

‘All is Act, Movement, and Life’: Fichte’s Idealism as Immortalism



G. Anthony Bruno

*One thing does not exist: Oblivion.
God saves the metal and he saves the dross,
And his prophetic memory guards from loss
The moons to come, and those of evenings gone.
Everything is: the shadows in the glass
Which, in between the day’s two twilights, you
Have scattered by the thousands, or shall strew
Henceforth in the mirrors that you pass.
And everything is part of that diverse
Crystalline memory, the universe;
Whoever through its endless mazes wanders
Hears door on door click shut behind his stride,
And only from the sunset’s farther side
Shall view at last the Archetypes and the Splendors.*
(Borges 1996, 149)

In a supplement to 1787’s *David Hume on Faith, or Idealism and Realism: A Dialogue*, Jacobi criticizes Kant for the apparent inconsistency of positing the existence of a thing in itself or ‘transcendental object’ on the grounds that, according to transcendental idealism, such an object cannot appear in possible experience. He advises that Kant reject the concept of a transcendental object for the sake of consistency and have ‘the courage, therefore, to assert the strongest idealism that was ever professed, and not be afraid of the objection of speculative egoism’. Jacobi’s advice is satirical, however, for he holds that the cost of consistent idealism is the loss of true, i.e., transcendental, reality: ‘we must mean by “object” a thing that *would be present outside us in a transcendental sense*’ (Jacobi 1994, 338).

It is therefore no surprise that, after Fichte follows precisely this advice while developing the *Wissenschaftslehre* in Jena in the 1790s, Jacobi accuses him in

G. A. Bruno (✉)
Royal Holloway University of London, London, UK

1799's 'Open Letter' of 'nihilism'. Jacobi coins this term to denote philosophy's denial of the reality and, in particular, the freedom of individuals through their reduction to modes of substance, as in Spinozism, or, as in Fichte's 'inverted Spinozism', their reduction to modes of 'pure and empty consciousness', i.e., of reason or the I (Jacobi 1994, 502, 519). By abandoning the 'true' that must exist outside the I 'in a transcendental sense' for the 'truth' of the system of consciousness that the I derives from itself, Fichte transforms reality 'into nothing' through 'a chemical process' of 'philosophizing' (Jacobi 1994, 505–7). Hence, Jacobi chides him for 'dissolving all *being into knowledge*, a progressive annihilation through ever more universal concepts leading up to science' (Jacobi 1994, 509).

Jacobi is clear that the consequence of Fichte's 'naked logical enthusiasm' is the loss of transcendental reality. He argues that if the I is 'the solvent medium of all objects of cognition', outside which there is nothing, such objects are not even appearances of something, viz., appearances of a thing in itself, but rather are only 'phantoms-in-themselves or appearances of nothing' (Jacobi 1994, 505, 514).¹ This is why Jacobi is 'pleased with Kant that he preferred to sin against the system' of transcendental idealism by positing the thing in itself, instead of sinning 'against the majesty' of transcendental reality. Fichte sins against this majesty by rejecting the concept of a thing in itself and grounding the intelligibility of objects of cognition on the I, thereby 'changing the *real thing* [...] *into nothing*'. The real sin is to 'annihilate' the objectivity of real, free individuals through one's commitment to the speculatively egoistic and hence nihilistic principle that '[n]othing must remain' in the object 'which is not our activity' (Jacobi 1994, 499, 508).

In *David Hume*, Jacobi clarifies the freedom of individuals with a pair of remarks. He says that although every being is 'connected with an infinite multitude of other singular beings', '[a]ll truly actual things are *individuals* or singular things, and, as such, they are living beings (*principia perceptiva et activa*) that are external to one another' (Jacobi 1994, 317–8). In other words, true individuals are not exhaustively explained by external relations to other individuals, for they are principles that explain the unity of their perceptions and actions and, in this sense, are 'living'. Earlier he describes the pre-philosophical conception of 'a living, self-manifesting, freely acting, personal power' and says that 'without the living experience of such a power in us [...] we should not have the slightest idea of cause and effect' (Jacobi 1994, 291). Not only, then, do we experience 'actual things' as individuals and thus as intrinsically living powers that are only derivatively causally related; we do so

¹According to Jacobi, a secondary error of Fichte's philosophy is the atheism with which he is charged in Jena. Jacobi's assessment of this error is complicated. Although he holds that the charge of atheism will 'always be made against any philosophy, whichever form it may assume, that invites man to rise above nature in spirit and above himself *inasmuch as he is nature*' and that he may be 'obliged to call [Fichte's] doctrine atheist', he does not consider Fichte 'personally' an atheist and at most regards Fichte's 'sin' to 'only be a *matter of thought*, a bungling of the *artist*, in words and in concepts, the fault of the *brooder*, not of the *man*' (Jacobi 1994, 520, 522).

only because we initially experience ourselves as intrinsically living powers.² The nihilistic denial of the reality of individuals accordingly amounts to a denial of life.

Jacobi avoids nihilism by espousing a ‘non-philosophy’ that consists in the ‘non-knowledge’ of, i.e., the ‘faith’ in, the self-activity that defines real individuals (Jacobi 1994, 501).³ Nevertheless, his remarks might be taken to imply that avoiding the nihilistic denial of life requires the insight that self-activity is essential to and, indeed, primary for a philosophical account of the intelligibility of objects. This is the insight that informs several passages from Fichte’s 1800 *Vocation of Man*, which is written as an indirect response to Jacobi’s ‘Open Letter’:

I will not gain entry into the supernatural world only after I have been severed from connection with the earthly one. I already am and live in it now, far more truly than in the earthly. Already now it is my only firm standpoint, and eternal life, which I have already long since taken possession of, is the only reason why I still care to carry on my life on earth. Heaven, as it is called, does not lie beyond the grave. It already surrounds us here and its light is kindled in every pure heart. (Fichte 1987, 94–5)

I *am* immortal, imperishable, eternal as soon as I decide to obey the law of reason. I must not first *become* so. The supersensible world is no future world: it is present. (Fichte 1987, 99)

Only reason is; infinite reason in itself [...] will annihilate our present life with what we call death and introduce us into a new life. [...] All our life is its life. We are in its hand and remain there, and no one can tear us out of it. We are eternal because it is. (Fichte 1987, 111)

All death in nature is birth, and precisely in dying does the augmentation of life visibly appear. There is no killing principle in nature, for nature is throughout nothing but life. It is not death which kills, but rather a more living life which, hidden behind the old life, begins and develops. Death and birth are only the struggle of life with itself in order to present itself ever more purely and more like itself. And how could *my* death be anything else? For I am not a mere representation and image of life, but bear within me the original life which alone is true and essential [...unlike] nature [...] which itself lives merely for my sake. (Fichte 1987, 122)

The appearance of death is the guide by which my spiritual eye is led to my new life and my new nature. Each one who like me leaves the earthly association [...] still *exists*, and is entitled to a new place. [...] So I live and so I am, and so I am unchangeable, firm and complete for all eternity. For this is no being assumed from without. It is my own, my only true and essential being. (Fichte 1987, 124)

These striking passages jointly claim that life is eternal, rational, our true being, and the final cause of nature in general and of death in particular. How can we make sense of this claim?

