Where Have All the Monads Gone? Substance and Transcendental Freedom in Schleiermacher*

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While there is no doubt that the early Schleiermacher was both a Spinozist and a determinist, it has remained an open question whether the mature Schleiermacher continued to espouse Spinozism and the manner of determinism entailed by it.[1] Included in this question is whether the later Schleiermacher thought of the self as a genuine metaphysical substance having real powers of its own, or whether he thought God was the only genuine substance, so that at bottom consciousness of the spontaneity of the self was only an unavoidable illusion. Certainly the later Schleiermacher protested that his theology was decidedly not pantheistic.[2] I have argued elsewhere that the decisive turn in Schleiermacher's thought was his abandonment of Spinozism and his espousal of a modified version of Leibniz's philosophy: the self is a genuine center of power.[3] Contra Leibniz, however, the self not only expresses itself out into the world of others, it is also capable of receiving their influence: it is a self-subsistent monad with open windows.

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[1] For instance, Julia A. Lamm, in *The Living God: Schleiermacher's Theological Appropriation of Spinoza* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), treats Schleiermacher's work, both early and later, as a post-Kantian Spinozism. She claims that "Schleiermacher's system remains a form of Spinozism, not only nominally in its direct appeal to Spinoza ("the holy rejected Spinoza!") but also fundamentally" (86). For a view acknowledging Schleiermacher's Leibnizian inheritance, see Manfred Frank, "Metaphysical Foundations," in *The Cambridge Companion to Friedrich Schleiermacher*, ed. Jacqueline Mariña (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 15–34.

[2] Protests can be found in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On the "Glaubenslehre": Two Letters to Dr. Lücke*, in *Schleiermacher Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–) (hereafter *KGA*, cited parenthetically in the text by division, volume [and sometimes also part], and page number), I.10:307–94, and, as I note below, throughout the second edition of *Christian Faith*.

[3] See Jacqueline Mariña, *Transformation of the Self in the Thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), chaps. 2–4.

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This article explores the later Schleiermacher's metaphysics of substance and what it entails concerning the question of transcendental freedom. I show that in espousing a metaphysics of substance, Schleiermacher also abandoned an understanding of nature as a mere mechanism, a view implying what I call a "state-state view of causation" ("SSV" for short). Adoption of the view of the self as substance was motivated by the primacy of practical and religious concerns in Schleiermacher's later work: in *Christian Faith*, an analysis of self-consciousness from a first person point of view grounds this understanding of the self. In fact, in *Christian Faith*, ontology, and thereby theology, is only possible through such a first person analysis. The development of Schleiermacher's views over time, and the reasons accompanying this development, can be fully understood only the in the context of his engagement with the work of Spinoza, Leibniz, and Kant. In what follows I trace this development through an analysis of the philosophical problems and influences shaping Schleiermacher's mature view, and shed light on his understanding of self-consciousness and its relation to God. My own account should also serve to correct some recent misunderstandings that have made their way into the secondary literature.[4]

In the first three sections of this article I lay out the principle contours of the "antinomy of agency" troubling the early Schleiermacher, providing an analysis of SSV therein presupposed and its relation to Spinozism. In the third and fourth sections of the article I show why Schleiermacher's eventual solution to the antinomy, namely, the espousal of the idea of self-active substances, also committed him to transcendental freedom in Kant's sense. In the fifth section I flesh out Kant's concept of transcendental freedom and demonstrate that it can coexist with the self's complete determination by God. Finally, the last section addresses the importance of this metaphysic of substances to Schleiermacher's religious and ethical outlook, and provides an analysis of Schleiermacher's method of theology from a first person point of view in *Christian Faith*.

[4] In particular, I have in mind Andrew Dole's book *Schleiermacher on Religion and the Natural Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), in which Dole argues that "in his mature work [Schleiermacher] once again gave articulation to a conviction that he had first expressed in his mid-twenties: that the best way to understand oneself qua human being . . . is to understand oneself as a being whose every thought, feeling, and action are the necessary product of the operation of chains of natural causes stretching back to the beginning of time" (36–37). As such, "all events within the natural order, including the 'innermost' events within the human soul, are appropriate objects of scientific research" (151). Therefore, he argues, Schleiermacher accounts for Christianity (and indeed all religions) as a fully "natural phenomenon" (146) and then adds a thin "theological overlay" that he then "superimposed" on it (147); Schleiermacher's understanding of Christianity is a "supplemented naturalism" (138). My discussion of Schleiermacher's metaphysics of substance demonstrates that the later Schleiermacher's espousal of a Leibnizian metaphysics of substance and its implications contradict Dole's account in very significant ways, especially in regard to Dole's claim that Schleiermacher believed the best way to understand oneself is in terms of mechanistic causality.

I. THE ANTINOMY OF AGENCY

One of Schleiermacher's central preoccupations in his early essay *On Freedom* (1790–92) was with the concept of agency and the conditions of act attribution.[5] There we find Schleiermacher puzzling over an "antinomy of agency," namely, the fact that the conditions of act attribution seem subject to two conflicting demands.[6] The first demand is one that we find developed by Hume, Leibniz, and other compatibilists regarding the concept of freedom, namely, that in order to cogently attribute an action to an agent, the agent's action must be connected with the agent's character, that is, it must be seen to follow from the agent's motives, desires, and beliefs.[7] Put more technically, any change of state, and therefore any beginning of an action, presupposes a prior state of the not yet acting cause. It would seem that if we are to posit an action as flowing from an agent, we need to connect the beginning of this action with the agent's state before it began to act. This state would encompass the agent's motives, desires, and beliefs, which we could then connect causally with the agent's subsequent action. Failing such a link, the action would have no connection with prior states and would thereby be an absolute beginning. However, the problem with such absolute beginnings is that they are groundless; they cannot be shown to flow from the prior states or character of the agent, but are arbitrarily produced, having no rhyme or reason insofar as they are not connected with character and motive. In such a scenario, while there is no causal necessity to an agent's action, there seems to be no intelligibility to it, either. The action cannot be intelligibly connected with the agent or the agent's motives (assuming these are contained in the prior states of the agent), and as such a crucial requirement of act attribution—that the action be attributable to the agent—is defeated.

It is for these reasons that Hume found what he called "the liberty of indifference," namely, "a negation of necessity and causes," so objection-

[5] With the exception of a passage from *On Religion* and two passages from *On Freedom* (cited in the notes), all translations of Schleiermacher's work are my own.

[6] I develop this problem at length in Jacqueline Mariña, "Schleiermacher on the Philosopher's Stone: The Shaping of Schleiermacher's Early Ethics by the Kantian Legacy," *Journal of Religion* 79, no. 2 (1999): 193–215; a revised version appeared as the first chapter in *Transformation of the Self*. What I present in this section is a short summary of the results uncovered there, which I discuss in order to motivate the fundamental problem I am developing here, namely, the motives behind Schleiermacher's adoption of transcendental freedom.

[7] Compatibilism is the view that human actions can be thought of as both fully determined by natural causes and as free; the two concepts are not thought to contradict one another because compatibilists typically understand freedom as the capacity to act in accordance with one's wants, wishes, and desires, and these states of the self must be understood to have a causal genesis if an action is to stem from an agent's character. Incompatibilists hold that the two concepts, freedom and determinism, contradict one another and cannot be made to agree. As this essay will show, the incompatibility of freedom and determinism can have two different grounds, depending upon how both freedom and determinism are understood.

able.[8] In his *Theodicy* Leibniz had also recognized a similar problem, noting the difficulties with what he called "an indifference of equipose," where "all is completely even on both sides, without any inclination towards either."[9] Action resulting from such indifference leads to the absurdity of a "determination for which there is no source."[10] Indifferent actions do not have a sufficient reason. They cannot be connected with a motive grounded in the character of the agent, who would thereby be predisposed to act in one way rather than another. Indifferent agents have no grounds in accordance with which to chose one way or another. Schleiermacher, too, recognized this problem in *On Freedom*. He asks, "How can I be responsible for an action when we cannot determine the extent to which it belongs to my soul?" (*KGA* I.1:316) Following Hume's discussion, he questions how we can understand the motive for an action if it cannot be explained in terms of the agent's character, and hence his/her prior states. Failing such a condition, actions "are based on chance" for they "have no ground at all" (*KGA* I.1:316), which means they have nothing to do with the condition of the agent, that is, his or her psychological states and disposition. Schleiermacher concludes that this idea of "complete chance . . . certainly cancels morality more than anything else" (*KGA* I.1:317).

Considerations such as these motivated Hume's compatibilist proposal reconciling freedom and necessity. On such a compatibilist understanding, an agent can be said to act freely just in case s/he acts in accordance with her wants, wishes and desires, even though these are causally necessitated, and cannot be other than what they are. Let us call this proposal "simple compatibilism." Such a compatibilist solution to the problem of freedom and determinism was quite appealing to the early Schleiermacher, even though he recognized significant problems with it that would later lead him to give it up.

