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A DISSERTATION

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BY

RICHARD LESTER OLIVER

Norman, Oklahoma

1977

SCHELLING AND KIERKEGAARD: EXPERIMENTATIONS IN MORAL AUTONOMY

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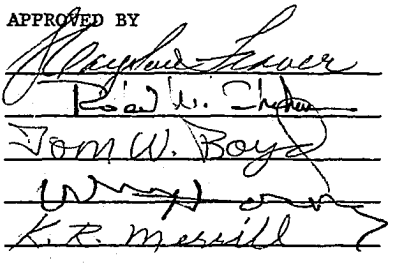

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Kantian ethics is the origin of all ethics of autonomy in which "autonomy" means the self-legislation or self-determination of the man who acknowledges no law except one which he has made. Nothing ultimately can have authority, perhaps even reality, for man which is not capable of being appropriated as his own and identified as proceeding from his own self. Kant's concept of autonomy is one of the most crucial suggestions of the modern period, serving not only as the capstone of his own ethical theory, but also as the impetus for the contemporary notion of authenticity among existentialists. The expanding nuances of autonomy and its vital role among Kant's successors have not been adequately explored. My purpose in this dissertation is to aid in filling this gap by exploring the manner in which the concept of autonomy was modified and utilized by Schelling's philosophy of freedom and in the thought of Kierkegaard. My thesis is that Schelling and Kierkegaard can be interpreted as having engaged in a series of thought-experiments to elucidate (1) the precise nature of moral autonomy and (2) the conditions which either preclude its possibility or contribute to its attainment.

It must be emphasized, however, that Schelling and Kierkegaard are not engaged in a direct and continuous expansion of the Kantian theory of moral autonomy. They are neither mere disciples nor imple-

mentors of a Kantian program. Kant's theory of moral autonomy was regarded as merely a stimulus for, and not an inventory of, moral autonomy. It would be amiss to assume that autonomy is a seamless robe serving the same role for each man. On the contrary, each man may be seen developing a theory of moral autonomy within the framework of his own presuppositions, methodology and concerns. More specifically, an analysis of their concepts of autonomy must be undertaken from within the context of their respective theories of man.

I shall proceed in the following manner. First, in the remainder of the Introduction I shall provide two things: (1) a resume of the nature and position of autonomy within Kant's ethical theory in order to set the historical backdrop for the present study and (2) a statement of problems inherent within Kant's theory which serve as a transition to the positions of Schelling and Kierkegaard. Secondly, in the body of the dissertation I shall present a chapter each on Schelling and Kierkegaard. By emphasizing the concept of moral autonomy in Schelling and Kierkegaard I intend to establish an interpretative framework which will (1) expand the existing literature on autonomy by demonstrating how the concept was expanded by two of Kant's nineteenth century successors, (2) provide tenable solutions to interpretative problems which have perplexed scholars with respect to Schelling and Kierkegaard, and (3) clarify an important aspect (albeit not the only one) whereby Schelling and Kierkegaard may be properly identified as Existentialists. This last point is the case if a philosophical school is best defined in terms of a continuity of intentions rather than an identity of conclusions. The continuity of intention in this case is autonomy and its subsequent relationship to the contemporary existentialist notion

of authenticity. Finally, in the Conclusion I shall show how the doctrines of Schelling and Kierkegaard must complement each other to provide a more comprehensive and defensible notion of moral autonomy. I shall also discuss the weaknesses and incompleteness of the concept of autonomy as developed by Schelling and Kierkegaard.

Kant's Theory of Moral Autonomy

Kant's theory of autonomy issues from his concept of man. In fact, his entire Critical Philosophy may be viewed as an elaborate philosophical anthropology.[1] Kant's philosophy is an attempt to disclose the essential elements which ground the ontological priority of man in matters of knowledge (theoretical reason) and conduct (practical reason). Kant states that the ultimate end of philosophic activity "is no other than the whole vocation of man, and the philosophy which deals with it is entitled moral philosophy."[2] In this light, Kant regarded the first Critique as the necessary first step of limiting theoretical reason so that practical reason, or moral philosophy, could assume its position of priority.[3]

Kant accomplishes the limitation of theoretical reason by

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[1]See, for example, Frederick P. Van de Pitte, Kant as Philosophical Anthropologist, The Hague (Martinus Nijhoff, 1971) who argues for this interpretation.

[2]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith, New York (St. Martin's Press, 1964), A 840/ B 868.

[3]Van de Pitte, op. cit., marshals a good deal of evidence to support the view that this was Kant's own understanding of the role of the first Critique. See, for example, pp. 36-38. Compare also Kant's Critique, A 838-41/ B 866-69.

reversing the traditional relation between knower and the known object. Whereas his predecessors had assumed that the mind must conform to the object, Kant argued that the object must be made to conform to the mind. Thus Kant argues that the mind is a logical schematic which organizes data according to certain a priori categories. These categories of the understanding are superimposed upon sense data (sensibility) in such a way that the resulting synthesis provides knowledge. Knowledge always derives its form from the mind and its content from the world. Thus knowledge in the Kantian sense concerns the manner in which man is aware of the world. Norman Kemp Smith suggests that Kant was the first thinker in modern times to raise the problem of the nature of consciouness in such a way as to investigate the manner in which consciousness is aware of the world.[1] But such consciousness is not the mere passive representationalism of the Empiricists. Consciousness in the Kantian sense consists partially in the active judgments which we make of the world.[2] It is in this light that we must understand Kant's technical vocabulary. His terminology does not spring from the objects in themselves but concerns the manner in which we experience or make judgments about objects.

Kant's aim in the first Critique is to trace back all experience to a synthetic unity of self. Thus, our fundamental concepts, such as those of mathematics and Newtonian mechanics, have their ground in the synthesizing activity of the self. What remains indubitable within the realm of theoretical knowledge, according to Kant, is the certainty of

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[1]Norman Kemp Smith, A Commentary on Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason", New York (Humanities Press, 1962, 2nd ed.), p. xxxix.

[2]Ibid, p. xlii.

the self with its faculties of sensibility, its a priori categories, and its synthesizing activity. Thus, Kant argues for the priority and spontaneity (autonomy) of the transcendental self in all matters of theoretical knowledge.

As theoretical reason is legislative in its judgmental awareness of the realm of nature, so practical reason is legislative in its judgmental awareness of the realm of freedom.[1] Kant first develops the doctrine of practical reason's self-legislation of the moral law in the Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals.[2] Three points concerning the self-legislated moral law are requisite to an understanding of Kant's theory of autonomy: the origin, the form, and the end of the moral law. My purpose in the subsequent discussion is not to solve the many internal problems in Kant's ethical theory but merely to underscore the salient points and the parameters of Kant's theory of autonomy in order to clarify the historical matrix within which the discussions of Schelling and Kierkegaard originate.

The origin of the moral law

Man initially becomes aware of the moral law through the experience of a conflict within ordinary moral consciousness, which Kant calls a "natural dialectic"(405). This natural dialectic consists in (1) a

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[1]Critique of Pure Reason, A 840/ B 868.

[2]Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, New York (Harper Torchbooks, 1964). Hereafter referred to as Groundwork. All quotations from the Groundwork are from H.J. Paton's translation and all page references--henceforth included in parentheses within the text--are keyed to the text of the Royal Prussian Academy in Berlin since this pagination is usually provided in the margins of the different translations.

consciousness of desires and inclinations which are ultimately derived from sensory data and (2) a consciousness of a sense of duty which ultimately proceeds from reason. The existence of this conflict discloses the inadequacy of reason alone to direct man toward his proper ends and the attainment of his welfare. Reason alone is inadequate to discriminate between the multiplicity of desires and inclinations as well as to account for the origin of our sense of duty. In fact, instinct would have been a far more reliable guide than reason for providing our moral duty (395). There must be a different end toward which reason is properly directed than the direct control of our desires. Thus, the proper end of reason is the establishment of a pure rational or good will (396), since only a pure rational will always acts from a sense of disinterested duty. Thus, although the moral law originates within reason, reason alone is inadequate to resolve the conflict in man's moral life without first establishing a pure rational will. "Only a rational being has the power to act in accordance with his idea of laws--that is, in accordance with principles--and only so has he a will"(412). But how is man to attain this sense of disinterested duty and what is this idea of law which constitutes a pure rational will?

The form of the moral law

Kant argues that in our will we are aware of an ought which is formulated in laws, and the form of this moral law is to be found in the will's idea of law. Since the moral law may run counter to our inclinations and desires, it must be expressed as an imperative (413). But imperatives are of two kinds: hypothetical and categorical. Hypothet-

ical imperatives, since they presuppose a superordinate aim or end, merely provide the appropriate means whereby to attain the desired end. Since the duty inherent within hypothetical imperatives is subject to contamination from such empirical factors as inclination and social prudence, they do not provide the essential or ultimate ends of human conduct. Kant does contend, however, that even this qualified sense of duty must have its source in a prior sense of unconditional duty. Such an unconditional duty is found in categorical imperatives. In contradistinction to hypothetical imperatives, categorical imperatives lay claim to universal validity and have their ground in themselves. Categorical imperatives tell us what we ought to do, not how to achieve what we want to do, and, thus, provide the form of the moral law.

Categorical imperatives aid us in distinguishing a sense of disinterested duty from those cases in which duty has been rendered impure by the inclusion of sensuous motives. Kant says that there is only one categorical imperative, although it may be given various formulations.[1] The categorical imperative provides the form of the moral law and, as such, the criterion by which all particular moral maxims must be judged.

Whatever else Kant intends to say by means of his various formulations of the categorical imperative, he certainly means the morally justifiable actions are universalizable. Thus universalizability is a

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[1]His most important formulations are as follows: 1. Always act so that you could at the same time will the maxim of your actions to become a universal law of nature (421); 2. Always treat humanity, whether in the person of your own self or the person of another, as an end and never solely as a means (429); 3. Always act as if you were a member of an ideal kingdom of ends in which you are at once both monarch and subject (433).

criterion of the moral law and must be applicable to morally good actions. On the negative side, actions are not universalizable if they are either self-contradictory or would be self-destructive within the objective order. On the positive side, universalizability means that if an action were morally permissible for me, then it would be morally permissible for everyone. To engage in any act which is not universalizable is to perform an act out of self-preferential treatment. Such actions are motivated by personal desires and inclinations and not by a disinterested respect for the moral law.

The only moral law derivable from the nature of reason is a purely formal law of self-consistency and universalizability which suffices to rule out inconsistent policies but does not serve to select some specific consistent policies rather than others. Perhaps this explains why Kant's examples of universalizability are usually prohibitive rather than prescriptive. Moreover, since the moral law issues from reason, it is a formal paradigm, an abstract norm. The formal moral law, to be actually applicable, must be concretized into empirical moral maxims. Kant attempts the concretizing of the formal moral law by means of the "typic of the moral law."[1] Man can concretize the empirically empty moral law in terms of the empirical world by reference to a purely hypothetical world. Kant suggests that this is precisely what occurs in the ordinary moral consciousness when the average man asks: What if everyone did what I am about to do? Two things are discernible in this

[1]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, trans., with an introduction, by Lewis White Beck, New York (Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1969), pp. 70-74.

question, which Dietrichson[1] suggests provide two secondary tests of universalizability. First, is it possible to regard my act as becoming a universal law? Second, is it desirable that my act become a universal law? By reference to this hypothetical order of nature, Kant asks us to visualize the world as it might become if my action were universalized and, further, to determine if I would want to live in such a world. Thus, the typic discloses Kant's intention in the universalizability criterion. Theoretical reason is consciousness of the world as it currently exists and is known through the synthesizing activity of the mind while practical reason is consciousness of the world as it could become through my actions.

Autonomy as the end
of the moral law

In spite of the importance and length of his discussion of universalizability, Kant does not consider it the final ground of ethics. A rational being may entertain the question of the universalizability of his acts only if "the will is . . . not merely subject to the law, but is so subject that it must be considered as also making the law for itself . . ."(431). This characteristic of making the law for itself is what Kant calls "autonomy of the will." Man is subject to the moral law as expressed in the categorical imperative only because he has a will capable of being a law to itself (Cf. 440), i.e., capable of being autonomous. An action has moral worth and manifests a man's

[1]Paul Dietrichson, "Kant's Criteria of Universalizability" in Kant: Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals with Critical Essays ed. by Robert Paul Wolff, New York (Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1969), pp. 184-85.

good will only when it is done for the sake of duty, and duty can be properly fulfilled only when one has adopted the principles of autonomy as the ultimate standard whereby he judges all his other moral maxims and his actions.

Kant states emphatically that the "principle of autonomy is the sole principle of ethics"(440). Thus, autonomy is the end of the moral law. Kant has now come full circle. The moral law originates within man's nature as a rational being, carries its own form of universalizability with it, and seeks autonomy as its end. Man is autonomous when his action coincides with his nature as a rational being.

Autonomy contrasted
with heteronomy

Kant expands the notion of autonomy by contrasting it with heteronomy. "If the will seeks the law that is to determine it anywhere else than in the fitness of its maxims for its own making of universal law the result is always heteronomy"(441). It must be noted in advance, however, that Kant's selection of historical representatives is rather arbitrary although the various principles are easily discernible.

Kant classifies all previous ethical theories as heteronomous, i.e., as deriving the moral good from principles external to man's own will. He divides these heteronomous principles into two groups--those empirically based on the principle of happiness and those rationally based on the principle of perfection. He summarily rejects empirical heteronomy because this type of theory involves basing morality on external or sensuous motives, thereby adulterating the motive of the moral law. Kant lists as examples of this group the philosophical

derivation of the good from the legal system (Mandeville), from education (Montaigne), from physical pleasure (Epicurus), and from moral feeling (Hutcheson).

Kant deals at length with rationally heteronomous principles because of the possibility of confusing them with his own view. He divides this group into those deriving perfection from an internal source (an immanent teleological principle) and those deriving perfection from an external or transcendent source such as the will of God.

Internal perfection may be either theoretical or practical. Theoretical perfection may be either metaphysical--the perfection of a being merely as a finite being generally--or transcendental--the perfection of a being within its own species. An example of this latter type might be a champion show dog as exemplifying the ideal of its breed. Practical perfection, on the other hand, is the fitness of a being to achieve any kind of ends, such as a talent or a skill which enhances a talent. As an example we might imagine that same champion dog winning a field trial or performance contest. Kant rejects all principles of internal perfection because they claim that morally good actions result from some immanent principle (entelechy) within a particular being. Perfection here is a possible result of a predetermined course of action which leaves the subject without either choice or responsibility.

There are, on the other hand, those who seek to derive the principle of perfection from a transcendent source such as the will of God. For adherents of this principle, morally good actions are those which conform to the will of God. This approach is contingent upon the sufficiency of a supreme being (God) to be all ends in general. Such

perfection is possible only if we may perform the will of God, and we may perform the will of God only if we know the will of God, and we may know the will of God only if we are assured of the existence of God. But, according to the Critical Philosophy, this is impossible because it demands insight into the unknowable noumenal realm. Hence, perfection according to the will of God cannot be the ground of morality because it relies upon an antecedent notion of perfection which is independent of man and to which it is difficult, if not impossible, to hold man as a finite being responsible. Even Christianity, for example, teaches that man can perform the will of God only consequent to God's impartation of grace.

Consequently, Kant rejects all heteronomous principles because they cannot determine the will immediately but must do so through some external desire or sensuous impulse. At best, they only provide hypothetical imperatives: I ought to do something because I desire something else. For example, one may choose to perform the will of God because he desires the promised blessings attendant upon such performance. This obviously perverts the moral law.

To review Kant's argument to this point, the categorical imperative must have a metaphysical foundation. That is, in Kant's sense of "metaphysical", it must have its ground in the a priori structures of the human mind. This explains Kant's insistence that no command issuing from an external or heteronomous source could be unconditionally binding upon the human will. "Morality lies in the relation of actions to the autonomy of the will"(439). Consequently, moral principles must be built upon an understanding of human reason which reveals the a priori concept of duty as expressed in the categor-

ical imperative. Obedience to the categorical imperative involves adopting as one's chief maxim the principle of autonomy: "Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it could become a universal law"(421). Whatever else Kant might have meant by autonomy, and despite the internal problems of reconciling elements of his theory with other elements of the Critical Philosophy, he certainly intends to affirm that an action is autonomous only if it is determined internally by freedom and not externally by sense solicitation of any kind. Moreover, an action is autonomous only if it is spontaneous and not conditioned by an immanent teleological impulse.

Although there are many problems surrounding Kant's theory of autonomy, an intriguing prospect arises as a result of his suggestion of autonomy: the rehabilitation of the valuational viewpoint. Value predicates must be grounded in an autonomous personality. Kant's seminal suggestion is that a morally autonomous personality must be grounded in a pure rational or good will. But to have introduced the principle of moral autonomy is not to have developed it to its full extent, and to have provided a new foundation for ethical values is not to give an account of them.[1] One result of Kant's theory, however, is obvious:

> . . . by transferring the moral enterprise from the theoretical intellect to the will, it facilitates the development of morality as a whole that would hardly have been possible without this change of venue.[2]

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[1]For the eventual outcome of this development, see below, pp. 162-65.

[2]Frederick A. Olafson, Principles and Persons, Baltimore (John Hopkins Press, 1967), p. 42.

The concept of autonomy was to reveal an astonishing capacity for expansion once certain limitations imposed on it by Kant were eliminated. The identification of these limitations provides the transition to Schelling and Kierkegaard, and the elimination of these limitations provides the substance of Schelling's and Kierkegaard's philosophy to be subsequently examined.

Transition to Schelling and Kierkegaard

Two major issues provide the transition to Schelling and Kierkegaard: (1) a general dissatisfaction with Kant's assumption of man's essential rationality because of its attendant problems, and (2) an attempt to overcome this dissatisfaction by extending Kant's own suggestions regarding the will as the basis of morality. While each of these issues is important separately, they are also important because of their convergence on a crucial point in the closing section of Kant's Groundwork. Accordingly, I shall examine each of these problems, first separately and then jointly as they converge.

First, it is the rationalistic foundation of Kantian ethics which elicits the greatest disagreement from Schelling and Kierkegaard. Kant, as a child of the Enlightenment, gave priority to reason over all the other elements of human nature. The essential, a priori structures of theoretical and practical reason which Kant identified were regarded by him as universal. The dissatisfaction results from two implications of Kant's assumption of the essential and ontological priority of reason. First, in order to account for both the realm of nature and the realm of freedom, Kant had divided reason into a theoretical and a

practical apsect. Yet, in spite of Kant's claim in the first Critique[1] that the two aspects of reason are united in a common ground and in spite of the centrality of this unity to his argument in the closing section of the Groundwork, Kant never demonstrates precisely how these two aspects are united. The attempt to specify the unity of theoretical and practical reason constitutes one of the central concerns of Schelling and, before him, Fichte. The second implication of Kant's position is his assumption of the inevitable and irreconcilable conflict between reason and desire (or inclination). Kant seems to argue that however closely they may converge, the ends of reason and the ends of inclination can never be fused or share a common end except incidentally. Neither Schelling nor Kierkegaard shares such a totally negative view of human desires and inclinations; they regard them, rather, as essential elements of human nature to be integrated with other essential elements.

The second transitional issue is the elevation of will from the level of an ethical principle to the status of an ontological principle. In spite of his emphasis on rationality, Kant had made the important suggestion that the good will is the source of the moral law. And later thinkers, during an age of romantic individualism, tended to elevate will to a position of ontological priority.

The elevation of will to the status of an ontological principle has two important implications for Schelling and Kierkegaard. The first implication is that it yields a new dimension to the widely accepted definition of human freedom as action in accordance with man's nature.

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[1]Critique of Pure Reason, A 840/B 868-A 841/B 869.

But if the nature of man's being is freedom, then he is free in acting freely, i.e., in being self-determining or autonomous. While this is a doctrine of radical freedom, it is not a doctrine of absolute freedom or indeterminism. Freedom needs restrictions, even if they are self-imposed, in order to prevent itself from being dissipated and its center from becoming vacuous. Yet its self-imposed restrictions cannot become absolutely binding lest its freedom become lost. How can freedom remain free without becoming dissipated? How can freedom restrict or focus itself without becoming lost in the structure of its own restrictions? The attempted resolution of this apparent paradox constitutes a primary concern for Schelling and Kierkegaard.

The second implication of positing the ontological priority of will is that it provides a perspective for detecting an inconsistency in Kant's theory which someone sharing his assumption of the ontological priority of reason might not notice. Kant had argued that moral judgments cannot be founded on conditional a priori principles, i.e., principles conditioned by, or derived from, the mere nature of human nature. Schelling and Kierkegaard concur with Kant on this point. Yet, in spite of his disclaimer, Kant appears to have grounded this theory on just such a conditional a priori principle by positing a pure positivity of rationality in the center of man. Had not Kant grounded the origin and dynamics of the moral law in the practical reason, argued that the categorical imperative's criterion of universalizability provides its form, and concluded that the end of the moral law is the autonomy of reason? If rationality is the only legitimate mode of expressing freedom as autonomy, then is not freedom restricted, hence determined or conditioned by reason?

Schelling and, to a lesser extent, Kierkegaard take the opposite approach of positing a pure negativity of freedom in the center of man. Thus, moral judgments cannot be based on principles conditioned by the mere nature of human nature because there is no predetermined and universal "nature" of human nature. They posit, instead, only a negativity of freedom, a freedom which is subject to determination by the individual himself. Accordingly, they are able to ground moral judgments in unconditional a priori principles which are choices, even creations, of individuals. Men become autonomous through the free choice among, even creation of, various systems and theoretical constructs. In short, Schelling and Kierkegaard concur that Kant erred in making autonomy a predicate of reason rather than of the whole person understood as ontological freedom. This posited negativity of freedom as the essential ontological reality of human nature permits the line of development concerning autonomy that will be explored in this dissertation and connects both Schelling and Kierkegaard to the movement of Existential philosophy.

Both of these transitional issues and their implications converge in a crucial passage in the closing section of Groundwork. Kant's argument centers around the definition and demonstration of the "freedom of the will" so critical to his moral philosophy. Will is first defined as a kind of causality possessed by all rational beings (446). Then "freedom of the will" is first defined negatively as the property of the will to exercise itself independently of alien determination, and then defined positively as autonomy. Kant obviously attaches great importance to the concept of autonomy because it is "the ground of the dignity of human nature and of every rational nature"(436).

Having defined what he intends by the phrase "freedom of the will," Kant turns his attention to the possible demonstration of its existence. He argues that if we presuppose the Idea of freedom, then there springs from it a "consciousness of a law of action" which can "serve for our own enactment of universal law"(449). But the presupposition of freedom is not a demonstration of its existence. Moreover, how can such a law be binding when we recognize ourselves as being determined within the realm of nature? Preparatory to his answer, Kant solicits the aid of his familar distinction between the sensible and intelligible worlds. Then he presents a dilemmatic argument. If I were solely a member of the intelligible world, all my actions would be in perfect conformity with my autonomy as a self-legislative being; and if I were solely a part of the sensible world, then all my actions would be in conformity with the law of nature governing desires and inclinations. I must be either a member of the intelligible order or a member of the sensible order. Therefore, my actions must be in conformity with the principle of autonomy or the laws of nature. Kant escapes from this dilemma by arguing that the minor premise is an inclusive disjunctive, i.e., man must regard himself as a member of both the intelligible order of freedom and the sensible order of necessity. This is the case because "the intelligible world contains the ground of the sensible world and therefore also of its laws"(453), i.e., the sensible world derives its order and necessity from the synthesizing activity of human reason. Thus, while freedom of the will and the morality derived from it are no phantom of the brain, "this freedom is no concept of experience, nor can it be such"(455). Hence, human freedom deals with the intelligible or noumenal world but is experientially unknowable.

Kant's position obviously rests on the idea of the noumenal realm. But later thinkers could not rest content with the problematic noumena. Fichte was the first to reject the noumenal altogether and to elevate the moral will to the status of an ontological principle. Schelling followed in the direction charted by Fichte. Schelling posits will as primordial reality and a pure negativity of freedom as the ontological reality of man in which this negativity means that will is not subject to complete rational formulation. Will is then presented as expressing itself in two antithetical modes as the realm of reason and the realm of nature. Hence, Schelling unites the theoretical and practical reason of Kant in a common ground. Next, this antithesis provides the resolution of the conflict between reason and desire or inclination. Further, this antithesis provides a resolution of the apparent paradox of freedom's self-imposed limitations. In this light, the concept of autonomy assumes a new dimension. Autonomy is not merely self-legislative but integrative in nature. Its role is the eventual integration or synthesis of the antithetical elements of reason and nature, theoretical and practical reason, reason and desire, freedom and restrictions. Kierkegaard will be seen to follow a similar line of thought of regarding autonomy as integration, although he transcends some of the more dubious metaphysical elements of Schelling's philosophy.

CHAPTER I

AUTONOMY IN SCHELLING'S "PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM"

In this chapter I shall demonstrate the manner in which Schelling may be interpreted as having engaged in an experimentation to elucidate (1) the precise nature of moral autonomy and (2) the conditions which either preclude its possibility or contribute to its attainment. To accomplish this I shall focus on some themes in Schelling's Philosophy of Freedom which are usually ignored and rarely appreciated. The first theme is his metaphysical voluntarism. While his metaphysical voluntarism can be more appropriately regarded as a theological voluntarism, it nevertheless permits him, secondly, to posit a pure negativity of freedom as the ontological reality of man. Third, it is in the context of his metaphysical voluntarism that the outlines of a theory of moral autonomy can be detected. Finally, it is within this context that he introduces the notion of personality. In fact, autonomy is synonomous with personality for Schelling.

The primary work upon which I shall rely, for reasons to be clarified shortly, is Schelling's Philosophical Inquiries the Nature of Human Freedom.[1] Accordingly, a few remarks are in order concerning the position and importance of this work within the Schellingean corpus.

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[1]Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling, Of Human Freedom, translated by James Gutmann, Chicago (Open Court Publishing Co., 1936). Translation

The Unity of Schelling's Philosophy

The issue of the position of Human Freedom is related to the broader issue of the unity of Schelling's philosophical activity. This issue arises since Schelling's thought can apparently be divided into several parts, e.g., his Philosophy of Nature, his System of Transcendental Idealism, and his Philosophy of Freedom. Do these parts constitute several discrete philosophies or merely several phases in one comprehensive philosophical system?

Because of this apparent division Schelling's philosophy has been subjected to widely divergent interpretations. The older interpretation, popular around the turn of the century, was to interpret his philosophical activity as a series of discrete systems lacking real continuity.[1] Hence, it became fashionable to speak of Schelling's three philosophies--the Philosophy of Nature, the Philosophy of Transcendental Idealism, and the Philosophy of Freedom. This approach produced some unfortunate treatments. First Schelling was viewed as a mere transitional figure between Fichte and Hegel in the development of Post-Kantian Idealism. This interpretation, based largely on the System of Transcendental Idealism, emphasized his early philosophic activity and his relation to Fichte while largely ignoring his other work. But it

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of Philosophische Untersuchungen urber das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit. Hereafter I shall refer to this work by the abbreviated title Human Freedom.

[1]For a succinct account of the diverse ways in which Schelling's philosophy has been divided into "phases," "stages," or "philosophies" by historians of philosophy, see Victor C. Hayes, "Schelling: Persistent Legends, Improving Image," The Southwestern Journal of Philosophy, III, 3 (Fall, 1973), pp. 66-69. Hereafter referred to as Hayes.

must also be remembered that Schelling became the first great critic of Idealism. Consequently, a second interpretation, based on his Philosophy of Nature and developed by those who accepted his criticism of Idealism, emphasized his influence on nineteenth-century Romanticism. This interpretation stressed his aesthetics and his dynamic view of nature while underplaying his later critical activity. Both of these interpretations, however, ignore or underplay his later Philosophy of Freedom which contains his implicit theory of autonomy.