The *Vocation*⁴ is composed of public lectures that Fichte gives in Berlin after his 1798 ‘On the Basis of Our Belief in a Divine Governance of the World’ ignites the

² Cf. Jacobi’s claim that we are not ‘beings who were *only capable of intuition and judgment*’, since ‘we can *also act!*’ (Jacobi 1994, 290).

³ Cf. Jacobi 1994, 230–1.

⁴ On the vocational tradition in the German enlightenment, see Zöllner 2013, 24–8.

atheism dispute, which provokes Jacobi's 'Open Letter' and forces him to resign from the University of Jena. The lectures often employ the moving words of a sermon. Can we philosophically translate this sermon's conception of life? We can if we trace this conception to the major Jena texts.⁵ I will argue that the public lectures are a popular expression of Fichte's pre-existing commitment to what I call immortalism, the view that life is the unconditioned condition of the intelligibility of objects.⁶ It contrasts with what I call mortalism, the view that death is the unconditioned condition of the intelligibility of objects.⁷ The debate about the plausibility of immortalism helps to shape the trajectory of post-Kantian philosophy from German idealism to phenomenology. Since this debate begins with a confrontation between Fichte and Jacobi regarding how to preserve the reality of living powers and avoid nihilism, I will focus on the *Wissenschaftslehre* as the first instance of post-Kantian immortalism.

Immortalism inherits two edicts—that the philosophical life alone is worth living and that philosophy is a preparation for death—in that it holds that a philosophical account of the intelligibility of objects both is necessary and must include an account of what it means to die, an account whose first principle or unconditioned condition must be a living power. Post-Kantian immortalism provides such an account from the first-person standpoint, Fichte's names for which are 'reason' and 'the I'. Jacobi must regard immortalist philosophy as oxymoronic, given his view that the nihilistic denial of life is the unavoidable consequence of any consistent philosophy, whether Spinozistic or Fichtean. And yet the self-activity of life undeniably occupies a central position in German idealism in general and in the *Wissenschaftslehre* in particular.⁸

In 1794–95's *Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre*, Fichte says:

The source of all reality is the I. [...] But the I is because it *posits itself*; and it *posits itself because it is*. *Self-positing* and *being* are therefore one and the same. But the concepts of *self-positing* and *activity* as such are also one and the same. All reality is therefore *active*, and everything that is *active* is reality. Activity is *positive* reality (in contrast with merely *relative* reality). (Fichte SW I, 134)

This passage identifies reality with activity insofar as reality's 'source', i.e., its first principle or unconditioned condition, is the activity of the I. Fichte implies that, insofar as the I's activity is '*positive*' rather than '*relative*', it is not active in virtue of something else, but rather is self-active and is, in this sense, living. This implicit immortalist appeal to life is made explicit in 1800's 'From A Private Letter', written amid the atheism dispute and published just prior to the *Vocation*: 'something stable, at rest, and dead can by no means enter the domain of what I call philosophy,

⁵I draw the *Vocation*'s continuity with the Jena texts slightly earlier than Zöller 2013, 23.

⁶See 1806's *The Way Towards the Blessed Life or the Doctrine of Religion*: "we, who explain death by life, the body by the soul—and not the reverse as the moderns do—are the true followers of the ancients; only that we see clearly what remained dark to them" (Fichte SW V: 424).

⁷For an account of Schelling's commitment to mortalism, see Bruno 2016; cf. the account of Heidegger's conception of death in Bruno 2014.

⁸On points of contact between Jacobi and Fichte, see Ahlers 2003 and di Giovanni 1989.

within which all is act, movement, and life. [...O]ne of the distinctive features of my philosophy is the fact that it deals only with what is living and by no means with what is dead' (Fichte SW V, 381–2). According to this passage, reality is active because 'all is act, movement, and life', i.e., because all is ultimately intelligible in terms of the I *qua* living power. Indeed, Fichte's rebuttal of the atheism charge in this text doubles as a rebuttal of the nihilism charge. Just as he does in 'Divine Governance',⁹ he claims here that the belief in God is 'never anything other than' the belief in a moral order that transforms 'the *order of nature*', i.e., the belief in the moral perfectibility of nature. From this claim, he infers that 'every belief that wishes to introduce an *amoral chaos*, a lawless arbitrariness on the part of a super-powerful being, mediated through senseless, magical means', is 'a *reprehensible superstition* and is *aimed at the total destruction of human beings*' (Fichte SW V, 394–5). As I will show, for Fichte, refuting the annihilation of human beings requires positing life as the unconditioned condition of intelligibility, i.e., refuting nihilism requires endorsing immortalism.

In §1, I explain the context of Jacobi's use of '*caput mortuum*' as a term for the thing in itself. In §§2–3, I reconstruct two immortalist arguments from Fichte's Jena period. The first is that the I's self-activity rules out the existence of the thing in itself and thereby vanquishes 'death's head'. The second is that, insofar as the I charges us with the moral perfection of nature, it is the final cause of our entire life, including its end. This is to say that the I puts our every moment into question, even our last. In §4, I use these immortalist arguments to interpret the joint claim from the *Vocation* that life is eternal, rational, our true being, and the final cause of nature and of death.

