C.C.E. Schmid's Intelligible Fatalism in Context

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While not a household name in Kant scholarship, Carl Christian Erhard Schmid was a significant figure in the early reception of the Critical philosophy.[1] Immediately following its publication, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* ([1]1781) was notoriously criticized as abstruse.[2] Schmid rose to prominence as one of the first proponents of the Critical philosophy during its initially precarious reception.[3] His *Critique of Pure Reason in Outline for Lectures Along with a Lexicon for the Easier Use of the Kantian Writings* (1786; *Critik der reinen Vernunft im Grundrisse nebst einem*

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[2] The famous Göttingen review (1782), authored by Christian Garve and heavily edited by Johann Georg Heinrich Feder, begins by claiming that the *Critique of Pure Reason* "strains the reader's attention to the point of fatigue" (*Zugaben zu den Göttingischen Anzeigen*, 40). For bibliographic information on reprintings of the review in German and English, see Jennifer Mensch, "Kant and the Problem of Idealism," 318n2. In the Gotha review (1782), the reviewer asserts that the content of the first *Critique* is "incomprehensible to the vast majority of the reading public" (*Gothaische gelehrte Zeitungen*, 560). The review was published anonymously and written by Schack Hermann Ewald. For a discussion of these reviews in the context of the immediate reception of the Critical philosophy, see Manfred Kuehn, "Kant's Critical Philosophy and Its Reception." The early reception of Kant's *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* suffered a similar fate. Thus, in an announcement of that work, the reviewer responds to Kant's complaint that he was misunderstood in the Göttingen review and claims that "if the worthy and brilliant man did not often have his head so high in the clouds, if he did not use his own terminology, and if his sentences were less cumbersome, then he might be less exposed to this risk" (*Neueste Critische Nachrichten*, 280). For a brief discussion of the first reviews of the *Prolegomena*, which were predominantly negative, see Brigitte Sassen, *Kant's Early Critics*, 280n9. Although well after the initial reception of the first *Critique*, Friedrich Nicolai, *Ueber meine gelehrte Bildung*, 35n, likewise claims that "Kant is onerous for his reader because he writes so obscurely and vaguely and so clumsily in his own mother tongue." For a discussion of Nicolai's role as editor of the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* during the reception of the Critical philosophy, see Sassen, *Kant's Early Critics*, 42–48.

[3] Kant was certainly aware of Schmid's advocacy of the Critical philosophy. In a letter to Kant from 20 September 1785, Christian Gottfried Schütz mentions that "a young Magister Schmid wishes to publish a compendium" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* for his lectures in the coming winter semester (10:408). In a follow-up letter to Kant from 13 November 1785, Schütz informs Kant that Schmid "is now lecturing on the *Critique of Pure Reason*" (10:423).

Wörterbuch zum leichtern Gebrauch der Kantischen Schriften) enjoyed considerable popularity and was instrumental in systematizing Kant's technical vocabulary.[4]

In his equally renowned *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* ([1]1790; *Versuch einer Moralphilosophie*),[5] Schmid endeavors to complete—at least provisionally and for the purpose of his lectures—a system of Critical moral philosophy containing a critique of practical reason, metaphysics of morals, and practical anthropology, or applied ethics.[6] Such an undertaking was celebrated as a victory for the Critical philosophy, since Kant's project of a metaphysics of morals had been long awaited.[7] Thus, the reviewer of the first edition applauds Schmid for going some way in refuting the objection that Kant's philosophy is artificial and inapplicable to everyday life, praising him for presenting "*an applied ethics based on Kantian principles*," requiring "not only *deep insight into the Kantian system* itself but also a genuinely original mind."[8] Likewise, K.L. Reinhold writes to Kant that he "rejoice[s] in the moral philosophy of our adjunct Schmid."[9] The various editions of Schmid's *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* would continue to receive attention. The third edition's reviewer in *Annalen der Philosophie* claims that Schmid's work is "all too well known" from previous editions, and that "such a universally read book deserves, above all, precise examination."[10]

However, *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* was far from universally acclaimed. In this work, Schmid presented his doctrine of intelligible fatalism, "the assertion of the natural necessity of all actions of a rational being according to laws of the causality of things in

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[4] The text was published early in 1786 and was positively reviewed in the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (no. 119, 19). Schmid sent the text to Kant on 18 May 1786 (10:450). Later that year Professor Johann Bering (Marburg) and Friedrich Gottlob Born (Leipzig) would lecture on the basis of Schmid's text. Its prominence is evidenced by the numerous editions published in short order. In 1788 and 1794 Schmid published subsequent editions of the *Critique of Pure Reason in Outline* without the *Lexicon*, the latter of which was reprinted by itself in 1788, 1795, and 1798. For a discussion of the early reception and influence of Schmid's *Lexicon*, see Hinske ("Einleitung"). Schmid's work was the first lexicon of Kant's terminology and thus he is the "founder of Kant lexicography" (Schröpfer, "Carl Christian Erhard Schmid," 37). Subsequent lexicons for the Critical philosophy were heavily indebted to Schmid's, with Samuel Heinicke's 1788 lexicon essentially plagiarizing Schmid's. For a discussion of the history of Kant lexicography, see Marcus Willaschek et al (eds.) (*Kant-Lexikon*, v–vii).

[5] Its preeminence is evidenced by its numerous closely succeeding editions. The work was reprinted in 1792, 1795, and 1802.

[6] Schmid sent a draft of the text to Kant on 21 February 1789 (11:1).

[7] For discussions of Kant's delayed execution of a metaphysics of morals, see Lewis White Beck, *A Commentary*, 5–13. In a letter to Kant on 3 July 1791, J.G.C.C. Kiesewetter notes Schmid's fulfillment of the dogmatic part of Kant's system in ethics, just as Jakob had done so in logic and metaphysics, and Hufeland in natural right (11:268).

[8] *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung* (*ALZ*), 108, 8 April 1791, 57. On Karl Heinrich Heydenreich's authorship of the review, see Martin Bondeli's contribution to the present volume.

[9] Reinhold to Kant, 30 April 1790 (11:164).

[10] *Annalen der Philosophie (2)*, 130.

themselves."[11] Schmid's merit as an expositor of the Critical philosophy would be overshadowed by the perceived blight of this doctrine. The significance of intelligible fatalism in late 18th-century German philosophy has been explored along several fronts. The doctrine served as the antipode, as it were, to Reinhold's account of free will as the capacity to choose for or against the moral law.[12] Moreover, Schmid and intelligible fatalism would prove influential for Fichte's development of the *Wissenschaftslehre*.[13] Yet, several aspects of the doctrine's legacy remain relatively understudied, including its provenance in the Critical philosophy, its significance to the reception of Kant's account of free will apart from Reinhold, and Schmid's apparent *volte-face* on the scope of freedom in the third and fourth editions of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to understanding Schmid's doctrine of intelligible fatalism within its historical context. The paper proceeds as follows. §2 presents the historical background to intelligible fatalism, evincing its roots in the first *Critique* and the influence of A.W. Rehberg and J.A.H. Ulrich. In §3 I outline Schmid's conception of intelligible fatalism in connection with Kant's claims across various works, and trace its reception among both advocates and opponents of the Critical philosophy. Then, in §4, I examine Schmid's apparent revisions to intelligible fatalism. Despite appearances to the contrary, I argue that he remains committed to the core tenets of the doctrine.

2. Historical Background

The doctrine of intelligible fatalism is a particular interpretation of the Critical philosophy, arising from specific circumstances in the immediate reception of Kant, and we must track its development within this context to understand it. To this end, I outline the most relevant aspects of Kant's philosophy, discuss the influence of A.W. Rehberg's review of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, and examine J.A.H. Ulrich's *Eleutheriology, or On Freedom and Necessity*

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[11] C.C.E. Schmid, [1]*Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, §257, 211, abbreviated as [1]*AMP* §257, 211. References to the second and third editions are abbreviated accordingly, with the fourth edition cited according to page number only.