Recent scholarship, in arguing for a stronger continuity within Schelling's philosophical activity, challenges the older tradition with its lop-sided interpretations. Victor C. Hayes argues that Schelling's work is the result of "continuous reflection" on new problems arising from the solutions to old problems.[1] Copleston contends that Schelling was continuously involved in carrying out a program first formulated in his youth.[2] Paul Tillich, in following Schelling's own suggestion, divides Schelling's work into two parts--an early or negative part and a later or positive part--but then argues that the two parts are dialectically related.[3] This sort of division leads Tillich to talk of a Schelling I and a Schelling II. At any rate, Tillich says that "the

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[1]Hayes, p. 69.

[2]Frederick Copleston. A History of Philosophy, London (Burns and Oates Limited, 1965), VII, pp. 97-99. Copleston's discussion of Schelling is the best and most extensive treatment available in English. Hereafter referred to as Copleston.

[3]Paul Tillich, Mysticism and Guilt-consciousness in Schelling's Philosophical Development, translated with an Introduction and Notes by Victor Nuovo, Lewisburg, Pa. (Bucknell University Press, 1974), pp. 22-25. This work was Tillich's dissertation for his doctorate in theology.

great turning in Schelling's thought . . . occurred before the publication of On the Nature of Human Freedom."[1] Bolman concurs with Tillich by arguing that Schelling shifted from a rational dialectic to an "existential dialectic."[2] This "existential dialectic" is developed in Schelling's Human Freedom and The Ages of the World. Whatever the final verdict regarding the unity of Schelling's philosophic activity, the dominant note of recent scholarship is towards a greater continuity.

Two facts warrant my concentration on Schelling's Human Freedom for a discussion of moral autonomy. First, given Tillich's claim that the major shift in Schelling's thought occurred before its composition, Human Freedom is the first systematic statement which incorporates and expands the nuances of this shift. The second justification is Schelling's own claim that Human Freedom contains his first treatment of such topics as the "freedom of the will, good and evil, personality, etc."[3] From time to time, however I shall appeal to certain collateral works for clarification and expansion of various points.

Preliminary Matters

Schelling's major concern in Human Freedom is the resolution of the problem of evil. In the opening sections of this work, comprising one-fourth of its total length, Schelling attempts to establish two

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[1] Ibid, p. 24.

[2] See Bolman's "Introduction," p. 3, in Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling, The Ages of the World, trans, with Introduction and Notes by Frederick de Wolfe Bolman, New York (AMS Press, Inc., 1967). His "Introduction" shall hereafter be referred to as Bolman and the translated work as The Ages of the World.

[3] Human Freedom, p. 4.

preliminary points. First, the primary thrust of the opening section is that freedom is compatible with a system of patheism, provided that such a pantheistic system is vitalized with a voluntaristic basis. Second, Schelling attempts to develop the ground for the construction of his own solution by underscoring the inadequacies of all previous solutions to the problem. The theories of Augustine, Spinoza, Leibniz and Fichte receive special attention. This section, while containing many suggestions that are relevant to the problem of evil, contains little that is germane to a discussion of moral autonomy. The material that is pertinent will be developed in the course of the following exposition. The first point, however, contains several suggestions necessary to an adequate understanding of Schelling's fundamental program in general and his theory of autonomy. In order to clarify these suggestions, I shall retrace Schelling's steps in the introductory section of Human Freedom.

Compatibility of freedom
and "system"

Schelling's demonstration that freedom is compatible with voluntaristic pantheism is accomplished through three intermediate steps. The first step is to show that system qua system does not necessarily preclude freedom. Schelling's concern is with the claim made by some that

> the idea of freedom is said to be entirely inconsistent with the idea of system, and every philosophy which makes claim to unity and completeness is said to end in denying freedom.[1]

[1] Human Freedom, p. 7.

Schelling concedes that it is difficult to answer such a vague charge because it is impossible to know "what restricting notions have already been attached to the word 'system' itself."[1] But Schelling interprets this claim to mean that freedom is incompatible with a world view.

Since all men possess an ingrained sense of freedom, theoretical inquiries regarding this sense of freedom may be occupied either with defining the concept of freedom itself or in clarifying "the relation of this concept to a whole systematic world view".[2] But Schelling contends that the two separate types of inquiry must coincide because an undefined or poorly defined concept of freedom is difficult to locate within a system while a concept of freedom without a systematic framework is of little value. Once the concept of freedom has been delineated, the crucial issue is whether it is to be an incidental or a dominant feature of the system. Previous systems which incorporated the idea of freedom have proved inadequate, according to Schelling, because they attempted to maintain freedom as an incidental feature of the system. Schelling insists that since freedom cannot be merely incidental to a system, it must be a dominant, if not the dominant, feature of any satisfactory system.[3]

Freedom within a pantheistic system

The second step is to demonstrate that pantheism does not preclude freedom. The usual thesis is that "pantheism is the only system

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 7.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 9.

[3] Human Freedom, p. 7.

of reason but is inevitably fatalism".[1] But Schelling distinguishes two types of pantheism. On the one hand, pantheism can be understood to mean the immanence of all things in God. Since such a view entails granting absolute causal power to God and unconditional passivity to the creature, it necessarily follows that the very existence of the creature is a constantly renewed creation which determines each creature in a particular manner. Hence, if pantheism is understood to mean that man exists in God and that all human activity belongs to and is a manifestation of the divine life, then pantheism must be regarded as fatalistic. But many persons have been driven to the pantheistic outlook in an effort to preserve a sense of human freedom. Consequently, pantheism as the immanence of all things in God is not the variety of pantheism which Schelling defends.[2]

On the other hand, pantheism can be understood as the total identification of God with all things. Schelling points out that two corollaries are frequently deduced from the initial definition: (1) that the totality of things constitute God, and (2) that each individual must be identified with God. Schelling rejects both of these corollaries by pointing out that they rest on a misunderstanding of the

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[1] Human Freedom, pp. 9-10.

[2] See pp. 10-14 of Human Freedom for Schelling's discussion. My interpretation disagrees with Copleston, who concludes that if "pantheism is interpreted as meaning that all things are immanent in God, Schelling is quite prepared to be called a pantheist" (Copleston, p. 130). I also disagree with Bolman's suggestion that Schelling is attempting to overcome the charge of pantheism altogether (Bolman, p. 5). It is more accurate to conclude that Schelling is trying to avoid certain traditional charges against pantheism rather than pantheism per se. A careful reading of Schelling's text and the reasons which I have adduced on this and the following page will substantiate my interpretation.

law of identity, or the meaning of the copula in judgment.[1] The misunderstanding arises as a result of confusing identity with sameness. Two distinct things, red spots for example, can be identical without being the same thing. This is an instance of what Aristotle had called specific sameness.[2] Schelling points out that

> the profound logic of the ancients distinguished subject and predicate as the antecedent and the consequent (antecedens et consequens) and thus expressed the real meaning of the law of identity. Even a tautological statement, if it is not to be altogether meaningless, retains this relationship. Thus if one says: A body is body; he is assuredly thinking something different in the subject of the sentence than in its predicate. In the former, that is, he refers to the unity, in the latter to the individual qualities contained in the concept, body, which are related to the unity as the antecedens to the consequens.[3]

Such a distinction suggests important implications for the two corollaries which some maintain can be drawn from the proposition "God in all things." The distinction implies that things, whether in their totality or individually, stand to God in a relation of consequent to antecedent. Accordingly, God and things may be in some sense identical but not the same or coincidental.

Individuality within a pantheistic system

A far more serious consequence of pantheism as the identification of God with all things is the claim that such a view denies all individuality to the constituent things. Spinozism is a case in point. When

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 13.

[2] Aristotle Topics, i. 7, 103a 6-14.

[3] Human Freedom, p. 14.

Spinoza's fundamental premise that substance is "that which is in itself and is conceived through itself"[1] is combined with his principle that determination is negation, the result tends to be that the whole is the only real individual. Consequently, individuality cannot be predicated of the constituent parts.

The apparent denial of individuality within this form of pantheistic system is a serious claim which Schelling refutes in the following manner. He again argues that the difficulty is based on a misunderstanding of the law of identity. To say that all things are united with or dependent upon God does not preclude their autonomy. The law of identity merely permits us to claim that a dependent entity exists as "a consequence of that upon which it is dependent,"[2] but it does not determine the nature of the dependent entity. For example, every organic being is dependent upon another organism for its genesis but not for the character of its existence. In the same way, the dependence of entities upon God for their existence does not entail their dependence upon God for all their actions, i.e., while dependent for their origin, they may be independent or autonomous in their actions.[2]

From his systematic refutation of certain charges against pantheism, we may deduce that Schelling is prepared to be classified as a pantheist. But in the course of his refutations, he has rejected certain traditional forms of pantheism. He has rejected both acosmism, the theory that the world is non-existent, and the view that all things are immanent in God, since the latter position is fatalistic. Further, he

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[1]Spinoza Ethics, Bk. I. Def. III.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 18.

has rejected the interpretation which identifies the world with God. Schelling is attempting to develop his own position, a position (1) which holds that God and the creatures are identical but not coincidental and (2) which retains individuality, and hence autonomy, for the creatures. To accomplish this, Schelling reinterprets his famous principle of identity. This reinterpretation is the basis for both of the moves Schelling has made. God and Nature are identical as ground and consequence. Nature is a consequence of the first principle, but not the first principle itself. God and Nature are identical, but not coincidental. Accordingly, Schelling is a pantheist, but one who seeks to maintain individuality and freedom for the creature. The precise nature of this relationship of non-coincidental identity remains to be clarified.

The vitalization of pantheism

Schelling's third step is to show that pantheism must, and can, be vitalized. There are two phases to this demonstration--its imperative and its possibility. It is necessary that pantheism be vitalized, if it is to be satisfactory to the most profound feelings of the religious mind. This profound religious feeling is that "god is not a God of the dead but of the living."[1] Hence, "it is incomprehensible that an all-perfect Being could rejoice in even the most perfect mechanism possible."[1] Since God is a living God, the procession of creatures from God can be neither a mechanical production nor an emanation in which the emanated lacks individuality and independence. As Schelling states it,

[1]Human Freedom, p. 19.

> the procession of things from God is God's self-revelation. But God can only reveal himself in creatures who resemble him, in free, self-activating beings for whose existence there is no reason save God, but who are as God is.[1]

In the process of arguing for the imperative of the vitalization of pantheism, Schelling develops his most pointed criticism of Spinoza. Schelling does not reject the Spinozistic notion of conceiving all things in God, but he does reject the lifelessness of his system, his mechanistic view of Nature. As Schelling phrases it, the fundamental "error of his system is by no means due to the fact that he posits all things in God, but to the fact that they are things."[2] Regarded as a thing, as a mere mode of Infinite Substance, the finite self must surrender itself to the absolute causality of the divine substance. Such self-surrender, by renunciating freedom as an illusion, demands that the finite self be absorbed in an impersonal Absolute. Schelling obviously wishes to avoid such Spinozistic implications.

This brings us to the second phase of this demonstration: How can pantheism possibly be revised in such a manner as to avoid the mechanistic implications of Spinozism? To maintain pantheism while overcoming mechanism, Schelling attempts to establish an alternative interpretation of nature by appealing to his own earlier Philosophy of Nature. It is the idealistic elements of that philosophy which he brings to bear upon the present problem. In his Philosophy of Nature he had regarded Nature as an independent, self-constructive, teleological and autonomous activity which is an immediate manifestation of

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 19.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 22.

the Absolute. He had regarded Nature as moving through various stages, or potencies, from the lower to the higher, as a gradual preparation for the appearance of consciousness. It is through consciousness that freedom is realized.[1] But how may nature be legitimately regarded as self-constructive and teleological? How can freedom be more than a mere hypothetical construct or regulative principle? Schelling responds by sounding the key-note of Human Freedom, that of voluntarism: "Will is primordial Being."[2] Will is the elusive Kantian "thing-in-itself." Will as primordial reality is the sufficient reason that can account for the activities of both the objective and the subjective orders. If God as primordial reality is Will, then God is free. And if God is free then his creatures as manifestations of himself, whether as ego or non-ego, must also be free. Thus, Schelling argues that pantheism can be vitalized via the spirit of idealism. But what is the "spirit of idealism" and precisely how does it serve to vitalize pantheism?

Fichte and the "spirit of idealism"

Schelling insists that "the true conception of freedom was lacking in all modern systems, that of Leibniz as well as that of Spinoza, until the discovery of idealism."[3] By "idealism," Schelling seems to be

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[1]Compare Emile Bréhier, A History of Philosophy, trans. by Wade Baskin, Chicago (University of Chicago Press, 1968), vol. VI, pp. 139-40, 142, 146. Bréhier is especially clear in his account of Schelling's Philosophy of Nature and his doctrine of "potencies," which plays an important role in his metaphysics.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 24.

[3]Human Freedom, p. 17.

referring primarily to Fichte and his own earlier thought. And the clue to the particular aspect of idealism in question is found in his affirmation of "will" as primordial reality.

Fichte had opened his Wissenschaftslehre[1] by noting that, while consciousness is always consciousness of an object by a subject, the philosopher can isolate conceptually two factors in our experience which yield two important concepts--intelligence-in-itself and the thing-in-itself. Consequently, the philosopher has two paths before him. On the one hand, he can attempt to explain experience as the effect of the thing-in-itself, or the objective order. This is the position which Fichte calls dogmatism. On the other hand, the philosopher can attempt to explain experience as the product of intelligence, that is, of creative thought. Fichte calls this path idealism and it is the one which he chooses to travel. Fichte's method of breaching the Kantian limitation on reason was to expand radically the jurisdiction of the practical reason so as to bring all of reason within its scope. For Fichte, the world is that which the self makes. Josiah Royce, in a succinct summarization, identifies the basic principles of Fichte's philosophy as the following:

> (1) All philosophy has its source in one primal truth, namely, the truth that living and voluntary selves freely choose to assert themselves, and so build up their whole organized world; (2) The moral law is, in consequence of this, really prior to all other knowledge, and conditions all that we theoretically know.[2]

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[1]Fichte: Science of Knowledge, edited and translated by Peter Heath and John Lachs, New York (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), pp. 8-9. Hereafter referred to as Fichte.

[2]Josiah Royce, The Spirit of Modern Philosophy, New York (W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 152.

Since the philosopher is faced with two paths, which Fichte regards as mutually exclusive, the next question is that of a criterion or principle for choosing between the paths. Fichte argues that the choice cannot be made by an appeal to any basic theoretical principle, nor can dogmatism or idealism theoretically refute each other. The issue must be decided by the "inclination and interest" of each respective philosopher. And the "interest" in question is one's interest in and for the self, which Fichte regards as the highest interest. "What sort of philosophy one chooses depends, therefore, on what sort of man one is."[1] Thus, the choice between dogmatism or idealism must be made on practical grounds. Accordingly, Fichte's clear preoccupation is with the free and morally active self. And this emphasis on the free and morally active self is the spirit of idealism which Schelling employs to vitalize pantheism, a move which prepares the way for his theory of autonomy.

Movement beyond Fichte

Although once a disciple and expositor of Fichte, Schelling moved beyond Fichte. Just how far beyond and the manner of his going beyond clarify two important phases of Schelling's development. First, he had moved beyond Fichte in his Philosophy of Nature. Whereas Fichte had sought to deduce the objective world from the activities of the posited Ego, Schelling had sought to perform the deduction in the opposite direction, moving from the world to the Ego. His criticism of Fichte was that the latter had reduced nature, or the non-ego, to a purely

[1] Fichte, p. 16.

passive and negative creation of the ego. The details of Schelling's deduction are based on the theories of physics, chemistry and biology current during the period. Nonetheless, Schelling contends that his Philosophy of Nature is a "genuine system of reason" which was completed by the emergence of freedom in which "the whole of nature found its transfiguration in feeling, in intelligence, and ultimately in will."[1]

Secondly, he has moved beyond Fichte in the present work, Human Freedom. While his positing of Will as ultimate reality appears to be a Fichtean move, it actually is not. Schelling considers the major difficulty of Fichte's position, a difficulty which led to the charge of atheism and cost Fichte his teaching position at Jena, to be his reduction of the finite ego to a mere manifestation of the Absolute Ego.[2] Schelling is careful to maintain a clear distinction between the finite ego and the Infinite Ego or Absolute. He insists that God and the creatures are identical, but no coincidental. Schelling, by employing his reinterpreted principle of identity, thinks he has been able to retain genuine individuality and freedom for the creature.

It is for these reasons that Schelling begins the section of Human Freedom entitled "The Possibility of Evil" by arguing that Fichtean idealism, whatever its merits, must be transcended. The value of idealism is that it has revealed the possibility of freedom as an ontological reality, a reality which is basically a self-determining process. It is his effort to retain this ontological freedom as a real possibility that leads Schelling to reject both Spinoza's realism and

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[1]Human Freedom, p. 24.

[2]Human Freedom, pp. 24-25.

Fichte's idealism.

> For it is immaterial to pantheism, as such, whether many individual things are conceived in an absolute Substance or many individual wills are conceived in one Primal Will.[1]

At stake is the concept of freedom, or lack thereof, inherent in each of these theories.

Schelling's earlier Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism, published in 1795, helps to clarify the reasons behind his rather quick dismissal of both the Spinozistic and Fichtean positions in the present work.[2] Philosophical Letters was a careful examination of both Spinozistic realism, or dogmatism, and Fichtean idealism, or criticism. Schelling had argued that both dogmatism and criticism reach the same theoretical conclusion--the theoretical annihilation of the finite self. This is the case because both positions destroy the essential polarity of consciousness. Consciousness is always consciousness of an object by a subject. But dogmatism and criticism attempt to reduce the totality of experience to one of the poles, thereby falsifying the whole experience. While dogmatism argues that knowledge can be made intelligible only on the hypothesis that the objective order is the active principle from which the universe derives its content, criticism argues that knowledge can be made intelligible only on the hypothesis that the subjective order is the active principle from which the universe derives its content. For criticism, reality is an Absolute Ego which produces its experience from within itself and progressively

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 26.

[2] I am indebted for my discussion of the Philosophical Letters to Copleston's account of the work, Copleston, pp. 100-104.

organizes that experience according to the necessities imposed by its own moral and teleological nature. Dogmatism reduces the subject, or finite self, to the Absolute Object, while criticism reduces the object to the Absolute Subject or infinite striving.

But while both of these positions lead to the same theoretical conclusion and while neither can theoretically refute the other, Schelling argues that a choice between them can be made on the practical level. The practical demands of each position express different ideals of man's moral vocation. Dogmatism requires that the finite self accept its already existing ontological situation as a mere modification of the infinite substance and renounce its illusory sense of freedom, thereby surrendering itself to the absolute causality of the divine and infinite substance. Criticism, viewing the absolute as infinite striving, requires that the finite self engage in unceasing free moral striving toward one's moral vocation, albeit that that vocation is a finite manifestation of the infinite striving Absolute.

But while Schelling clearly prefers the Fichtean position, there is the clear implication in the Philosophical Letters that some sort of synthesis is necessary. The Absolute must transcend the customary distinction between subject and object. Schelling suggests, even while preferring the moral implications of Fichtean criticism (which he calls "the spirit of idealism"), that the Absolute must be subject and object in identity. The resulting emphasis on the principle of identity is the guiding focus in Schelling's thought during the next decade. He first proceeds, in his development of the Philosophy of Nature, to demonstrate that there is an ideal aspect of nature, that nature is the struggle of objective reason to organize itself through ever higher manifestations

until consciousness appears. Then, in the System of Transcendental Idealism, he argues for a preestablished harmony in which the Absolute is the identity or neutrality of subject and object, or spirit and nature.[1]

But in Human Freedom Schelling has reinterpreted his principle of identity, and this reinterpretation carries important implications for a discussion of freedom. He thinks that both subject and object, spirit and nature appear to be the product of something more profound than either of them, something to which neither the term subject nor object can be applied. Schelling's effort to resolve the epistemological problem of the subject-object dichotomy, coupled with his acceptance of the "spirit of idealism," and its emphasis on the striving self, leads him to posit Will as primordial reality. Will, as primoridial reality, or God as antecedent, expresses itself in two ways, as subject and object, as Ego and Nature. Consequently, Schelling retains many of the ideas of both Spinoza (dogmatic realism) and Fichte (critical idealism) and synthesizes them into a theory of pantheistic voluntarism. For Schelling, both Spinoza and Fichte were in touch with reality, even if from a limited perspective. Both had grasped a part of the one ultimate reality, Will. But both positions needed to be complemented by the other.

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[1]Schelling states the problem in the following manner. "How at the same time the objective world conforms to representation in us, and representations in us conform to the objective world, cannot be conceived, unless there exists a preestablished harmony between the two worlds of the ideal and the real. But this preestablished harmony is itself not conceivable unless the activity by which the objective world is produced, is originally identical with that which displays itself in volition, and vice versa." System of Transcendental Idealism, in Modern Classical Philosophers, compiled by Benjamin Rand (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1952), p. 543.

Metaphysical Voluntarism

In the preceding section I have demonstrated the manner in which Schelling seeks to vitalize pantheism and how his attempt to resolve certain epistemological difficulties leads him to posit Will as primordial reality. In addition, I have stated his hope of uniting the metaphysical systems of idealism and realism into one comprehensive system.[1] It is now possible to summarize Schelling's rather complex thought to this point, thereby clarifying the import of his metaphysical voluntarism. Schelling insists that pantheism can be vitalized by positing Will as primordial reality. God, as primordial reality, as Will, is identical with the world, but as the antecedent or ground of the world's existence. Schelling resolutely affirms that such a move guarantees individuality and the possibility of autonomy to the creature. Furthermore, he insists that the epistemological concerns surrounding the subject-object dichotomy demand a common ground which is neither mere subject nor mere object. And this common ground, according to Schelling, is Will.

In the present section I shall show how Schelling, having posited Will as ultimate reality, attempts to apply his presupposition of ontological freedom to the resolution of various problems. Schelling's major concern in Human Freedom is how to account for the transmutation of God into the world while exempting God from either physical or moral responsibility for the existence of evil. If God is to be truly God and

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[1]Schelling states it thus: "Idealism is the soul of philosophy; realism is its body; only the two together constitute a living whole" (Human Freedom, p. 30).

worthy of worship, Schelling argues, then He can be neither responsible for having directly created evil nor morally responsible for having failed to prevent evil. His second problem is to show how man is responible for the presence or absence of evil. His concern to make human freedom intelligible is his point of departure for constructing a concept of God.

To further clarify his theory and what he means by freedom, Schelling distinguishes three possible concepts of freedom. First, there is the concept of material freedom as represented in Spinozistic realism or dogmatism. Second, there is the concept of formal freedom as represented in Fichtean idealism or criticism. But while idealism is the initiation into a higher philosophy, it is "not adequate to show the specific differentia, i.e. the precise distinctiveness of human freedom."[1] Having already rejected both of these theories as yielding an inadequate notion of freedom, he now rejects them because he regards them as inadequate to resolve the problem of evil. To resolve the problem of evil, Schelling offers his own concept of what he calls "vital freedom," a freedom which "is a possibility of good and evil."[2] The remainder of Human Freedom is devoted to developing and defending this third theory of freedom by relating it to the concept of God, the nature of man, and the redefinition of good and evil.

Whatever the final merits of Schelling's philosophy, it is little wonder that he regarded himself as having initiated a revolution in

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 25.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 26.

philosophy more powerful than even Kant's "Copernician Revolution,"[1] especially if he can accomplish all his intentions. His is a revolution in which Will, as eternal striving as opposed to a fixed essence, as an infinite dynamic creativity as opposed to a static reality, is primordial reality and in which "freedom is its most essential presupposition."[1]

Initial implications

Before proceeding to Schelling's concept of God, it is necessary to state three important implications of his thought to this point. These implications, following from his having posited Will as ultimate reality, will facilitate understanding his concept of God. First, since the chief characteristic of Will is striving or willing, the clear implication is that reality is dynamic rather than static. Consequently, Schelling rejects the traditional concept of God as actus purus, as having no potentiality. Schelling is convinced that those who hold the traditional concept of a static God are unable to develop an adequate theodicy. Schelling substitutes a theogonic process in which God has an interior life which manifests itself through a series of dynamic forms. God has an internal life and a tragic nature that is common to all living beings. Two of Schelling's posthumously published works, The Philosophy of Revelation and The Philosophy of Mythology, are an effort to write a history of religion which reveals the various forms or stages of the theogonic process. The obvious difficulty of such an approach is that it assumes that the stages in the history of religion correspond to the stages of divine development. Nevertheless, the theogonic approach is crucial to understanding Schelling's concept of God.

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 25.

The second implication of making Will the ultimate principle of reality is that Will, since it is given ontological priority over reason, is not subject to complete rational formulation. There remains an aspect of reality that is not subject to logical analysis or rational scrutiny. Schelling employs such terms as "the Ungrund," "the unruly," "the dark abyss," "the irrational," "chaos," and "freedom" to refer to this aspect of reality.

The third implication has great procedural significance. Since ultimate reality is Will and man is a part of reality, man himself, according to Schelling, is the door to the deeper levels of reality. Schelling argues that

> the processes of human life from the utmost depths to the highest consummation must agree with the processes of universal life. It is certain that whoever could write the history of his own life from its very ground would have thereby grasped in a brief conspectus the history of the universe.[1]

It is through man that Schelling arrives at knowledge of both God and the world. In order words, Schelling employs psychological categories for ontological purposes.

Schelling's concept of God

Having characterized his own theory of real or vital freedom as "the possibility of good and evil," Schelling turns his attention to clarifying the precise nature of this freedom. His attempt to render human freedom intelligible is his point of departure for constructing a concept of God. The possibility of evil must be reconciled with the personality of God in such a way that God is not responsible for the

[1] Ages of the World, pp. 93-94.

existence of evil. I shall state his theology in the broadest manner as a prelude to his theory of human nature and the good life or, more specifically, moral autonomy. It is not my purpose to criticize his metaphysics but merely to outline it in order to clarify the theory of moral autonomy implicit within it.

Schelling refers to the initial phase of the theogonic process of the divine life as that of pure indifference, the original undifferentiated ground of all that exists. It is that which is inaccessiable to reason. Being beyond the limits of human thought, it is the mysterious of ineffable. Since it is not subject to cognitive analysis or conceptual definition, Schelling refers to this ground of indifference by such descriptive terms as "the primordial ground," "the unreason," "the abyss," and "the unruly." Lacking both consciousness and the light of reason, it is a dark striving, an infinite impulse, an unconscious will. It is "a will within which there is no understanding, and thus not an independent and complete will."[1] It would be misleading to refer to this primal ground as God in the traditional sense of being personal. It is the ground of God's personal existence but is itself impersonal. It is "that within God which is not God himself."[2] Schelling's thought owes much of its philosophical interest to his admission of this primordial ground which is impervious to thought.

Out of this ground of indifference break forth two equally eternal beginnings. Schelling refers to each of these beginnings or

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[1]Human Freedom, p. 34.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 33.

principles as "potencies."[1] A correct understanding of Schelling's doctrine of potencies is of paramount importance. By the term "potency" he means potentiality, possibility, beginning, what can be but is not, a form of willing. Schelling does not employ the term in an Aristotelian fashion as meaning the entelechy or inner impulse to achieve an inherent and predetermined goal. For Schelling, it is rather, in the broadest sense, the capacity to effect a change. Each potency is a form of action or a mode of willing and is best characterized as a stage of growth or development in which a specific mode of action or willing is dominate. On the one hand, the "first potency"[2] is the stage of development in which the dominant mode of willing is expansion or outward thrust. On the other hand, the "second potency"[2] is the stage of development in which the dominant mode of willing is restriction or preservation.

Schelling's initial voluntaristic monism yields to dualism. All reality contains this duality of principles in opposition. The concepts of potency and polarity or opposition are the fundamental concepts of Schelling's philosophy. Two reasons may be adduced for his affirmation of polarity--one in the form of empirical verification and the second in the form of a cogent analytical argument. First,

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[1]The doctrine of "potencies" is a constantly recurring theme throughout Schelling's writings although the precise meaning of the term underwent slight modifications. The best account in English of Schelling's usage of the term in his early writings is Brehier's in his History of Philosophy, vol. VI, pp. 139-147. Tillich provides the most informative treatment currently available in English of Schelling's usage of the term in his later period. See Paul Tillich's The Construction of the History of Religion in Schelling's Positive Philosophy, trans. with an Introduction and Notes by Victor Nuovo, Lewisburg (Bucknell Univ. Press, 1974), pp. 43-76.

