling's work that emphasizes rupture rather than continuity, one identifies an early “Fichtean” period (1794–1797), followed by the natural philosophy (1797–1800), the philosophy of identity (1801–1804), and, finally, after a period of transition that ends with the *Philosophical Investigations*, the late philosophy starting with the *Ages of the World* (1811–1854). But one ignores Schelling's self-interpretation at one's own risk; at the very least, Schelling's apparent willingness to place the *Philosophical Investigations* in a direct line of investigation stemming from his earliest major writings evinces a plea for continuity, and, if continuity is based as much on the nature of the problem to be solved as on the solutions proffered, this plea

- should not be dismissed lightly. In this respect, Heidegger’s own somewhat exaggerated claim about Schelling, that “there was seldom a thinker who fought so passionately ever since his earliest periods for his one and unique standpoint,” is worth taking seriously even though one may argue (as with most of Heidegger’s grand assertions about other thinkers) that it applies more to Heidegger himself (Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise*, 6).
2. This journal is the *Philosophical Journal of a Society of German Scholars* (*Philosophisches Journal einer Gesellschaft deutscher Gelehrten*) that served as a principal conduit of the Fichtean line of idealism at Jena and was edited by Fichte along with Immanuel Niethammer (1766–1848). Schelling’s early publication in this journal is a sign of his being considered a proper follower of Fichte.
 3. This academic speech was given on October 12, 1807 for a celebration in honor of the nameday of King Maximilian I at the Bavarian Academy of Sciences (of which Schelling was a prominent member).
 4. Schelling is referring to Kant’s *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (*Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft*) (1786) and, in particular, to Kant’s dynamic theory of matter, which had considerable influence on Schelling as his first foray into *Naturphilosophie*, the *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature* (1797) shows, especially in the discussion of matter set out in Book II. Kant’s thinking proved attractive to Schelling because Kant does not consider matter to be some lifeless substrate but rather a balance of attractive and repelling forces that are in fact the condition for the very possibility of matter as such; in other words, matter is intrinsically dynamic, a tissue woven of opposing forces and not a sort of static, homogenous “non-thing” that is the basis of things. (Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, trans. Michael Friedman [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004], 62–74.)
 5. The *Journal for Speculative Physics* (*Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*) was edited by Schelling and intended to be a forum for the propagation and discussion of the philosophy of nature. The journal did not last very long. Indeed, only two volumes were produced, one in 1800, the other in 1801. Schelling abandoned the journal due to a disagreement with his publisher, Christian Gabler (1770–1821).

The Investigation

Introduction

6. The expression translated here as “scientific worldview” is “*wissenschaftliche Weltansicht*.” In his 1936 lectures on the *Philosophical Investigations*, Heidegger comments on the notion of “science” [*Wissenschaft*] relevant to German Idealism:

In the age of German Idealism, science (*Wissenschaft*) means primarily and truly the same as philosophy, that knowledge which knows the last and the first grounds, and in accordance with this fundamental knowledge presents what is essential in everything

knowable in a reasoned-out essential connection. In this sense Fichte uses the term “Doctrine of Science” (the science of science—the philosophy of philosophy) for his major work. Hegel speaks of the “System of Science” (First part; *The Phenomenology of Spirit*), of the *Science of Logic*.

Heidegger proceeds further to discuss the notion of a “worldview”:

The coinage of this term “world view” (*Weltanschauung*) comes from Kant, and he uses it in the *Critique of Judgment*. The term has there a still narrower and more definite meaning: it means the immediate experience of what is given to the senses, of appearances . . . Man is the *Cosmotheoros* (world onlooker) who himself creates the element of world cognition a priori from which as a world inhabitant he fashions world contemplation at the same time in the Idea . . . But behind this use of the word “world,” lurks an ambiguity which becomes apparent in the question of how many worlds there can be. There can only be One World, if world equals the totality of things. But there is a plurality of worlds if world is always a perspective of totality . . .

It is the direction of this second meaning of the concept of world, which we can grasp as the opening of totality, always in a definite direction and thus limited, that Schelling’s use of the concepts “world” and “world view” takes. (Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise*, 16–17)

7. This has often been taken to be an allusion to Jacobi. (See, e.g., the second excerpt from Jacobi included in this volume, at XXII.) The importance of Jacobi for the *Philosophical Investigations* is a question of some moment, and at least one scholar has suggested that Jacobi’s thinking about freedom had a decisive impact on Schelling. (See Siegbert Peetz, *Die Freiheit im Wissen* [Frankfurt a. M.: Klostermann Verlag, 1995], 11–13.) Others have suggested that Schelling refers to Friedrich Schlegel as well and, in particular, to his so-called *Indierbuch*, *On the Language and Wisdom of the Indian People* (*Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*). See, for example, Horst Fuhrmans’s note on this section in his edition of the *Philosophical Investigations*. (F. W. J. Schelling, *Über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit*, ed. Horst Fuhrmans [Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1961], 139–140)
8. The original reads in Bury’s translation (slightly modified):

For the Grammarian and the ordinary man will suppose that the philosopher gave utterance to these sayings out of boastfulness [*kat’alazdoneian*] and contempt for the rest of mankind,—a thing alien to one who is even moderately versed in philosophy, not to speak of a man of such eminence. But the man who sets out from physical investigation knows clearly that the dogma “like is known by like” is nothing but an old one which is thought to have come down from Pythagoras and is found also in Plato’s *Timaeus*; and it was stated much earlier by Empedocles himself,—

We behold earth through earth and water through water
 Divine ether through ether, destructive fire through fire
 Love through love, hate through grievous hate.

Such a man will understand that Empedocles called himself a god because he alone had kept his mind free from evil and unmud-died and by means of the god within him apprehended the god without. (Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Professors*, trans. R. G. Bury, vol. 4 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP (Loeb Classical Library), 1949], 174–177)

9. In this connection, Buchheim cites a passage from Fichte's *Doctrine of Science* in which Fichte notes that "[t]he theoretical part of our Doctrine of Science . . . is in fact, as will be shown at the proper time, systematic Spinozism except that each I is itself the sole highest substance . . ." (See F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände*, ed. Thomas Buchheim [Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2000], 93, n20, hereinafter referred to as *PU*, and J. G. Fichte, *Fichtes Werke*, ed. I. H. Fichte [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter (reprint), 1971], I:122.
10. In this section Schelling outlines three central ways in which pantheism as the "doctrine of the immanence of things in God" can be misinterpreted by misunderstanding the meaning of immanence. They may be summarized as follows:
 - (a) God is the same as things, yet, due to the fact that things only exist in a derived way, as a result of God's existence, they simply cannot be the same as God and, taken all together, cannot amount to God—here the qualitative difference vitiates the possibility of quantitative equality.
 - (b) Individual things are the same as God, yet, due to the qualitative difference between things and God, this also cannot hold, for how can there be a "derivative God," how can a thing be derivative and God, dependent and independent? Here Schelling moves to discuss the copula which has been interpreted as creating a false unity or sameness [*Einerleiheit*] between subject and predicate.
 - (c) Things are nothing, yet, if this is so, how can they be said to be "in" God, indeed, how can they be said to be? The relation simply collapses in empty identity, God is God.
11. The German reads: "*Wie kann nun die Lehre notwendig mit der Freiheit streiten, welche so viele in Ansehung des Menschen behauptet haben, gerade um die Freiheit zu retten?*" Here the referent of *welche* is arguably ambiguous and, hence, the sentence may also be read as: "Now, how can the doctrine, which so many have asserted in regard to man precisely in order to save freedom, necessarily be at odds with freedom?"
12. We have chosen to translate *das Geschöpf* by "created being" with the intention of differentiating it from *die Kreatur*, which we translate as the creature(s), and the more general *Wesen* when used simply to refer to a being or beings. Despite this recognition of difference in our translation,

the fact is that the difference between Schelling’s use of the native German *das Geschöpf* and Latinized *die Kreatur* is simply not clear.

13. In this and the preceding sentence, Schelling seems to be referring primarily to Leibniz rather than to the logic of the ancients which, in this context, can only be considered a reference to Aristotle (since knowledge of other streams of thought about logic in antiquity seems to have been still quite rudimentary in Schelling’s time). And Schelling is likely speaking of the logic of identity as inclusion, that the predicate is contained in the subject (“*verum est affirmatum, cuius praedicatum inest subjecto*”), which plays a foundational role in Leibniz’s thought and, in particular, in his thought regarding freedom. If the subject contains all its possible predicates; if, in other words, the subject merely needs to be unfolded or, as we say, “unpacked,” then there are two broad possibilities for such “unpacking”: (1) that the subject is “closed,” all predicates may be deduced from the subject alone; and (2) that the subject is “open,” all predicates may not be deduced from the subject alone but show themselves to be within it only in time. The difference here is essentially one between truths of reason and truths of fact, *a priori* and *a posteriori*, to borrow Kant’s terms. But it is important to keep in mind that, for Leibniz, in both cases the subject does contain its predicates as an antecedent, as their basis or *subjectum* (Gr: *hupokeimenon*, or “that which lies under”). The upshot of this, as Heidegger notes, is an essentially “aprioristic” way of conceiving the world (as a propositional matrix in which all propositions may ultimately resolve themselves into identities—a position the *Philosophical Investigations* puts in question) that nonetheless recognizes the difference in *quality* between divine and human knowledge, the former immediate and intuitive, the latter bound to time and, in this sense, discursive. (See Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Opuscles et fragments inédits*, ed. Louis Couturat [Paris: Félix Alcan, 1903], 16–24 and Heidegger, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, 47–50.) The further reference to the relation of subject and predicate as one of “enfolded” to “unfolded” seems to be derived from Giordano Bruno (1548–1600) according to Buchheim (Buchheim, *PU*, 97, n41).
14. The German reads: “*Spinozas härtester Ausdruck is wohl der: das einzelne Wesen sei die Substanz selbst, in einer ihrer Modifikationen, d.h. Folgen, betrachtet.*” Schelling’s richness of reference here may be somewhat attenuated if one translates the German *Folge* by “effect” suggesting as it may the very essence of the separation of agent and effect that is in question. Spinoza says of this relation (in *Ethics* I, Prop. VIII, Scholium 2):

For, by substance they would understand that which exists in itself and is conceived for itself, that is, that of which knowledge does not require knowledge of any other thing. By modifications, however, that which is in another and of which the concept is formed on the basis of the concept of that in which the modifications exist.

[*Nam per substantiam intelligerent id, quod in se est et per se concipitur, hoc est id, cujus cognitio non indiget cognitione alterius rei. Per modificationes autem id, quod in alio est et quarum conceptus a conceptu rei, in qua sunt, formatur.*]

The relation between substance and modification thus seems to encompass that of efficient, formal and material causes, three of the tetrad of Aristotelian causes (the *causa finalis* being the other), and that is why we have chosen the somewhat vaguer and arguably broader “consequence” to replace the more common “effect.” Moreover, in this way we are attempting to anticipate Schelling’s own rejection of causality in the relation of ground and existence which has a cloying structural similarity—at least on the surface—to that of substance and modification as Schelling describes it.