The problem with this proposal, Schleiermacher recognized, is that it seems to run afoul of a second competing demand of act attribution, namely, that we ultimately ground the action in the agent. The causal chain leading to an agent having the motives that she in fact has extends back in time infinitely, and precedes the very existence of the agent. Viewed in this way, the ground of action is external to the agent, and the agent, as such, could not be said to be its initiator, but would be, rather, a kind of turnspit. In *On Freedom* he notes: "This resonance of the soul is in turn a product of preceding and occasioning impressions, and so, resist as we may, all is at last dissolved in

[8] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby Bigge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 407. Just a few sentences earlier Hume makes the important point, "According to my definitions, necessity makes an essential part of causation; and consequently liberty, by removing necessity, removes also the causes, and is the very same thing with chance. As chance is commonly thought to imply a contradiction, and is at least directly contrary to experience, there are always the same arguments against liberty or free will."

[9] G. W. Leibniz, *Theodicy*, trans. E. M. Huggard (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1985), § 46, 148.

[10] Ibid., § 48, 149.

external impressions. So, of all that belongs to the action, what can we then assign to the agent? Do we see the agent in some way? We can think of the agent only as suffering! Or where is the power that is active? It dissolves into infinitely many infinitesimally small external forces that leave us with nothing to think of as firmly active in the subject." (*KGA* I.1:257).[11] On such a scenario, the individual is a mere placeholder in a given causal chain where all is mechanically determined; as Schleiermacher puts it, she flashes "all the colors, but merely according to the laws of refraction. Of all that you see in the person's actions, nothing belongs to the person" (*KGA* I.1:257).[12] Here the agency of the agent disappears, since the causal grounds for each action ultimately can be traced back to events preexisting the agent.

II. CAUSAL DETERMINISM, MECHANISTIC CAUSATION, AND SPINOZISM

Schleiermacher certainly realized the deep connections between the adoption of SSV in natural causation and Spinozism.[13] This SSV was closely tied to empiricist views on natural causation, since we only have empirical access to the states in which objects appear, and not to their inner powers. In his early years he had adopted both this view of empirical causation and Spinozism, using his reflections on the implications of this empiricist view of causation to support his Spinozism. As I note below, the later Schleiermacher dubbed this SSV of causation "mechanistic causation." It will help our inquiry if, before I engage in close textual analysis, I do a bit of conceptual work. What I call the SSV of determinism in natural causation is the following:

> The state of any given object at t_2 is a function of the state of the object at t_1, the relation of its state at t_1 to the states of all other objects influencing it at that time, and the causal laws governing that influence and the changes that will ensue.

Two things stand out as extremely important: first, here there is no talk of the inner powers of substances (which as such can never appear), but only of the states of objects, and the relation of these states to past states. Second, each state of an object is understood as having been fully determined by both the states that preceded it in time and the causal laws governing changes of state. Once we focus on the determination of the states of an object and the laws governing those determinations, an important problem arises, namely, difficulty in understanding how such states might themselves be expressions of the inner powers of substances. The reason for this difficulty lies in that on such an understanding states are always understood in

[11] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Freedom*, trans. Albert L. Blackwell (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1992), 42–43.
[12] Ibid., 43.
[13] I am grateful to Dana Tulodziecki, who helped me to come up with this name.

relation to prior states, not in relation to the inner powers of substances, which in any case never appear. On this model, insofar as any empirical object A has a genesis, namely, a beginning in time, the first state of that object's existence is not thought of as an expression of the inner powers of the substance, but rather as a state that follows upon a previous state. That previous state will not be a state of the object A that has just come into being, but of something else. Three things follow: first, given that all states are determined by prior states, all temporal states of A's existence will, in the last analysis, have been determined by states of affairs that preexisted A. As such, these temporal states are not thought of as the expression of the inner powers of A, but have their sufficient reason in something prior to A's coming into being. Second, given the impossibility of identifying the effects of the powers of a substance, pinpointing the identity, and therefore the existence, of genuine substances becomes a problem. And third, given that what we are dealing with here is law-governed changes of states throughout the natural order, these states are best understood as states of one underlying substance. This is because in thinking the change of the final state of B to the first state of A, we must posit an ultimate underlying substance which is neither A nor B, but to which such states and changes of state belong. Only such an underlying substance provides us with the necessary unity allowing us to think the transition from the final state of B to the first state of A. Spinozism is therefore the result.

Considerations such as these were certainly at the foreground of the Spinozism controversy, with which Schleiermacher was quite familiar. As such, the Spinozism put forward by Schleiermacher in his early essays, "Spinozism" and "Short Presentation of the Spinozistic System" (both from around 1793–94), went hand in hand with the determinism and simple compatibilism espoused by the young Schleiermacher, which, as I have shown in the first section, concerns itself first and foremost with the determination of temporal states. According to this version of Spinozism (which he, at that time, did not think contradicted the Kantian view of things), there is but one fundamental ground of the whole series of appearances, and each appearance is deterministically related to the whole. Now, for our purposes we can correlate the way an object appears at a given time with its state at that time; thus we may speak of a series of the appearances of an object or of a series of its states. In "Spinozism," Schleiermacher connects the appearance of a seed to the whole series of appearances, that is, to the whole series of states that led to its genesis. Once we speak of a series of states, each of which has its sufficient reason in the states that preceded it, Spinozism is the result. Schleiermacher notes that "if a noumenon should be the ground of the whole series of appearances from seed to tree, then this series may not end here, it must extend itself to all previous trees and seeds and those that follow, and because the mechanical and chemical changes

in the thing, and the ground of their relation to others, must be just so well preformed as the organic, which are so precisely interconnected with it, then this series must extend throughout the whole world of sense, and we thereby come once more to the Spinozistic relation" (*KGA* I.1:526–27).

What is it that grounds the series of transitions from seed to tree? If we were to posit something that underlies these transitions (the powers of a substance that ground the changes from state to state) we could not find a sufficient reason to limit the expression of the powers of this substance to the changes that appear to us in the transition from seed to tree. This is because the first state of the seed and the transitions it will undergo (namely, "the mechanical and chemical changes in the thing") are preformed, namely, predetermined by what appeared before the genesis of the seed. As such, Schleiermacher reasons, what appeared before must itself also be an expression of the same substance grounding both seed and tree, for the seed had its sufficient reason in those previous series of appearances. Spinozism is the result: all appearances are interconnected and deterministically related to one another; they are but expressions of the one noumenon that grounds or underlies them. Important here is that there is but one series of appearances: the unity and interconnection of such appearances in one temporal manifold quite naturally lends itself to the supposition that the appearances are those of a single ground which contains them all eminently within itself, and as such each appearance has its sufficient reason in the single noumenon grounding the whole world of sense.

The early Schleiermacher also mentions another important issue closely interrelated to the argument above. This is the mapping problem: how do we identify and demarcate metaphysical substances from one another if all that is given to us empirically is a series of changes of state? Strictly speaking, substances never appear; only their states or accidents do. How then do we map this series of changes, which extends infinitely into the past and the future, onto the powers of distinct individual substances? How do we know where one substance begins and another ends? "But tell us something about how and why you distinguish the phenomena as separate objects. Does this distinction have to do with the one combination, so that you would know you have grasped precisely that which results from a monad connection through your representation? How might you know this? Or does it have to do with this: that just what you see as your object belongs to a common central monad? How do you know this then, and how have you achieved this knowledge of monads through which to separate the individuals from one another?" (*KGA* I.1:548) These were powerful considerations that led the early Schleiermacher to reject the idea of a plurality of monads and to posit a single, underlying substance. Nevertheless, Schleiermacher would realize, as Kant before him had seen, that there were equally powerful, yet significantly more important, considerations that spoke in favor of the idea of a

plurality of substances or monads. For Kant, these were practical considerations; for Schleiermacher, these considerations would be both practical and spiritual.[14]

III. KANT, LEIBNIZ, AND THE THREAT OF SPINOZISM

Kant well understood the connections between the model of causation outlined above and the threat that Spinozism posed to morality. If there is but one substance, one real center of power, decision and action, there are no real moral agents, either. It was on practical grounds that Kant reintroduced the Leibnizian idea of the community of substances, each with its own intelligible character grounded in its monadic properties. Nevertheless, Kant believed that it was only through the transcendental philosophy affirming the unknowability, on theoretical grounds, of the true character of things in themselves that the idea of such a community of intelligible substances could be upheld on grounds having to do with the primacy of practical reason. Hence in his late work of 1790, "On a Discovery Whereby any New Critique of Reason is to Be Made Superfluous by an Older One," Kant notes that "the Critique of Pure Reason might well be the true apology for Leibniz, even against those of his disciples that heap praises upon him that do him no honor" (*AA* 8:251).[15] Now what the transcendental philosophy was supposed to hold at bay was the specter of Spinozism, which made the idea of a true community of substances, each with its own inner powers not determined by external forces, impossible. Were the empiricist view of causation outlined above true of things as they are in themselves, morality could not

[14] I speak here of the *primacy of the practical* in Kant's philosophy. For Kant, this amounts to the idea that we may posit the reality of something such as freedom so long as if, from a theoretical point of view, its impossibility has not been proven, and the idea of its reality is morally required. Certainly Kant would agree that the existence of genuine moral subjects, centers of power and decision, ranks among one of the realities that must be assumed from a moral point of view.