[2]The terms "first," "second," and "third" must not be understood as denoting a temporal order among the three potencies. They merely designate logically distinct moments within the character of Will.

Schelling offers what he accepts as plausible empirical evidence for the existence of opposition from the very character of Will. The ambiguous character of Will itself reveals the possibility of self-contradiction. Everyone is experientially aware of his capacity to will contradictory actions resulting from conflicting desires. In addition, everyone is experientially aware of his capacity to will contradictory actions resulting from a conflict between inclination and duty, e.g., to be moved to will what is cognitively understood as being opposed to one's own best interest or to be unable to perform what is cognitively understood as being in one's own best interest. Accordingly, Schelling argues that what is experientially true of man's will can also be posited as true of Will on the metaphysical level. It is the nature of Will to express itself in contradictory ways. Schelling, in an instantiation of his general procedure of employing psychological categories for ontological purposes, eventually takes this ambiguity within Will (derived from psychological phenomena) and both extends it to Nature and identifies it as integral to God. Second, a reasonably cogent analytical argument can be formulated within the framework of Schelling's thought. In his Philosophical Letters[1] Schelling had argued, in harmony with Fichte, that the philosopher is faced with two mutually exclusive paths--Realism (dogmatism) and Idealism (criticism)--and that neither perspective can refute the other at the theoretical level. Given the two theoretically irrefutable positions in conjunction with the self-contradictory character of Will, Schelling judges it plausible to argue that such opposition between principles and their consequences is the very nature

[1]See above, pp. 35-37.

of reality, especially if ultimate reality is identified as Will. The two antithetical positions can be regarded as the natural consequence of the contradictory expressions of Will.

It will be beneficial to state the full import of Schelling's twin principles of potency and polarity before proceeding to their application within his concept of God. The polarity of opposition is the key to Schelling's position on the philosophical problem of the relation between Being and Non-being or the essentiality and existentiality of Being. Schelling considers this problem one of the central issues of philosophy and his position is best understood in contrast to prior positions on the problem. Four positions can be identified within the history of philosophy. First, Plato hypostatized Being and Non-being in two separate realms--the realm of Ideas and the experiential world. Second, Aristotle placed them in the polar relation of potentiality and actuality. Third, one was derived from the other, whether existence from essence as in Spinoza and Hegel, or essence from existence as in Sartre. Schelling develops a fourth position of maintaining Being and Non-being in perpetual opposition. Schelling identifies the "first potency" as the limitless, expansive force of Non-being. As such, it is meonic freedom, the principle of individuation, the irrational will to selfhood, that which resists the restriction or limitations of thought. It is the dynamics of all that is. Next, he identifies the "second potency" as the realm of Being. This potency is the principle of limitation or restriction. It is the principle of universalization, complete selflessness, that which is thought itself. It is the form or structure of all that is.

In addition to the first two potencies or contrary principles

which are maintained in perpetual contrariety, Schelling posits the "third potency." This potency is the stage of development in which the dominant mode of action is synthesis or integration. Through its mediation between the first two potencies, the third potency transforms them from a contrariety of exclusion into one of mutual inclusion. This third potency, since it arises from within the Primordial Will, is capable of synthesizing the first two potencies by means of an internal relation. Thus, the first and second potencies become not only inseperable but inexplicable in isolation. Moreover, it is by virtue of the third potency that God becomes "personal" or possesses "personality." For Schelling, we are only justified in conceiving God as a personal being if we posit both an original antithesis within the primal ground or essence of God and a synthesis of the contradictory principles. In order for the infinite Being to possess personality, it must be capable of integrating the contrary principles within itself by means of an internal relation. In other words, personality cannot result from an external relation. Personality results because the infinite Being is self-determining or autonomous in the integration of its constituent elements.

These three potencies are central to Schelling's philosophy because of their flexibility. In fact, his theogony is an effort to explain how God and Nature are inclusive but not exhaustive of these three ontological principles or potencies of expansion, restriction and integration. Each potency is a direct expression of the Primal Ground and in each the same triplicity of potencies must be repeated. By means of three potencies Schelling is able, to his own satisfaction, to delin-

eate how God transmutes himself into the world, thus revealing the full import of his vitalistic pantheism.

Against this backdrop of his overall system and its basic principles of potencies and polarity, Schelling's concept of God can be explicated with a minimum of difficulty. The initial phase of the theogonic process of the divine life, as conceived by Schelling, is the Primordial Will as the undifferentiated ground of all that exists. This Primal Ground is "the incomprehensible basis of reality in things, the irreducible remainder which cannot be resolved into reason" (Verstand).[1] As the eternal basis or ground of God's existence, this Primal Ground "must contain within itself, though locked away, God's essence."[2] God's essence is the basis of his existence as ground or antecedent while his existence is the consequence of his essence. Each is logically prior to the other, i.e., the basis is logically prior as the ground of God's existence and God is logically prior as the justification of the Ground. Schelling states the case in the following manner:

> God contains himself in an inner basis of his existence, which, to this extent, precedes him as to his existence, but similarly God is prior to the basis as this basis, as such, could not be if God did not exist in actuality.[3]

But out of this ground of indifference two principles or potencies break forth--a will to expansion and a will to preservation. It is the conflict between these two principles which yields the vitality, and tragedy, of the divine being. "Without contradiction there would thus be no motion, no life, no progress, but eternal immobility, a deathly

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[1]Human Freedom, p. 34.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 36.

[3]Human Freedom, p. 33.

slumber of all powers."[1] This contradictory opposition is necessary to the divine life and constitutes the ground of God's eternal self-revelation within human history and the natural order. "If primal nature were in harmony with itself, it would remain; there would be an abiding one and never a two, an eternal immobility without progress."[1] But precisely what stands in opposition and what is the character of the opposition?

Schelling, in imagery that displays simultaneously both his position within the Idealistic movement and the influence of Plato, specifies the nature of the contrary principles in reference to the divine life. The first potency is the longing of the divine to give birth to himself, to send himself forth. "This primal longing moves in anticipation like a surging, billowing sea, similar to the 'matter' of Plato, following some dark, uncertain law, incapable in itself of forming anything that can endure."[2] While Primordial Will expresses its multitudinous longings, objectifies its manifold impulses, each of these expressed longings is incapable of enduring of itself. Hence, there arises within the divine life a deliberate effort of consciousness to discover within each impulse a universal meaning or pattern of which that specific impulse is an instance.

> . . . there is born in God himself an inward, imaginative response, corresponding to this longing, which is the first stirring of divine Being in its still dark depths. Through this response, God sees himself in his own image, since his imagination can have no other object than himself.[2]

These images within the divine life, arising from the light of reason,

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[1] Ages of the World, p. 105.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 35.

are thought-determinations (universal concepts or abstract categories). Originating within the second potency, they have an existence separate from the individual impulse. As such, these thought-determinations resemble the Platonic Forms and function within the divine life much as the Kantian categories, serving to bring order to reality.

> Following the eternal act of self-revelation, the world as we now behold it, is all rule, order and form; but the unruly lies ever in the depths as though it might again break through, and order and form nowhere appear to have been original, but it seems as though what had initially been unruly had been brought to order.[1]

The divine life develops through the perpetual interplay between the activities of these two potencies or powers. The inner life of God is thus conceived by Schelling as a dynamic process of self-creation. The same powers which act without consciousness in producing the Real realm of Nature act with consciousness in producing the Ideal realm of human history. In this manner Schelling maintains that the same duality of an expansive and a limiting force which Fichte had shown to exist in consciousness also pervades the whole of Nature. The universe, in both its Ideal and Real aspects, is involved in a continual evolutionary process in which each new addition of the first potency and the corresponding thought-determination of the second potency are synthesized or integrated into a new arrangement or combination with the previous accomplishments of the process.

> It can readily be seen that in the tension of longing necessary to bring things completely to birth the innermost nexus of the forces can only be released in a graded evolution, and at every stage in the division of forces there is developed out of nature a new being whose soul must be all the more perfect the more differ-

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 34.

> entiatedly it contains what was left undifferentiated in the others.[1]

This process of differentiating what was originally undifferentiated in the Primordial Ground is coincidental with the theogonic process. "The process of creation consists only in an inner transmutation . . ."[2] of the basis or ground of the divine being.

Thus it is possible to see the full import of Schelling's vitalistic pantheism. The divine life of God's self-creation not only develops in the universe, but it develops through the universe. "The whole spatially extended universe is nothing but the swelling heart of the godhead."[3] This transmutation of the Primal Ground as the "procession of things from God is God's self-revelation."[4] The history of the world is a continuous unfolding of God, the differentiation of what was undifferentiated in the Primal Ground. Accordingly, all things are included within God, but "the concept of immanence is completely to be set aside insofar as it is meant to express a dead conceptual inclusion of things in God."[5] Because Schelling posits the basis or Primal Ground of God's being as Will, the universe is the expressed objectification of that which was in the basis and is now incorporated in God.

Since the universe is the medium of God's revelation and development, that revelation can never be final, for then all development and with it all manifestation of freedom would end. The theogonic process

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 37.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 38.

[3] Ages of the World, p. 215.

[4] Human Freedom, p. 19.

[5] Human Freedom, p. 33.

is a dynamic, open-ended development of the divine life. As such, it is a process of becoming, since "the concept of becoming is the only one adequate to the nature of things."[1] God is the synthesis of the first potency's meonic freedom of Non-being and the second potency's universal categories of Being. This synthesis, for Schelling, constitutes the Absoluteness of God. God as Absolute is the totality of all that is involved in and resultant from the actions of the potencies. In other words, God as Absolute is the synthesis of the activities of the first and second potencies. Furthermore, this synthesizing activity of God constitutes the vitality of God. A "living being," for Schelling, is a living unity which contains the opposites--however great the tension between them--not without but within itself, and God certainly contains the opposites within himself since they arise from the basis of God's existence. Finally, this synthesizing activity is what Schelling designates as "personality." Personality develops only in contrast with a natural foundation and, with this as a basis, through conflict with opposing forces. Personality is the relation in opposition of that which in and for itself is not God but which can become God.[2] Schelling's general metaphysical principles of potencies and polarity, and their application to God, provide a backdrop against which his concept of human nature and ultimately his theory of autonomy can be delineated.

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 33.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 74.

Schelling's Concept of Man

In the previous section I described the manner in which Schelling's fundamental principles of potencies and polarity were employed to develop a conceptualization of God as a theogonic process. In the present section I shall demonstrate their application to man. Schelling's concept of man is the logical consequence of systematically employing his fundamental principles to explain human phenomena. Accordingly, his theory of man is the construction of a model of man which in many respects parallels his concept of God.

There are, however, three major permutations. The first permutation is that Schelling assigns man a crucial position within the theogonic process which constitutes the universe. The second permutation is the addition of specific terms such as "selfhood," "spirit," and "soul" to designate either certain aspects of human nature or the relationships among those aspects. Further, Schelling provides clarification of the central notion of "personality" by discussing the manner in which man is a concrete instantiation of his general principle of personality enunciated earlier.[1] The third permutation is the attempt to demonstrate how man alone is responsible for the presence of evil. I shall discuss each of these permutations in the following subsections.

Man's position within the theogonic process

The earlier characterization of Schelling's theogony as the

[1]See above, p. 51.

process of God's self-creation may be amended to include its characterization as the circuit of selfhood. Man, according to Schelling, occupies a position of singular importance within this circuit of selfhood. The phrase "circuit of selfhood" appropriately describes the attempts of the German Idealists to complete the program of Kant's Critical Philosophy. But the meaning and function of this circuit of selfhood needs to be clarified. Accordingly, I shall outline the manner in which it conveys the spirit of Fichte's philosophy and then discuss its general meaning in Schelling's thought.

In Fichte's philosophy the circuit of selfhood takes the form of demonstrating how the objective world is constructed by the knowing self. Fichte accepted Kant's basic premises and their implication that consciousness, or the knowing self, is the key to understanding reality. Whoever would understand reality must first understand the knowing self. But Fichte, by rejecting the Kantian thing-in-itself as inconsistent with Kant's premises, argued that the Critical Philosophy had to be transformed into a consistent idealism. In short, Fichte argued that the objective world had to be regarded as the product of the knowing mind. But Fichte, in recognizing that the world cannot be reasonably regarded as the product of an individual or finite self, felt compelled to regard the world as the product of a supra-individual or Absolute Self.[1] Fichte sought to perfect Kant's philosophical system by synthesizing pure reason, which provides the form of its knowledge, with

[1]Fichte's move of elevating the Transcendental Unity of Apperception to the status of an Absolute Self may be challenged. But Fichte thinks there is justification for the move within Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. Kant says that the representations of the self "must conform to the condition under which alone they can stand together in one universal self-consciousness"(B 132). Thus, Fichte not only

practical reason, which creates the objects of its knowledge. Thus, Fichte elevates the Kantian Transcendental Unity of Apperception to the level of an Absolute Mind (self-consciousness) which creates both the objects (the real world) and the knowledge (the ideal) by which the objects become known. Thus, the circuit of selfhood, in Fichtean Idealism, is the record of the steps whereby the Absolute Self produces its experience out of itself: the circuit of selfhood records the steps whereby the Absolute Self posits or determines Nature in order to realize its own powers or potentialities.

Schelling, however, is dissatisfied with Fichte's treatment of the external, natural order as a dead and mechanical product of the Ego. Schelling became convinced in 1798 "that the way from nature to spirit must be as possible as the reverse way upon which Fichte had entered."[1] To develop this way from nature to spirit, Schelling argued that Nature must be viewed as the living expression of Primordial Will. Nature is the evolutionary product of the dialectical differentiation of that which was initially undifferentiated within the Primal Ground, and man is a part of nature. Hence, man appears as an evolution from and within nature. Further, Schelling holds that a theory accounting for the evolutionary appearance of consciousness within the natural order is

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interprets the Transcendental Deduction as demonstrating that some set of categories is necessary, but also as suggesting that these categories are products of "one universal self-consciousness" or Absolute Self. Further, Fichte contends that consciousness itself can be accounted for, and knowledge made intelligible, only if consciousness itself is postulated as the active principle from which the universe is derived.

[1]This personal statement of Schelling's purpose is quoted in Royce's The Spirit of Modern Philosophy, p. 185.

needed to complement Fichte's theory.[1] Accordingly, the circuit of selfhood in Schelling's philosophy records the steps through which Primordial Will expresses itself first as unconscious nature, rises to consciousness in man, and finally returns to itself through human history.

Schelling delineates the full circuit of selfhood in his System of Transcendental Idealism. Initially the self objectifies itself and becomes aware of this objectified expression in the form of immediate experience or sensation, or the simple consciousness that something is. But the self, while conscious of its objects, does not recognize them as the products of its own activity. Thus, the self inevitably views the objects as purely natural phenomena subject to natural law. Nature is the unconscious life of the self. But reflection arises as the self continues to express itself in the circuit of selfhood. Through reflection the self comes to recognize the world of intelligible, phenomenal objects as the result of the synthesis of the real and the ideal. Finally, further reflection leads the self to recognize nature as the product of its own unconscious activity. Accordingly, the natural order, or the self in the process of becoming, is for Schelling simply the order of those existential positions which the self posits and then rejects in its movement as potency from undifferentiated to

[1]Royce calls this move "Schelling's epoch-making idea" that provided the impetus of subsequent philosophy, and adds that "to complete the undertaking of idealism, you need a theory of the facts of nature, so interpreted as to be in harmony with the view that only ideas are the realities, and yet so adapted to experience as to free your idealism from the arbitrariness of the inner life of mere finite selves." Ibid, p. 185.

differentiated. The various positions are recognized successively by consciousness as something other to itself while simultaneously being intimate constitutive moments of its own process.[1] The self under consideration cannot be any finite, individual self. But its objective world contains many individual empirical selves.

Man occupies a position of singular importance within the objective aspect of the circuit of selfhood because he is the being in whom self-consciousness first appears. Schelling deduces two implications from man's singular position within Human Freedom. First, since man is a microcosmic expression of the principles of potency and polarity present in the macrocosmic process, man is the being in whom the entire process first becomes articulated. Schelling develops some specialized terms to facilitate the clarification of this process in man. Second, man is the pivotal point in whom the outward, unconscious evolution of nature is reversed in order to initiate the conscious evolutionary return of the infinite self back into itself. As the being in whom self-consciousness first appears, man has two paths open to him. On the one hand, he may set himself in opposition to the universal process by attempting to universalize the particularity of his own being. On the other hand, he may deliberately contribute to the universal process by realizing the unique vocation which constitutes his being as an expression of the Primal Ground. The former path is the occasion of man's fall or the entrance of evil, and the latter offers man autonomy. I shall expand these implications in the next two sections.

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[1]The critical question here is whether Schelling has accounted for the appearance of consciousness or merely given consciousness a place within an overall schema. I shall return to this question within my closing, critical remarks.

Man and the disclosure of
the processes of life

Inasmuch as the life of man recapitulates the life of the whole,[1] man possesses both a ground and the polarity of the first and second potencies. In fact, since he possesses self-consciousness, man is the creature in whom the entire process is made completely articulate.[2] Man, according to Schelling, is the crown of creation and the most interesting and rewarding object of philosophic attention because man is the creature in whom both the fall and the state of things before the fall rise for the first time into consciousness.

As an expression of Primordial Will, man's original ontological reality is a negativity of freedom. "In original creation . . . man is an undetermined reality."[3] The first potency of expansive freedom, the principle of darkness, is the self-will of creatures. But the elevation of this abysmal center into the light of consciousness occurs in no creature visible to man other than man himself.[4] Schelling employs the term "selfhood" or "self-will" to refer to the activity of the first potency in man. This principle of selfhood, however, can be present in man at different levels. At the lowest level, and in isolation, "this self will of creatures stands opposed to reason as universal will."[4] It is, as such, the dark principle whereby man is separated from God.

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[1]See above, p. 41.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 39.

[3]Human Freedom, p. 63.

[4]Human Freedom, p. 38.

But the principle of selfhood can exist at a higher level. When this principle of selfhood is transfigured by the light of the second potency, then something higher arises in man. Schelling employs the term "spirit" to denote the synthesis of the first and second potencies in both God and man. "That principle which rises up from the depths of nature and by which man is divided from God, is the selfhood in him; but by reason of its unity with the ideal principle, this becomes spirit."[1] Schelling also employs the more restrictive term "soul" to denote the synthesizing activity in man. "Inasmuch as the soul is the living identity of both principles, it is spirit."[1]

The principle of selfhood may exist on an even higher level when integrated into "personality." The notion of personality is the key concept in Human Freedom, and Schelling, in his own self-confident manner, regards himself as having developed the only comprehensible conception of the divine personality.[2] The notion of personality is also the key to understanding his theory of autonomy. The best approach to his concept of personality is through his explicit, if somewhat perplexing, discussion of the divine personality. The following statement concerning the nature of the divine personality will serve as a convenient starting point.

> [I]f personality consists . . . in the connection of an autonomous being with a basis which is independent of it, in such a way namely that these two completely interpenetrate one another and are but one being, then God is the highest personality by reason of the connection of the ideal principle within him to the independent basis (independent relative to the ideal principle)--since the basis and the

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[1]Human Freedom, p. 39.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 93.

> existent entity in him necessarily unite to become one absolute existence.[1]

Two things stand out in this passage--the necessity of God's existence as an integrated personality and the nature of God's existence as an integrated personality. A spatial metaphor may be used to characterize the relations involved in the nature of the divine personality. "Spirit" refers to the horizontal synthesis of the first and second potencies arising from the Primal Ground, while "personality" denotes the vertical synthesis of spirit as the existential or consequential nature of God with the Primal Ground. God is personality in such a way that there is no contrariety between God as Primal Ground and God as consequent.[2] But caution must be exercised at this point. The realization of personality in God, the synthesis of Ground and Consequent, is not a temporal process. While logically distinct potencies may be distinguished within the divine being, there is no temporal succession. Moreover, since God as Ground and God as Consequent are identical although not the same,[3] the development of personality within God is an internal relation and not the mere incorporation of what was originally external. Thus, Schelling argues that God is necessarily an integrated personality.

Man, in contradistinction to God, is not necessarily an integrated

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 74.

[2] The concept of personality provides Schelling with the solution to one of the critical problems of dialectical philosophy from Hegel to Tillich--the problem of maintaining the vitality of God once the dialectical opposites have been reconciled. Schelling's metaphysical voluntarism permits him to argue that the unruly principle within the Primordial Will is ever capable of expressing further aspects of itself which must then be synthesized with the other aspects of God in an unending process.

[3] See above, p. 27.

personality, for the basic elements are separable in man. God's Ground is Himself as Primal Will. But man's ground is nature as the enduring and vital record of God's former self-revelation. Hence, in order for man to become an integrated personality, he must synthesize himself as nature, or empirical ego, with himself as ideal consciousness. Evil is that which prevents the synthesis between the empirical and the ideal. Accordingly, Schelling moves toward an explanation of the nature of evil.

Man and the origin of evil

Schelling's discussion of evil has two aspects--its possibility and its actuality. The possibility of evil resides within the polarities constitutive of the theogonic process. In God, as an infinite being, these polarities are maintained in a perpetual, harmonious tension. But this "unity which is indissoluble in God must be dissoluble in man"[1] as finite being, and this possible dissolution constitutes the possibility of evil. Yet Schelling contends that God is not the source of evil, nor is he responsible for evil. Even within God there exists the possibility that the unconscious will, the drive in the depths of the divine personality, might break away from its identity. But God as infinite is able to absorb all diversity and maintain such diversity in harmonious tension. Hence, actual evil as a real possibility cannot originate within God, although the ideal possibility is there. The unity of the two principles can be disrupted only in finite creatures, or more specifically, only in man as the creature in whom self-consciousness

[1]Human Freedom, p. 39.

first appears. But how does this disruption occur? Is finitude itself the cause of evil? Is this disruption inevitable, or deliberate, or accidental?

Explanations of the nature of evil, according to Schelling, may be either non-dialectical or dialectical. If non-dialectical, evil may be interpreted as either a negative or a positive concept. The negative conception reduces evil to "the so-called malum metaphysicum." Schelling singles out two examples of evil as a negative concept for special treatment--the Leibnizian view that evil is the necessary consequence of finitude and the Augustinian view that evil is a privation of good. Schelling rejects both of these negative concepts of evil because they "leave the understanding and moral consciousness alike dissatisfied."[1] Neither of these concepts of evil exempts God from some sort of moral responsibility for the existence of evil without damaging implications for the traditional attributes of God. More specifically, Schelling rejects the Leibnizian position because "evil is not derived from finitude in itself, but from finitude which has been exalted to independent being."[2] He rejects the Augustinian position because evil must "not only be founded on something inherently positive, but rather on the highest positive being which nature contains."[3] Hence, Schelling argues that evil cannot be adequately explained as a negative concept. Schelling discusses as an example of evil as a positive concept the long-standing interpretation that the sole explanation of evil lies in

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[1]Human Freedom, p. 43.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 46 note.

[3]Human Freedom, p. 45.

the realm of man's senses and passions.[1] Within this rationalistic view of ethics, "freedom consists in the mere mastery of the intelligent principle over the desires and inclinations of the senses, and the good is derived from pure reason."[1] But this view does not do justice, in Schelling's opinion, to the concept of freedom as the possibility of good and evil. Schelling regards man's physiological drives as the sine qua non of freedom. "To be sure, wherever passion and desire are, there is already a kind of freedom."[2] Further, the rationalistic interpretation of evil does not conform to his own notion of personality. Personality entails the incorporation or synthesis of the passions with reason, not their mere mastery by reason. Thus, Schelling rejects all non-dialectical interpretations of evil, taking the position that the only adequate concept of evil must be dialectical.

Having eliminated various possible non-dialectical explanations of evil, Schelling proceeds to develop his own dialectical concept. Schelling argues, in short, that evil consists in strife between the two polar principles or potencies within man while good consists in complete accord or synthesis between the polarities.[3] Man's self-will, in attempting to universalize the particularity of his being in opposition to the universal will of reason, initiates a division within his spiritualized selfhood of the very principles which in God are indissoluble.[4] The presence of strife between the polar principles prevents

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 47.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 53.

[3] Human Freedom, p. 70.

[4] Human Freedom, p. 40.

the development of spirit within man's existential being, which in turn prevents the synthesis of man's existential being with his essential being or ground in the form of personality.

Having defined the nature of evil, Schelling turns his attention to the difficult question of the origin of evil. As he states it, "what has to be explained is not simply how evil comes to be real in individual men, but its universal effectiveness."[1] To seek the source of evil is to seek that which solicits man to evil. Evil may originate from either an uncreated source or a created source. If evil originates from an uncreated source, then the source may be either an evil first cause or primal nature. Schelling dismisses both of these possible sources because they do not possess the two polar principles in such a way that they are capable of that dissolution which is the nature of evil.[2] Hence, evil must originate from a created being. Now a created source may be either external to man or internal. If external, then the source may be either evil per se or a fallen created spirit. But it cannot be evil per se because it would not contain the duality of principles whose dissolution is necessary for the presence of evil.[2] But neither can evil be said to originate from a fallen created being, for this begs the question of how evil originates within a created being in the first place.[2] Hence, the source of evil must lie within man. And if within man, then evil may originate from either passions or from man's own

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[1]Human Freedom, p. 49.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 51.

choice. But since the passions are not evil they cannot be the source of evil.[1] Hence, "evil ever remains man's own choice."[2]

Since he has defined evil as the dissolution of the polar principles and the source of the dissolution as being within man, Schelling must now show precisely how man is solicited to evil. Schelling, in a passage summarizing his general position on this issue, says:

> The general possibility of evil, as has been shown, consists in the fact that, instead of keeping his selfhood as the basis or the instrument, man can strive to elevate it to be the ruling and universal will, and, on the contrary, try to make what is spiritual in him into a means.[3]

Aroused selfhood may prompt man to attempt to preserve his own particular existence,[4] to exalt his self-will above the universal will.[5] By seeking to absolutize one of the polarities of his own being, man introduces into his being and, consequently, another spirit occupies the place where God should be.[3] "Aroused selfhood is not in itself evil but insofar as it has totally torn itself asunder from its opposite."[6] But there is within evil "that contradiction which devours and always negates itself" since, in its ambition to absolutize itself, selfhood "falls into non-being."[7] Selfhood falls into non-being precisely

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[1]See above, pp. 61-62.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 59.

[3]Human Freedom, p. 68.

[4]Human Freedom, p. 58.

[5]Human Freedom, p. 41.

[6]Human Freedom, p. 80.

[7]Human Freedom, p. 69.

because, in seeking to absolutize itself, it cuts itself off from its fundamental potentiality to achieve conscious realization of itself as part of the theogonic process.

Schelling further characterizes this aroused selfhood which absolutizes the particularity of its own being as a positive perversion of being. Insofar as aroused selfhood seeks to separate itself from its supernatural status as part of God's self-creation in gaining the full exhibition of its essential nature it becomes self-centered.[1] When aroused selfhood, or self-consciousness, becomes self-centered the result is a "counterfeit of being"[2] or a false life.[3] To absolutize the particular is to falsify the whole. Self-centeredness refers to the condition in which aroused selfhood arrogates to itself the totality of being or cuts itself off from the ground of being in seeking to absolutize itself. Such a condition, for Schelling, is evil.

Moral Autonomy

Schelling's purpose in Human Freedom is to establish a theory of freedom as the real possibility of good and evil. The bulk of his labor is devoted to demonstrating how freedom is the possibility of evil. Schelling, unfortunately, does not adequately develop the doctrine of freedom as the possibility of good. He merely offers a few scattered

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[1]Human Freedom, p. 41. Schelling approvingly quotes Franz von Baader's distinction between self-centeredness and the centered self (see p. 42, footnote). Paul Tillich employs this same distinction. See, for example, Love, Power, and Justice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 33-34.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 90.

[3]Human Freedom, p. 41.

suggestions regarding the conditions which contribute to man's attainment of autonomy. But the remainder of his theory may be either inferred in contrast to his doctrine of evil or deduced from other elements of his philosophy. Accordingly, since I have already treated the fundamental elements of Schelling's philosophy and his extensive discussion of the nature and origin of evil, it is now possible to clarify the theory of autonomy implicit within his philosophy.