15. See Jacobi’s comments on this in the first Jacobi excerpt included in this volume, namely:

Lessing: . . . Now, according to what ideas do you believe the opposite of Spinozism? Do you find that the *Principia* by Leibniz put an end to it?

I. How could I in view of the firm conviction that the incisive determinist does not differ from the fatalist? . . . The monads together with their *vincula* [bonds] leave extension and thinking, **reality** in general, as incomprehensible to me as before, and there I know neither right nor left. It seems to me as if, ultimately, a confidence trick were being played on me . . . For that matter, I don’t know of any doctrinal edifice that would agree as much with Spinozism as that of Leibniz; and it would be difficult to say which one of these authors fooled us and himself the most; with all due respect! . . . Mendelssohn proved publicly that the *harmonia praestabilita* is in Spinoza. From this alone it already follows that Spinoza must contain much more of Leibniz’s basic doctrines, or else Leibniz and Spinoza (on the basis of whose doctrine Wolff’s lessons would hardly have flourished) would not have been the striking minds [*Köpfe*] that they indisputably were. I dare to explain on the basis of Spinoza Leibniz’s complete doctrine concerning the soul . . .

16. See note 14 above. The terminology used here seems to be derived from Kant and, indeed, it seems to be taken from a passage in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, (A73/B99). (Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998], 208)
17. The German reads: “*Wäre das in einem andern Begriffenes, d.h. es wäre nichts begriffen.*” Here, as in the preceding two sentences, Schelling plays on the meaning of *begreifen* as both “to grasp” or “to understand” and, in the sense of *Begriffensein*, “to be included” or “to be contained.” Since the German wordplay cannot be captured literally in English, we have chosen with hesitance to maintain the latter meaning in the text over the former, while in the German a homology between

the two is effortlessly suggested, particularly in the sentence we cite here. Moreover, the notion of containment advanced here refers back somewhat ironically to the preceding discussion of the subject-predicate relation, where the predicate is said to be contained (*in esse*) in the subject.

18. See Boehme's *Mysterium pansophicum* included in this volume. Snow comments appositely on this sentence:

This conjures up an almost irresistible picture of God as an unspeakably prolific author who is gazing in amazement at the antics of the characters with whom he has peopled the vast fiction of the world. The German expression *für sich fortwirkend*, which is translated by Gutmann as “works on in its own way,” might more felicitously and idiomatically be rendered as “takes on a life of its own”; this seems to me to better capture the sense of the burgeoning autonomy of both ideas and human individuals to which Schelling is referring, and which forms an important basis for the concept of personality. (Snow, *End of Idealism*, 155)

19. The German reads: “*Gott schaut die Dinge an sich an.*” Our translation interprets the German quite literally rather than using the arguably more appropriate translation through the verb “intuit,” which would read: “God intuit things in themselves.” The problem here stems primarily from the translation of the noun *Anschauung* as “intuition,” which has become customary in translations of Kant where the term describes an immediate “looking” or “gazing at” what is, the way of receiving impressions from the senses whose two fundamental *a priori* forms are space and time. This translation itself seems to be indebted to the description of divine knowledge as a kind of immediate seeing (*visio Dei*) that one finds in scholastic texts; there the Latin *intuitus* is merely the nominal form of the classical deponent verb *intueor*, which means “to look upon” or “to gaze at.” This linkage is not at all clear, however, when one uses “intuit” or “intuition” in English where the association with the simple act of looking has become quite obscure. We sought to restore this association and the link with the immediacy of vision as that of the “eye of the mind” that runs through the entire tradition from Plato on—after all, the word “idea” is derived from the aorist infinitive of the Attic Greek verb “to see” (*idein*).
20. The reference here is somewhat obscure, but it is likely that Schelling means the more aggressive expressions of French materialism such as the writings of Baron d’Holbach and La Mettrie whose influential work, *L’Homme machine*, is one of the most starkly mechanistic visions of this current of thought. In general, the thrust of Schelling’s *Naturphilosophie* is to undermine the mechanist view of nature projected by Newtonian physics and its various derivatives. And there is little question that the more radically materialist thinkers among the *philosophes* of the French Enlightenment not only supported Newtonian physics but sought to “purify” it of its connection to the deity and, in doing so, they created a vision of a law-abiding but purposeless universe, one that has no regard

for human ends, that is essentially anti-anthropomorphic. (See Lester G. Crocker, *Nature and Culture: Ethical Thought in the French Enlightenment* [Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1963], 3–35.)

21. Once again, Jacobi is the target. But it should be noted that the allusion to Jacobi is by no means simply negative. The relationship between Schelling and Jacobi (who was Schelling's immediate superior as President of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences) seems to have been cordial at first, and at least one commentator has suggested that there was a vibrant intellectual exchange between the two that has not yet been given its proper due (Peetz, *Die Freiheit im Wissen*, 77). Nonetheless, relations became increasingly strained, ending with the complete break of 1812 in the so-called third pantheism debate.
22. Pygmalion's story is recorded both in Apollodorus (III.14.3) and Ovid (*Metamorphoses* X. 243 passim). He fell in love with Aphrodite (Venus) and made an image of her which he placed in his bed because she would not sleep with him. He prayed to her for pity, and she breathed life into the image as Galatea who bore him a son, Paphos.
23. The German reads: "*In dieser (der Freiheit) wurde behauptet, finde sich der letzte potenzierende Akt, wodurch sich die ganze Natur in Empfindung, in Intelligenz, endlich in Willen verkläre.*" Buchheim notes a basic reference here to the conception of potencies set out in the *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800) where the "whole sequence of the transcendental philosophy is based merely upon a continual raising of self-intuition to increasingly higher powers [*potenzieren*], from the first and simplest exercise of self-consciousness, to the highest, namely the aesthetic." The final "empowering" act is at once the most free, creative and necessitated—it is the union of freedom and necessity. (See F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism [1800]*, trans. Peter Heath [Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1978], 233.)
24. This is an extremely radical and enigmatic statement within the whole of the *Philosophical Investigations* because it brings up in its way the question of authority. For if there is "no other Being than will" what is there? In other words, if will is all that is, then how can there be anything outside will; namely, how can there be any authority beyond will? If this is at the heart of what Schelling is in fact telling us, he runs into a great problem, one that besets any way of thinking that does not grant primary authority to thought. If thinking is not primary, then what is it if not dependent? If thinking is dependent, then whence the synoptic view of freedom that the philosopher seems to offer us—is that not an act of will in itself?

Schelling avoids this question (while raising it again in another form) by equating the will of primal Being with God. Yet, such an answer does not give us much insight into the authority presumed by the thinker in presenting this view. The issue did not escape notice by Schelling's contemporaries. Even though mentioned in a slightly different context—that of Schelling's concept of intellectual intuition—Hegel's criticism of

this notion of intuition (quoted at length in Snow’s excellent treatment of the issue) is indicative:

[S]ince the immediate presupposition in Philosophy is that individuals have the immediate intuition of this identity of subjective and objective, this gave the philosophy of Schelling the appearance of indicating that the presence of this intuition in individuals demanded a special talent, genius, or condition of mind of their own, or as though it were generally speaking an accidental faculty which pertained to the specifically favored few. (Snow, *End of Idealism*, 63)

The notion of genius as special talent seems well suited to the kind of authority enjoyed by the author of the *Philosophical Investigations* as well. In other words, if the synoptic view set forth by Schelling here is not to be taken as merely a creation of the philosopher, thereby eliminating the distance between philosopher and artist, then it must be taken as the product of genius in the sense of an immediate apprehension or intuition of the whole—philosophic genius becomes vatic and prophetic with the philosopher bearing the vision of the truth vouchsafed to him by virtue of his genius. Few positions could have been more offensive to Hegel for whom reason holds the promise of equality (as something accessible to all rational beings despite differences in acuity) and for whom intuition is thus a fickle and arbitrary master, an imposition of unquestionable authority that differs little from the visions of prophets and madmen.

This question of authority hangs over the *Philosophical Investigations*. If there is nothing higher than will, nothing to regulate will, then how can one come to any other conclusion? Either Schelling purports to speak on behalf of the divine will, thus taking on the mantle of the vatic artist and prophet, or he is speaking on his own behalf in which case he claims to be a god or *cosmourgos*, the philosopher-artist as world-maker. In either case, philosophy as rational apprehension of the whole has come to an end as an act of discovery (if it indeed ever was) and has become instead an act of poetry.

25. Here we chose to translate the German *Ichheit* following the example of Daniel Breazeale’s authoritative translations of Fichte. See, for example, J. G. Fichte, *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), xxxvi.
26. This is an intimation of the crucial distinction in Schelling’s late philosophy between negative and positive philosophy. Edward Beach succinctly and judiciously describes this distinction as well as the interrelation of the two different kinds of philosophy:

The next important step towards this goal [of constructing a rationally coherent metaphysics—our note] is to distinguish between abstract essence (*quidditas*) and concrete “thatness” (*quodditas*) . . . As we have seen, it is Schelling’s position that the essence, logical structure, or “whatness” (*Was*) of the universe—and even of God himself—is, in principle, a bare possibility, which either could exist

or not exist. The “thatness” (or *Daß*), on the other hand, Schelling defines as the pure fiat on which being, as well as the very possibility of being, depends. The *Daß* he regards as the transcendent Cause of existence and therefore as standing at the pinnacle of the universal chain of being. Thus, although Schelling argues (in his critique, along Kantian lines, of the ontological proof) that the *Daß* of God is not deducible *a priori* from his essence, yet this still leaves open the option of establishing God’s essence by *a posteriori* means and on the basis of his *Daß*.

This consideration suggests to Schelling a new line of approach to the philosophies of religion and mythology. Corresponding to the distinction between the essence and the *Daß*, he divides his system into two separate, yet complementary branches: the “negative” and the “positive.” The task of the negative philosophy is to define and order the various possibilities of things—that is, to determine their formal structures considered exclusively *as* possibilities, but without reference to whether or not they actually exist. The highest order of possibility is that of a pure actuality which . . . transcends the very limits of thinkability—if indeed it exists at all. This is the possibility of the *Daß*. But the actuality of the *Daß* must be intuited directly. The positive philosophy, accordingly, begins with the “experience” of immediate existence in and through the *Daß*, and proceeds from there, in tandem with the negative philosophy, to establish when and how the bare possibilities become concrete actualities.