[15] Citations to Kant's works are provided parenthetically. Two modes of citation will be used. Citations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* (KrV) refer to the pagination of Kant's first ("A") and/or second ("B") editions. All other excerpts from Kant's work are cited by volume and page number and refer to the standard edition of Kant's works, *Kants gesammelte Schriften* (the *Akademie Ausgabe*, hereafter *AA*), edited by the Royal Prussian, later German, then Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, in 29 volumes (Berlin: Reimer; de Gruyter, 1900–). All translations are from the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992–). Since these translations always provide the Academy edition pagination, page numbers for translations are omitted. The Cambridge edition translations containing works cited are *Correspondence*, trans. and ed. Arnulf Zweig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); *Lectures on Metaphysics*, trans. and ed. Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *Notes and Fragments*, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); *Critique of Practical Reason*; *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. and ed. Allen W. Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and *Theoretical Philosophy after 1781*, ed. Henry Allison and Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

be saved. In a draft of his essay "What Real Progress has Metaphysics Made in Germany?" Kant notes that "the origin of the critical philosophy is morality, with respect to the imputability of action" (*AA* 20:335).[16] So long as action originates from the inner powers of a substance, the action is imputable to the agent. Not so in the Spinozistic business, wherein there is no such plurality, but rather a single underlying ground in which all events take place. Hence in the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant noted that such a monism makes of finite agents and actions mere "accidents" inhering in the one substance, and that on such a view "freedom could not be saved" (*AA* 5:101–2).[17]

At this point it will be useful to review the conceptual entailments discussed so far: determinism in accordance with a model of mechanistic causation implies Spinozism, that is, the idea that there is only one underlying substance in which all changes of state take place. If we deny Spinozism, we also deny mechanistic causation (the view of causal influence discussed above). Denial of this empiricist view of causation (implying only one center of power) implies that there are either multiple centers of power, or there are none.[18] Since the expression of power and its transfer is evident throughout all of existence, there must be multiple centers of power.

The key, then, to avoiding Spinozism and saving morality lies in providing an account allowing us to posit a multiplicity of substances, namely, real persons that are centers of decision and action. However, as we have seen, the idea of a multiplicity of substances contradicts the SSV of empirical causation. The problem the early Schleiermacher saw with Leibniz's positing of such a multiplicity of monads was that it remained a mere hypothesis, since it contradicted the empirical view of causation, and since Leibniz could not solve the mapping problem. While Leibniz had shown that such monads were logically possible, he did not show how we could find them in the empirical world: "We could in fact say to him [Leibniz]: you in fact believe to have shown through your hypothesis how and why many substances are possible. But tell us how and why you should distinguish the phenomena as separate objects" (*KGA* I.1:548).

[16] See Kant's 1798 letter to Garve, where he notes that what aroused him from his "dogmatic slumber" was the question of freedom vs. the necessity of nature (*AA* 12:257–58).

[17] Schleiermacher makes a similar point, although here he does not connect it to the question of freedom: "Were there no monads, then Spinoza would be correct, and all outside God would be ignored, and would disappear as an accidental attribute because the things would be lacking their own ground of endurance" (*KGA* I.1:547).

[18] The early Schleiermacher noted that if we deny Spinozism, "it must be replaced either by Leibniz's monads or the Eleatic acatalepsy [skepticism]" (ibid.). The second choice Schleiermacher lists, namely, skepticism (the first is a monadology of substance), is different from the one I consider above (that there are no centers of power). Nevertheless, since skepticism is not an account of what is, but concerns only our capacity to know it, it should not be considered an option regarding the fundamental nature of reality. Given this consideration, what is important here is that Schleiermacher lists Leibniz's monads as the only other option should Spinozism be denied.

Given the conceptual entailments discussed above, Kant realized he needed to come up with an account that both saves the phenomena of empirical causation and preserves that which morality requires, namely, genuine persons. Since the view that substances are genuine centers of power contradicts the SSV of empirical causation and is as such incompatible with it, Kant needed to demonstrate the compatibility of compatibilism with incompatibilism.[19] In other words, he needed to show that the simple compatibilism of Hume, which redefined freedom as action in accordance with one's wants, wishes, and desires, and as therefore compatible with the empiricist view of mechanistic causation, was itself compatible with the incompatibilist understanding of substances as genuine centers of power, which contradicted the empiricist view of causation. It is well known that the way Kant achieved this complex compatibilism was through his distinction between appearances and things in themselves in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: things as they appear to us stand in relation to us; however, these same things can be thought of in abstraction from their relation to us, or how they appear to us, and as such would be considered as things in themselves.[20] Insofar as things are given to me in space and time I understand them both in relation to me and to each other, but not in terms of their monadic properties, that is, those properties that do not depend on their relation to anything outside of them. Space and time are but a system of relations contributed by the cognizing subject. They are not features of things in themselves; as such, what is given to me in space and time are appearances that are fundamentally relational. Insofar as the SSV of causation, through which we relate states of affairs to one another, depends on the spatiotemporal manifold, it too will only yield a system of relations in this single spatiotemporal manifold. Since, however, this spatiotemporal manifold is the necessary contribution of the subject to cognition, it is not a feature of things in themselves, and neither are any of the features of the phenomena that appear in it, including the causal relations among them. From a theoretical point of view things in themselves are unknown and unknowable. The upshot of Kant's statement that he found it necessary to "deny knowledge to make room for faith" (KrV, B xxx) was that denial of theoretical, metaphysical knowledge of the nature of things in themselves allowed room for rationally ascribing to such things in themselves what morality required, given the primacy of practical reason. This was the strategy recommended by Kant in the second *Critique*: "Consequently, if one still wants to save it [freedom], no other path remains than to ascribe the existence of a thing so far as it is determinable in time, and so too its causality in accordance with the law of natural necessity, only to

[19] The issue is treated at length by Allen W. Wood in "Kant's Compatibilism," in *Self and Nature in Kant's Philosophy*, ed. Allen W. Wood (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 74.

[20] On this point, see Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

appearance, and to ascribe freedom to the same being as a thing in itself" (*AA* 5:95).

Kant saw that if space and time were features of things in themselves, Spinozism would result. He notes that "If I take space and time as predicates, qualities of things in themselves, Spinozism arises immediately" (Metaphysik K2, *AA* 28:803); "If we regard space as real, we assume Spinoza's system" (Metaphysik Dohna, *AA* 28:666); "If I take space as an entity in itself, then Spinozism is irrefutable . . . space is the Godhead, it is single, omnipresent, nothing can be thought outside of it, everything is in it" (Metaphysik L_2, *AA* 28:567). The argument is presented at length in the section entitled "Critical Elucidation of the Analytic of Pure Practical Reason" of the second *Critique*. There Kant relates the idea that space and time are features of things in themselves (transcendental realism) to causal realism, the idea that relations between events described in the model of empirical causation described above belong to things in themselves. This model depends upon the presupposition that there is a single spatiotemporal manifold through which distinct events are relatable to one another. If this spatiotemporal manifold is thought to be transcendentally real, then so are the relations, including those of causation, found in it. Hence Kant argues, if we are transcendental realists about space and time, attributing them to things in themselves, the standard model of causation also applies, and freedom cannot be saved. Kant notes that, "Now, if one takes the determinations of the existence of things in time for determinations of things in themselves (which is the most usual way of representing them), then the necessity in the causal relation can in no way be united with freedom; instead they are opposed to each other as contradictory" (*AA* 5:94). Further, Kant continues, if we are transcendental realists about space, time, and causation, Spinozism results: "Hence, if this ideality of time and space is not adopted, nothing remains but Spinozism, in which space and time are essential determinations of the original being itself, while the things dependent upon it (ourselves, therefore, included) are not substances but merely accidents inhering in it; for, if these things exist merely as its effects in time, which would be the condition of their existence itself, then the actions of these beings would have to be merely its actions that it performs in any place and at any time" (*AA* 5:101–2). The arguments presented here are buttressed by those found in the first analogy of the first *Critique*: the requirement of the unity of experience to posit a single spatiotemporal field through which distinct events are relatable to one another (causation) presupposes the idea of a single underlying substance, in which all alterations take place. Only through the notion of such an underlying substance can discrete phenomenal events be relatable to one another. If we think of space as transcendentally real, instead of as a form of intuition grounded in the representational capacities of finite subjects such as ourselves, Spinozism unavoidably results.