Schelling's doctrine of freedom must be understood not so much in terms of moral action, although the moral aspect is an essential ingredient, as in terms of the ego's realization of its essential principles. Freedom, for Schelling, means (1) attaining reflective consciousness of the basic powers of the mind and nature, and (2) engaging in creative activity whereby the ego expands its reflective consciousness. These two senses of freedom conjoin. Since ethics addresses the issue of the first principles of human conduct, and the issue of the first principles of human conduct addresses the issue of the appropriate ends of human activity, ethics must necessarily seek to clarify the ends of human activity. The end of human activity, according to Schelling, is the development of personality. Personality, or reflective consciousness, is the necessary condition of moral action.

The full appreciation of the nuances of Schelling's concept of personality forces one to conclude that personality is synonymous with autonomy. While personality is something to be gained rather than something possessed from the start, it, nonetheless, is the complete experience of freedom wherein man is autonomous. This interpretation of human personality is consistent with Schelling's doctrine of the divine personality. The theogonic process, for Schelling, is a teleological

process wherein the Absolute Ego moves towards the emergence of a form of concretely existing consciousness in which the full range of its essential principles is self-consciously exhibited. Such a form of concretely existing consciousness is what Schelling terms "personality" in God. Since the finite ego, or the individual, is an instantiation of the Absolute Ego, it must possess the same triplicity of principles and be capable of a form of expression analogous to the Absolute Ego. By clarifying the solutions which Schelling offers to problems inherited from Kant, we can further elucidate his identification of personality and autonomy.

Solutions to Kantian problems

Schelling's concept of the autonomous personality incorporates solutions to a complex of major problems inherent within Kant's moral philosophy. I shall focus attention on three of these problems. The first problem concerns the relationships between the four egos within Kant's philosophy--the empirical, the transcendental, the noumenal, and the moral selves. Kant failed to develop a satisfactory theory of the relationship between these four selves. The second problem concerns how man can reasonably be held responsible for immoral actions, especially since Kant appears to claim that free actions are moral while immoral actions are determined. The third problem concerns individuality, which is apparently precluded by Kant's demand for objectivity and universalizability in moral actions. The fact that Schelling devotes attention to these problems discloses the unmistakable influence of Kant, and Schelling's solutions reveal the manner in which he moves beyond Kant.

First, the clarification of the relationships between the four selves--the empirical, the transcendental, the noumenal, and the moral--discussed in Kant's philosophy constitutes one of the central issues in post-Kantian German philosophy. Schelling's doctrine of personality provides one solution. In the first place, Schelling identifies the serialized empirical ego as the product of the first potency which gives rise to Nature or the real aspect of reality. Nature is the history of the struggle of objective reason to organize itself through ever higher levels until consciousness appears. At the lowest level inorganic Nature develops in complete accord with the necessities of the Primordial Will. At the intermediate levels organic Nature develops through the impetus of desires and inclinations. At a higher level consciousness appears. The initial stage of consciousness is the awareness of the empirical ego or the self as known. At this level the empirical ego recognizes itself as part of nature and as determined by its own impulses and desires. This is the lowest level of selfhood wherein the self stands opposed to reason as the universal will.

In the second place, Schelling identifies the transcendental ego as the product of the second potency which gives rise to the ideal aspect of reality. Kant had regarded the transcendental ego as the empistemological correlate of all human acts of knowing. It was the necessary presupposition of knowing, providing unity to our inner and outer experience. In Kant's philosophy the transcendental ego is more of a unifying principle than a person. Schelling, however, apparently reifies the transcendental ego by regarding it as the manifestation of the second potency. Since the second potency as the will to universalization is the will to organize experience into universal categories,

it follows that the categories of the understanding are now regarded by Schelling as constituent elements of the transcendental ego whereby it determines experience according to the necessities of reason.

To this point Schelling has merely incorporated Kant's position with two additions--the identification of the empirical and transcendental egos with the first and second potencies. But the explicit recognition and integration of the empirical and transcendental egos produces what Schelling terms "spirit." Selfhood as spirit, according to Schelling, is the standpoint of Kant's Critical Philosophy. Kant's philosophy represents the developmental stage of consciousness in which consciousness overcomes the determinism inherent within the unconscious activity of the empirical ego by explicitly recognizing the role of the transcendental ego. Selfhood as spirit is "will beholding itself in complete freedom, no longer the tool of universal will operating in nature, but alone and outside of nature."[1] Consciousness, as spirit, comes to realize that the determinism of the natural order results from applying its own categories to the phenomenally given. While the transcendental ego recognizes itself as freely superimposing its categories upon the empirical order, it does not regard itself as having freely chosen those categories. Consciousness still views itself as acting in accordance with the necessity of its own categories. Hence, the relation between the empirical and transcendental egos remains one of opposition or external relation. Knowledge, in deriving its content from the empirical world and its form from the human understanding, is the only bridge between the empirical and transcendental egos. But the

[1] Human Freedom, p. 40.

synthesis attained in knowledge remains dubious since man, if he remains within the Kantian stance, can never know how closely his knowledge conforms to reality. A similar opposition between man's empirical desires and his rational sense of duty is illustrated in Kant's ethical theory. Such uncertainty and opposition, at least for Schelling, cannot be regarded as autonomous activity.

In the third place, Schelling identifies the noumenal ego with the Primal Will or the ground of man's being as ontological freedom. Man's expanding reflective consciousness, as he continues on the circuit of selfhood, recognizes that both the real and the ideal aspects of reality have their ground in the Primal Will. Hence, within the stage of the circuit of selfhood exemplified by Schelling's philosophy, the empirical and transcendental egos are understood as being expressions of the Primal Will. What was previously regarded as an external relation of opposition between the empirical and transcendental egos is now regarded, within this stage, as being potentially capable of transformation into an internal relation. Further, as the passage of selfhood from the empirical to the transcendental provided man a sense of freedom in determining the empirical order, so the passage to the present stage provides man a sense of freedom in determining the categorical structures whereby the transcendental ego organizes its experience. The finite ego, in recognizing its ground as ontological freedom, has now retreated to its origins. But because it has retreated to the principles from which it originates, it is now ready to fulfill its destiny and appropriate these principles into a unified autonomous personality. While selfhood as spirit is the indispensable preparatory stage for the

development of personality, selfhood as personality transcends the Kantian position.

In the fourth place, the moral self may be identified with what Schelling terms personality. The end of human activity is the development of personality in which man attains the full reflective consciousness of the self's basic powers and engages in the creative activity[1] whereby the self further expands its reflective consciousness. Personality is the reflective consciousness and integration of man's essential ground with its existential expressions. It is only as personality that man can possibly achieve the final realization of his potentialities because all the previous stages within the circuit of selfhood are characterized by the unconscious determination of man's existence by one of the polarities of man's essential being. Personality is characterized by a dynamic interplay of the polarities directed toward the achievement of chosen ends. Personality denotes a "living being" or a dynamic unity which integrates the forces inherent within itself. Man may be characterized as autonomous if and only if he has attained personality: all actions committed by a being which has failed to develop personality are amoral. The moral self is the dynamic unity of the empirical, the transcendental and the noumenal selves.

The second major problem within Kant's theory of autonomy resolved by Schelling is the difficulty of accounting for immoral action. Kant, in claiming that the moral self is a purely rational will, had difficulty in explaining how a purely rational will could

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[1]Schelling's inclusion of creative activity as an indispensable element of personality is dictated by his aesthetic interests. But this dimension of personality lies outside the scope of this dissertation.

choose evil. Further, Kant claims that morally right actions are determined by noumenal causes while morally wrong actions are determined by phenomenal causes. Hence the question arises, How can a purely rational will even commit immoral acts, much less be held responsible for them? Kant's answer, one which is apparently inconsistent with his overall philosophy, comes to the suggestion that

> immoral action consists, not in the noumenal self acting, but in the noumenal self neglecting to act and thus letting phenomenal causes take their course so that the action is determined by desire, this being the only alternative to determination by the moral law.[1]

Schelling's solution incorporates the above suggestion of Kant, but provides a more adequate foundation. Schelling not only identifies both the empirical and transcendental egos as expressions of the noumenal ego, but he also defines good as the synthesizing interplay between the two while evil is the disruption of the interplay. Evil or immoral action results whenever the self, for whatever reason, arrests its development and fails to achieve full reflective consciousness. This arresting of development may result either from the self's becoming fascinated with the pleasure derived from satisfying its empirical desires and inclination or from the self's becoming content with the security found in obeying the demands of reason as enshrined in customary morality and social roles. In either case the arresting of development results from absolutizing one of the polarities of man's being while excluding the other. Hence, because both the polarities of man's

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[1]A.C. Ewing, A Short Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Chicago (Chicago University Press, 1938), p. 235. See pp. 236-40 for a discussion of the manner in which Kant's answer to this problem contradicts other aspects of his philosophy.

existential being are expression of his essential being, man is the agent ultimately responsible for the disruption of forces which prevents future growth.

The third major problem within Kant's doctrine of autonomy is the issue of individuality. Standing in bold contrast to the impersonality that is seemingly required in Kant's ethic of objectivity and universalizability, Schelling's doctrine of personality permits the inclusion of individuality. Schelling explicitly argues that his form of pantheism need not preclude individuality.[1] But Schelling's precise principle of individuation is unspecified. Two interpretations are possible. On the one hand, individuality could mean that each man is a unique objectification of a particular impulse of the Primordial Will. Schelling's explicit criticism of Fichte for holding this view apparently entails his own rejection of it.[2] On the other hand, individuality could mean that, although their essential structures are identical, men are individualized by the degree to which they are self-conscious of their nature. Such a Leibnizian view of individuality is not only compatible with Schelling's over-all philosophy but is also consistent with his infatuation with Leibniz. Schelling's doctrine of personality, however, adds an important dimension to the Leibnizian doctrine. Since personality is relational in nature (rather than substantival), it entails not only gaining self-consciousness of the fundamental principles of man's being but also integrating or synthesizing these principles. Thus, for Schelling, not only may each person possess different

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[1]See above, p. 27ff.

[2]See above, p. 34.

degrees of awareness about these principles, but even persons who possess the same degree of awareness may integrate them in individualized ways.

Man's transcendental fall

In spite of the theory of autonomy implicit within Schelling's philosophy, his moral theory is truncated by the inclusion of a doctrine of a transcendental fall such that every man incurs original sin. This doctrine of a transcendental fall probably prevented Schelling from eliciting the theory of autonomy implicit within his philosophy and partially prompted his later preoccupation with religious questions.

Three important points may be made in passing regarding this transcendental fall into a state of original sin.[1] First, it is non-temporal and non-cognitive. It is a fall resulting from a willful act not in time and of which the will is cognitively unaware. Nonetheless, it initiates man's character, which determines subsequent actions. Second, it is an individual, not a racial or species, fall. It is not a fall incurred by one or a few and then imputed to all men. "For evil can only arise in the innermost will of one's own heart, and is never achieved without one's own deed."[2] Hence, each individual is responsible for his own fall. Third, it is limited to man. Nature is incapable of evil, at least in the moral sense and probably in any sense. Nature is completely determined by God, in whom there is no actual evil. But what is the nature of original sin, and what are its dynamics?

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[1]Schelling's doctrine of a transcendental fall bears a striking resemblance to the doctrines of both Kant and Schleiermacher.

[2]Human Freedom, p. 79.

Schelling characterizes original sin as the exaltation of self-will,[1] which results in the disunion of or discord between the polarities of man's being. "Man from eternity took his stand in egotism and selfishness."[2] By a choice made "from eternity" Schelling evidently means a choice made before the individual is fully cognizant of the choice. Once the tension within man's being is broken, original sin initiates a character within man which determines both future actions in accordance with the original sinful tendency and the nature of man's ineffective or pathological synthesis of the polarities. Man's fascination with the initial stages of his aroused selfhood causes him to forfeit further development, i.e., he absolutizes the particularity of his being "even though this evil is raised to self-consciousness only through the entrance of its opposite."[3] Man becomes cognizant of his sinfulness through awareness of the possible integration of the constituent polarities of his being into an autonomous personality.

Schelling further discloses the theological undercurrents of his philosophy by the inclusion of a doctrine of redemption, according to which man overcomes the discord resulting from sin. This discussion leads to further problems.

Schelling's doctrine of redemption

Man's proclivity to sin and the development of an ineffective or heteronomous personality may be rectified through redemption. Three

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 41.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 66. Also compare below, p. 80f.

[3] Human Freedom, p. 66.

aspects of Schelling's doctrine of redemption may be distinguished--its nature, its dynamics, and its purpose. I shall discuss each of these aspects in turn.

Redemption, in short, is the de-absolutization of selfhood or the reduction of selfhood from absolutized actuality to the level of potentiality. "Only selfhood which has been overcome, that means brought back from activity to potentiality, is good; and as potential, having been overcome by the good its remains evermore in the good."[1] Schelling adds further that "evil is bad only insofar as it goes beyond potentiality,"[2] that is, goes beyond potentiality to absolutized actuality. Redemption is the act of counter-acting the tendency of aroused selfhood to absolutize itself. Redemption results in effecting a new being, or synthesis between the constituent polarities of man's being.

Schelling's discussion of the dynamics of redemption presents an apparent contradiction. On the one hand, he appears to argue that redemption results from a divine action. "As man now is, the good, the light as it were, can be produced only out of this dark principle through divine transmutation."[3] On the other hand, he appears to hold that redemption is the consequence of the natural teleological activity of the potencies.

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 80 (emphasis mine). The crucial phrase "from activity to potentiality" reads in the German "Aktivität zur Potentialität." Gutmann, in the translator's notes, suggests "from actuality to potentiality," p. 112. This suggested translation, although not warranted by the text, is more in keeping with Schelling's thought and comes closer to his probable meaning.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 85.

[3] Human Freedom, p. 66.

> In the man in whom this transmutation has not yet taken place but in whom, too, the good principle has not completely died, there is that inner voice of his own better self, (better in respect to himself as he now is). It never ceases to urge him to accomplish this transmutation, and as he only finds peace in his inner self through a real and decisive change, he becomes reconciled with his guardian spirit as though the original idea had only now been satisfied.[1]

Schelling regards the contradiction as only apparent and not real. His vitalistic pantheism entails the truth and reconcilability of both these positions. At one level, the urge for transmutation is the natural expression of man's polarities, while at another level man's polarities must be viewed as the externalized expression of God as Primoridal Will.

The purpose of redemption is the completion of the theogonic process through the appropriation of Nature within God as Consequent or Absolute. God becomes aware of his powers through the agonies of human life. "Being is only aware of itself in becoming. . . . All history remains incomprehensible without the concept of a humanly suffering God."[2] Further, man is the turning point within the theogony whereby the process of God's externalization is reversed and the process of internalization is initiated.

> Man is the beginning of the new covenant through whom, as mediator, since he himself is connected with God, God (the last division being attained) also accepts nature and takes it to him. Man is thus the redeemer of nature towards whom all its archetypes strive.[3]

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[1] Human Freedom, p. 67.

[2] Human Freedom, p. 84.

[3] Human Freedom, p. 92.

But man can serve as the redeemer of nature only if he has attained the full realization and integration of his powers as an autonomous personality.

Critical Assessment

To this point I have avoided making any extended critical assessments of Schelling's philosophy, seeking instead to render a faithful and sympathetic interpretation. There are, however, several substantive criticisms which may be directed against Schelling. These criticisms fall into two groups--those directed in general against the character of Schelling's system as contained in Human Freedom and those directed in particular against his implicit theory of autonomy.

Difficulties regarding Schelling's system

Josiah Royce claims that Schelling's efforts to develop his philosophy in a systematic manner resulted from his close association with Hegel in Jena. Hegel had insisted that "philosophy must become a system, or else remain naught."[1] Schelling accepted this challenge and incorporated it into his lectures during 1800-01. The result was his System of Identity. But in his haste to develop a philosophic "system," Schelling indulges in some dubious moves which are central to his argument in Human Freedom.

The first criticism of his "system" concerns his famous Principle of Identity, or that "A is A." Students of philosophy are familiar with Hegel's unkind remark that the Absolute which Schelling derived

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[1]Josiah Royce, The Spirit of Modern Philosophy, p. 194.

from this principle is "the infinite night in which all cows are black." But in Human Freedom Schelling reinterprets this principle in the form of a conditional proposition, "p implies p." The subsequent differentiation between God as Antecedent or Ground and God as Consequent is central to his argument. But how is this reinterpreted Principle of Identity to be understood? If he regards the statement "p implies p" as referring to entities, then he is guilty of a serious logical error since this formulation of the Law of Identity refers to the truth of propositions. If he regards "p implies p" as referring to both the logical and the ontological orders, then he has failed to delineate the relation between the two orders which makes possible the transition from the one to the other. Since Schelling does not address himself to this question, one of the central features of his argument remains, to say the least, shrouded in mystery.

The second criticism of his "system" concerns the extreme difficulty, if not impossibility, of rendering meaningful a discussion of a theogony within which temporal succession is both present and absent. The notion of temporal succession is central to Schelling's discussion of God's theogonic self-creation within the world. Yet he argues that the conquest of personality within God involves a logical progression, not a temporal succession. The problem is one of switching from a logical progression within the Absolute to a temporal succession in Nature (which is, nonetheless, an aspect of the Absolute) without having delineated the relationship between the logical and temporal orders. Schelling's failure to face this issue results in his contradiction.

Finally, serious consideration must be given Hegel's charge

concerning the arbitrariness of Schelling's dialectic. Schelling's system frequently appears as an arbitrary dialectical schema within which he places many things rather than a dialectic within which things appropriately develop. Note, for example, his philosophy of Nature, or the real. The details of his philosophy of Nature appear extremely arbitrary, if not fanciful.[1] Again, Schelling claims that Fichte's philosophy needs to be complemented by a theory of self-consciousness. But Schelling, in spite of his claim, does not adequately explain the appearance of self-consciousness. It is presupposed from the beginning.

These criticisms prompt an attitude of justified uncertainty regarding the final value of Schelling's "system." A systematic thinker simply should not leave such major issues unresolved. Schelling, quite simply, is more systematizing than systematic.

Difficulties regarding his theory of autonomy

Although his theory of moral autonomy is merely implicit, certain critical remarks may be offered regarding both what he does say and what he implies. First, while his purpose in Human Freedom is to develop a theory of freedom as the possibility of good and evil, his theory is seriously truncated by the inclusion of a doctrine of the transcendental fall in which all men participate. Thus, his explicit statements depict freedom more as a possibility of evil than as a possibility of good.

Second, his explanation of freedom as the possibility of evil is seriously biased. His only explicit explanation for the presence of evil is the destruction of the polarity of existence due to the aroused

[1]Compare, for example, the discussion on page 49.

selfhood issuing from the first potency. But what about the antithetical aspect of the second potency? Surely the freedom resulting from the interplay of the contraries is equally endangered by the will to order, regularity, and permanence arising from the second potency. Discussion of this possibility is completely lacking in Schelling. Once again Schelling appears arbitrary in his development. He has found and used what he wanted while failing to explore systematically other possibilities implicit within his own fundamental principles.

Finally, Schelling's discussion of freedom lacks comprehensiveness and concreteness. The comprehensive development of his principles of polarity, as well as his theme of freedom as the possibility of good and evil, suggests the conclusion that man could be deprived of his freedom through the dominance of either the expansive potency or the restrictive potency, rather than merely the inevitable result of the aroused selfhood arising from the first potency. But his inclusion of the religious doctrine of a transcendental fall prevented the possibility of the loss of freedom through the dominance of the restrictive potency. Schelling's discussion of freedom also lacks concreteness. He fails to specify how the polarities are to be synthesized as well as how the synthesis is to be maintained. What is needed is a discussion of those partial or ineffectual syntheses in which one polarity dominates the other and the impact of these ineffectual syntheses upon the consciousness of the individual. In short, Schelling's theory needs to be complemented by a phenonenology of consciousness and its attendant forms of anxiety, frustration, and triumph. This is precisely the dimension to a concrete theory of autonomy which Kierkegaard develops. To Kierkegaard's treatment we now turn.

CHAPTER II

KIERKEGAARD AS A PHILOSOPHER OF AUTONOMY

The writings of Sören Kierkegaard are at once provocative and perplexing. A century after his death existential philosophers are still gleaning the insights scattered across his pages, and Kierkegaard scholars are still seeking the key which will permit them to bind those insights systematically into a harvested sheath. As late as 1944 Aage Henriksen summed up the state of Kierkegaard scholarship as follows:

> A point of view which neither violates the totality nor the separate parts (of Kierkegaard's authorship) does not seem to have been attained by anybody. The core of the authorship has not been penetrated.[1]

Thompson, in 1972, goes on to suggest "there may be no 'core' of Kierkegaard's authorship to be 'penetrated'."[2] This seems an unfortunate, and unnecessary, state of affairs in which to leave the issue. Let it be granted that the bulk and perplexity of Kierkegaard's work, coupled with his usage of pseudonyms, have prevented our penetrating the core. But our failure to penetrate the core does not warrant the conclusion that there is no core or that it will never be discovered.

As to the possibility of the core's non-existence, the sheer bulk and the rapidity of production of Kierkegaard's early writings--

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[1]Quoted in Josiah Thompson, Kierkegaard: A Collection of Critical Essays, Garden City, New York (Anchor Doubleday Books, 1972), p. v.

[2]Ibid, p. vii.

eight volumes of his aesthetic literature[1] and twenty-one edifying discourses published during the three-year period between February 1843 and February 1846--are inexplicable without some sort of supportive framework to provide both writer and writings a guiding focus. One might understand a literary author, a poet or novelist for example, producing a significant number of disconnected works in a relatively short time, but one cannot reasonably accept the presumption that a philosophical author would produce a number of disconnected works in a relatively short period. As to the possibility that the core will never be discovered, every alternative should be explored before scholars drop the issue. One such alternative is to seek the core which will clarify the unity of authorship and illumine its central theses behind the authorship rather than merely within it. It is generally recognized that Kierkegaard initiated a new philosophical perspective, viz., Existentialism. It is not generally emphasized, however, that this perspective did not appear spontaneously within Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard was a child of his day and was influenced by previous thinkers. Accordingly, my purpose in this chapter is two-fold. My primary task is to demonstrate the manner in which Kierkegaard may be interpreted as having engaged in a thought-experiment to elucidate (1) the precise nature of moral autonomy and (2) the conditions which either preclude its possibility or contribute to its attainment. My secondary task is to establish a reasonable presumption that Schelling was far more influential upon Kierkegaard than has been previously appreciated.

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[1]These eight volumes consist of the two volumes of Either/Or, Repetition, Fear and Trembling, Philosophical Fragments, The Concept of Dread, Stages on Life's Way, and the Concluding Unscientific Postscript.

Such an approach will clarify the relation between Schelling and Kierkegaard while simultaneously explicating the version of autonomy in Kierkegaard's philosophy.

In order to accomplish my dual purpose I shall proceed in the following manner. In the first section of this chapter I shall examine Kierkegaard's relation to Schelling. As a result of this examination I shall hypothesize a modified Schellingean framework as the core of Kierkegaard's authorship and the key to his moral philosophy. In the second section I shall test this hypothesis against Kierkegaard's theoretical discussion of the human self, thereby revealing how his view of the self as a synthesis essentially agrees with Schelling's and how the self may be autonomous or heteronomous. In the final section I shall establish how this hypothesized Schellingean framework is compatible, if not coincidental, with Kierkegaard's phenomenology of consciousness as contained in his theory of the three spheres of existence and, further, that the purpose of his phenomenology of consciousness is to lead the reader toward autonomy.

Kierkegaard's Relation to Schelling

The relationship between Schelling and Kierkegaard has never been completely explored. A few historical facts are indubitable. During his last years Schelling came out of retirement and returned to Berlin in 1841-42 to lecture on philosophy. His avowed purpose in these lectures was a polemic against Hegel's system. In his audience were such contemporaries as Burckhardt, Engels, and Kierkegaard.[1] It is

[1]Karl Löwith, From Hegel to Nietzsche, Chicago (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 115. Hereafter referred to as Lowith.

noteworthy that Kierkegaard and Engels (together with Marx) became the recognized leaders in the overthrow of Hegelianism around the middle of the century. Suggesting that their attack was "promoted" by Schelling, Löwith adds:

> We meet all the motifs of his criticism also in Feuerbach and Ruge, Marx and Kierkegaard, as well as in Trendelenburg, to whose criticism of Hegel, Kierkegaard frequently refers.[1]

Unfortunately the nature and extent of Schelling's influence upon Kierkegaard and Engels has not been fully investigated. By focusing on the relationship between Schelling and Kierkegaard I shall contribute part of that much-needed study.

Only the sketchiest discussions are afforded the Schelling-Kierkegaard relation in the secondary Kierkegaard literature. Their relationship is not even mentioned by such standard authorities as Diem,[2] Jolivet,[3] Arbaugh and Arbaugh,[4] and Thompson.[5] Only their early relationship, consisting of Kierkegaard's initial infatuation and disappointment with Schelling as a teacher, is mentioned by Swenson,[6]

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[1]Löwith, p. 116.

[2]Herman Diem, Kierkegaard's Dialectic of Existence, London (Oliver and Boyd, 1959). Hereafter referred to as Diem.

[3]Regis Jolivet, Introduction to Kierkegaard, New York (E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., n.d.). Hereafter referred to as Jolivet.

[4]George E. Arbaugh and George B. Arbaugh, Kierkegaard's Authorship, Rock Island, Ill. (Augustana College Library, 1967). Hereafter referred to as Arbaugh.

[5]Josiah Thompson, The Lonely Labyrinth, Carbondale, Ill. (Southern Illinois University Press, 1967). Hereafter referred to as Thompson.

[6]David Swenson, Something about Kierkegaard, Minneapolis (Augsburg Publishing House, 1941), p. 16. Hereafter referred to as Swenson.

Lowrie,[1] and Croxall.[2] The only discussions of Schelling's possible philosophical influence upon Kierkegaard are to be found in Collins[3] and Price.[4] Both of these treatments are very inadequate and incomplete.

In order to develop a complete treatment of the Schelling-Kierkegaard relationship, it is convenient to separate it into three aspects: (a) their personal relationship as teacher-student, (b) Kierkegaard's rejection of specific doctrines of Schelling, and (c) Schelling's positive doctrinal influence on Kierkegaard.

The teacher-student aspect of the Schelling-Kierkegaard relationship

While subject to different interpretations, the facts regarding the teacher-student aspect of the Schelling-Kierkegaard relationship are rather clear. Kierkegaard's initial response to Schelling's lectures was one of excited infatuation.

> I am glad to have heard Schelling's second lecture, indescribably glad. I have sighed long enough, and my thoughts have sighed within me. When Schelling mentioned the word Virkelighed (actual daily life), in connection with the relation of philosophy to

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[1]Walter Lowrie, Kierkegaard, Gloucester, Mass. (Peter Smith, 1970), pp. 234f. Hereafter referred to as Lowrie.

[2]T.H. Croxall, Kierkegaard Commentary, New York (Harper and Brothers, n.d.), pp. 11, 33. Hereafter referred to as Croxall.

[3]James Collins, The Mind of Kierkegaard, Chicago (Henry Regnery Co., 1953). Hereafter referred to as Collins.

[4]George Price, The Narrow Pass, New York (McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1963). Hereafter referred to as Price. Price traces the formative influence on Kierkegaard's thought beyond Schelling to Boehme. But this is because Price emphasizes only the voluntarism of all three men.

> Virkelighed, thought leaped within me as the babe leaped in Elizabeth. I remember almost every word he said from that moment on. Here perhaps clarity may come. That one word reminded me of all my philosophic sufferings and pains.[1]

Kierkegaard's excitment was generated by Schelling's insistence that speculative philosophy, through its preoccupation with the abstract and universal, had not adequately faced the perplexities of the individual in his actual daily life. But Kierkegaard's initial infatuation soon gave way to apparent disappointment only four and a half months later. His disillusionment is revealed in the following statements: "Schelling's later lectures have unfortunately little importance"; "I have given up Schelling entirely"; and finally, "Schelling drivels inordinately."[2] In these later lectures, Schelling became entangled in abstract theosophical ramblings which, as we shall see shortly, Kierkegaard could not tolerate.