Schelling characterizes the negative branch as “rational philosophy,” insofar as it deals with the purely possible. Yet the term “rational” is somewhat misleading, for among the possibilities to be considered are those of a nonrational ground (i.e., blind nature, or chaos) and of a suprarational, ordering directive (the will of God). Both of these, for different but related reasons, are supposed to escape rational determination; indeed, they are literally inconceivable. And yet the thought of their being inconceivable can and must be conceived. Thus, the negative philosophy, as understood by Schelling, paradoxically includes within itself the concept of a reality transcending all conceptual determinations, as well as the rationale of a struggle with the powers of unreason. Similarly, the positive philosophy represents the actuality of that struggle as revealed in human history, a process hopefully leading to the final triumph of reason over blind nature. In this way, the positive and negative philosophies are mutually to reinforce each other in the search for truth. (Edward Beach, *The Potencies of God(s): Schelling’s Philosophy of Mythology* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994], 107)

27. In this section of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Schelling presents three characterizations of evil in order to evaluate the possibility of freedom within God as a capacity for good and evil:

(a) Immanence: admitting freedom to do evil leads to the denial of God's benevolence and omnipotence, while to deny the freedom to do evil simply denies freedom *tout court*.

(b) *Concursus Dei*: even the most distant connection between God and creatures suggests a level of participation in their actions; otherwise God cannot retain omnipotence. Hence, God must share responsibility for evil actions which offends the notion of benevolence, of God's essential goodness. To deny this participation is to deny any positive ontological status to evil, to deny evil and, thus, to deny freedom once again.

(c) Emanation: evil as an estrangement or fall from God is riddled with inconsistencies. The most important among these relate to the origin of a falling away from God. If that origin is in God (he casts them out), then he is responsible for evil and his benevolence is impugned; if that origin is in creatures, then God must still be responsible, impugning his benevolence, for, if he is not, then he is no longer omnipotent and one has declared another origin of evil; if the origin is neither in God nor creatures, then the entire structure fails. Moreover, if evil is what is farthest from God, what is it? If it is as that which is not, it still is. Hence, evil even as privation of being has a curious being that is more than just the effluvium of a debating trick.

In each case, the compatibility of freedom (as the capacity to do evil) with God's omnipotence, omniscience and benevolence is shown to be impossible without eliminating freedom. Moreover, to assert freedom then becomes indistinguishable from a denial of God's complete authority that can only give rise to the suggestion that there may be another contrary authority (in evil).

Here Schelling is at his most powerful, setting out by means of the equation of freedom and evil the conditions which any monism must meet if it is to admit freedom and avoid a vitiating dualism. In doing so, he engages in a rather veiled placement of Hegel and Kant, as, respectively, primary advocates of monism and dualism, within the terms of the Christian justification of God and, thus, of the whole. The most intriguing result of this tacit placement is the deflation of Hegelianism as a theodicy that cannot perform its task any better than traditional Christian thought due to the denials that it must undertake as a condition of maintaining its essential monism as well as the equally wicked deflation of Kantianism as having three main consequences, a triumphant monism à la Hegel that is both a return to, and departure from, Christian monism, a "monist dualism" of endless struggle or conflict à la Fichte that may euphemistically be termed "asymptotic dualism" (as opposed to merely Sisyphian striving) or a most radical assertion of freedom à la Nietzsche, this final possibility being present only as an implication or anticipation of collapse, but a most prescient one.

28. The relevant passage from Plotinus referred to in Schelling's note reads:

One can grasp the necessity of evil in this way too. Since not only the Good exists, there must be the last end to the process of

going out past it, or if one prefers to put it like this, going down or going away: and this last, after which nothing else can come into being, is evil. Now it is necessary that what comes after the First should exist, and therefore that the Last should exist; and this matter, which possesses nothing at all of the Good. And in this way too evil is necessary. (Plotinus, *Enneads*, trans. A. H. Armstrong, vol. 1 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP (Loeb Classical Library), 1989], 299)

29. This is a distant echo of a famous sentence in *The Critique of Pure Reason* (A51/B75): “Without sensibility no object would be given to us, and without understanding none would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind” (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 193–194).
30. This is a reference to the orgiastic cult of Cybele whose male devotees would attempt to achieve union with her through castrating themselves and dressing like women. See Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), 117.

INVESTIGATION

DEDUCTION FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE

31. Schelling is likely referring primarily to Boehme here.
32. The distinction between being as ground of existence and as existence is crucial to the *Philosophical Investigations*; the entire positive argument of the treatise flows from this distinction. It might be stated right from the start that Schelling makes no argument to support this distinction; rather, he simply asserts it and refers to its first “scientific presentation.” That presentation is found in the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* [*Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie*] from 1801, a work typically associated with Schelling’s “identity philosophy,” and the reference here shows just how porous the periodization of Schelling’s thought can be (see Alan White, *Schelling: An Introduction to the System of Freedom*, [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983], 93 and Snow, *End of Idealism*, 141). Moreover, that reference is to a “scientific” presentation, and at least one commentator has suggested that the *Philosophical Investigations* is an exoteric or “dialogic” exposition of Schelling’s thought which is given more “rigorous” treatment in the foremost published scientific work of this period, the *Presentation of My System* (one presumes here that the model is Aristotle whose dialogues have survived only in rather insubstantial fragments) (White, *System of Freedom*, 93–94). Leaving the question of its supposedly more rigorous nature aside, the *Presentation of My System* does offer a useful *prolegomenon* to elucidation of the distinction between ground and existence, not the least of whose utility is its use of the analogy of gravity to explain the nature of the ground, an analogy that is taken up once again in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

Here are translations of those sections of *Presentation of My System* to which Schelling refers in his first note (the other notes refer to the same sections more generally and arguably add only slightly to what is indicated in this note), where if $A = A$ is the traditional sign of identity, $A = B$ is the sign of identity in difference:

a) Comment to § 54:

It is hardly doubtful that these proofs have left behind several obscurities for many readers. Hence, it could first be asked to what extent gravity could be thought as the ground of the reality of B, since the latter is originary [*ursprünglich*] (§ 44 comment 1). Yet B is only thought as having being or objectivity in relative identity; but relative identity itself is nothing real (§ 51). B thus, just like A, only becomes real in so far as it is posited together with A objectively, consequently in relative totality. Accordingly, gravity is just as much ground from A as from B. As a result, it might be difficult for many to grasp the diverse-seeming relation of forces in absolute identity. In this respect, we make only the following comment: absolute identity is immediate ground of the *primum Existens* [first existing thing] not in itself, but rather through A and B, which are equivalent to it (§53, Supplement 2). But absolute identity is absolutely immediate and *in itself* the ground of the reality of Being of A and B, yet for that very reason absolute identity does not yet *exist* in gravity. For it only exists after A and B are posited as having being. Gravity is for that very reason posited immediately by absolute identity and proceeds not from its *essence* [*Wesen*], nor from its actual *Being* (for this is not yet posited) but rather from its *nature*; from the latter, however, simply and immediately from inner necessity, namely, from the fact that it *exists* unconditionally and cannot *exist* other than in the form of Being of A and B. It is evident (from gravity's being posited *immediately* by absolute identity) that it is impossible to ground gravity as gravity, to seek to present it in its actuality [*Wirklichkeit*], since it must be thought as absolute identity not to the extent this exists, but to the extent it is the ground of its own Being, thus is itself not in actuality. (F. W. J. Schelling, *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, ed. Manfred Durner [Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2001], 368–369)

b) Comment 1 to § 93:

In gravity (§ 54 comment) we indeed had to recognize absolute identity according to its essence, yet not as having being, since gravity is in the latter as the ground of its Being. Absolute identity is not in the cohesiveness, but rather gravity (§ 92) which in itself does not exist. Absolute identity and actuality emerge in light. Gravity flees into eternal night, and absolute identity partially removes the seal under which it is contained, although it is compelled to emerge and, as it were, step into the light as the potency [*in der Potenz*] of A and B, but still as one identical thing. (Schelling, *Zeitschrift*, 386)

c) Explanation to § 145:

It is explained above that we understand by *nature* absolute identity first and foremost to the extent absolute identity exists in the form of A and B *actu* (§ 61). Now absolute identity exists as such, however, only in cohesiveness and the light. But since absolute identity is ground of its own Being as A³ through cohesiveness and the light, just as it was ground of its own Being as A² through gravity, and since it is perhaps as A³ once again ground of its own Being (in a yet higher potency [*Potenz*]), we will be able say in general: by nature we understand absolute identity to the extent it is considered not as having Being, but as ground of its Being, and we foresee from this that we can call nature all things which lie beyond the absolute Being of absolute identity. (Schelling, *Zeitschrift*, 426)

These hints are by no means clear, and we may do better to examine the relation between ground and existence further by looking at the *Philosophical Investigations* themselves. From that standpoint, it is important first of all to reject the many possible binary combinations that may seem to describe the relation such as, for example, that of the infinite to the finite or that of essence to existence or ground to consequence—the latter merely a causal relationship that cannot explain the relation and that carries one back to Schelling's discussion of the relation of God to things.

The relation is rather one of the ground's being a condition or medium through which God's existence first comes to light; it is the condition for the appearance of the light. In this sense, the ground is first recognized as such in terms of the existence of God; thus it does not exist independently of God (although it is "different" from him), nor does it exist prior to God, yet its existence is necessary so that God reveal himself. Hence, the condition of God's existence is itself conditioned, by that existence, and this sort of dialectical relation is a far cry indeed from the other relations mentioned above; it both complies with the basic dogmatic claim of God's eternity, that he must always be, even if that being must also have been before creation, and offers an explanation for the emergence of God (i.e., differentiation) in so far as that emergence is conditional.

Yet, what *is* the ground? Here Schelling's analogy with gravity is quite useful, for it clarifies the nature both of ground and existence. If ground is likened to gravity in its relation to light, then ground is a necessary force of contraction without which the expansion (of light) would not be possible. The roots of this thinking in Schelling's philosophy of nature are clear in so far as the constitutive relation is dyadic and dynamic; however, the tension between ground and existence is not one of attraction and repulsion but rather of contraction and expansion—the movement into the light is one of constant expansion, the movement conditioning this movement as its condition of possibility is one of contraction or self-concealment (here one is reminded of Heraclitus' famous "*phusis*

kruptesthai philei” [nature loves to hide/conceal itself]); each movement is defined with and against the other, they function together harmoniously, and the whole that emerges out of this movement is not comprehensible as a whole without it.

But if ground remains a condition in God, it does not necessarily have to do so in man—this is the great difference between God and man; hence, the danger of man, his inner dissonance, lies in the possibility that the ground may subordinate expansion to itself, that contraction may triumph over expansion by perverting it—in short, that the relation reverses itself in favor of the ground wherein the principle of light and expansion is harnessed to the ground, spirit becomes the voice of ground, the universal the mask of the particular. Here the ground ceases being a condition by which existence may become what it is, but seeks to become that for the sake of which existence becomes what it is, it seeks to become absolute.

The difference between the two is fundamental, it is the basis for the difference between good and evil in the *Philosophical Investigations*, a difference which, as Žižek notes, inheres in the nature of the unity between ground and existence, evil being a unity oriented to the ground’s freeing itself from its own conditionality and good being a unity where ground’s conditionality is retained and affirmed (Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder*, 63).