[12] For discussions of intelligible fatalism in connection with Reinhold's account of free will, see Martin Bondeli, "Zu Reinholds Auffassung von Willensfreiheit"; Faustino Fabbianelli, "Die Theorie der Willensfreiheit"; Faustino Fabbianelli, "Die unmittelbare Rezeption"; George di Giovanni, *Freedom and Religion*, 118–125; George di Giovanni, "Rehberg, Reinhold, und C.C.E. Schmid"; Michael Gerten, "Begehren, Vernunft und freier Wille"; Jean-François Goubet, "Der Streit"; Paul Guyer, "The Struggle for Freedom"; Michelle Kosch, *Freedom and Reason*, 50–52; Alessandro Lazzari, *Das Eine*, 198–206; Jörg Noller, "Kant and Reinhold's Dilemma"; Alexander von Schönborn, "Intelligibler Fatalismus"; and Günter Zöller, "Von Reinhold zu Kant."

[13] For a discussion of this line of influence, see Georg von Wallwitz, "Fichte und das Problem des intelligiblen Fatalismus."

(*Eleutheriologie, oder über Freyheit und Nothwendigkeit*), arguably second only to Kant in its influence on Schmid.

2.1 Kant

In defining intelligible fatalism in terms of the causality of things in themselves, Schmid draws on Kant's distinction between appearances and things in themselves. Although this highly controversial distinction, with its metaphysical implications and theoretical corollaries, cannot be treated in exhaustive detail here, a brief sketch will suffice for our purposes.[14]

Kantian *appearances* might be conceived of as objects as they appear in experience that are subject to *a priori* epistemic conditions, like space and time as pure forms of intuition and the categories. By contrast, *things in themselves* are objects independent of such conditions. Two theses connected with this distinction are of note. First, since cognition relies on sensible intuition, and non-spatiotemporal things in themselves cannot be given in intuition, we cannot cognize things in themselves. Second, things in themselves ground appearances. This relationship is asymmetrical, and the converse thesis is false:

> if appearances do not count for any more than they are in fact, namely, not for things in themselves but only for mere representations connected in accordance with empirical laws, then they themselves must have grounds that are not appearances. Such an intelligible cause, however, will not be determined in its causality by appearances, even though its effects appear and so can be determined through other appearances. (A 537/B 565; see also *Prol* 4:354)[15]

By "intelligible cause," Kant means the causality of a being *qua* thing in itself. This causal relation can be approximated as a grounding thesis: things in themselves ground appearances. The ground is a condition of the possibility of appearances, and must be represented as intelligible: "we can call the merely intelligible cause of appearances in general the

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[14] Disagreements often center on the metaphysical status of things in themselves and its consistency with Kant's claim that the objective validity of the categories is restricted to the domain of possible experience. For an excellent survey of the debate, see Lucy Allais, *Manifest Reality*, 3–36, and Dennis Schulting, "Kant's Idealism."

[15] References to the *Critique of Pure Reason* follow the standard A/B pagination. References to Kant's other works appear according to volume and page number in the Academy Edition, preceded by an abbreviation of the relevant translation in the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*. The Cambridge translations were consulted.

transcendental object" (A 494/B 522). Schmid's intelligible fatalism turns on the distinction between two kinds of causality corresponding to appearances and to things in themselves, respectively.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant discusses intelligible causality chiefly in connection with the concept of transcendental freedom.[16] Transcendental freedom, "the capacity to begin a state *from itself*" (A 533/B 561), can find no purchase in the realm of appearances, which are determined by empirical causal laws subject to temporal conditions. However, owing to the distinction between appearances and things in themselves, freedom is conceivable beyond the empirically conditioned causal series. Kant argues that causality can be conceived either "according to nature or from freedom" (A 523/B 560). Causality according to nature relates occurrences whose causes are subject to temporal conditions, which Kant calls natural necessity. Causality from freedom, by contrast, is independent of temporal conditions, "as *intelligible* in its *action* as a thing in itself" (A 539/B 567).[17] The action of *intelligible* causality is not an *event*, since it is independent of temporal conditions. "Such an intelligible cause," Kant claims, "however, will not be determined in its causality by appearances, even though its effects appear and so can be determined through other appearances" (A 537/B 565).[18] Kant admits that his theory is obscure, since intelligible causality transcends possible experience. Nevertheless, the distinction between appearances and things in themselves permits the *conceivability* of causality outside the temporally conditioned causal series. The concept of causality can be applied to objects which cannot be given in sensible intuition, even though there can be no objectively valid theoretical cognition of them (B 166n). Although, in the first *Critique*, Kant aims to show that transcendental freedom, i.e. causality from freedom, merely does not contradict natural causality, he suggests that our consciousness of moral obligations reveals our freedom: "Now that this reason has causality, or that we can at least conceive of something of the sort in it, is clear from the *imperatives* that we impose as rules on our powers of execution in everything that is

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[16] Schmid follows Kant in his lexical entry on "unconditioned causality": "a dynamical […] first, original cause, cause through freedom in the transcendental, cosmological sense, through absolute self-activity or spontaneity" (²*Lexicon*, 102–103).

[17] Kant identifies the action of causality as the causality of the cause (A 542/B 570). Ian Proops observes Kant's adoption of the Aristotelian 'operation of an agent cause' (*The Fiery Test of Critique*, 286).

[18] In the *Mrongovius* lectures on Metaphysics from 1782–1783, Kant notes that "[i]ts causality of an event is not itself an event" (*L-M/Mron* 29:924). Thus, intelligible causality is best represented on agent- or substance-causal models. See Derk Pereboom, "Kant on Transcendental Freedom," 542n9. Eric Waktins argues that for Kant all causality is fundamentally substance-causality (*Kant and the Metaphysics of Causality*).

practical" (A 547/B 575). This foreshadows Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, where he argues that the concept of transcendental freedom receives objective reality in the practical sphere through the moral law.

While the details of Kant's arguments for freedom in his moral-philosophical works must be passed over here, a few claims are integral to Schmid's doctrine of intelligible fatalism. The distinction between two kinds of causality is drawn in Section III of the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, where Kant argues that the negative concept of freedom as independence from natural necessity leads to the positive concept of freedom as autonomy (*GMS* 4:446–447). Since (1) the will is a kind of causality and (2) causality presupposes laws, then (3) the will's causality must be law-governed. The argument proceeds by elimination. Given that the negative concept of freedom entails independence from empirical causality and externally-determined efficient causes, (4) only a self-imposed law, viz., autonomy, could govern free will's causality. Based on this argument, some commentators attribute to Kant the view that freedom can be predicated only of morally good actions.[19] This interpretation, on which causality from freedom is tantamount to causality in accordance with the moral law, finds textual support in the *Groundwork* and *Critique of Practical Reason*. In the former, Kant claims: "A rational being counts himself, as intelligence, as belonging to the world of understanding, and only as an efficient cause belonging to this does he call his causality a *will*" (*GMS* 4:453).[20] The subject is his "proper self" "as intelligence only," the causality of free actions exists in the human being as intelligence and in "principles of an intelligible world" (*GMS* 4:457), characterized as "the whole of rational beings as things in themselves" (*GMS* 4:458). In the second *Critique*, Kant claims that the moral law is "a law of causality through freedom" (*CPrR* 5:47). Conversely, he characterizes freedom as "a causality of pure reason" (*CPrR* 5:48). Pure practical reason fills the conceptual space carved out for the possibility of freedom in the first *Critique* "with a determinate law of causality in an intelligible world (with freedom), namely the moral law" (*CPrR* 5:49).