The facts regarding the student-teacher relationship, are subject to various interpretations. On the one hand, the series of sudden attacks on Schelling may be taken at face value, a view all too readily adopted by Kierkegaardian scholars. But here, as throughout Kierkegaard's writings, one must be aware of his love of irony. The attacks may be interpreted as concealing something else. Lowrie[3] makes the interesting point--quite in keeping with Kierkegaard's temperament--that this disenchantment with Schelling was merely his ostensible purpose for hastily returning to Copenhagen while his actual reason was

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[1] Croxall, p. 11.

[2] Lowrie, p. 235. Emphasis mine.

[3] Lowrie, p. 235.

word that illness had overtaken his beloved, but rejected, Regina. At any rate, it is unlikely that a man could be so infatuated over another man's lectures (even remembering "every word he said") without retaining some lasting benefit from those same lectures. Thus, since the historical data are inconclusive, it is necessary to undertake a careful analysis of Kierkegaard's own writings to determine the extent, if any, of Schelling's doctrinal influence on Kierkegaard.

Kierkegaard's rejection of Schellingean doctrines

The most obvious difficulty with hypothesizing an influence upon Kierkegaard by Schelling is Kierkegaard's widely reported attacks upon Schelling in his aesthetic writings. Accordingly, I shall examine Kierkegaard's remarks about Schelling to determine (1) the precise nature of his attacks and (2) whether his critical remarks preclude the incorporation of other elements of Schelling's moral philosophy within his own philosophy.

Kierkegaard explicitly refers to Schelling's doctrines fewer than a dozen times, and these references usually appear to be deprecatory. Several of these references, while revealing, are quite brief. When discussing the possible relationship between soul and body, Kierkegaard rejects Schelling's "act of corporization" whereby freedom "posits its own body."[1] Again, he dismisses the fanciful "construction of history" in Schelling's theogony because it subjects history to the necessary

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[1]Sören Kierkegaard, The Concept of Dread, Princeton, N.J. (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 121. Hereafter referred to as Dread.

rules of knowledge.[1] And again, he criticizes Schelling for apparently limiting the role of dread to the "creative birthpangs of the Deity" while neglecting its role in the individual.[2]

Kierkegaard devotes more attention to Schelling's doctrine of "intellectual intuition" as a new point of departure for philosophy, always in conjunction with Hegel's rejection of Schelling's new starting point. Kierkegaard's mention of Hegel's rejection of Schelling has led commentators to conclude hastily that Kierkegaard completely approves of Hegel's rather caustic dismissal of Schelling's doctrine. But a careful reading of the passages discloses an element of satire in Kierkegaard's comments. Kierkegaard actually appears to condone Schelling's recognition of the need for a new starting point, and to ridicule Hegel's attempt to employ his own Method as such a new starting point, that is, to employ the Method to overcome the skepticism inherited from Kant. Hegel's Method, according to Kierkegaard, actually re-situates philosophy within the pre-Kantian assumption that "thought possesses reality."[3] In Dread Kierkegaard ridicules Hegel for employing the "catchwords 'Method and Manifestation,' to hide what Schelling recognized more openly by the cue 'intellectual intuition and construction,' the fact, namely, that this was a new point of departure."[3] Kierkegaard then proceeds to criticize Hegel's Method of Mediation while making no further reference to Schelling. In a parallel passage in the Concluding

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[1]Sören Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments, Princeton, N.J. (Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 98. Hereafter referred to as Fragments.

[2]Dread, p. 53 footnote.

[3]Dread, pp. 10-11.

Unscientific Postscript Kierkegaard refers to Schelling's "intellectual intuition" as a new point of departure for limiting the self-reflexive skepticism of thought. He then adds: "Hegel regarded this as a fault. He speaks contemptuously of Schelling's intellectual intuition--and then came the Method."[1] Once again Kierkegaard proceeds to criticize the Hegelian Method while ignoring Schelling. These two crucial passages reveal that Kierkegaard is actually chiding Hegel for casually dismissing Schelling while committing a more serious error than Schelling, who at least recognized the need for a new point of departure for post-Kantian philosophic activity.

In addition, Kierkegaard apparently identifies Schelling's demand for a new starting point as an implicit recognition of the need for what Kierkegaard's terms "the Leap." Kierkegaard's actual purpose in discussing Schelling's doctrine of "intellectual intuition" is disclosed in a passage treating his (Kierkegaard's) doctrine of the Leap. The Leap

> is something that cannot be attained either by means of the intellectual intuition of Schelling, or by what Hegel, dismissing Schelling's concept with disdain, proposes to substitute for it, namely, the Method. For the leap is neither more nor less than the most decisive protest possible against the inverse procedure of the Method.[2]

Whereas Hegel applied his Method only in retrospect, in sharp contrast Kierkegaard's position is clearly that the Leap carries one forward in time.

These references to Schelling merely underscore Kierkegaard's

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[1]Sören Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Princeton, N.J. (Princeton University Press, 1941), p. 299. Hereafer referred to as Postscript.

[2]Postscript. p. 96.

rejection of the former's idealistic and theosophical tendencies. They do not preclude Kierkegaard's appropriating various elements of Schelling's implicit theory of autonomy, provided that Kierkegaard can establish a foundation for them other than Schelling's idealistic and theosophical foundation, which he has rejected.

Schelling's positive influence on Kierkegaard

Since Kierkegaard seldom gives credit to those persons whose ideas he appropriates, it might appear to be difficult to ascertain Schelling's positive influence on Kierkegaard. In the absence of explicit credit, it becomes necessary to look for common themes, common terminology, similar moves, and even passages reminiscent of Schelling. Schelling's influence is most easily detected in Kierkegaard's early writings where, I shall argue, it serves as a formative element in Kierkegaard's subsequent philosophic activity.

One of Kierkegaard's earliest writings, Johannes Climacus or, De Omnibus Dubitandum Est,[1] is crucial for my present purpose because, although unfinished and published only posthumously, it signals a pivotal change in Kierkegaard's outlook. Apparently written in mid-1842, Johannes Climacus stands between his master's thesis, The Concept of Irony, and the tremendous literary outburst known as his aesthetic writings. The master's thesis, finished in September of 1841 immediately prior to his departure for Berlin, where he attended Schelling's

[1]Sören Kierkegaard, Johannes Climacus or, De Omnibus Dubitandum Est, Stanford, California (Stanford University Press, 1958). T.H. Croxall, the translator, develops a solid argument for an 1842 date of composition. See p. 17. Hereafter referred to as Johannes Climacus.

lectures, has a strong Hegelian tone. But his aesthetic literature, appearing between February 1843 and February 1846 and after he attended Schelling's lectures, sound a definitely anti-Hegelian note. The suspicion that Schelling may have been at least partially responsible for the change in Kierkegaard's outlook is partially substantiated by close scrutiny of Johannes Climacus. Johannes Climacus suggests Schellingean influence--the themes, the moves, and even the terminology appear Schellingean. Schelling's influence gains importance as one realizes that Johannes Climacus contains the seed-bed of Kierkegaard's aesthetic writings. The following analysis of Johannes Climacus is designed to display the similarity of the basic themes in both Kierkegaard and Schelling.

The first part of Johannes Climacus[1] is an extended attack on the alleged presuppositionless beginning of modern philosophy. Descartes, and after him Hegel, had argued that philosophy begins on the presuppositionless foundation of doubt--"Doubt everything."[2] The first part of the work closes with Johannes Climacus concluding that philosophy's foundation of doubt is not as presuppositionless as Descartes and Hegel had assumed because they had not explained the origin of doubt. The second part, an extremely compact section of only nine full pages, opens

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[1]Johannes Climacus is the intellectual biography of a man named Johannes Climacus, one of Kierkegaard's pseudonyms and the "author" of the Fragments and the Postscript. Thus, the aesthetic literature is bracketed between works "written" by Johannes Climacus.

[2]The first part of the work is an analysis of three propositions. The first is Descartes': "Everything must be doubted." The second is Hegel's: "One must have doubted in order to be brought to philosophize." The third is: "Modern philosophy begins with doubt." See pp. 115, 116.

with Johannes Climacus raising the central question as to "why, ideally, doubt is possible in the mind or consciousness."[1] His answer to this question is typically Schellingean: "The possibility of doubt lies in consciousness, whose very essence is a kind of opposition or contradiction. It is produced by, and itself produces, a sort of duality."[2]

But what stands in opposition within consciousness? Again Kierkegaard's answer is Schellingean in tone: "The terms of the duality are reality and ideality."[3] Not only does Kierkegaard denote the polarities of consciousness by Schellingean terms, but he also gives the terms Schellingean connotations. First, both Schelling and Kierkegaard identify "reality" as the realm of nature or the perceived world.[4] Kierkegaard, however, further characterizes the perceptual realm as the realm of immediacy, a realm lacking definite relationships and one in which everything is equally true and untrue. Second, Schelling and Kierkegaard both identify the other pole of consciousness as "Ideality," which is understood as a set of categorical structures which are superimposed upon the perceptual realm.[5] Ideality annuls the immediacy of Reality by introducing definite universal relationships. Consciousness, for Kierkegaard, becomes aware of Ideality through language, which is

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[1] Johannes Climacus, p. 146.

[2] Johannes Climacus, p. 149.

[3] Johannes Climacus, p. 149. For a discussion of Schelling's duality of reality-ideality, see above pp. 59f

[4] Johannes Climacus, pp. 147-48.

[5] Johannes Climacus, pp. 147-48. For Schelling's discussion of the meaning of "ideality," see above, p. 59.

the attempt to order and express the perceptual realm according to abstract universal concepts.

> Speech is ideality. For when I speak, I introduce opposition . . . Reality I cannot express in speech, for to indicate it I use Ideality, which is a contradiction, an untruth.[1]

This opposition between Reality and Ideality as exemplified in speech is the philosophical basis of Kierkegaard's famous doctrine of indirect communication. Speech, by its very nature, is a falsification of reality: "For what I say is quite other than what I want to express."[2] Hence, all communication through speech is only indirectly about reality.

Third, Schelling and Kierkegaard both characterize consciousness as the relationship between the polarities of reality and ideality. "Consciousness then is Relationship, a relationship whose Form or essence is Opposition."[3] Kierkegaard further adds that consciousness, in his sense of the term, cannot exist in the absence of either of the polarities. As he phrases it:

> Reality is not consciousness, any more than ideality is. And yet consciousness is not present without both and this opposition or contradiction between reality and ideality is the origin and essence of consciousness.[4]

The opposition between reality and ideality in consciousness introduces the element of ambiguity into human existence. "For only at the moment when ideality is brought into relationship with reality does

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[1] Johannes Climacus, p. 148.

[2] Johannes Climacus, p. 148.

[3] Johannes Climacus, p. 153.

[4] Johannes Climacus, pp. 149-50.

possibility appear."[1] The possibility of truth and untruth occurs as a result of a "collision"[2] between reality and ideality within consciousness. The duality of consciousness makes doubt possible, since consciousness at the unreflective level can be deceptive. "The possibility of doubt then lies in consciousness."[3] Hence, the proper foundation of philosophy is not doubt but rather that which makes doubt possible, namely, the polarities of consciousness.[4]

Kierkegaard draw three important implications from the relational nature of consciousness. First, the divisions or classifications of consciousness are always trichotomous. "For when I say, 'I was conscious of such and such a sense impression', I mention a trinity (I, consciousness, impression)."[5] Schelling had also argued that the divisions of consciousness are trichotomous. Second, Kierkegaard argues that "consciousness is spirit."[6] This is also a typically Schellingean move. The full import of these two implications for Kierkegaard's philosophy will be developed later.

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[1] Johannes Climacus, p. 149.

[2] Johannes Climacus, p. 153.

[3] Johannes Climacus, p. 149.

[4] Among the alternative readings not included in the final draft of Johannes Climacus, Kierkegaard left some very suggestive remarks about the role of doubt. These alternative readings are included in the Appendix to the translation of Johannes Climacus--the pagination is given in parentheses. "Johannes Climacus perceived that in doubt there has to be an act of the will. Otherwise, to doubt would be identical with being uncertain"(182). "If then I must emerge from doubt by a free act, I must have entered it by a free act--an act of the will"(187). "The possibility of doubt is essential to existence. It is the mystery of human life"(184).

[5] Johannes Climacus, p. 151.

[6] Johannes Climacus, p. 151.

The third implication is more important, both for Kierkegaard's present concern and for his later writings. Consciousness is a relationship which is accompanied by concern. The ironical doubt of Socrates and the provisional doubt of Descartes are intellectual functions, or functions of ideality. Such forms of doubt, according to Kierkegaard, are capable of disinterested or passionless reflection, and hence, they are ineffectual in dealing with "the experiences and adventures in which a man must be tried when setting out to doubt everything."[1] The individual consciousness, on the contrary, is the attempted synthesis of reality and ideality, and "brings with it interest or concern."[2] This concern of consciousness in the affairs of actual daily life signals Kierkegaard's advance beyond Schelling. Schelling had limited the concerns of the circuit of selfhood to a discussion of the Deity, while Kierkegaard intends to concretize it in terms of the individual finite ego.

The second work of Kierkegaard which suggest Schellingean influence is Dread. Kierkegaard had originally intended to issue this book as his first attempt at "direct communication" but decided at the last moment to publish it under a pseudonym. Lowrie, accordingly, argues that "we need not apply to this book S.K.'s emphatic admonition not to attribute to him anything that is said by his pseudonym."[3]

In Dread Kierkegaard raises the question of the origin and meaning of original sin in terms of what actually happens within the individual

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[1] Johannes Climacus, p. 144.

[2] Johannes Climacus, p. 151.

[3] Dread, p. x.

self-consciousness, and not in terms of a metaphysical or theological perspective. Hence, Dread must be understood on two levels: the manifest level of the doctrine of original sin and the private level of the individual consciousness.

While the theme of the book is the role of dread as the precipitating cause of original sin, its basic premise is identical with Schelling's premise in Human Freedom--the disclosure of freedom as the possibility of good and evil (sin).[1] But is man free? And if so, how does man become aware of his freedom? Man is free and becomes aware of his freedom through the experience of dread. Dread is epistemologically prior to freedom, but freedom is metaphysically prior to dread. But what is dread, and what occasions man's awareness of it?

Dread is the experience of vertigo in the face of possibility.

> Thus dread is the dizziness of freedom which occurs when the spirit would posit the synthesis, and freedom then gazes down into its own possibility, grasping at finiteness to sustain itself. In this dizziness freedom succumbs.[2]

I take it as significant that Kierkegaard, in connection with his description of dread as the dizziness of freedom, specifically acknowledges Schelling's discussion of the role of dread in the self-creation of God.[3] Kierkegaard, however, is occupied with applying this notion

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[1]Dread, p. 19.

[2]Dread, p. 55.

[3]The following quotations from The Ages of the World exemplify Schelling's view of the role of dread in his theogony. The pagination is given in parentheses following each quotation. "Since the first potency therefore unites in itself opposing powers, of which the one always longs for the outside, the other presses back toward the inside, hence its life is also a life of vexation ("Widerwärtigkeit") and dread ("Angst"), since it does not know which way to turn and so falls into an involuntary, revolving motion"(134). "That original blind life,

to the finite human consciousness. Kierkegaard adds further that "dread is freedom's reality as possibility for possibility."[1]

The term "possibility" is central to his characterization of freedom, as well as the totality of Kierkegaard's thought, and must be understood precisely according to his own definition of the term. Kierkegaard characterizes possibility as the result of the collision of the polarities (reality and ideality) of consciousness.[2] Understood in this light, dread is the proof not only of man's freedom but also of his heterogeneity.

Kierkegaard identifies the heterogeneous components of man as the bodily, the soulish, and the spirit.

> Everything turns upon dread coming into view. Man is a synthesis of the soulish and the bodily. But a synthesis is unthinkable if the two are not united in a third factor. This third factor is the spirit.[3]

This idea of man as the bodily and the soulish synthesized by and in spirit reveals Kierkegaard's doctrine of the human self. The prospect of man's synthesizing the polarities of the bodily and the soulish gives

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whose nature is nothing but strife, dread, and contradiction . . ." (155). "Pain, dread, and vexation of past life are released, as was shown, by that crisis or differentiation of powers"(163). "It is futile to try to explain the manifoldness of nature as a peaceful unification ("Ineinsbildugn") of different powers. All that comes to be can only do so in discontent; and as dread is the basic feeling of each living creature, so is everything that lives conceived and born only in violent conflict"(211). "The predominant feeling that expresses the conflict of tendencies in being, when there is no knowing which way to turn, is that of dread ("Angst")"(226).

[1]Dread, p. 38.

[2]See above, p. 93.

[3]Dread, p. 39.

rise to man's freedom and ultimately yields a variety of autonomy. But how are these three components to be interpreted?

Before focusing attention on the synthesizing spirit, it is necessary to concentrate on the constituent elements (the bodily and the soulish) which are synthesized. A note of caution must be sounded. Since Kierkegaard does not employ these terms in any traditional sense as denoting substantival entities, I have retained the terms "bodily" and "soulish", rather than "body" and "soul", to avoid confusion, as far as possible, with the more traditional usage. "The bodily" and "the soulish" bear remarkable similarities to Schelling's fundamental principles of the first and second potencies, and correspond to Kierkegaard's previous ideas of reality and ideality.[1] The important difference between Kierkegaard's polarities and Schelling's potencies is that Kierkegaard limits them to the region of consciousness while Schelling reifies them as metaphysical principles.

I shall now clarify Kierkegaard's use of these terms. First, "the bodily" refers to reality as perceived by human consciousness. As far as consciousness is concerned, there is no such thing as a body in the Cartesian substantival sense of res extensa. There are only bodily states. Hence, "the bodily" refers to consciousness' fleeting states of perceptual awareness originating within the transient, sensuous, finite, perceptual order of reality. Accordingly, in various discussions throughout his writings of the syntheses constituting the human self,

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[1]For a discussion of Schelling's potencies, see above, pp. For a discussion of reality and ideality in Kierkegaard, see above, p. 42-47 and p. 93f.

Kierkegaard refers to the bodily factor as reality, transiency, sensuousness, finitude, or temporality.

Second, "the soulish" refers to ideality as grasped by human consciousness. As far as consciousness is concerned, there is no such thing as a mind or soul in the Cartesian substantival sense of *res cogitans*. There are only mental states. Accordingly, "the soulish" refers to consciousness' mental states of awareness originating within the transcendent, intellectual, infinite, rational order of ideality. Hence, in various discussion throughout his writings of the syntheses constituting the human self, Kierkegaard refers to the soulish factor as ideality, transcendency, intellect, infinitude, or eternity.

Third, "spirit" is the factor which synthesizes the bodily and the soulish. Once again it must be emphasized that Kierkegaard does not use the term "spirit" in a traditional sense. Hence, Spirit does not necessarily refer to the divine in man. Kierkegaard has previously identified spirit with consciousness,[1] and he proceeds to increase the specificity of his concept in three aspects. (a) The first addition is that spirit refers to the self. "Man is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation which relates itself to itself."[2] (b) He further enriches the concept by specifying that the self as spirit refers to self-consciousness. Self-consciousness "is the decisive criterion of the self. The more

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[1]See above, p. 95.

[2]Sören Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* and *The Sickness unto Death*, Princeton, N.J. (Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 146. The latter work will hereafter be referred to as *Sickness*.

consciousness, the more self."[1] (c) Finally, he specifies that self-consciousness is grounded in the will. "The more consciousness, the more will, and the more will the more self. A man who has no will at all is no self; the more will he has, the more consciousness of self he has also."[2] The self as self-consciousness is a synthesis of the bodily and the soulish brought about by an act of will. But, since the polarities of the self are in constant flux, the self is a perpetual becoming. Thus, the self is continually at issue for the self. In order to gain and maintain his self, man must continually engage in self-consciously synthesizing the polarities of consciousness. To fail to synthesize the polarities, to succumb to the dizziness of freedom, is to lose the self as spirit or self-consciousness.

In conclusion, it is possible to summarize the similarities in the thought of Schelling and Kierkegaard, thereby clarifying the extent of the former's formative influence upon the latter. First, both men identify the objective pole of experience as "reality" (or "actuality") and the subjective pole of experience as "ideality." In reference to man, Schelling's "first potency" corresponds to what Kierkegaard calls "the bodily" and Schelling's "second potency" corresponds to what Kierkegaard calls "the soulish." Second, both men characterize consciousness as a relationship between the constituent polarities of experience. That is, both define man in terms of a dialectic of rela-

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[1] Sickness, p. 162.

[2] Sickness, p. 162. Kierkegaard's remark prompts a question regarding the locus of the will. Is will the presupposition of consciousness, the result of consciousness, consciousness itself, or a fourth element? The same question arises concerning the locus of freedom. See below, p. 95, where an answer to both questions is provided.

tionships. Third, both identify the collision between reality and ideality as the source of doubt and the possibility of freedom. Fourth, both men have a voluntaristic element, although as we shall see shortly, this plays a decidedly different role in their philosophies.

A major difference

Though there is evidence of Schelling's influence on Kierkegaard, there is one major difference between their theories, which serves as a prelude to Kierkegaard's philosophy because it has implications of the utmost importance for his dialectical view of man. Whereas Schelling had reified his potencies into metaphysical principles, Kierkegaard carefully maintains his polarities within the realm of consciousness. In this manner Kierkegaard extricates his view of man from the sort of dubious metaphysical underpinnings employed by Schelling. But it must be noted that both men are seeking to come to grips, in their respective ways, with the implications of Kant's Critical Philosophy. Schelling attempts to explain the origins of the polarities or antinomies resulting from Kant's philosophy by treating them as expressions of a Primordial Will. Kierkegaard, however, merely accepts the polarities as given (within consciousness) and then explores their consequences for man. Consequently, Kierkegaard's dialectic focuses on the various ways in which consciousness relates to the polarities. Spirit is a relationship, a relationship between the polarities of consciousness. But, as we have already observed, it is a relationship accompanied by concern. And the highest concern of consciousness is its concern over its own self or the manner of the self's existence. But what are the implications of this difference for Kierkegaard?

The first implication concerns the nature of what Schelling and Kierkegaard call "spirit." Schelling had argued that spirit results from, or is, the synthesis of the first and second potencies. Kierkegaard, however, accepts spirit, along with the bodily and the soulish, as part of the given. More specifically, spirit is the third term which accomplishes the synthesis of the bodily and the soulish; spirit has ontological priority over the bodily and the soulish. Consequently, Kierkegaard adopts a position contrary to much of western philosophy. Classical philosophers, according to Kierkegaard's interpretion, had regarded the human self as a psychophysical dualism, a union of psychic and somatic elements. According to his interpretation of the Classical philosophers, they viewed the human self as merely a "negative unity", i.e., a unity which is a mere conjunction or intersection of two elements. Plato for example had thought of the human self as a synthesis of reason and appetite in which the spirit is the mere togetherness which unites reason and appetite. But Christianity, according to Kierkegaard, had introduced the idea of the spirit as a "positive third term." For Christianity, the union of the psychic and somatic elements in the self is affected by this third term, which Kierkegaard identifies with consciousness. "The self as spirit is the natural synthesis of body and soul become conscious of itself and free with respect to itself."[1] In the Christian view, according to Kierkegaard, the spirit (or consciousness) relates itself to each of the constituent factors and then again in turn to itself. Accordingly, the self is not only a synthesis, but a synthesis which rests upon choice.

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[1]Louis Mackey, "The Poetry of Inwardness" in Kierkegaard: A Collection of Critical Essays, edited by Josiah Thompson, p. 56.

The second important consequence of restricting the polarities to the region of consciousness and then focusing on consciousness is that Kierkegaard draws clear distinctions between the terms "actuality", "the actual", "the possible", and "possibility".[1] By "actuality" Kierkegaard means the object as it is in-itself or transcendent to consciousness, while "the actual" denotes the object as known or grasped by consciousness, as immanent within consciousness. "The possible", for Kierkegaard, refers to anything which is conceivable. It is the possibles, arising from what Kierkegaard calls ideality or the soulish which introduce meaning into the sensory manifold, thereby providing it with definite relationships from the standpoint of consciousness. Kierkegaard makes a further distinction between cognitive and ethical possibles. Cognitive possibles result from an act of a thinker but have no direct effect on the cognizing subject. They merely introduce meaning into the actual world, thereby effecting its transition from an unintelligible to an intelligible state within consciousness. The range of cognitive possibles is limited only by the power, or weakness, of man's imagination. Ethical possibles also originate from an act of the thinker but differ from cognitive possibles in that they effect a change in the thinker. Ethical possibles acquire reference when they are chosen and appropriated as a model or pattern for the thinker's future. Once chosen as a pattern for one's future, possibles are transformed into possibilities. Hence, "possibilities" denotes any possible

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[1]One of the best discussions of these important distinctions is to be fond in Paul Holmer's article "On Understanding Kierkegaard" in A Kierkegaard Critique, edited by Howard A. Johnson and Niels Thulstrup, pp. 40-53. Hereafter referred to as Holmer.

which has been chosen and willed as a model for one's future: it is willed as a possibility for me.

These important distinctions may be illustrated by focusing attention on a mountain. As an actuality, the mountain is what it is in-itself, independent of human perception or conceptualization. The mountain is actual insofar as it is perceived by man from different perspectives or under different lighting and/or climatic conditions. But man's sensory awareness of the mountain presents a variety of possibles, both cognitive and ethical. As a cognitive possible the mountain may be interpreted in geological terms as being composed of igneous, metaphorphic or sedimentary rocks, as containing faults, dikes, pressure ridges, ore deposits, etc.; in chemcial terms as composed of iron, silicon, hydrogen, oxygen, etc.; in biological terms as containing diverse flora and fauna; in aesthetic terms as an object to be painted or photographed; in recreational terms as an area to be hunted or climbed or skied; in economic terms as timber to be harvested or as ore to be mined or as land to be subdivided and sold as homesites; or in a host of other possibles whose range is as great as man's imagination. As an ethical possible the mountain may be interpreted as something to provide pleasure or as a natural environment to be preserved and protected or as something to inspire religious awe. These ethical possibles may then be willed as a model for my future conduct and thereby transformed into a possibility.

The third important consequence of Kierkegaard's focusing on consciousness is one of his greatest contributions to philosophy. Kierkegaard discovered that these ethical possibles can be described from the transcendental standpoint of consciousness, and that these

possibles can be transformed into specific possibilities which may then be categorized according to certain fundamental types. His typology of ethical possibilities presents certain modes in which man may exist in the world, certain patterns of conducting one's life. Kierkegaard's concepts of the possible and possibility provide a key to understanding his philosophic activity.

> Kierkegaard's writings are a public and cognitive mode of creating and describing possibles for the person who choses to entertain them. And the principle kind of understanding which Kierkegaard's writings demand . . . is every reader's encounter with these possibilities.[1]

Thus, attempts to reduce Kierkegaard's philosophy to an account of his own psychological make-up or to correlate it with his biography, while of historical interest, are wrong-headed. They miss the fundamental thrust of his philosophy, which is to force the reader to encounter the possibilities for himself and to choose between (or among) them.

The fourth implication of Kierkegaard's restricting the polarities to the region of consciousness is that it leads him to focus on the various possible ways in which spirit or consciousness can relate to the oppositional factors of the bodily and the soulish. Consciousness may relate itself to the bodily factor, or to the soulish factor, or to both factors simultaneously. I shall return to this point in the next section.

The final implication of restricting the polarities to the region of consciousness is that it raises the problem of self-knowledge. Since consciousness <u>is</u> the relationship between diverse elements, it cannot be

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[1] <u>Holmer</u>, p. 48.

an object of direct knowledge for itself. As consciousness becomes more aware of its duality it also becomes more concerned over itself. The self becomes an issue for itself simultaneously with and proportionately to consciousness' increasing awareness of its duality. Further, the self cannot be fully understood by being reduced to either of the constituent factors. The self cannot be reduced to reality or actuality in the sense that immediate sensory experience is actual. Neither can it be reduced to ideality, for it cannot be completely described in language. Finally, Kierkegaard explicity and repeatedly affirms that the self is a synthesis. But so regarded as a synthesis, man is not yet a self. The self is a possibility to be achieved; it is not something granted to man as a natural endowment. If man were already a self through natural endowment, then consciousness would not be accompanied by such concern over the self. But if selfhood is a possibility to be achieved, it may also not be achieved. This problem of the self and of self-knowledge is one of Kierkegaard's central preoccupations.