33. The first edition has a comma before the “it” [“Er”], which is capitalized in the German, and so does the edition from Buchheim, although the latter notes that a period should likely be set here before the “it.” Having interpreted this unusual capitalization as sign of a printing mistake, we have inserted a period instead of a comma.
34. As noted, this analogy is the principal way that the *Presentation of My System* deals with the relation of ground to existence. (See Schelling, *Zeitschrift*, 368–370.)
35. The German reads: “*In dem Zirkel, daraus alles wird, ist es kein Widerspruch, daß das, wodurch das Eine erzeugt wird, selbst wieder von ihm erzeugt werde. Es ist hier kein Erstes und kein Letztes, weil alles sich gegenseitig voraussetzt, keins das andere und doch nicht ohne das andere ist.*”
36. We chose to translate the German *werden* in this and in the preceding sentence literally rather than by a paraphrase like “come into being.” We have done so because we preferred to retain the inherent dynamism of the German even though as English the use of “become” in this way (without a predicate object of becoming) is unnatural.
37. See the excerpt from Boehme in this volume, especially the opening paragraph.
38. The German reads: “*Dennoch ist sie ein Willen des Verstandes . . .*” We read *ein Wille* instead of *ein Willen* and assume the latter is a typographical mistake (found both in the first edition and that of Buchheim). The alternative here would be to read *ein Wollen*, which is also possible, but not likely given the subsequent repetition of *Wille* in the same sentence (see the immediately following note below).

39. *ein ahndender Wille*—we have chosen to translate old *ahnden* (= *ahnen*) by the verb “divine,” and this may well be a somewhat controversial choice. The verb *ahnen* means in general “to foresee,” “to have a presentiment or foreboding of,” or “to suspect.” Gutmann translates the term variously by “prescient” or “anticipating,” both of which are adequate but slightly inaccurate, since they seem to indicate advance access to knowledge, which should not yet be available to the yearning in this case (and that is why “to foresee” is also a problem). Hayden-Roy uses “presentient,” and “presentiment,” which is much closer but carries a sensory element in the adjective that is unwelcome. In their respective translations of *The Ages of the World*, where the verb is featured in the first sentence, Wirth uses “to intimate” and Norman “to divine,” both of which seem to us to be much closer to the mark since they suggest an almost ineffable inkling of something without necessarily freighting that inkling with a notion of foreknowledge that suggests Platonic *anamnēsis*, the recollection of something seen before.
40. Please see the “Translators’ Note” regarding our choice to use “anarchy” and “anarchical” to translate *regellos* and *das Regellose* here instead of Gutmann’s “unruly” and “unruliness.” Once again, we should like to emphasize that the association of this original “unstate” in the ground with darkness, chaos, disorder, and so on, leads us to believe a much stronger term like “anarchy” is a more appropriate translation.
41. This is a striking statement, and one that supports the interpretation of the ground not as an essence or unactualized *quidditas* that remains *in potentia* until some necessarily mysterious triggering moment but as an absence, an inexplicable void.
42. This proverbial expression for those who wrest confusion from clarity is taken from Horace’s *de arte poetica* (at line 143):
- quanto rectius hic, qui nil molitur inepte:
 “dic mihi, Musa, virum, captae post tempora Troiae
 qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes”
 non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem
 cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat,
 Antiphaten, Scyllamque et cum Cyclope Charybdin.
- In prose: How much more correct is he who does not exert himself ineptly—“Tell me, Muse, of the man who saw the cities and ways of many men after the capture of Troy”—and proposes not to give smoke from a flash of light but light from smoke in order to bring forth the splendid and wondrous tales of Antiphates, Scylla, Charybdis, and the Cyclops.
43. Buchheim suggests that the reference to Fichte here pertains to three treatises Fichte wrote between 1804 and 1806, all of which denigrate nature as having being—as being alive—in the same way as the knowing subject. See *Die Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* (1804); *Über das Wesen des Gelehrten* (1805); and *Anweisung zum seligen Leben* (1806)—to the best of our knowledge, none of these works from Fichte’s generally neglected post-Jena period has been translated into English.

44. This reference to John 12:24 has strong epistemological and theodical overtones. For the former, see J. G. Hamann, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. J. Nadler (Vienna: Herder Verlag, 1949–1957), 2:74. The latter are dealt with most famously by Fyodor Dostoevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov* where this verse is the epilogue and guiding thread of the very explicitly theodical narrative (F. M. Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky [New York: Vintage, 1990], 2).
45. This recalls Plato's *Timaeus*:
 Now the nurse [*tithēnē*] of becoming [*geneseos*], having turned watery and fiery and receiving the forms of earth and air as well, and suffering all the other properties that accompany these, assumes every variety of appearance; yet since she is filled with powers that are neither similar nor evenly balanced, none of her is in balance [*ouden autēs isoroppein*]; she sways irregularly in every direction as she herself is shaken by these forms, and as they are set in motion, she in turn shakes them. And as they are moved, they drift continually, in one direction or another, separating from one another. Just as grain sifted and winnowed from sieves or other such instruments [*organa*] used for cleaning grain fall in one place if they are firm and heavy but fly off and settle in another place if they are light. (Plato, *Platonis opera*, ed. J. Burnet, vol. IV [Oxford: Oxford UP (1902) 1978], 52d4–53a2; our translation)
46. For Plato's use of "instrument," see the immediately preceding citation from *Timaeus* (52e7).
47. The German reads: "Weil nämlich dieses Wesen (der anfänglichen Natur) nichts anderes ist als der ewige Grund zur Existenz Gottes, so muß es in sich selbst, obwohl verschlossen, das Wesen Gottes gleichsam als einen im Dunkel der Tiefe leuchtenden Lebensblick enthalten." Here *Wesen* is of particular difficulty. Our translation gives "being" for the first and "essence" for the second use of *Wesen* in this sentence, thus bringing up a thorny issue. This is because the choice is hardly immediate and reveals a serious philosophical problem, an ambiguity or, indeed, an ambivalence that seems to course through the *Philosophical Investigations*. On the one hand, the ground seems to be a sort of primordial chaos, an unknown and unknowable X from which springs the variety of existence and, above all, the existence of God. But if the ground truly is this darkness, then how can God have *an* identity and not *any* identity? Schelling's use of *Wesen* in this sentence implies (at the very least) that there is some identity or essence lying "dormant" in the ground, waiting to escape it into the light. This implication turns against the notion of the ground as a darkness except in so far as it may be obscure to us but clear to God—in other words, is the ground inscrutable in itself or merely due to the limits of human cognitive power? Is God's "unconscious" self, a self that emerges into the light or is it indeed anything at all or are both positions somehow correct depending on the point of view one takes and can take?

48. This recalls Plato's famous wax analogy from *Theaetetus* at 191d2–191e1:
 SOCRATES: Now I want you to suppose, for the sake of the argument, that we have in our souls a block of wax, larger in one person, smaller in another; in some men rather hard, in others soft, while in some it is of the proper consistency.
 THEAETETUS: All right, I'm supposing that.
 SOCRATES: We may look on it, then, as the gift of Memory [*Mnēmosynē*], the mother of the Muses. We make impressions upon this of everything we wish to remember among the things we have seen or heard or thought of ourselves; we hold the wax under our perceptions and thoughts and take a stamp from them, in the way in which we take the imprints of signet rings. Whatever is impressed upon the wax we remember and know so long as the image remains in the wax; whatever is obliterated or cannot be impressed, we forget and do not know. (Plato, *Theaetetus*, trans. M. J. Levett, rev. Myles Burnyeat, in *Complete Works*, ed. John Cooper [Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997], 212)

Deduction of the Possibility of Evil

49. Division is as old as Plato where it is called *diairesis* and forms a major topic of discussion in two of the most important dialogues, *Sophist*, and *The Statesman*. See Martin Heidegger, *Plato's Sophist*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2003) and Stanley Rosen, *Plato's Statesman: The Web of Politics* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1995), 14–36.
50. *Selbstlauter* and *Mitlauter* are the German terms we translate as vowel and consonant. Buchheim (Buchheim, *PU*, 128, n147) indicates that, in the sense employed by Schelling and derived from Boehme (from the *Mysterium magnum*), the terms distinguish the purity of God's "spirit" or "word" as opposed to that of man, which needs to be combined with consonants in order to be heard; in other words, whereas God's voice is pure, the human voice is not. Also see Wirth's comments in his translation of *The Ages of the World* (Schelling, *The Ages of the World [1815]*, 141, n59).
51. "The same unity that is inseverable in God must therefore be severable in man—and this is the possibility of good and evil." This is a central thought in the *Philosophical Investigations*, and it reveals the considerable virtue and ultimate failure of Schelling's attempt to reassert a form of theodicy that, as Friedrich Hermanni remarks, in some ways harkens back to St. Augustine and, in particular, to the *de libero arbitrio* (*On Freedom*), where human freedom is first equated with the will and an encroachment on God's order. (See Friedrich Hermanni, *Die letzte Entlastung*, 20–21.)
 Schelling's position is ambivalent in so far as God cannot fail, cannot collapse whereas man can. This move insulates God against the problems we addressed above (in note 27), but also allows for a much broader concept of evil than those which the tradition explicitly allowed.

52. Archaeus is not an identifiable figure of classical mythology. Buchheim notes that the reference seems to be taken from Theophrastus Paracelsus (Philip Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim, 1453–1541), the Swiss doctor, alchemist and philosopher-theologian, and is a sign standing for the principle of organic vitality which unifies the various vital powers. As such, this is yet another example of the more arcane stream of reference that appears in the *Philosophical Investigations*, a stream that should not be interpreted as exemplary of eccentricity as much as of Schelling's respect for otherwise denigrated semiotic systems (and this goes for mythology as well).