For these reasons Kant believed that only through the critical philosophy, which argued that space and time are not features of things in themselves, could Spinozism be avoided and morality saved. The business of morality only makes ultimate sense if we posit genuine individuals in communion with one another, and not "mere inhering accidents." As I argue below, the positing of transcendental freedom, as the "power of beginning an action *von selbst*," has first and foremost to do with the positing of substances whose inner powers are not determined by intra-worldly forces external to them. It is what must be posited in order to steer clear of Spinozism. Only if there are such substances is true personhood possible; in Reflexion 4225 Kant notes, "The question, whether freedom is possible, is perhaps the same as the question whether the human being is a true person and whether the I is possible in a being with relational/outer determinations" (ob das Ich in einem wesen von aeusseren Bestimmungen moeglich sey) (*AA* 17:464–65).

IV. TRUE PERSONS, TRANSCENDENTAL FREEDOM, AND A SOLUTION TO THE ANTINOMY OF AGENCY

It was certainly considerations such as these, along with important others, that led Kant to defend the possibility of transcendental freedom and its compatibility with phenomenal necessity in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. There, it will be recalled, we find Kant's famous definition of transcendental freedom as "a faculty of absolutely beginning a state, and hence also a series of its consequences" (KrV A445/B473) Kant later continues: "By freedom in the cosmological sense, on the contrary, I understand the faculty of beginning a state from itself, the causality of which does not in turn stand under another cause determining it in time in accordance with the law of nature. Freedom in this signification is a pure transcendental idea, which first, contains nothing borrowed from experience, and second, the object of which also cannot be given determinately in any experience" (KrV A533/B561). The early Schleiermacher was quite familiar with Kant's notion of transcendental freedom; his early essays were a youthful attempt to appropriate elements of Kant's philosophy while rejecting others. His early rejection of Kant's transcendental freedom is connected with two important considerations. First, the nature of the early Schleiermacher's objections to transcendental freedom reveal that he did not fully grasp what Kant was up to in his development of the idea. Second, the early Schleiermacher's acceptance of the complete causal determination of nature, that is, his "simple compatibilism," went hand in hand with his early Spinozism.

Schleiermacher's early rejection of Kant's transcendental freedom resulted from his misunderstanding of how Kant conceived of it. Kant did not think of transcendental freedom as an uncaused event, one unconnected with prior events, thereby not only rendering the unity of experience impossible, but making it impossible to understand how to attribute action to an agent.

(This would have been the way that Hume understood "the liberty of indifference"). In fact, in the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant notes:

> If, then, one wants to attribute freedom to a being whose existence is determined in time, one cannot, so far at least, except this being from the law of natural necessity as to all events in its existence and consequently as to its actions as well; for, that would be tantamount to handing it over to blind chance. But since this law unavoidably concerns all causality of things so far as their existence in time is determinable, if this were the way in which one had to represent also the existence of these things in themselves then freedom would have to be rejected as a null and impossible concept. Consequently, if one still wants to save it, no other path remains than to ascribe the existence of a thing so far as it is determinable in time, and so too its causality in accordance with the law of natural necessity, only to appearance, and to ascribe freedom to the same being as a thing in itself. (*AA* 5:95)

Transcendental freedom does not apply to phenomena existing in time; as Kant himself notes, were phenomenal events excepted from causal laws, they would have to be understood as springing up in accordance with blind chance and could not be connected with prior experience. Instead, Kant attributes transcendental freedom to substances considered in themselves, that is, in abstraction from their relation to us. However, every phenomenal event has a cause. As such, a person's empirical character, namely, that which makes its appearance in the phenomenal world, must be understood as fully determined in the world of sense. Hence Kant famously notes that "for a subject of the world of sense we would first have an empirical character, through which its actions, as appearances, would stand through and through in connection with other appearances in accordance with constant natural laws, from which, as their conditions, they could be derived; and thus in combination with these other appearances, they would constitute members of a single series of the natural order" (KrV A539/B567). Transcendental freedom, however, is not something that appears at all; indeed it cannot appear, for it is a characteristic of the subject considered noumenally, and not a characteristic of a subject as it is given to the representational faculty of another finite subject. Now according to Kant, the empirical character is a manifestation, an appearing, of the intelligible character. Transcendental freedom applies only to the subject's intelligible character. The intelligible character is not temporal, and thus not subject to the law of succession. Now, we can think of the intelligible character of a substance in terms of its monadic properties, namely, the properties that it has in itself; they are the inner grounds of the powers of substance which finite subjects such as ourselves could never cognize (they could only be known by God through an intellectual intuition). Hence Kant notes that,

> For since these appearances, because they are not things in themselves, must be grounded in a transcendental object determining them as mere representations, nothing hinders us from ascribing to this transcendental object, apart from the property through which it appears, also another causality that is not appearance, even though its effect is encountered in appearance. . . . One would also have to allow this

subject an intelligible character, through which it is indeed the cause of those actions as appearances, but which does not stand under any conditions of sensibility and is not itself appearance. The first one could call the character of such a thing in appearance, the second its character as a thing in itself. (KrV A539/B567)

Free actions are not groundless; they are the expressions of the intelligible character. Even when not considered from the point of view of appearance and hence not as causally determined, free actions are still the expressions of an agent's intelligible character, and are, as such, attributable to the agent. Considered as free they are not unmoored from the intelligible character of the subject, and hence the problem that Schleiermacher details in *On Freedom* regarding the problem of connecting free actions with agents is not applicable to Kant's view.[21]

From 1800 onward, that is, from the time of the writing of the *Monologen*, we can see Schleiermacher adopting a position similar in important ways to that of both Leibniz and Kant with respect to persons as initiators of action. There are, of course, important differences between all three figures. For instance, Schleiermacher seems to have ignored the transcendental ideality of space and time, which Kant believed grounded his distinction between appearances and things in themselves. However, the later Schleiermacher shares with both Leibniz and Kant a commitment to the idea that at the most fundamental metaphysical level (in relation to the world), the self ultimately must be considered as the originator of its own actions. Leibniz, for example, notes that "the soul has within it the principle of all its actions."[22] When Kant considers the subject's intelligible character, he notes that it is transcendentally free, that is, it is the originator of its actions. Kant tells us that "transcendental freedom . . . must be thought as independence from everything empirical and so from nature generally, whether it is regarded as an object of inner sense in time only or also of outer sense in both space and time; without this freedom (in the latter and proper sense), which alone is practical a priori, no moral law is possible and no imputation in accordance with it" (*AA* 5:97). Transcendental freedom is independence from determining causes antecedent in time, and hence independence from everything empirical. This independence entails, at the very least, that the agent must be the source of her own actions. As it will become yet clearer in my discussion below, Kantian subjects have at least this much in common with Leibnizian monads. And the mature Schleiermacher realized that this Kantian Leibnizianism is the only solution that avoids both the Scylla and Charybdis of the antinomy of agency. On this view we posit substances with inner powers that are not determined by agents external to themselves; in this sense substances

[21] Andrew Dole calls the strategy of transcendental freedom "quixotic and unpromising" (*Schleiermacher on Religion*, 61). However, he misunderstands what is implied by the view.

[22] Leibniz, *Theodicy*, § 65, 158.

originate actions from themselves in accordance with their intelligible character (monadic properties) and can be considered, as such, as transcendentally free.[23] Kant notes the connections quite clearly in Reflexion 5653: "with respect to the intelligible, the concept of freedom is already necessarily intrinsically connected with the concept of substance, since a substance must be the ultimate subject of its actions and cannot itself be the mode of action of another" (*AA* 18:311).

It is important to keep in mind that the inner powers of substances, their intrinsic or monadic properties, cannot appear. For were they to appear, they would no longer be monadic or intrinsic properties, but relational ones. While the inner powers of a substance determine its states, how these states themselves are apprehended will also depend upon the receptive powers of that to which such a substance stands in relation. These also play a role in the way the powers of the substance are received. Schleiermacher is aware of this distinction; in *On Religion*, he notes that "what you thus intuit and perceive is not the nature of things, but their action upon you."[24] His distinction between the "nature of a thing" and its "action upon you" can only make sense in relation to the distinction between an object's intrinsic or monadic properties (the nature of a thing) and its relational properties (its action upon us), an action which is only possible given our receptive capacities. Here Schleiermacher has in mind our capacities to receive sensations.