With this background in place, Schmid's conception of intelligible fatalism and its dependence on the notion of the causality of things in themselves will become clear below. For

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[19] See, e.g. Daniel Breazeale, "Freedom and Duty"; Gerold Prauss, *Kant über Freiheit*; and Dieter Schönecker, "A Free Will."
[20] See Heiner Klemme's instructive *Kants* Grundlegung, 204–209.

now, it will be helpful to consider the influence of A.W. Rehberg and J.A.H. Ulrich on Schmid's doctrine.

2.2 A.W. Rehberg

A.W. Rehberg's review of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* appeared in the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (*ALZ*) on August 6, 1788. The review was widely read and highly influential.[21] Rehberg raises several objections to Kant's second *Critique*: e.g. that Kant confuses the categories of modality and of quantity in the table of the categories of freedom; that the practicality of the moral law cannot be proven, since its connection to and reality in the sensible world would require self-consciousness of pure reason, which is impossible; and that the notion that the law itself via respect, and not pleasure in the law, could motivate moral action is *Schwärmerey*. In what follows, I restrict the discussion to the problem of the connection between the intelligible and the sensible, since this issue is particularly relevant to the development of intelligible fatalism.

Rehberg claims that the insolubility of the problem of how the intelligible world, which cannot be cognized, could be and really is connected to the sensible world leads to the idea of an "ultimate, infinite original being" in which this connection is grounded.[22] Thus, "the idea of the deity is indispensable to conceiving of the possibility of how noumena sensibly appear."[23] Accordingly, Rehberg takes the idea of the deity to be necessary to conceive of how an intelligence can effect sensible action, i.e. how intelligible causality can effect an action in the empirical world. Significantly, he characterizes the connection between the intelligible and sensible worlds as a "system of intelligible necessity" and an "intelligible fatalism of nature."[24]

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[21] The review was cited just one month after its publication by L.H. Jakob, *Ueber Freyheit*, 19, and is also referenced by K.L. Reinhold, *Briefe über die Kantische Philosophie Zweyter Band*, ix. Kant himself may have responded to Rehberg's criticisms indirectly in several works. C.G. Schütz, editor of the *ALZ*, sent Kant a copy of the review on June 23, 1788, prior to its publication the following month (see 10:541). George di Giovanni, "Translator's Introduction," 22–23, claims that Kant's 1791 essay "On the Miscarriage of All Philosophical Trials" can be seen, in part, as a response to Rehberg's criticism that although the categorical imperative is indeed the formal principle of morality, it cannot serve as an incentive to moral action. Furthermore, George di Giovanni and Allen Wood, "Editorial Notes," 456n2, suggest that Kant reacts to Rehberg in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (*CPJ* 5:177n) and in the Preface to *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (*Rel* 6:6–7n). For an extensive treatment of Rehberg's review of Kant's second *Critique*, its possible influence on Kant, and its impact on surrounding figures, including K.L. Reinhold, J.C.F. Schiller, and J.G. Fichte, see Eberhard Günter Schulz, *Rehbergs Opposition gegen Kants Ethik*.

[22] A.W. Rehberg, [*Review*:] *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, 356.

[23] Ibid., 357.

[24] Ibid. On this point, see also Gerten, *Begehren, Vernunft und freier Wille*, 180n35.

Furthermore, he claims that "morality does not suffer at all in this system of intelligible necessity," and that "the idea of morality is inseparably connected with a comparative concept of freedom (indicated by dependence on inner determining grounds) but not with the absolute concept of freedom."[25] Schmid would affirm Rehberg's claim that morality is compatible with a doctrine of intelligible necessity. However, Schmid rejects Rehberg's claim that morality does not presuppose the "absolute concept of freedom." As we will see below, Schmid takes Kant's conception of transcendental freedom as absolute spontaneity to be a necessary condition of the conceivability of morality. Moreover, although Schmid endorses Rehberg's claim that intelligible fatalism is indispensable to conceiving of the connection between the intelligible and the sensible, he does not understand this fatalism theologically, as Rehberg does. Instead, Schmid follows J.A.H. Ulrich in conceiving of a system of thoroughgoing necessity as a requirement of theoretical reason in order to avoid the irrationality of chance.

2.3 J.A.H. Ulrich

J.A.H. Ulrich's *Eleutheriology, or On Freedom and Necessity* (1788) criticizes Kant's conception of freedom from a Leibnizian–Wolffian perspective. In what follows, I examine Ulrich's discussion of determinism and indeterminism and his criticisms of Kant.

Ulrich frames the debate on free will in terms of determinism and indeterminism, predicated on the concepts of necessity and chance, respectively.[26] He distinguishes between two kinds of necessity: natural necessity (also called physical necessity) and moral necessity. Natural necessity indicates "the thought that, by positing certain conditions, something else is inevitably posited, and that under *absolutely identical circumstances* the converse is not possible."[27] Moral necessity indicates "the thought, or our reason's cognition, that something *ought to happen*, even

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[25] Ibid. L.H. Jakob criticizes Rehberg's claim that morality is to be conceived of in accordance with a system of thoroughgoing intelligible necessity (*Ueber Freyheit*, 19–20).
[26] Several scholars misunderstand the development of the terms "determinism" and "indeterminism" in the history of ideas. Ware, "Freedom Immediately After Kant," 879n12, suggests that the term "indeterminism" was coined by Ulrich in the *Eleutheriology*. Similarly, Cafagna, "Der Angriff," 13, claims that the word "determinism" was invented by neo-Leibnizians in opposition to Kant's Critical foundation of practical philosophy. While Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance*, 151f., is correct that the German *Determinismus* preceded the French *déterminisme* and the English "determinism," he is mistaken that the German term arose "only at the end of the eighteenth century." The terms are found in the second volume of J.N. Tetens' *Philosophische Versuche* (1777) and before that in both volumes of J.B. Basedow's *Philalethie* (1764), thus closer to the mid-eighteenth century and prior to the reactions to Kant's practical philosophy by neo-Leibnizians such as Ulrich and C.W. Snell.
[27] Ulrich, *Eleutheriology*, 16.

though it does not always actually happen because of this."[28] Note that, for Ulrich, our representation of moral necessity is subject to natural necessity:

> if the representation of *moral necessity*, or of the **ought**, becomes efficacious such that it brings about firm **volition** on its own, and the opposing stimuli are inefficacious, then given that (gradually achieved) efficacy of the thought "*I ought*," the occurrence of such a decision is also *true natural necessity*.[29]

Thus, moral agency is determined by natural necessity. By contrast, the concept of chance denotes "an *arising*, a *becoming*, which has no determining grounds, but whereby, when something occurred, the opposite could have equally occurred under absolutely identical circumstances."[30]

With these distinctions in view, Ulrich considers Kant's account of freedom. He notes that Kant's account of freedom rests on the distinction between appearances and things in themselves: considered as appearance and in terms of his empirical character, the human being's actions are determined in accordance with natural laws, but the same actions can be considered free with respect to the human being's intelligible character, which is not subject to temporal conditions.[31] Furthermore, Ulrich acknowledges that, for Kant, this freedom is revealed to us by the *ought*, which indicates a kind of causality independent of appearances and of empirical causality.[32] Yet, Ulrich objects, how is Kant's account supposed to avoid the *aut-aut* of necessity and chance? Independence from empirical causality does not entail independence from determination *pe se*. Thus, the intelligible character might be determined by non-temporal grounds. The question of determining grounds of the intelligible character comes to a head in immoral action: why pure reason only sometimes effectively determines the will to act

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 19.
[31] Ulrich, *Eleutheriology*, 22–27. I therefore disagree with Nuzzo, "Metamorphosen der Freiheit," 497, who claims that it was "particularly difficult for all of these philosophers [i.e. Ulrich and Schmid] to understand the true core of the Kantian resolution of the antinomy of freedom: that causality from freedom and causality according to laws of nature are emphasized as *distinct kinds of determination* and [that] the conception of a determination of the will with respect to appearances, on the one hand, and things in themselves, on the other, is developed on this basis." Ulrich understood but rejected Kant's distinction between two kinds of causality pertaining to appearances and things in themselves, respectively, and Schmid in fact adopts the distinction.
[32] Ibid., 28.

morally?[33] If there are no grounds determining the intelligible character here, then Kant is committed to indeterminism, which entails chance, ruling out any sufficient reason to blame the agent.[34] If such grounds are present, then he is committed to determinism. Moreover, even if "omission of reason is an *original* and *immutable* lack of reason's activity,"[35] this immutable lack must also be grounded in the intelligible character. Since the empirical character is grounded in the intelligible character, "thus here too there is *necessity*, thus everywhere *necessity*."[36]

Schmid would go on to champion the aphorism "everywhere necessity." However, unlike Ulrich, who rejects space and time as pure forms of intuition, Schmid attempts to reconcile thoroughgoing necessity with transcendental idealism and Kant's Critical conception of freedom.