1. *Caput Mortuum*

In the 1785 first edition of *Concerning the Doctrine of Spinoza in Letters to Mr. Moses Mendelssohn*, Jacobi recalls having 'certain remarkable "visions"' at 'eight or nine years old' (Jacobi 1994, 183). In the 1789 second edition, he elaborates this memory in response to A.W. Rehberg's review of the first edition:

That extraordinary thing was a representation of endless duration, quite independent of any religious concept. At the said age, while I was pondering on eternity *a parte ante*, it suddenly came over me with such clarity, and seized me with such violence, that I gave out a loud cry and fell into a kind of swoon. A movement in me, quite natural, forced me to revive the same representation as soon as I came to myself, and the result was a state of unspeakable despair. The thought of annihilation, which had always been dreadful to me, now became even more dreadful, nor could I bear the vision of an eternal forward duration any better. [...] I gradually managed to not be afflicted by this trial so often, and finally managed to free myself from it altogether... And this had been my situation between roughly the ages of seventeen and twenty-one, when all at once the old appearance came upon me

⁹See Fichte: 'This living and efficaciously acting moral order is itself God. We require no other God, nor can we grasp any other' (Fichte SW V, 186).

again. I recognized its characteristic dreadful shape, but was steadfast enough to hold it in sight for a second look, and now I knew that *it was!* It was, and had enough objective being to afflict every human soul in which it materialized just as much as mine. This representation has often seized me again since then, despite the care that I constantly take to avoid it. I have reason to suspect that I can arbitrarily evoke it in me any time I want; and I believe that it is in my power, were I to do so repeatedly a few times, to take my life within minutes by this means. (Jacobi 1994, 362)¹⁰

Jacobi's 'dreadful' vision is of, on the one hand, an 'endless' series '*a parte ante*' and moving 'forward' and, on the other hand, a series ending arbitrarily with 'annihilation'. This vision is unbearable because it rules out the existence of individuals, which we saw are not exhausted by external relations, such as they would bear in an endless causal series or would suffer with arbitrary annihilation, but rather are intrinsically living powers, i.e., powers that determine themselves. Hence the epigraph to the first edition of the *Letters*: 'Give me a place to stand' (Jacobi 1994, 173).¹¹ The dreadful vision, in other words, is the nihilistic image of nature as devoid of individuals and hence of life. This vision 'afflict[s] every human soul', moreover, because it threatens our faith in ourselves as living powers, without which we have no 'idea of cause and effect', as Jacobi says in *David Hume*, a claim that he reiterates in the second edition of the *Letters*: 'we do not have the slightest intimation of causality, except *immediately*, through the consciousness of our own causality, i.e., our life-principle' (Jacobi 1994, 377). But in what sense is the dreadful vision 'independent of any religious concept'? Which religious concept does it lack?

An answer is provided shortly after Jacobi's elaboration. He claims that human consciousness 'is composed of two original representations, that of the *conditional*, and that of the *unconditional*'. We represent the conditional when, in ordinary experience and scientific research, we seek to discover 'what mediates the existence of things', i.e., the 'mechanism' of their external conditions (Jacobi 1994, 375). The nihilistic image emerges from restricting nature mechanistically to the totality of conditioned things, i.e., things that are exclusively mediated, and thus explicable, by external relations. The ordinary and scientific motivations for this image perhaps explain why Jacobi finds it 'quite natural' to evoke a vision that causes him 'unspeakable despair'. Nevertheless, he observes that if we seek to 'reduce' nature to a mechanism, we thereby seek to 'discover the conditions of the unconditioned', which is

¹⁰ Compare Jacobi's memory with the May 1903 suicide note that had been carved into a tree at the top of Kegon Falls by Misao Fujimura, a seventeen-year-old student of English literature: 'How immense the universe / How eternal history / I wanted to measure immensity with this small five-foot body / What authority has Horatio's philosophy? / The truth of all creation is captured in a word / That is—"unfathomable" / Troubled with this regret, I finally determined to die / As I stand atop the precipice / I have no anxiety in my heart / I understand for the first time / Great pessimism is equivalent to great optimism' (*Shinbun Shusei Meiji Hennenshi* 1940, 60; translated by Jessica Chiba). Fujimura is troubled, not only by the universe's infinitude, but also by philosophy, whose dreams about the universe exclude anything whose 'truth' is mechanistically 'unfathomable', e.g., his living body. But whereas Jacobi experiences this vision as both natural and dreadful and seeks to avoid it for fear of taking his life, Fujimura finds equal parts 'pessimism' and 'optimism' in the vision and resolves to die.

¹¹ See Franks 2005, 162–5.

'an absurd undertaking' because, whereas natural entities are connected in 'a chain of *conditional conditions*', the '*unconditional condition of nature*' must be 'unconnected, hence *extra-natural*'. Representing the unconditional consequently involves a different kind of apprehension than representing the conditional, for if mechanistic cognition of nature is restricted to 'the sum-concept of the conditional', then the unconditional 'lies outside the sphere of our distinct cognition'. From this, Jacobi infers that the unconditional 'cannot be apprehended by us in any way except as it is given to us, namely, *as fact—IT IS!* This supernatural, this being of all beings, all tongues proclaim *GOD*' (Jacobi 1994, 376). We see, then, that God, insofar as it is unconditional, falls within the extension of the religious concept that the dreadful vision lacks.

But God is not this concept's only referent. As Jacobi says, in the 'consciousness of our spontaneous activity in the exercise of our will', we possess '*an analogue within us of the supernatural, that is to say, of a being who does not act mechanistically*'. The religious concept extends to God's creations, i.e., to living powers like ourselves, whose actions are not simply externally determined. Indeed, since our idea of nature's causal mechanism presupposes our self-activity or 'life-principle', 'nobody is in a position to represent the principle of life, the inner source of understanding and will, as the result of mechanistic connections, that is, as the simple *result of mediation*' (Jacobi 1994, 377). Representing the principle of life instead requires the concept of the unconditional, whose referent 'lies outside' the mechanism of external conditions. Not only God, then, but we too are obscured if our image of nature nihilistically excludes the religious concept of the unconditional, whose extension includes all living powers.

In the 'Open Letter', Jacobi satirically depicts the *Wissenschaftslehre* as a science that rejects the nihilistic image of nature:

A science that has itself alone, *qua* science, as object, and has no content apart from this, is a science in itself. The I is a science in itself, and the only one. It knows itself, and it would contradict its concept if it knew, or were to get hold of, something outside itself, etc., etc.... The I, therefore, is necessarily the principle of all other sciences, and an unfailing *menstruum* with which they can all be dissolved and made to vanish into the I without any trace of a *caput mortuum*—the *not-I*—being left behind. (Jacobi 1994, 409)¹²

This passage depicts a science whose cognitive content is itself and that 'contradict[s]' itself if it purports to cognize 'something outside itself'. This arguably captures Fichte's claim in 1797–98's *Attempt at a New Presentation of the Wissenschaftslehre* that the 'gist' of his science is that reason or the I is 'absolutely self-sufficient' and thus 'explicable solely on the basis of [...] itself and not on the basis of anything outside of' itself and, moreover, that it 'could not get outside of itself without renouncing itself'. Fichte summarizes this claim thusly: '[i]n short, the *Wissenschaftslehre* is transcendental idealism' (Fichte SW I, 474). Whereas on Kant's conception of transcendental idealism reason is not absolutely self-sufficient

¹²Contrast Hegel, who, although critical of Fichte's conception of the I, follows his pursuit of consistent idealism in *The Science of Logic*, Part I of 1830's *Encyclopedia Logic*, by using '*caput mortuum*' to refer disparagingly to the thing in itself (Hegel 1991, 87).

in that it depends on the unknowable thing in itself for the matter of sensation, Fichte rejects the concept of the thing in itself for denoting ‘something outside’ of, and thus for ‘renouncing’, reason. Indeed, just before his claim, Fichte calls this concept ‘a complete perversion of reason’ (Fichte SW I, 472).¹³ Jacobi gives expression to this Fichtean point by saying that no thing in itself or ‘*not-I*’ conditions the I. But why does he use ‘*caput mortuum*’, the alchemical term for the remainder in attempts to distil the elixir of immortality, to refer to the thing in itself?