The *Monologen* signals a fundamental shift in Schleiermacher's thinking in regard to the question of freedom. Here, against the deterministic assertions of the empiricists, Schleiermacher argues that spirits are free. The world is "spirit's most beautiful work, its self-created mirror" (*KGA* I.3:9). Instead of thinking of our mental states as causally determined by the world, what is stressed is the mind's activity in interpreting the world. It is freedom that "plays the melody, selects the key, and all subtle modulations are her work. For these proceed from an inner determination and from the individual's unique disposition" (*KGA* I.3:10). Importantly, Schleiermacher discusses the problem of freedom in relation to a distinction between the inner and the outer. Freedom proceeds from an inner determination, namely, the subject's inner powers. This "inner" of the subject should not be confused with the subject's mental representations or states, which can be taken as replacing one another in accordance with strict causal laws. These appear also, and are such external. The empiricist, according to Schleiermacher, sees only the outer, that is, the determination of one mental state or representation by the prior state that it replaced. As such, the empiricist sees only a causal determination at work even in her own mental representations:

[23] As Kant notes, the self as noumenon "begins its effects in the sensible world *from itself*, without its action beginning *in it* itself" (KrV A541/B569).

[24] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, trans. Richard Crouter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 24–25.

Freedom seems to him nothing but an illusion, spread like a veil over a hidden and incomprehensible necessity. Moreover, such an empiricist, whose action and thought look outward, sees everything as finite and particular. He cannot imagine himself as other than a sum of fleeting appearances, each of which replaces and cancels the other, so that it is impossible to think of them as a whole. A complete picture of his being thus escapes him in a thousand contradictions. . . . But within the spirit all is one, each action only complements the other, in each the other also is preserved. . . . Each of my acts reveals the whole of my being, undivided, each of its manifestations goes with the rest. (*KGA* I.3:12)

Whoever sees and recognizes only the outer spectacle of life instead of the spiritual activity that secretly stirs his inmost being . . . may never set foot within the sacred precincts of freedom, even though he thinks he has attained self-consciousness. For in the image he constructs of himself, this very self becomes something external, like all else, and everything in such an image is determined by external circumstance. (*KGA* I.3:9)

Two things are apparent in Schleiermacher's discussion. First, Schleiermacher argues that the self as it appears, even to itself, becomes "something external," and insofar as the self is considered in this way "everything in such an image is determined by external circumstance." On the other hand, insofar as the self understands itself in terms of the "spiritual activity that stirs [its] inmost being," it grasps itself as free, that is, as not predetermined in its activity by causes lying outside of it. Second, on this understanding of the inner spiritual powers of the self that express themselves into the outer, each mental state that appears is not understood in isolation. It is not simply grasped as standing in external causal relations to other states of the self, but is rather understood as expressive of the whole of the inner self. From the standpoint of spirit, in each action "the other also is preserved."

The significant ways in which Schleiermacher's discussion in *Monologen* reproduce moves that had already been signaled by Kant cannot be ignored. Schleiermacher contrasts the view of the self in accordance with its inner determinations (the precinct of freedom) with the external, the domain of causal necessitation by what lies outside the self. In a similar fashion, Kant had famously argued that the self can be understood from two points of view. As appearance (and note that what appears are always relational properties), the self is to be understood as empirically determined in accordance with causal necessity. However, insofar as the self is considered noumenally, that is, as it is in itself, its causality is not to be thought of as determined by something outside of it:

But the very same subject, being on the other side conscious of himself as a thing in itself, also views his existence insofar as it does not stand under conditions of time and himself as determinable only through laws that he gives himself by reason; and in this existence of his nothing is, for him, antecedent to the determination of his will, but every action—and in general every determination of his existence changing conformably with inner sense, even the whole sequence of his existence as a sensible being—

is to be regarded in the consciousness of his intelligible existence as nothing but the consequence and never as the determining ground of his causality as a noumenon. (*AA* 5:98)

Instead, any action of the self that appears temporally can, from this point of view, be understood as the expression of the self's noumenal causality. Schleiermacher's discussion of action as expressive of the whole of the inner self in *Monologen* ("within the spirit all is one") has deep parallels with Kant's view.

V. THE LIMITS OF TRANSCENDENTAL FREEDOM

In order to fully comprehend the continuities and discontinuities between Kant's modified Leibnizianism and the later Schleiermacher on the subject of transcendental freedom, it is important to disentangle two notions in Kant's texts too often confused with one another. Recall that transcendental freedom is "the power of beginning a state of itself [*von selbst*]—the causality of which does not in turn stand under another cause determining it in time in accordance with the law of nature" (KrV A533/B561). Key here is the notion that the causality of the transcendentally free agent is not itself causally determined in time.[25] Transcendental freedom must be distinguished from Kant's notion of our power of free choice (*Willkür*)—a significantly different notion. Kant defines the *Willkür* as "a power to do or to refrain from doing as one pleases (ein Vermogen nach Belieben zu thun oder zu lassen" (*AA* 6:213). While it is often believed that transcendental freedom implies the power of doing otherwise, key texts in Kant's corpus show that he did not conceive of it that way. Furthermore, the logic of what it means to be a substance whose intelligible character is not determined by causes lying outside of it does not imply the freedom of the *Willkür*. In *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* Kant notes that

there is no difficulty in reconciling the concept of freedom with the idea of God as a necessary being, for freedom does not consist in the contingency of an action (in its not being determined through any ground at all) i.e. not indeterminism ([the thesis] that God must be equally capable of doing good or evil, if his action is to be called free) but in absolute spontaneity. The latter is at risk only with predeterminism, where the determining ground of an action lies in antecedent time, so that the action is no longer in my power but in the hands of nature, which determines me irresistibly; since in God no temporal sequence is thinkable, this difficulty has no place. (*AA* 6:50n)[26]

[25] It is important to keep in mind that for Kant the series of the states of the mind, as given in inner sense, belong to the realm of appearance.

[26] Compare Kant's remarks in the *Lectures on the Philosophical Doctrine of Religion*: "One might raise the objection that God cannot decide otherwise than he does, and so does not act freely but out of the necessity of his nature. . . . But in God it is not due to the necessity of his nature that he can decide only as he does. Rather it is true freedom in God that he decides only what is suitable to his highest understanding" (*AA* 28:1068).

Here Kant acknowledges that absolute spontaneity (transcendental freedom) does not imply the freedom of the *Willkür*, that is, the freedom to will otherwise. God cannot arbitrarily choose good or evil, but must will in accordance with the divine understanding. The fact that God must do so does not threaten God's absolute spontaneity, for God is not determined by anything outside of Godself, and in God there is no temporal sequence, either.

Following Derk Pereboom, we can distinguish transcendental freedom from the freedom of the *Willkür* in the following way: we can identify transcendental freedom with source incompatibilism, and the notion of the *Willkür* with leeway incompatiblism.[27] Source incompatibilism implies the will is not determined by temporally prior causes; it is as such directly incompatible with transcendental realism about causation in the natural order.[28] It is, however, perfectly consistent with the notion of a complete metaphysical determinism concerning the intelligible character of substances from which action in the world of appearances ultimately might derive. On the other hand, the notion of leeway incompatibilism, that is, the notion "could have done otherwise at time *t*," is not only prima facie inconsistent with causal determinism, it is ultimately inconsistent with the idea of any determining grounds, including purely logical ones. If Kant is to uphold leeway incompatibilism, then persons must be able to timelessly choose their intelligible character, and this choice of intelligible character, grounding the self as appearance, would itself appear to be groundless. Fichte, famously, developed Kant's thought along these lines, and for this reason he quite rightly noted that if the will is to determine itself, that is, if it is to be considered its own ground of its determinations, it must be "originally formless;"[29] he notes further that "the true spirit of the Critical philosophy" demands that we recognize that "the principle of sufficient reason can by no means be applied to the act of determining absolute self-activity through itself (i.e., to the act of willing)."[30] Schleiermacher did not go this route in his development of Kant's thought.

Key to understanding Schleiermacher's metaphysics, and how he agreed and disagreed with Kant, is to underscore that the later Schleiermacher was a source incompatibilist affirming transcendental freedom, but not a leeway incompatibilist. Insofar as the self, for Schleiermacher, is completely dependent upon God, not only for its preservation but for its very existence, what the self is in its internal constitution (what Kant would have called its intelligible character), has its complete ground in God, and is, as such, determined by God. This implies the complete determination of all substances through the

[27] Derk Pereboom, "Kant on Transcendental Freedom," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 73, no. 3 (2006): 537–67.

[28] Transcendental realism assumes that space and time, and the SSV model of causation associated with them, are features of things in themselves.

[29] "J. G. Fichte: Review of Leonhard Creuzer, *Skeptical Reflections on the Freedom of the Will*," trans. Daniel Brezeale, *Philosophical Forum* 32, no. 4 (2001): 293.

[30] Ibid., 294.

divine causality, and thereby excludes leeway indeterminism, which would ultimately require a kind of groundlessness of the internal properties of substances. In this regard Schleiermacher can be taken to stand in agreement with Leibniz, for whom the monads were completely determined by God in accordance with their complete concept. However, it is important to stress that for Schleiermacher, insofar as a substance is not fully determined through the world outside it, that is, insofar as the substance is determined in accordance with its own internal powers, it is transcendentally free. Hence in *Christian Faith* he tells us that "the activities of free beings are determined from within" (*KGA* I.13,1:298). Through this lens we can make sense of Schleiermacher's statement in the *Dialektik* of 1818: "Necessity does not restrict freedom at all, but rather both are the same thing, only viewed from different sides" (*KGA* II.10,2:220).

