Reply to Dews, and a Plea for Schelling

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Reply to Dews, and a Plea for Schelling

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1. Peter Dews examines two contrasting interpretations of the *Freiheitsschrift* – Markus Gabriel's, which takes ontology as the work's main concern, and my own, which reads Schelling as employing a practical strategy – and argues that each reveals serious limitations, recognition of which leads to a more comprehensive view of the work.[1] Dews goes on to conclude that, *contra* what Gabriel and I (each on different grounds) imply, the *Freiheitsschrift* does not succeed in its aim but rather falls between two stools, Schelling's deficiencies in 1809 pointing towards the great innovations of his late philosophy.

The common criticism that Dews makes of Gabriel and myself is that we neglect the vital methodological condition that Schelling lays down at the outset of the *Freiheitsschrift*, that a theory of freedom must *both* accord with the first-person perspective from within which we enjoy a feeling of freedom, *and* embed freedom in an objective system of concepts; one-sidedly, Gabriel takes the second route and I take the former. Dews's specific criticism of my interpretation is that it attributes to Schelling an argument inconsistent with the view of morality articulated in the *Freiheitsschrift*. The potential for dissonance to which Dews rightly draws attention is something I had overlooked and neglect of the relevant issues constitutes a weakness in my presentation, though I am not convinced that the implications for the interpretation itself are as serious as Dews suggests, for reasons that I will try to explain. Because the general issues surrounding Schelling's philosophical methodology and ethical theory deserve clarification on their own account, what follows may hold independent interest.

One potential source of resistance to the attribution to Schelling of a Kantian-Fichtean style argument from first-person normative consciousness – not identified by Dews in so many words but perhaps in the vicinity of his concerns – derives from uncertainty that Schelling, in 1809 if not before, allows transcendental proof to be self-supporting. The dual system approach which Schelling had adopted in 1800 allowed transcendental philosophy to proceed under its own steam, methodologically independent from *Naturphilosophie*, but by the time of the *Freiheitsschrift*, when both the dual system model and the Identity Philosophy's unification of the two systems have been left in abeyance, the picture has become unclear. In addition and more particularly,

whatever Schelling may think of transcendental method in 1809, longer-term uncertainty surrounds his view of the probative value of *practical* self-consciousness. This goes right back to his 'Fichtean' texts of 1794–98, which give different indications concerning what is proven by the transcendental philosopher's discovery of an act of freedom at the core of self-consciousness. To be sure, the vacillations or at any rate variations in the weight Schelling puts on practical self-consciousness reflect the difficulties he encounters in completing his project of unifying Freedom and Nature, and to that extent I agree with Dews that the *Freiheitsschrift* lies under the shadow of a high-level lack of integration in Schelling's thought. The moral I would draw from this, however, is that, precisely because in 1809 Schelling still has no fixed and final account of a single philosophical method which would synthesize its Freedom- and Nature-related, and its *a priori* and *a posteriori* aspects, Schelling does not preclude, rather he leaves scope for, a metaphysical derivation from practical self-consciousness, even if the results thereof stand in need of revalidation from a standpoint which is theoretical rather than practical and which does not confine itself to the transcendental method.[2] In short, Schelling's requirement that freedom be located in a system of concepts does not preclude an argument that extrapolates metaphysics from moral consciousness, even if he cannot allow it to be the whole story.

Dews's objection, however, is more finely focussed. It is that Schelling in 1809 'no longer thinks that there is any such thing as the normativity of pure practical reason' and rejects the associated conception of 'the moral person as divided between transcendental freedom and the pull of empirical incentives',[3] and therefore cannot intend to argue in the way I propose. Let me now expand on what I said in my paper, briefly and obscurely, concerning Schelling's transformation of Kant's Fact of Reason, in a way that aims to take account of and accommodate the important points that Dews presses against my interpretation.

Indisputably Schelling in the *Freiheitsschrift* sets himself against Kant's thesis of the efficacy of pure practical reason and his identification of the moral law with the principle of autonomy, from which it follows that Schelling cannot be endorsing the Fact of Reason as it stands in the second *Critique* – since that argument is designed precisely to establish cognition of the intelligible ground of transcendental freedom presupposed by the moral law conceived as the principle of autonomy. It is also beyond doubt, and stands in close connection with the preceding, that Schelling's account of moral goodness is not Kant's: the moral goodness of an agent, on Schelling's

conception, is owed not to the motivational sufficiency of the agent's pure practical reason but to the agent's total, nature-inclusive being.