Literally meaning ‘death’s head’, the term denotes that which, *per impossibile*, resists explanation by a philosophical principle of self-activity or life like the I. Jacobi’s denial that the *Wissenschaftslehre* tolerates such resistance might therefore imply that this science is anti-nihilistic. However, his depiction of this science is as satirical as his advice to the consistent idealist to embrace egoism in *David Hume*, for he coins ‘nihilism’ precisely in order to signify the folly of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. Insofar as this science reduces individuals to modes of the I and rejects the concept of the thing in itself, it cannot but be devoid of life. What this science regards as a perverse and impossible *caput mortuum* is for Jacobi nothing other than transcendental reality, i.e., the irreducible source of living powers, both divine and human. Rejecting transcendental reality may render idealism consistent, but it denies the living reality on which the I itself depends. As Jacobi says in the ‘Open Letter’:

As surely as I possess reason, just as surely I do *not* possess with this human reason of mine the perfection of life, *not* the fullness of the good and the true. And as surely as I do *not* possess all this with it, *and know it*, just as certainly do I *know* that there is a *higher* being, and that I have my origin in Him. My solution too, therefore, and that of my reason is not the *I*, but the ‘More than I!’ the ‘Better than I!’—Someone entirely Other. (Jacobi 1994, 514–5)

2. The I and the Thing in Itself

Despite Jacobi’s depiction of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, we must charitably assess Fichte’s assertion that his science ‘deals only with what is living and by no means with what is dead’, i.e., that it aims to avoid the nihilistic image of nature.

In 1796’s *Foundations of Natural Right*, Fichte offers several remarks on the essence of human individuals:

[T]he rational being posits itself as a rational individual [...] by *exclusively ascribing* to itself a *sphere for its freedom*. He is the person who exclusively makes choices within this sphere (and not any other possible person, who might make choices in some other sphere). (Fichte SW III, 56)

[M]atter can restrict only a part of my free movement, not all of it; for in the latter case, the person’s freedom would be completely annihilated; in that case, I would be dead, dead in

¹³Cf. Fichte SW III, 40.

relation to the sensible world. [...]The free being's superior power over this external matter arises solely from its freedom to act in accordance with concepts. Matter, in contrast, operates only in accordance with mechanical laws and thus has only *one* mode of exercising efficacy, while the free being has several. (Fichte SW III, 68)

Nature completed all of her works; only from the human being did she withdraw her hand, and precisely by doing so, she gave him over to himself. Formability, as such, is the character of humanity. (Fichte SW III, 80)

Human individuals are defined in these remarks by an intrinsic 'power' of freedom, i.e., by a 'sphere' of activity that is not determined by external relations either to other individuals or to matter. Were this sphere so determined, freedom would be 'annihilated' and individuals would consequently be 'dead'. In that case, individuals would be governed by 'mechanical laws' of nature, whose 'works' are 'completed' via their total explanation by such laws. Unlike mere matter, however, human individuals ultimately are not externally formed, but instead form themselves.

Fichte's remarks on human individuals seem to adhere to Jacobi's anti-nihilistic definition of individuals as living powers, i.e., as unifying their perception and action. Nevertheless, insofar as human individuals are instances of I-hood, these remarks must be interpreted as deriving from the I as first principle. Indeed, the subtitle to *Natural Right* is *According to the Principles of the Wissenschaftslehre*. Since, for Fichte, it is the I that is ultimately self-active or living, we find that his remarks on human individuals presuppose an immortalist apprehension of the I's self-activity as the unconditioned condition of intelligibility. I turn now to reconstruct two immortalist arguments from his Jena period that serve to contextualize his remarks on the essence of human individuals.

The first immortalist argument is that the I's self-activity rules out the existence of the thing in itself and thereby vanquishes death's head. In the First Introduction to the *New Presentation*, Fichte says that philosophy's first 'task' is to posit the first principle or 'explanatory ground' of experience (Fichte SW I, 423).¹⁴ He argues that positing a principle is essentially 'a free act of thinking' (Fichte SW I, 425). This is because it is a normative act. Whether I posit the I as the first principle of the *Wissenschaftslehre* or the not-I as the first principle of Spinozism, I regard my act as the correct response to philosophy's first task, i.e., one that could have failed and for which I am responsible. Regardless of what I posit, then, 'it is only because I have determined myself' that I do so (Fichte SW I, 427).¹⁵ This entails that Spinozism, which concludes with the denial of the very freedom by which it posits the not-I, is

¹⁴Cf. Fichte SW I, 91.

¹⁵Cf. Pippin 2000: 'Since one cannot get someone to subject himself to the space of reasons unless he has already so subjected himself, the only possible appeal is to call his own experiences to mind in a way that will reveal he must have always already so subjected himself, and to ask him to try "not to be so subject", to act and think as if dogmatism were true. Such a subject would be in the same fix as the skeptic about practical reason, who must act under the idea of freedom if he is to act at all. To assume otherwise would still be to determine oneself to act as if determinism were true. But that would be to make it a norm for action and so to refute oneself; likewise with any attempt to exempt oneself from the space of reasons or the domain of normativity' (158).

a performative contradiction. In particular, it betrays the vitality on which it depends by feigning a kind of lifelessness, for, since it holds that individuals are modes that are infinitely determined by external relations to modes of the same attribute, it must annihilate freedom and so must nihilistically regard individuals as dead, i.e., as completed works of nature with no self-activity. By contrast, to posit the I as first principle is both to posit the I's self-activity or living power as the unconditioned condition of intelligibility in response to philosophy's first task and, since positing is an essentially free act, to posit oneself as an instance of I-hood, i.e., as self-active or living. This rules out one's determination by the not-I or thing in itself on the grounds that life conditions itself and is therefore not conditioned by any *caput mortuum*. Thus, when Fichte infers from Spinozism's performative contradiction that '[t]he only type of philosophy that remains possible is idealism' (SW I, 438), his conclusion expresses a commitment to immortalism, i.e., to a philosophical system in which self-activity unconditionally conditions the intelligibility of our experience of objects.