Thus, this major difference and its implications leads to the conclusion that while Schelling had a possible formative influence upon Kierkegaard as revealed in Johannes Climacus and Dread, Kierkegaard went beyond Schelling in several important respects which disclose the peculiar and distinctive features of his philosophy. The nature of consciousness as a relationship determines both the method and the problem of Kierkegaard's philosophy. The duality within consciousness necessitates both his method of indirect communication and his central problem of the nature of the human self. Accordingly, I shall turn to a more complete analysis of certain aspects of Kierkegaard's theory of

consciousness and their implications for his philosophical psychology and his ethical theory.

A hypothesis

Sufficient data regarding the reasonable supposition of Schelling's formative influence upon Kierkegaard and his own advance beyond Schelling have now been gathered to justify formulating a hypothesis which will guide my subsequent discussion. Spirit's concern over the character and quality of the self's existence gives rise to the central theme of Kierkegaard's philosophy. This theme may be stated as an existential imperative: Choose thyself! Understood in this light, Kierkegaard's philosophy is a phenomenology of man's spiritual development and is concerned (1) with describing the various ways in which man attempts to become a self and (2) with disclosing the adequacies and inadequacies of these various attempts. In short, it is a careful and detailed descriptive analysis (1) of the more obvious and prevalent ways in which consciousness relates to its constituent polarities and (2) of their practical impact on the men involved.

Kierkegaard's typology of possibilities focuses on three fundamental attempts to become a self, which he designates as the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious. A recurrent question in the secondary literature is, Why does Kierkegaard focus on only three such attempts to become a self? The hypothesis which I am advancing provides a clear answer to this question. Given the polarities within consciousness (reality or the bodily, and ideality or the soulish), there are a limited number of possible relationships. (1) If consciousness remains insensitive to the polarities, then a deliberate effort to

become a self is precluded. In this case we have the mode of human life which Kierkegaard calls "the public." (2) Consciousness may relate itself to the bodily and ignore, in whole or in part, the soulish. In this case we have the "aesthetic" sphere. (3) Consciousness may choose to relate itself to the soulish and ignore, in whole or in part, the bodily. In this case we have what Kierkegaard calls the "ethical" sphere. (4) Finally, consciousness may choose to relate itself or choose itself in both the polarities by maintaining a balance between them. This is what Kierkegaard calls the "religious" sphere. I shall argue, further, that the first three possibilities yield forms of moral heteronomy while only the religious yields what Kierkegaard considers to be a form of moral autonomy.

But if there are three possible ways in which man may choose to become a self, how is he to choose among them? Kierkegaard's response is that the choice must be "irrational" in the sense that it must be made in the fact of "objective uncertainty." Given the three spheres, one can only choose--indeed he must choose if he is to become a self--among them without logical or rational criteria to guide or justify his choice. Such a choice is accompanied, consequently, by dread or anxiety.

Kierkegaard's claim that the choice must be made in the face of objective uncertainty is reminiscent of the claim of Fichte and Schelling that a choice between the philosophies or realism and idealism cannot be made on the theoretical level but must be made on the practical level. Fichte had argued that the "sort of philosophy one

chooses depends on what sort of man one is."[1] Schelling had argued that both realism and idealism eventually lead to the theoretical annihilation of the self and that the self can only be rescued by synthesizing realism and idealism.[2] Kierkegaard can be interpreted as arguing that one's choice of a philosophical outlook is essential to the type of self one becomes. Hence, the choice of a philosophical perspective cannot be made on the theoretical level alone. In fact, given the all important task of becoming a self, Kierkegaard is indirectly suggesting that one should choose a philosophical outlook conducive to and productive of the type of self one chooses to become. A choice among the three spheres cannot be made by juxtaposing them on the theoretical level. At the theoretical level, each sphere is complete, mutually exclusive of the others, and capable of standing its ground against the others. The choice must be made at the practical level in terms of the impact of each sphere on the self which is forged by each choice. Kierkegaard carefully preserves this distinction between theoretical irrefutability and practical adequacy: failure to observe this distinction can only result in a confusing distortion of Kierkegaard's philosophy.

But while Kierkegaard cannot demonstrate the superiority of any of the spheres at the theoretical level, it is clear that his personal conviction is that the religious sphere is superior, at least at the practical level. Kierkegaard, in fact, attempts to communicate indirectly the superiority of the religious sphere through various

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[1]See above, p. 33.

[2]See above, p. 35ff.

personae depicted in his aesthetic literature. The superiority cannot be "proved" cognitively at the theoretical level; rather it must be "accepted" at the practical level.

Kierkegaard's manner of demonstrating the superiority of the religious sphere at the practical level is related to another recurrent question in Kierkegaardian scholarship. This peripheral issue concerns the status of those forms of consciousness which Kierkegaard designates as "irony" and "humor." Do these constitute two additional spheres, or merely boundary zones separating the three explicit spheres? According to my hypothesis "irony" and "humor" are merely boundary zones between the aesthetic and the ethical, respectively. They serve a vital role, however, because they indirectly disclose the inadequacies, at the practical level, of the relationships constituting the aesthetic and the ethical spheres.

The Nature of the Human Self Considered Theoretically

Numerous difficulties are encountered in Kierkegaard's discussion of the human self. These difficulties arise in part because of the language Kierkegaard employs when discussing the self. He not only uses terms which may be unfamiliar to the contemporary reader, but, what is worse, occasionally uses familiar terms in unfamiliar ways. And these difficulties also arise in part because of his method of approaching the topic. Kierkegaard repeatedly asserts that the self becomes an issue for itself, or a consciousness characterized by a concern for itself, because of the duality within consciousness. And his writings are designed to intensify this concern by forcing his reader to confront the

various possibilities of being a self. Moreover, Kierkegaard actually offers two discussions of the self. First, he presents a theoretical discussion of the self in such works as The Concept of Dread and The Sickness unto Death. Second, through the medium of his various pseudonyms and personae in such works as Either/Or, Stages on Life's Way, and the Concluding Unscientific Postscript he presents a portrayal of the manner in which the aesthetic, ethical and religious individuals attempt to achieve selfhood. The theoretical discussion presents the problems of achieving selfhood from the perspective of an impartial, objective thinker, while the dramatic discussion presents the problems of achieving selfhood from the perspective of "concrete" persons actually involved in becoming or choosing a self within the limits of the various possibilities.

In this present section I shall concentrate on his theoretical discussion of the self, reserving the dramatic presentation for the final section of this chapter. I shall argue that the theory of consciousness and its implications for selfhood previously encountered in Johannes Climacus provide the foundation and key to his later theoretical discussion of the self. I shall argue further that the view of selfhood which Kierkegaard develops in his theoretical discussion (1) is his personal preference, (2) yields an interpretation of selfhood wherein the self is autonomous, and (3) corresponds to what he terms the religious possibility of becoming a self.

Some preliminary remarks are in order concerning the status of Dread and Sickness within the Kierkegaardian corpus. Since I have

previously discussed the status of Dread,[1] those remarks need not be repeated. Regarding Sickness, there is general argeement among Kierkegaard scholars that, while published under a pseudonym, it occupies a peculiar position within the Kierkegaardian corpus. Several reasons may be adduced in support of its peculiarity. First, Sickness belongs to the religious, not the aesthetic, literature, and there is general agreement that the religious literature of the Kierkegaardian corpus is the expression of Kierkegaard's own preference for becoming a self. Second, he had initially intended to publish it under his own name but finally reached an agonizing decision to issue it under a pseudonym.[2] Third, the new pseudonym, Anti-Climacus, is not only new but also presents a new type of pseudonymity. Anti-Climacus is not a persona or exemplification of a certain choice of selfhood but a nom de plume designed to protect the author from personal attack. With this new type of pseudonym Kierkegaard wishes to avoid the possible criticism that he regarded himself as superior to his readers, as having attained the perfect Christian life. Hence, Anti-Climacus can discuss the rigorous demands of the Christian life, and Kierkegaard, as an existing individual, can continue to strive toward the heights portrayed by Anti-Climacus. As Lowrie says in the introduction to his translation, "here . . . every word can be regarded as his own."[3] Sickness is direct, not indirect, communication. Finally, Dread and Sickness, along with Fear and Trembling, form a trilogy that Kierkegaard intended to

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[1]See above, p. 96f.

[2]For a discussion of this point, see Lowrie, p. 456f.

[3]Sickness, p. 138.

provide an analysis of three fundamental human experiences--dread or anxiety, fear, and despair--encountered in achieving selfhood. In conclusion, Dread and Sickness may be regarded as occupying a peculiar status among Kierkegaard's writings and as expressing Kierkegaard's own preference for selfhood. I shall now proceed to analyze the concept of selfhood outlined in these two works.

The polarities of consciousness

Kierkegaard repeatedly states that man is a synthesis, and that regarded as a synthesis he is not yet a self. Three questions may be raised about this statement: What is to be related in this synthesis? What does he mean by "synthesis"? and What does it mean to say that man is not yet a self?

In reference to the various factors to be related in the synthesis comprising man, Kierkegaard identifies four sets of polarities. These polarities are the bodily and the soulish, the temporal and the eternal, the infinite and the finite, and possibility and necessity. Kierkegaard's discussion of the first two sets of polarities plays an integral role in Dread, while his discussion of the last two sets of polarities plays a vital role in Sickness. Preparatory to analyzing these polarities, it must be remembered that these polarities exist within consciousness. Kierkegaard does not regard them as metaphysical principles productive of man but rather as given within consciousness. Bearing this point in mind, we may both comprehend what Kierkegaard says regarding the self as a synthesis and avoid some wrong-headed criticisms which are occasionally directed against his philosophy.

First, consciousness is polarity of the bodily and the soulish in

which spirit is the third term which effects or accomplishes the synthesis.[1] Consciousness becomes aware of two antithetical types of being--the bodily and the soulish--within itself. We have previously seen that Kierkegaard, in Johannes Climacus, identifies "reality" as that which is perceptually known by consciousness and "the bodily" as that whereby man becomes perceptually aware of reality.[2] In addition, he identifies "ideality" as a set of categorical structures which are superimposed upon the perceptual realm and "the soulish" as that whereby man introduces definite relationships and meaning into the perceptually given.[3] Kierkegaard's discussion, to this point, is strongly reminiscent of Kant's discussion of empirical cognition. But given the overall moral thrust of Kierkegaard's philosophy, it is only reasonable to conclude that he is attempting to transcend and correct Kant's theories on a vital point. Kierkegaard is concerned with providing what might be termed a transcendental aesthetic of moral sensibility.[4] Hence, whereas Kant had assumed an irreconcilable conflict between the demands of practical reason and the inclinations (appetites) of the body which led him to conceptualize reason as exercising a repressive control over the bodily appetites, Kierkegaard argues that the bodily appetites must be integrated with the demands of reason in order to produce man as a synthesis. In other words, the self is to be a synthesis of the bodily

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[1] Dread, p. 39.

[2] See above, pp. 93 and 99.

[3] See above, pp. 93f and 100.

[4] Compare George Schrader, "Kant and Kierkegaard on Duty and Inclination" in Kierkegaard: A Collection of Critical Essays, edited by Josiah Thompson, p. 327.

and the soulish wherein the bodily appetites provide the thrust or dynamics of human action and the soulish provides the direction or focus of those actions. Hence, while neither of the polarities is reducible to the other, neither must they be interpreted as expressing an inevitable and irreconcilable conflict: they may be integrated. In fact Kierkegaard asserts that man's sensuous appetites become sinful only when the tension between the bodily and the soulish becomes disrupted through dread in such a way that consciousness succumbs to the dread and attempts to sustain itself in the finiteness of the bodily to the exclusion of the soulish.[1]

Second, Kierkegaard states that consciousness is a polarity of the temporal and the eternal. He characterizes this pair of polarities as being fundamentally different from the first pair. Whereas the former synthesis was a relationship involving three terms (a synthesis of the soulish and the bodily sustained by spirit), the present synthesis "has only two factors: the temporal and the eternal."[2] A few pages later he adds that this synthesis is the consequence and expression of the first synthesis. "The synthesis of the eternal and temporal is not a second synthesis, but is the expression for the first synthesis in consequence of which man is a synthesis of soul and body sustained by spirit."[3] Evidently this synthesis is not fashioned in the same manner as the former one and occupies a somewhat different status from the

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[1]Dread, pp. 51-57.

[2]Dread, p. 76.

[3]Dread, p. 79.

first one. A consideration of the constituent polarities of this synthesis will clarify both the nature and the status of this synthesis.

Whatever else Kierkegaard may mean by characterizing consciousness as a polarity of the temporal and the eternal, one fundamental point emerges. He regards the self as a composite of (a) that which is in its own nature successive and (b) that which is in its own nature non-successive. On the one hand, the self as a temporal or successive being develops in response to a constantly changing variety of temporal stimuli. That is to say, the self's perceptual and emotional states are constantly changing. On the other hand, the self as an eternal or non-successive being is a being possessing a certain continuity or identity throughout all of its successive temporal states. How do these two polarities originate and, more important for Kierkegaard, how can they be related or synthesized in man?

Employing Kierkegaard's own hint that this synthesis is an expression of the first synthesis it is possible to further clarify his intended meaning. Time as inner sense is applicable to both bodily and soulish states, but it is applicable in different ways. On the one hand, time as the temporal or as grasped from the perspective of the bodily must be interpreted as an infinite succession of discrete moments each of which is a process, a going-by. Hence, time cannot be legitimately divided into the past, the present, and the future. Viewed from the perspective of the bodily, time is merely the going-by of the present. On the other hand, time as the eternal or as grasped from the perspective of the soulish is that which introduces definiteness between and continuity among these discrete moments. "For thought, the eternal

is the present as an annulled (aufgehoben) succession."[1] Moreover, represented visually in terms of spatiality, "eternity is a going-forth."[1] In short, time is a going-by when considered from the stance of the bodily and a going-forth considered from the stance of the soulish. Thus, the polarities of the temporal and the eternal originate from the application of time as inner sense to the polarities of the bodily and the soulish respectively. But how can the temporal and the eternal be synthesized?

The intersection or union of these two polarities yields what Kierkegaard terms "the instant", which becomes a central category of his philosophical anthropology.

> The instant is that ambiguous moment in which time and eternity touch one another, thereby positing the temporal, where time is constantly intersecting eternity and eternity constantly permeating time.[2]

Through positing or constituting the instant, consciousness or spirit posits the parts of its duration into a unified, continuous whole and also gains awareness of the future as the possible. Thus, the polarities of the temporal and the eternal are synthesized by and within consciousness, and the possibility of their synthesis is contingent upon recognizing and synthesizing the polarities of the bodily and the soulish.

Third, consciousness is a polarity of the finite and infinite. Kierkegaard's discussion of these polarities and their synthesis parallels both Plato's discussion of the Limit (πέρας) and the

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[1] Dread, p. 77.

[2] Dread, p. 80.

Unlimited (ἄπειρον)[1] and Schelling's discussion of the First and Second Potencies.[2] Kierkegaard, in fact, explicitly states (1) that the finite is the limiting factor while the infinite is the expansive factor[3] and (2) that "infinitude and finitude (ἄπειρου, πέρας) both belong to the self."[4] Such an unequivocal reference to Plato invites a brief investigation of Plato's discussion of the principles of the Unlimited (infinitude) and the Limit (finitude) in order to gain a possible clue to Kierkegaard's usage of these terms. In general Plato regarded the Unlimited and the Limit as two of the ultimate metaphysical principles which, when combined or integrated by the Cause or creative agent in response to the motivational factor of Eros, yields the actual world or the Mixed.[5] More specifically, the Unlimited is the factor of indefiniteness, the absence of boundaries, or sheer multiplicity. The Unlimited as such is the merging of all forms or the absence of individuation, and the principle of objective vagueness and confusion in nature. The Limit, on the other hand, is the principle of order which introduces organization and distinctness into nature and sets boundaries within the flux.

In this light we may take Kierkegaard to be developing a theory of the self's origin analogous to Plato's theory of the world's origin.

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[1]See, for example, Philebus 14-18, 23-30.

[2]See above, p. 42f and p. 46f.

[3]Sickness, p. 163.

[4]Sickness, p. 168.

[5]I am indebted here to Raphael Demos' discussion of this topic in his work, The Philosophy of Plato. Demos argues that the five principle principles of the Unlimited, the Limit, the Mixed, the Cause and Eros are the keys to Plato's philosophy.

The self's actual existence is a mixture characterized by a perpetual tension between two primordial factors, the finite and the infinite. The self as finite recognizes itself, on the one hand, as limited by physiological, historical, social and conceptual factors, and, on the other hand, as capable of infinite or indefinite development within those limits. The self as infinite expands its horizons through the faculty of the imagination.[1] "Imagination is the reflection of the process of infinitizing"[2] whereby the productive imagination expands its horizons through the media of feeling, knowledge, and will. Man recognizes the potential of securing either innumerable sensory experiences of or factual data about the world and recognizes the innumerable possibilities or choices for acting within the world. But the imagination becomes "fantastical" when it "so carries a man out into the infinite that it merely carries him away from himself,"[2] thereby volatilizing the self through feeling, knowledge, or will. Consequently, limits must be imposed upon the infinitizing process. The self as finite imposes limitations or restrictions upon those innumberable possibilities by appropriating specific possibilities as his own while forfeiting other possibilities. But the limiting or finitizing process also contains a potential danger if it excludes the infinitizing process. It may result in man's "defrauding" himself of a self by losing his self in socially institutionalized mores established by previous generations.

The actual or concrete self, then, is analogous to the Mixed or

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[1] Sickness, p. 163.

[2] Sickness, p. 164.

the actual world in Plato's cosmology. And consciousness is the Cause or creative agent which fashions the self by integrating the finite and the infinite in response to Eros or, to use Kierkegaard's preferred term when discussing the formation of the self, passion. Thus, Kierkegaard argues that "the self is the conscious synthesis of infinitude and finitude which relates itself to itself, whose task is to become itself" and, further, that to become a concrete self means to become neither finite nor infinite but rather to become a synthesis of the two.[1] Choosing or creating the self is a process of becoming which may be likened to a spiral in which the self engages in constant self-transcendence by oscillating between the infinite and the finite without permitting either polarity to disrupt the interplay between them. In this way the self is (a) self-determining and (b) self-determined. The self consists or exists in the perpetual interplay between the infinitizing and the finitizing processes, or in "moving away from oneself infinitely by the process of infinitizing oneself, and in returning to oneself infinitely by the process of finitizing."[2]

Fourth, Kierkegaard declares that consciousness is a polarity of possibility and necessity, and his discussion of this pair of polarities is by far the most complex and perplexing of the four. Kierkegaard's intention in discussing this crucial point is clearer and less problematic than his demonstration of the point. As to his intention, he raises the issue of possibility in an effort (a) to establish freedom within the range of human experience, i.e., to refute determinism in

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[1] Sickness, p. 162.

[2] Sickness, p. 162f.

general, and (b) to overcome the particular sort of determinism inherent in Hegel's doctrine of "transition," i.e., that human history, whether individually or collectively, is an unfolding of necessity. By freeing human experience from the control of necessity, Kierkegaard intends to make room for freedom, responsibility, and ultimately faith in the life of the concretely existing individual. He raises the issue of necessity in an effort to provide continuity or history to the life of the individual and responsibility for that history.

Kierkegaard's demonstration of this point rests on two separate arguments. He presents, on the one hand, what I shall term the "logico-metaphysical" argument,[1] and, on the other hand, what I shall term his "existential" argument. I shall concentrate on this latter argument since I think it is more consistent with the principles which Kierkegaard laid down in Johannes Climacus and sheads more light on the hypothesis which I am developing. This existential argument is important because it transfers the discussion of moral autonomy from a metaphysical to an epistemological foundation. Kierkegaard, however,

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[1]Kierkegaard presents this argument in the "Interlude" which he introduces into the Philosophical Fragments. The logical aspect of the argument is based on a corrected version of Aristotle's discussion of the relationships between necessity, possibility, contingency and actuality. As a result of his argument, Kierkegaard claims that Actuality is the relation of Necessity and Possibility rather than Possibility and Actuality being related by Necessity. Thus, he states, "all coming into existence takes place with freedom, not necessity" (p. 93), thereby establishing spontaneity within the natural realm. Finally, he elevates freedom or indeterminism to a metaphysical status and presents what might be termed a Voluntaristic Argument for the existence of God, or as he states it, "the operation of a relatively freely effecting cause . . . points ultimately to an absolutely freely effecting cause"(p. 94). This entire argument, while of no little importance, diverts Kierkegaard from what I consider his stronger argument as well as his major interest in human existence.

does not develop this line of reasoning in any one place, and so the several parts of the argument must be gleaned from various parts of his writings. I offer the following reconstruction of the general features of his argument.

The key to Kierkegaard's argument is his discussion of the dual nature of consciousness, or the dual manner in which consciousness is aware of its world. Man as consciousness, on the one hand, interprets his past as controlled by the laws of necessity, i.e., that each event in his history has been caused by a prior event. But man as consciousness, on the other hand, interprets his future as having possibility, i.e., that there is spontaneity or indeterminacy in his world and that the presence of this possibility demands purposive choice of the individual. Thus, to say that the world possesses necessity and possibility is to make an epistemic statement about man's knowledge of the lived-world. This point is further substantiated by Kierkegaard's distinctions between actuality, the actual, the possible, and possibility mentioned earlier.[1] Kierkegaard takes seriously Kant's distinction between the world as it is in-itself and the world as it is known. Thus, by "actuality" Kierkegaard refers to the world as it is in itself, while by "the actual" he refers to the world as it is known by man. But in the very act of employing what Kant called theoretical reason to formulate his knowledge of the world man also employs what Kant called the practical reason and assigns meaning or value to the world as known. It is through assigning value to the world that man becomes aware of what Kierkegaard calls possibles. These possibles

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[1]See above, pp. 104f.

present alternative courses of action to man, and whichever course of action he chooses becomes a possibility for him.

Having identified necessity and possibility as diverse aspects of human knowledge, Kierkegaard does not attempt to reduce either of them to the other or to derive one from the other. He regards both necessity and possibility as legitimate and indispensable ingredients in man's knowledge of the world. And as elements within human knowledge in general, they also serve a vital role in man's knowledge of himself. As applied to the individual, necessity refers to those aspects of the individual which affect what one is but which were acquired beyond one's control. Necessity, as such, is inclusive of man's "facticity," i.e., his past and his present socio-cultural matrix, and of man's "nature," i.e., a man's natural desires and dispositions as a natural being. Possibility, on the one hand, refers to that whereby the individual ex-ists or "stands-out" from the natural environment which constitutes his necessity. Possibility is a subjectively posited telos resulting from a resolute choice of a specific possible. It is a self-chosen goal which yields simultaneously an appropriate means or life-style for comporting oneself toward one's subjectively posited goal. Freedom is manifested in, and made possible by, the subjective appropriation of necessity and possibility. "The self is freedom. But freedom is the dialectical element in the terms of possibility and necessity."[1] In this dialectical interplay the necessity which dominates man's being qua natural being is cancelled as an absolute determining factor and preserved as a dynamic but relative factor by being integrated with Possi-

[1] Sickness, p. 162.

bility. Thus, the self as actuality is a synthesis of necessity and possibility. Or, as Kierkegaard phrases it, ". . . actuality is a unity of possibility and necessity"[1] which implies that without such a unity of possibility and necessity the self does not exist in actuality but is an unrealized possibility.

Kierkegaard's doctrine of freedom as a dialectical interplay prompts a crucial question about the locus of freedom. Is this freedom present as the cause or as the consequence of the dialectical interplay?[2] An answer to this question demands a distinction between two different meaning of freedom within Kierkegaard's philosophy. On the one hand, freedom is present as the cause of the interplay in the sense that freedom is the ontological reality of man. It is this ontological sense of freedom which man first experiences through the phenomenon of dread. On the other hand, freedom is the consequence of this interplay in the sense that freedom becomes an ethical reality for man. Ontological freedom acquires ethical significance or becomes an ethical reality when it is preserved as an essential element in man's actual lived experience.

Ontological freedom can be exercised in such a way that it may be either preserved or forfeited. If ontological freedom is preserved as an ethical reality, then man's existence is autonomous or self-determining. If ontological freedom is forfeited, then man's existence becomes heteronomous. It is one of the great paradoxes of human

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[1] Sickness, p. 169.

[2] The answer to this question also provides an answer to the previous question regarding the locus of the will. See above, p. 101.

existence that man through a free choice can forfeit his ontological freedom and fail to realize freedom as an ethical reality.

Thus, we have the answer to the first question mentioned earlier.[1] The self is to be a synthesis achieved by relating four sets of polarities: the bodily and the soulish, the temporal and the eternal, the infinite and the finite, and necessity and possibility. But this raises the second question mentioned earlier:[1] In what sense is the self a "synthesis?" This question leads quite naturally to the issue of the nature of the dialectic employed by Kierkegaard. The Kierkegaardian dialectic can be best characterized as a "tri-lectic," that is, it is a relation between three factors wherein two polarities are integrated by the third factor without neutralizing any of the factors. Consciousness as ontological freedom is the factor which relates itself to each of the polarities and in turn relates each of the polarities back to itself as ontological freedom, thereby achieving ethical freedom.

We are now in a position to answer the third question raised above,[2] i.e., in what sense is man as a synthesis to be regarded as not yet a self? Kierkegaard's statement contains an ironical attack upon Hegel. Regarded as a synthesis in the Hegelian sense, man is not yet a self. Hegel regarded the dialectical synthesis as the mediation between opposites. For Kierkegaard, the dialectic is conceived as a perpetual interplay, rather than a neutralization, of opposites. Hence, the self, for Kierkegaard, may be characterized as

> this particular self-consciousness or this relating, intermediate being which relates its various aspects,

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[1]See above, p. 114.

[2]See above, p. 114.

> functions, states, or capacities to itself in a dynamic, 'moving' synthesis which is never finished or complete in time as long as this being exists.[1]

The self is not a static or finished synthesis but rather a dynamic, dialectical synthesis characterized by unending striving. The self as ethical reality is an insecure and straining synthesis wherein the various polarities are related by consciousness without their being neutralized. And, since the various polarities are continually being experienced in various ways, the synthesis must be constantly renewed and maintained. Hence, Kierkegaard says that the ". . . self, every instant it exists, is in process of becoming . . ."[2] If man's ontological freedom is preserved by means of the synthesis as an ethical reality, then man's self exists as autonomous or self-determining. If man's ontological freedom is forfeited, then man's self acquires a heteronomous existence. I shall analyze each of these forms of existence in the next two sections.

Man as heteronomous: despairing

Although man is a set of polarities, the terms of that polarity are not automatically or unconsciously integrated. They must be integrated by an act of will. But most men, judging from Kierkegaard's portrayal, fail to will (or will not to will) the integration of the polarities. That is, they fail to transform freedom as an ontological possibility into a concrete lived existence. Thus, they forfeit their

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[1]George J. Stack, "Kierkegaard: The Self as Ethical Possibility" in Southwestern Journal of Philosophy, III, 3, p. 59.

[2]Sickness, p. 163.

ontological freedom. This is what Kierkegaard apparently means when he refers to man's loss of the true (authentic?) self. Several questions may be raised concerning man's forfeiture of ontological freedom. First, why do some men forfeit their ontological freedom, or why do they fail to transform their ontological freedom into ethical freedom? This question involves both the motivation and the means whereby a man may forfeit his ontological freedom. Second, how does a man become aware, if he can, of his forfeiture of ontological freedom? Third, from a theoretical standpoint, what modes of existence are acquired by the man who has forfeited his ontological freedom? And finally, what justifies characterizing these resulting modes of existence as heteronomous? I shall answer these questions in the present section.