Putting these two points together, it may well seem that Schelling not only rejects the conclusion of Kant's Fact of Reason deduction but has also destroyed the basis for any argument of its kind: if the agent *qua* natural being is factored into normative consciousness, then this can no longer be regarded as pure in the way required for Schelling to be interpreted in the way I suggested. More broadly, it may seem that a transcendental construal of the *Freiheitsschrift*, as well as putting all the emphasis on the first-person point of view, confines itself to the Freedom side of Kant's great dualism and, aside from adding a new focus on evil, understands this in terms no different from Kant, or Fichte – as if Schelling's anti-Fichtean metaphysics of Nature made no difference to how he conceives rational self-consciousness.

While Dews is right to insist on the two fundamental points cited above as marking Schelling's distance from Kant, it does not follow, I think, that Schelling cannot employ the same distinctive form of argument from normative consciousness to *ratio essendi*. What allows him to do so, in short, is that the *ultimate* grounds of moral cognition and volition remain for him, as for Kant, exclusively *a priori*: for Schelling too moral consciousness is *pure*, even though it does not consist in consciousness of pure practical reason. It is so because the motivational value of empirical particularity – the normative weight that I attach to whatever motives arise from my natural being – is not the immediate effect of my existence as a particular in nature, but derives from the pre-empirical choice that I make at the non-temporal moment of my creation: the *pure* choice that I make before entering the temporal stream of Nature is what determines the motivational significance and moral valency that nature within me has, once I have entered into it. So although for Schelling the moral agent does indeed exhibit (as Dews emphasizes) a fusion of practical reason with natural-empirical particularity – what the Schellingian agent judges it to be right to do, and wills to do, is an expression of, and is necessitated by, her total nature as a particularized natural being – the very unity of this whole, by virtue of which the agent is not (as per Kant) a mere Freedom-Nature compound but rather some sort of identity of the two, has a non-empirical ground.

Schelling's transformation of Kant's moral psychology has something important in common, structurally, with Schiller's earlier grappling with Kant's Freedom/Nature dichotomy. Central to the *Letters on Aesthetic Education* is the claim that self-determination is inadequately conceived (or worse) so long as it excludes Nature,

empirical particularity, and confines itself merely to agreement with universal Reason. Schiller presents himself accordingly as attempting to save Kantian self-determination from Kant's own narrow rationalistic miscontrual of it. Schelling, by contrast, rejects the concept. Yet they concur in thinking that, in order to have reality, freedom and moral goodness must be properties of the person as a whole, meaning that what Kant treats as external to normative consciousness – the *Neigungen* that, according to Kant, must first be taken up into maxims in order to yield reasons for action – must be relocated within it. And the parallel extends to the means which they employ to achieve this result: just as Schelling's unification of Freedom and Nature turns on a pre-empirical act of choice (the point made above), so too does Schiller's solution, in the argumentative heart of the *Letters*, turn on the postulation of a pre-empirical state of 'unlimited determinability' in the formation of our mental powers.[4] They agree, therefore, that the two dimensions of human personality that Kant painstakingly separates cannot, as they stand, be merely glued together or co-mingled, and that the unity of free moral agency must have its source (which Schelling locates in a choice coincident with the subject's creation and Schiller in a retreat to pre-natal indetermination facilitated by aesthetic experience) independently of and prior to the agent's empirical existence as a particular in nature.[5] In that sense, both uphold Kant's conception of a pure *a priori* foundation for normativity in general. And it is the manifestation of this pre-empirical ground in moral awareness that, in Schelling, gives normative consciousness its authority as a datum for metaphysical extrapolation.