Fichte extends this first immortalist argument in the Second Introduction by casting the mode of apprehending the I, viz., intellectual intuition, in terms of life. He says that intellectual intuition 'simultaneously' is 'the act by means of which the I originates for [one]' and 'the act of intuiting [oneself]' (Fichte SW I, 463). Since, as we saw, positing the I is the act whereby I simultaneously discover self-activity as the first principle of experience and grasp myself as self-active, it is none other than the act of intellectual intuition. Fichte adds that 'I cannot move my hand or foot' without this intuition, for it is only through it 'that I know that I do this'. Whereas in sensible intuition I apprehend objects to which I stand in external relations, in intellectual intuition I apprehend my intrinsic power of freedom, i.e., my capacity to form myself. Fichte accordingly draws the immortalist inference that intellectual intuition 'contains within itself the source of life, and apart from it there is nothing but death' (Fichte SW I, 463). Indeed, he says, it is a mode of apprehension that is directed at, not a 'subsisting thing', but 'a sheer activity', i.e., 'not a being, but something living' (Fichte SW I, 465).¹⁶ Repeating his claim from the *Foundations* that the I is positively, not relatively, active, Fichte then explains that, by intellectually intuiting the I, I exhibit an 'ethical law within' me through which 'I am given to myself, by myself', not by something 'alien' (Fichte SW I, 466). The doctrine of intellectual intuition thus recalls Jacobi's anti-nihilist definition of individuals as living powers that are the explanatory principles of their own unity. As Fichte says, in intellectual intuition, 'I possess life within myself and draw it from myself' (Fichte SW I, 466).

Of course, Fichte's doctrine avoids nihilism by appeal, not to non-philosophy, but to a philosophical account of intelligibility on which self-activity is essential and primary. Such an appeal is oxymoronic for Jacobi, for whom philosophy entails the nihilistic reduction of individuals to modes of either the I or the not-I. Yet

¹⁶For an account of the difference between Kant's and Fichte's conceptions of intellectual intuition, see Bruno [2022](#).

Fichte's appeal directly responds to Jacobi's epigraphical demand for a foundation in living powers: 'Intellectual intuition provides the only firm standpoint for any philosophy. [...] I am only active. I cannot be driven from this position' (Fichte SW I, 466–7). It also avoids what Jacobi calls the absurdity of conditioning the unconditioned, for it construes intellectual intuition of the I's self-activity as 'unconditioned and thus absolute' (Fichte SW I, 462). And it distinguishes intellectual intuition from what Jacobi describes as the cognition of mediated existence: 'Intellectual intuition is the immediate consciousness that I act and of what I do when I act' (Fichte SW I, 463). Moreover, whereas Fichte arrives at his immortalist position through a conscious conversion from Spinozism with its nihilistic consequences,¹⁷ he may well suspect that Jacobi's religious concept risks '*the total destruction of human beings*' if its divine referent is 'a super-powerful being, mediated through senseless, magical means'. Given these considerations, Fichte's renunciation of the thing in itself is most charitably read as a genuine rejection of the nihilistic image of nature, specifically, an immortalist refusal to concede the existence of a *caput mortuum* within a philosophical account that is grounded on the concept of life.

This cannot be Fichte's only immortalist argument, however, for it does not account for what it means to die. Immortalism requires this for a complete account of intelligibility. Unless the I specifically renders death intelligible, the *caput mortuum* ultimately transcends explanation by the I's self-activity such that, in our final moment, we ourselves refute idealism. The threat is that our mortality conceals the truth of Spinozism, according to which death is simply a quantitative change in the arrangement of modes of nature and hence not conditioned by the I. Fichte's idealism consequently requires a second immortalist argument to the conclusion that the I assigns a purpose to the entirety of human life, including its cessation. But what purpose can make sense of death?

3. The I and Nature's Moral Perfection

An answer lies in recognizing that intellectual intuition of the I's self-activity discloses the essence of my existence, but not the purpose of my existence, i.e., it specifies the formal cause, but not the final cause, of human life. This causal distinction reflects a methodological division to which Fichte is committed in Jena and in

¹⁷See Fichte's 1807 Königsberg lectures: 'as a young man I was much more deeply rooted in the same Spinozism to which young people today, on far weaker grounds than those that I then repudiated, wish me to return' (GA II/10, 114, translated by Breazeale 2018, 105). Cf. Fichte 1987: 'The universe is to me no longer that ever-recurring circle, that eternally-repeated play, that monster swallowing itself up, only to bring itself forth again as it was before—it has become transfigured before me, and now bears the one stamp of spiritual life—a constant progress toward higher perfection in a line that runs out into the infinite' (122).

Berlin.¹⁸ In 1796–99’s *Wissenschaftslehre Nova Methodo*, he articulates this division by claiming that his system has ‘precisely two parts’, viz., intellectual intuition of the I as ‘the true object of consciousness’ and genetic deduction of the ‘conditions from which consciousness’ is ‘constructed’, i.e., of the categories that ‘make it possible for the I to posit itself and to oppose a not-I to itself’ (Fichte GA IV/2, 8, 179). Intellectual intuition apprehends the I as the living power that grounds intelligibility; genetic deduction subsequently comprehends the conditions that are necessary for fully realizing this power in the world. Putting this methodological division in causal terms, we can say that whereas intuition grasps the form of experience, deduction articulates its function.

Fichte expresses this causal distinction in the Second Introduction by drawing a distinction between ‘the I as an intellectual intuition, with which the *Wissenschaftslehre* commences, and the I as an idea, with which it concludes’. On the one hand, the I as intellectual intuition ‘contains nothing but the form of I-hood’, viz., ‘self-reverting acting’. In apprehending the I *qua* unconditioned condition, I grasp the formal cause of my life, ruling out the latter’s explanation by the thing in itself. On the other hand, the I as idea represents the ideal of the ‘completely cultivated’ human being, viz., one who ‘has completely succeeded in exhibiting universal reason within itself’ and thus ‘ceased to be an individual, which [one] was only because of the limitations of sensibility’, and who ‘has also succeeded in completely realizing reason outside of itself in the world’, whose ‘mechanical and organic laws’ have been ‘geared completely toward exhibiting the final goal of reason’ (Fichte SW I, 515–6). In comprehending the I *qua* practical ideal, I articulate the final cause of my life.