VI. ONTOLOGY FROM A FIRST PERSON POINT OF VIEW

Source incompatibilism stands at the heart of *Christian Faith*. Paragraph 4 of *Christian Faith* contains a lengthy account of the nature of human consciousness, a careful reading of which reveals that it is strongly marked by Kant's account of self-consciousness in the B-edition of the transcendental deduction. In §§ 24–25 Kant distinguishes between (*a*) the synthetic original unity of apperception, namely, the original activity of the I think, and (*b*) the self as it appears to itself: "in the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am" (KrV B157). In the original unity of apperception I am immediately aware of my existence since I have immediate access to my own activity of thinking. As Kant notes, however, self-consciousness is only possible insofar I am also aware of the "determination of my existence," which "can only occur in correspondence with the form of inner sense" (KrV B158). The immediate awareness that I am must always be conjoined with a consciousness of the self as it appears to itself in a determinate state.

This double constitution of self-consciousness plays a key role in the B version of Kant's transcendental deduction, and Schleiermacher's discussion of the sensuous self-consciousness in § 4 of *Christian Faith* not only follows Kant's account of the duality of self-consciousness, but contains significant commentary upon it.[31] Analysis of the exact nature of the duality of self-consciousness reveals (*a*) the nature of the immediate self-consciousness; (*b*) its relation to spontaneity, or the activity of the self; (*c*) the relation of the immediate self-

[31] Concerning this duality of self-consciousness, Kant importantly notes: "But how the I that I think is to differ from the I that intuits itself (for I can represent other kinds of intuition as at least possible) and yet be identical with the latter as the same subject, how therefore I can say that I as intelligence and thinking subject cognize myself as object that is thought, insofar as I am also given to myself in intuition, only, like other phenomena, not as I am for the understanding, but rather how I appear to myself, this is no more and no less difficult than how I can be an object for myself in general and indeed one of intuition and inner perception" (KrV B155).

consciousness to the intentional consciousness of the self to which it is directed (the self as it stands in relation to the world), and (*d*) the relation of the immediate self-consciousness to the higher self-consciousness. Schleiermacher begins § 4.1 as follows:

> In any genuine self-consciousness, whether it merely accompanies a thinking or a doing, or whether it fills a moment for itself, we are never conscious of the self in and of itself in its unchanging identity alone, but rather we are always at the same time also aware of the self's changing determinations. The I in itself can be represented objectively; however, every self-consciousness is at one and the same time that of a changing state. Yet, already implied in this difference of the latter from the former is that what changes does not stem from the self in its unchanging identity alone, for in such a case it would be undistinguishable from it. Thus there are two elements in every self-consciousness, which we may call a self-positing element and a non-self-positing element, or rather, a being, and a having so become in some way or another. Thus, for each self-consciousness, the latter presupposes something else outside the I through which it is determined, and without which the self-consciousness would not be exactly the one that it is. However, this something different is not objectively represented in the immediate self-consciousness, with which we are here alone concerned. For certainly this duplication of consciousness is the reason why in each case we objectively seek out something else to which we can attribute the origin of our change of state. However, this search is another act with which we are now not concerned.
>
> In self-consciousness these two are simply together, one element expressing the being of the subject for itself, the other its being with what is other than itself. To these two elements, insofar as they exist together in the temporal self-consciousness, correspond the receptivity and the spontaneity of the subject. (*KGA* I.13,1:34–35)

Now the "self-positing" element, that is, the spontaneity of the subject, is precisely the activity of a free being in its thinking and acting. It must be distinguished from the determinate states of consciousness that we can become aware of when we make consciousness our object. Awareness of this "self-positing" element is given in the immediate awareness of the "I think," namely, in the very activity of cognizing. This is consciousness of the self in its "unchanging identity." This self-identical consciousness, however, is always accompanied by an awareness of the self's changing determinations, which "do not stem from the self in its unchanging identity alone," but which arise in virtue of a reciprocal relation of influence and counterinfluence between self and world. The immediate consciousness of spontaneity cannot exist by itself; consciousness is always directed to an object other than itself, and in its directedness is determined by it. Were this not the case, such a consciousness "would express only spontaneity; not being directed to any object, it would be only an outward urge, an undetermined agility without form or color" (*KGA* I.13,1:34). Yet it is important to note that the determination of conscious states by that which is other than the self is not something that occurs through the sheer influence of that which is distinct from the self. Deter-

mination of such states also requires our counterinfluence; as Schleiermacher notes, "what is other [than the self] is determined by us, and without our spontaneity could not be determined in such a way" (*KGA* I.13,1:35). Even our very receptivity is a power through which what is given must be received in virtue of our own counterinfluence, which allows it to be received in a certain way. As such, Schleiermacher argues, the feeling of absolute dependence "can in no way stem from the effect of an object given to us in some way or another, for on such an object a counterinfluence would also exist, and even its voluntary resignation would always also contain a feeling of freedom" (*KGA* I.13,1: 37–38).

While Schleiermacher's principle concern is with the immediate self-consciousness, exactly what it is cannot be understood without careful analysis of the "duplication of consciousness" involved in self-consciousness, which contains two elements. The immediate consciousness is that dimension of consciousness through which we are intentionally aware of objects; it is the dimension of our cognitive activity. This dimension of conscious self-activity must be strictly distinguished from the objects to which consciousness is directed. The self can, of course, make itself its own object, and insofar as it is its own object, it has a mediated awareness of itself. However, the activity of the self through which the self makes itself its own object is distinct from the self as object of cognition. This dimension of the self as active cognizer can only be accessed through an immediate awareness of the self's self-activity, that is, through the feeling or experience that the self has of itself as it acts. It is distinct from the self as object of reflection. The self that reflects upon itself (the I think) always transcends the self that is the content of its reflection, for it is that through which the reflection is cognized, and cannot be contained in it. Moreover, it is important to note that the self can only cognize itself as distinct from and standing in relation to the world insofar as it has made itself its own object of reflection.

Throughout § 4 Schleiermacher argues that the immediate self-consciousness cannot exist by itself; self-consciousness and, as such, self-awareness, is possible only when an object distinct from consciousness in its self-activity is presented to it. In other words, consciousness can only make itself its own object if it stands in relation to something outside of it. This is because it is only when consciousness is determined to exist in a certain state through the influence of that which is distinct from it that it can reflect upon itself, for such a reflection of the self on itself is only possible if in self-consciousness there is a self-identity in difference, that is, if the self as object can be differentiated from the self as cognizer, while at the same time the identity of both is preserved. Such differentiation is possible only insofar as the moments of the self as reflected upon are states of awareness determined through the mutual influence between the self and what is other than the self.

Two things are important in this regard. First, in the first element of self-consciousness, namely, the self-positing element or the I think, the self

grasps itself immediately in its activity. Second, in the second element of self-consciousness, moments of the self as object of reflection are co-determined by both the spontaneity (self-activity) of the subject and the subject's receptivity insofar as it has been affected in a certain way. Since the first element in self-consciousness is simply the subject in its sheer activity, it is not dependent on the world; and since the second element of self-consciousness is a product of both spontaneity and receptivity, it too cannot be understood as fully dependent on the world. As such, Schleiermacher's account of self-consciousness as presented in § 4 is one in which transcendental freedom, understood as the capacity to begin an action *von selbst*, plays a key role. Even if, as Schleiermacher argues, the spontaneity of the subject is always colored mood-wise by how it has been affected, this spontaneity is never fully determined by what lies outside the self. And insofar the self-positing of the subject springs from its own internal powers, it is transcendentally free. Schleiermacher's account of consciousness in § 4 is completely distinct from the state-state view discussed above, wherein a state of consciousness is fully determined to be what it is by past states of consciousness.