The full importance of Nature for Schelling's argument, on my construal, emerges when we directly compare his theory of evil with Kant's. A fundamental point in Kant's argument is that we must avoid attributing to human beings an *a priori* interest in evil *for its own sake*: to attribute such a will to man is to make him either (i) a '*diabolical* being', which his capacity for the good will precludes, or (ii) 'morally good and evil at the same time', which is contradictory.[6] An evil will must therefore not be understand as directed at its object *qua evil*. Hence Kant's claim that the opposition of good and evil can be represented only as a matter of the *prioritization* of one of two principles, the moral law and the principle of self-love, over the other.[7] Though the principles must stand on the same level, in so far as an intelligible choice is made between them, they are unequal in a key respect: the moral law expresses the ground of its own necessity (pure reason), whereas the agent's prioritization of the principle of self-love is groundless or rather whatever ground it may have is 'inscrutable'. The

structure Kant describes thus combines symmetry (the principles are equally both practical alternatives) with asymmetry (regarding their rational modality), and it is designed to provide for the reality of evil without imputing a diabolical will. What it fails to supply, in Schelling's terms, rendering Kant's solution 'merely formal', is a ground of the possibility of a *real* opposition of good and evil: without some insight into what is *at stake* for the agent in their choice of either good or evil, it is impossible to understand how they can actually *conflict*, how the subordination of the one principle to the other can be an issue for the *will* of an agent, rather than merely subsisting as logical alternatives. Kant is of course fully aware that moral conflict cannot be understood as a confrontation of normative consciousness with what lies *outside* it, but nor has he, Schelling claims, shown how it can be understood as a diremption *within* it. The Kantian counter-claim is that any attempt to supply the allegedly missing insight – any greater degree of 'realism' about evil – will run foul of the absurdity of attributing a diabolical will; Kant's thesis of noumenal ignorance is consequently indispensable for the imputability of evil actions, just as his thesis of the transcendental ideality of empirical reality is indispensable for the attribution of freedom.

Schelling meets the challenge by employing Kant's own structure, but transposing it into an ontological key. Following Kant, Schelling plots the relation of good and evil along two dimensions: on the one (ontological groundedness) they are symmetrical, and on the other (rational warrant) they are not. This combination of symmetry and asymmetry is not left hanging, as in Kant, but provides the epistemic basis for, and is taken to derive metaphysically from, a corresponding combination in their ontological grounds. Each is aligned with a different relation of *Grund* and *Existenz*: in the case of the good, *Existenz* has precedence over *Grund*, in that of evil, *Grund* has precedence over *Existenz*. These structures derive in turn from the inherent differences of *Grund* and *Existenz*, and the symmetry-and-asymmetry of their relation: each grounds the other, according to Schelling's theory of God and Nature, but in inverse senses. The *Grund-Existenz* configuration, being metaphysically ultimate, closes all possibility of further explanation. It has thus been explained how it is possible for evil to figure positively in normative consciousness without imputing a diabolical will.

One crucial condition for Schelling to do all this is his rejection of a basic assumption that Kant makes concerning the *form* that normative consciousness necessarily takes. Kant assumes that normativity can take only one form, namely that of a *principle of practical reasoning*;[8] his justification being of course that anything else

would of necessity amount to a mere empirical cause. If Kant's assumption of the mutual exclusivity of Freedom and Nature stands, then Schelling's claim to have improved on Kant's theory is defeated: since, on that assumption, whatever ontological grounds Schelling may posit will only figure for the agent, and be capable of bearing on her will, once (and in so far as) they have been represented as, translated into, principles of reasoning. This would take us all the way back to Kant's theory of evil, and leave us facing once again the unanswerable question concerning the (principled?) basis on which the evil agent prioritizes the principle of self-love above the moral law.[9] But Schelling of course rejects Kant's Freedom/Nature dualism, and this allows normativity to reside in Nature. What exactly normativity-in-nature amounts to for Schelling is a topic of its own, but for present purposes all it means is that the principle of evil active in man need not be identified with a principle of reasoning, without thereupon being reduced to a non-normative Kantian empirical cause. This allows the pull of evil to be genuinely normative, without its grip being identified with the endorsement of a principle's rational validity. Schelling's assumption of the presence of Nature within normative consciousness – or at the very least, his rejection of Kant's exclusion of it – is therefore crucial for his construction of a theory of evil which supplies what Kant lacks. To return to the earlier issue of Schelling's methodology, the derivation of metaphysics from normative consciousness that he on my reading proposes might be described, not exactly as *naturphilosophisch* transcendentalism (since no specific doctrines of Nature drive Schelling's argument), but simply as a transcendental argument liberated from Kant's restrictive assumption of the mutual exclusivity of Freedom and Nature.