53. The cited passages read:

(1) to first footnote on page 36:

20. I found in comparing the *Rationale Theologicum* of Nicolaus Velsius with the refutation by Johann Musaeus that these two authors, of whom one died while a Professor at Franeker after having taught at Geneva and the other finally became the foremost theologian at Jena, are more or less in agreement on the principal rules for the use of reason, but that it is in the application of these rules they disagree. For they both agree that revelation cannot be contrary to the truths whose necessity is called by philosophers 'logical' or 'metaphysical', that is to say, whose opposite implies contradiction. They both admit also that revelation will be able to combat maxims whose necessity is called 'physical' and is founded only upon the laws that the will of God has prescribed for Nature. Thus the question whether the presence of one and the same body in divers places is possible in the supernatural order only touches the application of the rule; and in order to decide this question conclusively by reason, one must needs explain exactly wherein the essence of body exists . . . (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Theodicy*, trans. E. M. Huggard [La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1985], 86)

(2) to second footnote on page 36:

149. M. Bayle avows: 'that one finds everywhere both moral good and physical good, some examples of virtue, some examples of happiness, and that this is what makes the difficulty. For if there were only wicked and unhappy people', he says, 'there would be no need to resort to the hypothesis of the two principles.' I wonder that this admirable man could have evinced so great an inclination towards this opinion of the two principles; and I am surprised at his not having taken into account that this novel [*roman*] of human life, which makes the universal history of the human race, lay fully devised in the divine understanding, with innumerable others, and that the will of God only decreed its existence because this sequence of events was to be most in keeping with the rest of things, to bring forth the best result. And these apparent faults in the whole world, these spots on a Sun whereof ours is but a ray, rather enhance its beauty than diminish it, contributing towards that end

by obtaining a greater good. There are in truth two principles, but they are both in God, namely, his understanding and his will. The understanding furnishes the principle of evil, without being sullied by it, without being evil; it represents natures as they exist in the eternal verities; it contains within it the reason for which evil is permitted: but the will tends only towards good. Let us add a third principle, namely power; it precedes even understanding and will, but it operates as the one displays it and as the other requires it. (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 216–217; translation modified)

(3) to third footnote on page 36:

380. Aristotle was right in rejecting chaos: but it is not always easy to disentangle the conceptions of Plato, and such a task would be still less easy in respect of some ancient authors whose works are lost. Kepler, one of the most excellent of modern mathematicians, recognized a species of imperfection in matter, even when there is no regular motion: he calls it its 'natural inertia', which gives it a resistance to motion, whereby a greater mass receives less speed from one and the same force. There is soundness in this observation, and I have used it to advantage in this work, in order to have a comparison such as should illustrate how the original imperfection of the creatures sets bounds to the action of the Creator, which tends towards good. But as matter is itself of God's creation, it only furnishes a comparison and an example, and cannot be the very source of evil and imperfection. I have already shown that this source lies in the forms or ideas of the possibles, for it must be eternal, and matter is not so. Now since God made all positive reality that is not eternal, he would have made the source of evil, if that did not rather lie in the possibility of things or forms, that which alone God did not make, since he is not the author of his own understanding. (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 353)

54. Here is our translation of the citation from St. Augustine:

They ask us: whence evil? We answer: from the good, but not from the highest good; therefore, evil things do arise from good things. For all evil things participate in the good and resist it purely and as given in every part of it. One really should not find these things difficult who has correctly formulated the concept of evil at some time and noted that it always involves some deficiency, whereas all manner of perfection is possessed in an incommunicable way by God; nor is it any more possible to create an unlimited and independent creature than it is to create another God.

55. The cited passages read:

(1) to first footnote on page 37:

152. M. Bayle places the Greek philosopher Melissus, champion of the oneness of the first principle (and perhaps even of the oneness of substance) in conflict with Zoroaster, as with the first originator of duality. Zoroaster admits that the hypothesis of Melissus is more

consistent with order and *a priori* reasons, but he denies its conformity with experience and *a posteriori* reasons. ‘I surpass you’, he said, ‘in the explanation of phenomena, which is the principal mark of a good system.’ But, in my opinion, it is not a very good explanation of a phenomenon to assign it to an *ad hoc* principle: to evil, a *principium maleficum*, to cold, a *primum frigidum*; there is nothing so easy and nothing so dull. It is well-nigh as if someone were to say that the Peripatetics surpass the new mathematicians in the explanation of the phenomena of the stars, by giving them *ad hoc* intelligences to guide them. According to that, it is quite easy to conceive why the planets make their way with such precision; whereas there is need of much geometry and reflection to understand how from the gravity of the planets, which bears them towards the sun, combined with some whirlwind which carries them along, or with their own motive force, can spring the elliptic movement of Kepler, which satisfies appearances as well. A man incapable of relishing deep speculations will at first applaud the Peripatetics and will treat our mathematicians as dreamers. Some old Galenist will do the same with regard to the faculties of the Schoolmen: he will admit a chylific, a chymific and sanguific, and he will assign one of these *ad hoc* to each operation; he will think he has worked wonders, and will laugh at what he will call the chimeras of the moderns, who claim to explain through mechanical structures what passes in the body of an animal. (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 218–219)

153. The explanation of the cause of evil by a particular principle, *per principium maleficum*, is of the same nature. Evil needs no such explanation, any more than do cold and darkness: there is neither *primum frigidum* nor principle of darkness. Evil itself comes only from privation; the positive enters therein only by concomitance, as the active enters by concomitance into cold. We see that water in freezing is capable of breaking a gun-barrel wherein it is confined; and yet cold is a certain privation of force, it only comes from the diminution of a movement which separates the particles of fluids. When this separating motion becomes weakened in the water by the cold, the particles of compressed air concealed in the water collect; and, by becoming larger, they become more capable of acting outwards through their buoyancy. The resistance which the surfaces of the proportions of air meet in the water, and which opposes the force exerted by these portions towards dilation, is far less, and consequently the effect of the air greater, in large air-bubbles than in small, even though these small bubbles combined should form as great a mass as the large. For the resistances, that is, the surfaces, increase by the *square*, and the forces, that is, the contents or volumes of the spheres of compressed air, increase by the *cube*, of their diameters. This it is *by accident* that privation involves action and force. I have already shown how privation is

enough to cause error and malice, and how God is prompted to permit them, despite that there be no malignity in him. Evil comes from privation; the positive and action spring from it by accident, as force springs from cold. (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 219–220)

(2) to first footnote on page 38:

30. Thus what we have just said of human reason, which is extolled and decried by turns, and often without rule or measure, may show our lack of exactitude and how much we are accessory to our own errors. Nothing would be so easy to terminate as these disputes on the rights of faith and of reason if men would make use of the commonest rules of logic and reason with even a modicum of attention. Instead of that, they became involved in oblique and ambiguous phrases, which give them a fine field for declamation, to make the most of their wit and learning. It would seem, indeed, that they have no wish to see the naked truth, perhaps because they fear that it may be more disagreeable than error: for they are not familiar with the beauty of the author of all things who is the source of truth. (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 91–92; translation modified)

56. The German that we have translated by the unusual pair, “temperance” and “distemperance,” is *Temperatur* and *Distemperatur*. Both terms seem to be derived from theosophic literature. Buchheim suggests that Schelling may have lifted them from Christoph Oetinger’s *Swedenborg* (Buchheim, *PU* 136, n182), but the terms may also have roots in Boehme. (See Francesco Moiso, “Gott als Person,” in *Über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit*, ed. Otfried Höffe and Annemarie Pieper [Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995], 198.)

57. Arians and Monotheletes are two heretical streams of thought in early Christianity. The Arians were named after Arius (d. ca. 336 C.E.), a priest in Alexandria who asserted a powerful doctrine of divine transcendence that denied the oneness of Christ with God. Jaroslav Pelikan writes:

Even on the basis of the scraps of information about Arianism handed on principally by its opponents, we may recognize in the Arian picture of this Logos-Son, who was less than God but more than man, a soteriological as well as cosmological intermediary. The absoluteness of God meant that if the Logos was of the same essence with the Father, the Logos had to be impassible. The orthodox found it blasphemous when the Arians, also in the interest of the absoluteness of God, described the Logos as one possessed of a mutable nature and therefore not of the same essence with the Father. “He remains good,” the Arians said, “by his own free will, so long as he chooses to do so,” rather than by virtue of his oneness of essence with God. And so, according to Arius, God, foreknowing that the Logos would resist temptation and remain good, bestowed on him proleptically the glory which, as man, he would eventually attain by his own virtue. (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 1 [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971], 198)

The name Monotheletes derives from Greek *monon thelēma* or “one will” and describes those who advocated Monotheletism, a controversial school of Christian belief in the seventh century C.E. that claimed there was only one will in Christ and not two, one reflecting his divine, the other his human nature. To cite Pelikan again:

In the Trinity there were three hypostases, but only one divine nature; otherwise there would be three gods. There was also a single will and a single action. Thus will was an attribute of a nature and not of a hypostasis, natural and not hypostatic. Hence, the person of Christ, with a single hypostasis and two natures, had to have two wills, one for each nature. (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 2 [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974], 72)

Schelling also seems to have borrowed the *variatio sermonis* of *Enthusiasmus* and *Begeisterung* in this passage, which we translate by the pair “enthusiasm” and “ardor,” from Baader’s essay included in this volume, “On the Assertion that There Can Be No Wicked Use of Reason.”

Deduction of the Reality of Evil

58. See *Timaeus*, 49a–53b.

59. Schelling’s use of the term *Basis* is derived from chemistry where through precipitation complex compounds are separated out into their various base elements. (See Buchheim, *PU*, 107, n87; Moiso, “Gott als Person,” 199–200.)

60. The German reads: “. . . (*als aus der bloßen Potenz zum Aktus*) . . .” One of the more difficult translation issues in the text involves Schelling’s use of the pairs *Potenz* and *Aktus* (or *actu*) along with *Möglichkeit* and *Wirklichkeit* or *Realität* to express the notion of possibility as opposed to actuality or reality. We have equivocated somewhat here, generally translating *Potenz* and *Möglichkeit* by “possibility,” where it is clear that Schelling is not using *Potenz* in his more technical sense as a “potency.” (On this sense, see Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy* [London: Routledge, 1993], 112–115 and Beach, *The Potencies of God(s)*, 111–146.) And we have translated *Aktus* (or *actu*), *Wirklichkeit* and *Realität* either by “actuality” or “reality” as the case seemed to demand. The central issue here has been to ensure that the Aristotelian division of possibility and actuality be preserved where Schelling seeks to exploit this traditional ontological transformation by alluding to the tradition and loosened where “reality” describes better a more mundane, non-technical application of the German. The Latinate *Potenz* and *Aktus* are employed in the former sense, while the other terms are more variable.

61. This verb is used in a somewhat awkward way here. Yet, since it can be used to describe the enactment of a law or regulation, it seems fully appropriate to Schelling’s context, and that is why we have translated it by somewhat awkward English.