All of this is absolutely key to Schleiermacher's development of the notion of absolute dependence. At the end of § 4.3 he notes that the feeling of absolute dependence

> can in no way stem from the effect of an object given to us in some way or another, for on such an object a counterinfluence would also exist, and even its voluntary resignation would always also contain a feeling of freedom. Therefore, strictly speaking, the feeling of absolute dependence cannot exist as such in a single moment, for the totality of its inner contents is always determined by what is given, therefore by that towards which we have a feeling of freedom. However, the self-consciousness accompanying the whole of our spontaneity (and, since this spontaneity is never zero, accompanying all of our existence), and which cancels absolute freedom, is in and for itself a consciousness of absolute dependence, for it is the consciousness that the entirety of our spontaneity, in relation to which we should have had a feeling of absolute freedom, springs from elsewhere, even as it must have sprung from ourselves. Without all feeling of freedom, however, a feeling of absolute dependence would not be possible. (*KGA* I.13,1:38)

The feeling of absolute dependence cannot arise from the objects to which consciousness is directed (the world as object of consciousness), for on those consciousness always directs a determining counterinfluence. Consciousness is, as such, only partially determined by what lies outside it; it not only contains a self-positing element, namely, the activity of the I think, but it also partially determines what is given to it through both its spontaneity and its receptive powers. This is further developed in § 32.2 of *Christian Faith*, where Schleiermacher notes that the consciousness of being one with the world, in which we are aware of ourselves as "one of the living parts co-existing with this whole," cannot be equated with the feeling of absolute dependence. This is because

all the living parts mutually influence one another, so that the existence of the part with the whole is essentially twofold: admittedly, a feeling of dependence, insofar as the other parts are active in their influence upon it. However, there is also a feeling of freedom insofar as it is itself active and influences the other parts, and the one cannot be separated from the other. Hence the feeling of absolute dependence should not be understood as a being with the world, but rather as a being with God as the absolute undivided unity. For in immediate relation to God there is neither a feeling of freedom, nor can the feeling of dependence in relation to God be one that contains a partial feeling of freedom; rather at the highest level of Christian piety, and in the clearest consciousness of one's unfettered self-activity, the absoluteness of the feeling of dependence in relation to God remains unlimited. (*KGA* I.13, 1:203–4)

Only in and through the consciousness of one's self activity in relation to the world is a feeling of absolute dependence toward God possible. If we are to speak of absolute dependence, then it must be the self in its very activity of cognizing the world that is understood as dependent on a source that transcends both self and world, and is the source of both. Schleiermacher cannot be clearer: absolute dependence is "the consciousness that the entirety of our spontaneity, in relation to which we should have had a feeling of freedom, springs from elsewhere." Given that the world with which Schleiermacher concerns himself is the world as it is given to consciousness, the absolute dependence of our conscious activity on a source outside ourselves also encompasses the world as object of conscious reflection, for the self becomes aware of itself through its world. Both the self and its world are absolutely dependent, and as such the "whence" from which both our spontaneity and receptivity springs "is not the world, in the sense of the totality of temporal existence, and even less is it any single part of the world" (*KGA* I.13,1:39).

Schleiermacher recognized that only in relation to consciousness is ontology possible, for outside of consciousness we cannot relate to, even less know, anything at all. This is presupposed in § 50, where Schleiermacher claims that "All determinations that we attribute to God do not characterize anything particular in God, but rather refer to something particular in the manner that the feeling of absolute dependence refers to God" (*KGA* I.13,1:300). God, however, cannot be an object of consciousness, for any such object would be limited by our counterinfluence: as such it must be stamped by the active and receptive powers of the knowing subject. Hence any relation to God can be given in only one way, namely, insofar as in the immediacy of the experience of the I think there is given also the consciousness that this I is conditioned in its very existence by a source outside itself. Relation to God is possible only from a first person perspective, and any attempt to understand God from a third person perspective, that is, as one object among others given to consciousness, is always a corruption. Furthermore, the attempt to understand the relation between God and the self from such a third person perspective is equally misguided.

That ontology is possible only in relation to consciousness is also key to Schleiermacher's development of the difference between the absolute causality of God and intra-worldly causality. The understanding of intra-worldly causality in *Christian Faith* is especially distinctive: only beings that contain within themselves their own center of power, namely, monads that can express these powers out into the world, have genuine causality. These are what he calls "free causes," of which human consciousness is the prime example. As we have seen, *Christian Faith* treats consciousness from a first person point of view, the point of view of the I think. Schleiermacher's understanding of the *Naturzusammenhang* is brimming with these free causes, namely, persons apprehending themselves immediately as centers of power in accordance with their free activity. In § 49.1 he contrasts his own understanding of nature with a view in accordance with which nature is understood as a mere mechanism.

> The expression "free causes" in our proposition clearly makes a distinction between freedom and causality in general, and presupposes causes that are not free. Yet, on the contrary, causes must be free. In the usual understanding of the universal nature mechanism there is, strictly speaking no causality outside that of free causes. For here one imagines the being together and mutual influence of things as one in which there is movement only insofar as something has been moved, and in accordance with this picture one can consider the influence of each as a mere point of transition, so that causality is attributed only to the first mover outside this sphere. That is, in accordance with this conception, excluding the free cause, there is no causality in the finite; rather outside it there is only the free infinite cause, namely the divine causality, which is represented as having originally set in motion the entire sphere through a first push. Were we to include all inferior life in this mechanism, including the animal and vegetable . . . then free causes, by which we mean persons, would be the only finite causes, and all it would take for the divine causality to be the only remaining one would be for persons to think of themselves also as part of the nature mechanism, treating their consciousness of spontaneity as a mere unavoidable illusion. Luckily, however, few are capable of such a destructive self-denial, through which they not only have annihilated the rest of the world, but have made themselves victims of the completeness of their own view. For in such a manner all causality of the finite is changed into an illusion. On such grounds we cannot regard a single finite being as existing for itself, or thereby attribute substantial existence to one point rather than another in this universal change of being moved and moving again. Rather, all is either indivisibly one, or a countless mass of discrete points of transition, namely, atoms. (*KGA* I.13,1:295–96)

On the view of nature as a mere mechanism, what we have is the SSV model of causation discussed above. Here changes of state are fully determined through prior states ("there is movement only insofar as it has been moved"), and these states are themselves fully determined by the states that precede them. If, in order to avoid an infinite regress of states that are mere points of transition containing no effective power in themselves, we posit a first mover, then only

that mover will be a free cause. (This is what Schleiermacher means when he notes that "strictly speaking there is no causality outside of free causes," for only free causes have effective power—the rest are mere points of transmission). Such a mover would then be the only genuine cause, for only it would be expressive of its own power, beginning a series of changes from itself. Thus all of nature would be bereft of genuine causes, since it would then contain no genuine centers of power, that is, monads. The idea of the nature mechanism thereby leaves us with mere points of transition, namely, states that continuously change into other states, but which are not the locus of the effective power of the movement. Once those continually changing states are understood as the accidents of the one substance, Spinozism is the unavoidable result. The entailments of the SSV of causation detailed here coincide largely with those recognized by Kant: were we to think of time as a feature of things in themselves, the SSV of causation would lead us to think of everything dependent on a First Being as "merely accidents inhering in substance" with no real effective power. For "if these things exist merely as its effects in time, which would then be the condition of their existence itself, then the actions of these beings would have to be merely its actions that it performs in any place and in any time" (*AA* 5:101–2). While both recognized that the SSV of causation led to Spinozism, Kant avoided Spinozism through his claim that the SSV of causation applied to appearances only, and not to things in themselves. Certainly in Schleieramcher's *Christian Faith* there does not seem to be such a distinction between appearances and things in themselves. Instead we have (*a*) an awareness of the problems and implications associated with understanding nature as a mere mechanism, (*b*) a rejection of such a view, and (*c*) an adoption of a view of nature filled with self-active substances standing in interrelation with one another. In *Christian Faith* Schleiermacher abandons the SSV model of causation altogether. Instead, monads—free causes—stand front and center.

In what ways is the view of nature as mechanism problematic? According to Schleiermacher it annihilates the central point of departure of all genuine philosophical and theological understanding, namely, the first person point of view. From the point of view of the first person, we are immediately aware of ourselves as active centers of power in both our doing and our knowing. And only an understanding of nature that does justice to the experience of consciousness as self-active can be adequate to the human reality. Those who adopt the view of nature as a mechanism, and account for their own existence through this mechanism, treat "their consciousness of spontaneity as a mere unavoidable illusion." The view of nature as mechanism does not provide grounds for the individuation of the subject, that is, grounds for understanding "a single finite being as existing for itself." It therefore does not do justice to the first person experience of self-consciousness, which must be the point of departure for any real theology. As Schleiermacher notes, the "non-religious understanding, which objects to the particularity of the religious

self-consciousness as a deception, stems in part from those who also explain away the feeling of freedom as an illusion" (*KGA* I.13,1:204).

The understanding of nature we find in *Christian Faith* is most decidedly not one of nature as mechanism. Here, instead, we have a view of nature filled with co-active interdependent conscious substances (persons). And insofar as persons are genuine centers of power in relation to the rest of nature, namely, insofar as persons can move themselves without having been moved and thereby institute a series of changes outside of themselves, they are transcendentally free in Kant's sense. Recall that transcendental freedom is "the power of beginning a state of itself [*von selbst*]—the causality of which does not in turn stand under another cause determining it in time in accordance with the law of nature" (KrV A533/B561). Transcendental freedom does not mean absolute freedom, such that the influence of the world is denied. Rather, self-consciousness is both active and receptive, and insofar as self-consciousness is active, it is transcendentally free. Since transcendental freedom has to do with independence from prior temporal causes in accordance with natural laws, it does not preclude the complete dependence of the I think on God, and it does not entail leeway incompatibilism.