One final remark. There is an important respect in which Schelling, for all of his disparagement of Kantian-Fichtean ethics, remains Kantian, indeed formalist, in his thinking about morality. Kant's expositions of his moral theory begin with an analytic, which is all-determining for the resulting metaphysics of morals: it is because the ordinary concept of a good will leads to the concept of a principle that motivates by virtue of its formal property of universality, that the moral law ultimately comes to be identified with autonomy. Schelling does not provide an analytic, but he leaves us in no doubt concerning the correct analysis of the concept of the Good: transposing Kant's identification of morality with universal law, the *Freiheitsschrift* aligns goodness and love with universality, and evil with particularity. Universality takes a different shape in Schelling – for whom it is, as said above, not first and foremost a property of a *principle*, but rather a matter of the *form* of an agent's selfhood – but he sustains the

formalistic alignment of moral distinctions with metaphysical categories, and this is crucial for his inference from normative consciousness to its *ratio essendi*.

If what I have said is right, then, although claims for the practical-Kantian interpretation of the *Freiheitsschrift* must be qualified and clarified in the ways Dews shows to be necessary – and, as Dews also indicates, the work must also be reevaluated in light of Schelling's later development – it does not follow that the interpretation itself is awry.

2. The difference of Dews's and my respective appraisals of the *Freiheitsschrift* should be seen against the background of our fundamental agreement concerning the interest which the work holds not simply as a moment in Schelling's development but as an account of human freedom. Since this is hardly a mainstream view, it is worthwhile to say something about its basis, as I understand it. What follows is intended to complement and supplement the argument that Dews gives in Part III of his paper concerning the need for a speculative theory of freedom.

The *Freiheitsschrift* is, all too obviously, not a resource drawn on when contemporary philosophers (in the analytic tradition, at any rate) reflect on the problem of free will. Its present-day readers are those whose historical interest in classical German philosophy extends beyond the obvious landmarks of Kant and Hegel, and those, such as Žižek, who are constructing general philosophical positions of their own in dialogue with classical German thought. In this respect it is not on its own, however. Contemporary discussion of freedom in the analytic anglophone sphere is almost completely dissociated from the classical German legacy.[10] As Dews indicates, the one element that has survived, due largely to P. F. Strawson, is the notion of the 'practical point of view', which Kant is widely supposed to have shown to be in some important way self-validating. Kant's intelligible causality has no place and is mentioned only, like Schopenhauer's variant of the theory, as an absurdity to be avoided. Fichte's and Hegel's accounts of freedom, if they surface at all, do so in the context of rights and political theory. That more than half a century of intensive philosophical activity dedicated to establishing the possibility and actuality of human freedom should be taken to boil down to one fragmentary footnote in which Kant reports a provisional step in an argument not yet completed – this surely demands explanation: How has it come about that one of the great developments in modern philosophy, which unified itself around the concept of freedom and devoted page after page to expositing the meaning and

implications of a concept which has lost none of its importance and with which no later philosophical development can plausibly claim to have made substantial progress, has absolutely no significance whatsoever for contemporary thought about the topic?

One point should be made immediately, in order to rule out what might seem the obvious answer: it cannot be the 'metaphysicality' as such of classical German theories of freedom that explains their contemporary irrelevance, since metaphysical commitments abound in the theories of historical authors who do hold a place in contemporary discussion, and many contemporary theorists of free will who are indifferent to historical writings invest heavily in general metaphysics. (Nor can it be attributed to the nominally 'idealistic' character of classical German metaphysics, given their huge diversity on every dimension.) Some other explanation is required, and it is reasonable to suppose that it has to do with the way in which the *problem* of freedom is conceived in classical German philosophy. My suggestion is that it results from what may be called the *all or nothing* character of freedom and of the task that it sets, in the post-Kantian conception.[11] By this is meant that (1) freedom and value in general are regarded as essentially interconnected, such that (a) freedom is necessary and sufficient for the possibility of value, and (b) no methodological mistake is involved in attempting to elucidate or vindicate freedom through axiological reflection; (2) freedom, though necessarily expressed empirically, is independent from and immunized against empirical contingency – in the jargon, it belongs to the unconditioned; (3) freedom must pertain to the whole of human personality or to its deepest root, such that (a) the distinction between subjecthood and freedom is a conceptual and not a real distinction, and (b) if the attribute of freedom comes late in the metaphysical explication of what constitutes a human being, then its reality will to all effect have been denied rather than provided for.