62. This notion of a “Golden Age” is an ancient *topos* visible both in Hesiod’s *Works and Days* and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* from whence it had tremendous influence on the tradition:

Golden was that first age, which with no one to compel, without a law, of its own will, kept faith and did the right [*fidem rectumque colebat*]. There was no fear of punishment, no threatening words were to be read on bronze tablets; no suppliant throng gazed fearfully upon its judge’s face, but they were secure without protectors. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. F. J. Miller, vol. 1 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP (Loeb Classical Library), 1977], 9)

63. This sentence features a curiously traditional kind of theodical argument and echoes the Arian view of the mediating “Logos.” (See note 57 above.) However, the eschatological language, the “crisis in the *turba gentium*” seems to owe more to Boehme—in this connection, for example, see parts 7 and 8 of the *Mysterium pansophicum* included in this volume.
64. The German reads: “*Die Angst des Lebens selbst treibt den Menschen aus dem Centrum, in das er erschaffen worden . . .*” We use the unusual “into” to capture the equally unusual use of the accusative *in das* in German.
65. The German reads: “*Daher die allgemeine Notwendigkeit der Sünde und des Todes, als des wirklichen Absterbens der Eigenheit, durch welches aller menschlicher Wille als ein Feuer hindurchgehen muß, um geläutert zu werden.*”
66. This is the well-known anecdote known as “Buridan’s ass,” where an ass starves to death because it cannot chose between two equally distant and enticing piles of hay. The origin of this anecdote is somewhat obscure since it does not in fact seem to stem from the writings of the medieval philosopher Jean Buridan (ca. 1300–1358), whose name it carries, but from later sources among whom Spinoza is prominent (see, e.g., *Ethics* II. Scholium to prop. XLIX).
67. The connection of the atomic “swerve” with free will [*libera voluntas*] is preserved in the Epicurean literature primarily through Lucretius who offers the only detailed account of this connection in *On Nature* [*de rerum natura*]. Here is an excerpt from that account (ii. 251–260):

If all movement is linked always, and new movement arises from the old movement in a fixed order, and if the first things [*primordia*] do not make by swerving [*declinando*] a beginning that breaks the bonds of fate so that cause does not follow on cause from infinity, whence comes this free will in creatures all over the earth, whence, I say, is this will wrested from the fates by which we move forward to wherever desire [*voluptas*] leads us and by which we swerve our movements neither at a certain time nor in a certain place, but where our mind itself has carried us. (Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, ed. Cyril Bailey, vol. 1 [Oxford: Oxford UP, 1947], 248, 250; our translation)

(See also A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, 2nd ed. [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986], 57.)

68. Schelling refers to Kant's note (at B58) in *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793):

We can quickly be convinced that the concept of the freedom of the power of choice does not precede in us the consciousness of the moral law but is only inferred from the determinability of our power of choice through the law as unconditional command. We have only to ask whether we are certainly and immediately conscious of a faculty enabling us to overcome, by firm resolve, every incentive to transgression, however great (*Phalaris licet imperet, ut sis falsus, et admoto dictet periuria tauro* [Phalaris should command that you be false and, having brought forth the bull, he should compose perjuries—Juvenal, *Satire* VIII: 81–82]). Everybody must admit that *he does not* know whether, were such a situation to arise, he would not waver in his resolve. Yet duty equally commands him unconditionally: he *ought* to remain true to his resolve; and from this he rightly *concludes* that he must also *be able* to do it, and that his power of choice is therefore free. Those who pretend that this inscrutable property is entirely within our grasp concoct an illusion through the word *determinism* (the thesis that the power of choice is determined through inner sufficient grounds) as though the difficulty consisted in reconciling these grounds with freedom—[an issue] that does not enter into anyone's mind. Rather, what we want to discern, but never shall, is this: how can *pre-determinism* co-exist with freedom, when according to predeterminism freely chosen actions, as occurrences, have their determining grounds *in antecedent time* (which, taken together with what is contained therein, no longer lies in our control), whereas according to freedom the action, as well as its contrary, must be in the control of the subject at the moment of its happening. (Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, trans. George di Giovanni in *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996], 93–94)

69. This is Leibniz's attempt to avoid determinism: that there is always a reason for an action but not a necessary one, rather one that merely inclines. As Leibniz writes in *Theodicy*, “[t]here is always a prevailing reason which prompts the will to its choice, and for the maintenance of freedom for the will it suffices that this reason should incline without necessitating” (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 148). Few have been convinced that Leibniz's “inclining reasons” are anything more than rhetorical nods to freedom that soften the otherwise austere necessitarianism of his thought. For a rather sympathetic treatment, see, however, Robert M. Adams, *Leibniz: Determinist, Theist, Idealist* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994), 34–36.
70. This and the following paragraph in the *Philosophical Investigations* are of particular and telling difficulty in regard to the use of *Wesen*. While we have translated *Wesen* here in most cases by “being,” we have also translated it with “essence” in three places. Our choice was determined by

the curious nature of the difficulty Schelling is attempting to overcome, one that appears in many guises in these notes. This difficulty arises from the attempt to define being as free but in such a way that freedom and necessity are one. In other words, freedom is defined as acting in accord with necessity, namely, the inner necessity of one's own being—to be free is to act autonomously, but as the latter word suggests, to be free is to act in accordance with a certain law. Now, Schelling seems to make a distinction in these paragraphs between being, as the expression of that law, and that core of being which is itself the law; yet, he uses the same word, *Wesen*, to describe both this being as expression and as core of being. We have chosen to make this distinction—or, at the very least, our conclusion that it exists—explicit by using “being” where the German seems to denote what we call “being as expression” and “essence” where the German seems to denote the “core of being.” We have not done so lightly because, as we remarked in the “Translators’ Note,” we realize how inappropriate the term “essence” can be outside of its native (and, largely Scholastic) environment. Nonetheless, close attention to Schelling’s text has recommended this choice to us, since Schelling does seem to suggest that there is an essential core to being (even if this essence is hardly an Aristotelian, but rather very much a legalistic and, therefore, modern one), though he then swiftly proceeds to undermine this essentiality by indicating that it results from man’s own act. In doing so, Schelling appears merely to reinscribe his position within the “Kantian paradox” mentioned in the “Introduction” to this volume. The argument is basically circular: I freely choose to act, but I cannot do so other than in accordance with the essential character of my being, hence, I freely choose to be according to what I already am, hence, I freely choose to be what I am. On the surface, this is a perplexing argument at best, but it can muster greater interest if one considers that Schelling’s variety of transcendental idealism, his identity between subject and object, man and nature, is in fact eloquently expressed here (if in a peculiarly Fichtean way). As Robert Pippin notes:

To a degree still, I think, unappreciated, the young Schelling quickly realized that the whole approach [of Fichtean self-determination—our note] necessarily generated a basic problem. It was one whose logic would first appear in the German counter-Enlightenment (especially in Jacobi) and then in many, many forms later (certainly in Kierkegaard, later in Nietzsche’s account of “life,” and thanks to Heidegger, in thinkers such as Gadamer and Derrida). The task had been to think through the implications of the claim that *being in* any cognitive relation to the world, to have disclosed any sense (or being the true subject of one’s deeds) is necessarily *to have assumed such a relation actively*, to have determined *oneself* to be in such a relation. This does indeed make all the contents or objects of such a relation necessarily the results of some self-conscious self-determining. Yet we, as embodied agents

in the world, are already natural or at least pre-volitionally situated beings, already thinking in a certain way, with a certain inheritance, with certain capacities we clearly share with non-human animals (like perception). It is only *in* being a kind of being, within a certain sort of world with kinds of beings, at a certain historical time, that we *could* be the particular self-determining subjects or agents. To view the issue of *this* sort of pre-reflective situation as itself a result, or in terms of “what we must think” to make sense of “our” conditions of intelligibility, seems to miss the point profoundly. (Robert Pippin, *Idealism as Modernism: Hegelian Variations* [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997], 404–405)

Nonetheless, Schelling’s ambivalence concerning a proper response to this perplexity, the mystery of identity, is the very bedrock of his ever restless thinking—here Heidegger is surely correct—and it extends to the very end of his career becoming, in some respects, an increasing concern with narrativity. In this respect and, for another perspective on this central difficulty, see notes 24 and 76.

71. Schelling applies the notion of free will as “the system of the equilibrium of free will” to intelligible being, expanding the analysis begun with the discussion of Buridan, and it might be useful here to refer to Heidegger’s interpretation of this initial notion of indifference, as the ultimate form of freedom if freedom is defined solely as a kind of “freedom from,” in connection with his generally incisive taxonomy of the varieties of freedom discussed in the *Philosophical Investigations*. Heidegger notes:

If freedom means man’s complete indeterminacy, neither for good nor for evil, then freedom is conceived merely negatively, as mere indecisiveness, behind which and before which stands nothing. This in-decisiveness thus remains nugatory, a freedom which is anything else but a ground of determination; it is complete indeterminacy which can never get beyond itself. This concept of freedom is again a negative one, only in another respect, familiar in the history of thought as the *libertas indifferentiae*, the seventh concept of freedom in our count. (Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise*, 102)

The other six are:

- 1) Freedom as capability of self-beginning [*Selbstanfangenkönnen*].
- 2) Freedom as not being bound to anything, freedom *from* (negative freedom).
- 3) Freedom as binding oneself to, *libertas determinationis*, freedom *for* (positive freedom).
- 4) Freedom as control over the senses (inappropriate freedom).
- 5) Freedom as self-determination in terms of one’s own essential law (appropriate freedom), formal concept of freedom. *This includes all of the previous determinations.* (Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise*, 88)

And of course 6), that “freedom is the capability of good and evil.” (Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise*, 97)

72. The original Latin, “*determinatio est negatio*,” stems from Spinoza’s letters and had a considerable impact on the German idealists and, perhaps, on Hegel in particular. (See H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1934], 134.)
73. This sentence reflects a central thought in Tolstoy’s so-called philosophy of history in *War and Peace* which, in general, is merely the abstract expression of the governing narrative principles of that capacious novel. Tolstoy famously writes:

Reason expresses the laws of necessity. Consciousness expresses the essence of freedom.

Freedom not limited by anything is the essence of life in human consciousness. Necessity without content is reason in its three forms.

Freedom is the thing examined. Necessity is what examines. Freedom is the content. Necessity is the form.

Only by separating the two sources of cognition, related to one another as form to content, do we get the mutually exclusive and separately incomprehensible concepts of freedom and necessity.

Only by uniting them do we get a clear representation of human life.

Outside these two concepts, which in their unity mutually define each other as form and content, no representation of life whatsoever is possible. (L. N. Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, trans. Aylmer and Louise Maude [Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991], 1302; translation modified)

This remarkable passage, from Chapter X of the Second Part of the Epilogue to *War and Peace*, seems *prima facie* to allude to Schelling. But it is in fact a great deal more likely that Tolstoy gleaned these very Schellingian thoughts from his reading of Schopenhauer’s prize essay on freedom in which he was intensely engaged when he wrote these lines. Nonetheless, the similarity is striking.