Fichte notes that the two senses of the I have ‘in common’ that neither is ‘considered to be an individual’. As intuition, the I ‘has not yet been determined as individuality’, since, *qua* unconditioned condition, it is absolutely self-active and not, like an individual person, relatively self-active. As idea, the I represents that which ‘has vanished as a result of a process of cultivation’ (Fichte SW I, 516), since, *qua* practical ideal, it is a goal for which, *per impossibile*, an individual person no longer must strive. Each non-individual sense of the I is thus a pole between which our lived individuality is strung.

However, this is a limited commonality, for while the I as intuition is the constitutive ground of experience, the I as idea is the regulative goal of experience. Idealism ‘proceeds’ from the I as intuition, which we realize in the act of positing a first principle. But this intuition ‘contains nothing but the form of the I’, whose categorial content ‘becomes thinkable only when the I thinks of a world’, one whose moral perfection is a practical ideal. This ideal is ‘exhibited only within the practical portion of philosophy, where it is shown to be the ultimate aim of reason’s striving’, but an aim that is ‘only something to which we ought to draw infinitely nearer’ and so ‘will never become anything real’ (Fichte SW I, 516). We must review Fichte’s deduction of the necessity of this aim in order to see how it makes sense of death.

¹⁸ See Fichte SW I, 87; SW III, 2, 9; SW IV, 14-5; GA II/8, 84-5.

The deduction in question first appears in the *Foundations*. In Part I, Fichte discovers by a process of analysis that positing the I yields a contradiction whose solution is to be achieved, not through the deduction of theoretical categories in Part II, but ultimately through the deduction of practical categories in Part III. Both stages of Fichte's deduction make productive use of this originary contradiction and thus proceed according to a dialectical logic that develops throughout the Jena period.¹⁹

In §1 of Part I, Fichte argues that the I is the ultimate ground of positing, i.e., the 'necessary connection' between subject and predicate in the identity proposition 'A=A', for it is in virtue of the I's identity and its capacity to unify consciousness that subject and predicate constitute a unity. This argument articulates Fichte's opening claim that the I is the '*act* which neither appears nor can appear among the empirical determinations of consciousness, but instead lies at the basis of all consciousness and alone makes consciousness possible' (Fichte SW I, 91–2, 94–6).

In §2, Fichte argues that the I is 'the same connection' between subject and predicate in the opposition proposition ' $\sim A$ is not = A', for, again, it is in virtue of the I's identity that subject and predicate constitute a unity. Indeed, he says, the form of any proposition whatsoever stands 'under the highest form, that of *formability as such*—the form of the unity of consciousness', i.e., the identity of the I (Fichte SW I, 101–2). Moreover, not only would the terms in a proposition fail to constitute a unity if the I that posited them were not an identity, but also if the I that posited both an identity proposition and an opposition proposition were not an identity, then the latter act of positing 'would not be an act of positing *in opposition*', which it would be only 'in relation' to the former act of positing (Fichte SW I, 103), viz., within the unity of consciousness that is the I.

Fichte then observes that while 'the *form* of $\sim A$ is determined purely and simply' by the I *qua* condition of '*formability as such*', $\sim A$'s '*matter*' is 'determined by A', for it 'is not what A is, and its entire essence consists in this: that it is not what A is'. What $\sim A$ is can be known 'only if I am acquainted with A'. It follows that the I provides the form of what is posited, but not the matter. Such matter brutally opposes the I and, Fichte says, 'that which is posited in opposition to the I = *not-I*' (Fichte SW I, 104). Later he will assert that the not-I's opposition to the I is a 'postulated *factum*', for it is an opposition that 'underlies and grounds all derivation and grounding' yet for which '[n]o higher ground can be adduced from which one might derive' it (Fichte SW I, 253).

In §3, Fichte says that the foregoing analysis yields 'two conclusions stand[ing] in opposition to each other'. On the one hand, '[i]nsofar as the not-I is posited, the I is not posited'. This is because the not-I materially determines the I, i.e., the not-I 'annul[s] the I'. On the other hand, 'insofar as the not-I is to be posited in the I', i.e., in the unity of consciousness, 'the I must also be posited'. This is because the I formally determines the not-I, i.e., the not-I 'presupposes the identity of the I' (Fichte SW I, 106). Insofar as the not-I is posited, then, the I is and is not posited.

¹⁹On what makes Fichte's deduction genetic, i.e., both genealogical and jurisprudential, see Bruno 2018. On what makes this deduction's logic post-transcendental, i.e., dialectical, see Neuhauser 2014. For an account of the dialectic in the *Vocation*, see Martin 2013, 134–40.

The opposition between these conclusions reveals an originary contradiction, and hence a disunity, within consciousness such that the I is and is not an identity or, as Fichte puts it, both 'I = I' and 'I is not = I' (Fichte SW I, 107).

The threat that 'the identity of consciousness, which is the sole, absolute foundation of our knowledge, is nullified' by the constituent conclusions in the originary contradiction incurs a 'task', viz., to 'discover some X' through which these conclusions can be regarded as 'correct without nullifying the identity of consciousness'. Since the task is to preserve the unity of consciousness and thus the identity of the I, X must be 'a product of an original action of the I' (Fichte SW I, 107). Indeed, Fichte says, '*critical philosophy*' only 'becomes *Wissenschaftslehre*' if it derives from the 'absolute I' alone a system of categories in which the opposing 'features' of the I and not-I are united and that therefore includes X (Fichte SW I, 115, 119). However, the statement in Part I of the task of discovering X 'by no means determines *how*' the two contradictory conclusions, viz., that the I is and is not posited insofar as the not-I is posited, are to be 'thought together in a manner that does not annihilate and annul them' (Fichte SW I, 108). It accordingly falls, in Parts II and III, to the second methodological part of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, viz., genetic deduction, to derive the categories that 'make it possible for the I to posit itself and to oppose a not-I to itself'. This deduction will culminate in an X that not only reconciles the contradictory conclusions and thereby preserves the unity of consciousness, but also articulates the final cause of human life.