Up to a point the conception is recognizably Kantian: transcendental freedom as Kant conceives it certainly satisfies (1) and (2). What is not so clear is that Kant's theory of freedom succeeds in satisfying (3), even though it is hard to see on what grounds Kant could reject it. If we now turn to Jacobi, we find a forceful statement of the all-or-nothing conception which helps to explain the uneasiness concerning Kant's account which motivates the German Idealists' theories of freedom. In the first edition of his *Spinoza Letters*, Jacobi protests against determinism on the following grounds:

> The whole thing comes down to this: from fatalism I immediately conclude against fatalism and everything connected with it. — If there are only efficient, but no final, causes, then the only function that the faculty of thought has in the whole of nature is that of observer; its proper business is to accompany the mechanism of the efficient causes. The conversation that we are now having together is only an affair of our bodies; and the whole content of the conversation, analysed into its elements, is extension, movement, degree of velocity, together with their concepts, and the concepts of these concepts. The inventor of the clock did not ultimately invent it; he only witnessed its coming to be out of blindly self-developing forces. So too Raphael, when he sketched the School of Athens, and Lessing, when he composed his *Nathan*. The same goes for all philosophizing, arts, forms of governance, sea and land wars – in brief, for everything possible. For affects and passions would have no effect either, so far as they are sensations and thoughts; or more precisely, so far as they *carry* sensations and thoughts with them. We only *believe* that we have acted out of anger, love, magnanimity, or out of rational decision. Mere illusion! What fundamentally moves us in all these cases is *something that knows nothing of all that*, and which is *to this extent* absolutely devoid of sensations and thoughts. These, the sensations and thoughts, are however only concepts of extension, movement, degrees of velocity, etc. – Now, if someone can accept this, then I cannot refute his opinion. But if one cannot, then one must be at the antipodes from Spinoza.[12]

The particular interest of this passage, stripped of extraneous features, is Jacobi's notion of freedom as diffused throughout human personality, co-extensive with and constitutive of the total range of internal subject-constituting phenomena, such that denial of freedom would entail our elimination, or at any rate would leave us hollowed out, spiritless. Whether Kant need strictly disagree with anything Jacobi says here is uncertain, but in any case we do not find in Kant any similarly forthright affirmation of the foundational status and comprehensive reach of freedom.

The analysis I gave of the all-or-nothing conception of human freedom is only an approximation,[13] and a lengthy treatment would be required to substantiate the claim that it is original to and distinctive of classical German philosophy.[14] That said, it provides two things which are needed: a direct explanation for the non-relevance of classical German theories to contemporary discussion, and a basis on which we can identify what is specific to the way Schelling conceives freedom in the *Freiheitsschrift*. To take the first of these: Although the all-or-nothing conception does not entail a commitment to indeterminism, it does rule out *ab initio* all forms of *empirical* compatibilism – the very type of position most widely believed to offer the best

prospects for the defence of human freedom.[15] In addition, it means that a constructive speculative method of some sort, yielding metaphysical claims of a very general and most likely *revisionary* nature, is required if human freedom is to be grasped adequately. From such a perspective, contemporary discussion of human freedom, in which arguments characteristically turn on assertions and denials of conceptual connections between concepts extant in the manifest and/or scientific images, and which pursues metaphysical possibilities conservatively, within the constraints of one or other of those images, appear to be engaged in a circumscribed task located at a point relatively far downstream, and cannot be expected to do more than map assumptions which would avoid precluding the possibility of human freedom. That empirical compatibilism consistently proves the most stable (that is to say, the least awkward) position in contemporary debate comes as no surprise.[16]

The specificity of the *Freiheitsschrift* – the contrast that it forms with other post-Kantian speculative theories of freedom – lies in Schelling's holding fast to a fundamental insight of Kant's and Jacobi's, namely that there is at the level of *natural* consciousness an *opacity* in freedom which is indicative of its metaphysical *depth*. This opacity is a corollary of the all-or-nothingness of freedom: it becomes explicit for us (per Jacobi) when our reflection seeks to grasp the ground of the phenomena that we take to manifest our freedom, or (per Kant) when we ask what makes it possible for us to act under the Idea of freedom (in other words: what *grounds* our inalienable commitment to a capacity for rational determination of action). It is also connected closely with freedom's axiological dimension, in two ways: if the fact of freedom did not present itself as of a different order from other facts, then it could not matter *primitively* in the way that it does; and if freedom did not have a subterranean depth, then its unity could not survive the bifurcation into negative and positive conceptions which markedly characterizes theories of freedom.[17]