3. Intelligible Fatalism and Its Reception

In what follows, I outline Schmid's doctrine of intelligible fatalism against the backdrop of the historical context sketched above.

In overt homage to Ulrich, Schmid titles §228 of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* "Everywhere Necessity" (*Ueberall Nothwendigkeit*),[37] and claims that preceding causes determine all human action:

> in accordance with its nature, reason decides universally in favor of laws and rejects any lawlessness. *Determinism*, if it is conceived as a philosophy that denies any chance in nature and plainly rejects any explanation of an event from chance, is the only true and sound philosophy since, to the contrary, *indeterminism*, or the assertion of lawless effects in nature, renders any theoretical and practical use of reason impossible.[38]

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[33] Ibid, 32–33.
[34] For discussions, see Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 210; di Giovanni, *Freedom and Religion*, 116.
[35] Ulrich, *Eleutheriology*, 34.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Cf. Ulrich, *Eleutheriology*, 34.
[38] Schmid, [1]*AMP* §224, 187.

Schmid's claim refers to actions considered as temporally-conditioned appearances.[39] However, he extends determinism to the intelligible.[40] In a section entitled "Yet Everywhere Necessity" (evoking Ulrich), Schmid addresses the apparent inexplicability of immoral actions. Since chance is irrational, in the case of immoral action "something must be thought as present with the existence of reason that determines its efficacy on appearances."[41] Given the asymmetrical grounding relationship between things in themselves and appearances discussed above, this "something" cannot be an appearance. Even though nothing sensible can determine reason in itself, "it by no means follows that *what grounds sensibility* and its appearances is, *in itself*, incapable of restricting *reason's effects in appearance*."[42] So, this "something" that restricts reason's efficacy in appearance must be *intelligible*: "Hence we are not permitted to assume any (irrational) chance, i.e. lawlessness, with respect to the supersensible determining grounds of our actions. Thus, nothing remains but lawful necessity […] *Intelligible fatalism*."[43]

In the first edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, Schmid defines intelligible fatalism as "the assertion of the natural necessity of all actions of a rational being according to laws of the causality of things in themselves."[44] On its face, this definition appears contradictory. It predicates natural necessity of actions on the causality of things in themselves, whereas, according to Kant, natural necessity is causality according to nature, presupposing temporal conditions, and intelligible causality is atemporal. In fact, Schmid even refers to "intelligible fatalism of nature" (*der intelligible Naturfatalismus*).[45]

However, he apparently has in mind a broader sense of "natural." Recall Rehberg's characterization of a "system of intelligible necessity" as "intelligible fatalism of nature." Besides, Rehberg's influence on the name of Schmid's doctrine, Schmid seems to employ "natural necessity" in the sense used by Ulrich, namely as "the thought that, by positing certain

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[39] "In all these cases [of human action], the state of the action that we perceive is temporally preceded by another state of our mind and of the occasioning external things to which our mind stands in relation. The state of the action we perceive regularly and uniformly follows the preceding state such that under exactly the same internal and external circumstances, both non-action as well as every other action distinct from the one that takes place are recognized as conditionally impossible" (¹*AMP* §228, 190–1). Cf. Ulrich, *Eleutheriology*, 20.

[40] For a discussion of Schmid's argument, see Walsh, "C.C.E. Schmid and the Doctrine of Intelligible Fatalism."

[41] ¹*AMP* §255, 209. In this section, Schmid includes a footnote praising Ulrich: "This claim by the determinists, e.g. by Mr. privy councilor *Ulrich* in His *Eleutheriology* (Jena 1788.) §9ff. has not been attacked or doubted by any reasonable person, let alone refuted."

[42] Ibid.

[43] ²*AMP* §260a, 358.

[44] ¹*AMP* §257, 211.

[45] Ibid.

conditions, something else is inevitably posited, and that under *absolutely identical circumstances* the converse is not possible."[46] So understood, the natural necessity predicated of the causality of things in themselves invokes no temporal conditions. Moreover, by nature, "in the most general sense," Kant understands "the existence of things under laws" (*CPrR* 5:43; cf. *Prol* 4:294), contrasting "sensible nature" with "supersensible nature" (*CPrR* 5:43). In its material significance, he calls nature "the sum total of all things, insofar as they can be *objects of our senses*, and thus also of experience" (*MFNS* 4:467), or "the sum total of appearances insofar as these are in thoroughgoing connection through an inner principle of causality" (A 419/B 446n). In the *Lexicon*, Schmid expands the material concept of nature to "the sum total of things in themselves, of noumena; *supersensible nature*, world of understanding. It is indeed an object of our thought but not cognizable."[47] Thus, intelligible fatalism of nature indicates the necessity appertaining to the causality of things in themselves. At any rate, subsequent editions feature less ambiguous characterizations of intelligible fatalism, defining the doctrine as the thesis that "the supersensible substrate of nature and all of its appearances" is the "sufficient and lawful determining ground (*Entscheidungsgrund*) of all of our appearing actions."[48]

In accordance with this broad sense of "nature," Schmid characterizes the moral law as a law of nature: "The practical laws of reason spring from the nature of a rational will and could be called, in this respect, *natural laws of reason*" (*Naturgesetze der Vernunft*).[49] For Schmid, a law of nature "determines an effect or action."[50] Thus, he interprets the moral law, considered as a law of our supersensible nature, as a law of efficient causality. Thus, Kant's claim, discussed above, that the moral law is the causal law of freedom (*GMS* 4:446–448, 453; *CPrR* 5:47–49) is understood as a law of efficient intelligible causality.[51] Nevertheless, Schmid maintains,

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[46] Ulrich, *Eleutheriology*, 16. Although Ulrich also calls this kind of necessity "physical necessity," the definition is sufficiently broad to hold for non-sensible conditions.

[47] Schmid, ²*Lexicon*, 257. As support, Schmid cites *Prol* §14.

[48] ²*AMP* §260a, 358; ³*AMP* §260a, 479; ⁴*AMP*, 502.

[49] ²*AMP* §6, 25; ³*AMP* §6, 37; ⁴*AMP* 39. Note that Schmid qualifies this by claiming that the moral law is not a law of nature for the human will, since we do not always act according to it. Nevertheless, the moral law is the "natural law of the pure will" (²*AMP* §250, 337; ³*AMP* §250, 453; ⁴*AMP*, 476). F.W.J. Schelling, "General Overview," 162, claims that for absolute freedom, "the law that proceeds from the will is a mere *law of nature*."

[50] Ibid.