In Part II, a deduction of theoretical categories proves inadequate to the task of discovering X and resolving the contradiction within consciousness. A full presentation of this proof exceeds the scope of this paper. It suffices to note that, after analyzing the co-determination of the I and not-I in terms of the categories of limitation, division, and negation, Fichte observes that 'the contradiction will not be completely resolved in this way, but only displaced and posited anew'. This is because, with each deduced category,

[o]ne inserts between [the I and the not-I] some X, upon which both have an effect and by means of which each therefore has a mediated or indirect effect upon the other. Nevertheless, one quickly discovers that this X must, in turn, also contain some point at which I and not-I come into immediate contact [and thus contradict each other]. In order to prevent this, one avoids this sharp boundary by inserting a new intermediate component = Y. But it soon becomes evident that, just as in the case of X, Y also must contain some point in which the two components posited in opposition to each other come into immediate contact. And things would continue in this manner forever were the knot not loosened but severed by means of an absolute decree of reason, not a decree pronounced by the philosopher himself, but one to which he merely calls attention, namely, that since there is no way in which the not-I can be united with the I, *there ought to be* no not-I at all. (Fichte SW I, 143–4)

Each theoretical category fails to condition the possibility of the I positing the not-I because it only reformulates their co-determination, viz., as co-limiting, co-dividing, and co-negating. Each category thereby repeats the originary contradiction, only to

call for yet another category. We escape this regress only by deducing the 'absolute decree of reason', viz., that there ought to be 'no not-I' determining the I. Since this deduction cannot be theoretical, we must pursue the 'infinity of the I' in the 'practical part of our science' (Fichte SW I, 217–8),²⁰ viz., in Part III.

In §5 of Part III, Fichte says that since, for the sake of the unity of consciousness, the I must be posited 'purely and simply by the I itself', the 'contradiction' of a not-I that imposes a 'check' on the I's activity 'must be eliminated', viz., by conceiving of the I as the 'cause of the not-I' (Fichte SW I, 248–50).²¹ However, this causality cannot annul the not-I's opposition to the I, for then the not-I would 'cease to be not-I' and would 'itself become I'. Rather, this causality must consist in the not-I's 'conformity' to the I. Fichte understands conformity in the sense of 'Kant's categorical imperative', according to which everything 'ought to be posited' through the 'absolute being of the I' (Fichte SW I, 254, 260–60n). The not-I conforms, in this sense, to the I's demand for 'a world as it would be were all reality to be posited purely and simply through the I', i.e., 'an ideal world' (Fichte SW I, 269). The causality whereby the not-I conforms to the I is therefore final, for it harnesses the not-I toward the realization of an end, viz., nature's moral perfection.²²

However, since the not-I appears to us most directly in the guise of our natural inclinations, the I is the final cause of the not-I within us and is therefore the final cause of human life. We must morally perfect nature because it is our own actions, swayed as they are by inclination, that must conform to the I. As Fichte says, 'that everything be in harmony with the I' is a 'demand' specifically of our 'practical reason' (Fichte SW I, 263–4). Moreover, since we are never rid of our inclinations, fully conforming to the I is impossible. This is why, in §§6–7, Fichte says that 'striving' for nature's moral perfection merely 'aims to exercise causality' on the not-I. Were we actually and fully to 'exercise causality' on the not-I, we would 'completely annihilate' it and thus would cease to strive, i.e., we would, *per impossibile*, achieve moral perfection (Fichte SW I, 287).²³ As the final cause of our life, then, the I represents an ideal our striving for which always presupposes the not-I

²⁰Cf. the *Vocation's* account of the limits of theoretical reason in Crowe 2013, 38–44.

²¹See Fichte SW I, 210–2.

²²This is not Fichte's ultimate characterization of the contradictory relation between the I and the not-I. In *Natural Right*, he extends his dialectical reflection on this relation, arguing that while the I always limits the not-I, in a 'prior moment' the not-I always limits the I, 'and so *ad infinitum*', a regress that is 'cancelled only if it is assumed that *the subject's efficacy* is synthetically unified with the *object* in one and same moment' in a way that 'leave[s] the subject in full possession of its freedom to be self-determining'. Fichte locates this moment in another's summons, which regards 'the subject's being-determined as *its being-determined to be self-determining*'. Your summons invites and so assumes, even as it opposes and so limits, the exercise of my efficacy. This resolves the contradictory relation between the I and the not-I, for it reconceives their causal interaction as an 'undivided event' of '*free reciprocal efficacy*' (Fichte SW III, 32–4), thereby recasting the world in social rather than merely sensible terms.

²³Cf. Fichte SW I, 254.

and so is endless. As Fichte puts it, while the I ‘strives to fill infinity’, this ‘cannot be posited unless an opposing striving of the not-I is [also] posited’ (Fichte SW I, 288).²⁴ Anticipating the terms of the *New Presentation*, we can say that although conformity to the practical ideal of nature’s moral perfection is ‘something to which we ought to draw infinitely nearer’, this ideal ‘will never become anything real’ and thus is regulative.

After deducing the necessity of striving endlessly to satisfy the I’s demand for nature’s moral perfection, Fichte announces in §8 that ‘the most complete system in the entire human being’ is derived from ‘the subordination’ of ‘all *theoretical laws*’ to ‘*practical laws*’ or, ‘since there is indeed but one practical law’, to ‘the same practical law’ (Fichte SW I, 294–5), viz., the moral law. This law is the X that ultimately, albeit regulatively, resolves the originary contradiction between the I and the not-I and thus preserves the unity of consciousness. On the one hand, the I determines the not-I by demanding that they ‘*ought* to be purely and simply the same’ (Fichte SW I, 260). On the other hand, the not-I determines the I by always subsisting alongside its aspiring cause. Both conclusions can now be granted as ‘correct’, for, insofar as we strive for nature’s moral perfection, the I both is and is not posited. It is posited *qua* the final cause of human life and is not posited *qua* the complete actualization of this cause.

How does this final cause make sense of death? Consider that a statement is an answer to and thus presupposes a question in virtue of which it counts as correct.²⁵ For Fichte, my actions are a collective statement of my effort to answer a question that the I, i.e., the living power that grounds intelligibility, poses to me: will I morally perfect (my) nature? The I’s moral law puts my actions into question and, since no set of actions can be a definitive response to it, I am always answering for myself. Every action must respond to this demand, including my last, lest the latter be conditioned by something other than the I and thereby refute idealism. The moral law is itself an answer to no question because it presupposes nothing, i.e., nothing external to the I. This law is consequently the highest question. My whole life is my answer to it. Consequently, my life is a continuous moral activity that must include my final act on pain of the Spinozistic scenario in which my death is a non-purposive event whose cause is external to the I, i.e., a *caput mortuum* lying in wait to refute the very idea of the I’s self-activity. My death must instead be my highest answer to the highest question. By supporting this thought, Fichte’s idealism provides an immortalist account of the meaning of death according to which death is intelligible to the extent that it serves the moral purpose of life.²⁶

²⁴Cf. Fichte SW I, 270.