The task which classical German philosophy sets itself is to show that this appearance of depth is not deceptive, not an optical effect of our ignorance of concealed causes. One form that the project takes is the attempt of Fichte (and Hegel) to transform the opacity of freedom into transparency – to illuminate it all the way down. Accordingly the *Wissenschaftslehre* seeks to show that the depth of the fact of freedom consists in its being a 'fact' of an extraordinary kind, without parallel, one which makes self and world possible; but which can nonetheless be illuminated fully, because the fact is immanent in self-consciousness.[18]

Whether or not he ever shared the objective of fully illuminating freedom, up until 1804 Schelling did not set himself in opposition to it. By 1809, however, Schelling had identified evil as the crucial obstacle to any such approach, and this gave him reason for reverting to the other strategy of classical German philosophy, explored earlier in the day by Kant and Jacobi, which aims to upholds the reality of freedom precisely by allowing it to remain in some respect cognitively unassimilated – whence Kant's thesis of the incomprehensibility of freedom, and Jacobi's theory of immediate affective-intuitive *Glaube*/*Vernunft* which no *wissenschaftlich* reflection can recuperate. The *Freiheitsschrift* does not straightforwardly follow their pattern, however: Schelling instead offers a synthesis of strategies, a combination of Kantian ignorance with Fichtean illumination. The true opacity in freedom, the real source of its resistance to rational insight, Schelling claims, is our capacity for evil, but from this datum – and by turning our attention away from self-consciousness and towards God *sive* Nature – we can extrapolate a metaphysics that affords the same level of insight into our existence as free beings as the *Wissenschaftslehre* claims to do. Thus it may be said indifferently either that the *Freiheitsschrift* raises the Kantian 'comprehended incomprehensibility' of freedom to a higher power, or that it provides an illumination of freedom as total as the phenomenon allows.

Schelling's approach to freedom is differentiated on the one side, therefore, from the Fichtean-Hegelian claim that speculative reflection can render freedom fully transparent to philosophical reflection, and on the other from the contemporary assumption that freedom, in order to have reality, must yield to analysis in terms of other and plainer concepts already in circulation. But his disagreement with our contemporaries is much greater than with his own. From Schelling's standpoint, the tendency of contemporary defences of freedom, reflecting the anti-speculative philosophical outlook which conditions them, is to superficialize freedom: lacking all conviction in the possibility of metaphysical depth, we find it necessary to suppose that freedom, in order to exist, must be located right at the surface. Accordingly we seek to align it as closely as possible with some antecedently recognized, uncontested and relatively unproblematic feature of our rational lives, on which we take ourselves to already have a firm criteriological grip – responsiveness to reasons, capacity for self-control, governance by second-order volitions, and suchlike. What is puzzling about this endeavour, from the classical German perspective, is the expectation that a concept which carries such an extraordinary weight will allow itself to be identified with a

specific architecture of propositional attitudes or other psychological configuration. The correlative objection is that, in order to recognize facts about mental life *as* bearing the specific significance of manifesting freedom, we must *already* be in possession of a concept which is not the concept *of* a mere psychological condition – freedom must already be available as an 'Idea', or something of a similar non-empirical order, in order for us to interpret and experience some particular type of psychological life *as* that of a being equipped with freedom. Whatever the shortfallings of classical German philosophy, there is reason to regard its claim that human freedom cannot be a fact like any other as a lesson that needs to be relearnt.

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[1] Peter Dews, 'Theory Construction and Existential Description in Schelling's *Treatise on Freedom*' [PUBLICATION DETAILS OF ISSUE OF THE BJHP IN WHICH PRESENT ARTICLE ALSO APPEARS TO BE SUPPLIED].

[2] Thus Schelling introduces the *Grund*/*Existenz* distinction as having already been established by *Naturphilosophie* (*Freiheitsschrift*, 357), and in the *Weltalter* it is introduced via reflection on the nature of God.

[3] Dews, 'Theory Construction and Existential Description in Schelling's *Treatise on Freedom*', pp. 000 and 000.

[4] Letters 19–21, in *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: In a Series of Letters* (1793–95), trans. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), pp. 128–149.