[51] For Kosch, *Freedom and Reason*, 52n13, Schmid's position is "the logical conclusion of the descriptive-law interpretation" of GMS III, i.e. the interpretation on which the moral law is the causal law of noumenal agency.

intelligible fatalism does not abrogate morality.[52] He likely found support for this view in the following passage of the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

> But whether in these actions, through which it prescribes laws, reason is not itself determined by further influences, and whether that which with respect to sensory impulses is called freedom might not in turn with regard to higher and more remote efficient causes be nature – in the practical sphere this does not concern us. (A 803/B 831).[53]

Thus, Kant suggests the possibility of higher causes of reason's activity, which Schmid interprets as intelligible obstacles. However, the supposition of reason's determination by remote causes does not encroach on the practical sphere.

Schmid's doctrine of intelligible fatalism came under heavy fire in connection with his account of freedom. Thus, a reviewer of the third edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* asserts that it is "a pity that the theory *of freedom*, thus the single most essential part of all of moral philosophy, fails and that thereby the entire system is made untenable,"[54] and "on p. 475 the author presents intelligible determinism as a comprehensible and valid system, and as a result of this alone he inevitably barred himself from any access to a genuine theory of freedom."[55]

Below, I examine the reception of intelligible fatalism against the backdrop of Schmid's account of freedom. For now, it will be instructive to highlight a few aspects of that account. Drawing on Kant's concept of transcendental freedom, Schmid characterizes absolute (also called "metaphysical") freedom as the "capacity to act from pure self-determination (thus, *without being determined*)," a capacity "to begin an action."[56] For Schmid, consciousness of the moral law "compels us […] to assume freedom not merely as a capacity that is not impossible, but also as an actual capacity of my will and of the will of every moral being.[57] Curiously, Temilo van Zantwijk asserts that Schmid's "position is especially incompatible with a view of

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[52] [2]*AMP* §263u, 387. For discussion of this point, see Walsh, "C.C.E. Schmid and the Doctrine of Intelligible Fatalism."

[53] For a discussion of this passage in view of the relationship between practical and transcendental freedom, see Heiner Klemme, *Kants Philosophie des Subjekts*, 90–95.

[54] *Annalen der Philosophie (2)*, 121.

[55] Ibid, 128.

[56] [1]*AMP* §233, 194–195. In the third edition: "freedom […] consists in absolute spontaneity" ([3]*AMP* §205, 370n).

[57] Schmid, [1]*AMP* §243, 201–202. See also Schmid, [1]*AMP* §227, 190.

freedom as spontaneity. He [Schmid] maintains that it is actually impossible for us to view our rational will 'as if' it acts spontaneously."[58] *Pace* van Zantwijk, for Schmid, consciousness of the moral law requires that the will be regarded as absolutely spontaneous: the moral law is the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom. Schmid claims that the *ought* is a "*synthetic proposition a priori* that is determined by the essential constitution of this practical faculty of cognition, or an immediate, pure *fact* […] This is the same fact whereby the existence of a pure practical reason (§103) becomes manifest. Accordingly, this consciousness compels us to assume a free capacity."[59] Here, Schmid takes himself to follow the second *Critique*'s doctrine of the fact of reason: the moral law presupposes freedom as its *ratio essendi* and reveals itself to consciousness *a priori*. Conversely, freedom is the *ratio essendi* of the moral law. If causality as construed by the transcendental realist "is the only way of representing the causality of actions, then it follows that the concept of an *unconditional ought* (moral necessity) is an invalid, completely inapplicable concept, and that all judgments that refer to it are empty and chimerical."[60] Intelligible causality through freedom is a condition of pure practical reason and of the moral law: "that pure reason is practical, which is the basis of the moral law as its condition, presupposes a capacity of absolute freedom."[61]

Schmid's intelligible fatalism was almost universally condemned by both opponents and advocates of the Critical philosophy. J.C. Schwab is arguably the most influential opponent of the Critical philosophy to attack Schmid's intelligible fatalism. Winner of the 1792/95 prize essay competition of the Berlin Academy of Sciences,[62] he defended the Leibnizian–Wolffian philosophy against the onslaughts of Kantianism in a series of writings.[63] Schwab likewise

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[58] van Zantwijk, "Schmid," 685.

[59] Schmid, ¹*AMP* §125, 126–127. Similarly, Kant states: "Consciousness of this fundamental law may be called a fact of reason because one cannot reason it out from antecedent data of reason […] and because it instead forces itself upon us as a synthetic a priori proposition" (*CPrR* 5:31); "Moreover, the moral law is given, as it were, as a fact of pure reason of which we are *a priori* conscious" (*CPrR* 5:47); "[…] this fact is inseparably connected with, and indeed identical with, consciousness of freedom of the will" (*CPrR* 5:42).

[60] ¹*AMP* §235, 196.

[61] ¹*AMP* §125, 126. Accordingly, Wallwitz's proposal in *Die Interpretation und Ausformung*, 51, that Schmid departs from Kant's contention that freedom is the *ratio essendi* of the moral law, is implausible.

[62] The prize competition—dedicated to the topic, "What Real Progress has Metaphysics Made in Germany since the Time of Leibniz and Wolff"—was supposed to be closed by January 1, 1792. However, due to a lack of submissions (Schwab being the sole contributor), the contest was extended to June 1, 1795.

[63] Besides the prize essay, Schwab attacks criticizes Kant's philosophy from a Leibnizian–Wolffian perspective on topics ranging from ethics and natural law to metaphysics and epistemology: *Neun Gespräche zwischen Christian Wolff und einem Kantianer über Kant's metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Rechtslehre und der Tugendlehre* (1798); *Acht Briefe über einige Widersprüche und Inconsequenzen in Herrn Professor Kants neuesten Schriften* (1799); *Vergleichung des Kantischen Moralprincips mit dem Leibnitzisch–Wolffischen* (1800); *Ueber die Wahrheit der*

attacks intelligible fatalism from a Leibnizian–Wolffian standpoint. In two essays published in the *Philosophisches Archiv*—"On the Two Kinds of I, and the Concept of Freedom in Kant's Ethics" (*Ueber die zweierlei Ich und den Begriff der Freiheit in der Kantischen Moral*; 1792) and "On Intelligible Fatalism in the Critical Philosophy" (*Ueber den intelligibeln Fatalismus in der kritischen Philosophie*; 1794)—Schwab argues that Leibnizian–Wolffian determinism is preferable to intelligible fatalism and to the Critical philosophy more generally.[64] Indeed, Schwab takes Schmid's *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* and the doctrine of intelligible fatalism contained in it to be indicative of the Critical philosophy. According to Schwab, the "Leibnizian doctrine of freedom, or the Leibnizian–Wolffian determinism […] is incomparably more coherent and in agreement with the concepts of human understanding."[65] This is because it supposedly has all of the virtues of Schmid's doctrine *sans* unjustifiable theoretical posits about our sensible and supersensible natures.

Of course, not everyone would be so quick to call intelligible fatalism consistent with the Critical philosophy. Reinhold would present his theory of free will in opposition to intelligible fatalism.[66] Likewise, a reviewer of the first edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, thought to be Heydenreich,[67] claims that while Schmid's treatment of the concepts of the highest good and the moral incentive is "completely faithful to Kant's principles," Schmid departs from Kant in his "doctrine of freedom," which rests on intelligible fatalism.

Indeed, Heydenreich's conception of *moral freedom* in the second volume of his *Reflections on the Philosophy of Natural Religion* (*Betrachtungen über die Philosophie der natürlichen Religion*; 1791) is likely a response to Schmid. For Schmid, moral freedom is the "appearance of metaphysical freedom"[68] via the "determinability of desire through pure reason."[69] Moral freedom, the manifestation of absolute freedom, is crucial to determining actions' moral significance. Schmid calls actions which "intrinsically bear the imprint of rational

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Kantischen Philosophie und über die Wahrheitsliebe der Allgemeinen Literaturzeitung zu Jena in Ansehung dieser Philosophie (1803).