²⁵On the relation between statement and question, see Collingwood 1969, 23–32.

²⁶Cf. Fichte: ‘the only thing that exists is reason, and individuality is something merely accidental. Reason is the end and personality is the means. [...R]eason alone is eternal, whereas individuality must ceaselessly die off’ (Fichte SW I, 550).

4. Life and Death

The immortalist arguments in Fichte's Jena period depict humans as living powers whose freedom is intrinsic and whose existence is purposive to the very last. They also clarify the *Vocation's* claim that life is eternal, rational, our true being, and the final cause of nature and of death. It is because the I's self-activity unconditionally conditions the intelligibility of experience that it is eternal and rational. It is because positing the I as first principle and apprehending myself as an instance of its self-activity are the same act that the I constitutes my true being. And it is because the I's identity is ultimately thinkable only as issuing a demand for nature's moral perfection that it is the final cause of nature in its entirety, including the event of my death.

Fichte's immortalist position rules out the threat that my mortality conceals the truth of Spinozism in the form of an inexplicable *caput mortuum*. The moral project of bending nature to the I's moral law cannot be undermined in my final moment, as if the latter could falsify the reality of living powers. Death must rather be conceived, as Fichte says in the *Vocation*, as life's own struggle to 'present itself ever more purely and more like itself'. As we saw, this struggle consists in our endlessly striving to render the not-I ever more like the I. We authentically pursue this goal only if we recognize that death is nothing and life is all.

There is no mistaking Fichte's rejection of the nihilistic image of nature in the *Vocation*:

The system of freedom satisfies my heart; the opposite system kills and annihilates it. [...] I want to love, I want to lose myself in taking an interest[.] [...] Only in love is there life; without it there is death and annihilation. [...] We do not act because we know, but we know because we are meant to act; practical reason is the root of all reason. [...] We cannot renounce [practical] laws without having the world and, with it, ourselves sink into absolute nothingness. (Fichte 1987, 24, 79)

It is nevertheless an open question whether Fichte's philosophical account of the primacy of life is preferable to Jacobi's non-philosophy of living powers. Jacobi holds that it is only through 'faith' that I grasp the 'wondrous revelation' that I have a body, that there are other bodies, and that, in general, 'without the *Thou*, the *I* is impossible' (Jacobi 1994, 231). Although Fichte arrives at the latter claim via genetic deduction in *Natural Right*, Jacobi will charge that systematic deductive inference entails nihilism. But perhaps Fichte can escape this charge given his view that embracing the *Wissenschaftslehre* ultimately depends on 'faith in oneself', i.e., on 'confidence in one's own self-sufficiency and freedom' (Fichte GA IV/2, 17). In that case, post-Kantian immortalism offers a plausible renunciation of death's head.²⁷

²⁷Thanks to Addison Ellis, Gabriel Gottlieb, Rory Phillips, and Owen Ware for helpful comments on this paper.

References

- Ahlers, Rolf. 2003. Vitalism and System: Jacobi and Fichte on Speculation and Life. *Idealistic Studies* 33 (1): 83–113.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. 1996. Everness. In *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology*, ed. Stephen Tapscott. Texas: University of Texas Press.
- Breazeale, Daniel. 2018. Fichte's Spinoza: "Common Standpoint", "Essential Opposition", and "Hidden Treasure". *International Yearbook of German Idealism* 14: 103–138.
- Bruno, G. Anthony. 2014. A Peculiar Fate: The Unity of Human Life in Kant and Heidegger. *Dialogue: Canadian Philosophical Review* 53 (4): 715–735.
- . 2016. "As From a State of Death": Schelling's Idealism as Mortalism. *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 8 (3): 1–14.
- . 2018. Genealogy and Jurisprudence in Fichte's Genetic Deduction of the Categories. *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 35 (1): 77–96.
- . 2022. From Being to Acting: Kant and Fichte on Intellectual Intuition. *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*: 1–22.
- Collingwood, R.G. 1969. *An Essay on Metaphysics*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Crowe, Benjamin. 2013. Fichte's Philosophical *Bildungsroman*. In *Fichte's Vocation of Man: New Interpretive and Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel Breazeale and Tom Rockmore. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Di Giovanni, George. 1989. From Jacobi's Philosophical Novel to Fichte's Idealism: Some Comments on the 1798-99 "Atheism Dispute". *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 27 (1): 75–100.
- Fichte, J.G. 1889. *The Way Towards the Blessed Life or the Doctrine of Religion in The Popular Works of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Volume II.* Trans. W. Smith. London: Trubner
- . [GA] 1962–2012. *J.G. Fichte: Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. R. Lauth, H. Jacobs, and H. Gliwitzky. Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: Frommann-holzboog.
- . [SW] 1965. *Sämtliche Werke*. I.H. Fichte. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- . 1987. *The Vocation of Man*. Trans. Peter Preuss. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- . 1994. *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings*. Trans. Daniel Breazeale. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- . 1998. *Foundations of Transcendental Philosophy (Wissenschaftslehre) nova Methodo*. Trans. Daniel Breazeale. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 2000. *Foundations of Natural Right*. Trans. Michael Bauer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2021. *Foundation of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre and Related Writings (1794-95)*. Trans. Daniel Breazeale. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Franks, Paul. 2005. *All or Nothing: Systematicity, Transcendental Arguments, and Skepticism in German Idealism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hegel, G.W.F. 1991. *The Encyclopedia Logic (with the Zusätze)*. Trans. T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, and H.S. Harris. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Jacobi, F.H. 1994. *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel Allwill*. Trans. George di Giovanni. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Martin, Wayne. 2013. The Dialectic of Judgment and *The Vocation of Man*. In *Fichte's Vocation of Man: New Interpretive and Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel Breazeale and Tom Rockmore. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Neuhouser, Frederick. 2014. Fichte's Methodology in the *Wissenschaftslehre* (1794–95). In *The Palgrave Handbook of German Idealism*, ed. M.C. Altman. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Pippin, Robert. 2000. Fichte's Alleged Subjective, Psychological, One-Sided Idealism. In *The Reception of Kant's Critical Philosophy: Fichte, Schelling and Hegel*, ed. Sally Sedgwick. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shinbun Shusei Meiji Hennenshi. 1940. *Newspaper Compilation Meiji Edition Annals, Vol. 12*. Tokyo: Rinsensha.
- Zöller, Günter. 2013. "An Other and Better World": Fichte's *The Vocation of Man* as a Theologico-Political Treatise. In *Fichte's Vocation of Man: New Interpretive and Critical Essays*, ed. Daniel Breazeale and Tom Rockmore. Albany: SUNY Press.