[5] The further difference in their respective strategies, reflecting their different estimates of how much is needed to fix the problem bequeathed by Kant, concerns of course the concept of Nature, which Schiller leaves untouched, and which Schelling wholly transforms. If Schelling were to make a criticism of Schiller, it would surely be that his expectation of being able to overcome the Freedom/Nature division within the subject without rethinking the metaphysics of Nature is naive.

[6] *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793), 6:35 and 6:36, in Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. and ed. Allen W. Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 82 and 83. See also 6:22–25, pp. 71–73.

[7] Ibid, 6:36, p. 83.

[8] Kant says explicitly that the propensity to evil must *consist in* (bestehen muß) unlawful maxims (ibid, 6:32, p. 80), and that 'the ground of evil' can lie 'only in a rule' (6:21, p. 70).

[9] Ibid, 6:21, p. 71: 'One cannot, however, go on asking [...]'.

[10] I take the *Oxford Handbook of Free Will*, edited by Robert Kane (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), as representative. Kane explains in his Introduction (p. 37n2) that coverage of the history of free will debates would require a separate volume, and the contributions to the *Handbook* bear out his view that discussion can proceed with only incidental reference to historical sources. The only contributor who discusses Kant at any length is Galen Strawson, in a chapter included under 'Non-Standard Views'. Apart from P. F. Strawson, neo-Kantian writers such as Christine Korsgaard have no presence.

[11] Here again I am borrowing from Paul Franks.

[12] Johann Friedrich Jacobi, *Concerning the Doctrine of Spinoza in Letters to Herr Moses Mendelssohn* (1785), in *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel 'Allwill'*, trans. and ed. George di Giovanni (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), p. 189.

[13] In particular, a case can be made that autonomy should be added as a fourth component.

[14] And to explore its later development in Kierkegaard, Bergson, Sartre, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Adorno and others who take their bearings from the classical German conception. Heidegger's *The Essence of Human Freedom: An Introduction to Philosophy* (1930), trans. Ted Sandler (London: Continuum, 2002), provides an especially clear and explicit restatement of the view that human freedom cannot be regarded as merely one 'particular' philosophical problem among others.

[15] Differently put, it entails that there is *truth in* indeterminism at the *empirical* level, whether or not indetermination *per se* belongs to the essence of freedom. One interesting implication of the all-or-nothing conception is that (some of) the terms employed by natural consciousness to articulate freedom – in particular and most obviously, the 'could have done otherwise' clause and the modal openness of the future – may be legitimate *expressions* of consciousness of freedom, without being strict conditions of its reality: if freedom is not transparent to natural consciousness, then the conceptual means that we ordinarily employ to signal its reality – though these must be validated in at least an oblique sense – may lack strict truth, and yet not be false or empty. From this it follows, *contra* the methodology of contemporary discussion, that the issue of the nature and reality of freedom cannot be decided simply by conceptual analysis of the terms in which we ordinarily articulate our conviction of our freedom.

[16] While it cannot by any means be said that naturalism is a shared premise of contemporary freedom theorists, it is at least true that, by dint of what it implicitly refuses to countenance as worthy of consideration, the debate is to all effect conducted under pressure from naturalism. Here it needs to be pointed out that, as regards taking seriously the metaphysical implications of natural science, the situation is no different from the 1780s, as the passage from Jacobi shows; what has changed is the perception of philosophical possibilities available for the defence of human freedom – as these have narrowed, so the concept of freedom has been contracted.

[17] This feature of the concept's behaviour, the fact that we instinctively grasp freedom on the one hand as an unconditional end, hence as something fully positive, and at the same time represent it in terms of negation, absence of constraint and so forth, without having any clear idea how the two dimensions are connected – a duality that the history of political thought displays on a large scale – is distinctive and ought to be found more puzzling than it is.

[18] For a succinct statement of Fichte's commitment to transparency, see 'Zu "Jacobi an Fichte"' (1805/06), *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. Immanuel Hermann Fichte (Berlin: Veit & Comp., 1845–46), Bd. 11, p. 390. Also relevant is Fichte's letter to Jacobi, 3 May 1810, in *Johann Gottlieb Fichte's Leben und literarischer Briefwechsel. Die erläuternden Aktenstücke zur Biographie und den litterarischen Briefwechsel enthaltend*, Bd. 2, ed. Immanuel Hermann Fichte (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1862), pp. 179–184, which opens with what appears to be an attack on the *Freiheitsschrift*.