[64] The two essays are translated in Noller and Walsh, *Kant's Early Critics on Freedom*. While the first essay ostensibly treats the distinction between the intelligible and empirical self in Kant's moral philosophy, Schwab does so via Schmid's *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, often referring to intelligible fatalism.

[65] Schwab, "On the Two Kinds of I," 77.

[66] Since the connection between Reinhold and Schmid in this regard has received considerable attention, I will pass over it here. For discussions of this topic, see note 12.

[67] See note 8.

[68] ^{1}*AMP* §261, 224.

[69] ^{1}*AMP* §227, 190.

self-activity"[70] *moral actions*. Those containing no "trace of an effect of self-active reason" are *immoral*.[71] By "rational self-activity," Schmid apparently means pure reason's self-legislation of the moral law. Actions that are the manifestation of absolute freedom in appearance, viz. pure reason's absolutely spontaneous legislating of a law determining the will, are moral. Actions in which freedom does not manifest itself are immoral. This implies that only actions which manifest pure practical reason's self-activity, i.e. moral actions, are free.[72] In opposition to this view, Heydenreich defines moral freedom as "the capacity to contain and make efficacious the complete ground of actions which are in conformity with or contrary to the moral law of reason, without being necessarily determined to either of them by the influence of external forces or by one's own representations."[73] Thus, he rejects Schmid's restriction of moral freedom to moral actions, opting for a conception of freedom that consists in choosing for or against the moral law.[74]

Fichte forthrightly disavowed Schmid's intelligible fatalism and his concomitant account of freedom, underscoring Creuzer's assessment that the doctrine "abolishes all morality" and claiming that "[b]y Mr. Schmid's own admission, imputation, blame, and merit cease to exist in this theory."[75] Fichte's rebuke appears in his review of Leonhard Creuzer's *Skeptical Reflections on Freedom of the Will* (*Skeptische Betrachtungen über die Freiheit des Willens*; 1793), published in the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*.[76] Schmid, who provided a preface to Creuzer's book, accused Fichte of being uncharitable.[77] Fichte replied that he never intended a literal quotation, but merely invoked its meaning as he (Fichte) could understand it.[78] Tensions between

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[70] ¹*AMP* §251, 206.

[71] ¹*AMP* §251, 206.

[72] In connection with Kant's claims from the *Groundwork* on the causality of the will, Creuzer echoes Schmid's view: "with respect to moral freedom, I do not know what could be objected against this. For insofar as we conceive of moral freedom as nothing other than the ground of the real possibility of *moral* actions, it follows by itself that all actions which we consider to be effects of this freedom must bear the form of pure practical reason in themselves and be determined by its laws" (*Skeptical Reflections*, 144).

[73] Heydenreich, "On Moral Freedom," 63.

[74] Although Heydenreich does not mention Schmid by name here, he cites Schmid no less than five times in the second volume of his *Reflections on the Philosophy of Natural Religion*. His authorship of the review of the first edition of Schmid's *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* in the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung* and his advocacy of a conception of moral freedom contrary to Schmid's make the latter the likely inspiration of Heydenreich's claim that his conception is the "only true concept of *moral freedom*" ("On Moral Freedom," 64).

[75] Fichte, "Creuzer Review," 204. I treat Fichte's charge concerning imputation in more detail in Walsh, "C.C.E. Schmid and the Doctrine of Intelligible Fatalism."

[76] For discussion of Fichte's review, see Wayne Martin, "Fichte's Creuzer Review," and Wayne Martin, "Fichte on Freedom," 297–299.

[77] *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung Intelligenzblatt* no. 14, 112.

[78] *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung Intelligenzblatt* no. 29, 232.

Schmid and Fichte began to rise as a result of this exchange and came to a head when Schmid accused Fichte's philosophy of being an "idle fantasy" and an "endless fiction."[79] Fichte responded vehemently in his "Vergleichung des vom Herrn Prof. Schmid aufgestellten Systems mit der Wissenschaftslehre," which contains Fichte's notorious "act of annihilation," whereby he declares that Schmid ceases to exist.[80]

However, not all engagements with intelligible fatalism were so acrimonious. Friedrich Carl Forberg claims that although he does not agree with the arguments of intelligible fatalism, "those which had been offered in opposition to it seemed even less compelling."[81] Short of advocating intelligible fatalism outright, others would accede to core features of Schmid's account of freedom. Thus, Leonhard Creuzer confirms Schmid's view that the constitution of the human faculty of cognition demands the assumption of necessity apropos the noumenal. For Schmid, "the concepts of *ground*, *law*, and *necessity* are […] pure, universally valid concepts of reason that pertain to everything conceivable."[82] He elaborates:

> Hence we are not permitted to assume any (irrational) chance, i.e. lawlessness, with respect to the supersensible determining grounds of our actions. Thus, nothing remains but lawful necessity. For there is absolutely no middle path between the two because they [i.e. chance and necessity] are contradictorily opposed, that is to say, because the entire sphere of conceivability and possibility is limited by the concepts of necessity and chance.[83]

Thus, the necessity of positing intelligible fatalism turns on the conceptual conditions of thinking *per se*. Although we cannot cognize things in themselves, as soon as we think about them, we must do so in accordance with the pure concepts that hold for thinking as such: "It is true that we do not *know things in themselves*, but as soon as we think of them, we consider them *as noumena*

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[79] Schmid, "Bruchstücke aus einer Schrift," 101, 106.

[80] The essay is translated with an introduction in Daniel Breazeale, *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings*, 307–335. For discussions of the dispute between Fichte and Schmid, see Benjamin Crowe, "Fichte's Fictions Revisited;" Elizabeth Millán, "Fichte," 313–317; Lothar Sennewald, *Carl Christian Erhard Schmid und sein Verhältnis zu Fichte*; and Temilo van Zantwijk and Paul Ziche, "Fundamentalphilosophie."

[81] Forberg, *On the Grounds and Laws*, 10. For discussion of Forberg's interpretation of Kant's *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, see Walsh (forthcoming a).

[82] ²*AMP* §260a, 358.

[83] Ibid.

and thus must think of them rationally – or not at all."[84] Likewise, Creuzer claims: "*Rational conceivability* is thus an indispensable demand of our reason on everything we could ever ascribe to our intelligible I."[85]

In contrast to an anonymous contributor to the *Philosophisches Magazin*, who claims that Schmid's extension of the principle of sufficient reason to the intelligible is an emphatic assertion along the lines of "a dogmatist of the Leibnizian–Wolffian school,"[86] Schmid takes this extension to be grounded in the laws of thinking: although the principle of sufficient reason can be applied *determinately* only to objects under temporal conditions, this does not exclude the application of this principle *in general* to noumena, i.e. absent an "*individually determined* representation."[87] Indeed, since the conceptual constraints of thinking we must do so. Along these lines, Creuzer asserts that the concept of necessity is "inseparable from the *pure concept of the understanding of causality*. In particular, it does not first receive its meaning through the form of time, as some have claimed, but only *a more closely determined meaning*. The rule is in this latter case *determinately cognizable*, in the former case only *conceivable*."[88] Arthur Schopenhauer would later employ this line of argument, contending that the concept of freedom qua *libertas indifferentiae* cannot be clearly thought "because the principle of sufficient reason […] is the essential form of our entire faculty of cognition."[89]

Although intelligible fatalism was widely rejected as inconsistent with the Critical philosophy, in his review of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, H.A. Pistorius questions whether Kant's account of freedom does not amount to a "rational fatalism."[90] Pistorius' suggestion is interesting because the review was written in 1788 but, due to editorial mishandling at the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, was not published until 1794.[91] Thus, while the historical influence between Schmid and Pistorius is excluded, the connection shows that Schmid was not the only figure in the reception of the Critical philosophy to interpret Kant along the lines of

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[84] *²AMP* §260b, 360.