The religious self-consciousness recognizes further that "the effects of free action are possible only through the feeling of absolute dependence" (*KGA* I.13,1:295); in absolute dependence we recognize that "the activities of free beings are determined from within" (*KGA* I.13,1:298). The view expressed here is similar to the Leibnizian one: persons are dependent upon divine preservation; they are true centers of power in relation to the world insofar as they are receptive of the divine energy. It is in this sense that the later Schleiermacher also believed that only substances that are for themselves, that is persons, can stand in relation to God. Mere points of transition in an undivisible unity (as found in Spinozism), lacking any self-subsistent identity for themselves, cannot stand in any such relation. Now it may be objected to both Leibniz and the later Schleiermacher that their own views make scant progress over Spinozism, since on their view the spontaneity of the subject itself derives from God, so that God still remains the only genuine self-active cause. While a complete discussion of the merits of this objection lies beyond the scope of this essay, the Leibnizian view adopted by the later Schleiemacher at least has the advantage that it, unlike the variety of Spinozism discussed here, accommodates the reality of first person experience.

In the *Theodicy*, Leibniz makes a very interesting remark regarding the metaphysical determinism of substances in relation to God and the problem of agency. He notes that the action of God in relation to a creature "does not preclude the creature's participation in actions, since the action of the creature is a modification of the substance, flowing naturally from it."[32] Not

[32] Leibniz, *Theodicy*, § 32, 142.

only does the action of the creature stem from its inner nature. More importantly, the creature participates in its action. What might this participation mean? By this participation I understand that the subject intends her actions, is aware that she has intended them, and understands them as coming from herself. Her actions do not simply happen to her. Leibniz notes that "when we act freely we are not being forced, as would happen if we were pushed on to a precipice and thrown from top to bottom; and we are not prevented from having the mind free when we deliberate, as would happen if we were given a draught to deprive us of discernment."[33] Such an intending of action, and a first-person awareness of the self as intending it, is necessary if the self is to deliberate, that is, if is to reflect upon itself and its own moral development as it acts in the world. For Leibniz as well as Schleiermacher, even if the person has been completely determined by God, she is still a center of decision and experience, with an inner life and inner awareness through which rational participation in her own inner development is possible. She is capable of becoming perfect, and participating in her own perfection insofar as she reflects and acts intentionally. It may be that the process of becoming perfect, through the having of a narrative history, is necessary if the agent is to internalize her life in God, even if this process of perfection has been determined by God from the outset.

Neither Leibniz, Kant or Schleiermacher believed that a self mechanistically determined by outer material causes, when taken as transcendentally real, is compatible with the possibility of inner self development, moral perfectibility, and, in the case of Schleiermacher, religious self-awareness. This was the case for several reasons. First, purely mechanistic causation or natural efficient causation is blind. In Kant's words, while it may operate in accordance with natural laws, it lacks consciousness and cannot operate in accordance with the idea of laws.[34] As such, efficient causality is mindless. It is always grounded in the past, in what has occurred before, and in a law that binds an event with one that has occurred earlier. It does not operate intentionally or teleologically, as mind does. Mind is always directed at a teleological goal or aim that has not yet occurred; the sphere of moral action in the temporal sphere requires that we understand ourselves as minds. Here the imagined possible future aimed at determines the present.

All three figures recognized the distinct character of reasons and causes, and did not think that the operations of mind in accordance with reason could be reduced to the operations of mere mechanism without losing what is distinctive of mind in the first place. Instead what we have is either a harmonization between the doings of mind and what occurs on the empirical, physical level (Leibniz) or an ultimate grounding of appearances in the in-

[33] Ibid., § 33, 143.

[34] In *Groundwork* II Kant notes, "Everything in nature works in accordance with laws. Only a rational being has the faculty to act *in accordance with the representation* of laws, i.e., in accordance with principles, or a *will*" (*AA* 4:412).

telligible character of persons (Kant). For Leibniz, the internal states of the monad are harmonized by God with what occurs to its body.[35] For Kant, the intelligible character is what ultimately grounds the appearances.[36] In neither case do we have a blind mechanistic causation or the laws of empirical nature grounding mind. As I have argued above, the later Schleiermacher, too, strongly resisted the notion that the self should be reduced to a "mere point of transition" in a causal chain.

These considerations serve to illuminate why Leibniz and Schleiermacher thought the complete determination of the individual by God did not threaten religion and morality, and why they eschewed the determination of the self by nature. God, as perfect mind, can be the ground of other finite minds who act intentionally and "participate" in the experience of their moral and spiritual evolution. Because God is perfect mind, God's determination of finite mind does not vitiate its character as mind and its intentional participation in the moral enterprise. Schleiermacher, very much in the spirit of Leibniz, characterizes God as love and wisdom (*KGA* I.13,2:498). These are characteristics of God *pro nobis*, and they serve to illuminate the Christian's faith in how God guides the experience of persons so as to redeem and perfect them.[37] Schleiermacher defines the divine wisdom as "the art of re-

[35] For instance, in regard to his notion of the preestablished harmony, Leibniz notes in his *Theodicy* that "God created the soul in the beginning in such a fashion that it must produce and represent to itself successively that which takes place within the body, and the body also in such a fashion that it must do of itself that which the soul ordains. Consequently the laws that connect the thoughts of the soul in the order of final causes and in accordance with the evolution of perceptions must produce pictures that meet and harmonize with the impressions of bodies on our organs; and likewise the laws of movement in the body, which follow one another in the order of efficient causes, meet and so harmonize with the thoughts of the soul that the body is induced to act at the same time when the soul wills it" (§ 62, 157). For Leibniz, while the successive states of the soul harmonize with the successive states of bodies, efficient causality is clearly not the ground of mind. The distinction between the two orders, that of nature, operating according to laws of efficient causality, and that of mind, which operates in accordance to moral laws, can be found in numerous works. For instance, in the *Monadology* (§ 87) he speaks of the harmony between the kingdom of "efficient causes" and the kingdom of "final causes"; G. W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, trans. Robert Ariew and Daniel Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989), 224. The difference between the two kingdoms or two orders is further explained in the fifth letter to Clarke, where Leibniz notes that "the natural forces of bodies are all subject to mechanical laws, and the natural forces of minds are all subject to moral laws. The former follow the order of efficient causes, the latter the order of final causes" (ibid., 345). An excellent discussion of Leibniz on the kingdoms of nature and grace and their harmony can be found in Robert Merrihew Adams, *Leibniz, Determinist, Theist, Idealist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 82–110.

[36] Kant tells us that the appearances "must be grounded in a transcendental object determining them as mere representations." The transcendental object has a character, that is a "law of its causality." Insofar as we are speaking transcendentally of persons, the subject has an "intelligible character, through which it is indeed the cause of those actions as appearances, but which does not stand under any condition of sensibility and is not itself appearance" (A539/B567). This passage was also discussed in detail above.

[37] In *Christian Faith* Schleiermacher defines the attributes of love and wisdom in relation to the work of redemption. In § 166 we find: "The divine love is the attribute through which the divine nature reveals itself and is known in the work of redemption" (*KGA* I.13,2:500). In § 168 the divine wisdom is defined thus: "The divine wisdom is the principle ordering and determining the world for the divine self-communication effected in redemption" (*KGA* I.13,2:508).

alizing the divine love perfectly" (*KGA* I.13,2:499). This wisdom is the "the right design of ends and means, understood in their manifold determinations and in the whole of their reciprocal relations" (*KGA* I.13,2:499). Were efficient causation to be considered the fundamental metaphysical ground of mind, the operations of mind would have to be thought of as, at bottom, mindless. This would amount to the reduction of intentional processes to unintentional ones. Were this reduction adopted, so that blind mechanism was thought to be that which truly characterized fundamental reality, then faith in the absolute power of God undergirding the individual's intentional participation in the work of redemption must also be thought to be a delusion.

Like Kant, Schleiermacher held to the transcendental freedom of the subject in relation to the world—that is, Schleiermacher was a source incompatibilist. This source incompatibilism allowed him rightly to resist the reduction of the moral order to the natural order. On the other hand, Schleiermacher rejected Kant's leeway incompatibilism. There are two fundamental reasons for doing so: one philosophical and the other theological. The philosophical reason has to do with the unintelligibility of an ultimately groundless freedom, an idea that persists in Kant's idea that we timelessly choose our intelligible character. A fundamental theological reason why Schleiermacher would have rejected leeway incompatibilism is that this incompatibilism would threaten the confidence of the creature in God's redemptive work, and interfere in the person's faith in herself as absolutely dependent on God. It is no accident that Schleiermacher pushes us very strongly to universalism at the end of *Christian Faith*. All are absolutely dependent on God, and God's saving love and wisdom extend to all creation.