First, why do some men forfeit their ontological freedom, thereby failing to achieve concrete ethical freedom? The answer to this question must be sought in the nature of consciousness as characterized by Kierkegaard. The duality of consciousness produces special problems in reference to self-knowledge. When applied to the self, the polarities of consciousness result in an initial epistemic uncertainty because no single polarity can provide an interpretation of the self which is satisfactory to the other polarities and the various interpretations of the self arising from each polarity do not automatically fit together to form a complete understanding of the self. Moreover, this epistemic uncertainty produces an ontological insecurity. This ontological insecurity is most clearly detected in the experience of dread, which also discloses the possibility of freedom. Consequently, the self according to Kierkegaard, may be said to seek to overcome epistemic uncertainty and ontological insecurity by identifying itself

with one of the polarities. Hence, man is motivated to forfeit his ontological freedom in an effort to escape the dread which accompanies his awareness of freedom.

By considering the outcome of the motivation to forfeit his ontological freedom it is possible to ascertain the means or conditions whereby the self can forfeit its freedom. Freedom is forfeited whenever there is a disrupture or disintegration of the polarities of consciousness. Such a disruption occurs whenever consciousness focuses its attention upon one of the polarities to the subordination and/or neglect of the other polarity. It is precisely this disruption of the polarities or failure to posit a synthesis of the polarities which Kierkegaard designates as man's "original sin," although it is unclear whether he intends "original sin" to refer to an actual disruption of what was previously integrated or merely an awareness of what has not yet been integrated.[1]

Second, how does man become aware of the fact that he has forfeited his ontological freedom? In a word, despair, according to Kierkegaard, discloses the fact that freedom has been lost. As dread reveals the possibility of freedom, so despair discloses a partial or total loss of freedom. But what is despair? Despair is an internal

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[1]Kierkegaard, in an important comment, provides two instantiations of sin as a disruption: "When then the possibility of freedom manifests itself before freedom, freedom succumbs, and the temporal now emerges in the same way as did sensuousness with the significance of sinfulness" (Dread, p. 81). Thus, the separation of the temporal from the eternal as well as the bodily from the soulish is sin. By "sensuousness" Kierkegaard does not mean simply the erotic or the sexual (which are modes of sensuousness) but rather an existence dominated by sensory awareness. He also refers to this type of existence, as we shall see later, as the aesthetic.

alienation or a characteristic of a mode of existence in which the self is alienated from part of itself. Kierkegaard variously describes despair as a sickness,[1] a disrelationship of the self in relation to itself,[2] a sickness unto death,[3] and a sickness of the spirit.[4] Thus, consciousness is self-corrective, at least in the sense that despair discloses that something is amiss within the self. Hence, in analyzing Kierkegaard's discussion of despair it is possible to ascertain the answers to the remaining questions concerning man's forfeiture of ontological freedom.

Since Kierkegaard characterizes despair as a sickness, it is convenient and justifiable to analyze despair like any other illness. Accordingly, Kierkegaard may be said to be discussing the etiology of despair--isolating its source, describing its dynamics and symptomatology, and charting its development. And this is precisely the task Kierkegaard assigns himself in Sickness, a work of importance because it is as if he were retrospectively surveying his earlier aesthetic works and summarizing the principles embedded in them.

In the first place, the source of this internal sickness is consciousness. Consciousness is the ultimate pathogenic factor in that it is in and through consciousness that man becomes aware of the polarities of consciousness and the dread of freedom, and then is first tempted to overcome dread and the uncertainity of existence by

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[1]See, e.g., Sickness, p. 143.

[2]See, e.g., Sickness, p. 147.

[3]See, e.g., Sickness, p. 150.

[4]See, e.g., Sickness, p. 157.

identifying itself with one of the polarities. Several important implications follow from the fact that consciousness is the source of despair. First, despair can never result solely from tragic external circumstances; despair is an internal disrelationship within the self. Kierkegaard, in fact, insists that it is the self, or rather the disrelationship to the self, of which man despairs. Second, since consciousness is a universal feature of man, Kierkegaard argues that despair, in some form, is universal:

> . . . there lives not one single man who after all is not to some extent in despair, in whose inmost parts there does not dwell a disquietude, a pertubation, a discord, an anxious dread of an unknown something, or of a something he does not even dare to make acquaintance with, dread of a possibility of life, or dread of himself, so that . . . this man is going about and carrying a sickness of the spirit.[1]

Third, although he argues for the universality of despair, it is his obvious intention to demonstrate that the consequences of the despair characterizing every non-Christian form of existence are more destructive and disastrous to the self than those of a Christian existence.

But what are the dynamics of despair? It is obvious that man is not motivated directly to despair. Man is indirectly motivated to despair by an inadequate attempt to overcome dread and the uncertainty of existence.

Kierkegaard's typology of despair includes an extended discussion of the symptomatology of despair. To appreciate his symptomatology of despair, it is necessary to keep in mind his view of the self. The

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[1] Sickness, p. 155.

self, for Kierkegaard, is "a relation which relates itself to its own self."[1] But a relation can be either a negative one of disrelation or a positive one of inter-relation. Now despair is "the disrelationship in a relation,"[2] or a negative relation. Hence, since man is a polarity and despair is a disrelationship within that polarity, Kierkegaard argues that "all its [i.e., despair] symptoms are dialectical."[3] It is in this context that Kierkegaard presents his basic premise for plotting the symptomatology of despair: "the forms of despair must be discoverable abstractly by reflecting upon the factors which compose the self as a synthesis."[4] He adds to this the important procedural note that "no kind of despair can be defined directly (i.e., undialectically), but only by reflecting upon the opposite factor."[5] In other words, a specific symptom of despair is not only caused but must be described by the absence of its polar opposite. Thus, the forms of one's despair varies with the kind of imbalance within the self and one's degree of self-consciousness. More specifically, the despair of the self can take diverse forms depending, first, upon which pair of polarities within consciousness (the soulish/the bodily, finitude/infinitude, temporality/eternality, possibility/necessity) is disrupted and, second, upon the degree of self-consciousness within the self. Moreover, in plotting the symptomatology of despair, Kierkegaard answers our

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[1] Sickness, p. 146.

[2] Sickness, p. 148.

[3] Sickness, p. 157.

[4] Sickness, p. 162.

[5] Sickness, p. 163.

third question, "What modes of existence are acquired by the persons who have forfeited their ontological freedom?".

By focusing abstractly and dialectically upon the polarities of consciousness, Kierkegaard presents the symptoms of four forms of despair. The first form of despair is the despair of infinitude which has as its prominent symptom the lack of finitude.[1] The despair of infinitude results because consciousness, through choosing the unrestrained exercise of the imagination, infinitizes itself through the acquisition of either innumberable sensory experiences of the world or factual data about the world. When the self is dominated by the imagination, it becomes fantastical and produces a counterfeit of true selfhood because it lacks the restrictions or guiding focus of the polarity of finitude.

The second form of despair is the despair of finitude in which the prominent symptom is the lack of infinitude.[2] Because it lacks the expansive, transcending power of the infinitizing process, the self which suffers the despair of finitude chooses to lose itself to the controlling power of cultural roles, historical movements, and/or physiological drives. Such a self becomes a face-less number, defrauded of true selfhood by "the others." He is the truly socialized, acculturated, well-adjusted man with a deep, if unconscious, sense of despair or self-estrangement.

The third form of despair is the despair of possibility in which

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[1]See, Sickness, pp. 163-165.

[2]See, Sickness, pp. 166-168.

the prominent symptom is the lack of necessity.[1] In this form of despair the individual becomes so intent upon pursuing novel and exciting possibilities such as scientific investigations, intellectual pursuits, political ambitions, business endeavors and financial investments, social causes, aesthetic productions, or recreational activities that he moves farther and farther from his true self, forgets his self-development, and finally loses his self altogether. Hence, he may awaken to ask, "In spite of all my accomplishments, who am I?" Without its limits, even self-imposed limitations, the self evaporates or volatilizes itself in possibility. Such a despair may cause the self to evaporate itself in hope or in fear--the hope of unending possibilities or the fear of impending disaster, the fear of losing all.

The final form of despair is the despair of necessity in which the prominent symptom is the lack of possibility.[2] Without the liberating, expansive power of possibility, the individual succumbs to either determinism or triviality. The despair of determinism terminates in a suffocating fatalism in which everything effecting the self results from external factors totally beyond the control of the individual. The despair of triviality terminates is a mode of existence in which the individual's outlook on life is dominated by a tranquilizing probability --whatever eventuates is the probable, whatever happens to the self results from probability. The improbable, which is nevertheless probable, provides this self with its only breath of freedom. But such a form of existence, which Kierkegaard characterizes as Philistine, is

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[1]See, Sickness, pp. 168-170.

[2]See, Sickness, pp. 170-174.

devoid of the imagination which can revive a suffocating self, and, hence, it is in despair.

But in spite of the valuable insights into the symptoms of despair gleaned by reflecting abstractly upon the various polarities of consciousness, Kierkegaard adds that "principally, however, despair must be viewed under the category of consciousness: the question whether despair is conscious or not, determines the qualitative difference"[1] between the forms of despair. With this important note Kierkegaard moves beyond plotting abstractly the symptomatology of despair to charting its development in concrete individuals. If consciousness of self determines the qualitative differences between actual forms of despair, then "with every increase in the degree of consciousness . . . the intensity of despair increases: the more consciousness, the more intense the despair."[2] Consequently, Kierkegaard distinguishes between a form of despair, on the one hand, which lacks sëlf-consciousness and two forms of despair, on the other hand, which possess some degree of self-consciousness.

The despair which lacks self-consciousness[3] is the form in which despair is minimally present and is designated as the despair of innocence, although he also denotes it as the despair of paganism. The chief characteristic of the despair of innocence is complete oblivion to the possibility of existing as spirit (in Kierkegaard's sense of the term). Thus, the despair of innocence, the most common in the world, is

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[1] Sickness, p. 162.

[2] Sickness, p. 175.

[3] See, Sickness, pp. 175-180.

the most dangerous because it sufferer is unaware of himself as potential spirit, and to be unaware of oneself as potential spirit is to preclude the possibility of deliverance from despair. Kierkegaard adds further that the sufferer of the despair of innocence is dominated by his "sensuous nature and the psycho-sensuous" and that he lives in the sensuous categories of the agreeable and the disagreeable. The despair of innocence or paganism corresponds to, and provides a valuable interpretative schema for, his concrete discussion of "the public" mode of human existence.[1]

Once a man becomes aware of the polarities of consciousness, or once the self becomes an issue for the self, while simultaneously failing to posit a synthesis of the polarities as spirit, there are two possible forms of despair which the self may suffer. But, since actual concrete men possess varying degrees of self-consciousness, these two forms of despair are distinguished by an increasing consciousness of the self and their own despair. Or as Kierkegaard states the case, "the degree of consciousness potentiates despair."[2]

The primary form of conscious despair is "despair at not willing to be oneself: or the despair of weakness.[3] In suffering this type of despair, the self fails to will or wills not to will to be oneself as spirit. That is, it wills not to will or posit a synthesis of the polarities of consciousness. But there are two varieties of this

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[1]See below, pp. 146-47.

[2]Sickness, p. 182.

despair depending upon which set of polarities the individual chooses as the determining factors of selfhood.

The individual, on the other hand, may suffer despair "over the earthly or over something earthly."[1] This form of despair results from choosing a sense of selfhood which is determined by those polarities more compatible with "the bodily." Since this form of selfhood is "pure immediacy" and its despair is "passive, succumbing to the pressure of the outward circumstance," such a man recognizes that he has a self only by the external, i.e., through the variety and intensity of sensory experience available to the self. His self is merely something included along with "the other" in the temporal flow of the world. By identifying his self with the bodily polarity, its dialectic is grounded in the hedonistic categories of the agreeable and the disagreeable. Its central concepts are good fortune, misfortune, and fate: clear indications of the dominance of an inadequate understanding of the polarity of possibility and the absence of a proper understanding of necessity. By focusing the self in the locus of temporality--to the neglect of eternality--the self despairs in either dread of an uncertain and perhaps disagreeable future or regret over an irretrievable past. Thus, he is bound to the present. The only logical inference is that Kierkegaard is here describing theoretically the determinates of the despairing self which corresponds to the aesthetic mode of concrete existence.[2]

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[1]See, Sickness, pp. 184-194.

[2]See below, pp. 147-52. It should be obvious to the reader familiar with Kierkegaard that the categories of this type of despair are identical with the categories of the aesthetic existence in Either/Or and the Concluding Unscientific Postscript. The only difference is that

The individual, on the other hand, may suffer despair "about the eternal or over oneself."[1] This form of despair results from choosing a sense of selfhood which is determined by those polarities which are more compatible with "the soulish" or man's intellectuality. This, according to Kierkegaard, is an advanced form of despair because the individual possesses an increased awareness of the nature of the self and despair. One of the prominent characteristics of the individual in this form of despair is an emphasis on "introversion," which is the opposite of immediacy. The individual seeks to overcome epistemic uncertainity and ontological insecurity by withdrawing into the interiority of the soulish. He becomes enmeshed in a quest for moral and cognitive absolutes within the categorical structures of reason. Hence, such an individual exhibits a strong need for solitude in order to think his own thoughts, to explore the recesses of the soulish in the hope of finding these absolutes. Thus, he attempts to satisfy an inadequate understanding of the eternal. Further, such an individual, by possessing an inappropriate understanding of necessity, views the world as a field of the phenomenally given upon which the intellectual self can exercise or superimpose the categoreal structures of reason. He may be "a university man" who, possessing an inadequate understanding of Infinity, seeks to be larger than the world, to encompass the world within the categorical structures of reason, to reduce the world to a system of thought (an apparent jab at Hegel). Or, if he is morally inclined, he

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my hypothesis permits the identification of the dynamics of the aesthetic existence.

[1]See, Sickness, pp. 194-200.

may engage himself in great causes, seeking with a sense of urgency to transform the world according to his own moral absolutes. But the eventual outcome of such endeavors is despair because the constantly changing pattern of the phenomenally given simply will not conform with finality to rational formulation. More importantly, he has neglected or lost a valuable side of the total self issuing from the bodily. Once again the only logical inference is that Kierkegaard is here describing theoretically the determinates of the despairing self which corresponds to the ethical mode of concrete existence.[1]

The final stage of despair which Kierkegaard discusses is "the despair of willing despairingly to be onself."[2] In this stage of sickness the individual despairingly determines to be himself and, hence, there enters a note of defiance. Further, since there is an increasing consciousness of the self, or the polarities of consciousness and the incongruities between them, the individual is conscious that despair is its own deed or that it issues directly from the self rather than merely from external circumstances. Hence, the individual wills to stand his ground, to assume his existence in the face of unresolved incongruities. If the individual is an active sufferer he may enshroud himself in Stoic indifference to the incongruities, resolutely refusing to let anything diminish his ataraxia. If the individual is a passive sufferer he may enshroud his consciousness with the consolation of providence, half expectantly waiting and half demanding that he be taken care of. Thus he lays claim to "the Power" in spite, out of unacknowl-

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[1]See below, pp. 152-56.

[2]See, Sickness, pp. 200-207.

edged malice. This is the most unfortunate form of despair since, with the requisite ingredients fully acknowledged, the individual wills not to will to forge his self, to posit a synthesis, to integrate the polarities in a manner of his own choosing. Thus, he chooses in complacency to forfeit the struggle which justifies existence; in despair he wills despairingly to despair.

Thus, we arrive at the final question, What justifies characterizing these modes of existence as heteronomous? A complete and adequate answer presupposes my discussion of Kierkegaard's theory of the self as autonomous to be developed in the following section. Nevertheless, a few broad comments may serve as a provisional answer while simultaneously conducting the inquiry toward the topic of autonomy. The common characteristic of all forms of despair is a failure to posit the spirit or self as the synthesis of the polarities. Thus, "not to be one's own self is despair."[1] To be one's self as spirit is to exist as freedom, and to exist as freedom is to inter-relate the polarities.[2] Thus, Kierkegaard tells us that "the soulish-bodily synthesis in every man is planned with a view to being spirit."[3] But consciousness may will to fail to accomplish such a synthesis by focusing the locus of the self within one of the polarities. And such a choice produces a state of existence in which consciousness, through absorbing itself within one of the polarities, eventually permits itself to become determined by the constituent determinates of that particular polarity. And, in being

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[1] Sickness, p. 163.

[2] Sickness, p. 162.

[3] Sickness, p. 176.

determined by the determinates of a particular polarity, man is no longer self-determining. Thus, his ontological freedom has been forfeited. Man has freely chosen (ontologically) not to be free (ethically).

The self as autonomous

My task in the present section is to clarify how Kierkegaard's abstract theory of man as consciousness presents the prospect of an autonomous human existence. While he offers only a few direct statements regarding such an existence, the essentials of his theory can be deduced in contrast to his discussion of a despairing, heteronomous existence. If a disruption of the polarities within consciousness implies a despairing or heteronomous existence, then we may deduce that an autonomous existence implies the integration of the polarities. Thus, Kierkegaard's theory of man as a synthesis of various polarities implies a moral theory of self-realization in which the realized self is an autonomous or self-determining one. I shall be concerned here with Kierkegaard's abstract discussion of the prospect of achieving ethical freedom or autonomy, reserving treatment of his concrete discussion to the subsequent section.

Dread discloses the presence of ontological freedom and the possibility of ethical freedom, but the mere disclosure of the possibility of freedom is not sufficient to render the self autonomous. The self can become autonomous only by grasping, interpreting, and then choosing which possibles it will appropriate and how it will appropriate them within the self. The recognition and resolute choice of specific

possibles introduces responsibility, since the self could have choosen other possibles than the ones actually chosen.

But before the individual can synthesize the polarities into an autonomous self, it is necessary that the individual know first-hand both that which is appropriated within the self and that which is rejected. Hence, the individual must seriously explore each of the polarities while refusing to remain entangled in any of them. The trick is to venture into one polarity, then to return to its opposite, and finally to integrate the results of both experienced polarities without losing the self in the process. Kierkegaard employs the analogy of breathing with its inward and outward movement to exemplify the freedom of true selfhood.[1] A more adequate analogy might be that of a spiral in which the individual engages in constant self-transcendence by oscillating between various polarities without disrupting the interplay. Such a mode of existence is never static; it is an endless dialectic.

From this sketch of true selfhood, it is possible to deduce that the autonomous individual is one who accepts the appetites and sensations of the bodily along with the intellectuality of the soulish, giving neither priority nor preference to either one. Autonomy requires rationality, but not the sort of rigorous, legalistic rationality that refuses to heed demands from non-rational sources such as the bodily appetites. Kierkegaard's repudiation of Kant's moral rationalism does not entail an acceptance of moral irrationalism, an all too frequent charge against Existentialism in general and Kierkegaard in particular.

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[1] Sickness, p. 173.

Being autonomous means being liberated from both the demands of an excessive moral rationalism and mere hedonism. Hence, liberation does not mean license. The autonomous self integrates the demands of the bodily and the soulish in such a way that the bodily provides the thrust or dynamics of human action and the soulish provides the focus or directionality of human action.

At this point two questions must be raised concerning such a theory of moral autonomy. First, does the synthesis of a self alone guarantee that it will be a good self? And, second, is Kierkegaard demanding that the self do something beyond its own power since he has simply transformed a belief about what reason can accomplish into a belief of what the will can accomplish?

Whether intentional or not, Kierkegaard provides an answer to such queries. The answer comes in the form of an additional, but very important, premise:

> This formula (i.e., that the self is constituted by another) is the expression for the total dependence of the relation (the self namely), the expression for the fact that the self cannot of itself attain and remain in equilibrium and rest by itself, but only by relating itself to that Power which constituted the whole relation.[1]

With the addition of this premise, Kierkegaard appears to be claiming that autonomy can be retained only via absorption in theonomy, in which the concretized self recognizes itself as grounded in an all-encompassing reality--God. It is God who serves as the ontological ground for the given polarities of consciousness. But because such a ground is beyond the limitations of human knowledge it must be acknowledged by a

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[1] *Sickness*, p. 147.

choice or "leap of faith." But while Kierkegaard interprets this premise in such a supernatural way that it becomes a God-premise, this premise could also be given a natural interpretation. According to such an interpretation, the human self results from consciousness (and its polarities) simply finding itself thrown into a situation not of its own making. In this latter case, it is an easy transition to the contemporary theories of such existentialists as Heidegger and Sartre. In spite of Kierkegaard's obvious choice of the supernatural interpretation of this premise, I can find no compelling reason for necessarily following his interpretation. The overwhelming bulk of what Kierkegaard says is clear and relevant to an understanding of the human condition without accepting his "God-premise." But regardless of the interpretation one chooses, Kierkegaard employs this premise to reach a formula for the human self which is completely free of despair: "by relating itself to its own self and by willing to be itself the self is grounded transparently in the Power which posited it."[1]

The difficulty with a theoretical discussion of the human self is that human existence is such as to preclude developing a simple model or paradigm whereby we can subsume each and every man. Kierkegaard's approach certaintly precludes any attempt at moral casuistry. Rather his entire philosophic output is calculated to sensitize man to the polar dimensions of human existence arising from the nature of consciousness and the eventual outcome of various types of syntheses of these polarities. But even this must be accomplished at the practical

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[1] Sickness, p. 147.

rather than the theoretical level. Hence, we must turn our attention to Kierkegaard's concrete and practical discussion of the human-self.

The Human Self Considered Concretely

To this point I have applied my hypothesis of a modified Schellingean framework to Kierkegaard's abstract and theoretical discussion of the self. But the unconvinced reader may ask, As interesting as the previous discussion has been, how does it relate to the remainder of Kierkegaard's thought, especially his more recognized doctrines of the three life-styles? Indeed, if the various *personae* of Kierkegaard's "marionette theatre" can be shown to exemplify the various syntheses I have previously outlined, then my hypothesis will acquire greater credibility. Accordingly, in the present section I want to focus on Kierkegaard's discussion of the problems of achieving selfhood from the perspective of "concrete" persons actually involved in becoming or choosing a self. I shall show that my interpretation of Kierkegaard's theoretical discussion of the human self is illustrated and corroborated in his dramatic presentation of the problems of achieving selfhood. In short, I shall apply my hypothesis to Kierkegaard's famous doctrine of the three spheres of human existence by analyzing some of his various *personae* in the light of my interpretation, thereby revealing the explanatory power of my hypothesis.

Kierkegaard's writings portray three general categories of existence which in the secondary literature are variously referred to as "stages," "spheres," "levels," "modes," or "life-styles." I reject the terms "stages" and "levels" as inadequate and inappropriate because they suggest a necessary sequential development which is alien to

Kierkegaard's thought. I prefer the terms "spheres" or "life-styles." "Spheres" suggest the fact that each category is hermetically sealed from the others, while "life-styles" emphasizes the practical impact of each category on the individual's actual daily life, a concern which is never far from Kierkegaard's attention.

The "public" life-style

Before applying my hypothesis to Kierkegaard's doctrine of the three spheres of existence, it is necessary to consider a type of human life which he considers all too common. This is the form of human life which Kierkegaard designates as "the public" and analyzes in The Present Age.[1] This form of human life bears a strong resemblance to what Nietzsche later called "the herd man" with his attendant "slave morality" and to what Heidegger called "das Mann" or mass-man with his attendant conventionality and inauthenticity.

This type of life is characterized by a definite lack of reflection on the nature and significance of selfhood. It consists in the unquestioning acceptance of traditional ideas and values, and the unconscious imitation of customary patterns of behavior. The men living this type of life are simply mirror images of the social ideas and values surrounding them. They unhesitantingly adopt the folkways, mores, and customs of their cultural matrix. As such, they may be described as "socialized men," "acculturated men," or even "adjusted men": these are rather contemporary expressions denoting what Kierkegaard calls the "leveling" of mankind. "Leveling is eo ipso the

[1]Sören Kierkegaard, The Present Age, trans. by Alexander Dru, New York (Harper Torchbooks, 1962).

destruction of the individual."[1] As a form of living in which "all inwardness is lost,"[2] men living in this manner may be characterized as exhibiting a "self-less-consciousness."

Since this manner of living consists in the mere internalization of social norms surrounding the individual, various aspects of this type may bear a superficial resemblance to the three explicit spheres which Kierkegaard delineates later. But since they lack inwardness, which Kierkegaard considers the indispensable quality of being a real self, there is no depth in their committment to their social milieu. Such a person has merely entered the path of least resistance and may be best characterized by what Kierkegaard calls "dreaming innocence."[3] Being unaware of the polarities of consciousness, they are insensitive to the dread which, nevertheless, lurks in their being. The public is that form of living in which man has not even attempted, much less accomplished, any type of synthesis of the polarities of consciousness. In short, the "public" refers to the type of man for whom his self is not yet an issue.

The aesthetic sphere

If and when a man's self becomes an issue for him, one of the ways of existing as a self which he may choose is what Kierkegaard calls the aesthetic. While the specifics of the aesthetic life-style are as multifarious as the individuals who live it, certain broad traits are

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[1] The Present Age, p. 54.

[2] The Present Age, p. 43.

[3] Dread, p. 37.

easily detectable. The aesthetic life-style is so named because the aesthetically-oriented individual attempts to maintain an aesthetic attitude toward existence. An aesthetic attitude in art is one of distance or detachment. While the aesthetic attitude toward an art object is consistent and valuable, Kierkegaard argues that despair is the only result of maintaining such an attitude toward existence or one's existing self. The aesthetically-oriented individual is one whose self-consciousness, or self concept, is dominated by the perceptual order. By attempting to maintain an attitude of aesthetic distance or objective detachment toward existence, the aesthetically-oriented individual fixes the locus of his self in the phenomenal realm. He regards himself as an empirical ego determined by objective reality. The aesthete comes to grips with the dread of his being by seeking immediacy in the perceptual order, thereby hoping to escape dread by becoming enmeshed in the phenomenal world. As a mode of consciousness dominated by the perceptual of consciousness, the aesthetic life-style exemplifies hedonistic romanticism and hedonistic intellectualism. In the former case, the aesthete may simply identify his self with the various sensations derived from the phenomenal order. His self is, as Hume phrased it, a "bundle of perceptions" without any continuity. In the latter case, he may identify his self as the accumulator of perceptual data derived from the phenomenal order.

The first point which I wish to emphasize, in keeping with my hypothesis, is that the aesthetic life-style results from a disruption among the polarities of consciousness in such a way that the individual has chosen to fix the locus of his self within the bodily polarity. This can be seen in two ways. First, the essential traits or categories

of the aesthetic sphere are precisely those categories which correspond to those polarities of consciousness most compatible with the bodily. Second, it can be seen in the nature of the aesthete's despair. More specifically, his despair is due in part to the inadequacy of the bodily polarity in creating the self and in part to the continual operation of the neglected or rejected polarity of the soulish. Both of these avenues of support can be satisfied by selecting typical passages from among Kierkegaard's dramatic presentation of the aesthetic sphere.

The central categories of the aesthete's existence are derived from his choice of the bodily to resolve the issues of existence. Due to his exclusive commitment to the reality pole of consciousness, the aesthete is confined to the perceptual immediacy of the present. By the category of immediacy Kierkegaard seems to suggest that the aesthete wills to become "flesh incarnate," to absorb his consciousness in sensation by identifying himself with the phenomenal order. But actual sensory experience by its very nature is limited to the present. Hence, the aesthetic life is characterized by "the moment." Johannes the Seducer, for example, exclaims that woman is the moment, the occasion of complete sensual absorption in the external: his attitude toward woman is simply an instantiation of the general aesthetic attitude toward life. The aesthete lives in possibility: these possibilities are not his own but rather his passive realization of the possibilities of the external object. His possibilities come from outside himself, and he

must wait expectantly for everything from without.[1] The sensory stimuli from the external world produce his continually vassilating moods.[2]

The aesthete's despair arises in part from the inadequacy of the bodily to satisfy fully the demands of consciousness. The bodily cannot account for the apparent flow of time,[3] and it certaintly cannot account for his anticipation of the future. Further, the bodily cannot account for memory. The young man A confesses the need to keep a diary in order to remember "the reason which led me to do this or that, not only in connection with trifles, but also in connection with the most momentous decisions."[4] His despair is also due in part to the impingement of the soulish. Kierkegaard argues that the soulish or ideality pole of consciousness is that which introduces definiteness and relationships into the region of consciousness. But the aesthete struggles to overcome the soulish by avoiding all reflection. Hence, the greatest danger to his existence is boredom because the repetition of any event arouses the reflection of ideality. He even seeks to escape memory: "there is nothing more dangerous to me than remembering."[5] The impingement of the soulish is responsible for his frequent outcrys of the meaninglessness of his life.[6]

The second point which I wish to emphasize, in keeping with

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[1]Either/Or, I, p. 296.