[85] Creuzer, *Skeptical Reflections*, 131.

[86] *Philosophisches Magazin*

[87] *²AMP* §260b, 360–361.

[88] Creuzer, *Skeptical Reflections*, 137.

[89] Schopenhauer, *Die beiden Grundprobleme*, 9.

[90] Pistorius, "Review of *Critique of Practical Reason*," 101.

[91] For a discussion of the review, see Guyer, "The Original Empty Formalism." A translation of the review is forthcoming in Walschots, *Kant's* Critique of Practical Reason.

fatalism. Nevertheless, he would revise the concept of absolute freedom to include the capacity to transgress the moral law.

4. Revisions to Intelligible Fatalism

In what follows, I examine Schmid's revisions to intelligible fatalism. The first concerns Schmid's name for the doctrine; while the revision itself is arguably merely terminological, it indicates important features of the context of intelligible fatalism. The second revision is more substantive, threatening to undermine the necessity thought with the concept of absolute freedom and, with it, intelligible fatalism itself. I argue that Schmid attempts to reconcile his conception of absolute freedom with intelligible fatalism by appealing to the distinction between practical and theoretical reason.

  In the third and fourth editions of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, Schmid redubs his doctrine of thoroughgoing necessity "intelligible determinism" (*Intelligibler Determinismus*), instead of "intelligible fatalism."[92] As discussed above, Schmid rejects Leibnizian–Wolffian determinism in favor of his doctrine of intelligible necessity. Puzzlingly, in ¹*AMP* Schmid seemingly identifies determinism with fatalism: "The consequences of *determinism* are the same as in *fatalism*. These two systems are essentially indistinct."[93] Yet, he never defines the genus concept of fatalism, only its various species concepts, including intelligible fatalism. Schmid's terminological ambiguity in the first edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* does him no favors. Several of these ambiguities are rectified in the second edition. For instance, he introduces the terms "sensible fatalism" (²*AMP* §251c, 340) and "empirical sensible determinism" (²*AMP* §259a, 355) to qualify his erstwhile mere "fatalism" and "determinism."[94] Schmid's claim that determinism and fatalism are essentially indistinct presumably asserts that both doctrines, in the most general sense, entail thoroughgoing necessity. However, such a doctrine can take different forms and Schmid does not endorse every kind of determinism.

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[92] This terminological shift first appears in 1793 in Schmid's *Outline of Moral Philosophy for Lectures* (*Grundriß der Moralphilosophie für Vorlesungen*), §160, 156.

[93] Schmid, ¹*AMP* §232, 194.

[94] It is presumably this brand of fatalism that Schmid takes Kant to reject in his 1783 review of Schulz's *Attempt at an Introduction* (see *Rev-Schulz* 8:10–14). Nevertheless, some conceptual distinctions are already present in the first edition: e.g. "blind fatalism," "mystical fatalism," "atheistic fatalism," etc. (see ¹*AMP* §259, 215–218).

Disambiguating Schmid's position here is instructive with respect to Paul Guyer's recent claim that Schmid did not endorse intelligible fatalism. According to Guyer, Schmid rejected "what he took to be Ulrich's position that Kant was committed to 'intelligible fatalism' by himself insisting that to apply determinism to the 'finite rational being, the human being,' that is, the noumenal self and its will, would be 'indemonstrable,' provable neither by an 'analogy from experience' nor from the 'logical principle of the ground' […]."[95] Contrary to Guyer's claim, Schmid does not reject intelligible fatalism, only a *specific conception* of determinism:

> a determinism that subjects the I (the finite rational being, the human being) in every respect — thus, not merely as an appearance, but also as a *thing in itself* (which he normally does not distinguish) with respect to all of his actions, rational and animal ones, and with respect to everything that constitutes an action, according to the form (mode of action) as well as the matter, or according to the internal and external objects acted upon — to the necessary influence *of appearances in time* without qualification and derives actions exclusively on this basis is […] indemonstrable […].[96]

To this argument, Schmid adduces several other observations. Determinism, he claims, is "indemonstrable," "inconsistent," "practically detrimental," among others. As the emphasis on *appearances in time* indicates, Schmid intends a conception of determinism on which the human being, *both* as appearance and thing in itself, is necessarily influenced by appearances under temporal conditions. Schmid rejects *this* determinism owing to the asymmetrical grounding relationship between appearances and things in themselves. *Intelligible determinism*, by contrast, is a "necessary thought."[97]

While it is not certain why Schmid characterizes his view as "fatalism" rather than "determinism" in the first two editions of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, Schmid's doctrine (under any name) was plausibly influenced by the Pantheism Controversy, which arose from correspondence between F.H. Jacobi and Moses Mendelssohn on G.E. Lessing's purported Spinozism. According to Jacobi, all roads of rational inquiry lead to dreaded fatalism, which

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[95] Guyer, "The Struggle for Freedom," 122.
[96] Schmid, ^{1}*AMP* §260, 220. Guyer's contention that Schmid rejects intelligible fatalism rests on this passage ("The Struggle for Freedom," 122).
[97] ^{2}*AMP* §263z, 397.

justifies assuming irrational fideism. "Fatalism" was Jacobi's preferred pejorative, presumably influencing Schmid's initial terminological choice. Schmid's apparent conflation of "fatalism" and "determinism" in early editions of *AMP* may derive from Ulrich's view that the difference between them is nugatory: "one can call this belief in universal and determined necessity *determinism*, or *fatalism*, *Stoicism*, or *Spinozism*, or, as far as I am concerned, even *Beelzebubism*."[98] Schmid's choice of "intelligible determinism" in the third and fourth editions may have reflected Kant's *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, where he claims predeterminism, not determinism, threatens freedom (*Rel* 6:49). Indeed, Schmid subsequently adopts that distinction: "Sensible predeterminism as well as supersensible determinism can be reconciled with consciousness of and practical belief in freedom and with the purposive use of this freedom."[99]

By the third edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, Schmid seems to waver on the scope of absolute freedom: "[t]he omitted exercise of moral freedom presupposes a higher capacity upon which the exercise or omission of moral freedom depends […]. This capacity is the *free will as such*, or absolute freedom."[100] Thus, whereas Schmid previously restricted the scope of absolute freedom to the activity of pure reason and attributed its failure to determine the faculty of desire to intelligible obstacles, he now claims that this failure depends on a higher capacity of freedom:

> The disposition and action of the human being is thus not absolutely determinable by the pure will. Nevertheless, it is within our power to decide in all cases whether our disposition and action are to be determined by the pure or sensible will, namely by means of a free capacity for the use of all capacities, or a capacity to determine oneself the supreme determining grounds of real actions.[101]

This revision was presumably undertaken in light of Kant's *Religion*. Thus, Schmid claims, echoing Kant's *Religion*, that moral evil results from the free subordination of the moral to the sensible incentive:

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[98] Ulrich, *Eleutheriology*, 8.
[99] ³*AMP* §262b, 492.
[100] ³*AMP* §249, 449. To my knowledge, no recent scholar has observed these amendments.
[101] ³*AMP* §249, 449–450; ⁴*AMP*, 473.

an *immoral volition* (*volitio*) can arise in us by subordinating the moral incentive to the sensible one […] This inversion of incentives must be able to arise from the *free faculty of volition* itself […] moral evil, as imputable, cannot come in us through mere external influence; hence it must arise as a result of an act of our free will.[102]

Indeed, Schmid is explicit in the preface to the fourth edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* that "Kant's and Fichte's moral writings" were useful in improving the book and "correcting several erroneous claims."[103]

Let us consider the implications of this revision. Jean-François Goubet claims that Schmid abandoned intelligible fatalism as of the third edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*.[104] This claim ought to be rejected for three reasons. First, the passage to which Goubet refers as evidence is also found in the second edition. Second, the passage does not suggest Schmid renounced intelligible fatalism:

It would perhaps still be theoretically conceivable that something lying beyond the sphere of our consciousness determine these acts of will and, consequently, that they would be *intrinsically conditioned*. But there is 1) no theoretical reason to assume this. *Intelligible fatalism* would accordingly be theoretically *groundless*, although not internally contradictory.[105]

Immediately prior to this passage, Schmid discusses the absolute freedom of the pure will. Hence, "these acts of will" refers specifically to actions determined by the will's "unconditional causality." Schmid's point is that while it is theoretically possible that the will's unconditional causality implied by absolute freedom is actually conditioned by something intelligible, we have no reason to suppose that this is the case and thus to do so would be a groundless assumption.