74. *Wesenheit* has posed a problem for us as another use of *Wesen*. We have chosen a rather clumsy paraphrase to avoid a perhaps even clumsier neologism (essentiality/beingness).
75. The German reads: “*Der Mensch, wenn er auch in der Zeit geboren wird, ist in den Anfang der Schöpfung (das Centrum) erschaffen.*” The unusual use of the accusative here—in *den Anfang*—has been carried over to the English where it is equally unusual. The notion of change of location here seems quite intentional and suggests a birth where one is “thrown” into the beginning (although one should not confuse this with Heidegger’s notion of “thrownness” or *Geworfenheit*).
76. This is one of the most enigmatic sections of the *Philosophical Investigations* where the timeless and time-bound meet. Or do they? Several commentators (Hennigfeld, Snow) have tended to view Schelling’s insistence

on an “act which is eternal by its very nature” as somewhat fanciful, a mere *façon de parler*, and they are perhaps correct in holding such a view in so far as the act is associated with an intelligible being, a kind of being that, strictly speaking, has only a most peculiar sort of being. Yet, while it does manifestly seem wise to be cautious about the ontological intent and plausibility of Schelling’s claim, it is fair to say that a founding act of the nature Schelling contemplates cannot by definition belong to time if it indeed is in a very strong sense responsible for the governing interpretation of, or attitude to, time that is one of the basic constituent elements of a self or character, of whatever is created through this central act. And it is likely fairest to say that a self or character or life is only expressed in a narrative, in a time-bound form which, to be founded as a narrative, to have a structure as a narrative, however, must also be outside time to that particular extent. For all narratives must have beginnings, and these beginnings to be beginnings cannot be subject to the rules or terms they create, to use discredited language, they must transcend the narratives they found; if this were not the case, there could be no narrative at all. This point is made with splendid irony by Thomas Mann in his “Prelude: Descent into Hell” with which begins *The Stories of Jacob*, the first novel in the great tetralogy, *Joseph and His Brothers*. (For a further development of Mann’s opening in connection with similar issues in the context of *The Ages of the World*, see Wolfram Högbebe, *Prädikation und Genesis: Metaphysik als Fundamentalheuristik im Ausgang von Schellings “Die Weltalter”* [Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1989], 7.)

Yet, Schelling does seem to be more radical than that in so far as he suggests that character is determined in an even more intimate and particular way, determined with reference to a very particular plot-line indeed—Judas being the paradigm here. It is this particularity itself that might offend and bring into doubt Schelling’s account because it tends toward a form of metaphysical speculation rather too bold for modern or postmodern taste. But, as Žižek has said, Schelling at his boldest, or wildest, is often also at his closest to everyday experience, and this goes for the kind of thinking he expresses here as well. For choosing a certain narrative, along with all that comes with it, through a founding act is to choose always within a context, to take a position vis-à-vis a dominating narrative, and this position by its very nature must be a particular one, one that defines a self and, as such, seems to reveal a character that is outside the tradition which imposes the dominating narrative because it would be extraordinarily difficult to explain the possibility of such dissent or particularization without having recourse to that outside. Now, one may hesitate to associate that outside with intelligible character or the like, but some explanatory figure is necessary, since this simple experience of dissent is the clearest and most immediate indication of its necessity.

But Schelling appears to stumble into further problems by noting that the free act also is a necessary one. Here again, the answer might be that

the founding act determines, that it is both an act of freedom, a declaration in the void, and an imposition of necessity since it dictates all subsequent acts that flow from it. See Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder*, 16–22.

77. Schelling plays on two basic meanings of the word *Anstoß*, which can mean either a “hindrance or an “obstacle,” as we have translated it here following Gutmann, or an impetus or “motivating factor.” The relation between the two meanings seems quite clear and brings to mind Rousseau’s account of the origins of a certain kind of modern *eros* in the second part of his *Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality among Men*. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality among Men*, in *The First and Second Discourses*, trans. Roger D. and Judith Masters (Boston: St. Martin’s Press, 1964), 142–143.
78. What does this kind of predestination mean? Again, as remarked in note 76, the sense of predestination seems to reflect the notion that, as T. S. Eliot says, “in my beginning is my end” (“East Coker”), that the constitutive acts by which I become myself also constitute a sort of predestination, that as constitutive acts, they must be outside time, yet they dictate what time will hold.

But, as stated before, the imputation of an eternal character, that someone is bound to a particular character, whether evil or good, is very problematic, not only in itself but also in regard to the kind of theodicy Schelling may be pursuing.

Here emerges the central ambiguity, which we mentioned in terms of the translation of *Wesen*. Does Schelling argue that there is something akin to an essence in God and human beings or does he deny this possibility? Is there a darkness that conceals a “hidden” light or does light somehow determine itself on its emergence from darkness—in other words, is genesis a genesis of something that precedes genesis or of something that becomes itself in genesis—the older way of saying this is to look at genesis as necessary emergence or as a coalescence of chance.

It seems to us that this ambiguity courses through the entire treatise and is neither openly nor tacitly resolved (and this despite Schelling’s closing arguments which very explicitly rehearse one last time the notion that God has some kind of innate identity), and its impact on the theodicy and anthropology of the treatise is profound because it shows a fundamental indecision about the possibility of the grand structure of thought set forth in the treatise—in this sense, the latter is indeed both a primary example of idealism and its destruction (and, in this same sense, both of Heidegger’s opinions expressed at different times—1936 and 1941—are correct).

79. Here Schelling emphasizes a key point, that evil is not an expression of the passions allowed to reign due to debility, but rather that evil is thoroughly imbued with mind or spirit—to posit the self is to entertain the possibility of evil hitherto “dormant” but nonetheless fundamental, a

constitutive force in the self, and therefore “radical.” Schelling relies on Kant of course and reproves Fichte, who discusses radical evil in his *System der Sittenlehre* (1798) at 198–205. Fichte notes:

This is what we presuppose: man will do nothing which is not simply necessary and which, pressed onward by his nature [*Wesen*], he is not compelled to do. Accordingly, we presuppose an original lethargy [*Trägheit*] in reflection and, as a consequence, in action pursuant to this reflection. Accordingly, this would be a true, positive, radical evil; not just something negative as it hitherto seemed to be. Then it had to be that way as well. We must have something positive merely in order to be able to explain the negative. (Fichte, *Werke*, IV/199)

80. The Greek means quite literally “by bastard reasoning,” a combination which suggests an unanchored and wavering way of thinking that cannot tell the difference between original and copy. The term appears in the *Timaeus* at 52b3 and the crucial portion of the text is this:

So because of all these and other kindred notions, we are also not able on waking up to distinguish clearly the unsleeping and truly existing nature, owing to our dream-like condition, nor to tell the truth—how that it belongs to a copy [*eikōn*—seeing that it has not for its own that for which it came into being, but fleets ever as a phantom [*fantasma*] of something else—to come into existence *in* some other thing, clinging to existence as best it may, on pain of being nothing at all; whereas to the aid of that which truly is [*to ontōs on*] there comes the precise and true argument, that so long as one thing is one thing, and another something different, neither of the two will ever come to exist in the other so that the same thing becomes simultaneously both one and two. (Plato, *Timaeus*, trans. R. G. Bury [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP (Loeb Classical Library), 1929], 122–125)

81. Buchheim finds a reference to Jacobi’s epistolic novel, clumsily titled *Edward Allwill’s Collection of Letters edited by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi with an Addition from Letters of His Own*, and, specifically, to letter XX. See Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel Allwill*, trans. George di Giovanni (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994), 465–472.
82. Likely a further reference to Jacobi (and perhaps Schlegel as well).
83. The German reads: “*Gewissenhaftigkeit erscheint nicht eben notwendig und immer als Enthusiasmus oder als außerordentliche Erhebung über sich selbst, wozu, wenn der Dünkel selbstbeliebiger Sittlichkeit niedergeschlagen ist, ein anderer und noch viel schlimmerer Hochmutsgeist gerne auch diese machen möchte.*”
84. Buchheim indicates that the source here is Velleius Paterclus, *Historia romana* II 35, 2 (Buchheim, *PU* 153, n282). The Cato referred to is M. Porcius Cato, called “the younger” or “Uticensis” (95–46 B.C.E.) to distinguish him from his great ancestor, M. Porcius Cato, the “Censor.” The former Cato was portrayed in antiquity as a veritable incarnation

of Republican virtue, the glory of staunch and stubborn Rome, before the advent of the empire, and this is especially evident in Lucan's dark epic, the *Pharsalia*, where the famous line, "*victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni*" ["The winning cause has pleased the gods, but that of the defeated Cato"] (I:128) helped set the tone (with its ironies perhaps less than intact) for Cato's subsequent historical reception.

The Freedom of God

85. The German reads: "*Der zweite ist der Wille der Liebe, wodurch das Wort in die Natur ausgesprochen wird, und durch den Gott sich erst persönlich macht.*" We have preserved the accusative sense of the German that implies the active power of the word in regard to nature.
86. King Alfonso X of Castile (1221–1284), called "el sabio," "the learned" or "wise," is portrayed in Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697) as having made daring challenges to tradition in the name of scientific inquiry. In particular, Alfonso was notorious both for questioning Ptolemaic astronomy and, after having engaged in extensive research on it, for making his blasphemous suggestion that had he been "of God's counsel at the Creation, many things would have been ordered better." If one wishes to take the issue that far, Alfonso's daring questioning can be seen as an example of the kind of questioning of the architect that leads to his overthrow, a rather neat prefiguration of the principal thrust of modernity. (Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, vol. 2 [Reinier Leers: Amsterdam, 1697], 94–95; Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought*, 14–18)
87. 2 Sam. 22:27 reads in the Revised Standard Version:

With the pure thou dost show
thyself pure,
and with the crooked thou dost
show thyself perverse.
88. This citation is from Hamann's *Aesthetica in nuce. Eine Rhapsodie in Kabalistischer Prosa* (Hamann, *Sämtliche Werke*, 2:208). Buchheim notes (Buchheim, *PU*, 158 n316) that the citation is incorrect, the text having appeared in 1762 in *Crusades of a Philologist (Kreuzzüge des Philologen)*. The "chamberlain of the Alexandrian church" is probably Origen (c. 185–254 C.E.), the outstanding thinker of the Christian East who bears comparison in significance and scope of thought with St. Augustine, the great difference between the two being that St. Augustine has almost always been celebrated, whereas Origen has been both celebrated and calumniated as devoted more to Plato than to the church (indeed, for this reason much of his thought was soundly rejected in the East at the Fifth General Council in 533 C.E.).
89. *Gynaecium* (Gr. *gunaikōn* or *gunaikōnitis*) denotes those inner rooms of a Greek or Roman house occupied exclusively by women.
90. The German reads: "*Inwiefern die Selbstheit in ihrer Lossagung das Prinzip des Bösen ist, erregt der Grund allerdings das mögliche Prinzip des Bösen, aber nicht das Böse selber, noch zum Bösen.*"

91. From Huggard’s translation (modified to account for Schelling’s use of a Latin translation of the original text which was written in French and differs in the first passage cited in the note):

(1) from section 25 (Schelling’s reference to p. 139):

Hence, from the foregoing it is to be concluded that God *antecedently* wills all *good in itself*, that he *consequently* wills *the best as an end*, what is indifferent and physical evil as *a means*, but that he wishes *to permit* moral evil only as a *condition without which* the best may not be obtained so that evil surely may not be admitted except in the form of a hypothetical necessity that connects it to the best. (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 138)

(2) from section 230 (Schelling’s reference to p. 292):

Regarding vice, it has been shown above that it is not the object of a divine decree *as means*, but as a *condition without which*—and only to that extent is it permitted. (Leibniz, *Theodicy*, 270)

The All-Unity of Love

92. This language is derived from Boehme. See part 5 of the *Mysterium pansophicum* included in this volume.
93. Here is a relevant excerpt from the page referred to in *Philosophy and Religion*:

Now, as the final goal of history is reconciliation with the fall, the latter can also be looked upon from a more positive perspective. For the first selfhood of the ideas was one flowing from the immediate activity of God. But the selfhood and absolute into which they introduce themselves through reconciliation is self-given, so that they exist in selfhood as truly independent ideas regardless of their absoluteness. In this way the fall becomes the means for the complete revelation of God. In so far as God, by virtue of the eternal necessity of his nature, lends selfhood to what is seen, he gives it away itself into finitude and, so to speak, sacrifices it so that the ideas which were in him without a self-given life are called into life; it is precisely in this way that they become capable, as independently existing, to be in the absolute once again, something which happens through a completed morality. (Schelling, *Sämmtliche Werke*, VI: 63)

94. In the Revised Standard Version, the passage reads: “For he must reign, until he has put all his enemies under his feet.” This passage is from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians (15: 25).
95. Indifference is one of the fundamental terms in the so-called philosophy of identity, that is, the philosophical tendency associated with Schelling’s writings between 1801 and 1804. This notion of “indifference” is often thought to be the target of Hegel’s notorious comments in the “Preface” to *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*, the empty absolute, the “night in which, as the saying goes, all cows are black” (Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 9). But it should be hardly surprising that Schelling’s conception

of indifference is not to be confused with the Hegelian caricature. Indifference is not in fact an absence of difference, a complete surrender to a pure and, thus, unknowable (at least for a finite mind) plenitude, it is not an overcoming of opposition in pure identity, as it were, but, just as it sounds, it is a point of indifference between oppositions where they are in balance, where they are indifferent the one to the other. Indifference as such is the absolute because the first indication of difference must be an indication of limitation.

It must be admitted, however, that Schelling's notion of indifference does little to explain how difference can come to be, that is, how anything can come to be—the origin remains necessarily mysterious, ever a challenge to thought, and a stern reminder of the possible limits to thought.

96. The aphorisms read:

162. The difference between a divine identity and a merely finite one is that, in the former, it is not things which are opposed but need to be connected that are connected but such of which each could exist for itself but yet does not exist without another.

163. This is the mystery of eternal love, that that which would be absolute for itself, although considering it no theft to exist for itself, yet exists only in and with others. If each thing were not a whole, but rather only a part of the whole, there would be no love: there is love, however, because each thing is a whole and nonetheless does not nor can exist without another. (Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, VII: 174)

97. The somewhat overwrought German of the final clause in this sentence reads: “. . . ferner daß nur Gott als Geist die absolute Identität beider Prinzipien, aber nur dadurch und insofern ist, daß und inwiefern beide seiner Persönlichkeit unterworfen sind.”

98. This footnote has gathered a good deal of attention. White refers to it in his attempt to adduce evidence for his claim that Schelling is engaging in esotericism (107). More recently, Peter Warnek has argued that the note reflects Schelling's “own thematizing of the movement of the word to recoil upon the way in which freedom comes to word” (Peter Warnek, “Reading Schelling and Heidegger: The Freedom of Cryptic Dialogue,” in *Schelling Now*, 180). Warnek continues: “Schelling's word of freedom would therefore also have to be the ecstatic movement of freedom bringing *itself* to word; it would be life saying life in the movement of life itself. This is the promise of a ‘system of freedom.’” Jason Wirth also makes the following comments on this note:

. . . Schelling expressed the dialogical genesis of everything in the text. The writer composes from a particular perspective and *in medias res* within an unfolding drama still always to be completed. This dialogical demand, this indebtedness to the treatise's subject, does not grant Schelling authority over it. This writing, within a fluid context in which the *Wesen* can somehow emerge, does not grant Schelling the capacity to render it with sharp determinations.

This dialogical humility knows that this is not a dialogue between equals because there is no parity among the interlocutors. The interlocutors are not *einerlei*, not of the same kind. A model of such an asymmetrical dialogue might be something like attempting to communicate with nature. Or speaking with animals, not as creatures to be trained for human use, but as animals per se. A more classical precedent might be Job’s dialogue with the whirlwind. It is a dialogue between bodies and their animas, between the light and its concealed, indwelling darkness. It might be thought of as a dialogue of the fractured *Wesen* with itself, producing discontinuities without sublimation. (Wirth, *The Conspiracy of Life*, 159)

99. The German here is “*Finalität der Ursachen*” or “finality of causes.” What is likely meant by this is clarified by Gutmann who translates *Finalität* by “purposiveness,” thereby suggesting that Schelling is alluding to Aristotelian teleology and, thus, the notion of a *causa finalis* that is the end for the sake of which (*hou eneka*) something happens.
100. The Latin source appears to be Horace which Schelling freely varies. Here is the original (*Odes* II. i):

Motum ex Metello consule civicum
bellique causas et vitia et modos
ludumque fortunae gravesque
principum amicitias et arma

nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus,
periculosae plenum opus aleae,
tractas et incedis per ignes
suppositos cineri doloso.

[In our translation: You are treating of the civil commotion under the consulship of Metellus, the causes of war, the mistakes, its phases, the game of fortune, the dire friendships among princes and the arms stained with blood—a task full of dangerous risk—and you go forth through fires hidden beneath treacherous ashes.]

101. The section reads:

76. Let it not be objected that such rational speculations on the mysteries of religion are forbidden.—The word ‘mystery’, in early Christian times, meant something quite different from what we understand by it now; and the development of revealed truths into truths of reason is absolutely necessary if they are to be of any help to the human race. When they were revealed, of course, they were not yet truths of reason; but they were revealed in order to become such truths. They were, so to speak, the result of the calculation which the mathematics teacher announces in advance, in order to give his pupils some idea of what they are working towards. If the pupils were satisfied with knowing the result in advance, they

- would never learn to calculate, and would frustrate the intention with which the good master gave them a guideline to help them with their work. (G. E. Lessing, *Philosophical and Theological Writings*, trans. H. B. Nisbet [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005], 236)
102. This is an allusion to Herder's philosophy of history and, more specifically, to his theory about the origin and development of Christianity as outlined, for example, in his *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Mankind* (*Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*). In that work, Herder insists that Christianity, just as all religions, including those of the pagan cultures, must be traced back to an original religion [*Urreligion*] and that the very idea of religion has always been a primary fact of human life. (See 9, V. "Religion Is the Oldest and Holiest Tradition of the Earth," in Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, ed. Martin Bollacher [Frankfurt a. M.: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1989], 372–379.)
103. This alludes to Goethe's famous bon mot mentioned at the end of Baader's essay "On the Assertion that There Can Be No Wicked Use of Reason." See that essay in this volume.
104. The essay by Baader noted here is called "On the Analogy between the Drive to Know and to Procreate" (*Über die Analogie des Erkenntnis- und des Zeugungs-Triebes*). See Franz Xaver von Baader, *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. F. Hoffmann, vol. 1 (Aalen: Scientia Verlag [Reprint], 1963), 39–48.
105. According to Buchheim, this idea was prevalent in theosophic literature and, of course, in Boehme (Buchheim, *PU* 167, n372–373).
106. This is likely another reference to Schlegel and his *Indierbuch* (see note 7 above).

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

Introductory Note

1. For an extensive treatment of the relation between Schelling and Boehme, see Robert F. Brown, *The Later Philosophy of Schelling: The Influence of Boehme on the Works of 1809–1815* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1977).
2. For a broad overview of the Pantheism debate, see Frederick Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1987).
3. In this respect, see Wirth, *The Conspiracy of Life*, 65–100.

Boehme

1. Jakob Böhme, *Sämmtliche Schriften*, ed. Will-Erich Peukert, vol 4 (Stuttgart: Frohmann-Holzboog [Reprint], 1955–1960), 97–111.

Baader

1. Franz Xaver von Baader, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 33–38.
2. "Evil is not a story, it's a power."

Lessing

1. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Werke*, ed. Herbert G. Göpfert, vol. VIII (Munich: Hanser Verlag, 1979), 118–120.

Jacobi

1. The translation follows Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn*, ed. Marion Lauschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2000), 23–36 and Lessing, *Werke VIII*, 565–571. As to the former, we have attempted to follow as closely as possible the various forms of emphasis in the text.
2. *En-Sof* [Heb: “that which has no end/the infinite”] refers to the notion of a hidden or absent God, a *deus absconditus*, without name and form which is the ground of all beings. The term developed into a central concept in the Kabbalistic philosophy of the Middle Ages. (See Göbel, “En-soph,” Lessing, *Werke VIII*, 751 and Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* [New York: Schocken Books, 1946], 269–273.)
3. *salto mortale* [literally, “by means of a fatal leap,” in which a person turns head over heels in the air, e.g., somersault].
4. This term comes from section 47 of the *Monadology*, which reads as follows: “Accordingly, God alone is the primary unity or the original simple substance, of which all the created or derivative monads are products. They originate, so to speak, through continual fulgurations of the divinity from moment to moment, limited by the receptivity of the created being, to which it is essential to be limited . . .” See Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Monadology*, ed. and trans. Nicholas Rescher (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991), 162.
5. Jacobi likely refers here to a Latin translation of *Principes de la nature et de la grace fondés en raison*.
6. Jacobi is referring to the “Confession of Augsburg” by Melancthon, Luther, and other theologians that was submitted to the emperor during the Reichstag of Augsburg in 1530. This “Confession” continued to incite fierce disputes between orthodox and reformed Lutherans thereafter. (See Göbel, “Augsburgische Konfession,” Lessing, *Werke VII*, 739.)
7. Jacobi’s *salto mortale* is paired with a play on *Kopf* [head, intellect] here. The implication is that one must humble one’s intellect before this leap, which has no use for it; a leap which, in other words, represents a subordination of reason to faith.
8. The text follows Jacobi, *Über die Lehre des Spinoza*, 166–167. As before, we have attempted to follow closely the various forms of emphasis in the text.
9. Jacobi is referring to Voltaire’s tragedy *Mahomet* or *Le fanatisme ou Mahomet le Prophète* (1743).

Herder

1. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. B. Suphan, vol. 16 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881–1913), 552–560.

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Page numbers in italics refer to the supplementary texts and the notes to them.

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Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom

F.W.J. Schelling

Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt offer a fresh translation of Schelling's enigmatic and influential masterpiece, widely recognized as an indispensable work of German Idealism. The text is an embarrassment of riches—both wildly adventurous and somberly prescient. Martin Heidegger claimed that it was “one of the deepest works of German and thus also of Western philosophy” and that it utterly undermined Hegel's monumental *Science of Logic* before the latter had even appeared in print. Schelling carefully investigates the problem of evil by building on Kant's notion of radical evil, while also developing an astonishingly original conception of freedom and personality that exerted an enormous (if subterranean) influence on the later course of European philosophy from Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard through Heidegger to important contemporary theorists like Slavoj Žižek.

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At Clemson University, Jeff Love is Assistant Professor of German and Russian and Johannes Schmidt is Assistant Professor of German.

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