[2]Either/Or, I, p. 31.

[3]Either/Or, I, p. 25.

[4]Either/Or, I, p. 32.

[5]Either/Or, I, p. 31.

[6]Either/Or, I, p. 28.

my hypothesis, is that the aesthetic life-style is heteronomous. Heteronomy is a state of existence in which the individual is subject to the rule of authority of another. The aesthete's actions are determined by whatever is external to him. His possibilities are not chosen but merely assimilated from the external world. His life imperative is: Enjoy thyself. Regardless of whether he seeks his enjoyment in sensory pleasures, health, fame, position, or wealth, he seeks it in contingent factors beyond his control. By his own admission, the aesthete regards them as the fortunes of Fate (whether good fortune or misfortune): "I am not the master of my life."[1] And to this he adds:

> The arbitrariness in oneself corresponds to the accidental in the external world. One should therefore always have an eye open for the accidental, always be expeditus, if anything should offer.[2]

If one attempts to derive his happiness from external sources, then one must be able to control those external sources. But, regardless of how carefully the aesthete attempts to orchestrate his enjoyment, those factors remain beyond his control and actually control him. Hence, his existence is heteronomous and he is faced with a frustration which only potentiates his despair. Kierkegaard succintly and emphatically makes this point through the medium of Judge William:

> But he who says that he wants to enjoy life always posits a condition which either lies outside the individual or is in the individual in such a way that it is not posited by the

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[1] Either/Or, I, p. 30.

[2] Either/Or, I, p. 296.

individual himself.[1]

Judge William argues that the ethical can correct this problem.

The ethical sphere

The second way of existing as a self is that which Kierkegaard calls "the ethical." Kierkegaard's dramatic development of this mode of existence is presented through his pseudonym, Judge William. Judge William's life-style can be summarized as a single imperative: Choose thyself.[2] Collins[3] points out that the Judge's conversations employ the "paraphernalia of German idealism," and then suggests that perhaps Kierkegaard has not altogether rescued his thought, nor his terminology, from his professed enemies. I think, however, that Kierkegaard is deliberately using their terminology and thought patterns, that his ethical life-style corresponds to his understanding of the type of ethic representative of the German tradition (especially Kant, Fichte, and Hegel), and that he is attempting to reveal the limitations and inadequacies of such an ethic from a practical standpoint.

The first point which I wish to emphasize, in keeping with my hypothesis, is that the ethical life-style results from a disruption among the polarities of consciousness in such a way that the individual has chosen to fix the locus of his self within the soulish polarity. This can be shown in two ways. First, the essential traits or categories of the aesthetic sphere are precisely those categories which

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[1]Either/Or, II, p. 184.

[2]Either/Or, II, p. 167, 218.

[3]Collins, p. 80.

correspond to the polarities of consciousness most compatible with the soulish. Second, this disruption of the polarities can be seen in the peculiar form of despair which Judge William suffers. More specifically, his despair is due in part to the inadequacy of the soulish polarity in solving the perplexities of life and in part to the continual operation of the bodily polarity.

A careful examination of Judge William's crucial (but typically ethical) treatise, "Equilibrium between Aesthetical and the Ethical in the Composition of Personality",[1] discloses that the central categories whereby he defines his existence are identical with the categories corresponding to the poles of consciousness which Kierkegaard calls "the ideality" or "soulish" pole. One can also detect a strong current of German idealism. Both of these aspects are displayed in Judge William's arguments for the importance of choosing the self. By choosing oneself one "consolidates" the personality[2] and provides "continuity"[3] and "eternal validity"[4] to the self; and these fulfill the demands of consciousness' polarity of the eternal. But it is not a creative choice because the pattern for the self is embedded within the self.[5] Moreover, this pattern is a finitized expression of an

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[1] Either/Or, II, pp. 159-338.

[2] Either/Or, II, p. 171.

[3] Either/Or, II, p. 200.

[4] Either/Or, II, p. 215.

[5] Either/Or, II, p. 220.

eternal[1] and absolute Power.[2] Judge Williams adds emphatically:

> The ethical is the universal and so it is the abstract . . . When the ethical becomes more concrete it passes over into the definition of morals and customs . . . Only when the individual himself is the universal is it possible to realize the ethical. This is the secret of conscience, . . . He who regards life ethically sees the universal, and he who lives ethically expresses the universal in his life, he makes himself the universal man, . . .[3]

This transformation of himself into the universal man[4] provides him with a sense of "calling": "The ethical thesis that every man has a calling is the expression for the fact that there is a rational order of things in which every man, if he wills, fills his place . . ."[5] Furthermore, his calling provides a series of necessary duties; it is every man's duty to work,[6] to marry,[7] and to have friends.[8] The demands of the polarities of finitude and necessity, for Kierkegaard, are satisfied within the Judge's choice of a life-style. And by placing such emphasis on one set of polarities the Judge neglects their opposites.

Judge William's despair, on the one hand, issues from the inability of reason or intellectuality (i.e., the soulish polarity) to

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[1] Either/Or, II, pp. 171, 181.

[2] Either/Or, II, p. 223.

[3] Either/Or, II, pp. 159-260.

[4] Either/Or, II, pp. 260, 265.

[5] Either/Or, II, p. 297.

[6] Either/Or, II, p. 292ff.

[7] Either/Or, II, p. 309ff.

[8] Either/Or, II, p. 327ff.

deal adequately with all of life's dilemmas. More specifically, this is seen (1) in the occasional but significant "contradictions" between the conflicting demands of his sense of duty and (2) in the occasional "exceptions" to a general moral maxim. The reflective individual recognizes that there are certain "hard-cases" or "difficult choices" which result either because of a conflict between specific moral maxims or because of the absence of a maxim which clearly fits the situation. Judge William's solution is either to ignore the situation or at least to apply an inadequate maxim.[1]

Judge William's despair, on the other hand, arises because of the impingement of his bodily polarity upon an unstable mode of existence. The bodily demands that attention be given to the particulars within a situation. Now it is the so-called "exceptions" to the rules and "contradictions" among the rules which require an individual to focus on the particulars of a situation and to make an anxious, logically uncertain choice. In addition, "the bodily" demands that the appetites and inclinations of the body be satisfied rather than merely repressed or denied. One cannot avoid suspecting that Judge William's intellectualized approach to life fails to resolve the old Kantian problem of the conflict between reason and the bodily desires.

The second point which I wish to emphasize is that the ethical life-style is one of heteronomy. Judge William's insistence that the ethical life be grounded in a "calling" from some Power regarded as universal and eternal is an explicit admission of the heteronomous quality of his self. Kierkegaard is indirectly rejecting any suggestion

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[1] Either/Or, II, pp.

that man's moral life is a finite expression of God's creative freedom. Of course, the same criticism might be directed toward Kierkegaard. The difference between the positions of the Judge and Kierkegaard is that the former argues for the metaphysical ground of the moral life from the theoretical level while the latter only hints at it from the practical level. The heteronomous quality of the ethical sphere is implicitly admitted in the Judge's interpretation of committment. While the Judge has grasped the importance of choice and committment for the continuity of the self, he fails to find such continuity within himself alone. Even his committment must be stabilized by an external agent, such as the Power or even marriage. His self is derived from his committment (viz., that his self is a reflection of the qualities inherent within that to which he is committed), rather than his committment being derived from his self. Kierkegaard offers the religious existence as an alternative to both the aesthetic and ethical forms of existence.

The religious sphere

In light of Kierkegaard's dramatic presentation, there are two points about the religious sphere which I want to emphasize: (1) the religious, as Kierkegaard understands it, is grounded in the synthesis or integration of the polarities of consciousness, and (2) it produces a form of existence which is autonomous. But by the religious I am not referring to what Kierkegaard calls Religiousness A, which is a religion of immanence, of resignation, of suffering in self-annihilation, of the ethico-religious. I am referring to what he calls Religiousness B, which is a religion of transcendence, of faith, of suffering in self-

assertion, of the aesthetic-religious.[1] That the religious life-style involves an integration of the polarities can be seen from (a) the essential categories of the religious, (b) the nature of the criticisms which Johannes Climacus, Kierkegaard's major religious persona in the Concluding Unscientific Postscript, directs against the aesthetic and ethical life-styles, and (c) the character of the problems encountered in becoming a religiously existing self in Fear and Trembling.

Kierkegaard explicitly and repeatedly defines several of the central categories of the religious in terms of the synthesis of the polarities. "Sin" is the full realization that at the core of one's existence there is a profound contradiction. Johannes Climacus, in the Concluding Unscientific Postscript, even subscribes to what might be called "the fortunate fall", since prior to sin there is no selfhood. It is after the fall and in the light of sin as the recognition of contradiction that the self begins to take shape.[2] "Spirit" is the term Kierkegaard employs to designate the synthesis of the bodily and the soulish. The self as spirit is not only a synthesis, but a synthesis which rests upon choice. The self as spirit chooses which possibles it will appropriate as its own and which possibles it will reject. The nature of existence as a synthesis is illustrated by Johannes Climacus' discussion of the relation between thought and feeling (imagination):

> In existence all the factors must be co-present. In existence thought is by no means higher than imagination and feeling, but coordinate . . . The task is not to exalt the one at the expense of the other, but to give them equal status, to

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[1]See, Postscript, pp. 493-98, 507.

[2]See, Postscript, pp. 516-19.

> unify them in simultaneity; the medium in which they are unified is existence.[1]

It is the aesthetic and ethical life-styles which attempt to give priority to either feeling or thought respectively. Thus, neither the aesthetic nor the ethical completely fulfill that which Kierkegaard considers to be the true paradigm of existence.

In the light of existence as the integration of the polarities, it is possible to understand other categories belonging to the religious. "Inwardness" denotes the fact that the individual as the particular must integrate the polarities in the face of "objective uncertainty." "Faith" is that by which the self as spirit acquires everything.[2] By faith the religious individual remains open to the full range of the possibilities within the polarities of consciousness. "Suffering" denotes the fact that, since the polarities of the self are in constant flux, the self is a perpetual becoming and in perpetual danger of being lost or disintegrated.

Johannes Climacus' criticisms of the aesthetic and ethical spheres presuppose a position in which the polarities are integrated. His first criticism is presented as he ranks the spheres according to their interpretation of what it is to exist.[3] The aesthete finds no contradiction in the fact of existing: to exist is one thing, and the contradiction comes from the external, phenomenal order. The ethical recognizes the contradiction of existence, but identifies it as a

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[1]Postscript, pp. 310f.

[2]Fear and Trembling, p. 59.

[3]Postscript, p. 507.

contradiction between the universal, moral demands of reason and his desires and inclinations. Religiousness A comprehends the contradiction as a mode of suffering but then seeks to overcome suffering through self-annihilation. Religiousness B, or the Paradoxical Religiousness, fully comprehends that existence itself is or contains the contradiction. His second criticism is presented as he ranks the spheres according to the individual's "dialectical" apprehension of inwardness.[1] The aesthete is himself "undialectical," having his dialectic outside himself in self-assertion in such a way that the ultimate basis (the universal) is not dialectical in itself. Religiousness A is inwardly defined by self-annihilation before God. Religiousness B, which is Johannes Climacus' own position, is paradoxically dialectic, viz., he recognizes the importance and nature of his own inwardness in integrating the polarities. His third criticism deals with the attitudes towards suffering exhibited in the various spheres.[2] The aesthetic existence is essentially enjoyment and, thus, it seeks to escape suffering. The ethical existence is one in which the individual seeks to over come the suffering due to one's passions through victory over the bodily desires by the dominance of reason. It is only the religious existence which fully recognizes and inhabits the suffering which is inescapable to true existence.

That the religious sphere involves an integration of the polarities of consciousness is shown in the problems to be encountered in becoming a religiously existing individual. The first problem is

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[1] Postscript, p. 507.

[2] Postscript, pp. 255-7.

whether there can be a teleological suspension of the ethical?[1] The ethical as the universal, as applicable to everyone at every instant, demands that man abolish his particularity in order to become the universal. The religious, in contradistinction, demands that man suspend the ethical as the universal in order to become the individual. The paradox of faith is that the particular is higher than the universal. It is only as the particular individual that a man may obtain a private relationship with God rather than a relationship identical with everyone else's. The second problem is whether there can be an absolute duty toward God.[2] As a particular individual involved in a private relationship with God, the individual relates himself absolutely to an absolute duty which is discovered in his own inwardness. It is his particular task which is simultaneously an absolute duty. But such an "absolute duty may cause one to do what ethics would forbid."[3] Ethically speaking, Abraham is about to murder Isaac. Such a particular but absolute duty can only serve to intensify th suffering of existence contingent upon the recognition of the contradiction within consciousness. The third problem is whether Abraham, as the religiously existing individual, should voice his absolute duty?[4] Abraham cannot communciate his intentions to Sarah, Eleazar, or Issac. He cannot speak, for that is to forego his particularity and situate himself once again in the universal. Thus, "silence", as a category of

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[1]Fear and Trembling, pp. 64-77.

[2]Fear and Trembling, pp. 78-91.

[3]Fear and Trembling, p. 79.

[4]Fear and Trembling, pp. 91-129.

the religious, results from the discovery that speech is incommunsurable with his existence. Abraham must conduct himself in solitude (due to particularity) and silence, without objective or logical justification, without the external support of friends or relatives, knowing that he may be judged immoral by conventional standards of ethics.

The second point which I wish to emphasize is that the religiously existing individual possesses a form of autonomy. This can be seen first through a simple inference. If man's ontological freedom is preserved as an ethical reality, then man's existence is autonomous. But man's ontological freedom can be preserved if and only if the polarities of consciousness are integrated by an act of will. The religious sphere involves the integration of the polarities. Thus, the religiously existing individual is autonomous. This inference is further substantiated by Kierkegaard's remarks concerning some of the essential features of the religious sphere. The religious involves a "re-duplication" or "double reflection", which is the possibility of a second coming into existence within the first coming into existence, i.e., a second coming into existence which is qualitatively different from the first one. This re-duplication is accomplished through the integration of the polarities of consciousness. Life is a matter of either/or; but whereas the aesthetic and the ethical choose in an exclusive sense, the religious individual chooses in an inclusive sense. Stated differently, truth is subjectivity: it is the individual's truth a truth which permeates the whole of his life, which is reflected outwardly and back again, and which is the full appropriation of thought and feeling, of past and future, of necessity and possibility. Thus, Abraham does not seek the meaning or purpose of life in the demands of

the phenomenal nor in the universal demands of reason, but rather as the solitary and silent individual he seeks the meaning of his life in a subjectively posited purpose. It is a purpose which cannot be justified in terms of the phenomenal or the rational: it must be regarded as absurd. Kierkegaard speaks of the absurb as if it is something which grasps man. By means of the absurd the individual is open to the influences of "the Power" in his life. But as we have seen earlier,[1] there seems to be no compelling reason to regard this Power as God.

IMPLICATIONS

I have developed an interpretation of Kierkegaard based on a modified Schellingean framework. But my interpretation does not depend upon the Schellingean background for its justification. Indeed, I have demonstrated that my hypothesis (1) is initially suggested in Johannes Climacus; (2) is substantiated in his more abstract and theoretical works such as The Concept of Dread and The Sickness unto Death; and (3) is helpful in resolving the perplexities surrounding the dynamics of the three modes of concrete existence. From a historical standpoint, my interpretative framework demonstrates the probability of a much stronger Schellingean influence on Kierkegaard than has previously been developed.

But even more important than the historical interest and exegetical value of this study is its thematic value. In the light of my interpretation of Kierkegaard, a very interesting theory of value predicates can be abstracted from his philosophy. Given some set of

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[1]See above, p. 143f.

polarities within consciousness (and we need not necessarily employ Kierkegaard's), we can deduce a theory of value predicates grounded in the nature of the self. The duality of consciousness introduces the element of anxiety into human existence. More especially, it introduces anxiety about the self. The presence of this anxiety implies that the moral task of man is to choose to achieve a sense of selfhood by appropriating the respective polarities of consciousness. The result is an ethic of self-realization in which the realized self is autonomous or self-determining; it is not a theory of self-realizationism based on an immanent teleology but upon man's deliberate choices. Thus, man's actual existence is a composite characterized and maintained by a perpetual tension between the polarities of consciousness. From this we may deduce a definiens of evil. By "evil" reference is made to any entity, event, force, or individual which disrupts or prohibits the fruitful interplay of the polarities of consciousness whereby man, either individually or collectively, can create and/or attain his destiny. A definiens of "good" can be deduced by way of contrast. But the polarities of consciousness, by virtue of their givenness, are morally neutral: their interplay provides the human good; evil results only when one polarity is ignored or eliminated and the contrary one is claimed as all-inclusive. In other words, anything which forces consciousness to restrict its awareness to a specific feature of consciousness does damage to the totality of consciousness and precludes a sense of autonomous selfhood. To absolutize the particular is to falisfy the whole of consciousness, and to falsify the whole is to preclude the interplay of the polarities, the necessary condition of autonomous selfhood. Such a position stands opposed to all attempts at

reductionism, whether naturalistic or idealistic. Even Kierkegaard's indirect criticism of the aesthetic and ethical modes of existence contains an implicit opposition to such reductionistic efforts.

This theory of evil permits a further distinction between natural evil and moral evil. A natural evil is any factor originating from non-human sources which presents a disruptive threat or destroys the interplay of the polarities of consciousness. Pain, for example, is a natural evil because, by forcing consciousness to focus or localize its attention upon the bodily, it disrupts the interplay. Again, a tornado is a natural evil because it disrupts man's pacification of the natural environment, which is a necessary condition for the development of intellectuality. A natural good, in contrast, is any factor originating from non-human sources which contributes to or enhances the interplay of the polarities of consciousness.

The definition of moral evil proceeds along similar lines. A moral evil is any factor originating from human sources, whether internal or external, which presents a disruptive threat or destroys the interplay of the polarities. By focusing on internal sources of disruption we can gain some sense of personal moral obligation, an all too frequently missing aspect of many ethical theories. An individual has a self-obligation to gain and maintain his own integrity of self-determination through the appropriating interplay of the polarities. Unrestrained hedonism, for example, is evil because it forces consciousness to focus its attention upon the bodily while ignoring man's rationality. Further, by focusing on external sources of disruption we can gain some sense of our moral obligation to others. We have an obligation to treat others in a way which will enhance the possibility

of their achieving moral autonomy. Sexism and prejudice, for example, are morally evil because they reduce the "other" to the level of objects through assigning roles which ignore their ontological freedom and deny their right to be self-determining.

Such a theory of good and evil has great utility in the moral evaluation of social institutions. Any organized movement or social institution acquires an immoral quality when it denies its individual participants the right to be self-determining. Thus, a dictatorial or paternalistic attitude within academic or business or religious or social institutions is immoral. Excessive poverty or economic enslavement, for example, is immoral because it forces the individual to focus their efforts toward the most meager satisfaction of the appetites and desires of the bodily.

CONCLUSION

I have developed an interpretation of Schelling and Kierkegaard which demonstrates the manner in which they sought to elucidate (1) the precise nature of moral autonomy or the manner in which man may be self-determining and (2) the conditions which either preclude or contribute to its attainment. In conclusion I shall present a critical analysis showing (1) how Schelling and Kierkegaard confirm my thesis and (2) the current relevance of the concepts herein advanced. The first point can best be made by (a) re-stating those elements of Kant's moral philosophy most directly involved in the thought of Schelling and Kierkegaard, (b) summarizing the salient points in their theories of autonomy, and (c) tracing the development of these essential points within their theories in order to show how their conclusions must complement each other to provide a more comprehensive and defensible notion of autonomy. The second point can be made by noting some of the strengths and weaknesses of their theory of autonomy. Some of these points can be utilized or corrected by contemporary thinkers interested in developing a theory of moral self-determination.

The first phase of summarizing how my interpretation of Schelling and Kierkegaard confirms my thesis is to re-state those elements of Kant's moral theory which prompted the inquires of Schelling and Kierkegaard. Kant initiates his moral investigations by declaring that the original datum of ethical inquiry is our experience of a conflict between our consciousness of desires and inclinations ultimately

derived from sense data and our consciousness of a sense of duty ultimately proceeding from reason. But the very existence of this conflict, according to Kant, discloses the inadequacy of reason alone to direct man toward proper moral actions and the attainment of his own well-being. If reason alone is inadequate to resolve the conflict within man's moral life, then what is the role of practical reason? Kant argues that the proper end of reason is the establishment of a good or pure rational will. This pure rational will has two functions: it determines what a man should do from a sense of disinterested duty, and it mediates between reason and man's multiplicity of desires and inclinations. But Kant, in the actual development of his moral philosophy, emphasizes the rational rather than the volitional aspect of this pure rational will. Moreover, Kant fails to demonstrate (a) how this pure rational will is formed, (b) how it mediates between reason and (c) how theoretical and practical reason are ultimately united. Each of these unsolved issues contributed to the thought of Schelling and Kierkegaard.

Schelling attempts to establish the Will as the mediational factor between reason and desire by positing will as the ultimate ontological reality. Will as Primordial Being expresses itself through the polarities of impulse and reason. The polarities are then synthesized or integrated into spirit. Man as spirit, therefore, is self-determined and self-determining. Schelling employs the same move to clarify how theoretical and practical reason are united as well as to explain how the desires can be accepted and integrated rather than repressed within man as an autonomous self. Kierkegaard avoids the metaphysical difficulties of Schelling by focusing on the finite or

concrete individual, thereby restricting the polarities to human consciousness. Consequently, Kierkegaard does not become involved in an attempt to explain the origin of the polarities but merely accepts them as given, and then he argues that they can be synthesized by a resolute choice.

Second, my interpretation of Schelling and Kierkegaard shows that their theories share certain essential features which provide the framework of their theory of autonomy. Their combined theory gives ontological priority to the volitional rather than to the rational or the affective aspects of man. In addition, it is a theory of man as a being of consciousness in which consciousness contains polar opposites which must be integrated. Finally, it is a theory in which man is autonomous when he integrates the polarities and heteronomous when the tension between the polarities has been disintegrated or disrupted by man's own choice.

But while their theories share these common features, there is an important way in which they must complement each other to provide a more comprehensive and defensible theory of autonomy. Schelling emphatically argues that a theory of man as possessing ontological freedom must also be tempered by showing that freedom needs restrictions in order to avoid being dissipated. Schelling merely discusses the possibility of man's losing his freedom through the activity of the expansive principle; Kierkegaard argues that man can be deprived of his freedom through the dominance of either the expansive or the restrictive polarity of consciousness. Schelling's discussion is conducted at the abstract level while Kierkegaard's is concrete. Consequently, Kierkegaard provides a more enlightening discussion of the conditions which contribute to man's

attainment of autonomy through his analysis of dread and the conditions which preclude autonomy through his analysis of despair.

The current relevance of the theory of autonomy developed by Schelling and Kierkegaard can be ascertained by noting some of the strengths and weaknesses of their discussions. The strengths disclose certain valuable suggestions to be incorporated within present moral theories of self-determination while even the weaknesses suggest further avenues of inquiry. There are four strong points within their combined theory. First, both men emphasize that any theory of autonomy which does not take into account the full range of human experience and the constituent elements of human nature is sure to be inadequate. A theory of autonomy which does not correspond to the facts of human experience and human nature is little more than metaphysical web-spinning. Second, both men point out that a tenable theory of autonomy must be one which leaves man open to future eventualities rather than binding him to either abstract moral maxims or isolated elements of human nature or even to prior commitments. Autonomous action is not action coincidental with universal moral maxims or detached facets of human nature or former choices but rather action which leaves man open to being self-determining as well as self-determined. Third, both men avoided the perennial danger threatening human autonomy in the usual philosophies of creationism by making freedom the very essence of the self. If the ontological reality of man is freedom, then man is himself in acting freely rather than obeying divine fiats or the inexorable laws of nature. Fourth, both men recognized that even a doctrine of radical freedom must include a provision for limiting or restricting that freedom, even if the limits are self-imposed.

There are, however, several weaknesses within their theories which require further investigation. Among the internal weaknesses, the most serious is the strong religious presuppositions held by both men which may produce a misunderstanding of their theories. But this is not to say that the religious element in general is at fault. In the case of Schelling,[1] his unfortunate and unnecessary inclusion of the specific doctrine of man's transcendental fall seriously truncates his theory of freedom as the possibility of both good and evil, and serves to limit freedom as the possibility of evil. If Schelling had omitted this specific doctrine, then the other religious elements in his thought would not have jeapordized his system and the elimination of the doctrine of a transcendental fall would have strengthened his theory of autonomy. In the case of Kierkegaard, the religious element is susceptible to misunderstanding. The frequent occurance of religious doctrines within Kierkegaard's philosophy might lead the careless reader to lapse into the view that he is defending traditional Christianity. But Kierkegaard constantly criticized the complacency and shallowness of institutional Christianity or "Churchianity." We must remain cognizant that by the "religious" Kierkegaard means that life-style which integrates the various polarities of man's being into a self-determined and self-determining existence. Hence, the weakness concerning the religious element in Kierkegaard's thought is more that of the careless reader than his.

At least three external criticisms can be raised against Schelling and Kierkegaard. First, we may question whether they are

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[1]See above, pp. 74f and p. 80.

correct in their identification of the constituent elements or polarities of human reality to be integrated within an autonomous existence. On the one hand, we may ask whether a theory of autonomy needs to include all the factors upon which they concentrate attention. On the other hand, we may note their neglect of the socio-economic factors emphasized by Marx, the cultural-aesthetic factors emphasized by Nietzsche, and the factor of the unconsciousness emphasized by Freud. Should not these factors be considered in an adequate and defensible theory of autonomy? Secondly, we may raise the issue of the adequacy of the dialectical method for analyzing philosophical problems. Is the dialectical method adequate for dealing with ontological realities and is it logically sound? On this point we must remain cognizant of those on the one hand who have strenuously defended the dialectical method--for example, Hegelians, Marxists, and to a lesser extent, some of the existential phenomenologists--and those on the other hand who have repudiated the dialectical method. As important as this question is, it extends far beyond the domain of this dissertation. But this question is tangential to a third and more relevant question. Is it possible that the insights and suggestions of Schelling and Kierkegaard can be strengthened through the application of the methodological apparatus of phenomenology? This seems to be the current impact of Kierkegaard. Heidegger's version of authentic existence, for example, is an ontological version of Kierkegaard's conception of autonomous existence. Even Schelling may have indirectly influenced Heidegger through the mediation of Hölderlin, Schelling's roommate at Tübingen,

and Schelling certainly received direct attention in some of Heidegger's later writings.[1]

In conclusion, the theory of autonomy or self-determination developed by Schelling and Kierkegaard must be characterized as thought-experiments. That is, they are tentative and provocative, not definitive. But whatever the final verdict of history as to the value of their theories, those persons currently interested in developing a moral theory of self-determinism cannot, without loss, ignore the insights and suggestions of Schelling and Kierkegaard regarding the roles of appropriation and integration as well as the accompanying dread for a theory of autonomy.[2]

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[1]For a recent discussion of this point, see Parvis Emad, "Heidegger on Schelling's Concept of Freedom" in Man and World, Vol. 8, no. 2 (May, 1975), 157-74.

[2]One current effort which recognizes the roles of appropriation, integration and dread for a theory of autonomy is that of Walter Kaufmann. See his Without Guilt and Justice, New York (Delta Publishing Co., Inc., 1973).

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This bibliography follows the sequence of chapters in this dissertation. The entries are by no means exhaustive. Two criteria have guided my selection of entries. First, I have included those sources which are either quoted or referred to in the dissertation. Second, I have listed those sources which contributed most to my understanding of the men herein discussed.

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