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[102] ³*AMP* §252, 458–459. Cf. *Rel* 6:21, 25, 30f., 35ff., 44ff.
[103] ⁴*AMP*, unpaginated.
[104] Goubet, "Der Streit," 250.
[105] ²*AMP* §255c, 346; ³*AMP* §255c, 464–465.

Third, Schmid confirms in the third and fourth editions of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* that intelligible fatalism is a necessary presupposition.[106]

Nevertheless, Schmid's claim that immoral action presupposes a free capacity to choose to determine oneself in accordance with or contrary to the moral law poses a serious threat to intelligible fatalism. After all, on Schmid's earlier view, it was the existence of immoral action that necessitated the postulation of intelligible obstacles. Significantly, Schmid apparently denies that the intelligible self is to be identified with pure reason:

> Since this intelligible I and its intelligible character must be conceived of in accordance with the appearing I and its empirical character, as the schema or symbol of the former, we are *not* permitted to conceive of the intelligible I *only as reason*, given that in appearances it does not always express rationality.[107]

Thus, since the empirical character is grounded in the intelligible character, the manifestations of irrationality in appearance must be grounded in our intelligible self. In claiming this, Schmid opens the door to what he previously considered absurd: a conception of freedom entailing metaphysical indifference. Previously, the activity of the intelligible I qua pure reason was governed by the law essential to its supersensible nature, the moral law. For Schmid, this activity was both lawful and necessary. Now he argues for a capacity whose activity is not law-governed. But if it is no longer necessary to think of the intelligible as thoroughly law-governed, then it is not clear what rational need there remains to posit intelligible fatalism.

The matter is complicated by the fact that Schmid does not seem to be consistent even with respect to these revisions. Thus, as the reviewer of the third edition of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy* observes, [108] Schmid retains passages from previous editions which apparently deny that moral evil is free:

> Now given that there are *immoral* and *non-moral actions* […], a sufficient determining ground in the intelligible must be assumed for these appearances […] thus (due to the

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[106] ³*AMP* §260b, 480; ³*AMP* §262z, 525; ⁴*AMP*, 508.

[107] ³*AMP* §262k, 503; ⁴*AMP*, 524.
[108] *ALZ*, no. 315, 58.

limitedness of moral appearance), we must assume that what grounds *sensibility* and all its appearances *in itself*, or the supersensible substrate of nature, necessarily determines this perceived limitation of the effects of reason in appearance.[109]

Furthermore, he continues to identify "[t]he transcendental I" with "reason in itself,"[110] which he seems to deny in other passages as of the third edition. Contrary to his postulation of a capacity of freedom whose efficacy is not necessarily governed by the moral law, he claims in the fourth edition that metaphysical freedom "is not *lawlessness*. The self-determination is lawful. Its law is the moral law."[111] To this paragraph Schmid appends a footnote, claiming that Kant's *Religion* demonstrates that "the *Kantian* doctrine of freedom cannot be and is not supposed to be a doctrine of chance nor indeterminism."[112]

I contend that Schmid hoped to accommodate these apparent inconsistencies through a stark contrast between theoretical and practical reason. Already present in the first two editions of *Attempt at a Moral Philosophy*, Schmid asserts:

> Speculative and practical *claims* are in accord. Sensible predeterminism as well as supersensible determinism are compatible with consciousness of and with the practical faith in freedom, and with the purposive use of this freedom.[113]

This is because Schmid insulates the modal concepts operative in the theoretical and practical use of reason, respectively:

> there is an essential difference in the concepts of that which is physically or theoretically necessary and possible, and that which is practically or morally necessary and possible […] *Necessary according to theoretical laws of reason* is that which is not otherwise possible according to theoretical concepts of — sensible or supersensible — nature […]. *Necessary according to practical laws* is that which is not otherwise possible than this

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[109] ³*AMP* §260b, 479–480; ⁴*AMP*, 502.
[110] ²*AMP* §264a, 403; ³*AMP* §263, 531; ⁴*AMP*,
[111] ⁴*AMP*, 488.
[112] ⁴*AMP*, 488 note.
[113] ²*AMP* §262b, 369; ³*AMP* §262b, 492.

one way according to practical reason's concepts of the absolute unity and perfection of the will.[114]

Schmid takes his revised claims about an absolute capacity of freedom to transgress the moral law to pertain to the practical standpoint. Thus, he argues that self-directed judgments of praise and blame presuppose "*a capacity upon which the use of all capacities* […] *absolutely depends, but which itself is absolutely independent*."[115] This presupposition is limited to the standpoint of practical reasoning:

> This relation of the concept of freedom to possible actions is, however, only permitted *insofar as they are moral or immoral* […] The *necessity of assuming it practically*, i.e. of acting under the idea of freedom, is immediately contained in the consciousness of the necessity (obligation), to obey the moral law universally and under all temporal conditions.[116]

By separating the assertability conditions of claims of practical and of theoretical reason, Schmid takes himself to be warranted to assume, for practical purposes, a robust conception of absolute freedom which includes the capacity to obey or transgress the moral law, while maintaining the doctrine of intelligible fatalism as a necessary, though problematic, assumption of theoretical reason. However, in doing so, he extends the scope of the practical, previously restricted to the space of consciously representable reasons: "only what we are acquainted with can have a determining influence on our actions, whereas the limits that define rational activity are absolutely indeterminable for us."[117] As a result, theoretical and practical reason stand in ever greater tension with one another, since the domain of discourse of both includes the supersensible substrate of appearances.

5. Conclusion

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[114] 4*AMP*, 534.
[115] 4*AMP*, 491.
[116] 4*AMP*, 541–542.
[117] 1*AMP* §257, 211. For discussion of this feature of Schmid's account of rational agency, see Walsh, "C.C.E. Schmid and the Doctrine of Intelligible Fatalism."

In this paper, I hope to have shown the historical significance of Schmid's intelligible fatalism. By highlighting the influence of Kant, Rehberg, and Ulrich on Schmid's doctrine, its connection to and role in the immediate reception of the Critical philosophy could be thrown into sharp relief. On my reading, Schmid's characterization of the doctrine as "intelligible natural fatalism" marks an extension of Kant's concept of *nature* to the supersensible and an idiosyncratic view of the Critical philosophy in light of the Pantheism controversy. *Contra* Jacobi, Schmid sought to demonstrate that morality and freedom could be reconciled with a fatalistic system of thoroughgoing necessity.

The far-reaching reception of intelligible fatalism — engaging Creuzer, Erhard, Fichte, Forberg, Heydenreich, Reinhold, Schelling, and Schwab, among others — demonstrates its significance as a particular development within this dynamic period of classical German philosophy. Contrary to recent commentators, I argued for Schmid's commitment to freedom qua absolute spontaneity and to Kant's view of the moral law as the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom. Furthermore, I argued that Schmid's revisions to his account of absolute freedom represent no renunciation of intelligible fatalism but an attempt to reconcile the respective demands of practical and theoretical rationality.

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